

The Book of Destiny
(*Translation of Kitab-ul-Taqdeer*)

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Ghulam Ahmad Parwez

Tolu-e-Islam Trust®

25 B, Gulberg-II, LAHORE

PAKISTAN

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Author: Ghulam Ahmad Parwez
Translated by: Dr. Ejaz Rasool (Glasgow, UK)
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Contact: Tolu-e-Islam Trust
 25 B Gulberg-II
 Lahore-54660
 Pakistan

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 was 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 Iqbal¹, 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. (6:105).

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 revelation of the Quran. 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 *Al-An'am* 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 to in various verses of the Quran, and he compiled a book in Urdu titled *Tabweeb-ul-Quran* (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

¹ Dr. Muhammad Iqbal, a South Asian philosopher, author and politician, who was inspired by the Quran (1877-1938). (Ed)

Quran) in Urdu, and these are also available as 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.

Parvez 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

Whether it is the world of religion or the sphere of philosophy, if you enquire from anyone what is their most difficult, complicated and insoluble problem, their reply will be only one – the issue of *Taqdeer*². If you search, so much literature will be available on this issue that piles and piles will form; and if you read it, then not only will you not be able to make head or tail of it, instead your mind will become the abode of even more doubts and suspicions, and your heart will become an even greater whirlpool of confusion and uncertainty than before. When the last link in my series on Ma'arif-ul-Quran³ - Jahan-e-Farda⁴ - was published, and expansive and detailed tomes like the Lughat-ul-Quran and Mafhoom-ul-Quran⁵ had already been completed, then I considered that, *Hamd* to Allah, the sacred mission of the dissemination and publication of Quranic thinking which I had held before me, has been completed to this extent, and the remainder of my life will be devoted to the arrangement and compilation of Tabweeb-ul-Quran⁶. But I saw that the requests for further clarification of Quranic themes which are being received from the direction of readers, are almost ninety per cent of them, directly and indirectly, regarding the issue of *Taqdeer*. These questions, in fact you could say objections, were mostly received from the section of the youth. The summary of these was that the religion which teaches us that whatever is written in the fate of man can neither be erased nor can anything be done against it, how can we compete with other nations in the arena of life by holding onto this religion? And the objection of the group who had started to study the Quran was that there are contradictions to be found in it at every step. At some places it states that whoever wishes can acquire guidance and whoever wishes can go astray, and at other places it states that guidance and misguidance are both received from the direction of Allah, man has no choice in this. Witnessing these kinds of questions and objections, I felt that whatever I had written about this issue in snippets here and there is not enough to untangle this conundrum. For this there is the requirement for a separate permanent manuscript in its own right. If this conundrum is not

² *Taqdeer* - (root Q-D-R). This word is used in the context of religion to mean determinism or even fatalism i.e. that everything has been decided by Allah in advance, that Allah has already written the fate of every human being even when he or she is not yet born – however, Allah has not informed him or her about it. This view is completely contrary to the possession of choice and intent which is bestowed on man from the outset. (Ed)

³ The term means introduction to the Quran. It comprises a number of books by the author covering various topics of the Quran. (Ed)

⁴ The English version is titled, *The Life in the Hereafter: What does the Quran say?* (Ed)

⁵ The English version is titled, *Exposition of the Holy Quran*. (Ed)

⁶ *The Classification of the Quran*. (Ed)

resolved, then whatever effort I have made to bring the educated class of the youth towards the Quran will all go to waste, and they will become disgruntled with Deen. The motivation for the compilation of this book was the intensity of this realisation, the outcome of which is before the readers.

As with other important issues of life and realities about the universe, the Quran has also solved this extremely difficult issue with its extraordinary eloquence and comprehensiveness in such a clear way that, if it is comprehended correctly, then no further doubt remains in this regard. But for this there is the need for profound reflection and reasoning in the Quran, and in the process of Quranic comprehension, it is extremely important to keep the following aspects before us:

- (1) The style of general human writings is that a book is usually based on one subject and is divided into different chapters. Each one of these chapters expounds one aspect of the subject of the book and is complete in itself. After this there is the second chapter, then the third, until when we reach the final chapter, then the whole subject of the book appears before us in a mutually connected form.

The style of the Quran is different from this. It is not a Book consisting of a single topic, instead it is a compilation of the most important issues of life and the profoundest realities of the universe. It is obvious that when a concise book has to be the custodian of such numerous and varied problems and realities, then there can be no room for a detailed discourse on these matters. Hence, as far as guidance for human life is concerned, this has been expounded in it with great detail and clarity, but regarding the realities of the universe and facets of life, only references have been made to these, and it has been left to human knowledge and vision, intellect and reasoning, to arrive at their details. Furthermore, a full discussion about a matter is not carried out solely at one place. Its style is such that a point is noted at a fundamental level at one place, it is elaborated on at another place, an addition appears somewhere else, an exception is noted at some other place. The Quran terms this style of expression as '*Tasreef-ul-Ayat*' (cross referencing of the verses) i.e. clarifying a matter by repeatedly presenting different verses before us. This is not the place to elaborate on how this particular style of expression was the best and most suitable for such a Book, which was to be declared as a complete and immutable code of life for all times for the whole of mankind. At this point in time, the aim is only to explain that the technique for comprehension of the Quran is that whatever problem is before you, whatever the Quran has stated about it, and wherever, all of that should be in front of you at the same time. In this way, you will be

able to understand this issue accurately in the light of the Quran. By reading the verses separately and individually, the aim and meanings of the Quran will not be comprehended precisely. I have tried to understand the Quran in this very manner, and after a lengthy period of dedicated effort, have compiled the *Lughat-ul-Quran* and *Mafhoom-ul-Quran* in this same way. Whatever I have understood from the Quran regarding the issue of *Taqdeer* too, is also according to this technique, and I have endeavoured to present this in the same way in this book.

- (2) The second stumbling block in the path of arriving at the meanings of the Quran is that we usually try to understand it according to the translations, and the fact is that the translation of the Quran cannot be done in any language of the world. This claim will appear a bit strange to you but it is actually based on reality – the synonyms for the Quranic words cannot be found in any other language in the world. I have presented this reality in the introduction to *Mafhoom-ul-Quran* in great detail. Readers who have an interest in this topic should study it there. You will see there how Muslim and non-Muslim men of knowledge and vision have acknowledged this fact that translation of the words of the Quran is not possible. The meanings of the Quranic words can be understood, and made to be understood, but they cannot be translated. This was that same fundamental reality regarding Quranic comprehension in view of which I compiled the *Mafhoom-ul-Quran*, and I am grateful to Allah that it has acquired immense popularity. Whoever has studied it has acknowledged and commented on this fact in a heartfelt manner, that as a result of this the Quran has started to become comprehensible.

In the coming pages you will find written in connection with the verses of the Quran, that this is the prevalent translation of this verse, but its actual meaning is such and such. From this my aim is not that ‘that translation is wrong’. When translation of the verses of the Quran is simply not possible, then the question of its being correct or wrong does not even arise. For example, the following is stated in the Quran, and it is translated like this:

يُضِلُّ مَنْ يَشَاءُ وَيَهْدِي مَنْ يَشَاءُ

Allah misguides whoever He wishes, He gives guidance to whoever He wishes... (16:93)

Pick up any copy of the Quran and you will find this same translation; so much so, that even if you look at the *Lughat*⁷ of the Arabic language, these words will be translated in this same way. But when we look at this verse according to the cross referencing of verses (*Tasreef-ul-Ayat*) as noted above, then it will be clearly seen that the meaning which is ascertained according to this translation is not only incorrect but is absolutely against Quranic teaching. Hence, until the time that we do not establish the meaning of ‘*Manya’sha’u*’⁸ (مَنْ يَشَاءُ) in the light of different places in the Quran, the correct meaning of this verse will not be comprehended. I have compiled the meanings of the Quranic words in the *Lughat-ul-Quran* in the light of the authenticated books of *Lughat* of the Arabic language and the Quranic verses in the same way; and then having defined the exposition of the complete Quran in the same manner, published that in the *Mafhoom-ul-Quran*. In the book under view, the difference between the translation of the verses and their meanings has been presented using this same method.

- (3) In connection with comprehension of the Quran, this fundamental point also needs to be borne in mind that the Quran has presented one such proof of its being from Allah that there is no contradiction in it, there is no inconsistency anywhere (4:82). In light of this proclamation, no meaning of any verse of the Quran will be able to be called correct which is contrary to another of its verses. For this it is also essential that when one verse of the Quran appears before you, you look to see that whatever meaning you are taking from it, that it is not in conflict with another place in the Quran. In defining the meanings of the verses of the Quran, I have also kept this reality before me, and thus explained that there is no contradiction in the Quran anywhere at any place: there is no contradiction, no inconsistency. Wherever we detect an inconsistency, that is the consequence of our inadequate understanding – with further reflection and reasoning, study and analysis, that inconsistency can be eliminated.
- (4) Another fundamental condition in relation to understanding the Quran is that you should also come to the Quran after getting rid of all pre-established beliefs and concepts from your heart and mind. If a belief or ideology is embedded in your mind beforehand, then consciously or unconsciously, you will attempt to obtain support for this belief or ideology from the Quran. You will not be able to comprehend the correct

⁷ *Lughat* - dictionary. (Ed)

⁸ *Manya’sha* – the literal translation of this is ‘as per the Will’, in reference to the Will of Allah. (Ed)

meanings of the Quran in this way. When it has imposed the precondition of ‘*La-Ilah*’ before ‘*Illa-Allah*’, this is the very aim from this, that the foremost prerequisite to ‘reach Allah’ is that you purify and cleanse your heart and mind from every non-Allah concept. Until all man-made idols are not removed from the precincts of the Kaaba, Allah cannot be housed there. This stage is a very tough one, but there is no way other than this of acquiring guidance from the Quran.

In the coming pages you will also find it written that when ‘Deen converts into *Madhab* (religion) then...’. It is important to understand this differentiation between Deen and *Madhab*. The system of life which used to be received by the *Anbiya* from Allah via *Wahi* is called *Ad-Deen*. But later on when human tampering finds its way into this Deen, then it no longer remains as Deen, it becomes *Madhab* instead. Though *Madhab* is an invention by human beings themselves, they attribute it to Allah. In this way the religious priesthood keeps the population trapped in this deception, and maintain its hegemony on their hearts and minds in the name of Allah. If some individual raises his voice against any belief or *Maslak*⁹ of religion, then the religious priesthood incites the public by alleging that he opposes your Deen, and the reason they present for this is that whatever he is saying is against the *Maslak* of your forefathers. In this way, by imposing *Fatwas* of *Kufr* and *Al’haad*¹⁰ against him, they alienate the people against him so that no one lends an ear to his voice. Though it is a fact that beliefs (never mind how erroneous these may be) are the most precious of all the treasures of man, which he never wishes to give up easily.

This is what happened with Islam as well. After a period of time, the contamination of human ideas started to take place in the Deen which was bestowed by Allah via Rasul-ullah¹¹, and in this way it gradually descended to the level of religion. Now that same religion is prevalent among us, but there is one fundamental difference between us and other followers of religions, and it is this very difference due to which it is possible for us that this religion can be changed into Allah’s Deen once again. That difference is that we have possession of the Book of Allah – in which Deen is preserved in its true form, it exists devoid of any tampering. This characteristic is not available to any other religion in the world. At this point in time there is no other book under the skies sent down by Allah which is in its original form other than the Quran. Hence, if we wish to convert our prevalent religion into the Deen of Allah once again, then for this the

⁹ *Maslak* – mode of following a religion (pl. *Masalak*). (Ed)

¹⁰ *Al’haad* – heresy. (Ed)

¹¹ Rasul-ullah – Muhammad (PBUH), the final messenger of Allah. (Ed)

undertaking will be to evaluate our prevalent beliefs and *Masalak* in the light of the Quran. Those that are in line with it should be retained, and by rejecting those that are against it, the correct Quranic concepts should be adopted in their place. The ultimate aim of my efforts is only this, that the Deen bestowed by Allah is presented before the nation once again. This book is also one link in this process – and in my view a very important link, because through the study of history, this reality becomes unveiled and stares us in the face that one fundamental cause among the causes for our destructions is the non-Quranic ideology of *Taqdeer*. This ideology, which ruins Deen and intellect, has turned this immensely dynamic and vibrant nation into a heap of ashes. It is my request to the readers that whatever I have written, they make it the focus of their profound attention, because the prevalent ideology of *Taqdeer* is continuing to prevail among us through successive generations for centuries, and has become an integral constituent of our *Eimaan*¹². In order to replace it with the Quranic concept, there is not only the need for profound reflection and reasoning, but also for patience and calmness, and immense steadfastness and determination.

I have written this book for those readers who wish to understand the issue of *Taqdeer* from the Quran. That is why I have neither touched upon philosophical discourses in this, nor have argued about the opinions of various writers. I have tried to explain this extremely complex conundrum in a very straightforward and simple way in the light of the Quran. Furthermore, I have also attempted to make its written style as commonly comprehensible as possible, despite the fact that it is very difficult for an author to alter his style of writing, especially in the latter part of his life. To what extent I have succeeded in this effort of mine, this decision will be made by the readers.

For reference to verses, the Surah number is given first and then the verse number e.g. (3:15) will mean the fifteenth verse of Surah *Al-e-Imran*. Where a verse has not been noted, only its reference is provided, you can search for it in any copy of the Quran yourself. Since there is at times a difference of one or two in the numbering of the verses between different publications of the Quran, hence for reference if you look at one or two verses before or after, then the desired verse can be located.

Finally, I consider it necessary to admit and acknowledge this fact (as I consider it essential to document in every book) that whatever is being presented before

¹² *Eimaan* – conviction based on the five precepts as described in the Quran i.e. Allah, the life in the hereafter, the *Malaika*, the Books, and the messengers (*Anbiya*). According to the Quran, the prevalent concept of *Taqdeer* is not part of *Eimaan*. For further details see the root (*A-M-N*) in *Lughat-ul-Quran*. (Ed)

you is a human effort in the comprehension of the Quran, in which there is inevitably the chance of error and omission. Whatever I have viewed to be correct according to my vision, I have presented it without any reduction or addition. If you are in agreement with this, then that is excellent, and if you differ in this, then you can reflect on the Quran for yourself. I always refrain from arguments or debate. If, with this effort of mine, the correct perspective of the Quranic message descends in the heart of even one individual, then I will consider that I have received the reward for my endeavour.

G. A. Parwez

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Tolu-e-Islam

25 B, Gulberg II, Lahore

EDITOR'S NOTE

This is an English translation of the Urdu book titled *Kitab-ul-Taqdeer*, authored by G. A. Parwez and published by the Tolu-e-Islam Trust, Lahore, Pakistan. The literal translation of the title is 'The Book of Destiny.' The book discusses some very important aspects of issues related to human choice and intent, and how Muslims have created problems and complications for themselves around this issue in the last few centuries, after they had clearly demonstrated the immense benefits which can be achieved from following the Quran's clear and direct instructions in this regard during the initial era (7th century AD) of the Islamic system.

I have added footnotes to explain some terms, and these are followed by (Ed) when they are from the translator. Footnotes without this suffix are from the author himself. The verses are quoted in the format (2:256), meaning Surah 2, verse 256 of the Quran. The names of the relevant Surahs are also noted wherever the author has quoted these in the text and these can be checked from any copy of the Quran. I have used the term Allah wherever the text refers to the Quran, as the concept of Allah noted in the Quran is very specific, and not the same as that of a 'God' as referred to in various other religions or in general terms. The meanings of the verses are those which the author has explained using the *Lughat-ul-Quran*, which was compiled by him, and wherever a translation is done to compare it with the meanings of the verse, the author has clarified this himself.

When the Quran linked the purpose of human creation to the Law of Requital (45:22), it made it clear to man that whatever he does during his life on this planet, nothing will escape the sight of this law of Allah. If he keeps this law in mind, he will remain aware of the potential consequences of everything he does during his life. Since man possesses choice and intent, it soon became clear to him that this law does function in life, i.e. what you sow, so shall you reap. But despite this, many people disregard it because they fail to understand the significance of their own self, and instead follow their unbridled desires in blind pursuit of the immediate benefits of life. The man-devised system around them does not help in any way; rather, it motivates them to conform to its relative values, where success is defined in terms of the accumulation of every kind of material benefit by whatever means necessary before death overtakes them. The Quran tells us that if we follow this course then there is no 'life' in it.

The disorder which we witness in the world around us is a consequence of ignoring this basic law, while it continues to ensure that whatever we do, whether

individually or collectively, it establishes its inescapable consequences. Regarding this law, the Quran states:

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

The Quran made the following facts clear at a fundamental level:

1. Every human being is deserving of respect and dignity (17:70) by virtue of possessing choice and intent.
2. The universe owes its existence to the creation of man, as noted in the verse above. The creation of man is for a higher purpose of life, this world being the first stage of his existence, and after his physical death, he (his self) will move on to the next stage of evolution. The human self has the potential to survive physical death.
3. The Quran describes two concepts of life, one of which man will opt for in order to live in this world. One concept is that life ends with physical death, so if his view is that there is nothing within him which can extend beyond this earthly life, then his life will be focused around the material benefits of physical life i.e. an animalistic existence. The second concept is that life at the level of the self continues beyond physical death, which implies that there is 'something within him' which can survive it.
4. Man has the choice to structure his earthly life purely around the decisions of his intellect alone, and the Quran has spelled out the kind of world which will emerge as a consequence of this choice. Or he can choose to utilise his intellect within the domain of *Wahi*¹³ (the Quran) and create an entirely new world in which he will be able to live a life free from fear and grief (2:38).
5. The attribute of choice and intent as part of the manifestation of the human self at a fundamental level meant that man must have maximum freedom and liberty to make decisions in his earthly life. However, if he lives life according to the functioning of his intellect alone, then due to the limitations of this, he will remain trapped under the influence of his unbridled desires and emotions, and will not be able to enjoy the maximum potential of his capacity as a human being. Only the *Wahi* of Allah can tell him what latent potentials lie within him. For this, he is provided with the guidance of *Wahi* from Allah through His designated

¹³ *Wahi* – the revelation from Allah, which is now finalised and preserved in the Quran as guidance for the whole of mankind until the end of times in this world. The Quran is not a product of the human intellect and this can be verified by using the criteria noted within it. (Ed)

messengers. The final guidance was completed within the Quran, and passed on to mankind until the Last Day¹⁴ as far as this earthly planet is concerned.

Under the guidance of the Quran, a model Islamic welfare state based on the system of Deen was established through the hands of Rasul-ullah ﷺ¹⁵ (the final messenger of Allah) and his companions during the seventh century AD, which presented itself as a model forever for the rest of mankind. This means that if it could be implemented at that time, then it can be implemented again at any time if mankind wishes. However, it did not endure for long, and subsequent generations of Muslims did not return to the system of Deen during the following centuries.¹⁶

This model of the Islamic state eliminated slavery in all of its forms, restoring respect and dignity for a human being physically as well as cognitively to that same status as advocated by the Quran. All men were declared as being equal (based on evidence)¹⁷ and possessing intrinsic respect and dignity. Both men and women enjoyed the same freedoms within their own specific areas of responsibility. The constitution of the State was based on the Permanent Values of the Quran. Those managing the affairs of the State accepted the following with full alacrity, that Allah is the ruler of the Islamic system and His rule is established through the Quran, and since everyone is equal before Allah's law, the concept of ruler and ruled is eliminated. Those at the helm of affairs subjugated themselves to the values and laws of the Quran. The path they followed is called *Sirat-e-Mustaqeem*¹⁸ with their sight set on the life of the hereafter – this acceptance is total without any compulsion (external or internal) as noted in (2:256). Through mutual consultation, they formulated sub-clauses within the boundaries of the principles, laws, and values given by the Quran, in order to meet the requirements of the time, but they were fully cognisant of the fact that they did not have the authority

¹⁴ The Last Day, both as an individual with our physical death when our eyes close permanently on this earth, and also as the Last Day of the planet itself, as the earth has a finite existence too. (Ed)

¹⁵ This means 'Peace Be Upon Him', written as PBUH in abbreviated form. (Ed)

¹⁶ Currently, no system of Deen exists anywhere in the world. All those countries where Muslims reside observe constitutions which are assembled by those men who have acquired power and are at the helm of affairs. (Ed)

¹⁷ When a child is born, it is equal to any other child in the world. The child is not aware of its gender, race, colour, status, parents, beliefs, nationality, etc. He or she possesses choice and intent, and has inherent respect and dignity as a human being. Each has an 'I' which has the same latent potentials. (Ed)

¹⁸ *Sirat-e-Mustaqeem* – generally translated as a straight path. For more details, see *The Meanings of the Quran*, Volume 1, by the author under verse (1:6). (Ed)

to alter any of these laws, values and limits defined by the Quran.¹⁹ The human psyche became transformed as a result of following *Wahi*, and removed all false concepts of Allah – man became free from all kinds of intellectual chains.

However, those who subsequently usurped power, instead of living under the Sovereignty of Allah, replaced it with their own rule. They reintroduced the enslavement of human beings, the elimination of which is one of the aims of the Quran, and humanity sank once again into a deep quagmire of darkness as *Malukiyat*²⁰ established an iron grip in those lands which were occupied by these Muslims. The Quran was put to one side, and all the bounties associated with its guidance vanished. Subsequent generations lost sight of it completely, and this age of darkness continues to prevail in the world of today. As happens under such circumstances, men produced all kinds of writings to justify evil, in order to satisfy their base desires and emotions, and since they found it hard to dupe the public at large in the presence of the Quran, they concocted *Abadeeth*²¹ two to three hundred years after the death of Rasul-ullah and attributed these to him. This was indeed a great audacity on the part of these people to produce ‘another Quran’ to misguide themselves as well as others. This was precisely that against which the Quran had warned the *Momineen* right at the outset (25:30). With the passage of time, these *Abadeeth* became embedded within the prevalent belief system of the Muslims, and were generally accepted by most as being the sayings of Rasul-ullah (and given the false status of *Wahi-e-Khafi*²²), while the Quran took a back seat and was relegated to being a Book which was only to be read in order to gain some kind of abstract ‘*Sawab*’²³ through the blind recital of its words without any kind of true comprehension whatsoever. This resulted in the ‘death’ of the Muslims as a whole - those who had once upon a time acquired a ‘new life’ through following and implementing the pure guidance of the Quran (8:24).

Though this book deals specifically with the issues of *Taqdeer* currently prevalent among the sectarian versions of Islam, it also contains a great deal of information in terms of Quranic concepts, Permanent Values, Divine attributes and the laws

¹⁹ They understood that if any change is made in any of the laws and values given by the Quran, then they will not enjoy those benefits which are associated with the Quranic system of Deen i.e. they will be deprived of Allah’s *Faql, Rehmat*, knowledge, wisdom, power, etc. In fact, they will be committing *Shirk*, which is declared to be a supreme injustice (*Zulm*) and a severe crime (against man himself) by the Quran (31:13). (Ed)

²⁰ *Malukiyat* – dictatorship. (Ed)

²¹ For more details on the origins of *Abadeeth*, see the book, *The Status of Hadeeth in Islam*, by the author. (Ed)

²² *Wahi-e-Khafi* – *Wahi* which is claimed to be conveyed secretly and not contained in the Quran. (Ed)

²³ *Sawab* – the belief in abstract rewards for the performance of rites and rituals. (Ed)

applicable to the development of the human self. By explaining various important terms, Parwez helps us to understand those verses of the Quran about which ordinary translations have created those misconceptions which have led to the current problematic issue of 'Taqdeer'. The readers can apply these to all manner of man-made systems which are cloaked under numerous guises throughout the world. Some of these are visible while others are more subtle and can be imposed both externally or internally, by man upon man, and by groups of men upon the population at large. For example, economic slavery, in which people live in perpetual financial hardship, and which is created by the capitalist system of the world, and as a consequence of which most of humanity is never able to exercise their choice and intent even at the lowest level of their existence. The irony is that though there are major campaigns concerning issues such as global warming, little action is taken on remedying poverty and economic slavery. Other forms of slavery are self-imposed by man as a result of different belief systems e.g. fatalism (*Qismat*²⁴), superstitions, divisions of race, class, caste, rituals, religious beliefs, etc.

This book deals comprehensively with those results of wrong translations and interpretations of various verses and terms in the Quran which have succeeded in stifling Muslim cognition for centuries. The issues are discussed by quoting examples from our daily life. This is a human world and Allah has given us complete freedom to mould it as we like, however, we cannot go outside of His laws, and whatever we do has consequences. It also means that whatever responsibilities Allah has taken upon Himself in relation to the development of the human self and meeting the physical needs of humanity, those are to be carried out through human hands. Whatever takes place in the world, good or bad, there is a human hand behind it, and whatever solution appears anywhere on the planet, there is human effort behind it.

The books of G.A. Parwez throw light on various aspects of the Quranic system of Deen, and the importance of the role of a human being in helping to establish this system according to the demands of the time. Man can develop his understanding and recognise his role as a junior companion partaking in Allah's creation in the universe in order to achieve true freedom. Man takes over that part of His creation where Allah has given him free reign, so that he can change the face of the earth physically as well as intellectually, and can achieve those great enhancements in consciousness which he could not otherwise have achieved without the light of *Wabi*. Even without the light of the Quran, man is still aware of his freedom to choose, particularly those who are not constrained by 'slavery' as imposed through religious beliefs. However, they assume that man's life ends

²⁴ *Qismat* – pre-destined fate. (Ed)

with the death of his physical body – that there is no possibility of another life in the hereafter. Those who become aware of the possibility of creating ‘a new self’ for themselves through the acceptance of *Eimaan* open themselves up to the realm of a new inner reality. The Quran states:

Or (the state of those who manifest Kufr) is like the depths of darkness in a vast deep ocean, overwhelmed with billow topped by billow, topped by (dark) clouds: depths of darkness, one above another... (24:40)

The literature (including *Abadeeth*) which has been written by those who were a product of the system of *Malukiyat*, and who did not comprehend the significance of the Quran as a complete Book of guidance, is a brew of whatever their own intellect housed as a belief system in their own era, and conformed to whatever was prevalent at that time. Even today, if we look at the literature around the world, we will mostly see a reflection of the environment in which those writers were brought up. In his book, *The Human Self and Iblees*, Parwez has written about the thought process of Rasul-ullah, who, despite being born in a restrictive environment, questioned the issues facing mankind:

Just ponder that in this environment, from the ignorant and savage land of Arabia, a human being stands up. As has been noted previously, he should have been the same as the people around him, and even if his intellectual level is assumed to be higher than the people around him, then at the very most he could have been declared to be a wise man of that civilised world. And what the condition was of the civilised world of that era has been discussed above.

*But that individual rises and raises the flag of rebellion against every single one of those aspects of that structure of life which was declared as being precisely in accordance with nature by the civilisation and culture, and knowledge and wisdom of that era. He becomes introduced as the claimant of such a revolution in which the very foundations of this structure of lies are uprooted and cast aside. He declares *Malukiyat* to be the worst curse of Allah; superstition is stated to be contrary to human dignity, and he proclaims priesthood to be a saintly ‘veil’ of self-deception; the division of caste and creed is counted as among the tyranny of Pharaonic powers. According to him, the capitalist system is such a leprosy which has filled the body of humanity with fatal germs. His soul shivers at the thought of slavery. His proclamation about nationalism is that man acquires the form of bloodthirsty beasts as a consequence of this. He rises up, and calling on the whole world, proclaims that no human being has the right to rule over another human being.²⁵ He states that the connection of man with Allah is*

²⁵ See verse (3:79) for the proclamation of the Quran that no human being has the right to subjugate another human being to man-made laws. (Ed)

direct; for this, there is no need for any intermediate medium of priesthood.²⁶ He announces that the criterion for human eminence and dignity, and status and righteousness, is his character and deeds, the foundation of which is on Eimaan. No man has priority and superiority over another human being by virtue of birth. He states that capitalism is nothing more than that a few men, by acquiring power, have usurped the rights of weak and helpless human beings. Hence, the demand of justice and accountability is that these usurped rights are snatched back from the hands of these usurpers and returned to the rightful claimants. He declares accumulation and hoarding to be a severe crime in the economic system, and announces that the circulation of wealth should not be in such a way that it remains circulating within one particular group. He states that man, as simply being a human being, is in itself a reason for respect for him, hence, even the very notion of slavery among human beings cannot arise. By shattering all tribal and national prejudices, he makes the announcement of this supreme revolution that the whole of mankind is one as a result of its origin, therefore all people on the face of the earth are members of one universal brotherhood and are branches of one high and mighty tree. The creation of differentiation and differences in them through the unnatural barriers of race, colour, language, and nationhood, is the breaking into pieces of the body of humanity. So much so, that he makes a proclamation against all the non-natural laws and constitutions of human life (individual and collective), and not only does he make a proclamation, but also by generating a revolution, demonstrates what is the true significance of human life.²⁷

This is how, through the light of *Wahi*, the human intellect grasps the reality of being created as a human being, and matters which would otherwise have remained hidden from us, become evidently clear. Those who do not employ their intellect using the light of *Wahi* cannot comprehend the true significance of the possession of choice and intent, and cannot visualise the possibility of a life in the hereafter as a reality. Religious emotive beliefs can provide some kind of concept of a hereafter, but it is not based on fact, and is thus flawed and deceptive. This is the reason why the concept of the hereafter which exists even in the three Abrahamic religions is at variance with each other, as is the concept of God. Parwez provides a detailed discussion on this aspect in his book, *The Human Self and Allah*.

Finally, the Quran arrived to eliminate all kinds of slavery, whether physical or psychological, and declared that each human child, by virtue of possessing choice and intent, has dignity and respect which is inviolable. Even if he commits a crime,

²⁶ This is a statement of fact as the Quran states ‘...*He is with you wheresoever you may be...*’ (57:4). (Ed)

²⁷ G.A. Parwez, *The Human Self and Iblees*, Chapter 9, pp 224-225.

he as a human being, and must be treated with respect and dignity while being punished for the crime, and this includes offering him opportunities to reform himself. The Quran proclaims that human beings are created for a lofty purpose, they are born free, and must remain free. And this is not a Utopian idea but is achievable during our finite earthly life: simply alter the thought process by bringing the intellect within the guidance of the light of the Quran, and the reality of the purpose of creation and of human existence itself will become crystal clear. The Quran states that this is bound to take place:

Soon will We show them Our signs in the universe, and in their own selves, until it becomes manifest to them that this is the Truth. Is it not enough that your Rabb²⁸ does witness all things? (41:53)

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Please note that 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 not of the original author. If readers have any questions or comments after reading this work, they are welcome to contact Tolu-e-Islam Trust.

Dr. Ejaz Rasool

Glasgow, UK

April 2024

²⁸ *Rabb* – this Divine attribute encompasses sustenance and nourishment of all the creations of the universe, which is required for their development from beginning to end. (Ed)

GLOSSARY

Though the meanings of the Quranic words and terms used in this book are generally explained within the text itself, a short list of some of these with a more detailed explanation is considered to be useful also. This glossary is mostly taken from the book by the author titled, *Islam: A Challenge to Religion*. According to the author, these meanings are based on the following :

1. Lane, Arabic-English Lexicon
2. Lisan-ul-Arab
3. Taj-ul-Arus
4. Muhit-ul-Muhit
5. Raghīb, Mufriḍat-ul-Quran

These interpretations are also supported by the context within which they have been used in the respective Quranic verses. All the relevant terms and phrases have been discussed at great length in his other work, *Lughat-ul-Quran* (The Lexicon of the Quran), which is also available in English. In the following explanations, the respective roots of the relevant terms and phrases are given in brackets. Some meanings have been edited to meet the requirements of this book.

Amr. In English there is only one word to denote production of a thing, namely, creation. The Quran, however, has indicated two stages of creation. The first stage is that of Divine planning, where Allah's Directive Energy initiates an inchoate object on the path leading to its destined incarnation. And the process by which it finally assumes the material form intended for it is called the process of creation. Creation involves the blending of various elements in a particular manner and in particular proportions, so as to produce an entirely new thing, for instance, the formation of water through a combination of hydrogen and oxygen.

How Divine planning operates in the various stages of *Amr* is not known to us, but in the world of creation it can be comprehended through the physical laws. Indeed, man can not only comprehend the operation, but also cooperate with Allah in this creative process. The laws under which the various objects in the universe function are made in the world of Divine planning (*A'lam-ul-Amr*), but they are enforced and executed in the world of creation (*A'lam-ul-Khalq*).

Anbiya: the plural of *Nabi* (q.v.).

Batil: This means not only destructive pursuits, rather every one of those things is termed as *Batil* which has no constructive result; when something is tested

against a standard and it fails to meet that criteria, i.e. *Haqq* is that which meets the standard, and *Batil* is that which does not meet the standard, hence it is the opposite of *Haqq*. *Batil* does not denote merely those ideas or actions which possess destructive potentialities, but includes all thinking and conduct that does not lead to constructive outcomes.

Birr (B-R-R): generally translated as virtuous or pious deeds; in fact, it has a much wider sense. The basic meanings of the word are extensiveness, largeness, ampleness. It therefore signifies conduct that tends to expand the personality of the individual, and to ensure the fulfilment and happiness of the whole society. Such conduct helps to rid men of narrow-mindedness and to widen their outlook, and ensures an abundant supply of the necessities of life for all.

Deen (D-Y-N): This word has been used in various senses, among them being: ascendancy, sovereignty, management or conduct of affairs, ruling power, power of dominion, mastership, ownership, possession or exercise of power, code of law, constitution of a state (in modern terminology), Law of Requit, an order in which consequences of human actions can be measured, obedience, subjection, a way, course, mode, manner or conduct of life. Deen would be all these aspects taken together.

Now the Quran has described Islam as *Ad-Deen*, which is generally translated in English as religion. In light of the meanings given above, however, it should be clear that this supposed English equivalent is not only incorrect, but distorts and vitiates the true significance of Deen. Islam is not a religion; in the entire text of the Quran it has not been described even once as a religion (*Madhhab*). Islam is, in fact, a way of life, a social system, a polity, a code of law. In the context of the external universe, Islam signifies the Divine Order that governs the life and movement of the entire universe. The whole aim and purpose of the Quran is the establishment of a universal order founded upon the Divinely-ordained values of life. This is *Ad-Deen*.

Haqq (H-Q-Q): A very comprehensive Quranic term. It is usually translated in English as truth or right, but in fact it has a much wider connotation. According to Lane²⁹, its primary signification is suitability to the requirements of wisdom, justice, right or rightness, truth, reality or fact; or to the exigencies of the case, as the suitability of the foot of a door in respect of its socket for turning round rightly; the state, or quality, or property of being just, proper, right, correct or true. The state of being established or confirmed as a truth or fact. Everlasting

²⁹ Arabic English Lexicon.

existence. Valid, substantial, or real. Existing as an established fact so as to be undeniable.

These several meanings of this word make it perfectly clear that *Haqq* is by no means confined to the realm of thoughts and ideas, notions and beliefs. It stands for those constructive results of conceptions and beliefs which manifest themselves in a tangible form and are in harmony with the changing needs of the times. No belief or theory relating to this world can be described as *Haqq* unless its truth is established by a positive manifestation of its constructive potentialities. These constructive results will be abiding and imperishable, for the word *Haqq* is used only for things that are abiding and imperishable.

The antithesis of *Haqq* is *Batil*. It might be emphasised again that *Batil* does not stand merely for ideas or actions with destructive potentialities but includes all thinking and conduct that do not lead to constructive results.

Ithm (I-Th-M): The Quran uses various terms to denote ‘crime’ or transgression of the laws of Allah. These terms have in fact been used to indicate the different effects or results of crime. For instance, a person who wishes to keep to the right path in life ought to follow the party that has come into existence for the good of all mankind. (This party or group is called *Ummat-un-Muslimatun*). If, however, he conducts himself in a manner that makes him so weak, depressed and listless that he is unable to keep in step with the party and tends to lag behind, he is guilty of *Ithm*. In other words, every action which weakens human personality would fall within the category of *Ithm*.

On the other hand, there are crimes that stimulate one’s spirit of defiance and prompt him to transgress the limits of the law; such crimes are described as ‘*Udwaan*’. Both these categories of crimes – *Udwaan* as well as *Ithm* - involve infringement of the laws of Allah; they differ only in respect of their results. It should be clear that the prevailing conception of ‘sin’ does not exist in the Islamic code of ethics. The notion that infringement of the Divine injunction is ‘sin’, whereas violation of the social code and rules is ‘crime’, is a fallacy which is in conflict with the Islamic view of life. The Islamic society is an agency for the enforcement of the Divine laws; it therefore rules out a duality between the laws and injunctions of Allah and those of society. This kind of duality is conceivable only in religion, not in *Deen*.

Eimaan (A-M-N): to be convinced, to accept, to verify something, to rely upon, or have confidence in. This is usually translated in English as belief or faith; and faith, in turn, signifies acceptance without proof or argument, or without reference to reason or thought, knowledge or insight. Faith is generally regarded

as the negation of knowledge or reason; it is said about Kant, for instance, that 'he found it necessary to deny *knowledge* in order to make room for *faith*.'

Indeed, Kant himself suggests a trichotomy of the modes of cognition into knowledge, opinion, and belief:

Opinion is such holding of a judgement as is consciously insufficient, not only objectively but also subjectively. If our holding of a judgment be only subjectively sufficient, and is at the same time taken as being objectively insufficient, we have what is termed believing. Lastly, when the holding of a thing to be true is sufficient both subjectively and objectively, it is knowledge. (From The Critique of Pure Reason)

According to the Quran, however, *Eimaan* is not what has been described above as believing; it is what Kant calls knowledge. In fact, *Eimaan* is synonymous with conviction and is based on reason and knowledge. The Quran does not recognise as *Eimaan* any belief that is divorced from reason, and involves blind acceptance of any postulate. It is true that *Deen* involves the acceptance of certain things which cannot be known through sense perception, but there is no reason to presume that things which cannot be thus perceived do not exist. Indeed, our reason and thinking compel us to recognise the existence of many such things. In any event, *Eimaan*, according to the Quran, signifies the conviction that results from full mental acceptance and intellectual satisfaction. This kind of conviction bestows a feeling of *Amn* – inner contentment and peace (*Amn* and *Eimaan* have a common root (A-M-N)). And a *Momin* is one who accepts the truth in such a way that it ensures his own peace and helps him to safeguard the peace and security of the rest of mankind. Indeed, *Al-Momin* is one of the attributes of Allah Himself (59:23).

Huzn (H-Z-N): generally translated as grief. It is a composite word, and used for every misfortune that may befall a human being including economic hardship e.g. anxiety and worry about earning a daily living. The Quran has declared that if human beings follow the Quranic guidance and establish the system of *Deen*, then they will be free from fear and *Huzn* e.g. (2:38). This means to not allow those causes to arise which create *Huzn*. This root contains an element of hardness, harshness, and intensity. Fear (*Khauf*) is generated due to some anticipated danger i.e. some event likely to occur in the future. The situation which becomes created before some possible loss is *Khauf*. After this loss, this fear ends, and *Huzn* commences.

Jahannam: usually translated as hell, which again does not properly convey the Quranic sense of the term.

According to the Quran, life has manifested itself in the human form after having gone through various stages of the process of evolution. This is the final link in the evolution of life in this world. But life is not limited to this world; it continues beyond death. The higher life that the individual with a developed personality is capable of leading after his life in this material world, is called a heavenly life, or the life of *Jannah*. On the other hand, the evolution of a personality not so developed is bound to be thwarted; this kind of life is called an infernal life, or the life of *Jahannam*. *Jannah* and *Jahannam* do not stand for places or localities; they denote different conditions of human life, which have been described metaphorically. It should also be clear that these conditions do not relate entirely to the life hereafter: they have their beginnings here in this world of matter. A social order based upon Quranic foundations results in a happy situation: the necessities of life are available in abundance and are secured in extremely decent ways befitting human dignity. This brings about true happiness and peace of mind. This is called a heavenly life (*Jannah*). On the other hand, a society based upon principles repugnant to the laws of Allah engenders anxiety and discontentment, and this is an infernal life (*Jahannam*). *Jahannam* is a Hebrew compound word composed of *Ji* and *Hinnum*, and meaning the valley of *Hinnom*. This was a famous valley situated in the south of Jerusalem where men were burnt alive and offered as a sacrifice to the idol Moloch. *Jahannam*, therefore, denotes a situation in which humanity is ruined. In Arabic, the word *Jabeem* is often used in this sense; it means to prevent – that is, it denotes a condition in which human evolution is prevented, and life begins to stagnate instead of progressing.

Jannah: see *Jahannam*.

Khair (*Kb-Y-R*): usually translated in English as good, as against *Sharr*, which is translated as evil. These equivalents again do not give the exact Quranic meanings of the words.

Man is endowed with manifold faculties and powers. When he uses these faculties in accordance with the laws of Allah, the results are conducive to the development of his own personality as well as for the welfare of mankind as a whole. This is *Khair*. When, on the other hand, the potentialities of man are used in contravention of the laws of Allah, the result tends to bring about the disintegration of the individual's personality and harm the interests of humanity at large. This is *Sharr*. Moreover, such human faculties as are not put to any constructive use also fall within the definition of *Sharr*.

This exposition of the notions of *Khair* and *Sharr* also provides an answer to the question why Allah, Who is Himself *Khair*, has created *Sharr*. In fact, *Sharr* is not an independent quality or force created by Allah: man has been created with a

free will, and when he, by his own choice, uses his potentialities for destructive purposes, the result is *Sharr*.

Khalq: see *Amr*.

Kufr (K-F-R): This is the antonym, or negation, of *Eimaan*. It means to deny the truth, to prevent, to defy the laws of Allah. Basically, the word means to cover or conceal. One who denies the truth in fact seeks to conceal it; he is, therefore, called a *Kafir*. *Kufr* means open denial, not hypocrisy. The hypocrite professes to believe in a thing that he does not accept at heart; the *Kafir*, on the other hand, has at least the forthrightness to proclaim his belief. That is why the Quran condemns and consigns the hypocrite to the lowest depths of hell.

The definition of *Kufr*, however, is not confined to denial of the truth; it includes the concealment or withholding of the means of subsistence, which Allah has created for the good of all mankind, and which He wants to be freely available to all.

Madhhab (Z-H-B): literally means way, or course. This word does not appear in the Quran, and in Islamic jurisprudence (*Fiqh*) it stands for 'school of thought'. The English word 'religion' is usually translated as *Madhhab*, and *deen*

since Islam is generally described in English as a religion, the word *Madhhab* has come to be used for it in Urdu also. This is a fundamental fallacy; it might be stressed once again that Islam is a *Deen*, not a *Madhhab*. Today, the only Divine *Deen* is Islam, whose principles and precepts are enshrined in the Quran.

Maghfirah (G-F-R): usually translated as forgiveness. The Quranic Law of Requit, however, entirely negates the very conception of forgiveness. Every human action, according to this law, has a natural and logical outcome for which there can be no forgiveness. The correct meaning of the word *Maghfirah* is to protect: for instance, *Mighfar* means the helmet or piece of mail with which a soldier protects his skull and neck.

The first prerequisite for the prevention of disease is one's internal resistance: that is to say, his body should have sufficient internal strength to withstand an attack by forces detrimental to its health. If, however, the attack proves too strong and the person falls ill, his resistance must be strengthened so as to prevent the disease from taking a fatal turn, and to effect its cure. This preventive and curative process would be called *Maghfirah*.

Faithful compliance with the laws of Allah gives man sufficient strength to resist the destructive forces in life. But if he should ever fall into error and be guilty of

infringing these laws, and his personality should consequently be weakened, the remedy would lie in good conduct calculated to recuperate and strengthen his personality and save him from the harmful effect of his lapse. This is called *Maghfirah*.

Malaika (*A-L-K or M-L-K*, the latter being preferable): This is usually translated in English as angels, but the common religious notion of the word is very different from its Quranic conception. The universe can be divided into two parts: the material world which we can perceive through the senses, and the world beyond our powers of perception. The Quran, in the first instance, uses the word *Malaika* to denote the forces of nature at work in the world of matter. For instance, when it says in the allegorical account of Adam that all the *Malaika* prostrated themselves before Adam, it means that man has been endowed with the capacity to subdue and conquer the forces of nature. Moreover, besides the physical forces of nature, the Quranic meaning of *Malaika* includes the psychological forces within the individual himself. When used with reference to the other part of the universe – the one beyond our powers of perception – *Malaika* stands for the forces at work there to fulfil Allah's purpose, and to shape in practice the Divine scheme of things. In this sense the word also includes the agencies through which the word of Allah has been revealed to various *Anbiya* (for the guidance of mankind). So, in this sense, *Malaika* may also be called messengers.

Malaika are not endowed with any will or independent power; they are devoted to the performance of their respective duties, and cannot act otherwise than they do. Man is the only being in the whole universe endowed with a free will and independent power.

Mushrik (*Sh-R-K*): one guilty of *Shirk* (q.v.). plural form is *Mushrikeen*.

Nabi: This is usually translated in English as prophet (one who prophesies). This translation is again incorrect and misleading. *Nabi* is not a derivative of *Naba'un* which means 'to inform'. In olden times the word *Nabi* was used for a special functionary in the Jewish temple whose function was to prophesy future events. In its Quranic connotation the word *Nabi* is derived from *Nabwa'tun* which means an elevated place, it therefore means a person standing on a pedestal; in other words, one who lives in this material world but can also perceive the unseen world beyond, because he (such a person) is endowed with Divine revelation (*Wahi*). (See also *Rasul*).

Nabuwwat: The function or office of the *Nabi* is called *Nabuwwat*, that is, the function of securing Divine guidance through revelation. (For details see *Nabi*).

Quran (Q-R-A): The Book that Allah gave to Muhammad (PBUH) through revelation, and which he passed on to the Muslims in the form in which we know it today. The internal evidence provided by the Quran itself, as well as historical research, proves beyond a shadow of doubt that not even a comma of the original Quranic text has been changed. This is a unique attribute of the Quran and is not shared by any other revealed book now extant. The Quran embodies the *Deen* revealed to the earlier *Anbiya* in its true and perfect form. This Book does not give us merely a code of ethics, it provides us with a code of life which embodies guidance, principles and laws relating to every sphere of human life and activity. The Quran, according to Islam, is the final authority in matters of *Deen*. The injunctions and the principles contained in the Book form the cornerstone of the Islamic polity, and the limits laid down by it provide the framework within which the laws of the Islamic State may be formulated. These principles, or limits, or framework, are immutable, but the statutes made by the State within these parameters are open to modification and change according to the needs of the times. The Quran is the last of the Divine Books because *Nabuwat* ended with Muhammad (PBUH). No subsequent human opinion or pronouncement in matters of *Deen*, therefore, can be recognised as authoritative, nor can any man-made law repugnant to the Quran be regarded as binding upon Muslims. The Quran is a book of guidance for all mankind and transcends the barriers of time and space. The Islamic State is an instrument for the enforcement of the laws and injunctions embodied in the Quran.

Rabb (R-B-B): Usually translated in English as the Lord. Again, the English equivalent does not convey the real meaning and significance of the Arabic original. *Rabb* means one who enables a thing or person to grow and develop and eventually to realise all its potentialities; and the process by which a person (or object) thus fulfils himself is called *Rabubiyat*³⁰. Nothing in the universe comes into being in a state of perfection or fulfilment; it is born with certain potentialities which, when developed and actualised, enable the object concerned to become what it was designed to be. Like other objects and beings in the universe, man is also endowed with manifold potentialities which, if properly developed, enable him to rise from the animal to the human level. The Quran seeks to establish, in accordance with the Divine laws, a social order under which the latent potentialities of every individual can be fully realised. This realisation of the individual's potentialities will include the sustenance and growth of his body as well as the fulfilment of his personality. This kind of social system is called the

³⁰ The author coined this term from *Rabb* – it refers to the system of sustenance presented by the Quran. (Ed)

Rabubiyat order, and its establishment is the ultimate end and purpose of the Deen of Islam.

Rabubiyat. see *Rabb*.

Rasul (R-S-L) The duty of the *Nabi* does not end with the securing of Divine guidance; in fact, this is but the beginning of his task. The root of the word *Rasul* means a messenger, or one who has a message to deliver. It is the duty of the *Nabi* to deliver to mankind the message revealed to him by Allah without the slightest change or modification; it is by virtue of this function that he is called a *Rasul*. But even the faithful delivery of the Divine message does not complete the performance of the *Rasul's* function; he is also responsible for setting up a social order in compliance with the principles enshrined in the Divine message that he has delivered. In other words, he is entrusted with the establishment of 'Allah's kingdom upon earth'. He is charged with the revolutionary function of ending the sway of tyrannical, oppressive, and self-seeking rulers and priests, and establishes a free order of society in which men will not be dependent upon other men and will not be subject to anything except the Divine law. The *Rasul*, from this point of view, appears as a great revolutionary who does not content himself with sermons, but implements the Divine law practically by example, and seeks to bring all men under its sway. This is the real function of the *Rasul* (*Risalat*).

In view of the above explanation it is clear that *Nabi* and *Rasul* are two facets of a single entity, or two faces of the same coin. A *Nabi* is also a *Rasul*, and vice versa. The plural form of *Rasul* is *Rusul*.

Nabuwwah, or reception of the revelation of Divine guidance by the *Anbiya* or *Rusul*, ended with Muhammad (PBUH). The guidance revealed to him is preserved and enshrined fully and exactly in the Quran. But the function of *Risalat*, or the delivery of the Divine message to all of mankind and the establishment of a social order in accordance with its principles, has devolved upon the nation or *Ummah* that has *Eimaan* in that Book, that is, the Quran.

Ruh (R-W-H): usually translated as spirit or soul. 'Spirit' has a special meaning in Christian metaphysics, and 'soul' is the expression of a peculiar notion in Greek philosophy. The Quranic conception of *Ruh* differs essentially from 'soul' as well as 'spirit'. Its most appropriate translation would be 'Divine Energy', which expresses itself through a free and self-determining will. Free will is possessed only by Allah, Who imparts it to human beings also; no other being is endowed with this power. The Quran holds that the power of the human will is not a product of man's natural constitution; it cannot, therefore, be called a material force. It is a power specially bestowed by Allah upon men; that explains why Allah

has described it as ‘His *Ruh*’ – meaning thereby the human personality, which is the bearer of the free will.

This should not, however, be taken to mean that the human personality is a part of the Divine Personality. Personality is absolutely indivisible; no personality, therefore, can possibly be a part of any other personality. We are all familiar with the fallacy that the human spirit is a part of the Spirit of Allah bogged down in the world of matter, and that the whole end and purpose of man’s life on earth is to purge this spirit of its material impurity, so that it may merge again with the Divine Spirit. This misconception is thoroughly repugnant to the spirit. Allah has endowed every individual with an inchoate personality, and the purpose of his worldly life is to develop his personality so that it may be able, after death, to continue its journey further.

The word *Ruh* has been used in the Quran in other senses also. But in the present work it has not been used in any of the other senses; the other meanings are, therefore, not given here.

Shaitan (*Sh-T-N*): Man is endowed with manifold faculties and is free to use them as he wills. These faculties include his impulses. If he uses these faculties in accordance with the laws of Allah, then constructive results, which are conducive to the benefit of the interests of all of mankind, follow. If, on the other hand, he uses his faculties in a manner repugnant to the laws of Allah, the results are destructive. The impulse that induces man to use his faculties in contravention of the Divine laws is called *Shaitan*. The common English equivalent for this word, namely, devil, does not properly express the Quranic sense of the original term.

The word *Shaitan* has also been used for defiant or rebellious human beings; in other words, for such men as defy the laws of Allah themselves and also induce others to defy those laws. Since destructive activity inevitably brings frustration and sorrow, *Shaitan* has also been called *Iblees* – which means a disappointed being who fails to secure happiness in life.

Sharr. see *Khair*.

Shirk (*Sh-R-K*): obedience to man-made laws along with or in contravention of the laws of Allah. Islam does not permit obedience to any laws other than those laid down by Allah.³¹ Indeed, not only actual obedience to other laws, but even the belief that it is permissible and proper to obey these laws is tantamount to

³¹ This means that the benefits which are associated with obedience to the pure Quran cannot be achieved by *Shirk* i.e. the ‘formula’ of the Quran becomes ineffective. (Ed)

Shirk. Polytheism is generally understood to mean the worship of idols. It is, of course, true that idol worship, or the worship of any of the forces of nature, amounts to *Shirk*. But this definition is not exhaustive, nor are these forms of worship the most serious manifestations of *Shirk*, for they result mainly from ignorance. The most heinous form of *Shirk* is obedience to laws and injunctions other than those of Allah. From the Islamic point of view the important thing is obedience, not worship. Muslims obey Allah, they do not worship Him in the general sense of the word.

Taqdeer (Q-D-R): This is generally translated as fate, and fatalism is widely believed to be one of the fundamental elements of the Islamic creed. This is absolutely wrong. A theory of life which is based upon the freedom of the human will cannot possibly have anything to do with fatalism. Human freedom and fatalism are mutually contradictory concepts.

A mango stone embedded in soil, if properly looked after and nourished, has the capacity to grow into a mango tree, which will eventually yield the mango fruit. The realisation of this potentiality of the mango stone is called its *Taqdeer*. To be more precise, *Taqdeer* means measure. The true measure of the mango stone is the mango tree; if a stone does not grow into a tree, it does not conform to its measure. On the other hand, no mango stone can grow beyond its measure: this is the destiny of the mango stone.

Man has been endowed with manifold potentials. If he follows the right path in life and adheres to it, his potentialities are gradually realised, and his personality is so developed that he is enabled to attain the perfect human stature in this life, and to cover the evolutionary stages yet to come beyond this world (the life in the hereafter). This development of the individual is called his *Taqdeer*.

Taqwa (W-Q-Y): The common English equivalent, namely, piety, does not properly express the real meaning of the word. Deviation from the path of right conduct leads man to ruin; *Taqwa* helps to keep him on the right path and thus save him from ruin. But merely saving oneself from ruin is a negative virtue, whereas the Quran regards the positive aspect of life as being of fundamental importance. In the context of the Quran, therefore, *Taqwa* involves not only saving oneself from the forces of destruction but also stabilizing one's personality through the preservation and enforcement of the laws of Allah. To be more concrete, it means the faithful and efficient performance of all the duties that Allah has enjoined upon man through revealed guidance. This meaning is wide enough to include loftiness of character and purity of conduct. One who leads a life of *Taqwa* is called *Muttaqee*.

Taubā (T-W-B): While on his way to a particular place, an individual reaches a crossing, and from there he takes a turn and continues on. But after a short while he realises that he has put himself on the wrong path, which will not take him to his destination. He must now turn back and return to that point from where he took the wrong turn. This kind of return is called *Taubā*. It is obvious, however, that a mere return to the crossroads will not take the man to his destination; he will also have to adopt the right path. *Taubā*, therefore, covers all three aspects of the process: realising one's error, retracing one's steps, and then taking the right course.

Zulm (Z-L-M): Words based on this root appear frequently in the Quran. It means not to keep something at its proper place, either by increasing or decreasing it, or removing it from its proper place or time; to disturb the balance of something; crossing the limits; placing a thing in a wrongful place. Its basic meanings are of darkness; for light to be extinguished i.e. there being no light where there should have been a light. In the physical domain we need light to see things clearly, similarly, in matters of our collective life we need the light of the Quran to avoid conflicts and to remove differences among us. It is also translated as injustice and the creation of imbalances in society.

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The Book of Destiny

1 Chapter 1 - *Kitab-ul-Taqdeer* - Background

When man opened his eyes on planet earth, he found himself surrounded by an extremely unfavourable environment. Eerie jungles all around in which were very frightful, wild and bloodthirsty beasts and other dreadful gigantic animals; towering mountains all around and their menacing rocky faces; a boundless ocean before him and its fearsome tempestuous conditions. On the other side, roaring rivers, streams, creeks, and their destructive and stormy nature – continuous rains, hailstorms, snowfalls, and together with them tremor causing lightning, flashing and thunder – here and there ominous volcanic mountains and from them a pouring flood of boiling, molten, fiery lava; the demons of earthquakes lurking underground and lightning snaking overhead – to the right and left, in front and behind, above and below, these innumerable means of destruction and devastation, and stranded among them, helpless, vulnerable, unarmed, weak and feeble, without any means and resources - man! He could not understand why all this is taking place, how is it happening, and what is the procedure by which to become protected from this? He was ignorant of the law of cause and effect and unfamiliar with the possibility of harnessing the forces of nature. Furthermore, he conceptualised every destructive event to be an accident, and used to declare this accident to be a consequence of mere chance – his mind simply could not venture beyond this.

1.1 The First Concept of Man

Now it is obvious that the man who is trapped within such a dangerous morass of accidents and chances, and possesses no resources or means for protection from them, will inevitably feel himself to be helpless. Consequently, this was the first concept which man established about himself i.e. that man has been created constrained in this world, there is nothing within his power. Weak and feeble, helpless and defenseless, without means and support, constrained and pitiful, there is only one procedure available before man to protect himself from a frightening and dangerous force, and that is that he should bow down before this power, weep and wail, and in this way implore for mercy.

1.2 The Concept of Worship

Man of this initial era adopted this very procedure in order to be protected from the destruction of these dreadful forces. In the early morning this fiery sphere appeared on the eastern horizon, and he stood with hands clasped before it. From the heavens the rumbling of clouds, the flashing of lightning, and the roaring of thunder terrified the soul, and he fell before them in prostration. When the breaking of banks by the relentless floods of a river caused devastations, he began to entreat and plead before it. Sometimes he made the lion his deity, sometimes the snake. Sometimes he immersed himself in worship of the goddess Agni (fire), sometimes in worship of the god Inder (rain).³² In this way, he established another concept about life, to plead for mercy from an entity possessing power in order to receive protection from dangers, and in this way to be a seeker of its help. Anthropologists classify this era of mankind as the Age of Worship. But it is obvious there could be no impact on these events in the universe due to this concept of the human mind, they were going to manifest according to their own laws – and they continued to manifest in this way. If, by chance, some event transpired following the worship of some god or goddess which was in accordance with the desire of these worshippers, then it would become a reason for reinforcement of this belief of theirs. If this did not happen, then they already considered themselves to be helpless in any case, and offering thanks would sit back with patience.

1.3 The Age of Magic

Some crafty people among them took advantage of this helplessness of theirs and said to them, do as we tell you and then see whether these goddesses and gods do not fulfil your desires. In this way, magic, spells, amulets, and charms came into existence. This era is called the Age of Magic in human history. As a consequence of this, some awareness of his own power became apparent to man i.e. that man can also use supernatural forces to some extent according to his own wishes. But even with this there was no change in these beliefs (mentioned above) – in other words, that man is helpless in this world and needs the aid of supernatural powers for protection from dangers, which can either be acquired through worship or through the power of magic. This is the account of that human being who was devoid of the guidance of *Wahi*³³ and coined concepts about the universe and his own self using his own intellect. These kinds of concepts were later described using the term religion. You will find these concepts in every religion of the

³² Agni and Inder are religious gods worshipped in India. (Ed)

³³ *Wahi* – the revelation from Allah through His messengers. (Ed)

world, whether that religion is prevalent among primitive tribes or among civilised nations. The reality and basis of religion is always one and the same in every place.

1.4 Concepts Bestowed via *Wahi*

Contrary to this, some concepts were bestowed through *Wahi* about supernatural power, the universe and man. According to these concepts:

- (1) This system of the universe has neither come into existence by chance, nor is it a random collection of incidents and fortuitous events. It has been created according to a well-defined programme by a Being Who is *Hakeem*³⁴ and *Aleem*³⁵. Together with this, He has established such firm laws according to which everything in the universe is busily engaged in functioning. This Creator of the universe and clear laws are identified by the name of Allah. These laws encompass the external universe as well as the social life of man and also an individual's own self i.e. no aspect of Divine creation is outside the sphere of these laws.
- (2) Other than man, everything in the universe is constrained to live life according to these laws. Living life according to these laws is termed as being their '*Fitrat*'³⁶, which it is not within their control to change. Hence whatever event occurs in the universe, it takes place according to these laws. In the outer universe it is called the law of cause and effect, and in the human world it is called the Law of Requit, which means that a defined consequence is established for every deed of man, even to the extent of the thoughts passing through his heart: no deed of his can remain without a consequence.
- (3) This potential has been kept within man that he is able to acquire knowledge about the things of the universe. When he acquires knowledge about these laws according to which the forces of nature are busily functioning, then he will be able to harness these forces. Based on this, man is not constrained and restricted in the universe, the things of the universe are constrained. He does not need to be afraid of the things of the universe, it is the things of the universe which should be 'fearful' of him. The things of the universe are his servants and bow down before him, and he is their director and worthy of their prostration.

³⁴ *Hakeem* – All-Wise. (Ed)

³⁵ *Aleem* – Omniscient. (Ed)

³⁶ *Fitrat* – the nature of things. (Ed)

Man can acquire knowledge of the laws of nature through observation, study, and experimentation. This is called knowledge of the sciences according to the terminology of the modern era. But knowledge of the laws about his own life (i.e. not about the laws relating to his physical life, but knowledge about the laws pertaining to his human life) is bestowed via *Wahi*, which is now preserved within the Quran. Just like the laws of nature, these laws are also immutable and permanent.

- (4) The difference between man and other things of the universe is that the things of the universe are created to be constrained to follow those laws which relate to them in order to live life. But man has not been created constrained in this respect. He has been given the choice that if he wishes he can live his life according to these laws, and if he wishes he can adopt some other path for himself.

1.5 *Jabr* (Acceptance Through Compulsion) and Choice

Man is possessor of choice up to this extent (that he lives life according to Allah's laws or goes against them), but he is not given this option that he can also obtain the outcome of his path according to his wish. Its outcome will become established only in accordance with the laws established by Allah. In other words, he has been given this choice that if he wishes he can swallow a capsule of poison, or if he wishes he can swallow a sweet, but he is not given this choice that having swallowed a capsule of poison he can create the outcome of that of a sweet. The result will be established according to the Law of Requit, which is not within the control of man to change. The domain of authority of this law is equally applicable to man's present life and to the life in the hereafter after his death.

Allah is that Omnipotent Being Who established these laws according to His programme, and now He has such control over them that the outcome of every action keeps on becoming established according to them. A law is merely the name for a formula – i.e. if you do such and such, then such and such will happen – within this formula itself there is no such intrinsic power according to which the outcome takes place. This power lies in the Hand of the Creator of this formula or law. For any law to become a living reality and to remain as such, it is necessary that the force which is acting behind it should always remain alive and enduring i.e. it should be living and established.

1.6 Difference Between Deen and *Madhab*

The system of life whose reality and foundation these concepts define is termed *Ad-Deen*. You will have seen from this that Deen is the opposite of *Madhab*, and a challenge against it. The Quran has described these concepts with great clarity and precision, details of which will appear before you in the coming pages. From these details that problem of *Taqdeer* which the world of religion has made so complex and unsolvable will appear before you clarified and resolved.

2 Chapter 2 - The Concept of Allah

Allah was also Allah at that time when this universe came into existence, and He will remain as Allah at that time when this system is no longer in existence. Hence, 'the world of Allah' is not only the universe created by Him, there is more beyond this. It is from this respect that the Quran has described the existence of 'two worlds of Allah'. One is called the domain of *Amr* which is beyond the universe created by Allah, and the other is the domain of *Khalq*, which consists of the universe created by Allah. The Quran declares:

...Be aware that the domain of Khalq and Amr both belong to Allah...(7:54)

It is obvious that the association of law will be with the domain of *Khalq*, not with the domain of *Amr*. For example, this is a fact that in the universe no effect can appear without a cause, and nothing can come into existence without pre-existing material. This is the law of Allah. But its connection is with the domain of *Khalq*, not with the domain of *Amr*. Allah brought this universe into existence from nothingness i.e. He created it without any pre-existing material. This decision of His that such a universe should come into existence, and then this act of His from which He created it is completely against the law of cause and effect, and the system (in the world) of creation and procreation.

2.1 Domain of *Amr*

Those matters are related to the domain of *Amr* in which there is no law, instead it is the Will of Allah that is operational there. This is that very 'world of Allah' about which it is stated:

...He does whatever He wishes according to His authority and intent. (22:14)

In another verse:

...Certainly your Rabb does whatever He wishes according to His intent. (11:107)

Furthermore:

...He makes whatever kind of decision He wishes according to His Will. (5:1)

...He does whatever He wishes according to His Will. (22:18)

*He cannot be questioned why did You do it like this. All others can be questioned.
(21:23)*

It is proclaimed about this initial stage of creation (in which the universe was brought into existence from nothing without any pre-existing material) that:

He created the universe (the earth and heavens) the first time. When He decides on a matter, then for that He only says, Be! and it happens (in this way, He brought the universe into existence from nothing). (2:117)

Here, Allah is called *Badi us-Samawat-e-Wal Ard*. In another verse He is called *Fatiri us-Samawat-e-Wal Ard* (6:14). At another place it is stated:

Allah initiates the creation of the things of the universe, and by rotating them through variations, causes them to traverse further creative stages... (30:11)

2.2 Meaning of *Takhleeq* (Creation)

It should be made clear that the linguistic meaning of *Khalq'un* is to measure something, to evaluate it, to correct the balance and proportion of something. From this respect the meaning of *Khalaqa* will be to make something according to a specific estimate and scale by creating proportion and balance in different elements. As far as the initial creation (without pre-existing material) of things of the universe is concerned, that relates to the domain of *Amr* of Allah, and in this no one is a partner with Allah. But by the mutual intermixing of things created in this way, the creation of ever new things can also be done by man, and he does so. That is why the Quran has declared Allah to be the Best of Creators (23:14, 37:125) i.e. from among those who create, the One Who creates with supreme beauty and adornment, and with the most precise balance and proportion. It is stated at one place that:

He also keeps adding to His creation according to His Mashe'at. (35:1)

These additions can be in the creation of new things of the universe for the first time, and also in the creation of new things by the novel re-arrangements of different things, as well as through new compositions. In the words of Ghalib³⁷:

He has not yet freed Himself from adorning and beautifying,

³⁷ Mirza Ghalib was an Indian poet (1797-1869). (Ed)

In front of Him is an eternal mirror still veiled.

2.3 Characteristics of the Domain of *Amr*

This phase of creation (in which things of the universe are brought into existence from nothing, and are made possessors of various characteristics) is about the domain of *Amr* of Allah. Regarding this, we can neither understand how it took place, nor how it takes place, nor can we question why a certain thing was made a possessor of certain characteristics. Why was it done in this way that fire should provide heat, and that water should flow down a slope (under normal circumstances). Why was cyanide made poisonous, and water made the promoter of life. Why was honey endowed with sweetness, and salt with saltiness. Why was the universe created like this, and not like something else. The Creator (*Fatir*³⁸) of the universe did all this according to His absolute authority and with full autonomy. For this He was neither bound by any procedure or law, nor in need of the advice and opinion from anyone. This is that place about which He has only told us that:

يَخْلُقُ اللَّهُ مَا يَشَاءُ

...as He Wills, He creates...³⁹ (24:45)

Regarding the word *Ma'yasha'u* (as He Wills), this is defined as the '*Mashe'at* of Allah'. We can neither comprehend this *Mashe'at* of Allah, nor can we question anything about it, as to why something is like this and not like that. This is the domain of *Amr* of Allah – 'He makes whatever kind of decision He wishes according to His Will' and 'He does whatever He wishes according to His Will' - about this He has only told us that He has created the system of the universe *Bil-Haqq* (16:3), He has not made it *Batil* (3:191). It is now our task to engage in research and enquiry according to the various sciences of the universe, and find out how it is *Bil-Haqq* and not *Batil* – but this is a separate topic. At this point we only wish to state that the form and reality of the domain of *Amr* of Allah is out with our sphere of comprehension, because it is beyond our concept of the system of laws (e.g. of cause and effect). Now let us move forward another step.

³⁸ *Fatir* – the attribute of Allah as creating from nothing. (Ed)

³⁹ Also mentioned in many other verses.

2.4 *Taqdeer*

Allah created the universe according to His *Mashe'at*, and having reached this goal, He made a supreme change in His programme. Here, Allah confined His *Amr* within the four walls of the laws made by Him. This point demands profound attention and reflection. The word '*Qanun*' (law) does not appear anywhere in the Quran. Even in the Arabic literature of that time this word is seen very little with this meaning, instead of this another root has been used in the Quran, which is even more expansive than *Qanun* due to its comprehensiveness. The root is (Q-D-R), *Qadr*. The basic meaning of this root is estimation or scale. The meaning of *Qadartu Shaiya* is that I measured that thing, made an estimate of it, and the meaning of *Qadara Shaiya Bishaiyi* is that he measured something by laying it side by side with another thing, and in this way estimated whether it is equal to it or not, or what the mutual proportion is of each. The meaning of *Qadartu Alai'hi Taub* is that I made clothes according to this individual's measurements. Hence, the basic meaning of *Taqdeer* is for something to fit according to some scale or estimate. And that scale or model or pattern according to which something is made is called *Miqdar'un*. *Jaa'a Ala Qadrin* means that it complied fully with the estimation or scale. The individual who is of a moderate and suitable height is called *Qada'run*, neither too tall nor too short. The individual who reports what yield of grain can be expected from a field by assessing it is called *Al-Muqaddiru*.

From the above explanations it is clear that the meanings of *Qad'run* or *Taqdeer'un* are those of estimation or scale, or for something to fully meet the estimate and scale. Since it is necessary that in order to make anything according to a particular scale and estimate, there should be full control over that thing, this is why *Qadartu Ala Shai'in* means that I possessed enough power that I could make that thing according to my estimation.

2.5 The *Amr* of Allah Became Tied to Laws

We have seen earlier that in the domain of *Amr* every decision or task reaches accomplishment under the absolute control and full autonomy of Allah. There is no defined fixed law there according to which every decision is issued. But in the domain of *Khalq* the *Amr* of Allah becomes confined within the four walls of procedures and laws:

...and the *Amr* of Allah is a decree determined. (33:38)

The *Amr* of Allah converted into the pattern of scales, it became tied to defined scales. And in this way:

...Allah has fixed a scale for everything. (65:3)

It is important to understand what the meaning is of 'for everything a scale is determined'. Water becomes a solid from a liquid at a freezing temperature; at a particular temperature it again becomes liquid from the solid state; it flows down a slope. Whichever vessel it is poured into, it adopts that same shape. If more heat is provided, then it turns into vapours. Vapours are lighter than air, hence they rise high up into the atmosphere and are called clouds. On reaching a particular level of cooling, these vapours again convert into water, and since water is heavier than air, these fall (in the shape of rain) onto earth. These will be called the 'scales' of water. Or that, in a particular quantity, water quenches thirst and supports life, but an excess of this same thing becomes the cause for human death (e.g. dying due to drowning). These are also scales of water. Or, for example, a date tree bears fruit after many years, while a banana comes to fruition within six months. These are their scales. From the cactus seed a fruitless and thorny plant grows, and from the mango stone a 'heavenly fruit' – glasses filled with delicious juice.

2.6 The Laws of Nature

Following reflection, this reality will appear before us that the entity which the Quran has called *Qadr* is called the Law of Nature in our terminology. Therefore the meaning of 'Allah has fixed scales for the things of the universe' (65:3) will be that Allah has defined laws for all the things of the universe according to which they come into existence, grow, spread, bear fruit, and after that wither away (or acquire some other form). Just note how this reality becomes clearly manifested before us from different verses of the Quran.

- (1) In connection with the birth of a human child, it is stated that its beginning is from a fertilized ovum which becomes attached inside a safe location (the uterus of a woman). It stays there for a known duration, or estimate (77:21-22). It is apparent that this refers to that period for which the foetus remains in the mother's uterus and for this a law of nature is established. After this it is stated that We have fixed these scales (laws). We are the Best to define scales (77:23). (In addition the meaning of *Qadi'run* also become clear – 'the One Who defines scales'. At another place *Qadeer'un* has appeared instead of *Qadi'run* (25:54)).

Regarding these scales for the foetus, it is stated at another place that sometimes a child remains incomplete in the mother's womb, and mostly it is born having become fully formed. After this it is announced: 'There are scales fixed for everything with Allah' (13:8).

- (2) Regarding rain it is declared: 'And We bring down rain from the clouds according to a scale' (23:18, 43:11). At another place it is stated that when there is rainfall, then streams and brooks flow according to their capacity (*Qadr*, scales) (13:17).
- (3) It has also been described about the produce of the land that its output is according to an estimate which the *Masbe'at*⁴⁰ of Allah has fixed (42:27). In this regard there is also mention of the four seasons in which different crops grow. Allah has fixed scales for four crops from the land (41:10).
- (4) It is generally stated about all the things of the universe that He created every single thing and established an estimation and a scale for this (25:2), in fact, created everything according to a specific scale (54:49). Those two verses of Surah *Al-A'la* merit close reflection in which it is stated that Allah began the creation of every single thing, then after removing all inessentials and superfluities from it, established its proportion, then fixed the necessary scales for it, and retained within it the guidance of this *Amr*: how it should develop and nourish itself according to these scales (87:2-3).
- (5) Now we come to that aspect in which the meaning of this word (*Qadr*) appears before us with greater transparency according to modern terminology (Law of Nature). Among us, even a primary class student now knows how the day and night follow each other. This is the consequence of the rotation of the earth and its rotation is taking place according to a fixed law. It is as a result of this that the timings of day and night (sunrise and sunset) are established with such certainty and assurance that there is not even the difference of one second in them. It is decreed about this that Allah has fixed scales for the day and night (73:20). Similarly, it is decreed about the moon that Allah has fixed stages for it (10:5).

After this, see how the meanings of the word *Taqdeer* become clearer before us. The Quran states that the sun (Solar System) is also continuously heading towards its destination, and this is the law (*Taqdeer*) established by that Allah Who possesses knowledge of everything and is also Master of supreme authority (36:38). At another place, after general mention of the various stellar

⁴⁰ The meaning of *Ma'yasha'u* in the verse will be explained later.

bodies and specific reference to the stars, it is stated that these are the established scales (laws) of Allah Who is *Azîz* and *Aleem* (41:12). From these explanations it is clear that the meaning of *Taqdeer* is the law of nature, not the 'fate (*Qismat*) of man'.

2.7 *Taqdeer* is Allah's, not Man's

There is also another point worthy of attention here. It is stated in these verses that 'this is the *Taqdeer* of Allah, *Azîz* and *Aleem*'. According to the conventions of Arabic language, the meaning of *Taqdeer* is to confer an estimate or scale, to establish it. The meaning of the '*Taqdeer* of Allah' will be the Divine scales or laws established from the direction of Allah. From this you can gauge what the correct meaning of *Taqdeer* is, and with what meanings it is used amongst us! In other words, according to the Quran, '*Taqdeer*' belongs to Allah; to say 'the *Taqdeer* of man' is simply wrong. The reality is that the cause for many conundrums, complications, and struggles about life's problems are a result of the incorrect use of words, or their incorrect meanings, and the only correct method to understand the Quran is that the true meanings should be established of its words, terms, and concepts.⁴¹

These laws of nature (*Taqdeer*) of Allah are already established from the beginning (they were defined in the domain of *Amr*), and inscribed in the 'Book of Nature' or the scripture of the universe. It is this that Allah has called the '*Kitab-e-Mubeen*' (perspicuous Book). It is stated in Surah *Al-An'am* that Allah knows what is in the oceans and the land, and no leaf falls from any tree without His being aware of it, nor is there any seed hidden in the darknesses of the earth which is outside of His domain of knowledge. The reality is that:

...nor anything fresh or dry (green or withered) but is (inscribed) in a perspicuous Book. (6:59)

There are no constituents whatsoever in the things of the universe which are not to be found in the '*Kitab-e-Mubeen*' i.e. the laws of nature established from the direction of Allah are inscribed on each and every leaf in the universe, and engraved on each and every particle (17:58). Whoever wishes can study them - this is called knowledge of the physical sciences. From this respect these laws are called known specifications (15:21) i.e. those laws about which knowledge can

⁴¹ I have defined the meaning of the Quranic words, terms, and concepts on this very basis in the *Lughat-ul-Quran*, and then according to these meanings I have compiled the *Mafhoom-ul-Quran*.

be acquired (15:4). That which is stated about Adam that he was given '*Ilm-ul-Asma'* (knowledge of characterisation), from this is simply meant knowledge of the things of the universe.

2.8 The Laws of Allah Are Immutable

The definition of a law is: If – Then – Always.

2.8.1 The Difference Between a Command and a Law

'If you do such and such, then its result will be this, and will always be this' - the last condition is the premise and basis of a law. The meaning of *Hukm* (command) is that of a decision. An employer gives orders to his employees from time to time. It can happen that he has just given one order, and following that a second order, which is at variance with the first. Therefore, orders will be those decisions which keep changing, or in which there is the possibility of change.

But when some order (decision) adopts such a form that no possibility of change remains in it, then this will be called a law. In other words, a decision which is unalterable will be called a law. The decisions which Allah has made regarding the things of the universe i.e. fixed scales for them, are immutable. It is this very immutability of the laws of nature on which the great and lofty structure of science is raised, by complete trust in which earthly man can journey to the moon, and then return joyfully and jubilantly (which is called *Tawakkul*⁴² in Quranic terminology). Nay! rather proclaim this - that it is on the basis of this very immutability of these laws of nature that the spectacular structure of the universe is established with such firmness and strength and its marvellous machinery is busily engaged in functioning with such balance and beauty, and organisation and harmony.

2.8.2 *Kalimaat Ullah*⁴³ and *Sunnat Ullah*⁴⁴

⁴² *Tawakkul* – full trust and confidence in the laws of Allah. (Ed)

⁴³ *Kalimaat Ullah* – usually translated as the word of Allah, it means the laws of Allah. (Ed)

⁴⁴ *Sunnat Ullah* – this means implementation of these laws of Allah and their manifestation. (Ed)

Two words have appeared in the Quran for Divine law – one is *Kalimaat Ullah* and the other is *Sunnat Ullah*. By studying the Quran the difference between these two becomes apparent, that *Kalma* is the theoretical basis of the law which can be called the formula, and *Sunnat Ullah* is the practical form of this formula i.e. when that theoretical law adopts a practical form then it will be termed *Sunnat Ullah* i.e. that path on which Allah is operating, or on which He is causing the universe to operate – these are both immutable. It is stated in Surah *Al-An'am*:

...no one can change the laws of Allah (Kalimaat Ullah)...(6:34) See also (6:115, 18:27)

At another place it is stated:

...no alteration can take place in the laws of Allah (Kalimaat Ullah)...(10:64)

In connection with *Sunnat Ullah* it is noted in Surah *Al-Ahzab*:

This same Sunnat (procedure) of Allah also remained in place in connection with former nations (and this will also remain in place for the addressee nation). You will not find any alteration in the Sunnat of Allah. (33:62) See also (40:85, 48:23)

At other places, instead of *Tabdeel* (change), the word *Tahweel* has appeared i.e. the path of Allah does not change even its direction (17:77, 35:43).

We have seen earlier that on entering the domain of *Khalq*, the *Amr* of Allah becomes 'confined to scales' (*Qadr Maqdur*) i.e. it becomes moulded into the form of assigned scales. This is what is called the *Sunnat* of Allah in the Quran. It is stated in Surah *Al-Ahzab*:

...this has remained the practice of Allah in relation to former nations, and the command of Allah is a decree determined. (33:38)

This is because the *Amr* of Allah (in the domain of *Khalq*) becomes moulded into the form of scales: it adopts the form of an immutable law.

2.9 The Meanings of *Haqq*

We have seen earlier that the Quran has informed us that Allah has created the universe as *Haqq*. Those constructive outcomes which are beneficial and emerge before us in a concrete form are called *Haqq*. The question is, how can this proclamation of Allah, that the universe is busily functioning so that from this beneficial results can manifest in a tangible way for man, appear before us as a proven reality. For this it is stated that:

Allah proves Haqq as being Haqq through His laws...(10:82)

In another verse it is stated:

...Allah eliminates Batil via His laws and establishes Haqq... (42:24)

This matter manifests in front of us as a result of those changes which keep appearing in the universe according to natural laws, but for this a very long duration is required – each and every day of Allah consists of thousands of years (32:5) according to our count and numbering, in fact fifty thousands of years (70:4). But when the arms and hands of man become the companion of the universal forces, then those same results materialise in a matter of days i.e. in the outer universe through scientific discoveries and inventions, and in the human world by establishing a system of the State according to the laws of Allah – but this is another topic, hence these references are considered sufficient here.⁴⁵ In this way, by manifesting *Haqq*, the *Amr* of Allah keeps on becoming fulfilled. It is stated in Surah *Al-Talaq*:

... Verily, Allah ensures that His Amr reaches its completion (i.e. that programme which He had defined in His domain of Amr), and this was that aim for which He had established laws for everything. (65:3)

2.10 The Things of the Universe Are Constrained

This reality has become evident from this that the laws of Allah are immutable. Now let us examine the other side of this same coin, where this reality will appear before us that the things of the universe are constrained to live life according to these laws which have been designated for them. Verses on this topic can be found at numerous places in the Quran, that:

Whatever is in the highs and lows of the universe, it is prostrating before Allah (before the laws of Allah). Whether it is a living creation or Malaika, all are bowed down before Him, and no one can dare to disobey or transgress against this. (16:49)

All are in obedience to Him (2:116). At another place it is stated that everything in the universe is busily engaged for the accomplishment of that programme which Allah has defined for it (57:1).

⁴⁵ For details see my books, *What is Islam?* and *Islam: A Challenge to Religion*.

If everything that has been said above is explained in a summarised form, then the following conclusions will appear before us:

- (1) Allah has fixed laws for everything, and it is through these laws that He maintains full control over them.
- (2) The things of the universe are obliged to obey these laws.
- (3) These laws are *Qada'rin Ma'loom* (known scales) i.e. knowledge about them can be acquired. Man has been bestowed with this potential that he can acquire knowledge about them. (As has already been noted) when it is stated in the story of Adam that 'We have given knowledge about all the *Asmaa*⁴⁶ to Adam' (2:31), this means knowledge about the things of the universe i.e. the laws of nature and the characteristics and properties of the things of the universe. When man acquires knowledge of these laws, then the forces of nature come within his control. In the story of Adam this is referred to as the 'prostration by the *Malaika*' (2:34).

The Quran has condensed all these details in a few comprehensive words when it proclaims that:

Allah has bound all the things of the universe in the chains of laws, so that you can draw benefit from them, can bring them into your use... (45:13)

... Whichever nation reflects on this reality, it will find very clear signs in it (to define the status of man in the universe). (45:13)

2.11 Allah Has Imposed Constraints on Himself

We have witnessed that in this new stage of the creative programme of Allah, a supreme revolution has appeared, and that is that the *Amr* of Allah (which was not constrained by any procedure and code) became *Amr Maqdur* (constrained *Amr*) i.e. instead of absolute authority, it became a law, and then such a law in which there can never be any alteration. In other words, in this stage Allah Himself imposed constraints on His Own Self. We tremble at the thought of the concept of a 'constraint' on Allah, but when He Himself has done this and has announced it, then we should have no reluctance in acknowledging it – and what is the point of reluctance? When it is a reality which we witness on a daily basis

⁴⁶ *Asmaa* – this is the plural of *Isma* which is usually translated as name. By assigning names to things, human beings can characterise these. (Ed)

(that the laws of Allah are immutable), then acceptance of it is what is called truthfulness. It is stated in Surah *Al-An'am*:

...He has declared Rehmat as a duty (Ka'taba) on Himself...(6:12, 54)

The word *Ka'taba* has appeared in those places in the Quran where some matter has been declared as a duty (i.e. compulsory) on someone. For example, fasting is prescribed (*Ka'taba*) for you i.e. this duty is placed on human beings from the direction of Allah (2:183). Hence, the meaning of verse (6:12) will be that Allah has imposed this constraint upon His Own Self. At another place it is stated:

...Allah has made it compulsory (Haqqan Alai'na) on His Own Self to keep Momineen protected from ruin and destruction. (10:103)

Here the words *Haqqan Alai'na* merit careful reflection. These mean that Allah has made it a duty on Himself that He will do this. At another place it is stated:

...It is incumbent (Haqqan Alai'na) on Us to help Momineen. (30:47)

Allah has written it down (decided it) that We and Our messengers will definitely be successful. (58:21)

This is not the place for elaboration of the conditions on which this *Rehmat* of Allah, safeguarding of *Momineen*, victory and success, supremacy and control (which Allah has made compulsory on Himself) are predicated. At this point in time we only wish to note that Allah has also imposed constraints on His Own Self. These constraints have also been called the 'promise of Allah':

This is the promise of Allah, the fulfilling of which He has made compulsory on Himself. (16:38) See also (31:9, 35:5, 40:55, 40:77)

He has stated emphatically about these 'promises' that they will never be contravened:

...This is the promise of Allah and remember! Allah never goes against His promises...(30:6) See also (3:194)

2.12 The Promises of Allah

These 'promises' of Allah are, in reality, His established laws, and not contravening them means that there will never be any alteration in these laws. This is the meaning of this 'constraint' which Allah has kept imposed on Himself. One prominent example of this constraint is noted in the Quran itself. It is clear

that Allah has brought this great universe into existence from nothing, but after this He has established immutable laws for the things of the universe. Among these laws is the law of reproduction, according to which the birth of the offspring of animals and man is through the mating of a male and a female. It is the belief of Christians that Jesus was the son of Allah. Allah has refuted this belief, and the reason with which He has rejected it contains enormities of vision within it. He has stated that Allah has brought this whole system of the universe into existence from nothing. For this creative programme of His, He was not bound by the law of cause and effect, but after the creation of the universe, when He had implemented the law of cause and effect, then even He Himself does nothing against it. For the birth of a son, His law is that this is the consequence of the mating of a male and a female (husband and wife). These people assert that so and so is the son of Allah:

To Him is due the primal origin of the heavens and the earth: how can He have a son when He has no consort? ... (6:101)

But while they are claiming this, they do not even ponder that how can Allah have a son when He does not even have a wife?

Have you observed what a supreme reality Allah has expounded in this reasoning i.e. it is true that He has brought the universe into existence without any prior material, and without the constraint of the law of cause and effect, hence, what difficulty is there for Him to cause a son to be born to Him like this. But when He has defined a law for the birth of a child, then even He Himself does not contravene this law – He can do this, but does not do this. And there is a very great point implicit in this (that he can do this, but does not do this).

2.13 Response to an Objection

It is said that if it is accepted that Allah is also constrained by laws, then He no longer remains Omnipotent, he becomes bound, and this is against the stature of being Allah. But to think like this is the consequence of a superficial and erroneous perception. The one who is constrained is he who is forced to obey the restrictions imposed by someone else, but the one who imposes some restriction on his own self through his own choice and intent cannot be called constrained. If you are commanded to walk around for three miles every morning, then you will obey this command under compulsion. But if you yourself make the decision that you will go for a walk every morning for three miles and then you routinely walk, this will not be called a compulsion on you. The one who always

fulfils his promises, lives life according to his principles, is firm in his commitments, lives up to his words, is not called a constrained man: he is called a man of principle, and trustworthy. Therefore, if Allah Himself has imposed some constraints on Himself despite possessing complete control and absolute authority, then no flaw transpires in His being Omnipotent. Rather, this is proof of His being possessor of firm determination, that despite possessing the authority and control to do everything, He does not breach His principles, He does not turn away from His promises, He does not go against those laws which are devised by Him. And in truth, being Allah only suits Him Who, despite being the possessor of such infinite authority and unlimited powers, remains solid on His commitment and true to His promise with such firmness (bound by principles). This is that Allah in Whom complete trust can be placed. Keep this in mind! That Allah could have created the universe but not established any procedure and law for it; He could have done this, but He did not, He established laws for it.

Then He could also have done this, that He could have altered His defined laws whenever He wished, but He declared that, despite Our being able to do this, We will not do this – this is the correct concept of Allah.

2.14 The Religious Concept of Allah

But this concept of Allah is bestowed by Deen, which a man habituated to religion (*Madhab*) cannot embrace, or does not want to embrace. As has been documented at the beginning, religion is a collection of the concepts created in the era of the infancy of man, when (like a child) he was not yet familiar with the concept of laws. Man has now become an adult, and through intellect and reasoning he can appreciate this concept of Allah which Deen has bestowed. But the interests of the religious clergy lie in this: that the human mind should remain in the era of infancy, hence they do not permit the populace to come towards this direction. The kind of concept of God which they wish to engrave on human minds is one in which, by their becoming the intermediaries, they get the ‘supplications of people’ accepted, and in this way continue to have their own divinity accepted by the masses. For this purpose the religious clergy made the doctrine of *Malukiyat* commonplace - or you could say that *Malukiyat* and the religious clergy joined hands – and presented this as proof of the king being the possessor of power that he is not obligated to follow any procedure or law. He can do whatever comes to his mind and can issue whatever kind of command he wishes. A human being living under this kind of system of *Malukiyat* and religious priesthood can

conceive of following orders, but not of obeying a law. We can assess how tight the grip of religion is and how deep its influences on the human mind are, from the fact that even those people who raise the flag of rebellion high against *Malukiyat* or dictatorship, even lay down their lives to establish a political system based on the rule of law, when they arrive in the houses of worship, they prefer to view Allah as an absolute dictator instead of the ruling authority who governs in accordance with the law – this is the magic spell of religion! In other words, the rule of law in their own world, and total absence of laws in the kingdom of Allah!! Deen arrived to eliminate this very dualism i.e. to proclaim that the blueprint of the communal life of human beings should be like that of the external universe, where there is the rule of law and order and in which no one can do whatever he wants.

(At this point these brief outlines will suffice, details will appear further on.)

3 Chapter 3 - Man

We have witnessed that in the second stage of the creative programme of Allah, His *Amr* acquired the form of a law, and the things of the universe were created compelled to obey these laws and Allah made this commitment Himself that He will not make any changes to these laws. This was a very great revolution in the domain of creation, but there was an even greater revolution than this – and that was the creation of man. Laws were also defined for man, but he was not created compelled to obey these. He is given the choice that if he wishes he can live life according to these laws, and if he wishes he can transgress against these. Now just reflect what a supreme revolution this was in the creative programme of Allah!

- (1) Sovereign Allah, possessor of limitless authority, Omnipotent, but by declaring the laws devised by Him as immutable, imposed a constraint on Himself.
- (2) The things of the universe have been created obligated to obey these laws.
- (3) And man is created as possessor of choice and intent.

3.1 Man – Possessor of Choice and Intent

The one who is constrained only has one path before him on which he has to tread, willingly or unwillingly. But the one before whom there is more than one possibility, and he has the freedom to adopt whichever path he wishes, is called possessor of freedom to choose. This is called the right to choose (choice). The Quran declared about the creation of man that:

We have shown him two paths. (90:10)

In another verse it is stated:

We have shown him the correct path of life, now it is dependent on his own decision whether he adopts it or refuses to tread on it. (76:3)

This has been expanded at another place:

Say to them! Haqq has arrived from the direction of your Rabb, now whoever wishes can adopt it, and whoever wishes can reject it. (18:29)

It is stated in Surah *Al-Qamar*:

Man can only acquire that for which he makes an effort. (53:39)

The impetus for motivation to make an ‘effort’ is the intention of man, this is why we are informed at a number of places that man can only acquire that for which he makes an intention. It is noted in Surah *Bani Israel* that ‘the individual who forms the decision to attain immediate benefits in the world, We bestow those same benefits on him; and the individual who aims to acquire the bounties of the future, and then makes an effort for their attainment, We grant him his desire. This is an arena of action and deed, in whichever domain someone makes an effort, he keeps progressing in that’ (17:18-20). We have not placed obstructions in the paths of Our bounties, these are open to all. Whoever wishes should acquire these through effort and action. It is stated in Surah *An-Nisa*:

Whoever forms the intention to acquire immediate benefits, (say to him that) there are immediate benefits with Allah, and also bounties of the future. Whatever you desire to attain, that is what you will receive. (4:134) See also (25:62)

3.2 The Responsibility of Man

As will be described in detail in the next chapter (the Law of Requital), man has been declared as being responsible for all his deeds, and it is this very responsibility of his due to which the results of his deeds appear before him. The whole system of reward and punishment for deeds revolves around this pivotal point that man is responsible for his own deeds, and it is obvious that only he can be held responsible for his deed who carries it out with his own choice and intent. The one who is forced to carry out some task simply cannot be held responsible for it. On this basis the Quran has made it clear that the one who is compelled, and the one who has freedom of choice and intent, can never both be equal (16:75-76). This is the reason that it has stated that if someone is made to commit even an act of *Kufr* under compulsion, he will not be held accountable for it. There will only be accountability for that deed which is enacted through one’s own choice and intent (16:106). At another place it is stated:

...If you make an error by mistake, then it has no weight. Culpability will only be for that in which there is the intention of the heart...(33:5)

This is the very principle which He has defined for the system of law for justice in the world too, according to which He has differentiated between killing in error and premeditated murder, and has specified separate punishments for both of

them – a severe punishment for premeditated murder, and a lenient one for killing in error (4:92).

3.3 The Story of Adam – Elucidation of Constraint and Choice

The Quran has solved the issue of ‘constraint (*Jabr*) and choice’ metaphorically in a very engaging style in the account of Adam. Allah gave a command to Adam and also to *Iblees*⁴⁷. Disobedience of this command was committed by Adam and also by *Iblees*. When Adam was asked, why did you do this, he replied with downcast eyes that:

...O our Rabb! We did wrong to our own selves...(7:23)

We made a mistake, we acknowledge it, and we are regretful and ashamed i.e. Adam accepted that he is responsible for this transgression. Since he accepted his responsibility and realised that he had committed an error, hence the possibilities of reformation and recovery became illuminated for him. He was told, no matter:

... We will keep sending guidance towards you. Whoever amongst you follows it, he will remain secure from fear and grief. (2:38)

This is what is called the possibility of regaining the lost paradise. The Quran has termed this as *Tauba* after committing an error by mistake (16:119).

Contrary to this, when this same question was put to *Iblees* (that why did you transgress against Allah’s command), he replied to Allah that how did I transgress? It was You Who misguided me (7:16, 15:39), I am a constrained human being, I neither have the choice to obey nor to transgress; here, everything takes place according to your command. If You had not wished it, then how would I have been able to resort to transgression. Therefore, when *Iblees* refused to accept responsibility for his action, it was stated to him that there is simply no possibility of reformation and recovery within you. You have strayed far from the possibility of reformation of your self (15:34). You are ‘disgraced and expelled’ (7:18), condemned, humiliated and ruined, eternal despair is your ‘destiny’ (the meaning of *Iblees* itself is that of hopelessness) i.e. how can the one who views himself to be constrained bring about a transformation in his own condition - this is the evidence of his eternal state of hopelessness.

⁴⁷ *Iblees* – human rebellious emotions and unbridled intellect. See the book, *The Human Self and Iblees* by the author. (Ed)

3.4 The Path of *Kuffar* and *Mushrikeen*

The Quran has stated that when *Iblees* had said that, 'If You had not wished it, then how could I have been disobedient,' this is the very same stance of the *Kuffar* and *Mushrikeen* in the world. They also do not hold themselves responsible for their own acts, instead they say that if this had not been in the *Mashe'at* of Allah, then how would we have been able to adopt the path of *Kufr* and *Shirk*? Whatever happens here takes place according to the Will of Allah. It is stated in Surah *Al-An'am*:

... When you will say to these Mushrikeen that what kind of path is this that you have adopted, in reply they will say that the Mashe'at of Allah was simply like this. If Allah had not wished this, then neither we nor our ancestors would have committed Shirk ... (6:148)

In reply to them, Allah stated:

... Say to them that whatever you say are your own conjectures and ignorance. Reality has nothing to do with this. (6:148)

It is stated in Surah *Al-Zukhruf* that when you ask them this question, in reply they say:

If Allah had willed, we would not have worshipped these false gods. What can we do, this was simply the Will of Allah. What can man do against His Will; hence, we are constrained... (43:20)

In response to this, it is stated:

... This is total ignorance, foolishness, a lie, a false accusation. (43:20)

It is stated in Surah *Ya'Sin* that when these capitalists are instructed to keep your wealth openly available so that the poor can also obtain bread, these *Kuffar* say to the *Momineen*:

Well! This is something strange that you are saying! If Allah had wished that they do not remain hungry, then He would certainly have provided them with Rizq. From their remaining hungry and naked it is patently obvious that Allah simply does not wish that they should receive food and clothing. So Allah wishes them to remain hungry and naked, and you are telling us to make arrangements for their food and clothing. If we do this, then it will be against the Mashe'at of Allah. This will be a declaration of war against Him. We cannot become ready to do this... (36:47)

In reply to this the Quran has stated that:

*...Say to them that what more can be said than this, that you are greatly misguided.
(36:47)*

3.5 The Will of Allah

Pause here for a moment and reflect that when we declare, standing or sitting, that this was how Allah had intended it, His Will was simply this, it was His *Mashe'at* that it should be like this, this is indeed what he desired - if this had not been His Will, then how could this have taken place, hence whatever happens here is in accordance with the Will of Allah; man cannot intervene in this in any way, no one can dare to interfere in this issue –standing or sitting, we keep uttering this day and night, so much so, that the greater the extent to which one utters this, then the closer he is believed to be to Allah, and the one who advises that:

*Do not go against the wish of the beloved,
People should not supplicate in my favour.⁴⁸*

he is considered to be a worshipper of Allah to the same degree - just ponder what the Quran declares about people who say such things? The verses of the Quran are before you, you can reach a conclusion yourself in their light – if we offer an opinion, then there will be a complaint.

3.6 The *Mashe'at* of Man in the Human World

It is the declaration of the Quran that these *Kuffar* and *Mushrikeen* (in obedience to *Iblees*) state that whatever happens in the human world is in accordance with the *Mashe'at* of Allah. And Allah declares to mankind that:

...in your world it is your Mashe'at which is functioning...(41:40)

You can do what you wish in any way you like, We have created you as a being possessing choice and intent. Following this, We do not wish to snatch away your choice and intent by interfering in your affairs and by imposing Our *Mashe'at* on you. If We had wished to snatch it away, then why would We have bestowed it in

⁴⁸ From Hasrat Mohani, an Urdu poet.

the first place? This is you evading your responsibility, that despite possessing choice and intent, you proclaim yourselves to be constrained.

3.7 Compulsion in Choice

But together with stating that you can act according to your own wishes, He has stated another thing too, due to which after this choice of man, an aspect of constraint appears before us. It is stated:

...Do whatever you wish, but understand this much, that every deed of yours will produce a particular outcome according to Our Law of Requitul. (41:40)

You do have this choice that you can carry out whatever act you wish, but once you have committed an act, then you will no longer retain this control over it that you can prevent its consequence, or create some change in it. This matter will be outside the domain of your authority. You have the choice to tread on one path out of two, but you do not have this choice that though you adopt path A, you desire to reach the destination to which path B leads. (As has already been written) you have the choice to swallow poison or a sweet, but you do not have any choice over this, that though you swallow poison, you can create the outcome of that of a sweet. We have defined a law to establish an outcome for every deed of yours. Our law becomes applicable on you according to whatever kind of act you carry out, so that the defined outcome for this deed can be established. The initiative is in your hands, Our law keeps on following behind you.

3.8 Whatever Man Becomes, that Same Kind of Law Will Become Applicable on Him

The Quran has made this reality clear at a number of places. Referring to the misdemeanours of Bani Israel, it is stated:

...When they adopted crooked paths, then Allah (the Law of Requitul) made their hearts crooked...(61:5)

They were told that now the final messenger of Allah has arrived, if you give him your support, then the period of your punishment of ruin and humiliation will come to an end, but:

But if you revert to your former way again, then We will also revert to Our former way, and you will be trapped in this same punishment again. (17:8)

Our law is that:

Whoever turns his face away from the right path, We turn his face towards that same direction. (51:9)

It is stated in Surah *At-Tauba* that:

...Then when they turned away from the correct path, then Allah also turned their hearts away... (9:127)

It is stated in Surah *An-Nisa* about the people who adopt another path after abandoning obedience to the messenger and the path of the *Momineen*, that regarding those people whose path they adopt, We also join them together with them (4:115). Contrary to this:

Whoever keeps Us in mind, We also remember him... (2:152)

Whoever makes an effort for the eminence and loftiness of Our Deen, We also make him eminent and superior.

... Whoever helps Us, We also help him... (47:7)

From the above explanations you have seen that whatever path man proposes for himself, the law of Allah becomes congruent with it accordingly.

3.9 Change in the Conditions of Nations

The Quran also informs us that whichever law is applicable to individuals, the '*Taqdeer*' of nations also keeps changing in accordance with it. In other words, whatever kind of psychological change some nation produces within itself, a change takes place in its outer condition in accordance with that. It is stated in Surah *Ar-Ra'd*:

...it is a fact that whatever is with a nation, Allah does not make any change in it, until that nation does not produce a change in its psyche itself... (13:11) See also (8:53)

This means that just like individuals, there are laws established by Allah for the rise and fall, and life and death of nations. Whatever kind of path a nation adopts,

the same kind of law of Allah becomes imposed on it and establishes the consequence of the path of that nation.⁴⁹

3.10 Further Elaboration of the Word *Taqdeer*

From the above explanations the meaning of ‘*Taqdeer*’ will have become clear. Let us bring to mind once more whatever was written earlier about the correct meaning of the word *Taqdeer*. It is noted in Surah *Al-An’am*:

...Allah made the night for rest, and the sun and the moon as the means for counting and numbering (of time). This is the Taqdeer of Allah Who is Aziz and Aleem.
(6:96)

It is obvious that we will state this in other words as ‘this is the law established by Allah’. Similarly, it is stated in Surah *Ya’Sin*:

And the sun is heading towards its appointed destination; this is the Taqdeer of Allah Who is Aziz and Aleem. (36:38)

At a third place it is stated:

...And We have illuminated glittering lamps (stars) in your nearer heavens, and also made them as a means of protection for you. This is the Taqdeer of Allah Who is Aziz and Aleem. (41:12)

As an illustration, it is noted in Surah *Al-Furqan*:

...He created everything and then defined Taqdeer for them. (25:2)

Here, too, by *Taqdeer* are meant the laws established by Allah. In Surah *Al-Dahr*, regarding the chalices of paradise, it is stated:

These chalices will be of sparkling silver, and they will have been made according to specific scales. (76:16)

These are the places in which the word *Taqdeer* has appeared in the Quran, and its meanings are absolutely clear i.e. the scales established by Allah, or the laws of Allah according to which this system of the universe is busy functioning. From this it is evident that the meanings with which this word (*Taqdeer*) is commonly used among us are completely contrary to the Quranic meanings for it. The

⁴⁹ Details about this subject are given in Chapter 6 about the rise and fall of nations.

‘*Taqdeer* of man’, ‘his *Taqdeer*’, ‘my *Taqdeer*’ – this is all wrong. *Taqdeer* is only that of Allah i.e. the law of Allah. Hence, in the case of human beings, we will say that:

Taqdeer is that law of Allah which becomes imposed upon man according to his condition. Whatever kind of path man adopts, the same kind of Taqdeer of Allah (the law of Allah) becomes imposed upon him.

Whoever puts his finger into fire, this *Taqdeer* of Allah becomes applicable on him that he becomes engulfed in the suffering of burning and swelling, and when he applies soothing cream on it, then this *Taqdeer* of Allah becomes applicable on him that he should attain comfort and solace.

3.11 The Verdict of Umer Farooq (2nd Caliph)

Further elucidation of this very reality is illustrated by that incident in the time of Caliph Umer Farooq, when plague spread in one location, he advised abandoning this habitation and moving into the jungle. At this a companion named Abu Ubaida said, What! do you wish to flee from the *Taqdeer* of Allah? He replied, Yes! I wish to flee from one *Taqdeer* of Allah towards another *Taqdeer*. By remaining in a plague infested area, and then suffering from the plague by becoming infected as a result of the contaminated environment also occurs according to the *Taqdeer* of Allah (Divine law). And by leaving this place and moving to a clean environment and thus becoming protected from this danger, also takes place according to the *Taqdeer* of Allah (Divine law). Now this matter is up to the choice of man, which *Taqdeer* of Allah he wishes to impose upon himself. Iqbal has noted regarding this:

*Heighten the level of your self to such an extent that before every Taqdeer,
Allah Himself enquires from His servant, tell Me what your wish is.*

This also means that the individual whose resolve is strong changes his path according to his will, and since whatever kind of choice he makes, the same kind of *Taqdeer* of Allah will become applicable on him, therefore the human being who is the possessor of firm resolve gets the *Taqdeer* of Allah imposed on himself according to his wishes. In contrast to this, the path of the man with a weak resolve keeps changing under external influences. Hence, this is not a matter of choice for him what kind of *Taqdeer* of Allah (which Divine law) becomes imposed on him. In other words, he is constrained like plants and stones, and consequently remains under the control of *Taqdeer*, whereas the possessor of resolve keeps His *Taqdeer* under the obedience of his choice.

3.12 How Did This Meaning Change?

This is the Quranic meaning of *Taqdeer*. How this meaning converted into that meaning which is currently prevalent among us will be explained further on, where it will be described how the Deen bestowed by the Quran converted into *Madhab* (religion). This was that fundamental shift due to which the concepts of Deen about Allah, the universe, and man, converted into the concepts of religion. As a consequence of this, instead of being a Sovereign ruling according to law, Allah acquired the form of an absolute dictator, and man, instead of being a creation possessing choice and intent, was made into a prisoner shackled in the chains of *Taqdeer*, while the religious chiefs set themselves as the keepers of this jail - this tale is agonising and this *Hadeeth*⁵⁰ is heart-rending. But the opportunity to expound on it will come further on.

3.13 A Principled Discourse About the Doctrine of *Jabr*

Those who believe man to be constrained due to the conversion of Deen into religion (i.e. proponents of the doctrine of *Jabr*) also present some verses of the Quran in support of their belief. A detailed discussion will take place about these verses in the coming chapters, but in this connection it seems appropriate that the principle of the argument which is touched upon should be brought to the fore at this point, so that the matter becomes clear in principle right here. It is commonly averred that Allah has stated that:

- (1) No individual knows what he will do tomorrow (31:34). He does not know where his death will take place (18:23).
- (2) And Allah has stated about Himself that Allah is aware of both the present of people and also of their future ((2:255) and other places).

From the first verse this logic is drawn that when man does everything according to his own intention, then where is the difficulty for him to ascertain what he will be doing tomorrow? This situation can only arise when man is constrained, hence he will be justified in saying, how can I know what I will be doing tomorrow.

⁵⁰ *Hadeeth* – narration, saying. (Ed)

Whatever I will be made to do, I will do exactly that. This logic is flawed at a basic level.

3.14 Knowledge of the Future

There is no doubt that man is a possessor of choice and intent, but his choice is not limitless. It is conditional on many such circumstances about which he can say nothing in advance and is impacted by so many influences over which he has no control as an individual. If man lived in such a world where neither external events and incidents could influence his life, nor the actions in life of other human beings could alter the direction of events, then he could assert what he will do in the future. But man lives in a world where at every step he is affected by external events and the societal environment. If the question was just about events in the external universe, even then we could have said that as human knowledge continues to progress regarding the secrets and facts of the functioning of the universe, he will become enabled to acquire knowledge in advance about events which are going to manifest in the future. For example, just as today he can say with assurance when there will be an eclipse of the sun or moon, similarly, he will also be able to ascertain the time and even the location of an earthquake in advance. But the difficulty for man is that he is surrounded by a crowd of other human beings, each and every one of whom is the possessor of his own choice and intent, and the effects of their decisions also impacts other individuals. The situation today is such that the party about to come into power in the USA, or the election of the president there, shakes the political scene of nations of the world, and causes tremors in world markets. How can a man inhabiting such a world predict what will happen tomorrow? The moon can affirm at what time and at what place I will rise. The sun can declare at what time and at what point I will set. Man can never say with certainty when and where his death will take place. The evidence for man being constrained cannot be proven from this. All that can be ascertained from this is that in a communal world, the decision of one individual is predicated on many such elements and affected by those factors over which he has no control, so that he can say nothing about the future with certainty. The reason that the Quran has placed so much emphasis on making use of reflection and reasoning, and intellect and insight, is that the purpose from this is for man, as far as possible, to take into account the circumstances and conditions and assess the various elements and factors to the best of his ability before formulating any decision. But he can only do this to the limits of what is possible, he can never say anything with certainty and assurance.

3.15 Divine Knowledge

Now let us come to the second argument, that Allah is aware of both the present and the future of people – it is said that knowledge of the future can only be regarding that thing which is deterministic. The entity whose condition is such that it can change its intention whenever it wishes, what can be predicted about its future. For example, an expert in astronomy can predict one hundred years in advance when there will be an eclipse of the moon, but even ten scientists cannot say that this fly which is sitting here at this moment in time, where it will sit next after flying away. Hence, when Allah knows what man will do tomorrow, then from this it can be inferred that man is not a holder of choice but is constrained.

This reasoning is based on one fundamental misconception. The issue of Divine knowledge is related to the issue of time, and from the philosophical viewpoint the issue of time is extremely complex and difficult. (As has been said in the preface) my effort is to avoid ontological discourses and philosophical interpretations as far as possible in this book, and to present everything in a simple and straightforward style. Moreover, without becoming entangled in the complexities of the issue of time, we feel it suffices to note that there is a fundamental difference between Divine knowledge and human knowledge. The Quran has declared the alternation of day and night (day coming after night and night after day) as great signs, and has made the movement of the sun and moon the means for counting and numbering. This is that ‘counting and numbering’ through which we divide time into past, present, and future, otherwise in reality there is no existence of past, present, and future. During sleep when we become unaware of this alternation of night and day, no sense whatsoever remains of time. In the words of Bergson, past, present, and future are merely the signs of those marks which we have put on the yardstick of time merely for our convenience. Allah is above and beyond these demarcations, thus for Him this division of time has no existence. Before Him (in the words of Iqbal) time has the status of an ‘eternal now’.⁵¹ The difficulty is that we cannot cause this reality to be understood even from an example, because while we remain in this current state of awareness and consciousness of ours, we cannot rise beyond the sense of time. Although in relation to space this can be explained (partially) by an example. While we are sitting in the enclosed yard of our house, whatever is happening on the other side of the wall will be unseen for us i.e. invisible to our eyes. But for the individual

⁵¹ M. Iqbal, *The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*, p 76.

who is sitting on the rooftop, the events on the other side of the wall are not unseen, but will be ‘witnessed’ i.e. a matter taking place before his eyes. When Allah has stated that He knows the unseen and the seen, this means that He is witnessing everything from such heights from where nothing can be hidden from His sight – that which you call unseen, for Him is also ‘manifestly seen’.

As has just been said, as long as our consciousness and senses remain functioning, as long as we are making use of our intellect and awareness, we cannot go beyond the differentiation of past, present, and future. We rise beyond this differentiation when our consciousness and senses are suspended, and intellect and awareness disappear. If some individual sleeps continuously for three days, after waking up he will never be able to tell what the date is on that day – and the one remaining unconscious for six months or one year will not be able to ascertain even the month and year.

In short, after becoming ignorant of intellect and awareness, we are beyond the states of past, present, and future - instead of describing this as ‘beyond’, it will be more appropriate to describe it as being unaware. But due to His complete knowledge, Allah is far above these parameters: in front of Him, from the beginning to eternity, time holds the status of the present.⁵²

3.16 Prophecies Are Merely Conjectures and Guesswork

In order to understand this matter in the simplest of words, we can say that at every moment man retains the choice to alter his intention and decision. But Allah has knowledge of this, what he is going to change his decision to. Hence, though man cannot say what he will do tomorrow, Allah knows it. Hence, those people who give news about the future of men (make prophecies), they merely make use of conjecture and guesswork. When man cannot say with certainty and assurance about himself as to what he will do tomorrow, then how can some other human being say this about him. Ask those who offer such information about human beings, that (never mind man himself) where will this fly which is sitting here, fly

⁵² Iqbal has expressed this aspect in his book, *The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*, as follows: ‘Divine knowledge must be conceived as living creative activity to which the objects that appear to exist in their own right are organically related. By conceiving God’s knowledge as a kind of reflecting mirror, we no doubt save His foreknowledge of future events; but it is obvious we do so at the expense of freedom. The future certainly pre-exists in the organic whole of God’s creative life, but it pre-exists as an open possibility, not as a fixed order of events with definite outlines.’ pp 78-79. (Ed)

off to next. You will see that all their prophecies will end up futile. When some individual cannot make this kind of prophecy about a fly, then who can say about man who is a possessor of choice, what he will do tomorrow (other than Allah).

The Quran states that during the era of infancy of man, soothsayers, astrologers and fortune tellers used to entrap simple human beings in their nets by claiming that they bring news of the heavens. But in the era following the revelation of the Quran, when humanity is reaching its age of maturity, those making these kinds of claims will receive 'fiery lashes' from the domain of knowledge (72:8-9).

3.17 Deen Converted into Religion (*Madhab*)

These were details about the era of Deen (Islam). After this when Deen converted into religion, these ruinous armies of (prophesying) soothsayers, astrologers, fortune tellers, and diviners also appeared even amongst us. And that human being, the possessor of resolve and choice, who was to write his *Taqdeer* with his own hand, became ensnared in the bait of seeking his *Qismat* (fortune) by wandering around showing his palms to others.

In the words of Iqbal:

*Today the pattern of their deeds is their Taqdeer,
Though Allah's Taqdeer was hidden in their intentions,
What was unacceptable gradually became acceptable,
In slavery the conscience of nations becomes transformed.*

4 Chapter 4 -The Law of Requit (Mukafat-e-Amal)

It has been stated earlier that the law of cause and effect is functioning as a fundamental principle in the physical universe. Together with this the other fundamental principle is the law of uniformity of nature. From this it means that the law of cause and effect remains functioning uniformly in the whole of the universe. A cause which under certain circumstances produces one effect at one place and at one time, whenever and wherever those circumstances will exist in the universe, then that cause will produce the same effect. In the human world this law is known as the universal Law of Requit.

4.1 Two States of Human Life

Human life has two states - one is physical life like other things of the universe, in which the same laws are applicable to man which apply to other animals. The birth of a human child takes place like the offspring of other animals. The life and nourishment of a human being is also indebted to those elements and environment on which the life and nourishment of most animals is dependent – eating, drinking, sleeping, waking, health, disease, the process of reproduction, death, etc. all occur according to physical laws. So much so, that man is also the holder of those basic traits which in the case of animals are called instincts i.e. the instinct of self-preservation, aggression (readiness to attack), and reproduction – these emotions are termed basic instincts and are commonly found equally in animals and human beings.

4.2 The Human Self

But there is also another level of human life which is higher and loftier than animalistic or physical life. The holder of this life is not the human body, rather another entity which is called the human self or *Nafs* (human personality). The human self is not under the obedience of physical laws but is also not outside the confines of laws. For this there is another code of laws which is called the Permanent Values. Honesty, trustworthiness, truthfulness, distinction between legitimate and illegitimate, differentiation between *Haqq* and *Batil*, etc. are related to these very values. The reflection of these values in human deeds is what is

called character. Animals only display behaviour; character is the hallmark of human life.

Knowledge about physical laws can be acquired through observation of nature, study, experimentation, etc. but the Permanent Values are received from the direction of Allah through *Wahi* and are now preserved in the folds of the Quran. The way in which the outcomes of the physical functioning of man are established according to physical laws, similarly the outcomes of his deeds as a human being manifest according to the laws related to the Permanent Values. This is called the universal Law of Requit. The distinguishing characteristic of man, which is called his choice and intent, is in reality a characteristic of the human self. By living life in accordance with the Permanent Values, the growth of the human self takes place, and by going against them, weakness and debilitation appear in it. One of the signs of a developed self is also that the resolve of such a person is firm. This same developed self advances forward after the physical death of the body. This is called the life in the hereafter. From these explanations it is clear that the way in which the effects of the physical functioning of man impact on his physical body, in the same way the effects of those deeds which are related to the Permanent Values impact on his self – and all these effects are established according to the laws of Allah.⁵³

4.3 Three Types of Laws

Three types of laws function in human life:

- (1) Physical laws which are related to the physical body of man.
- (2) Social laws which are called the laws of a government, or the norms and constitutions of a society, and
- (3) the Permanent Values (or ethical laws) which are related to the human self.

In each of these three spheres of life man himself is responsible for his own acts and deeds, and it is this very responsibility of his on the basis of which he is declared accountable for their effects and consequences. In the first two spheres it can happen (and does happen) that an individual even has to face the consequences of such matters for which he himself is not responsible: for example, while walking along a path, some person pushes him into the river and

⁵³ For details of these aspects see my book titled, *The Life in the Hereafter: What Does the Quran Say?*

he dies from drowning. Or that bridge on which he was walking suddenly collapses, or for example, due to bad planning and administration, a famine engulfs the land, a flood occurs, or for some reason war breaks out. No single individual is responsible for these matters but the members of the society will become victims of their consequences.

But the third sphere (which is related to the human self) is that in which every individual is responsible for his own deeds, and it is only he who has to face their consequences. The format of these consequences is that the effect of every deed of his (even to the extent of his thoughts) keeps on impacting his self – this is what is called his scroll of deeds.

After this introduction, take note that whether these are the collective deeds of man, or those of an individual, the Quran declares man as being responsible for them all. There is no sphere in it where it states that man happens to be a constrained being, and that whatever takes place is according to this *Taqdeer* or *Qismat* of his which is already written down or is predetermined - man (individually or collectively) makes a decision according to his choice and intent and acts according to this decision, and the outcome of this act is established according to the laws defined by Allah. Predetermined, or already established, or written beforehand, is the Law of Requit. ⁵⁴ That is termed Divine *Taqdeer*, not the *Taqdeer* of man (as we have already seen). And as far as his '*Qismat*' is concerned, his *Qismat* or fate are those consequences of his deeds which transpire according to the Divine *Taqdeer* (Divine laws).

Details of these matters will appear in the following lines.

4.3.1 Your Destiny Becomes Defined by Your Deeds (2:202)

The Quran has stated the fundamental principle to be that:

...whoever did wrong deeds and his wrongs encompassed him from all directions, these people are denizens of hell, the fields of their hopes will become burnt to ashes...(2:81)

And those people who accepted Eimaan and did Saleh deeds, they will be inhabitants of paradise...(2:82)

⁵⁴ The consequences of actions are predetermined e.g. that of putting a finger into fire, of telling lies, etc. (Ed)

At another place it is stated that:

...whatever someone does, he receives its full recompense... (2:281) See also (3:24, 3:160, 40:17)

But the intention of man is essential in this:

Accountability will be of his who performs a deed with the intention of his heart... (2:225)

He is not declared to be responsible for that action which someone makes him commit through compulsion. We consider that this one verse is sufficient as evidence for this fact that, according to the Quran, man has been created as a possessor of choice and intent, not as a constrained being. It is stated in Surah *Al-An'am*:

Whatever deed an individual does, he is the one who bears the recompense for it. Remember! According to the Law of Requit of Allah, no bearer of a burden will carry the burden of another. Everyone carries his own burden... (6:164)

And is subject to questioning about his own individual responsibilities. This is also reiterated at different places.⁵⁵ It is stated in Surah *An-Najam* that:

Man can only obtain that for which he toils and makes an effort. (53:39)

He is deserving of the fruits of his hard work:

...The establishment of a righteous society is essential so that every individual can receive the recompense of his hard work. (20:15)

No one's efforts should remain without an outcome (21:94). So that your efforts can produce their full results (17:18-21). Just as with individuals, this same law is functioning in the life of nations:

...whatever your forefathers did, it was they who reaped its recompense. Whatever you will do, its outcome will appear before you. You will not even be questioned about what they did. (2:134) See also (2:141)

This is because the Law of Requit is that:

...Every individual is only responsible for the consequences of those deeds which he does himself – good deeds have good outcomes, evil deeds have evil outcomes... (2:286)

⁵⁵ See verses (17:15, 35:18, 39:7, 53:38).

Destructions descend on people due to their own deeds (2:79). In summary, every individual is pledged at the hands of his own deeds. He has bound himself to his own deeds (74:38).

4.3.2 What You Sow, So Shall You Reap (9:82)

The meaning of the Law of Requitil is that no deed (right or wrong) of man can remain without establishing its outcome. Since this is our daily observation in the physical world and in the physical life of man himself, hence there is no confusion in this, nor any doubt or suspicion – whoever puts his finger into fire, his finger gets burnt; whoever drinks water, his thirst is quenched. But in the case of the Permanent Values, since the outcomes of human deeds do not appear before us tangibly, this difficulty arises in understanding whether their consequences are actually becoming established or not. Hunger is removed by eating bread - every individual knows this. But this fact that the human self is ruined by *Haram Rizq* (bread obtained through dishonesty or theft) is difficult to grasp. Since the mechanistic concept of life does not even acknowledge the existence of the human self, it also does not acknowledge the outcomes of the Permanent Values. It only acknowledges those laws which society recognises and implements, and the consequences of disobedience to which can appear before us through the justice system of the society. Regarding those deeds which remain hidden from the eyes of society or those matters which are not even crimes according to the laws of the society, the question of their consequences does not even arise.

4.4 The Root Cause for the Excessive Crimes in the World

The fundamental reason that crimes are becoming commonplace in the whole world at this point in time, and epidemics of dishonesty, deceitfulness, plunder and exploitation, fraud and embezzlement, abuse and subjugation are spreading like forest wildfires, is that people no longer have any conviction remaining about the human self. In their view life is only this physical life, but the focal point of the whole teaching of the Quran is *Eimaan* in the human self. Hence it has informed us in clear words that no action of man remains unaccounted for, whether it is related to his physical life or to his self. It declares that this system of the universe is busy functioning for this aim that no deed of man remains without establishing its outcome:

Allah created the universe (the heavens and earth) as bil-Haqq, and for this purpose that every self gets the precise recompense for his deeds and there is no injustice done to anyone. (45:22)

At another place it is stated:

Whatever is in the highs and lows of the universe, all is busy functioning for the completion of the programme of Allah, so that the evil consequences of the deeds of those who adopt an evil path appear before them, and a joyful outcome for those who do good deeds. (53:31)

It is stated in Surah *Yunus* that the creative programme of Allah - i.e. bringing the things of the universe into existence for the first time, and then by putting them through various rotations converting them into a new form - is for this purpose that those people who have conviction in the truth of the Permanent Values of life and do righteous deeds according to these values, should obtain the recompense for these deeds in accordance with justice and fairness, and that the end of those who reject these and resort to transgression should be destruction (10:4).⁵⁶

It is noted in Surah *An-Nisa* that:

... Whoever does an evil deed, he will bear its consequence... (4:123)

Whatever appears before man, it is the outcome of his own deeds (9:82).⁵⁷ At other places it is stated that every individual will obtain the recompense for what he has done (34:33). This has been reiterated at various places e.g. (7:127, 52:16, 56:24, 83:36).

At another place this reality is presented in these words:

...Allah does not waste the deed of anyone who performs an action... (3:195)

And at another place it is stated:

... Those who live their life in a balanced manner, Allah does not let their recompense go to waste. (12:90)

4.5 The Scales for the Weighing of Deeds

⁵⁶ This has been reiterated in these verses (11:7, 18:7, 67:2).

⁵⁷ See also verses (14:15, 16:96-97, 40:17).

It is in order to make this fundamental principle understood that it is stated that every deed of man has a weight and scales are erected for the weighing of these, in which every atom of a human deed is weighed (21:47).

And on the day of the manifestation of results, We will erect the scales of justice, and in this way no kind of injustice will be done to any individual. Those people whose balance will be heavy with constructive deeds, their lives will be lived in prosperity; those whose balance is light, they will be ruined (23:102-103). Each and every single atom of every human deed will be weighed on a set of scales (31:16)⁵⁸.

Deeds will be weighed and a receipt for the weight will be given into the hands of everyone, so that he can see what his account is (9:94, 9:105, 10:23). According to this calculation, the one who will have developed his self suitably, his field will bear fruition. The one who kept it suppressed under his base emotions and suffocated it, he will become ruined (91:9-10).

In light of these explanations of the Quran, you can see whether man is declared to be responsible for his own deeds, or does he appear to be such a creation who has no control over any of his acts and he keeps doing whatever has been determined for him, willingly or unwillingly (like a machine)? The question of reward and punishment for the deed of the one who is constrained does not even arise.

4.5.1 Read Your Own Scroll of Deeds (17:14)

The reality which is illustrated above through the example of a set of scales is called a scroll of deeds at other places in the Quran. In connection with this it is firstly stated that:

... Whatever man says, We write it down...(19:79) See also (21:94)

At another place it is stated that We have appointed guardians and sentinels in front of man and behind him, who keep recording all his deeds (13:11, 50:18). At another place they are called respected scribes - 'extremely honourable writers' (82:11). This record is not kept hidden somewhere: it is a *Kitab-e-Mubeen*, an open and clear book (10:61).

⁵⁸ See also verses (34:3, 99:7-8, 101:5-6)

This *Kitab-e-Mubeen* has not been kept somewhere externally, it is in the heart of man himself. It is noted in Surah *Bani Israel* that ‘the scroll of deeds of each man is hung around his neck.’ At this point in time it is rolled up, but at the time of the manifestation of results this will be unrolled, and man will be asked to read his own scroll of deeds himself:

Read it yourself, and also evaluate your own account. Sufficient is your self to make out an account against your own self this day. (17:14)

There will also be no need for an external witness for proof in this list of crimes. Man himself will give evidence against his own self, and he will himself repudiate all those false excuses of self-deception which he used to concoct before this in justification of his evil deeds (75:14-15).

This is that record about which it is stated that:

... We have a book which states the truth clearly, it commits no error whatsoever... (23:62)

And this is that very book on seeing which the criminal will utter a shriek (18:49). He will say:

...In despair and regret he will lament, Alas! I wish that I were just a lump of mud instead of a conscious being possessing choice and intent so that I could have been saved from this accountability. (78:40)

Accountability is only of man possessing choice and intent, not of figures made of mud. It is clear from these explanations that the outcomes of every deed of man remain preserved, whether these are the thoughts passing through his heart or the deceptions of the eyes (40:19), and produce their respective consequences according to the Law of Requit of Allah. The scroll of man’s deeds is a parchment in his own hand which he keeps imprinting on the clear slate of his self. He arrives into the world with a clean slate, an empty scroll, and then keeps writing his ‘own *Taqdeer*’ on it. In the words of Iqbal:

*Write your account now with your quill,
The pen of Haqq has kept your countenance free.*

4.5.2 Outcomes of Deeds Are Non-Transferable (17:7)

When a deed is dependent on the choice and intent of every single individual, then it is obvious that no one else can be included in its outcome either, nor can

you transfer its outcome (reward or punishment) to someone else. For example, you can give your earnings (money) to others and according to need can also take it from others. But if you go for a walk every morning and because of this your health improves, you cannot pass your good health on to another, nor can you borrow someone else's health. In the same way, by putting a finger into fire, you cannot transfer the burning pain which you will perceive to someone else, nor can the intercession of anyone relieve you from it, nor can you escape it by giving or donating something to someone. These are those outcomes of deeds which can neither be transferred to anyone, nor can be borrowed from someone. We have used the example of 'health' purely to make it comprehensible, otherwise what is being said is that the effects of human deeds which are imprinted on the self of the concerned individual are not able to be transferred. This is because (as noted above) the deed is dependent on the intent of a person, and when another cannot be included in the intent of an individual, then how can he be included in its consequence? This is called the individuality of the human self. Contrary to this, since the one who is constrained does not even have any personal choice, then how can the outcome of some action of his leave a mark on his self? If we look at it from this viewpoint, then the one who is constrained is also not accountable for or deserving of the outcome of his own deed, leaving aside anyone else being included in this.

The Quran has elaborated on this individuality of the human self as a possessor of choice and intent at a number of places. It is stated in Surah *Bani Israel*:

If you do good deeds, then this will benefit your own self, and if you do wrong, then you will bear their loss... (17:7)

The one who does righteous acts, its benefit is to his own self; the one who does destructive acts, its loss also falls to his own self... (41:46)

...Allah does not do injustice to His servants. (41:46) See also (45:15)

Whoever toils and endeavours, he does it for his own self... (29:6)

It is stated in Surah *Yunus*:

...O mankind! If you transgress against the laws of Allah, then its loss will be to your own self... (10:23) See also (4:111)

It is stated in Surah *Al-An'am*:

Clear and illuminated paths have appeared in front of you from the direction of your Rabb, hence, whoever treads with open eyes, it will be to his own benefit, and the one who walks with eyes shut like the blind, he will only cause a loss to himself... (6:104)

This same theme is reiterated in these words at another place:

O mankind! Haqq has arrived to you from the direction of your Rabb, hence, whoever will tread on the right path presented by Him, the benefit will be his alone. Whoever adopts another (wrong) path by leaving this path, the loss will be borne by him alone... (10:108) See also (17:15, 30:44, 31:12)

4.6 This is Not a Business Matter

The other side of this same coin is that those effects of the action of man possessing choice and intent which are imprinted on his self, cannot be erased by anyone else. In other words, no one can intervene whatsoever in the matter of reward and punishment. The Quran has clarified this reality at several places, for example, it is stated in (2:48) that ‘in the case of the outcomes of deeds, no individual can be of any assistance to another person, nor does the question of intercession arise in this matter, nor can an individual escape by offering or donating something, nor can anyone help another.’ See also (2:123).

At another place it is stated that the issue of outcomes of deeds is not a business transaction, such that these can be purchased by paying a price, nor can the friendship of someone be of any use in this regard, nor can anyone intercede on someone’s behalf (2:254). And there is no exception in this for anyone. So much so, that even Rasul-ullah is told to inform these people that:

...If I, too, go against the laws of Allah, then no one can save me either from the consequences of this. I am also fearful of the Law of Requital of Allah. (10:15) See also (6:15)

It was in view of this individuality of the human self i.e. that everyone is accountable for his own deeds, that Rasul-ullah informed his opponents plainly that there is no need to resort to dispute in this regard:

...Our deeds are for us, and yours are for you... (2:139)

...Neither will you be asked what crimes did we commit, nor will we be questioned about what you did. (34:25)

...The outcomes of your deeds are for you, those of our deeds are for us. (109:6)

...My deeds are for me, your deeds are for you. You are not responsible for my deeds, nor am I responsible for your deeds. (10:41)

Only he can be held responsible for the outcomes of his deeds who commits these deeds using his own choice and intent. The one who is coerced into doing something, how can he be held responsible for this. Even Allah does not interfere in this matter, although He keeps watching who is committing what kinds of acts:

...Allah sees your deeds. (2:237)

He is well aware of these (2:234). No deed of anyone can remain hidden from His eyes (2:142). To such an extent, that:

... Whatever resides in your heart, Allah has knowledge of that too... (2:235)

The meaning of ‘Allah sees your deeds’ is that no deed of man can remain out with the grip of the Law of Requit of Allah. Every deed of man is within its domain (3:120). This is why no deed of man can remain without producing its effect, and every individual has to face the consequences of his own deeds himself because he is responsible for his own deeds.

5 Chapter 5 - Troubles and Hardships

These kinds of events keep appearing before you on a daily basis, for example:

- (1) If an invalid recovers, then his relations will declare with great pride and joy that we went to great lengths for his treatment. We had him treated by such and such a physician, consulted with such and such a specialist, he ultimately recovered by using such and such a medicine.
But if that patient dies, then it will be said that we made great efforts from our side, we left no stone unturned in his treatment, but Allah wished it to be like this – what can we do; no one can question Him.
- (2) If a son is successful in his examination, then this will be the fruit of his efforts, but if he fails, then it will be said that he made great efforts from his side, but Allah wished it to be so.
- (3) If there is success in a court case, then this will be declared to be the outcome of one's own good planning and the hard work and expertise of a lawyer. But if there is failure in this, then breathing a deep sigh, it will be said that Allah simply wished it to be like this.
- (4) So much so, that if a boy is born to someone then there will be a celebration at this, and if two or three girls are born into a household one after another, then the mother of the girl will be consoled by saying, Ah well, sister! have patience, this was just the will of Allah for it to be so, how can anyone have any influence in this matter?

5.1 Success Owes to One's Own Effort, Failure is Due to the Will of Allah

In other words, in the case of defeat and failure, man considers himself to be constrained and attributes such events to the Will of Allah, but in the case of successes and achievements he does not view himself to be constrained – he declares these to be the outcome of his own skill and expertise. We have seen at the beginning that when man, in his era of infancy, found himself to be helpless against his unfavourable circumstances, he conceived the idea of some supernatural power. Therefore, to consider oneself to be constrained in a situation of defeat and failure, and to relate difficulties and hardships to Allah, are vestiges of these same initial imprints on the human mind which 'religion' has kept alive, and which continue to obtain validation from such 'holy aphorisms' as 'I

recognised Allah through the failures of my schemes⁵⁹. And since pain and sorrow, grief and anguish, are the lifeblood of the poetry of the east, therefore poets add even more poison to these kinds of beliefs by averring that:

*The one for whom hardship is an unknown,
Who is not a victim of pain and anguish,
On whom a hard time has never descended,
Who has never awoken repeatedly weeping in the night,
He does not know what a supplication means,
What does he know what Allah is.*

After that, *Tasawwuf*⁶⁰ then added such colours in it that this ideology became an ‘established reality’. Let us now see what the Deen of Allah declares in this respect.

5.2 Meaning of Hardship

Museeba'tun is a word in the Arabic language whose root word is (*Sd-W-B*). The fundamental meaning of this root is for something to descend and by descending to reach its destination. From this aspect every event or incident will be called ‘*Museeba't*’ (hardship). But in the Quran this word (*Museeba'tun*) has appeared as the opposite of *Hasna'tun* (good) (9:50), hence its meaning is generally used for an unpleasant occurrence. The question is, do hardships and difficulties (unpleasant occurrences) appear from the direction of Allah, or are these the outcomes of the deeds of man himself (individual or collective). The Quran provides an answer to this question with great transparency.

5.3 Hardships Are the Outcome of One's Own Deeds

It is noted in Surah *Al-Shura* that:

*Whatever the hardship that descends on you, it is the outcome of your own deeds...
(42:30)*

⁵⁹ This phrase is related to Ali bin Talib (the fourth Caliph) which in my view is incorrect. It appears to be the saying of a Sufi.

⁶⁰ *Tasawwuf* – mysticism or Sufism. (Ed)

In Surah *Al-e-Imran* it is stated that when some hardship descends on them, they say, how did this happen, who is responsible for this? The answer came:

... Say to them! This is brought about by your own self; no one else is responsible for it, you yourself are responsible... (3:165)

It is stated in Surah *An-Nahl*:

Their own evil deeds became hardships and appeared before them... (16:34)

5.4 Period of Respite

The procedure established by Allah for the manifestation of the outcomes of evil deeds is that, firstly, these effects keep manifesting imperceptibly, and then after a period of time they materialise in a tangible form (this is called the period of respite, or the Law of Gradual Effects). It is stated in Surah *Zumr* that at this point in time these people are making merry, and jesting with the laws of Allah by living life according to their desires, but after a very short period:

Whatever they are doing, its consequences will emerge and appear before them, and that Law of Requit which they are mocking will engulf them from every direction. (39:48)

The Quran has used a very meaningful term for the interval between a deed and the materialising of its effect. It is a fact that a deed is committed first and its outcome appears in front of us afterwards. The Quran explains this as man sending this outcome on ahead before his own departure: it goes forward and waits for him, and when after this he reaches there, he finds it standing before him. The expression of the Quran for this is:

... Whatever their hands send forward for them... (3:182)

5.5 Whatever Their Hands Send Forward

It is stated in Surah *Al-e-Imran* that whatever crimes these people are committing currently, We are continually writing these down one by one. When they advance forward in the journey of life, then their outcomes will appear before them. At that time it will be said to them that these outcomes (hardships) have not dropped down out of the blue, these are those same ones which you had sent forward in

advance (3:182) - these have come on ahead, and you have followed on behind them. At another place these have been termed as *Ma-Asla'fat* i.e. those which have passed by on this path before you (10:30).

It is stated in Surah *Al-Hajj* that the outcome of the wrong path of these people will be that they will be humiliated in the world and will also be ruined and destroyed in the hereafter. And when this will be their condition, they will be told:

...this is but all that which you had sent forward for yourself... (22:10)

In Surah *Al-Qasas* it is stated about Bani Israel that when some trouble visits them, which they have previously sent forward for themselves by their own hands, then they begin to shriek and wail (28:47). See also (4:62). It is stated in Surah *Rum* that the condition of people is such that when they acquire successes and bounties, they are puffed up in pride about them, and when they have to face hardships, then they become extremely hopeless and sorrowful, even though they had previously sent forward these troubles for themselves through their own hands (30:36).⁶¹ It is stated in Surah *Al-Fajr* that when man will see this destruction in front of him, which will be deadly, he will call out in extreme despair and regret that:

Alas! Would that I had sent something forward for my life. (89:24)

Not only troubles and hardships, but also whatever bounties of life man acquires, he has sent these forward previously for himself. In Surah *Al-Muzzammil* it is stated:

... Whatever bounties you will send forward in advance for yourselves, you will find these present with Allah... (73:20)

In the verses mentioned above, it is stated, 'Whatever your hands have already sent forward.' At some places it is stated:

... Whatever their self has sent forward for them... (5:80)

The Quran declares the self, which is the fountainhead of his choice and intent, to be responsible for human deeds. That is why it declares that it is his self which will be held accountable for the outcome of his deeds. Thus it has stated:

... the human self should look to see what it has sent forward for its tomorrow... (59:18)

⁶¹ This is repeated in (42:48).

In connection with the manifestation of outcomes it is stated that:

At that time every self will find out all that it has sent forward and all that it has left behind. (82:5)

This is because all this was documented in his 'scroll of deeds'. It is stated in Surah *Ya'Sin* that:

Those footprints which these people leave behind them in the journey of life, and whatever they send forward, We keep on recording all of these...(36:12)

...And the entry of each item keeps taking place in a clear scroll, which continues to journey ahead of them. (36:12)

It is evident from these explanations that according to the Quran, whatever trouble descends on man, it is the consequence of his own deeds (individual or collective). In connection with the destruction of Bani Israel, it is stated in Surah *Al-Baqarah* that their destruction was the consequence of their own deeds (2:79). They were destroyed because they were unjust and rebellious (2:59). They were seized in the punishment of ruin and disgrace because they had adopted transgression against the laws of Allah (2:61, 3:112).

5.6 Humiliation and Disgrace

And this is not just specific to Bani Israel, this is the universal law of Allah that humiliation and disgrace is the outcome of the evil deeds of man himself. The situation of each one of those nations whose state is such that it accepts one part of the code of laws (of Allah) and rejects the other part, is that:

...it becomes humiliated and disgraced in the world, and on the Day of Judgement an even more severe punishment will be imposed on it...(2:85) See also (2:114, 22:9-10)

In Surah *Al-Fajr* this reality is presented in a very appealing style. It is stated that when man is humiliated and disgraced, then he complains that my *Rabb* has humiliated and ruined me for no reason (89:16). In response it was instructed to inform them that this is not correct, Allah does not disgrace anyone for no reason. You became humiliated due to the outcome of your evil deeds. Your condition was such that you did not respect those people who were left abandoned in society, nor did you make any arrangements to cater for the needs of those people whose running businesses used to cease, nor did you ask others to do this. Whatever you used to inherit from your forefathers, you would become the sole

master of it. You had established an economic system such that in it the greater capital drew the smaller capital towards itself. This was your mentality, and this was your system, the outcome of which is this humiliation and disgrace. And despite this, you complain that Allah has disgraced you unjustly and without legitimate cause. Allah does not disgrace anyone without legitimate cause (89:17-20). See also (92:4-10).

‘Allah does not disgrace anyone without *Haqq*’ – this is because to disgrace someone without legitimate cause is *Zulm* (injustice) and Allah never does *Zulm* to anyone. The Quran has made this reality clear at numerous places.

5.7 Allah Does not Do *Zulm* to Anyone

It is stated in Surah *Al-e-Imran* that the fields of those people who do *Zulm* to others can never flourish – they become ruined and destroyed. And after that it is stated:

...Allah does not do Zulm to them, they do Zulm to their own selfs. (3:117)

After mentioning the destructions of various former nations, it is stated in Surah *At-Tauba* that:

... These destructions and devastations of theirs did not take place because Allah did Zulm to them without cause. These happened because they did Zulm to their own selfs and committed excesses. (9:70) See also (11:101, 16:33, 29:40)

We are told in Surah *Yunus* that:

Allah does not do even the slightest injustice to human beings. Men do injustice to their own selfs, the consequence of which is their ruin and destruction. (10:44)

Allah is the possessor of infinite powers and human beings are His created servants who have no status before Him, hence this thought should not even enter the mind that He will do injustice and wrong to His weak and feeble creation. The hardships and destructions which afflict people are brought about through their own hands. Allah never does injustice to His servants (22:10). Leaving aside doing injustice to His servants, He never even forms the intention for it (40:31). He tells us to simply reflect a little:

If you acknowledge the truth of the laws of Allah, and after accepting them from your heart act according to them, then what would Allah gain by inflicting a punishment on you? ... (4:147)

The 'psyche' of Allah is not that of (Allah forbid) sadists, who obtain mental pleasure from tormenting others unjustly and causing them suffering. Therefore do not even let this thought cross your mind that Allah causes pain to reach anyone without any cause. Troubles descend on men due to their own wrong paths – this is called 'doing injustice to their own selves'. The Quran states:

... With Allah everything is decided according to Haqq and justice, and no kind of wrong or injustice is done to anyone. Every self will be paid the full recompense for its deeds... (39:69-70)

In relation to the manifestation of the outcomes of human deeds, it is stated:

On that Day everyone will be given full recompense for his deeds, on that Day no one will be treated unjustly... (40:17)

Their decision will be done according to justice and fairness, and no injustice will be done to anyone. (10:54)

5.8 Two Verses of Surah *An-Nisa*

In connection with this, two verses of Surah *An-Nisa* are very profound and merit great attention. Referring to the distorted mentality of one group during the era of Rasul-ullah, it is stated that their condition is such that:

When some good reaches them, they declare that they received this from Allah, and when some trouble reaches them, they say to Rasul-ullah that this is all because of you... (4:78)

It is announced:

... Say to them that this kind of differentiation and categorisation is not correct. Good and troubles all are from Allah... (4:78)

After that it is stated that:

... What has happened to these people, that they do not even try to understand the matter, and keep uttering whatever comes to their mind. (4:78)

After that they are informed about the matter, to remember:

... Whatever trouble comes to you it is brought about by your own self, and whatever bounties you acquire, these are from the direction of Allah... (4:79)

There seems to be an apparent contradiction between these two verses. In the first verse it is stated that good and troubles are all from Allah, and in the second verse it is stated that good is from Allah, and troubles are brought about by your own selves – what does this mean? What is detailed here is that:

- (1) Whatever events occur, whether these are easy or difficult, pleasant or unpleasant, all take place according to the laws of Allah.
- (2) The law of Allah is that if you live according to them (the laws of Allah), then its outcome will be good (prosperities).
- (3) And if, in opposition to them, you live according to your own decisions, then its outcome will be troubles and hardships.

In other words, in this arena of efforts and deeds, all outcomes are established according to the Law of Requit of Allah. From this respect, all of these are from the direction of Allah. Now as far as the distinction between pleasant and unpleasant outcomes is concerned, the principle for this is that whatever deeds are carried out according to the laws of Allah, their result is pleasant (this is called from the direction of Allah), and those deeds which man carries out against them according to his own choice, their outcome is unpleasant (this is called from his own self).

From this a supreme reality appears before us that it is only good that is always received from the direction of Allah. Troubles and hardships (called *Sharr*) come at man's own invitation. Details of this point will be found a little later, under the topic of *Khair* (good) and *Sharr*. In light of these explanations, two fundamental issues come before us.

5.9 False Concepts

When we remark, on experiencing some unexpected trouble or an unpleasant event, that what can be done, it was simply the Will of Allah that it should be like this, or that this is simply what Allah had willed, to allege this is not only contrary to reality but is a very great accusation against Allah Himself. The meaning of 'this is simply what Allah had willed' is that whatever has occurred, we are neither responsible for it – we had made every effort that this should not happen, but despite this, Allah did this – nor can we comprehend any rational cause for it. This is why it is said that we can do nothing against the Will of Allah. He is Omnipotent – He can do whatever He wishes. Why He does this is a matter that cannot be comprehended by anyone, only He is cognisant with the *Hikmat* (wisdom) of this. Only Allah can understand His Own matters! Have you

observed what kind of concept of Allah appears before us from this – such an Allah with Whom there is neither any procedure or law, nor accountability or Book, no justice or fairness. He does whatever comes to His mind. He makes people suffer in unjustified hardships and difficulties. Why He does this, neither its cause can be comprehended by anyone, nor can anyone enquire about it from Him.

And the second point is that nothing takes effect through the planning and organisation of man, his hard work and effort, his toil and endeavour – only that takes place which is the Will of Allah - from this man becomes relegated to a mere constrained creation. Details will be written about this point later.

5.10 It All Happened by Chance

There is no doubt that:

- (1) Many such events occur whose cause we cannot comprehend. We call it chance, and fall silent.
- (2) An individual can also become a victim of those troubles and hardships for which he himself is not responsible, rather what happens is that according to the law of Allah, the outcome of his deeds should be something else (i.e. pleasant), but what transpires is the opposite (unpleasant). For example, the one who lives life according to the principles of honesty and integrity in a corrupt society keeps falling victim to all kinds of afflictions, even though according to the law of Allah the outcome of balanced deeds should be bountiful.

As far as the first point (chance) is concerned, in this universe which is functioning under the immutable system of the law of cause and effect, no such event can take place which has no cause. But discovering the causes is dependent on human knowledge and research. In his age of infancy, man was not cognisant of the underlying cause of any event, so he attributed every event to chance. As his knowledge increased, the veils covering the secrets of nature kept being lifted up and the causes of events and incidents began to appear before him. Hundreds of events, incidents, even diseases are such that they were previously declared as being merely the outcome of chance, but now they come within the sphere of the law of cause and effect. Even now the situation is such that primitive tribes in Africa, America, or Australia etc. attribute to goddesses and gods those events for which they cannot comprehend any cause. In the civilised world, where new discoveries of science keep on becoming the trigger for uncovering the secrets of

nature, no difficulty arises in comprehending the causes of these events, to such an extent that certain matters whose causes we did not comprehend in our childhood are now viewed by our children as common knowledge in daily life, and they are well acquainted with how these occur. And this issue is not just confined to ancient primitive tribes – even within a civilised country in the present day, those people who are used to living life in the darkneses of superstitions created by religion become contented with calling these incidents ‘Divine glory’, regarding whose causes and effects even the children from educated households are well aware of. Those diseases for which they still resort to amulets and the lighting of candles on graves, these children go directly to the physician and obtain a remedy for them.

Thus we attribute to chance those incidents whose cause and effect is not known to us. In our own era there are still such areas in which information has not been able to be acquired about the causes and effects of these events (despite the fact that man has unearthed a great deal of information relating to numerous hidden and undiscovered matters about the functioning of the universe). As our knowledge about the universe will keep on advancing, the causes and effects of these events will also come within the domain of our knowledge and in this way, ultimately, no event in nature will remain a secret. When the Quran had stated in relation to Adam (man) that Allah had placed the potential to gain knowledge of the things of the universe within Adam, then together with this, by stating *Kulla’ba*⁶² (2:31), it was also clarified that there will be nothing among these things about which he will not be able to gain knowledge.

Chance is the name for a deficit in our knowledge, otherwise there is no event in the universe which materialises by chance.

5.11 The Condition of Individuals in a Corrupt Society

Now let us come to the second point (that an individual also becomes the victim of those hardships which are not the consequence of his own deeds). In connection with this it should be understood that when man lives life in a certain society, then he becomes a part of that society. When a society is treading on the correct path, all the people in this society benefit from its pleasant outcomes – even those people who have not personally participated in the toil and hard work reap these bounties e.g. if there are bountiful crops and an abundant harvest due

⁶² *Kulla’ba* - meaning all of this. (Ed)

to the correct efforts of some society, then those members of this society who have not even glimpsed these fields of crops also become prosperous. According to this same principle, the destructive effects of the society which adopts the wrong path also have to be faced by those individuals who are not directly associated with this wrong path, and have not played any role in it - when a dam in a river bursts, even though those directly responsible are the government officials who hold the reins of power to plan and administrate, its destructive effects also have to be faced by those people in the village who have no knowledge whatsoever about how that dam burst. These are those collective dangers about which the Quran has warned that:

Make an effort to keep your society secure from such a danger which, when it comes, then not only are those people engulfed in it who are directly responsible for the corruptions and destructions, each and everyone sinks into its folds... (8:25)

But man is a strange being, when bounties and prosperities are accessible to an individual due to the good management of the collective system of a society, he will never comment regarding these that I did not make any effort to acquire them, hence I have no right to them, these should only go to those who have toiled for them. He benefits from all of these and in such a way as if it is his right. And he does not even consider it necessary to extend gratitude to those people through whose rational planning, or from whose labour and effort these conveniences have become available. But if a hardship arrives due to some flaw in society, then he starts to wail that I am not responsible for this failing, hence why should I endure this hardship - this is an injustice against me, a wrong against me. He creates an uproar that those people who are responsible for the collective organisation and management of society should be held accountable. These hardships should be borne by them, why are we made the target of these!

Referring to this mentality of man, the Quran states:

When the circumstances of man are favourable and the bounties of life are available to him, he transgresses and turns his face away with pride and arrogance (from the laws of Allah), but when trouble visits him, then despairing, he begins to raise a hue and cry. (17:83)

After that it is stated:

Say to them! Every individual in a society remains busily engaged within his own area of responsibility (Shakilaat⁶³), hence, he is indirectly included in the beneficial and harmful consequences of the actions of collective life i.e. he is responsible for these...(17:84)

5.12 Exchanges Between Leaders and Populace in *Jahannum*

The Quran has described this reality in a very vivid way when it states that the leaders and the populace will mutually wrangle in *Jahannum*, and will hurl accusations at each other that it is you who are responsible for these troubles and miseries. It is stated in Surah *Saba*:

...If you bring this scene to mind, when these people who had adopted a path of crime will be standing in the presence of Allah, and will be levelling accusations about their wrong path at each other - the populace will say to their leaders that if you had not misguided us, then we would most certainly have accepted Eimaan in the laws of Allah. The leaders will reply, why do you denounce us? When the straight path had appeared before you then was it us who prevented you from adopting it – you yourselves wished to commit crimes, now you are putting the blame on us for nothing!

Their followers will retaliate that you used to play such tricks day and night, and used to keep laying down nets of intrigues due to which we simply could not come to the straight path. What! even after this do you have the temerity to claim that you did not mislead us! (34:31-33)

But no excuse of theirs will be considered worthy of acceptance and they will all be included in this *Azqaab* (punishment) equally, they will all have to endure it together (37:33)⁶⁴ - the officials of the system for their wrong practices, and the populace because they were the very source of that power of these elites on the basis of which they directed society along an evil path.

This is the connection between an individual and society within collective life according to the Quran. Society is simply the term for a collection of individuals – it does not drop down ready made from above - if the populace do not wish to

⁶³ *Shikaal'un* – the rope with which the leg of an animal is tied i.e. tethered. Due to this it can only move around within a defined circle. In this verse this is the meaning of *Shakilaat* i.e. the domain of responsibility of an individual.

⁶⁴ Details of these exchanges between the leaders and the public can be found in the chapter on *Jahannum* in my book titled, *The Life in the Hereafter: What Does the Quran say?*

tread on the wrong path, then they should rise up and change that system which does not permit the society to tread on the right path. Have you observed that the Quran does not consider this excuse of the populace as worthy of acceptance, that we were weak, indeed constrained, hence do not involve us in this punishment – for man, as possessor of choice and intent, to call himself constrained is in fact the greatest crime in itself - that crime for which *Iblees* became declared as rejected for all times from the lofty avenues of life. Therefore, to declare oneself as being constrained and to espouse a path of escapism from one's own responsibilities is a degradation of human eminence. It is quite possible that weak human beings (i.e. those who have no means of power) are unsuccessful in their initial efforts to change the wrong path of a society, but remaining unsuccessful in this endeavour is one thing, and declaring oneself to be constrained and surrendering before it and not even making any effort to change it is another matter. In the Divine balance the former endeavour is deserving of immense appreciation and admiration (2:157), while the second option is a cause for consignment to the fire of hell (4:97).

5.13 Our Initial Era

This is the correct position of hardships and troubles in civic life according to the Quran.⁶⁵ As long as this teaching of the Quran remained before the Muslims, at the time of every collective hardship they used to pause and reflect, and analyse this issue to determine what is the cause for this hardship. If they observed that the cause of this problem is some flaw in organisation and management, then the populace would warn those who were at the helm of affairs and immediately turn their attention towards rectifying it. If it was the direct consequence of the laxity or carelessness of the citizens, then they themselves would make an effort to rectify it and reform themselves. None among them attributed it to Allah in order to seek a route of escape, nor by calling it his *Taqdeer* did he sit down weeping and doing nothing.

5.14 A Later Conspiracy

⁶⁵ Further details about communal life will be given in Chapter 6 on the *Taqdeer* of nations (rise and fall).

But later on when those at the helm of affairs adopted paths of tyranny, and as a result societal hardships and troubles arose like a flood, they became apprehensive that if the populace come to know that we are responsible for this, then they will rise up against us. So, in order to save themselves from this danger, they thought to direct the attention of the populace towards something else – however, doing this alone was not within their power. For this they got the religious clergy on their side - no Pharaoh can proclaim himself to be a supreme *Rabb* without Haman (79:24) – and they responded that this is not at all difficult - just watch! Consequently, the clerics began to address the people with this sermon that not even a leaf in the world can move without the command of Allah. These people who have set themselves up as your rulers, what authority did they have that they should become rulers – it is Allah Who has made them rulers. Then whatever they do, how could they have had the authority to do whatever they willed either – this is also taking place according to the command of Allah. If this had not been the Will of Allah, then how could they have adopted such a path. So, leaving aside speaking out against their tyranny, you should not even allow an iota of a complaint to arise in your hearts. If you do allow this, then it will mean that you are complaining against the *Mashe'at* of Allah and against His Will. This is *Kufr*, it is *Al'Haad*, it is *Irt'daad* - repent, and seek forgiveness thousands of times.⁶⁶

And it was the result of these sermons that this dogma became entrenched among us that every trouble which visits us is according to the Will of Allah – man should do '*Sabr*' and '*Shukr*'⁶⁷ on this.⁶⁸

Remember that whatever trouble visits you, it is brought about by your own hands (42:30). Sometimes it comes individually, like putting your finger into fire yourself, and sometimes collectively like the destructions arising from flooding due to the dam of a river bursting. Or the stresses faced in a corrupt society at every step by those who are living an honest life according to principles.

5.15 Why Do Worries Accost People Living Honest Lives?

⁶⁶ *Kufr*, *Al'Haad*, *Irt'daad* – here these are used to mean going against the prevalent religious belief system. (Ed)

⁶⁷ *Sabr* and *Shukr* – from a religious point of view these are taken to mean to become reconciled to a situation and do nothing. (Ed)

⁶⁸ Here it is sufficient to mention these points. Details will be covered later where it will be explained how and when did this change take place?

This last point (i.e. the worries of those who live honest lives) requires further elaboration. It is stated in Surah *Al-Maida*:

O members of Jamaat e Momineen! Take care of your self. Only you can do it, no one else can do this. Remember! if (by taking care of your self) you remain treading on the right path, then those who are treading on the wrong path will not be able to cause you the least harm ... (5:105)

This verse conveys great realities. It is noted here that if you keep treading on the correct path then those treading on the wrong path will not be able to do you any kind of harm. But our observation goes against this. We regularly witness that an individual who wishes to live a life of honesty and integrity suffers a loss every other day. Dishonest businesses scheme against an honest businessman in such a way that he faces the loss of all his assets. The colleagues and staff of an honest and conscientious officer instigate such intrigues against him that his life becomes a living hell. These kinds of examples are to be found in every sphere of society. Then how did the Quran declare that those who are treading on the wrong path cannot harm the individual who adopts the right path – this issue merits some deeper reflection and reasoning!

5.16 Benefit and Loss in Physical Life

As has been previously described, on reaching the human form life divides into two levels. One is that same animalistic level which is continuing from the past – this is called physical life. This life remains under the obedience of physical laws, and in this there is no differentiation or distinction between good and evil, so much so that not even between a *Momin* and a *Kafir*. Whether a good person puts his hand into fire, or an evil person, it will affect both equally. Whether poison is ingested by a *Kafir* or a *Momin*, both will die. In this life losses also occur according to physical laws and profit is also acquired according to these laws. Whichever individual tills his land according to the laws of agriculture and makes efforts, his crop will be bountiful; the one who tends it with indifference, his crop will be poor. It is stated in Surah *Bani Israel*:

Our law is that whoever desires immediate benefits in this world and makes an effort for these according to the physical laws, We give those material benefits to him according to our Law of Mashe'at which We have made through Our choice and intent. But in the life of the future, there is the destruction of hell for him which he is made to enter, ruined and disgraced.

Contrary to this, the individual who desires the bounties of the future along with immediate benefits, and makes such efforts for them which should be undertaken as per Haqq, and has conviction in the Permanent Values, these are the people whose endeavours will bear full fruition in both the present as well as in the future.

In this way, We cause both these groups to advance according to our laws in proportion to their efforts i.e. those who only desire immediate benefits, and those who desire both immediate benefits and the bounties of the future. And the bounties of your Rabb are kept available for all of them equally. We do not place any obstacle for anyone in their path, so that one group should advance while the other group is stopped right there. (17:18-20)

This means that any individual can acquire the means of sustenance which is acquired via physical laws, who makes an effort to acquire it through these laws. In this race in life the arena is kept open for both *Kafir* and *Momin* equally. It never happens that a *Kafir* is grabbed and pushed back despite his efforts, and that a *Momin* is advanced forward even if he does not make any effort for it.

At another place it is stated:

For the individual who desires the bounties of the future, We make additions in it according to his efforts. And for the individual who merely desires worldly benefits, he receives those benefits in proportion to his efforts, but there is no share in the bounties of the future for him. (42:20)

This is the law of Allah relating to physical life – since at this stage life is at the animalistic level, there is no question of any kind of distinction in it of good and evil - among animals there is none who is good or bad, *Kafir* or *Momin*.

5.17 The Benefit and Loss at the Other Level of Life

The other level of life, which we call human life for the purpose of identification, is higher than animalistic life. In this ethical values are applicable. Whichever individual lives his life according to these values, his self keeps on developing. Whichever one goes against them, the development of his self halts. This is termed the life of the future, or the life of the hereafter.

But at this level of life animalistic life does not end, that too remains in existence, and its requirements are also alive in the same way. From this it is clear that a double set of laws is applicable to human life – one is the physical laws and the other is the laws about the Permanent Values. The correct life (which is called an Islamic life or the life of a *Momin*) is that in which the requirements of the human

body and its self are both continually fulfilled in a balanced and harmonious way. In a correct society (Islamic) there is no conflict between these two. But in a wrong society (non-Islamic) there is a confrontation between these two at every step i.e. in this society, on one side there is an individual who desires the preservation of the Permanent Values (honesty, integrity, righteousness), and confronting him is another individual (or group of people) who have no regard for these values. They are only desirous of material benefits, no matter how these may be obtained. When there is a clash between the interests of these two, then it is obvious that compared to an individual who will not hesitate to use every kind of method to obtain these, that individual will remain unsuccessful who, before lifting his hand, will reflect whether the Permanent Values permit this or not. Now there are two paths before this individual from which he can choose whichever one he wants. Either he also resorts to every trick by ignoring obedience to values, and thus competes with the opposing party by standing equally on the same level - though he will achieve material benefits from this, there will be a loss to his self - or by preferring the interest of his self, he does not relinquish his principles. In this way, though he will have to suffer a material loss, there will be no loss caused to his self. Hence, when the Quran declared that:

...guard your self: if you follow (right) guidance, no hurt can come to you from those who stray...(5:105)

Its meaning was that if you guard your self, then the individual who is treading on the wrong path (may possibly cause you material loss, but) will not be able to cause you any loss to your self:

...the destination of you all is to Allah: it is He that will show you the truth of all that you do. (5:105)

Benefit and loss to the human self cannot be estimated using material scales, they are measured by Divine scales. Therefore their precise and correct estimate will take place when they will be weighed on the scales of the Law of Requit.

5.18 The Importance of Material Benefits

But the Quran does not ignore the demands of physical life (i.e. material benefits). It accords great significance to them, this is why it declares the life of a *Momin* as:

...he achieves both the bounties of the world and also the prosperities of the future...(2:201)

Now the question which arises is how can this aim be achieved? In other words, that man should keep achieving material benefits and should also not let go of his hold on the Permanent Values. The whole teaching of the Quran is for the completion of this programme. The mutual confrontation between a man of principle (a *Momin* individual) and a materialistic person (only desiring immediate benefits, who is called a *Kafir*) is defined as the mutual tussle between *Haqq* and *Batil*. In this tussle the man of principle suffers defeat, because in an evil society those people who follow *Batil* have acquired the form of a united front, and men of principle live their life separately at an individual level. According to the Quran, this behaviour of men of principle (i.e. an individualistic way of thinking which is called *Tasammuf* or monasticism) is wrong. According to the Quran, correct Islamic life is that these followers of *Haqq* should live life by coming together as a *Jamaat* and in this way, by being united, oppose the *Batil* front. It is obvious that great difficulties will need to be faced in this confrontation. The group following *Batil* will not give up its interests easily, it will use every tactic to preserve them.

5.19 Confrontation Between *Haqq* and *Batil*

These are those verses about this confrontation and clash between *Haqq* and *Batil* which the Quran has mentioned at various places. This is called the campaign for *Jehad*. In Surah *Al-Baqarah* it is stated:

Or do you think that you will enter paradise just like that? It will never happen like this. You will also have to pass through those life-threatening phases through which those peoples passed who clashed with the forces of Batil before this. In this confrontation the condition would become such that hardships and troubles encircled them from all directions. Their hearts quaked at their severity, to such a degree that they and their messenger would cry out aloud, O Allah! When will the time come for the fruition of our endeavours? After such courage and patience testing stages, eventually their efforts used to succeed, and Divine aid used to make their efforts and striving bear fruit. Remember! You will also have to go through these very stages.
(2:214)

The degree of intensity that this confrontation had acquired in the Battle of Ahzab has been outlined by the Quran in these words:

That was such a severe time for you when the army of the enemy had encircled you from all directions. Due to fear, darkness was before your eyes, and due to fright, your hearts were pounding as if they will burst from your chests and reach your

throats, and (in the hearts of those among you whose Eimaan was weak) all kinds of misgivings about the promises of Allah were arising.

At the time of such an earth-shaking affliction, the true motivation of the Momineen emerged before them and those observing could see with what steadfastness they confront challenges. (33:10-11)

These are those confrontations in which there is the possibility and expectation of all kinds of (physical) losses:

In this sometimes there will be the fear of war and killing, and other dangers; sometimes there will be scarcity of the means of food and drink; sometimes there will be the loss of possessions and life; sometimes fields and orchards will be destroyed. All this will occur, but after this glad tidings of victory and success will be for those who remain steadfast in this struggle and endeavour, and during this horde of troubles and hardships, whose gazes do not divert even the slightest from this focus that our aim is to defeat the forces of Batil in order to establish the system of Haqq. We have dedicated ourselves for this. Let hardships come, our every step will be lifted towards this very aim; that is our objective and ultimate target and we will advance towards it in every eventuality. (2:155-156)

For this confrontation there will be a massive need for material means and wherewithal, along with personal traits of patience and determination. That is why it is instructed that you should keep the means of defence for your frontiers in readiness to the best of your ability (8:60). If any weakness remains in the tactics of war in the battlefield, then the *Jamaat e Momineen* will have to suffer its consequences in the same way that the opponents have to bear a loss in similar circumstances.

Hence in the Battle of Uhad, due to one mistake in the battle tactics, the victory of the *Jamaat e Momineen* turned into a defeat and they had to bear a severe loss as a result, to the point that (according to the historical account) Rasul-ullah himself became wounded in this, and his companions provided him with protection with great valour and sacrifice.

These are those places where the *Jamaat e Momineen* are provided with reassurance by stating that:

...If you have had to face hardships, then there is nothing to be perturbed about in this, the opposing party also had to bear similar losses... (4:104)

This revolving of events and incidents continues like this in all eras, and all human beings can fall into its folds – sometimes the scale is heavier on one side, sometimes on the other side (3:140). Hence there is never any reason to be

perturbed in times of difficulties, these should be faced resolutely. In these confrontations, if the contingent of those who are following *Haqq* keeps confronting the opponents resolutely and steadfastly with the necessary resources and means, then ultimately success will be theirs alone; and in this way, the establishment of that society takes place in which no material loss is incurred from following the Permanent Values. This is the system in which:

...if you keep following the correct path, then the one treading on the wrong path will not be able to cause you any loss... (5:105)

According to this there will neither be a material loss, nor a loss to the human self, and this will be called good in this world and good in the hereafter (2:201) – material prosperities in this life and eminence of the human self in the life of the hereafter – this is the supreme level of achievement.

In this endeavour and struggle, only the hardships and troubles of this life fall into the share of those people who lay down their life before the establishment of the system, but their life in the hereafter becomes so beautiful that every living person is highly envious of this kind of death. They are the ones who are described as having laid down their lives in the path of Allah, and those who are living are told not to consider them dead – they have been taken into the lap of a life of eternity (2:154).

But this success is only achieved through one's own effort and action, and this effort and action only bears fruit within the context of a collective way of life – this is called national life or the life of the *Ummah*. For this, see the next chapter.

6 Chapter 6 - *Taqdeer* of Nations

Just like the life of individuals, the life of nations also remains under the obedience of the Law of Requit of Allah. This is that very law which becomes the set of scales for their rise and fall and decides their life and death. And since (as stated in a previous chapter) the '*Taqdeer*' of individuals is tied to the '*Taqdeer*' of nations (i.e. collective life), we can say that the domain of the Law of Requit concerning nations encompasses both individuals and nations. Regarding the change in circumstances of nations, we have previously noted this law of Allah that:

...Allah does not bring about a change in the condition of a nation until that nation does not bring about a psychological change within itself... (13:11) See also (8:53)

6.1 The Life and Death of Nations is Never Without a Cause

This is that law, the *Amr* of Allah (already discussed in Chapter 2), about which it is stated that:

...so that the Amr of Allah becomes accomplished... (8:42)

This *Amr* of Allah is fulfilled as follows:

... Whichever nation is to become destroyed, it should be destroyed according to demonstrable causes and proofs based on clear evidence, and whichever one is to remain alive, it should also remain alive based on clear evidence... (8:42)

Here, no nation obtains life just as 'charity', nor does its destruction occur through deceit without any cause. Here, this never happens that a nation becomes destroyed without any cause, devoid of *Haqq*:

This is because your Rabb never destroys any nation without Haqq and that it might not even know why its end has come about like this. (6:131)

At another place it is stated:

This does not suit your Rabb, it is far beneath Him, He simply never does this, that He destroys some town without Haqq, while its inhabitants have the potential to stay alive. (11:117)

6.2 Historical Evidences

In Surah *Rum* it is noted about the first addressee nation (Arabs) of the Quran that they were advised a thousand times that the consequence of a wrong path is destructive, hence if they wish their survival they should give up this path, but they do not comprehend this fact. Say to them that if they do not understand this fact in this way, then they should look back at historical accounts. Ponder on the circumstances and conditions of past nations and bring to mind their end and its causes.

For this purpose if these people go around the world with their eyes open, they will be able to see what was the end of those nations before them who adopted a similar path to them. Those nations were far greater and more advanced than them in power and splendour. They ripped open the face of the earth to draw out its hidden treasures, and populated the lands. Their populations were also far more numerous than the populations of these addressees. Their messengers came to them with clear and perspicuous laws.

Before reporting what then was their end, listen to a matter of principle - and that is that it has never happened that Allah has simply destroyed some nation unjustly and wrongly. Nations do injustice to themselves, Allah never does injustice to anyone.

So then the messengers of Allah came to them, but they falsified them, mocked them, and remained resolute on this evil path of theirs. The outcome of this was that regarding those people who had established this kind of system creating imbalances, imbalances then became created within their own lives. The balance of their society became disturbed and they were destroyed and annihilated (30:9-10).

6.3 What is Meant by Falsifying the Messengers

It is stated here that they rejected (falsified) the messengers of Allah and His laws, so they became destroyed and annihilated – what is this falsification? What is known as rejection? This is something which merits reflection.

A doctor instructs a patient not to drink milk, otherwise your condition will worsen. He comes home and relates to his friends and companions that have you heard what this doctor is saying, he says do not drink milk, or else your condition will deteriorate – he has become insane. Has milk ever caused someone's

condition to deteriorate? Saying this, he gulps down a glass of milk – the next morning his illness takes a turn for the worse. This is called falsification (*Takzeeb*) i.e. to declare a true statement to be a lie, and to act blatantly counter to it.

The Quran informs us that *Anbiya* came continuously to former nations. They used to advise them that the path on which you are treading will drive you into deep abysses of ruin and destruction, but the people would mock them and say that this can never happen and after this continue headlong on this same path of theirs, and ultimately would plunge into a hell of destruction. This was the outcome of their falsification. After narrating the accounts of these nations, the Quran informs the nations of the world that in light of these facts you too should take cognisance of your path, and ensure that these paths are also not those which lead towards destructions. If these paths are also the same as those which these former nations had adopted, then avoid them, otherwise your end will also be like theirs. Decisions regarding the nations of the world take place according to the Law of Requit of Allah, which means that whichever path a nation was treading on and due to which it became destroyed, whenever and wherever any nation treads on this path, its end will also be the same – this is the Quranic philosophy of history.

In light of these facts it directs its addressee nations (whether these are of the era of Rasul-ullah, or of the present time, or of a time to come) to examine these historical accounts and then see what was the end of those who falsify:

Many nations have passed before you. Just go around the world and witness what was the end of those who falsified (Mukazzibeen)? (3:137) See also (6:11, 16:36)

Instead of *Mukazzibeen*, the term *Al-Munzareen* is used in Surah *Yunus* i.e those who were informed in advance not to tread on this path, you will become destroyed (10:73). It is stated in Surah *Al-An'am* that the destruction of nations takes place due to their crimes:

Have they ever even paid attention to how many nations have been annihilated before this, who possessed such wealth and prosperity which even these do not possess? Abundances of Rizq used to be showered on them, and economic prosperities used to flow like rivers, but they became destroyed due to their crimes, and other nations took their place. (6:6)

6.4 Injustice as a Cause for Destruction

The list of these crimes due to which nations become annihilated is quite long. But the Quran has kept injustice (*Zulm*) at the top of this list and has declared in clear words that:

The root of nations is severed because of (their) injustice... (6:45)

After describing the destruction and annihilation of these nations, it states that:

These are the ruins of the habitations of these nations who, when they were bent upon doing injustice and cruelty, We then destroyed them... (18:59)

At another place it is stated:

(If these people enquire from historical accounts, they will inform them) how many habitations there were whose dwellers Our Law of Requitel gripped hold of and eliminated. This was because they had adopted a path of tyranny and injustice. They were eliminated in such a way that their tall buildings came tumbling down into their own foundations. Their wells were left disused. Their fortified castles became reduced to ruins.

Do these people not travel around in these lands, so that (by witnessing the instructive end of these past nations) the potential to employ intellect and reasoning awakens in their hearts, and the ability to listen becomes active in their ears? (The fact is that when an individual shuts his eyes to realities then) it is not that the eyes on his face become blind - those can still see - but their hearts become blind, which are in their chests, and in this way their ability to think and understand becomes paralysed.
(22:45-46)

After narrating the instructive accounts of several past nations, the Quran has reiterated this reality that:

...it simply never happens that We destroy a nation, except if it is unjust... (28:59)

Because the aim here is not go into details about these nations, we will therefore confine ourselves to these examples only.⁶⁹ At this point in time we wish to depict this reality that the rise and fall of nations is linked to their own deeds – their ‘*Taqdeer*’ is not pre-written, they write it with their own hands.

⁶⁹ For more details see my books, *What is Islam?* and *The Life in the Hereafter: What Does the Quran Say?*

6.5 *Ajal* – the Period of Respite

It has been noted earlier that according to the Law of Requit, for a deed and its tangible outcome to manifest takes some time, which is called the period of respite. In Quranic terminology this is known as *Ajal*. Amongst us death is called *Ajal* but in the Arabic language its meaning is that of a period of respite. Because the life of nations is not counted in days but is mapped by the scale of centuries, hence their period of respite (*Ajal*) is also a fairly prolonged one. The reason that we often become deceived upon seeing that a nation continues to prosper despite the fact that it unleashes all kinds of injustices and tyranny over weaker nations, it has adopted a path of enslavement and subjugation, its system is based on exploitation and the world is becoming aggrieved at its hands, is because this is its period of respite. It is stated in Surah *An-Nahl*:

(If Our law of gradual effects and respite was not functioning and) there was instant accountability of people on account of injustice and tyranny, then there would have been no one (human being) seen walking on the face of the earth. But Allah does not do this, instead He delays their end for a period of time. When this period of respite comes to an end, then there is neither a delay or an advance of even a moment in their destruction. The final decisive verdict of their deeds appears before them. (16:61) See also (35:45)

This period of respite is so strictly regulated that:

No nation can cut this duration short, nor can increase it. (23:43)

If a nation reforms itself within this period, then it is saved from destruction - if it does not do this, then it becomes destroyed. The period of respite has been kept for this very purpose.

6.6 There is a Law For Every *Ajal*

The period of respite (*Ajal*) is also not determined for every nation in advance i.e. this does not happen that (for example) a nation comes into power, and it is already determined for it that it will remain in power for two hundred years and after that it will come to an end – that though this nation may do many thousands of things, it will neither decline before two hundred years, nor will it be able to survive after two hundred years – nay, it does not happen like this. Defining this period also takes place according to the established law of Allah i.e. that as long as this nation keeps treading on this (correct) path, it will retain power and

stability. When it treads on another path in opposition to this one, then it will fall into a pit of humiliation. To elucidate this reality, the Quran has described this principle, that:

- (1) The life of every nation is for a period of time (10:49).
- (2) For every period of time there is a law – whichever nation wishes, it can increase or decrease its lifespan according to this law.

This law of respite is not some kind of hidden knowledge that no one can fathom. What is the point of devising such a law about which no one can have any knowledge? The very purpose of a law is that those for whom it is drafted should know that if we work according to it, then its outcome will be this, and if we go against it, then its consequence will be that. The Quran has made this reality clear by declaring this period of respite to be *Kitab-un Maloom-un*⁷⁰ (15:4) - that everyone can have knowledge of this law. (The laws about the rise and fall of nations are noted in the Quran with great clarity and in great detail, therefore this law of respite is *Kitab-un Maloom-un*). This is *Sunnat Allah*⁷¹ in which no change can occur (35:43). This is what is called the law of succession and replacement of nations i.e. that law by acting on which a nation becomes established, and then when it violates this thriving programme, decline starts to set in it. If it restores its balance even at this point in time, then its life increases. If it does not do so, then power and authority becomes seized from it and its place is taken by some other nation, which has acquired the potential for power and authority within it according to this Divine law. The *Jamaat e Momineen* who acquired power in the land as a consequence of their *Eimaan* and *Saleh* deeds (24:55) have themselves been addressed that:

If you do not enter the battlefield of life for Jihad, then a grievous penalty will become imposed on you, and that penalty will be that some other nation will take your place, and you will not be able to do anything to Allah – these are the scales defined by Allah... (9:39) See also (11:57)

It is stated in Surah *Muhammad*:

There are also such people among you who, when they are told to keep their possessions freely available to fulfil the needs of others, they manifest miserliness (Bukhl) in this. They should know that the individual who resorts to miserliness, that miserliness goes against his own self – Allah is not dependent on you. You are dependent on Him for the survival and development of your own self. If you turn

⁷⁰ *Kitab-un Maloom-un* – the book whose knowledge is within human reach. (Ed)

⁷¹ *Sunnat Allah* – the way of Allah. (Ed)

away from the correct path of life, then he will substitute another nation in your stead, which will not be like you (it will be better than you). (47:38)

This is because the law for the life and death, and establishment and substitution of nations is that the nation which is in possession of the correct system of life remains in place; the one which institutes a wrong system becomes destroyed, and its place is taken by that nation which is the possessor of a better system. Decisions about the life and death of nations take place according to their ideologies regarding life and their practical system – this is the *Taqdeer* of Allah (the law of Allah) for nations.

6.7 *Kitab* (Book)

We have seen that, whether it is the individual or collective life of people, every event in it takes place according to the law established by Allah. Hardships also appear according to these laws and bounties are also acquired in accordance with them. Man has been provided with knowledge about these laws, and together with this, the choice and intent that if he wishes he can acquire bounties by living life according to these, and if he wishes he can become afflicted with hardships by going against these laws.

But there are some verses in the Quran which are such that if they are viewed superficially, the human mind turns towards another direction. Therefore it is necessary that before moving on, the correct (Quranic) meaning of these verses is made clear. For example, it is stated in Surah *Al-Hadeed* - the common translation is as follows:

No trouble befalls a land or occurs in your lives which is not written down before this in a Book, before We created him in the world...⁷² (57:22)

Or, for example, it is stated in Surah *At-Tauba* that (its translation is given as):

Say to them that nothing will reach us but what Allah has written down for us...⁷³ (9:51)

From these and many other verses of this kind, the meaning which is taken is that whatever event materialises in the world (whether it relates to the individual life of human beings, or their collective life) it is already written down beforehand,

⁷² Translation by Maulana Mahmud ul Hasan.

⁷³ Ditto.

and it appears in the world in accordance with this. From this, terms such as ‘scroll of *Taqdeer*’ and ‘written destiny’ became prevalent, and its consequence is that this belief has become commonplace among us that before the birth of every human being, his destiny (*Qismat*) is written down and is with Allah, and then everything keeps taking place in accordance with this. This scroll can neither be erased, nor is it within the control of anyone that he can avert what is written in his *Qismat*. Allah is regarded as being ‘*Katib-e-Taqdeer*’ (Writer of *Taqdeer*) according to this very belief.

Let us now see what the Quranic meaning of these verses is.

Among Arabs, when dispersed pages were amalgamated, then it was called a *Kitab*. This is the form of a *Kitab* even today. (Moreover) when at the beginning of the Quran it is described as ‘This is the Book’, it is clear from this that it existed in the form of a compiled book in the life of Rasul-ullah himself. Those *Abadeeth* which assert that the Quran was assembled into book form later on are contrary to the evidences presented in the Quran. The form in which we possess the Quran today, it had already been written down and compiled in this same form during the eminent life of Rasul-ullah himself. Now let us return to the original issue.

However, in the basic meanings of the root (*K-T-B*) from which the word *Kitab* is derived, law, or whatever is made mandatory on someone as per law, are also included. This word has appeared at numerous places in the Quran with these same meanings. For example:

- (1) In Surah *An-Nisa*, after listing those relationships with whom *Nikah* is *Haram*, it is stated ‘*Kitab Allabi-Alaikum*’ (4:24). Maulana Mahmud ul Hasan translates this as ‘the command (*Hukm*) of Allah is upon you’ i.e. according to him, here the meaning of *Kitab* is that of a command. We have previously noted that the word *Qanun* (law) does not appear anywhere in the Quran. The word ‘*Hukm*’ generally appears in its place. The meaning of *Hukm* is that of decision, and the decision or *Hukm* which is permanent and immutable is called law (*Qanun*). For example, this decision of the government that traffic should flow on the left side is called a national law because this command is not for one time only, it is permanent and is across the board. In the same way, this decision of Allah that fire provides heat is not a temporary decision, it is permanent and immutable, that is why it has acquired the form of a law. This is the same position of the Quranic commands because they are both permanent and immutable. Therefore the meaning of *Kitab Allabi-Alaikum* in verse (4:24) mentioned above will be that this is the law of Allah for you.

- (2) In Surah *Al-Baqarah*, in connection with *Nikah* with divorced women, the translation by Maulana Mahmud ul Hasan is as follows:

...and do not form the intention for Nikah until the time that Iddah⁷⁴ reaches its defined (Kitab) limit...(2:235)

Here the translation of *Kitab* has been done as what is defined (*Iddah*) i.e. that *Iddah* which has been laid down by Allah – this will be called *Hukm* or law.

- (3) *Salaat* is a duty for *Momineen* at an appointed time (4:103).
(4) It is noted about the Quran that it contains established laws (98:3).
(5) *Qasas*⁷⁵ has been declared a duty on you (2:178).
(6) Fasting has been decreed for you (2:183).
(7) War has been declared to be a duty on you (2:216).
(8) In Surah *An-Nisa* it is stated regarding orphan females that you do not give them whatever is defined for them according to the law (4:127).
(9) In Surah *Anbiya* it is stated:

We had noted this (Kitab) in the Zabur⁷⁶ after ethical instructions, that the inheritors of the land will be those servants who will possess the ability to inherit the land. (21:105)

The meaning of *Kitab* here is very clear. The law of Allah is that power in the land (government) is acquired by that nation which possesses the potential to manage worldly affairs. If a state is acquired on the basis of ability, then that will be in accordance with the law of Allah. If it is acquired by deceit (or is just obtained by some incompetent nation) then that will be against the law of Allah.

- (10) The scroll of deeds of nations is also termed as their book. Every nation will be called towards its scroll of deeds, and it will be said to them that whatever you used to do, today you will reap its recompense (45:28). It is obvious that all this will take place according to the Law of Requital of Allah. Allah Himself has termed this as His Own 'Book'. Whatever Our Book states against you is *Haqq* (45:29). See also (20:52).

⁷⁴ *Iddah* – this is the three-month period which divorced women need to wait for before entering into another marriage contract. Its purpose is to establish any pregnancy resulting from the previous marriage. See (65:1, 65:4) (Ed)

⁷⁵ *Qasas* – compensation for manslaughter when a death has occurred in error. (Ed)

⁷⁶ *Zabur* – the name of the Book containing the *Wabi* of Allah revealed to Dawood (David). (Ed)

6.8 The Book of Nature

It is stated in Surah *Al-An'am* that whatever is on the land and water, Allah has knowledge of it. Every leaf which falls from a tree, Allah knows about it too. Whatever seed there is in the darknesses of the earth, even invisible, green or withered, whatever is there, it is all included in a *Kitab-e-Mubeen* (6:59). Obviously here the meaning of *Kitab-e-Mubeen* is the book of nature. In other words, the laws about the things which are dispersed throughout the external universe are called the laws of nature.

It is stated in Surah *Al-e-Imran* that one part of the Quran consists of those commands which are noted in precise terms. They are called established instructions (*Mubkama'tun*), and another part is about abstract realities which are presented in the style of metaphors. It is declared about *Mubkama'tun* that these are *Umm-ul-Kitab* (3:7) i.e. the true foundation of the law. It has already been explained that the laws about the universe are devised in the domain of *Amr* of Allah, and are brought into action in the domain of *Khalq*. From this respect it is stated '*Wa Inda Hu Umm-ul-Kitab*' (13:39) i.e. the fountainhead of the origin and basis of the laws is with Allah, namely, in the domain of *Amr*. About the Quran itself, it is stated that this is with you in the form of Arabic words and shapes, but it is with Us in the *Umm-ul-Kitab* (Mother of the Book) (43:4).

By *Umm-ul-Kitab*, or the domain of *Amr*, is meant the knowledge of Allah, outside of which there is no thing. In Surah *Al-Hajj* it is stated:

Do you not know that whatever is in the highs and lows of the universe, Allah has knowledge of it all. It is all 'in the Book'. (22:70)

At another place it is called the *Kitab-e-Mubeen* (27:75).

6.9 The Stages of *Mustaudah* and *Mustaqar*

Whatever event takes place within the universe, after passing through various stages it reaches its final destination. The Quran has called these initial phases as *Mustaudah'u* i.e. that journey in which the previous stage hands over its 'passenger' to the second stage, and when it reaches the final stage then this is called its '*Mustaqar*' i.e. its final abode. It is stated in Surah *Al-Qamar*:

Every Amr (matter) is a Mustaqar. (54:3)

At another place it is stated:

Every message has a Mustaqar. (6:67)

And in Surah *Hud*:

*Allah has knowledge about the Mastaudah of everything, as well as the Mustaqar.
These are all noted in the Kitab-e-Mubeen. (11:6)*

The *Mustaqar* of an event is when it appears in a tangible form before us. As far as the phases of its *Mustaudah* are concerned, some of these will be connected to the domain of *Amr*. After this, when this '*Amr*' enters the phase of the domain of *Khalq*, then it will fall under the obedience of the law of cause and effect. In this, man will have a grasp of the phases of its *Mustaudah* according to his level of knowledge. It is possible that there are certain phases of the *Mustaudah* of some matter which have not yet come within the domain of human knowledge.⁷⁷ After this, when discoveries by man keep advancing, he will also gain knowledge of those links of cause and effect which are up until now hidden under a veil.

The intermediate interval between a human deed and its effect appearing tangibly before us (which is called the period of respite) is, in fact, phases of *Mustaudah*, which remain obscured from the eyes of man. He can witness the outcome at that time when it appears in a tangible form before him. This will be its *Mustaqar*. In other words, the consequence of every act of man begins to establish simultaneously with it, but he becomes aware of it at that time when it acquires a tangible and visible form. It is stated in Surah *Anbiya*:

Many were the habitations which We destroyed because of their injustice and tyranny, and in their stead another nation arose. They were continuing on their path of injustice and oppression and since not a hair on their head was being harmed, hence they thought they were not accountable to anyone. But in reality it was that period during which their deeds were establishing their consequences intangibly, and were continuously moving towards Mustaqar. (21:11-12)

When Our punishment appeared before them in a visible form, they began to flee from it in order to save themselves, but Our Law of Requitall called out to them that now you cannot escape anywhere from it. Halt, and return to those abodes of luxury of yours based on the hard work of others, in which you used to revel. Go there! so that you can be questioned about whose earnings were these from which you used to purchase your lavish accoutrements in this way. At that time they will wail and shriek a thousand times, but their wailing and shrieking will not be of any help to them.

⁷⁷ For example, details about the human psyche relating to the development of the human self are not yet within the domain of modern psychology. (Ed)

They will be dealt with in such a way, like that of a harvested field, or an extinguished flame. (21:13-15)

We were saying that Allah has stated about the *Mustaudab* and *Mustaqar* of every *Amr* that it is in the '*Kitab-e-Mubeen*' (11:6). From these explanations it is clear that:

- (1) The meaning of *Kitab* is a law or code of laws.
- (2) All laws are determined and finalised in the domain of *Amr*. In this stage this is called *Kitab Allah* i.e. Divine knowledge.
- (3) And in the domain of *Kbalq* these same laws appear before us in the shape of the laws of nature and the Quran. These are also called *Kitab Allah*, with this proviso that knowledge of these laws can be acquired by man, because this is a *Kitab-e-Mubeen* (clear Book) or *Kitab-e-Maloom* (known Book).

6.10 Important Verses Related to the Issue of *Taqdeer*

Following these explanations we come to those verses which were quoted earlier, and for the explanation of which the Quranic meaning of *Kitab* was presented. First of all look at these verses of Surah *Al-Hadeed* due to which individuals with a superficial gaze become entangled in misconceptions as a result of the correct meaning not being before them. Maulana Mahmud ul Hasan has translated these verses as follows:

*No calamity comes to a land or in your lives which is not written down by Us in a Book before We create you in the world. Undoubtedly this is easy for Allah, so that you do not worry about what does not come into your hand, and do not exult in that which He has bestowed upon you. For Allah is not pleased with the one who boasts and is arrogant.*⁷⁸ (57:22-23)

And the conclusion which is drawn from this is that every trouble yet to come is predetermined. This has been pre-written in everyone's *Qismat* in advance by the Writer of *Taqdeer*, and no matter what a man may do, it is bound to come. And when the reality is this, that man can do whatever comes to his mind, the predestined hardship simply cannot be turned away, then what is the point of

⁷⁸ The translation of the Quran by Abdullah Yusuf Ali also presents this as: 'No misfortune can happen on earth or in your souls but is recorded in a decree before We bring it into existence: that is truly easy for Allah. In order that you may not despair on matters that pass you by, nor exult over favours conferred upon you, for Allah loves not any vainglorious boaster.' (57:22-23). This is not very different from the one by Maulana Mahmud ul Hasan quoted by the author. (Ed)

crying and causing to weep over it – man should remain sitting with gratitude and patience - this is called ‘contentment with destiny’ which is a symbol of pious servants of Allah. Similarly, if bounties become available to man, he should also not become boastful regarding these, because they are also not the outcome of his personal skill and expertise. These are written in his *Qismat*, that is why he acquires them – what skill of his is there in this for him to boast about!

6.11 There is Nothing Contradictory in the Quran

In the first place, see how the whole structure of the Law of Requit of Allah, which is the basis and foundation of Deen, comes tumbling down according to this meaning of these verses - these decrees of Allah that man only gets that for which he makes an effort; every hardship is brought about through man’s own hands; Allah neither humiliates anyone without cause, nor empties His treasure chests of bounties for nothing; all this is the outcome of the hard work and effort of man himself – these, and hundreds of other decrees of Allah become declared as (Allah forbid) lies. Hence, due to just this basic reasoning, this meaning of these verses is not found to be correct. Together with this, also keep this reality in mind that Allah has presented this evidence of the Quran being from Him that there is nothing contradictory in it (4:82). If this is accepted that on the one hand Allah has declared that every hardship is brought about by man’s own hands, and at another place has declared that every hardship is predetermined in which man has no choice, then what greater contradiction and inconsistency can there be than this? Therefore any such meaning of these verses which differs from other verses of the Quran cannot be declared as being correct. Now let us see what is the correct meaning of these verses.

You have already noted the meaning of ‘*Kitab*’ i.e. the law of Allah. In light of these meanings, the interpretation of this verse (57:22) will be:

Whatever event takes place in the external universe or in the human world itself, there is a law already defined for it. Events in the external universe, and the hardships and troubles in human life, all materialise according to the law of cause and effect established by Allah. And this matter was not at all difficult for Allah to devise these kinds of laws. (57:22)

Furthermore, also understand that whereas troubles occur due to the law established by Him, along with this He has also made such laws by acting on which these difficulties become alleviated. If the law is that putting a finger into fire will lead to intense pain, then along with this He has also made this law that

if you apply a certain ointment to the burnt finger, the pain will subside. Hence, if a loss is suffered due to going against the law, there is no need to despair – Allah has also made such a law through which this loss can be assuaged.

If you have suffered a loss due to one *Taqdeer* (law) of Allah, then (in the words of Caliph Umer) move from this *Taqdeer* towards another *Taqdeer* of Allah. Thus there is no need to shed tears over incidents and troubles, the alternative path is lying open before you: start treading on it, rectification of the harm will ensue as a result. The one who should be in despair is he who either has no knowledge at all about why this has happened, or it has come from the direction of some oppressive and tyrannical ruler against whom man does not dare to stand up. Hence what else can he do other than sit back, saying ‘*Sabr* and *Shukr*’! Remember! Despair and helplessness exist in such a system where there is no law and procedure established, where the situation is such that, like the royal decree, if it is wished then the one offering greetings is relegated to prison, and when the mood is good, the one uttering a profanity is awarded with lands and wealth - in such a system the situation is truly such that man sinks down holding his head in despair and hopelessness at every hardship. But it does not happen like this in the kingdom of Allah – there, a procedure and law is established for every matter and the paths of rectification are open for every mishap. There is neither injustice nor deceit, nor lawlessness, nor the situation of some kind of ‘royal decree’ there. Hence, in the kingdom of such a Ruler, why should someone despair over some mishap? If some loss has occurred, then look to its cause, and after that see what measures He has defined for its remedy, act according to these, the loss will be remedied.

Similarly, if someone has acquired some prosperity, then he, too, should not think that since I am the courtier of the king, hence, being pleased with me, he has conferred this reward on me. This is indeed what happens with the monarchies of the world but this is not what happens in the kingdom of Allah. There, rewards are also the outcome of the balanced deeds of man himself. This is the correct meaning of these verses.

It is stated in Surah *Al-Anfal* that it so happened in a battle that instead of defeating the enemy completely, many of its soldiers were captured, so that compensation could be obtained for them. This decision was not in accordance with the aim of Deen. But since this was merely an error of judgement, and an unwitting error, therefore it was considered sufficient to serve a mild admonishment to the *Jamaat e Momineen* on this. In this connection it was stated that (Maulana Mahmud ul Hasan translates this as):

If it was not a thing which Allah had already written (Kitab-un min-Allah) then you would have received a severe chastisement in obtaining this. (8:68)

Its correct meaning is clear – *Kitab-un min-Allah* here means that law of Allah which is noted in the Quran i.e. this law that a mistake which is committed due to an error or omission can be overlooked – hence the meaning of the verse under view is that whatever you people did, that crime was such that you should have received a punishment for it, but because this law has already been given in the Quran that admonishment is sufficient for an error or omission, hence you will not be punished.

It is stated in Surah *At-Tauba* that the state of these hypocrites is such that if your circumstances are favourable, then this matter becomes very vexatious for them (that why did you gain prosperities), but if the circumstances become unfavourable and you are facing hardships, then they become overjoyed and they dissociate themselves from you declaring that we had already taken certain precautions so that we, too, do not become trapped in hardships together with them. After this it is stated (this is translated as follows by Maulana Mahmud ul Hasan):

Say to them! 'Nothing will come to us except what is written by Allah for us. He Alone is our Benefactor, and Muslims should put their trust only in Allah.' (9:51)

The correct meaning of this is that, say to them that whatever events we have to face, neither any goodwill of yours is included in it, nor any ill will. Here, every matter manifests according to the Law of Requit of Allah, hence whatever hardships we come across are those which are inevitable according to this law. And this law is so firm and immutable that nothing can go against it; we have complete trust in its concreteness, therefore these kinds of remarks of yours can have no influence on us whatsoever. The meaning of *Ma Kata'ballah-Hu'lana* is not 'whatever Allah has already written for us in our destiny', its meaning is - that law which Allah has established for us - whatever is allowed for you as per the law of Allah, go and make an effort to seek it (2:187).⁷⁹ It is obvious that if the meaning of *Ma Katab-Allahu'lakum* is taken to be 'whatever Allah has destined (written down) for you', then the command to make an effort and seek it becomes meaningless. What is the point of making an effort to acquire something which has been predetermined by Allah beforehand? That will, in any case, be received, but for that thing for which a law has been established, it will be essential to make an effort to desire it and acquire it. As is noted at another place:

⁷⁹ The Arabic of the verse is: *Wabtaghu Ma Katab-Allahu'lakum...* (Ed)

Allah has established this law that We and Our messengers will surely prevail (be victorious)...(58:21)

The pages of the Quran are sparkling with details of the extent to which the messengers had to patiently endeavour and struggle for this victory. It is noted in Surah *Al-A'raf* that the people of Musa entreated:

'Write down' for us the delights of this world, and also those of the hereafter...
(7:156)

In reply it was stated:

...These bounties are 'written down' for those who practice Taqwa (are Muttaqeen).
(7:156)

From these elucidations it is clear that *Ma Katab-Allahu'lana* does not mean that which Allah has already written down. Allah has established laws beforehand, and after that the scroll of deeds of individuals and nations is written concurrently according to these laws, and it is also according to these that they receive bounties as well as hardships.

6.12 *Bi-Izn-Allah* (as per Allah's Law)

It is commonly declared among us that not even a leaf can move without the command of Allah. There is no verse regarding this topic in the Quran, though there are certainly verses of this kind in which it is stated and (for example) which are translated as follows - that no trouble can reach you without the command of Allah (64:11). It is obvious that if this is indeed its meaning, then all those verses which have been quoted in the previous pages will be refuted. In this connection, let us at least bring to mind the following one verse among many, in which it is stated:

Whatever trouble descends on you, that is also brought about through your own hands... (42:30)

And then see that (if the meaning of verse (64:11) is taken to be that whatever trouble comes, it comes due to the command of Allah, then) there will be a glaring contradiction between these two verses, and then together with that, note this proclamation of the Quran that the evidence for its being from Allah is that there is no contradictory matter in it.

The words of verse (42:30) are such that there can be no other translation of it. It is absolutely clear in its meaning. Hence, it is obvious that in verse (64:11) the meaning of *Bi-Iẓn-Allah* will be something else. Let us now see what the meanings of *Bi-Iẓn-Allah* are.

6.13 The Meaning of *Izn*

The basic meaning of *Iẓn'un* is that of an announcement, *Aẓaan* and *Mo'aẓẓan* come from this. In addition, its meanings also include permission and knowledge (*Ilm*). The meaning of *Iẓn-Allah* is also 'knowledge of Allah'. Imam Raghīb Isfahani, a linguistic scholar of synonyms, has said that the difference between *Iẓn* and *Ilm* is that *Iẓn* is used where the choice and will of the one possessing *Ilm* is also included. We have seen that when the *Ilm* and intent (*Amr*) of Allah operates in the domain of *Khalq*, then it acquires the shape of a law. And as we have documented regarding *Hukm*, when a *Hukm* is issued on a permanent basis and is immutable, then it becomes a law. This is the same case for permission: when permission is given for something on a permanent basis, then it will be called a law in our terminology. The term *Iẓn-Allah* has appeared in the Quran with this very meaning, for example:

- (1) It is stated in Surah *Al-Hajj* that regarding these people on whom tyranny has been unleashed, the extent of these tyrannies is such that though these people have migrated from there (Makkah) and arrived in Madina, the opponents have not left them alone even here. They are on their way to attack them with a large army, so then these people are also granted permission (*Iẓn*) to fight against them (22:39).

It is obvious that this permission for war was not just confined to these people and was not an interim injunction, rather its meaning was that whenever and wherever such circumstances arise, Muslims will have permission to take up arms i.e this was not a temporary permission, but a permanent one (predicated on such circumstances). In other words, the situation will not be that when these circumstances arise, Muslims will supplicate to Allah and when authorisation is granted from His direction, then they will raise their swords. This was the reason that when the *Jamaat e Momineen* fought against the Jews (in the Battle of Khyber), and cut down those date palms of theirs which were becoming a hindrance in the path of the battle, the Quran stated that you did all this *Bi-Iẓn-Allah* (59:5), although there is no mention in the Quran of any separate permission (*Iẓn*) at that time to carry this out.

6.13.1 The Law Relating to Agriculture

- (2) Clear physical laws exist relating to agriculture – the land should be such in which there is potential for growth i.e. it should be fertile, and if it is cultivated according to a procedure then this will result in a good harvest. In this connection it is stated in the Quran that fertile land produces a good harvest with the *Izn* of its *Rabb* (7:58). It is patently obvious that *Izn* here means the laws relating to agriculture in which the soil being fertile has a fundamental role.

6.13.2 The Law Relating to Rain

- (3) Regarding rain, this fact is clear that it falls according to a specific physical law (it is a consequence of acquiring knowledge of this law that man has now become capable of creating artificial rain). It is stated in the Quran that do these people not ponder on this, that whatever is in the earth, Allah has subjugated it to your control, and how ships keep floating on the seas according to His *Amr*, and He keeps the clouds suspended in the atmosphere, so that these do not rain down without His *Izn* (22:65). It is obvious that the meaning of *Izn* here is that law of Allah according to which the vapours (clouds) floating around in the atmosphere turn into water due to a certain level of cold, and since water is heavier than air, instead of remaining suspended in the atmosphere, these fall onto the land. This is what is called rain. Therefore, when it will be said that rain comes down with *Izn-Allah*, this will mean that it falls according to the law established by Allah.
- (4) The *Mujabideen* fighting in the path of Allah were those who had pledged their lives into the Hand of Allah. Their aim in life was to proclaim *Haqq* and truth, even if they had to lay down their lives for this. These were the lofty goals and sacred sentiments on the basis of which they used to remain unwavering with steadfastness and determination like a rock in the battlefield. These were those characteristics of theirs due to which it was declared that these *Mujabideen* can vanquish even ten times their number in opponents – and even if they have a shortage of equipment and arms, they will still overwhelm twice their number with the *Izn* of Allah (8:65-66). What is this '*Izn-Allah*' other than that when these characteristics become created within you, then you will overcome even twice your

number – and whenever and wherever such a condition becomes created, its outcome will be the same. This is called a law. This is that very law according to which it is stated that a *Jamaat* consisting of only a few overcomes opponents who are numerically superior (2:249). Here, too, the meaning of *Bi-Iẓn-Allah* is clear, and at the end of the verse, by stating that Allah is with those who remain steadfast (*Sabireen*), the matter becomes further clarified that Allah is with those people who exercise perseverance and resoluteness.

After this verse, it is stated that when the army of Talut came out to confront Jalut, Talut supplicated, O our *Rabb!* Impart on us the nectar of steadfastness and resoluteness, so that no tremor affects our steps in the battlefield, and in this way bestow victory and success on us over our opponents (2:250). After this it is noted that this army defeated the army of Jalut with the *Iẓn* of Allah (2:251). From here the meaning of *Iẓn-Allah* appears before us even more clearly.

6.14 The Law About Acceptance of Eimaan

The teaching of the Quran about *Kufr* and *Eimaan* is that (i) there is no kind of compulsion in the matter of Deen (2:256) and (ii) the teaching based on *Haqq* and truth from the direction of Allah has appeared clearly before you – whoever among you wishes, can opt for it; whoever wishes can reject it (18:29).

Like a compassionate friend, it was the heartfelt desire of Rasul-ullah that people should save themselves from destruction by abandoning their wrong path. This sincere desire of his used to acquire such an intensity that Allah had to declare that it appears as if you will fret yourself to death in this anxiety that why do these people not accept *Eimaan*. In relation to this, in Surah *Yunus* he is told that if Allah had wished that mankind should tread on only one path, willingly or unwillingly, then where was the difficulty for Him to do this. He would have created them devoid of choice and intent (just like animals) but He did not do this. He has bestowed the ability of selection and choice on man, so that he himself can adopt whichever path his heart desires. This is Our law in this respect. But you desire that people should be forced to become *Momin* (10:99). Remember! No individual can accept *Eimaan* without the *Iẓn* of Allah (10:100).

If the meanings of *Iẓn* here are taken to be command or permission (i.e. this is said that no individual can accept *Eimaan* without the command of Allah), then not only will this matter (that will you force people) be against it - because when the situation is that *Eimaan* becomes conditional on Allah's command or

permission, then man will become declared as being constrained – this will, in fact, be against the whole teaching of the Quran. Hence, the meaning here of *Iẓn-Allah* is the established law of Allah, and that law is that there is no coercion or compulsion in the matter of Deen. Whoever wishes should accept *Eimaan*, and whoever wishes should adopt *Kufr*. Now as far as this is concerned, that how can man employ his choice and intent correctly, the next part of the verse has made this clear by stating that:

...For those people who do not make use of their intellect and reasoning, the matter does not become clear to them, they remain confused. (10:100)

Therefore *Iẓn-Allah* (His law) is this - that people should make use of intellect and reasoning, and should select a path for themselves with their choice and intent.

6.15 A Strange State of Affairs?

It is described in Surah *Al-Mujadilah* that these opponents and hypocrites who keep conducting secret meetings and intrigues, it is *Shaitan*⁸⁰ who incites them to do this. From this his aim is to make the *Jamaat e Momineen* disheartened, but he (and all others) should know that *Shaitan* cannot cause any harm to reach them without *Iẓn-Allah* (58:10) – if the meaning here of *Iẓn-Allah* is taken to be the command or permission of Allah, then the meaning of this verse will be that whatever *Shaitan* also does, he does it according to the command or permission of Allah. From this the whole concept of *Shaitan* becomes overturned because his very core (permanent trait) is described as being that he adopts rebellion against the command of Allah and displays disobedience. Therefore, here too the meaning of *Iẓn-Allah* is the law of Allah, and the meaning of the verse is that the goal of these opponents who are engaged in these plots and clandestine consultations is to cause harm to the *Jamaat e Momineen*. But you need to maintain conviction in this fact that no one can cause harm to anyone against the law of Allah. Keep His law in front of your eyes and whatever its requirements are, keep on fulfilling these, no harm will be able to reach you. The mode of life of *Momineen* is that they have complete trust in the concreteness of the law of Allah (58:10).

After these explanations let us now examine those verses in which it is stated that no trouble comes without the *Iẓn* of Allah.

⁸⁰ What is *Shaitan*? For this refer to my book titled, *The Human Self and Iblees*, or the relevant topic in *Lughat-ul-Quran*.

6.16 No Trouble Comes Without the *Izn* of Allah

In the battle of Uhad, the *Jamaat e Momineen* were making great headway until a platoon of archers abandoned their position by disobeying the instructions of their commander, due to which their victory turned into a defeat and they had to bear a severe loss. Illustrating this incident in Surah *Al-e-Imran*, it is stated:

You were subduing the enemy under your sword according to the law of Allah, you were gaining the upper hand, and in this way that covenant of Allah was becoming fulfilled which He had made with you, but precisely at that moment your steps faltered. In the incident confronting you, you began engaging in mutual disagreement, and (what your leader had commanded) you disobeyed it, even though victory and success, which was your dear aim, was before your very eyes. Do you know why this happened? Because some among you sought immediate benefits and some remained whose eyes were focused on the benefits of the future. Thus, your attention turned away from the enemy towards another direction. (You were defeated and) in this way the matter became clear to you (after this you realised your mistake and returned to your location and you achieved success, and thus) the effects of your mistake were erased. This is the law of Allah, that by making one mistake man is not deprived of successes forever. Whenever, after realising his mistake, he returns to the correct path, he benefits from the favours of Allah. (3:152)

Later on, when you started to ponder regarding these losses, this thought inevitably arose in your heart that how did this happen, who is responsible for it? In response, Allah announced, O Rasul! Say to them that all this happened due to your own selves, you yourselves are responsible for this (3:165). After this it is stated:

That day whatever events transpired in the battlefield, whatever hardships you suffered, all these were Bi-Izn-Allah... (3:166)

In light of the foregoing explanations, the meaning of *Bi-Izn-Allah* becomes so transparent that nothing further remains to be said about it: 'Whatever hardships you had to bear, those were due to your own error, and all this occurred precisely according to the law of Allah.'

6.17 Guidance by Keeping the Law in View

And in light of these same explanations, look at this verse of Surah *Al-Taghabun* in which it is stated that:

Whatever trouble comes to you, it is Bi-Izn-Allah... (64:11)

In other words, it comes according to the law of Allah. After this, four such words have appeared in the Quran in verse (64:11) as a result of which our visionary gaze becomes illuminated and sparkles. It is proclaimed that every event takes place in accordance with the law of Allah:

... The individual who has certainty in the truth of the laws of Allah, his heart receives such guidance... (64:11)

Which means that through this, by paying attention to the links of cause and effect, he estimates which way the wind is blowing, what is likely to happen in the near future, and what is the possibility of countering it. By having conviction in the truth of the laws of Allah, and the necessary information about their connotations, the condition of man becomes such that (in the words of Iqbal):

*The scene which is still hidden behind a heavenly veil,
Its reflection is within the mirror of my intellect.*

It should be made clear that from this is not meant some 'prophecy', rather the aim is to reach some conclusion through the use of intellect and reasoning by contemplating on the links of cause and effect. This is why Iqbal has said 'mirror of intellect'. The belief of those who prophesy is that until the mirror of intellect is not shattered and ground into powder, man simply cannot reach that status of spirituality where he obtains news of the unseen. What more can we say about them other than that:

O ignorant one! What do you know about the status of Muhammad of Arabia?

This was, in any case, an aside. We were saying that according to the Quran, *Izn-Allah* means the established law of Allah which is both permanent and immutable.

Note - at this point we have carried out a discussion in principle about *Izn-Allah*. Wherever the words *Izn-Allah* have appeared in connection with other matters, a description about them will be given at those respective places.

7 Chapter 7 - Good and Evil

From the study of the history of human thought, this reality appears before us that among the issues of life, no issue has confused man as much as the issue of good and evil has baffled and stumped him. The problem of good and evil is, in reality, an intrinsic part of the issue of *Taqdeer*, therefore this problem has not just been the intellectual and visionary focus of only philosophers, it has also been the centre of attention of religionists. In this connection, this conundrum has been presented with intense persuasion, ascribed to St. Thomas Aquinas, when he states that:

If the existence of evil is as a result of the will of God, then He cannot be absolute good, and if evil exists despite the will of God, then God cannot be declared to be omnipotent.

Since in this book we have maintained this *modus operandi* that we will not entangle ourselves in philosophical arguments or intellectual discourses around issues related to *Taqdeer*, instead by discussing these issues in simple language, we will suffice by presenting the Quranic teachings about it, hence, we will not go into those details about what human thinking was in this regard (from the time of the Greek philosophers to the modern era)⁸¹ and what was asserted. Here we will only illustrate what those dilemmas are from the perspective of human thought at an ordinary level, due to being stuck in which the human mind has continued to be trapped in this tussle for thousands of years, and with this background we will describe what solution the Quran presents regarding these complexities.

7.1 The Sentiments of Sensitive Hearts

It is well known that Buddha was the son of a Rajah, and the crown prince of a state. Though he was a prince, nature had endowed him with a very compassionate heart (and a sensitive disposition). He saw that a cat gobbles up a rat, and a dog pounces on a cat. The chick of a hen is seized by an eagle, and a lion rips apart a deer and devours it. Then he witnessed that a poor man dies a slow death from starvation and an impoverished invalid dies in agonies of pain –

⁸¹ Those readers who have interest in this, should read my book titled, *Insaan nae Kiya Socha?* (What Did Man Think).

his sensitive heart could not tolerate this, and from this he reached the conclusion that this world is simply an abode of afflictions and hardships, and to escape these afflictions and hardships, there is no remedy other than that man should abandon the world, and abandon it to such an extent that no desire even should emerge in his heart. When such a condition is created from cutting himself off from the world, then he will enter a state of total absence of sentiments which is called *Nirvaan*, and in this way he will achieve salvation (*Mukti*) from worldly afflictions and hardships. Later on, these impressions of his acquired the status of philosophy, which is continuing to overshadow the human mind for the last two and a half thousand years.

7.2 Detestation of the Material World

Since earth was the name for the world of water and land i.e matter, hence from this the maxim was derived that matter is a quagmire in which the human soul has become severely trapped. The objective of human life is to release the soul from this imprisonment by matter. The technique for this, too, is to withdraw from society, and this goal can be achieved through various meditations and privations. This *Maslak* is called *Tasawwuf*, which is continuing to prevail in every nation of the world, although its name has been different among different nations.

7.3 The Creed of Reincarnation (*Tanasakh*)

When Hindu philosophers pondered on this question that why is it that some people in the world live a life of extreme comfort and luxury while others suffer hardships and troubles all their life, they reached this conclusion that those people who had performed good deeds in their previous life receive prosperities and bounties in the present life; those who performed evil deeds remain afflicted by hardships. This ideology was, in fact, another name for Transmigration of the Soul, which was a creation of Greek thought, and from where Hindu religionists borrowed it.

7.4 The Christian Belief of Original Sin

Some thinkers, when they witnessed that lies, deceits, stealing, injustice, and cruelty is commonplace in the world, reached this conclusion that the very nature of man happens to be evil. Christianity moved one step further and established the edifice of Original Sin on this basis. It stated that the effect of the sin which was committed by Adam and his wife in paradise is that every human child comes into this world already tainted with this original sin, and this contamination is the root cause of all moral evils of human beings. The only way to remove this is for man to acquire belief in the crucifixion and atonement of Jesus Christ.

7.5 The Duality of Zoroastrians

Persian thinkers said that no, this is not the way it is - the matter is like this, that two permanent and mutually opposing forces are at war with each other right from the beginning in the world. One is the force of *Zulmat* (darkness) which is called *Abarman*, and the other is the force of *Nur* (light), which is called *Yazdan*. A battle is continually raging between these two, which is known as the tussle between good and evil. This Dualism is the religion of ancient Persian Zoroastrians, which is attributed to Zarathustra⁸². It is this very battle between opposing forces in the universe which gave birth to the German philosopher Hegel's doctrine of Dialecticism⁸³, and on which the structure of the economic doctrine of Marx is raised.

7.6 Schopenhauer's Philosophy of Pessimism

One ideology is that there are simply no opposing forces in the world – those forces which we consider as being opposing, the state of their opposition is the way in which we say, for example, right and left, up or down. These are merely relative terms. From this aspect the view of one school of thought is that evil does not exist in the world, there is only good. Contrary to this, another school of thought (whose Imam is Schopenhauer) holds the belief that the world is only evil, good simply does not exist in it - this doctrine is, in reality, simply an echo from the past of the ideology of Buddha. The individual who has a fertile mind

⁸² Zoroaster, also known as Zarathustra, is regarded as the spiritual founder of Zoroastrianism. He is said to have been an Iranian prophet. (Ed)

⁸³ Hegelian dialectic - an interpretive method in which the contradiction between a proposition (thesis) and its antithesis is resolved at a higher level of truth (synthesis). (Ed)

but (unfortunately) his nerves are weak, pessimism then essentially dominates his intellect - this was what happened with Schopenhauer.

One school of thought considers that good and evil do not have an external existence, they are names for those impressions which man deduces from various events. For example, if a windstorm or flood due to rain occurs in some jungle (where no human being lives), we do not call it destruction (*Sharr*), but if that same storm or flood creates havoc in a hamlet, then we term it as evil. Or an even more pertinent example is that of the darkness of night, which is good for a burglar and bad for a traveler – hence, according to them, good and evil are internal perceptions of man, they have no intrinsic existence in themselves.

Briefly, these are those vortices regarding the conundrum of good and evil in which human thought, transfixed by the complexities of magic, is stuck going around in circles for thousands of years, and from which it sees no possibility of extricating itself. The fact is that these convolutions are not created by good and evil, rather these are a creation of the human mind itself. He invents them himself, and when he becomes entangled in their knots, then he starts to wail and shriek that I cannot see any solution for escape from these.

Let us see what guidance the Quran gives us in this respect.

7.7 The Quranic Teaching

First of all, take the events in the external universe which are called natural evil. It is the declaration of the Quran that:

We created not the heavens, the earth, and all that is between but for Haqq... (15:85)

(There are numerous verses on this subject in the Quran). In other words, Allah has created the universe *Bil-Haqq*. The word *Haqq* has many meanings but from the point of view of the topic being discussed, its fundamental meaning is such a thing whose outcome is constructive, not destructive. In contrast to this, the meaning of *Batil* is that which produces destructive outcomes. It becomes clear from this that, according to the Quran, the purpose of all things in the universe and whatever takes place within it is constructive, not destructive. In other words, their outcome is *Khair* (good), not *Sharr* (evil).

We have seen that there are innumerable forces functioning in the universe: these are called the forces of nature, and all of them remain busy operating according to the laws established by Allah. We have also seen that the potential to acquire

knowledge of these laws has been kept within man. As he continues to acquire knowledge of these laws, the forces of nature will fall within his control, until one day he will harness all of these forces. Allah has proclaimed that:

*And He has subjected to you, as from Him, all that is in the heavens and on earth. . .
(45:13)*

In other words, the whole universe has been subjugated to man. Until such a time that man does not gain knowledge of the law about some force of nature (called scientific discoveries), that force remains uncontrolled and unharnessed, and becomes a cause of destruction for man. When he harnesses it by acquiring knowledge about it, thousands of constructive tasks can be derived from it. In the era of infancy of the human intellect, when he had not yet acquired knowledge about the laws of nature, all the forces of nature were unbridled, rather a cause of destruction and devastation for him. As he started to gain knowledge about them and continued to harness them, instead of being harmful, they kept becoming beneficial.

7.8 Appreciation of Scholars of Thought and Research

Those things were created to produce beneficial outcomes but man did not know the technique to obtain benefits from them. The Quran has declared these men of conviction and thought and scientists conducting research and investigations as deserving of admiration, who through continuous reflection and reasoning, and sustained research and enquiry, provide the practical evidence of the truth about the claim of the universal forces following *Haqq*. It is stated in Surah *Al-e-Imran*:

For those people who make use of intellect and vision, in the creation of the universe and the alternation of day and night there are great signs to reach reality i.e. for those men of intelligence and vision, and those possessing thought and insight, who in every aspect of life, standing, sitting, lying down, keep the laws of Allah in their sight, and reflect on the created composition of the universe, and following their research based on their understanding and vision, declare fully convinced that, O our Rabb! You have not created anything in the universe for the production of destructive outcomes. Your Being is far above this, that You will create this system of the universe without purpose, and for the production of destructive effects (this is our deficiency of knowledge and short-sightedness that we do not make use of research, and by remaining ignorant of the beneficial aspects of the universe in this way, keep suffering losses and calamities). Bestow this ability on us that (by carrying out

informed research and practical experimentation, we obtain precise benefits from the things of the universe, and in this way) we remain protected from the destructive aspects of life.

The nations which remain deprived of the benefits of the things of the universe by not conducting this kind of research, the fields of their efforts and endeavours turn into ashes, and they live a life of ruin and humiliation – and it is obvious that such humiliated and ruined nations do not have any helper and companion. (3:190-192)

Those who reflect and reason on the system of the universe in this way are declared to be *Ulema* (scholars) by the Quran. (35:27-28)

7.9 The Forces of Nature

‘O *Rabb!* You have not created all this as *Batil* (3:191). For the practical proof of this, an outcome of research is that those immense forces of nature, which due to being violent and unbridled used to cause colossal destructions as a result of which man used to consider that they are only evil (*Sharr*), when man brought them under his control then they became the source for thousands of benefits and began to be seen as only good (*Khair*). When rainwater is not within the control of man, it becomes a flood bringing destruction, but when man confines it within its shores, then it becomes a messenger of fresh life for barren land and a supporter of life. If the flames of a fire are uncontrolled, then town after town is turned into a heap of ashes, but when it is brought under human control then it becomes completely beneficial. Snakes, scorpions, and hundreds of other different kinds of poisonous animals etc. which were not seen as anything other than death flying about and harm walking around, and regarding which no one understood why Allah had created them, such medicines are now being prepared from their very poisons which are the cure for hundreds of deadly diseases. A living and tangible example is that same individual who is writing these lines at this moment in time, and is presenting his reflections to his readers. The story is that in 1964 I underwent an operation. Though the operation was successful, after this, due to a mishap, there was such a severe haemorrhage that it could not be stemmed. The consultant⁸⁴, who apart from being an expert in his field, was an embodiment of sincerity and affection, did everything in his power but all to no avail. The situation reached such a point that I became unconscious, and relatives as well as the doctor himself became hopeless about my life. My breathing became

⁸⁴ Dr Abdul Wadud – my respected friend – what a great companion he is!

uneven and as a last resort, the doctor administered an injection. The haemorrhage halted, I opened my eyes, and I gradually returned from the desolate plains of death to the valleys of life. I later asked the doctor what was that elixir of life which served as the resurrecting remedy. He told me that the name of this medicine is Reptilase, which is prepared from the venom of a snake. On hearing this, this part of verse (3:191) burst forth spontaneously from my lips: 'O *Rabb!* You have not created it (this universe) as *Batil*.'

Iqbal has stated from the lips of Adam, in the conversation between Allah and Adam, that:

*You created stone, I turned it into a mirror,
You created venom, I turned it into an elixir.*

If you wish to seek living evidence of 'I turned it into an elixir', then go to any pharmacy. You will find about ninety per cent of the packaging with 'poison' written on it, and every medicine among these will be the treatment for some disease or other, and in this way, every venom will be declaring from its lips that, O *Rabb*, You did not create me for destructive results. This was the short-sightedness of man that he had viewed it as such.

7.10 Congenital Deformities in Children

This was the same inadequacy of human knowledge due to which he could not even understand why some children are born disabled, even blind. He tried his best to guess, and finally reached this conclusion that these diseases and disabilities are the consequence of some (evil deeds) from their previous life – what more could he possibly think beyond this? But when man advanced in scientific research, he also discovered the secret of these occurrences. Consequently, the state of developed nations is such that they first of all medically examine the couple intending to marry to check that they are not suffering from any such condition which may be transmitted congenitally to the child. After becoming satisfied from this aspect, they keep monitoring the foetus in the mother's womb and keep providing the necessary means of protection to it there. It is the consequence of these scientific discoveries and good planning that in these nations children are generally born strong and healthy. They are continuing to undertake further research in this field so that measures can also be taken to prevent those disabilities and infirmities in children which have not yet fallen within their grasp.

7.11 The Issue of Pain

The severest and most chastising example of *Sharr* (evil) is quoted to be pain, and the one who is suffering from pain simply cannot be made to understand its ‘philosophy’ (the ability to think and reason usually becomes suspended in a state of severe pain). But experts in the field of disease state that pain is but a *Rehmat* from nature. The machinery of the human body is so complex and hidden that, leaving aside another human being, one does not even know oneself how this is functioning, and whether some flaw is arising in it. In order to notify that some fault or malfunction has arisen in this machinery, nature has built a mechanism in it which is called pain. Pain is, in fact, that alarm which signals danger, which keeps calling, in fact shouting to warn about impending danger. If this bell does not ring, then no one will even be able to know that some malfunction is occurring within the machine till such a time that the machine eventually comes to a stop (i.e. the death of man takes place). From this point of view, pain is, in reality, a blessing.

But like other processes of nature, this process is also rather crude, hence man is trying to discover some technique in its place by which an impending danger can be known beforehand, but no pain and agony should accompany this. Intense and focused research is taking place in this connection. At this moment in time I have before me a published article by a research scholar, George A.W. Boehm⁸⁵, in which he has asserted that in view of the speed with which this research is taking place, it can be expected that in the next ten years man will be rid of bodily pain – I pray to Allah that it may indeed be thus.

Be that as it may, we were discussing that as human knowledge continues to advance, the aspect of evil (*Sharr*) of the things of the universe keeps transforming into good (*Khair*).

7.12 The Quantity Used of Things

Together with discovering the properties of the things of the universe, it is also essential to find out what ‘quantity’ of their use supports life, and in what quantity it is life threatening, in other words, to acquire knowledge about the *Taqdeerat* (scales) of these things. One glass of water is life giving, but if that same water enters the stomach in a far larger quantity, then death occurs due to it - this is

⁸⁵ George A. W. Boehm, the article was published in The Pakistan Times, 24 Jan 1971.

how a man dies from drowning. Glaring evidence of how much importance their *Taqdeerat* (scales) holds in the use of things is seen in the homeopathic method of treatment. The focal point of this method of treatment is that those kinds of unpleasant effects which arise in the human condition from ingesting an excessive amount of something, the remedying of these effects takes place through a homeopathic dose of this. Through this principle they have proven that the true essence of everything in the universe is *Khair*, it is from its incorrect 'quantity' that it becomes *Sharr*.

7.12.1 *Min Sharr-e-Ma Khalaqa* (113:2)

And from this the meaning of this illuminating verse of the Quran can be easily understood in which is stated:

Say! I seek refuge with the Rabb of Falaq⁸⁶ from the Sharr of created things. (113:1-2)

In other words, take precautions that whatever Allah has created in the universe, these do not become *Sharr* for you due to their incorrect use i.e. Allah has not created *Sharr*. He has kept different properties and effects in the things of the universe, whether they are harmful or beneficial is now dependent on how you use them. If you use them according to the physical laws established by Allah, then their outcome will be *Khair*; if you use them contrary to these, then *Sharr* will be created as a result. It is on this basis that it is stated as a principle in Surah *Al-e-Imran*:

...all Khair is in Your Hand. Verily You have defined scales for all things. (3:26)

7.13 Allah is the Fountainhead of *Khair*

Allah did not create *Sharr* – He created the things of the universe and defined their '*Taqdeerat*'. If they are utilised according to these, then the outcome will be only *Khair*, because Allah is the fountainhead of *Khair*. If they are utilised contrary to these, then *Sharr* becomes created from this i.e. *Sharr* is an outcome created by man himself. This is that supreme reality which has been clearly described in

⁸⁶ *Falaq* – one of the meanings of its root (*F-L-Q*) is of *Haqq* becoming manifested after hardships. See *Lughat-ul-Quran* by the author. (Ed)

Surah *An-Nisa*. We have already discussed this verse earlier but because of the importance and relevance of the point being discussed, we feel it is necessary to reiterate it. That verse is this:

Whatever bounties you receive, they are from Allah; and whatever troubles descend on you, they are brought about by your own hands... (4:79)

And in the verse before this it is stated:

Say! All outcomes are established according to the laws defined by Allah... (4:78)

If you act according to these laws, then the outcome will be *Khair* only, if you go against them, then it will be *Sharr* only.

At another place it is stated:

... Whatever is received from the direction of Allah (i.e. by acting in accordance with the laws defined by Him), that is Khair, and also enduring. (28:60)

At certain places this reality has been described in a very refined manner. For example, it is stated in Surah *Bani Israel*:

When We bless man with Our bounties, he turns away and becomes indifferent, and when he suffers some loss, he becomes hopeless. (17:83) See also (41:51)

Here Allah has not related loss or *Sharr* towards Himself. At another place it is stated:

When We impart⁸⁷ happiness to man through Rehmat, he becomes boastful; when he suffers a loss due to his own errors, then he sinks down in despair. (30:36) See also 42:48)

In Surah *Al-A'raf* this style has become even more refined and eloquent when it is stated that:

The fertile land produces a very good crop according to the law of Rabb (by the Izn of its Rabb), but when it is barren then the land gives very little produce... (7:58)

Just note that it is not stated in the second part of the verse that this is with His *Izn*, even though this also takes place according to the law of Allah.

⁸⁷ The term used is *Azraq'na* – i.e. We do it like this.

7.14 *Khair* and *Sharr* in Ethics

So far we have discussed the physical characteristics and properties of the things of the universe, their method of physical use and the beneficial and harmful effects produced by them. But in the human world another aspect of good and evil also appears before us, which is not connected to physical laws. The physical property of a sword is that it cuts the throat. If this sword is in the hand of a tyrant, then he will use it to cut the throats of the weak and persecuted, but if that same sword is in the hands of a justice loving human being, by twisting the wrists of the tyrants, he will produce the means of protection for those who are persecuted. The sword remains the same and its physical property also remains the same, but the purpose for which it is used becomes the criterion for its becoming *Khair* or *Sharr*.

7.15 The Aim and Criterion of *Khair* and *Sharr*

Let us take a step further from even here. An individual extorts money from someone through deception. In this 'deception' no physical means (e.g. a sword etc.) has been used, only the human intellect has been employed for this. You mention this loss of yours to a friend who is shrewder and cleverer. He formulates such a plan due to which that deceitful fellow has to return your money. In this your friend has also simply employed intellect. It is clear from this, too, that the human intellect is also a force and it becomes *Khair* or *Sharr* according to the purpose for which it is used.

7.16 The Aim Can be Defined by *Wahi*

The question is how to define those aims according to which the material forces or the potentials of man himself become *Khair* instead of *Sharr*. It is obvious that these aims cannot be ascertained using the human intellect, because how can intellect provide an answer to the question of what aim should it be used for? Just as a sword cannot itself define the aim of its use, in the same way the human intellect also cannot define the aim of its own use itself. For this there should be a fountainhead beyond the human intellect: this fountainhead is Divine *Wahi* and the criteria which are determined according to *Wahi* are called the Permanent

Values in the terminology of Deen. When the forces of nature, things of the universe, or the human intellect itself is employed according to the Permanent Values of Allah, then its outcome will be *Khair*. When these are employed counter to these values, then its outcome will be *Sharr*. A society which rejects the Permanent Values of Allah and establishes its social system exclusively on the foundations of intellect is called a system of *Batil* because its outcome is *Sharr* for man. In such a society the utilisation of the forces of nature and the things of the universe is through the intellect, and the intellect is employed according to emotions. Regarding emotions, we have seen earlier that this is basically the name for those instincts which man has received as an inheritance from his animalistic life, and the emotions of preservation of the self and self-aggression are intrinsic in these instincts. When these same emotions acquire a collective form from an individual one, then the meaning of self-preservation is the preservation of one's own nation. Now just reflect that when different nations exist in the world, and every nation utilises the forces of nature according to its own individual intellect (self-interest) for its own self-preservation and to gain control over others, then what will be the consequence of this? That same hell in which today all the nations of the world are severely trapped! In other words, that hell which is fueled by those flames which are manufactured by utilising the forces of nature in defiance of the Permanent Values.

7.17 Hell of the Modern Era

This is that very system of *Batil* in which those human beings who wish to live their life according to the Permanent Values have to bear all kinds of hardships. It is in connection with this that it is stated about the evils of that society:

...whose (evil) embers fly far and wide. (76:7)

By disregarding the Permanent Values, when humanity becomes divided into nations, some among the nations become more powerful and other nations remain weak – and powerful nations keep on becoming stronger by sucking the blood of the weaker nations – in this way, different classes become created in a nation. In these classes, the upper class sets itself up as masters of the wealth and power of the nation, and the underprivileged class becomes their servant by becoming subordinate to them and their dependents.

7.18 Rich and Poor by Birth

Then according to this system of *Batil*, the children born to the upper class are born not only with the conveniences of life, rather with a complete set of luxuries, and the children born in the dwellings of the lower class spend their whole life in struggle and poverty. And since the criterion for respect and dignity in society is declared to be wealth, hence these poor and underprivileged human beings and their children, despite possessing all the human potentials, are considered to be lowly and debased.

The Hindu clergy concocted this justification for this inequality, that differentiation in rank and economic status is a result of the deeds in the previous life of an individual – the one who commits the greatest number of wrongs is born as a *Shudra*, the one higher up than this is *Vaishya*, then *Kshatriya*, and above everyone else are Brahmins themselves – it is obvious that when the ones who define these ranks are Brahmins, if the uppermost class is not professed to be that of Brahmins, then who else can it be?

7.19 This is From Allah

Regarding this differentiation in classes, the people who disagreed with the doctrine of a previous life stated that these are defined by Allah – whoever He wishes, He makes him rich; whoever He wishes, he can keep him deprived and poor. He can confer respect and status on whoever He wishes; He can degrade and humiliate whoever He wishes. This is the destiny and fate of every single person, this is what is known as the *Taqdeer* of man which no individual can make for himself nor erase. They concocted this belief, and continued to reiterate it with such persistence and intensity that the populace became endlessly prey to this hoax. This intrigue was instigated so that the gazes of the populace would not look up to see that this differentiation and division is not from Allah, rather it is the creation of this wrong system whose establishment and strength the upper class is responsible for. And in the upper class both those in charge of organisation and management and this clique offering sermons and homilies are included – (as has been noted before) *Malukiyat* and the religious clergy are both intrinsically dependent on each other.

7.20 The Quran is Also a Fountainhead of *Khair*

After this let us return to this illuminating verse of the Quran in which it is stated that *Hasnaat* (delights of life) are all received from the direction of Allah, and hardships and troubles are brought about by your own hands. These hardships and troubles are a product of this evil system which comes into existence through transgression against the Permanent Values of Allah. If a society is established in accordance with these values, then there are showers of *Hasnaat* from every direction. These values are preserved within the Quran, this is why the Quran itself has also been proclaimed as *Khair*. It is stated in Surah *An-Nahl*:

These opponents ask the Jamaat e Momineen, what has your Rabb sent down in your direction? In reply they say that He has sent down Khair... (16:30)

In other words, Allah Himself is the fountainhead of *Khair*, and the code of laws sent down from His direction is also *Khair*, by acting in accordance with which human life becomes *Khair* through and through. *Sharr* becomes produced by going against it – *Khair* from His side, *Sharr* at our own invitation!

*My cupbearer served nectar, clear and transparent,
Whatever colour you perceive in it, it is my doing.*

What is this *Khair*? In explanation of this it is stated:

... Those people who live their life in a balanced way in accordance with the Permanent Values, they are bestowed with both the delights of this life, and also the delights of the life of the hereafter... (16:30)

From here another definition of *Khair* appears before us which merits our attention.

In physical life (or at an animalistic level) the criterion for *Khair* and *Sharr* (or benefit and loss) is very clear, simple and straightforward. The thing (or task) from which we obtain a material benefit is *Khair*, that from which there is a material loss is *Sharr*. In this matter it is also worth bearing another thing in mind, that according to this criterion nothing can be declared as being a cause for *Khair* or a cause for *Sharr* on a permanent basis. The very same thing which is beneficial at one point in time (according to the circumstances pertaining at that time), can be harmful at another time (with a change in circumstances). Milk is beneficial in a state of good health and harmful during a cough, or cold and flu symptoms. Or (based on quantity) one glass of water is beneficial, while a bucket of water is

harmful. From this point of view it is stated that good and evil are relative, not absolute.

7.21 The Criterion for Absolute Good and Evil

But when life is viewed at the human level i.e when it is acknowledged that human life does not only consist of the physical body alone, there is an entity other than the body which is called the human self, then another criterion of good and evil appears before us (benefit and loss), and that is that those matters through which the human self becomes developed, from which integration is produced within it are *Khair*, and those from which its development halts, and disintegration occurs within it are *Sharr*. Since the human self is non-physical and at this point in time invisible, hence the scales for measurement of its *Khair* and *Sharr* are also not visible. For example, every individual can know and recognise what harm transpires from ingesting poison, but what harm occurs (to the human self) from telling a lie can neither be seen nor measured. Contrary to this, there can be a material benefit from telling a lie – the reality is that man only tells a lie at that time when he has an expectation of gaining some benefit. Without the expectation of some benefit, only an insane person will tell a lie!

7.22 The Materialistic Concept of Life and Morality

From these explanations it is clear that as far as the human self is concerned, neither its criterion for harm or benefit, nor its scales of measurement are physical, its standard is the Permanent Values which are called morals in common terminology - it should be made clear that morals relate to human life. There can simply be no concept of morals among animals. In a society in which the human self is not acknowledged, there is no basis for morals (it is called the materialistic concept of life, and that system of living is called secularism). In this there are only the laws of society (social laws or laws of justice) without which the communal life of man cannot remain in place. The majority among these social laws, or laws of justice, are those which are called moral codes e.g. do not lie, do not deceive, do not do wrong to someone, etc. etc. but their status is that of social laws or laws of justice, not of morals, even though in common parlance these are termed morals. This difference can be understood through an example. If an individual knows that by telling a lie he will obtain a certain benefit, and he also has the assurance that this lie of his cannot come to the notice of society, nor

within the grip of the machinery of the court system, then according to the materialistic concept of life there will be nothing which can prevent him from telling a lie.⁸⁸ If an individual does not tell a lie due to fear of loss of reputation in society, or due to the concern of being arraigned by a court of law, then he will not be considered as a possessor of an eminent character. Contrary to this, the individual who acknowledges the existence of the human self and keeps an eye on its benefit and loss will not tell a lie even at that time when he has certainty that his lie can neither be noticed by society, nor by the jurisdiction of the court, and when by telling a lie he will benefit greatly materially. He will not tell a lie because he knows that there will be a loss to his self from this (even though he will benefit materially). He will sacrifice the material benefit for the sake of the benefit of his self. This is what is called morality: it will be called being moral. From the Quranic point of view, the definition of character (balanced conduct) is that where there is a clash between a material benefit and a Permanent Value, man sacrifices the material benefit for the sake of the preservation of the Permanent Value (i.e. for the sake of the benefit to his self). In the materialistic concept of life, or the secular system, there is the concept of obedience to the law but there cannot be the concept of morals. There is no basis for morals in it, and this is the reason why there are amendments taking place in its code of laws every other day i.e. their status is also relative.

In contrast to this, the status of the code of values which relates to the human self is not relative, those values are permanent and immutable, and the good or evil which materialises as a consequence of these (i.e. *Khair* by obeying them, and *Sharr* by contravening them) is called Absolute Good and Absolute Evil. In other words:

- (1) It cannot happen that deceit is a cause for evil at one time and a cause for good at another time.
- (2) Nor can it be that more dishonesty is a cause for evil while a little dishonesty is a cause for good.
- (3) Or that in some era honesty and integrity were good, and later on lies and deceit became good, or will become good. The Permanent Values (which are related to the human self) are permanent, immutable and absolute.

⁸⁸ That which is termed the voice of conscience is the name for those imprints which are embedded in the heart of a child through initial education and upbringing. Whatever kind of environment a child is trained in, his conscience will be of the same kind. Have you not noticed that the kind of wrong environment in which the youth of today is being brought up, according to this their conscience does not forbid them at all from wrongdoing and committing crimes. (Details of these matters will be found in my book, *The Human Self and Iblees*).

Since there is simply no concept of Permanent Values in a wrong society (or in a *Batil* system), if an individual in it wishes to live life according to the Permanent Values, then he often has to bear material losses. In this tussle, the advice of the *Maslak* of monasticism (*Tasawwuf*) is that because this matter (or worldly affairs) is worthy of contempt, therefore do not allow even the thought of material benefit or loss to enter your heart – the true reality of life is abandonment of the world. But this is self-deception. While living in the world, you simply cannot abandon the world. In this regard the teaching of the Quran is that if a society is established according to the Permanent Values, then such a situation simply cannot arise in which there is a confrontation between a material benefit and a benefit to the self of man. This is why it tells people that instead of living an individual life, live a collective life in which the society becomes established on the foundations of the Permanent Values. In this you will achieve material benefits and the development of your self will also keep taking place. The Quran terms material benefits as worldly delights, and benefits to the self as delights of the hereafter – this is because the life of the hereafter is related to the human self, not to the human body.

In light of these explanations this reality has become apparent to us that according to the Quran, absolute good is that through which worldly benefits can be achieved and also the benefits of the hereafter i.e. through which the physical life of man is prosperous and his self also keeps becoming stronger, and absolute evil is that which produces results contrary to this.

And now the meaning of this verse of Surah *An-Nabl* becomes crystal clear before us in which it is stated that when the *Momineen* are asked what has been sent down to you, they reply – *Khair* (good), in other words:

...According to which material benefits are achieved, and also benefits associated with the human self... (16:30)

It is this pattern of life which is called *Ad-Deen*. From this it is clear that:

- (1) The materialistic concept of life (or secular system of living) is that in which the aim and goal is merely material benefits. This is also against *Ad-Deen*.
- (2) The *Maslak* of monasticism (*Tasawwuf*) is that in which the material world is declared to be worthy of contempt. This is also against *Ad-Deen*.
- (3) *Ad-Deen* (the Islamic system of life) is that in which both the benefits of the material world are achieved and the development of the human self. This is absolute good.

This is that *Khair* about which it is stated that this is achieved through *Eimaan* and *Taqwa* i.e. firm conviction in Allah and the human self, and observance of the Permanent Values:

If these people live their life according to Eimaan and Taqwa, then they will get Khair from Allah – Ah! If only they could know this reality. (2:103)

Those people who achieve the prosperities of life and expansion of the human self are the ones declared to be *Abrar* (righteous) at another place (3:198). It is cautioned in Surah *An-Nabl* that when there is a tussle between material benefits and Permanent Values, then at that time do not purchase the material benefit in place of a Permanent Value. If you do not do this (i.e. you prioritise the benefit of your self), then you will obtain *Khair* from the direction of Allah (16:95). At another place this is described as *Khair* for your own *Nafs* (self) (64:16).

Those people in the depths of whose hearts *Eimaan* in the human self has not entered, consider it to be in their interest to give preference to the material benefit in this kind of tussle. This is the erroneous outlook in the differentiation between *Khair* and *Sharr* referring to which it is stated:

...It is possible that you dislike one thing and there is Khair in that for you. And it can also be possible that you desire something very much and it is a cause of Sharr for you. The way to avoid this kind of muddle in this differentiation between Khair and Sharr is that you do not declare your own knowledge as being the criterion, instead declare the knowledge of Allah (Wahi) as the foundation and criterion. (2:216)

That which it declares as being *Khair*, consider it to be *Khair*, and that which it declares as being *Sharr*, consider it to be *Sharr*. The most challenging stage in the tussle between physical life and the Permanent Values is that where man has to lay down even his life for the sake of the preservation of *Haqq*. This is called the arena of *Jehad* (or *Qital*). At such a delicate juncture the instruction of the Quran is that you enter the amphitheatre of war fully prepared, without fear and irrespective of danger:

...if you fix your gaze on the reality and truth of life, you will discover that this very thing is a cause of Khair for you. (9:41)

Man becomes deceived in this respect because the interests of physical life are visible right in front of him, while the outcomes of *Khair* take time to manifest:

...and man who fixes his gaze only on the physical life happens to be very hasty. (17:11)

7.22.1 *Ibtala* - Accountability of Own Self

When there is a tussle between the interests of material benefits and the human self, at that time man tests this aspect about how much strength has been created in his self. If his self is strong, then he will not become overwhelmed by the allurements of material interests in this confrontation – this stage is called *Ibtala* i.e. an opportunity for man to test himself. When the human self overcomes material temptations at such junctures, further strength becomes created in it as a result, and this is the kind of strengthened self which also cannot die with death. This is why the Quran has declared death to be the yardstick for measuring the strength of the human self (21:35, 67:2), and this is why it has instructed that do not obey the laws of Allah in such a way that if benefits can be accrued by following them, then you obey them, and when there will be a loss from this, then you transgress them – this conduct of self-interest is a recipe for disaster:

There are among men some who obey the Divine law, but in such a way as if they are standing on a verge. If they see a benefit in obeying this law, then they remain content in it, but if some kind of loss accrues to them from it, then they turn their faces away unhesitatingly (4:143). The outcome of following this path is that the life of their present becomes ruined and also that of the future – loss in the world, and also in the hereafter – and this loss is so glaring for which there is no need for evidence and rationale. (22:11)

7.22.2 Man of the Modern Era

Now just ponder that when from the point of view of the Quran, those people will suffer a loss and remain unsuccessful in whose sights the importance of the benefits of the human self becomes diminished, then those people who right from the beginning are not even convinced about the human self (i.e. the life of the hereafter), what differentiation will they be able to make between the true benefit and loss to human life. This is that very condition of man of the modern era about whom Iqbal states:

*Absence of motivation (on the path of Allah),
And pursuit of his own desires,
Unable to bring his intellect under his vision,
Became entangled in the maze of his intellect,
Unable to decide his benefit and loss until today.*

This is that human being about whom the Quran has stated that:

He who should have been desiring Khair, continually calls out to Sharr! ... (17:11)

From these explanations it is clear that *Khair* and *Sharr* are the outcomes of human deeds themselves. If he employs the forces of nature and his own potentials according to the Permanent Values of Allah then the outcome is *Khair*, and if he employs them against these values then the outcome is *Sharr*. In order to weigh this *Khair* and *Sharr*, the scales of the Law of Requit of Allah are ever ready, and it is according to this weighing that the verdict for the success and failure of human life is given. If the balance tilts heavily towards *Khair*, then life is successful, and if it remains light, then his life remains a failure and unsuccessful:

According to these scales of measurement, every single atom of Khair and Sharr of human deeds will appear in front of him. (99:7-8)⁸⁹

It is also clear from these verses that *Khair* and *Sharr* are the outcomes of man's own deeds. It is not the case that Allah has already decided the *Khair* and *Sharr* in advance for every human being. In other words, what has been decided is that the outcome of a certain deed of man will be *Khair*, and that of some other deed will be *Sharr*, and it has been left to the choice and intent of man that he can do whatever kind of deed he wishes, its outcome will appear before him in accordance with it - in both the worldly life, and the life of the hereafter.

7.23 Profit and Loss

The words of profit and injury have also appeared in the Quran for *Khair* and *Sharr*. The difference is only of words, otherwise the principle and law that is defined for *Khair* and *Sharr* is the same as that for profit and injury.

We have already seen that when man was not yet aware of the secrets of the universe, then due to terror of the dreadful forces of nature he used to implore profusely and prostrate before them so that he could remain protected from their harmful effects.

It was this proclivity for desiring benefit and repulsing harm, which produced that concept in his mind about those forces which he began to call gods and goddesses, and after this, having carved physical sculptures of them, he started to worship them. The Quran made man aware of his true status and informed him

⁸⁹ See also (2:110, 2:215, 27:89, 28:80, 73:20).

that those forces which he considers as his deities have all been created to obey him.

7.24 Gods and Goddesses Cannot Convey Benefit or Loss

For this the Quran has repeatedly stated that there is no power in these false gods which you worship to cause any benefit or loss to reach you, therefore why do you degrade human eminence by bowing down before them:

These people, abandoning Allah, worship those Batil deities which can neither cause any benefit to reach them, nor any loss. . .(25:55)

As has been stated earlier, the Quran has reiterated this fact at numerous places.⁹⁰ These people were told that, leaving aside any power to cause you benefit or loss, they do not even possess control over any kind of benefit or loss for their own selves (13:16, 25:3).

7.25 Not Even a Sage Old Man

After gods and goddesses, man was also trapped in this false impression that elders and saintly human beings have the power to cause benefit or loss to others as well. For the eradication of such a *Batil* belief, the Quran adopted such a style of admonishment following which it left no room for anything further to be said. For Muslims, who could be (and can be) a more sacred and holy being than Rasul-ullah himself. The Quran itself made this declaration from the honourable lips of Rasul-ullah that:

Say to them! I myself do not have any authority for benefit or loss to my own self. For me, too, this takes place according to the laws of Allah. . .(7:188) See also (10:49)

7.26 Harm From Human Beings in an Unjust Society

⁹⁰ See verses (5:76, 6:17, 6:71, 10:18, 21:66, 22:12, 48:11).

But some human beings are certainly caused harm at the hands of other human beings; for this it is stated that this is according to *Iẓn-Allah*:

*...but he (Shaitan) cannot harm them in the least, except as per Izn Allah...
(58:10)⁹¹*

We have seen under the previous topic that the meaning of *Iẓn-Allah* is the laws established by Allah. This is why it is stated that another individual causes harm to reach you because you have not made arrangements for the means of protection according to the laws of Allah. It is stated in Surah *Al-e-Imran* that the state of these opponents (*Munafiqeen*) is such that if you acquire some bounties then this matter pains them greatly, and if a trouble visits you then they are very pleased at this:

...If you adopt steadfastness and observe the laws of Allah, then none of their intrigues will be able to cause you any harm... (3:120)

At another place it is stated that:

If those living in habitations had had conviction in the truth of the laws of Allah and had lived life in accordance with them, then the gates of blessings of the heavens and earth would have opened for them, but they falsified these laws, and they were subjected to accountability because of their deeds. (7:96)

Here the use of 'because of their deeds' has made it clear how losses are incurred according to '*Iẓn Allah*' – all this is the outcome of the wrong actions of man himself. If you keep treading on the right path then no one will be able to cause you any harm (5:105).

7.27 Its Solution!

But here that same issue appears before us again, which was the focus of our attention previously, and that is that despite treading on the right path, an individual suffers at the hands of others. As has already been described, this kind of thing occurs in an unjust society and its remedy is nothing other than for this society to be overturned, and a just society to be established in its place (according to the laws of Allah). Iqbal has illustrated this reality in these radiant words:

⁹¹ *Shaitan* is mentioned in this verse. We will see further on what is meant by *Shaitan*.

He does not remain sitting shedding tears at the hands of Taqdeer – by rejecting unfavourable ‘Taqdeer’, he brings about favourable ‘Taqdeer’ in its place through the power of his hands.

Since all this takes place according to the laws defined by Allah, hence Allah relates it to His Own Self. It is noted in Surah *Al-An’am*:

If a loss reaches you from the direction of Allah (i.e. according to His laws), its rectification can also be done by no one else: for this you will need to turn towards His laws. This is because He has defined scales (laws) for everything. (6:17) See also (10:107, 39:38)

7.28 An Important Point

We have stated above that whatever act man carries out according to the laws of Allah, Allah relates it to Himself. This is a very important point and (hence) demands further clarification.

7.28.1 The Battle of Badr

In the Battle of Badr (which was the most important event between *Haqq* and *Batil*), *Mujahideen* (whom Allah had termed as His Own army, *Hez̤b-Ullah*) are busy employing their swords and arrows and in this way are severing the necks of the opponents of *Haqq* and justice. The declaration of Allah regarding this is:

...you were not killing them, it was Allah Himself Who was killing them; at that time it was not you aiming the arrows, it was Allah doing this... (8:17)

The swords were yours, but on their razor-sharp edges it was Our ‘*Taqdeers*’ which were in action. The arrows were yours, but it was Our decisions that were wrapped around their tips.

7.28.2 Bait-e-Rizwan (Fealty of the Willing)

And at the location of Hudaibiya⁹², when these devoted soldiers of Islam were renewing this covenant to lay down their lives which they had made with Allah (that we have sold our possessions and lives into Your Hand (9:111)) on the blessed hand of Rasul-ullah, the Quran has drawn a beautiful, simple and vivid scene of this sight in these words:

(O Rasul!) Those people who were plighting their fealty to you, they were not pledging it with you, but were in reality renewing their covenant with Allah. At the time of this 'fealty', it was not your hand over their hand, it was the Hand of Allah Himself... (48:10)

When the programme of Allah comes into fruition in this way through the hands of men, then man himself becomes the *Taqdeer* of Allah. In the words of Iqbal:

*A Muslim under the spell of Taqdeer is a Kafir,
If he is a Momin, he himself becomes Allah's Taqdeer.*

At another place Iqbal states:

*It is futile to complain about the Taqdeer of Allah,
Why are you yourself not the Taqdeer of Allah?*

In summary, whatever manifests in the universe according to the Divine laws, it is related to Allah Himself i.e. it is stated that Allah Himself does this. This is that point where a visionary proclaims (in the words of Ibraheem) that:

Allah is He who created me, and then showed me the straight path. He is the One who gives me food and drink, and when I fall sick, he cures me. Then He will give me death, and after death will give me life again. (26:78-81)

Not only are properties and characteristics imparted to the things of the universe, man himself has also been provided with potentials which Allah attributes to Himself, so much so, that even that act which he does according to these natural abilities has also been related towards Allah. For example, it is stated in Surah *Ar-Rehman*:

Allah created man and taught him to speak. (55:3-4)

It is obvious that Allah does not teach a human child to speak, it is his environment which teaches him. But since the ability to speak in man is bestowed

⁹² The Treaty of Al-Hudaibiya was between Rasul-ullah representing the state of Madina and the Koresh of Makkah in March 628. (Ed)

by Allah, that is why it is stated that Allah taught man to speak. At another place it is stated:

Allah is He Who taught man to write with a pen. (96:4) See also (2:282)

In other words, this ability has been kept within him that he can express his inner thoughts through writing. It is noted in Surah *Al-Maida*:

... Whatever game that hunting animals catch and bring to you, it is also Halal for you. Those animals whom you train to hunt in the way in which Allah has taught you... (5:4)

It is obvious that Allah does not teach any human being how to hunt. He has kept this ability within man, and whatever he does according to this natural ability, Allah has related this to His Own Self.

From these explanations it is clear that the style of the Quran is that whatever takes place in the universe according to the laws of Allah, or whatever man does according to the abilities conferred by nature, it relates these directly towards Allah. This is a very important point, and by keeping it in mind we can easily comprehend all those places in the Quran where, because of this point not being before us, various kinds of opinions form in our minds and doubts arise. Details of these places will appear before us in the coming pages in different chapters.⁹³

7.29 *Shaitan - Iblees*

With regard to not accepting responsibility for the outcome of his own deeds, man has kept another shield in front of him which is called *Shaitan* or *Iblees*. In this connection it is important to firstly understand what it is that is known as *Shaitan*. (I have written in detail about this topic in my book, *The Human Self and Iblees*. At this point in time, it will suffice to mention a few aspects). We have seen that:

- (1) As well as intellect, instincts at the animalistic level are present in man. The task of the intellect is to meet the demands of life.
- (2) Human life is the name for remaining in obedience to the Permanent Values.

⁹³ For further examples see, *The Meanings of the Quran*, Vol 7, Section 1.16, under verse (12:76). (Ed)

- (3) When there is a clash between a Permanent Value and the interest of an animalistic instinct (motive), then at that juncture if the Permanent Value remains in control, then the intellect adopts methods to bring its requirements into practical action. And if the animalistic motive overpowers, then the intellect functions in obedience to this. Because at that time the emotions and intellect do not remain under the obedience of the Permanent Values, they are therefore called rebellious emotions and unbridled intellect.

It is these rebellious emotions and unbridled intellect which are called *Shaitan* in Quranic terminology. Some scholars of *Lughat* think that '*Shaitan*' is a word of the Arabic language and related to *Shata*, *Ya'sbitu*, which mean to become inflammatory. We have drawn the above interpretation of *Shaitan* according to these meanings. Some consider this word to be from the Hebrew language, which means the one creating obstacles (the hinderer) i.e. those forces which stand up to block the path of the Permanent Values – this also means the same.

According to psychology, when man becomes overwhelmed by his rebellious emotions, this gives rise to aggression i.e. the desire to subjugate others. In these circumstances the human mind does not stay balanced. When this emotive state cools down, man feels regret at what he has done from this, the consequence of which is frustration and despair. The root of the word *Iblees* is (*B-L-S*) which means to become hopeless. The Quran has described *Shaitan* and *Iblees* as being two sides of the same coin i.e. the rebelliousness of emotions whose ultimate outcome is that of hopelessness.

From the above explanations it is clear that *Shaitan* is in reality the name for man's own rebellious emotions. And the second point which we have observed is that the emotions and intellect are neither *Sharr* nor *Khair* in their own right, they are only forces, the wrongful use of which leads to evil outcomes and the correct use produces good outcomes. Hence, that ideology or doctrine which declares emotions as being worthy of contempt, in fact to be suppressed, and intellect to be condemned, cannot be considered as acceptable in the court of Islam. Emotions and intellect are the creation of Allah and we have observed that Allah does not create *Sharr*, He is the fountainhead of absolute *Khair*. Hence, to declare anything among His creations as being intrinsically *Sharr* is a severe crime (Allah forbid) against the Creator.

But the Zoroastrians of Persia have declared *Shaitan* (*Aharman*) to be a permanent being possessing power in itself of *Sharr*, and have declared it to be such an entity which has its own existence external to man and remains in continual conflict with *Yazdan* (God).

7.30 Doctrine of *Jabr* (Compulsion)

Those people who used to seek routes of escape by not accepting responsibility for the consequences of their actions by declaring themselves to be constrained (with no choice), took advantage of the doctrine of the entity of *Shaitan* being external to man. Therefore, they concocted this belief that it is *Shaitan* who makes man do all the wrong acts. We have seen at the start that *Iblees* had disobeyed the command of Allah, but refused to accept his responsibility by stating that You Yourself made me commit this transgression (i.e. Allah) – what choice did I have in this. In other words, refusal to accept responsibility for one’s own actions is itself *Ibleesiyat*. Following these explanations, let us see what the Quran states regarding the connection between human deeds and *Shaitan*.

7.31 Quranic Elucidations

In the story of Adam it is stated in a metaphorical style:

Shaitan whispered suggestions in their hearts (Adam and Eve)...(7:20)

And it is stated in Surah *Qaaf*:

We have created man and We know what dark suggestions his Nafs keeps creating within him... (50:16)

From this it is clear that *Shaitan* is the human self itself, not an external entity or force outside of man. In the Battle of Uhad some people (hypocrites) turned their backs and abandoned the battlefield. It is stated about them that:

...Shaitan created faltering in their steps due to their deeds... (3:155)

From this it is clear that that which we call ‘*Shaitnaʿ*’ is another name for the evil deeds of man himself. We have seen that when man is overwhelmed by his emotions, then his mental state becomes unbalanced. It is stated in Surah *YaʿSin* that those entering hell will be told that you allowed *Shaitan* (emotions) to overcome you, and in this way your intellect became paralysed and so you reached hell (36:60-62).

In Surah *Ibraheem* a metaphorical dialogue appears between *Shaitan* and his followers on the Day of Judgement. There, human beings who are evil doers accuse *Shaitan* that you made us do these things. In response to this, *Shaitan* states

that what you say is wrong, I did not have any control or authority over you that I could have compelled you to do something against your will. All I did was that I called out to you, you yourself acquiesced to this call and started to follow behind me. Today, instead of condemning me, condemn yourself, because I am not responsible for your deeds, it is you yourself who are responsible (14:22).

7.32 How Can Man Remain Protected from Being Controlled by Emotions?

Now the question which arises is that, with the existence of emotions, how can man protect himself from being controlled by them?

Tasawwuf (mysticism and Sufism) declared that the technique for this is that emotions should be annihilated (in their terminology this is called self-annihilation). But the way in which their doctrine of 'forsaking the world' is impossible to follow, indeed is a self-deception, similarly the doctrine of annihilation of emotions is also impracticable to follow and is based on self-deception. Human emotions simply cannot be annihilated, and even if (supposing) they could be annihilated, then eliminating them is insanity and a manifest loss. Emotions (like intellect) are an immensely precious faculty of man. The pleasures, freshness, and novelties of life are linked to desires, and the emergence of desires owes itself to emotions. If no heat of emotions remains in the being of man, then he will turn into a mere inanimate block of ice. Regarding emotions, when the guidance of the Quran appears before us, then a euphoric feeling bathes the soul, and it can be clearly seen what the difference is between the light bestowed from the fountainhead of *Wabi* and the conjectures concocted by the human mind.

Firstly, by presenting those people who have adopted the *Maslak* of obedience to emotions without any limits or conditions, it has stated:

Have you ever pondered on the condition of that individual who has made emotions themselves as his deity? The consequence of this path is that, despite possessing intellect and knowledge, he sets out on the wrong paths, and due to being overwhelmed by his emotions, his condition becomes such that seals are set on his heart and ears, veils are drawn over his eyes, his potentials to see, to think, and understand, become suspended and are gradually paralysed. After this it is stated that it is only the guidance of Allah which can save him from this misguidance. They are the people who keep blindly following behind their animalistic emotions (45:23).

7.32.1 Convert *Iblees* into a Muslim

The Quran has not told them that they should destroy their emotions and not maintain any connection with them. It has stated that:

...He becomes misguided who follows his own emotions without the guidance of Allah... (28:50)

Here the Quran has made the matter crystal clear that human emotions are not *Sharr*. They become evil at that time when they are left unrestrained. If they are kept within the obedience of the Permanent Values, then their outcome is *Khair*. This is that reality where a *Hadeeth* of Rasul-ullah which shines like lustrous pearls has been explained in a very eloquent and heartwarming style. Rasul-ullah said that every human being has an *Iblees*. The companions inquired, is there also an *Iblees* of yours? He replied, Yes! I too have an *Iblees* but I have converted my *Iblees* into a Muslim.

7.32.2 *Iblees* Can be Made to Obey Oneself

Just see from where the issue began and where it has ended? Emotions were not destroyed, they were left in the state they were in, but they were employed according to the Divine Permanent Values. In this way, this immense force, instead of being destructive, became completely constructive i.e. the flood was confined within the banks of the river, and in this way, instead of becoming the cause for destructions, it became the reason for habitations and prosperities. The same way in which potentials have been kept within man to harness the forces of nature, he has also been bestowed with the power to harness his emotions. In the account of Adam it has been stated metaphorically that when *Iblees* was cursed, he said to Allah that You have humiliated me for this 'favourite' of Yours, now watch what I do with him: by inserting a leash through his nose, I will lead him bewildered and stumbling about, and then will destroy him in such a way that he will never forget it (17:62-63). In response to this challenge of *Iblees*, it was decreed from the court of Allah that attempt to do whatever you wish, but you will never be able to achieve any control and authority over My servants (17:65). *Iblees* will never be able to influence those people who maintain conviction in the truth of the laws of Allah and have trust in their firmness (38:83). His influence will be effective on those who totally sidestep the laws of Allah; or on those who, though

they will not completely avoid them, they will not purely follow these laws, instead they will also associate non-Divine laws with them (16:99-100).

7.33 The Model of Yusuf

The state of those who follow Allah's laws is such that leaving aside obeying *Shaitan*, if even the thought of *Shaitan* somehow randomly enters their mind, they immediately bring Allah's laws in front of them, and from this such a sparkle is created in their vision due to which their paths become illuminated far into the distance, and their feet simply do not lift to tread in the wrong direction (7:201). This was that very '*Burhan e Rabb*' seeing which Yusuf tore to shreds the webs of *Shaitnat* laid by the wife of the Aziz of Egypt, and in this way demonstrated to that world that '*Shaitan* can never overwhelm the devoted servants of Allah':

...he was from among Our devoted servants. (12:24)

At this juncture an objection is raised from those with superficial minds that it is all very well to have the power to confront *Sharr* in man and overwhelm it, but why did Allah establish such a system in the first place in which this tussle continues between these two forces – what was the purpose of this?

7.34 What is its Purpose?

Those who raise such objections do not even ponder that this confrontation was an essential consequence of man being the holder of choice and intent. (As we have already written) being the possessor of choice and intent means that there should be two possibilities before him, and he should have this authority that he can select one out of the two. The one who does not have two paths before him - only one path exists - the question of his making a choice of path does not even arise. Only the one before whom no other path exists is called constrained. There is no opportunity to reflect, or differentiate and select between the right and wrong direction on the path on which there are no crossroads. In the journey of life, this is that choice at a crossroad where human potentials become awakened. This is what is called a challenge. The reality is that there is a Law of Evolution functioning in the universe, and the very essence of evolution lies in challenge. According to this law, strength and loftiness can only be achieved in a situation where opposing and challenging forces lock with each other. Life is a continuously flowing stream but if in its path there are no rocks creating falls,

then its tranquil flow will gradually become converted into a motionless state, and this dynamic stream will become a still and stagnant pond. Latent lyrics within the strings of a guitar will never come alive unless the strings are plucked. Shine and glitter can never be created in the reflective blade of a sword until the time that it is not sharpened on a stone. The embers of a flame are not possible without the rubbing together of stones. This is that very law of confrontation and resistance through which there is awakening of the latent potentials of man. This is termed as the manifestation of his ego or the strengthening of his self. If ego does not confront its opposite, then the dynamism of the universe will freeze, the colours in the arena of life will become drab. This world of colour and fragrance will again convert into an abode of mud and clay. The heat of the blood in the veins of the universe owes itself to the desire of the human ego to manifest itself, and the thrill of its confrontation. This is that reality which Iqbal has expressed in this stirring way:

*Do not live in such a colourless world,
One in which Allah exists, but no Shaitan.*

In his book, *Baal e Jibreel*, Iqbal has expressed this same reality in the form of a dialogue between *Iblees* and Jibreel (Gabriel). In this *Iblees* says to Jibreel that:

*When you gain access alone to Allah, ask Him,
Whose blood was it that coloured the story of Adam!*

This is the status of *Shaitan* in the light of the Quran i.e. that tussle between the animalistic and human life of man, which becomes the means to bring out his latent potentials, and in which man at every moment, through his self-accountability, keeps witnessing and evaluating how much strength has been created in his self (life as a human being). This is declared by the Quran as being the tussle between *Haqq* and *Batil*, in which *Haqq* (constructive programme) ultimately overpowers *Batil* (destructive programme):

*We keep striking the head of Batil with the hammer of Haqq, until the brain of Batil
is burst open and it leaves the arena, fleeing... (21:18)*

In the human world this supremacy of *Haqq* appears with electrifying speed in a collective system which is established according to the Permanent Values of Allah. Contrary to this, the system of *Batil* in which animalistic passions are allowed to cavort freely, creates obstacles for *Haqq* at every step. This is the reason that the Quran has stated that have you ever pondered on the state of such people who in their own hearts think that they possess *Eimaan*, but whose practical condition is such that they establish that kind of system in which the decisions of their affairs are taken according to non-Divine laws (*Taghut* or *Shaitan*), even

though they were commanded to repudiate these. And this is indeed what *Shaitan* desires, to lead them far into misguidance (4:60).

From the above explanations this reality will have become apparent to you what the meaning and purpose of *Sharr* and *Khair* (or *Abarman* and *Yazdan*) is according to the Quranic point of view. It can be illustrated in a few succinct words as two techniques for utilising the forces of nature and human potentials themselves. If these are employed according to the Divine Permanent Values, then the outcome is constructive; if employed counter to these, then they produce destructive results – and man possesses the choice that he can adopt whichever one he wishes out of these two techniques. Whichever technique he chooses, the outcomes will be established in accordance with this, in other words, they will become *Khair* or *Sharr* accordingly. This ensuring of outcomes from the forces of nature, and from one's own potentials themselves according to personal goals, has been termed by Iqbal as a '*Taqdeer* smashing force' when he wrote that:

*There remains yet a Taqdeer smashing force in him,
While the ignorant call him a prisoner of Taqdeer.*

This is that same thing which was termed by Caliph Umer as changing direction 'from one *Taqdeer* of Allah to another *Taqdeer* of Allah Himself.'

8 Chapter 8 - If...Then (in the Quran)

We have explained at the beginning that the definition of a law is:

If...then...always.

In other words, if you do this (or do it like this) then its consequence will be such and such, and whenever and wherever you do this, its consequence will always be the same. Whichever command, ideology, formula, or algorithm meets these conditions, it will be called a law.

8.1 Judicial Laws

There are three known forms of law in the world. First, judicial law, e.g. ‘if you steal, then you will be punished with up to three years imprisonment and a fine of one thousand rupees’. In this law you will notice that there is no intrinsic connection between the deed (theft) and its consequence (imprisonment or fine). In the code of laws of a country, theft is declared to be a crime and the order for punishment of this crime is issued from the direction of the court. If theft was not declared to be a crime according to the code of laws of a country, or the one who commits theft could not be brought within the grasp of the judicial machinery, then there would be no consequence to this act (of theft). In other words, the consequence of a deed is not embedded within the judicial laws, it is levied from the outside. This is the reason that these laws do not exist in their own right from the beginning, they are legislated. Any country can legislate whatever kinds of laws it wishes, and whenever it wishes it can change or amend them. This is the same condition for communal laws and codes (i.e. those pertaining to society).

8.2 Physical Laws

Now let us examine the other category of laws which are called physical laws, or the laws of nature; for example, this law that if put your finger into fire, it will become burnt. Note that in this the consequence of this action is inbuilt within the deed itself, it has not been imposed from somewhere outside. It is not the case that if a country passes this law that in our land fire will not burn a finger,

then fire will stop burning it. Or that some individual puts his finger into fire in such a place where no one can see him, and so at that time his finger will not become burnt. These are those laws on which the definition of law as mentioned above is precisely and fully applicable. These laws exist in their own right (they are not devised by man) and are also immutable.

8.3 Permanent Values

Now we come to the third category of laws e.g. if you do not help the needy, you will become destroyed. It is obvious that though this law meets the condition of 'If...and...then', it neither comes within the domain of judicial or communal laws, nor within the domain of the physical laws of nature. These are called the Divine Permanent Values because they are also immutable and are not devised by human beings but are established by Allah, and are bestowed by Him through *Wahi*. There is a dual outcome which becomes established through these laws. Firstly, that the communal life of man becomes balanced by acting according to them, and secondly, that the self (personality) of individuals become developed. Only the individual who acknowledges the existence of the human self can have conviction in the truth of these values. It is apparent from this that in order to act according to these values, possession of *Eimaan* is fundamental (i.e. conviction in the human self and in the Permanent Values bestowed via the *Wahi* of Allah). The Quran has also highlighted the communal aspect of these laws and also that aspect which is linked to the human self. For example, it has declared *Zina* (adultery and fornication) to be a transgression of the Permanent Values, and on the one hand calling it a crime in the court of law, has proposed a punishment for it, and together with this has also stated that weakness⁹⁴ becomes created as a result of this in the human self (25:68).

8.4 *Kitab* and *Hikmat* (the Book and Wisdom)

In the Quran '*Kitab* and *Hikmat*' are both declared as being sent down from the direction of Allah – '*Kitab*' is the 'if' part of the law and '*Hikmat*' is its 'then'. If with 'if' there is not a 'then' in an order, then that order cannot acquire the status

⁹⁴ The word used by the Quran is *Ithm* (*A-Th-M*). Its basic meaning is exhaustion, sadness, loss of energy, a slow tread. It also means to delay or stay behind. See *Lughat-ul-Quran* by the author. (Ed)

of a law. In the communal world, when lawlessness becomes widespread in some country, then even though 'if' is still present at its place, its 'then' disappears. For example, the law in it was that if you take a bribe, then you will be fired from the job. But what happens in lawlessness is that people take bribes freely but are not dismissed from their jobs, they do not receive the punishment for this crime.

8.5 Difference Between Deen and Religion (*Madhab*)

In the same way, when Deen descends to the level of religion, then the laws in it adopt the form of such commands to which obedience is considered to be essential, but no tangible outcome of these comes before us. Obedience to them is induced by announcing that the pleasure of Allah is obtained through this, and that He becomes displeased by disobedience to them.

But in Deen commands are established in the form of laws. By obeying them a defined outcome is established, which appears in a tangible form in both this world, and will also appear in the hereafter. This is what is meant by '*Kitab* and *Hikmat*'. Together with '*Kitab*', '*Hikmat*' is also made clear so that we can keep checking concurrently whether the command is being acted upon correctly or not. If, by complying with this command, that outcome is becoming established which was described, then it is being followed correctly. If that outcome is not materialising, then we need to stop and see where we are going wrong. This is not the situation in religion: in this man remains absorbed in his own contented belief (complacency) and does not assess whether the outcome of his action is right or wrong. This is because this reality is simply not before him that any tangible outcome can appear by obeying this command. It is obvious that if you act according to some formula and its defined outcome is not established, but despite this you keep on acting in the same way, then all your efforts will go to waste. The Quran calls this the wasting of deeds (2:217) i.e. their deeds were wasted, their efforts remained fruitless.

In Deen every effort which is made according to the law bears fruit, in religion it goes to waste.

Whatever is stated above, we have noted it in parts earlier as well. But at this place it was felt necessary to reiterate it for another purpose. That purpose is that if the question of 'if' only arises for the one who is the possessor of choice and intent, then the question of 'if' simply does not arise for the one who is constrained. 'If you do this, then its outcome will be this.' The meaning of this is that whoever is being addressed has the choice that if he wishes he can do this, and if he wishes

he does not have to do this. It can only be said to someone with eyes that if you keep your eyes on the path when walking, you will save yourself from falling into a ditch. It cannot be said to a blind man that if you keep your eyes on the path then you will not fall into a ditch. Hence, for the Quran to say to human beings that if you do it like this, then this will be the consequence, proclaims man as being the possessor of choice and intent, not as being constrained. In this connection, the Quran has generally used the 'if...then (*Inn...Fa*)' sequence, and at some places has also stated that 'you are told to do it like this, so that...(*La'alla-Kum...*)' - in both cases the purpose is the same. At this point we wish to illustrate the wisdom of the use of 'if...then' by presenting a few laws from the Quran, from which it will become clear that man is possessor of choice in his actions.

8.6 A Few Examples From the Quran

- (1) The essential consequence of *Eimaan* and *Saleh* deeds is the life of paradise i.e. if you accept *Eimaan* and do *Saleh* deeds, then its outcome will be the life of *Jannat*. (2:25)
- (2) If you follow Our teachings, then there will be no fear and grief (*Khauf* and *Huzn*) (2:38). If you keep your wealth openly available in the path of Allah, then there will be no fear and grief. (2:262, 2:274, 2:277, 6:48, 46:13)
- (3) If you accept some parts of the Book (code of laws) and reject some parts, then you will be humiliated and ruined in this world and will suffer a severe chastisement in the hereafter. (2:85)
- (4) If these people had accepted *Eimaan* and acquired *Taqwa* then they would have received an excellent recompense. (2:103)
- (5) If you keep My laws before you and do not ignore them, then I will add an increase in your eminence and loftiness. (2:152)
- (6) If these People of the Book had accepted *Eimaan* (in the Quran) then it would have been better for them. (3:110)
- (7) If you become *Momin* then you will remain in authority over all. (3:139)
- (8) If you are killed in the path of Allah, or you die, then protection and *Rehmat* will be bestowed on you from the direction of Allah. (3:157)
- (9) If you remain in receipt of Allah's help then no one will be able to overpower you (3:160). But Allah's help is only available to the one who stands up in support of Deen. (22:40, 47:7)
- (10) If you accept *Eimaan* and acquire *Taqwa* then there is a supreme reward for you. (3:179)
- (11) If you steer away from major errors (fundamental flaws), then your imbalances will be removed. (4:31)

- (12) If these People of the Book had accepted *Eimaan* and acquired *Taqwa*, then We would have removed the imbalances in their life (5:65). If they had continued to obey the *Wahi* of Allah, then they would have kept receiving the means of sustenance from the heavens and the earth (5:66). The doors of the bounties of the heavens and earth would have opened for them. (7:96)
- (13) The one who accepts *Eimaan* and then does not include injustice (*Zulm*) with his *Eimaan* acquires peace and receives guidance towards expansive paths. (6:83)
- (14) If you adopt *Taqwa*, then you will achieve a life of distinction. (8:29)
- (15) If twenty *Mujabideen* among you remain firm footed, then you will overwhelm two hundred – this will occur in that situation where you are on an equal footing with the opponents with regard to the means and resources for war and battle. If there is a deficiency in this respect in your case, even then you will overcome twice your number. (8:65-66)
- (16) Through *Eimaan* and *Taqwa* glad tidings are received both in this life and the hereafter. This is the immutable law of Allah in which there will not be any change. (10:63-64)
- (17) Whoever strives on our path, We will light up many pathways for him for the achievement of the aim. (29:69)
- (18) Whoever remains firm footed with *Eimaan*, *Malaika* will descend upon him who will give him glad tidings that there will not be any kind of fear and grief for him both in this world and in the hereafter. (41:30-31)
- (19) Through *Eimaan* and *Saleh* deeds, power in the land is achieved i.e. government and a State is acquired in this world. (24:55)
- (20) If you turn away from the laws of Allah, then another nation will take your place. (9:39, 47:38)
- (21) Whoever turns away from Our laws, his sustenance will be narrowed down. (20:124)
- (22) If you utilise the Divine bounties (*Naima*) according to His laws (do *Shukr*) then there will be an increase in Our bounties. If you block the bounties of life (do *Kufr*) then you will become trapped in punishment. (14:7)
- (23) Whoever gives to others and pursues *Taqwa*, the pathways of his life will become easier. (92:5-7)
- (24) Stay steadfast, maintain mutual discipline and control, pursue *Taqwa* so that you can succeed. (3:200)
- (25) Bani Israel were held accountable through the punishment of disgrace and ruin – this happened because they adopted rebellion against the laws of Allah. (3:112)

By reflecting on these examples, this reality will become crystal clear before us that Allah has kept two possibilities before man, and has stated to him that you can adopt whichever path you wish between these two but understand this much, that if you adopt this path then this will be the consequence, and if you adopt that path then its outcome will be that one.

This is what is called an immutable law and the establishment of this law is called *Taqdeer* i.e. the natural consequence of a human deed according to the law of Allah. We had stated earlier that a command which is permanent (i.e. there is no change made in it) acquires the shape of a law. Now this should be added to it that:

When Allah gives a command on some matter on a permanent basis and together with this also states that this will be its outcome, then this command will be called an immutable law.

Islam is Deen and in Deen laws are provided – the meaning of the word Deen itself is also law. The Quran is the final Book of Allah, hence there is now no question of any change in the commands given in it, and it has also been noted in it what the outcome of acting in accordance with these commands will be. Therefore the Quran is the Divine code of laws.

9 Chapter 9 - How Did This Happen?

Cast another glance at the verses of the Quran which have appeared before you in the previous pages and see whether any kind of doubt or suspicion, scepticism or confusion remains in this matter, or the possibility of even the slightest error in understanding that:

- (1) The system of the universe is busy functioning according to the established laws of Allah.
- (2) Man is possessor of choice and intent and is responsible for his decisions and his deeds. At every crossroad in life both the right and the wrong paths are clearly present before him, and he possesses the choice that he can select whichever path he wishes. Whichever path he treads on, its consequences will appear before him. This is called the Law of Requit, which is permanent and immutable – ‘What you sow, so shall you reap’ is the fundamental principle of life.

9.1 Our Prevalent Beliefs

Keep these realities to one side in your mind, and on the other side witness what you have been hearing since your childhood in your homes, in the streets, in the bazaars, in the mosques, in the gatherings of respected scholars, and in the congregations of revered Sufis, and what you have been reading in the *Tafasir* of the Quran, the collections of *Abadeeth*, the books of past Imams, and in the literature of poets and the tales of the elders, that:

Not a leaf in the world can move without the command of Allah. Man can do nothing without the command of Allah. Whatever takes place here is due to the Will of Allah, man cannot interfere in it in any way. Whatever is going to occur in his life, it is all written down prior to his birth in his Taqdeer, and no one can erase this slate of Taqdeer. No one can change destiny (Muqaddar). Allah is Omnipotent, He can do whatever He wishes. No one dare say anything against His command. He can give limitless sustenance to whoever he wishes, and He can give restricted Rizq to whoever He wishes. He can make whoever He wishes rich, and He can make whoever He wishes poor and deprived. He can bestow status on whomever He wishes, and can impart humiliation on whomever He wishes. If He wishes, He can make kings paupers, and if He wishes He can place a royal crown on the heads of beggars. Sickness and health, life and death, all are within His control and authority - human planning can do nothing in this. Hence, man should not allow even the slightest complaint to arise in

his heart against His Will. Whatever transpires, he should remain content and grateful on this. The more an individual remains reconciled to His Will, the more he will be counted as being among the courtiers of the Divine court.

This is now the teaching of Islam, and these are the beliefs of Muslims! You will surely be astonished how these beliefs became prevalent among Muslims in opposition to such clear and transparent teaching of the Quran – and became prevalent in such a way that they transformed into actual Deen themselves? And became ingrained with such intensity in the depths of the subconscious that even if some fleeting thought arises in opposition to these at any moment in time in someone’s heart, he begins to tremble thinking that who knows how big a sin has been committed due to this. And if an individual brings even a word on his lips against these beliefs, then an alarm is raised that he is an apostate, an atheist, a denier of the Omnipotence of Allah, a materialist – and who knows what else? Inevitably this matter will be seen as a reason for great incredulity and a cause for immense astonishment as to how this transformation became created in the fundamental teaching of Islam, and how such a perplexing revolution entered our beliefs. And this is despite the fact that the Book of Allah is present with us in such a way that no change has occurred in even a single word or punctuation mark in it, and its recitation is done day and night, morning and evening, *Daroes*⁹⁵ are presented regarding it, *Tafasir* are written about it.

Just ponder, is this not the place where we need to halt, and with profound patience and calmness, intense reflection and reasoning, analyse how did this happen? When did it happen? Why did it happen? And is there any possibility of rectification of this or not?

9.2 Former Discourses on *Ilm-ul-Kalam*⁹⁶ are Meaningless!

There has been so much written around the issue of *Taqdeer* amongst us that perhaps not even a fraction of this has been devoted to any other issue. Since this issue has been made a constituent of ‘*Eimaan*’ (details of this will come later), therefore it was not possible that a book is written about Islam and *Taqdeer* is not mentioned in it. Over and above being written about in passing, enormous, voluminous, dedicated tomes have been authored on this topic, but the skill of those who generate complications is such that the more they tried to resolve this

⁹⁵ *Daroes* – plural of *Dars*, a religious lecture. (Ed)

⁹⁶ *Ilm-ul-Kalam* – this term is used in connection with the Quran to denote ‘discourses about the Book of Allah’. (Ed)

issue, the more complex it continued to become. And the reason was that instead of carrying out analyses according to the Quran, they made it an abode of philosophical intricacies and intellectual sophistries, and discussed aspects which were outside of the Quran from the religious point of view. We feel that entering into a discussion about these details is non-productive, not only because a ship is needed to travel this shoreless ocean, but also because if we present these before you, you will simply not be able to comprehend what their meaning is and what their connection with Deen is? In light of the viewpoint with which we reflect on the issues of life today, knowledge about the *Ilm-ul-Kalam* of that era has now become obsolete and useless. It is obsolete, and for the modern-day intellect it is complex, in fact also vague. For example, Imam Ibne Hazam Andalusi is counted as being amongst the renowned scholars of the past. He has carried out a detailed discussion under the topic of *Qadah* and *Qadar* in his famous book, *Al-Malal wa Al-Nahl*. This discourse begins with the following question and answer:

These people, who are convinced about action through the possession of ability, have said that when this question is posed, does a Kafir have the ability to accept this Eimaan for which he has been commanded, or does he not have the ability for this, they replied that a Kafir has the ability to exchange Eimaan i.e. that he will not remain in Kufr forever, but will cancel it and will replace it with Eimaan. The answer which is essential for this is that he is apparently in possession of the ability due to his healthy body and absence of any limitations. On the sum total of Eimaan and Kufr, while he remains a Kafir and until such a time that Allah helps him, he will remain without ability. When he is accorded help, his ability becomes completed, and then he acted. If it is said that in that case, he has then become possessor of this ability and become responsible for his actions, then we will reply, yes.

Now just imagine that if this discussion, which is spread across hundreds of pages, is presented before you, what will you achieve from this? Amongst us discussions have taken place in a similar fashion on this issue, endless books have been written along these very lines, and this is what is being taught in our religious institutions and establishments of higher learning.

9.3 History is Untrustworthy

And now the question which remains is, who was responsible for initiating these new (and against the Quran) beliefs, and how did they become not only a constituent of Islam, but became declared as the origin and basis. Its connection is with history, and from the historical perspective (and on hearing this, you will

certainly be taken aback, but it is a fact that) our record about the initial era is very untrustworthy. This discussion is not related to the topic which we are viewing, hence we do not wish to enter into details about this at this point.⁹⁷ Briefly, its reasons are as follows:

- (1) Our earliest written history, which is considered to be not only authentic, but in fact is viewed as *Umm-ul-Tawareekh* (the mother of histories), is the history by Imam Tabari⁹⁸ which has been concluded in thirteen volumes. This history was recorded almost three hundred years after the initial era (the time of Rasul-ullah), and that, too, in this way that it was based not on some prior written record, but on oral narrations – in other words, Imam Tabari has written that I heard this version from so and so, who in turn heard it from so and so, and in this way this spoken series of narrations reached to the initial era. To what extent a history which is compiled in this fashion can be trustworthy is obvious. After this, whatever books on history there have been among us are based on the history by Tabari (this is why it is called *Umm-ul-Tawareekh*).
- (2) Only that history which is unbiased and compiled objectively can present events in their original colours. During the era in which our history was compiled, the *Ummah* had become divided into sects. Therefore during this era, not only history, but whatever was written was not able to remain untainted by sectarian beliefs and tribal prejudices and inclinations. In that era the issue of *Taqdeer* itself had also become a basis for sectarianism. This is the reason that Abu Zehra Misri has said that it is hard today to determine who was the initial proponent of the doctrine of *Jabr*. In his words:

*It is very difficult to determine about a sect which acquires the form of a specific group, who its initial founder was. Hence, identifying the starting point of this sect is not an easy task.*⁹⁹

- (3) This belief regarding the greatness and sanctity of forefathers was made commonplace among us that to pass any criticism on whatever they had written (in fact, whatever is related towards them) is against their high stature, rather it is a severe insult to their honour and an unforgivable sin. Now it is obvious that the nation in which such beliefs are rife about these

⁹⁷ I have discussed this topic in my book titled, Letters to Saleem, Volume 3, under the heading 'What is our history?'

⁹⁸ Muhammad ibn Jarir al-Tabari was a Muslim historian and scholar from Amol, Tabaristan, Persia. He spent 12 years writing his encyclopaedia on Islamic history. (Ed)

⁹⁹ From the book, Al-Mazahib-e-Islamia.

figures from the past, how can its history be examined with a critical eye, particularly when this kind of critique is declared to be even *Kufr* and apostasy. The nation whose children are taught this lesson that the mistakes of forefathers cannot be questioned, how can its past literature be sifted through the sieve of knowledge and reason.

9.4 The Correct Approach to History

These are the reasons on the basis of which our history cannot be declared to be trustworthy. As far as the eminent character of Rasul-ullah and the circumstances and details about his companions are concerned, for that we have the authority and evidence of the Book of Allah (the Quran) in whose truth and integrity we have *Eimaan*. The part of our history which is related to that era can be evaluated in this way - that those events in history which are such that they go against the authority and evidence of the Quran, they are false and hence worthy of rejection, and those events which are in accordance with its authority and evidence, they can be considered as being correct and acceptable. But we do not possess any such criterion for the evaluation of history following this era. Because we have evidences present with us from the Quran about the issue of *Taqdeer*, we can therefore declare this much with certainty, which of those beliefs that were made widespread afterwards in relation to this are in accordance with the Quran and which are against it.

9.5 The Doctrine of *Jabr* at the Advent of Islam

The Quranic viewpoint about the issue of *Taqdeer* has appeared before us. We also obtain this evidence from the Quran itself that during the period that the Quran was sent down, such people existed whose belief was that whatever takes place it is due to the Will of Allah, man has no choice in this matter. It is noted in Surah *Al-An'am*:

Mushrikeen will declare that if Allah had wished, then neither we nor our forefathers would have committed Shirk; nor would we have declared anything Haram. (We are only doing all of this because Allah had wished it to be like this, what control do we have in it)...(6:148)

The Quran has stated that these people falsify the truth and reality. In this connection, see verses (16:35, 43:20). In Surah *Ya'Sin* it is stated:

When they are told to spend their wealth to remove the hunger of those who are hungry, then those people who are Kafir say to the Momineen that if it was the Will of Allah that these people do not remain hungry, then He would have provided Rizq to them Himself. It is evidently clear from their being hungry that Allah simply does not wish to provide them with Rizq. Hence, how can we provide Rizq to those whom Allah does not wish to provide with Rizq; this would be tantamount to going against the Will of Allah... (36:47)

The Quran declares that these people are immersed in a blatant state of misguidance.

9.6 Punishment due to the Belief of *Jabr*

From these verses it is clear that at the time of Rasul-ullah such people existed who were convinced about the doctrine of *Jabr*. These were *Mushrikeen* and *Kuffar*. The Quran refuted this belief of theirs, and together with this provided such positive teaching due to which the root of these kinds of beliefs was severed. In the light of the Quran, the issue of *Taqdeer* was solved with such ease that no further doubt or suspicion even remained in this regard, and no one required any kind of further elaboration. If any doubt arose anywhere about it, then this was immediately resolved. For example, it is noted in the *Abadeeth* that a thief was brought before Caliph Umer, and he asked him why did you steal. He replied that, 'This was merely the decision of Allah'. At this Caliph Umer imposed 'Hudd'¹⁰⁰ on him and also added a punishment of lashes. When he was asked the reason for this double punishment, he said that the punishment for stealing is *Hudd*, and the lashes because he levelled a false accusation against Allah.¹⁰¹

Among Muslims, as long as the Quran remained the source and foundation of Deen, the doctrine of *Jabr* was not able to embed among them - it is obvious that the ideology which the Quran explicitly declares as being *Shirk* and *Kufr*, how could it find a place among Muslims. But when the Quran disappeared from their sight (or was made to disappear), and that central authority (i.e. the system of the State based on *Risalat*) no longer remained which was responsible for keeping the beliefs and *Masalak* of the *Ummah* bound within the shores of the Quran, then all kinds of non-Quranic beliefs and concepts kept becoming a part of Islam. Among these was also the issue of *Taqdeer* – in fact it is stated that the very first sect which

¹⁰⁰ *Hudd* – this term is used for the cutting off of hands. See (5:38). (Ed)

¹⁰¹ Abu Zehra Misri, *Al Madhab ul Islamia*, Urdu Translation, p 139.

appeared within the *Ummah* on the basis of this belief was the Jabria sect, and there was a particular reason for this.

9.7 The Evidence of Harmzan

Before the advent of Islam, the Arab nation consisted mostly of tribes of desert dwellers and nomads who used to live life by herding goats and consuming dates. To their right and left were those empires of Persia and Rome, whose civilisation and culture, power and glory, had been legendary for centuries. Evidence for the degree of disdain with which the inhabitants of Persia viewed these Arabs as being lowly can still be found today in the *Shahnama*¹⁰² of Firdausi. These Arabs accepted a Deen like Islam, and from this such a revolution arose in their hearts and outlook that within a short period they became rulers of the vast and wide empire of Persia. Obviously, this was an unbearable shock for the Persians. They were defeated in the battlefield at the hands of Arabs and came under their control and authority, but the deep wound which was caused to their hearts as a result of this could not be healed for a very long time. As a result, the fire of revenge kept simmering in their hearts. They knew that the secret of this immense power of the Arabs was concealed in those concepts of life which the Quran had bestowed on them. After suffering defeat in the battlefield, when a governor of Persia, Harmzan, having been captured, was brought to Madina, Caliph Umer enquired from him that the Persians were that nation which considered it to be beneath them to even fight against the Arabs, and if the Arabs ever had a skirmish with them, then a tiny contingent of their army would cause the Arabs to flee. Why has it now happened that the whole nation of Persia has been so heavily defeated by a handful of Arabs. The answer which Harmzan gave is worthy of deep reflection. He said that the truth is that before this, when we used to have confrontations, the Arabs used to face the Persians alone, hence it was not at all difficult for us to overcome them. But in the confrontation which took place this time, the Persians were alone in this, but ‘the Arabs also had their Allah with them’. Who could fight against the combined might of these two? And so we were defeated.

‘Now the Arabs also had their Allah with them’ – this was the real secret of the power of the Arabs with which the Persians were very well acquainted. The meaning of ‘being with Allah’ was that a transformation had taken place in the

¹⁰²The *Shahnama* is a long epic poem about the mythical and historical past of the Persian empire written by the Persian poet Firdausi between 977 and 1010. (Ed)

hearts of the Arabs due to this Deen which their Allah had bestowed on them. As a result of this change in heart and vision, those revolutionary passions which arose in them, and that determination which was awakened in their hearts for the sake of their high and lofty aim in life to unflinchingly oppose every non-Deen power in the world, even to the laying down of their lives, no nation in the world was able compete with this – the Persians and Byzantines were all aware of this secret, hence their endeavour was to divert the Arabs away from these concepts of life which were the reality and basis of their successes and achievements.

9.8 The Plot of Christians and Jews

A severe blow was also caused to the self-concocted religions of Judaism and Christianity due to the advent of Islam. Furthermore, due to the rising power of the Muslims, a tremor had appeared in the foundations of the powerful fortress of the Byzantine empire, and Jews received an enforcement order to exit from the Arabian peninsula. Hence, these nations were also not lagging behind the Persians in their vindictiveness against the Arabs. Their intentions were the same as those of the Persians, and the tactics to accomplish these aims were also the same as those which were in the minds of the Persians. In other words, by somehow or other alienating Muslims from the revolution inducing concepts of life bestowed by the Quran, to introduce the same kind of tampering in their Deen as the tampering which had taken place in their own religions. When Iqbal uses the term '*Ajm*' as against 'Arab', from this he does not only mean the Persians, all non-Arab nations are included in it. And when he presents Arab-Islam in opposition to *Ajmi*-Islam, then by Arab-Islam he means that Deen which was bestowed by the pure Quran, and by *Ajmi*-Islam is meant all those non-Quranic concepts which were borrowed from Zoroastrianism, Judaism, Christianity, etc, and made constituents of Islam, and in this way, this Deen of Allah converted into that self-created religion of men which continues to be prevalent among us for centuries now.¹⁰³ The beginning of this tampering occurred from Persia, and its first link in the chain was an alteration in the belief about *Taqdeer*. The foundation of Zoroastrianism was on the issue of *Khair* and *Sharr*, hence the Persians knew very well what effect this belief has on the life of nations. They were well acquainted with this secret that a nation which holds this

¹⁰³ If I am blessed with the time and ability, my intention is to write a history of Islam (not of Muslims), in which it will be related how the Deen of the Quran became converted into the existing prevalent religion, and from where and by what paths non-Quranic ideas, concepts, and beliefs came to its door.

conviction that man writes his own destiny with his own hand and that his place among the ranks of nations in the world is defined by his doctrines of life, and his deeds and character are in accordance with these, then that nation becomes the possessor of immense powers. The technique to draw it away from these powers is to instill this belief in them that nothing transpires from the planning and deeds of man himself. The condition in which he is to live in the world is pre-decided in advance (*Muqaddar* i.e. as per his *Taqdeer*), and no individual can make any kind of alteration in this. Thus the beginning of the tampering in Deen (Islam) was from this very issue. The foundation of the very first sect which appeared among Muslims on the bases of beliefs was on a mutual difference regarding the issue of *Taqdeer*. This tale is interesting as well as extremely instructive, and acutely painful too – it is not a tale, it is a tragedy about its decline, it is grief about its state of ruin, it is an obituary about its demise.

9.9 The Asawara of Persia

In Persia there was a group of men of knowledge and intellect and a political class who were known as Asawara. Think of them as advisors to the Persian royals (Akasara), just like the nine viziers of Akbar¹⁰⁴. These aristocrats of the royal court used to be gifted with a bracelet of gold as a mark of distinction, this is why they were called Asawara. The meaning of *Al-Samar* is that of a bracelet. (In addition, the aim of this metaphor which has been described in the Quran regarding the inhabitants of paradise that they will be given ‘gold bracelets’ to wear, is a reference to their lofty status of distinction).

After the defeat of Persia, the Persian army in general and the Asawara in particular petitioned Saad Bin Waqqas (the conqueror of Persia) that whatever entitlements are available to the Muslims, if these are also made available to us then by accepting Islam we wish to settle down in Muslim habitations. This condition of theirs was accepted, and in this way these people settled in Kufa and Basra etc. Today, though we are not aware of the details of this reconciliation in view of which this permission was granted, when we look at the consequences and outcomes of this, then the conclusion towards which the mind is drawn is that this decision was not a wise one.¹⁰⁵ The reason is very clear. As is well known,

¹⁰⁴ A Moghul emperor of India. (Ed)

¹⁰⁵ The general public should not be blamed for the lapses and weaknesses of the Islamic government, as it is the responsibility of the *Momineen* at the helm of affairs to ensure that the society is run according to the constitution based on the Quran. All kinds of people with a variety of views can live under an Islamic system, as long as they follow its laws. (Ed)

Persia was the home of a very ancient civilisation due to which the artificialities of a wrong culture and the formalities of warped traditions had become a part of their life. The *Malukiyat*, the priesthood, and the capitalist system were flowing freely through the veins of their society like lifeblood. The basis of their religion was on Zoroastrian beliefs. Their wise men (particularly the Asawara) were experts in discussions and observations about matters relating to philosophy, logic, theology, and metaphysics, etc.

In contrast to them were the Arabs, whose life was simple like the starkness of a desert, and whose intellect was unpolluted like the atmosphere of a jungle. They were neither acquainted with the machinations of the realm of politics, nor were they familiar with the minutiae of ontological issues, or the intricacies of philosophy and logic. The Deen by obedience to which they had achieved a distinctive status in the world, that too was extremely pure, direct, and simple – a few clear and transparent concepts of life, and the power to action generated by them – this was their way of life and the basis of their sustenance.

Now just reflect that in such a nation with straightforward minds and pure vision, if the Persian mentality finds opportunities for contaminating these, and then they also come with a specific objective, it is obvious what will then be the outcome.¹⁰⁶ The simple minds of Muslims could not compete with the trickeries of their intellect. These people became integrated within the habitations of Muslims, where they began to insidiously spread their own ideas. History informs us that the name of the very first individual among Muslims who initiated the issue of *Taqdeer* was Mobid Bin Khalid Jhanni, and tells us that he had taken this issue from Abu Yunus who was connected to the Asawara. This belief was taken forward from Mobid by Ghilan Damishqi and spread further. According to this belief, man is declared to be merely a constrained being and trapped in the chains of a predestined *Qismat*. From this respect this group is called Jabria¹⁰⁷.

9.10 Christian Influences

¹⁰⁶ Such an outcome of this mingling of people which turned the Islamic *Millat* upside down – not only this, but which changed the course of the history of mankind towards the wrong direction - had occurred much earlier in Madina itself. After the victory in Persia, the governor there, Harmzan (and his companions), were granted permission to reside in Madina. The murder of Caliph Umer was a result of their conspiracy – that tragic incident on which the eye of humanity is still shedding tears of blood! If Caliph Umer had remained alive a little longer, today the map of the world would have been something else.

¹⁰⁷ Jabria – this name is derived from the word *Jabr* which means compulsion and coercion. (Ed)

The doctrine of *Jabr* was also the foundation of Christianity: this belief that a human child is born with sin, and that no deed of man can erase the mark of this initial sin is absolute *Jabr*. Then (according to the Bible) Eisa had said this prayer in the last moments of his life that, O God! Your Will is to be met, not mine – this was the foundation of the belief ‘to be content with the Will of God’. Thus according to a narration from history, Ghilan Damishqi (who was from the Qubti tribe) had taken this doctrine of *Jabr* from a Christian, who had become a Muslim and later reverted again to Christianity. The doctrine of the duality of *Khair* and *Sharr* also existed among Jews. When Bani Israel chanced to live around the area under the rule of Khosrow¹⁰⁸ during the hegemony of Babylon, their intermingling with the Persians was a necessity.

9.11 The Jewish Influences

After this, their release from Babylon and rehabilitation in their former homeland was also owing to the kindness of the Akasara of Persia. Due to this, they became even more influenced by the Zoroastrians. The doctrine of the duality of *Khair* and *Sharr* was introduced among them in this manner, and their interest in metaphysical ontological issues added further polish to it. (The Jewish institute of ontology in Alexandria was the centre of philosophy in this era).

Hence, one report from history is also that the founder of the doctrine of *Jabr* was Ja’ad Bin Durham who, though he was himself a Muslim, had taken this belief from a Jew in Syria. From Durham this doctrine was learned by Jahm Bin Safwan who was from Khorasan. He disseminated this belief with such fervour and intensity that the name of the sect of Jabria itself became Jahmia. Thus this sect is known in history by this name. In our annals not only is there this kind of ambiguity about the inventor of this doctrine, but also uncertainty about the process itself of the introduction of this belief. Therefore, sometimes this sect is called Jabria because they used to emphasise that Allah is Omnipotent, and sometimes it is called Qadriya because they rejected man’s ability to make choices (details of this issue will appear later).

Among Muslims, whether the inventor of this doctrine is Mobid or Jahm, or its source is Zoroastrianism, or Judaism and Christianity, this reality is clear that this

¹⁰⁸ The King of Persia from 531 to 579. (Ed)

totally non-Quranic belief infiltrated Islam from non-Islamic sources. This is an occurrence dating from the initial period of the Abbasid era.¹⁰⁹

At this point, the question which surely arises in our minds is, how did this kind of non-Quranic belief, which relates to the fundamentals of Deen, become widespread among Muslims? It is certain that those communicating and disseminating it would have presented philosophical reasonings in its support, but the mind finds it hard to acknowledge that Muslims of that era (at least) became ready to accept this kind of belief as part of their Deen merely on the basis of philosophical reasonings. In the matter of Deen they must have been demanding the authority of Deen itself - and the authority of Deen was supplied to them!!

9.12 The ‘Authority of Deen’ for this Non-Quranic Doctrine

You will have been taken aback to hear how this could have occurred! ‘How did this happen’ - this tale is also very strange and instructive. From this not only was authority for this one belief (*Taqdeer*) received, to whatever extent contamination by non-Quranic concepts occurred in Deen, their basis was also on this same authority.

9.12.1 *Ahadeeth*

Allah had declared His Book (the Quran) to be the foundation of Deen, and Rasul-ullah himself used to follow it and present its teachings. Until the time that the Quran remained as the foundation of Deen, no contamination from a non-Islamic belief was able to take place in Islam. The contaminators of Deen first of all removed this foundation from its position, and made this belief commonplace that in Deen the authority and final verdict is not the Quran alone, together with the Quran there is another thing similar to it (*Mithlu Hu Ma’bu*), and those are *Ahadeeth* – initially all that was proclaimed about the *Ahadeeth* was that the Quran

¹⁰⁹ We cannot give a definitive answer to this question whether Zoroastrians, Christians, Jews, etc. did this as a conspiracy, or spread these concepts among Muslims because they considered them to be correct and true (according to their belief), because intentions are known only to Allah. But from whatever appears before us from history, it certainly looks as if this was done deliberately (as a conspiracy). But whether it was done wittingly, or unwittingly, this nation became destroyed.

becomes further elucidated from these; after this, they advanced forward another step.

Among the Jews there was this belief that the *Wahi* received by a *Nabi* from Allah consists of two types – one is Torah *Shabb-Kutab* (i.e. *Wahi Jalli* or *Wahi Maktub*) and the other is Torah *Shabb-Alfa* (i.e. *Wahi Khafi* or *Wahi Ghair-Maktub*). *Wahi Maktub* is recorded in the Book of Moses and *Wahi Ghair-Maktub* consists of those narrations via Haroon which are prevalent among the nation. The whole edifice of the *Shariat* of Jews is dependent on these very narrations. The Quran has only described one kind of *Wahi*, all of which is preserved within its folds, but now this belief was made commonplace among Muslims that even the *Wahi* which Rasul-ullah received from the direction of Allah was of two types – one was *Wahi Maktub* or *Wahi Matlu* (which is documented in the Quran), and the other was *Wahi Ghair-Maktub* or *Wahi Ghair-Matlu*, whose compilations are these narrations (these are what are called *Abadeeth*). Both of these are from the direction of Allah and are the equivalent of each other.

Subsequently, this belief was concocted that if a mutual contradiction is found between two concepts or commands presented by *Wahi*, then out of these two, one is to be considered as the canceller (*Nasikh*) and the other is to be taken as being cancelled (*Mansukh*).¹¹⁰ As a logical conclusion of this belief, it was said that if a contradiction is found between the Quran and a *Hadeeth*, then it should be understood that the *Hadeeth* has cancelled the command of the Quran i.e. *Abadeeth* became declared to be the cancellers of the Quran. In other words, *Abadeeth* became declared to be the authority and criteria in Deen, and the Quran became relegated to the earning of *Sawab* through its recitation.

Rasul-ullah had not given any compilation of his own *Abadeeth* to the *Ummah*. Rasul-ullah had only given the Quran (in a compiled and complete form) to the *Ummah*, which exists among us, word for word. After Rasul-ullah, the Righteous Caliphs (*Khulfa Rashideen*) and even other distinguished companions did not compile any collection of *Abadeeth* – Abu-Bakr Siddique and Umer Farooq had even strictly prohibited the writing and narrating of *Abadeeth* so that no contamination could take place in Deen.¹¹¹ But when the belief mentioned above was concocted about *Abadeeth*, then the need arose for the compilation of

¹¹⁰ Contradiction in *Wahi*! What a strange thing. The Quran has stated that the evidence for its being sent down from Allah is that there is no contradiction or inconsistency in it. But later on this belief was made commonplace that contradictions are common in *Wahi*.

¹¹¹ They never felt any need to go outside the Quran, and they also knew that by going outside it, the formula of the Quran for Deen will become contaminated, and the system of Deen will collapse. (Ed)

collections of *Abadeeth*. Thus the collection of *Abadeeth* which is declared to be the most correct (i.e. the compilation of Imam Bukhari) was compiled in the third century Hijri (Imam Bukhari died in 256 AH)¹¹² - the remainder of the collections were compiled after him. Only the collection of Imam Malik (Moata) was compiled before this, but it contained very few *Abadeeth* - all these collections of *Abadeeth* were not compiled through any prior existing written record. They were compiled from hearsay through people. Just ponder that two hundred and fifty years after the death of Rasul-ullah, those *Abadeeth* which will be compiled based on merely the verbal utterances of people, what will be their scholarly and historical status (leaving aside their status in Deen)! But these *Abadeeth* (which were, at the most, attributed to Rasul-ullah i.e. those who were verbally narrating them only attributed them to Rasul-ullah) were proclaimed as being the most accurate *Abadeeth* of Rasul-ullah, and it was decreed that *Kufr* will necessarily become applied from the rejection of even one of them. In this way, leaving aside the possibility of the error and omission which can be made by the narrators of these *Abadeeth*, just ponder on the allowance and leeway which emerged for the concoction of false *Abadeeth*, and relating these to Rasul-ullah. How far and wide these concocted *Abadeeth* were disseminated can be assessed from just one thing that Imam Bukhari has written, that when he began the task of collecting *Abadeeth*, he found six hundred thousand *Abadeeth*. Out of these, he considered about seven thousand to be worthy of being included in his collection. The remainder (almost five hundred and ninety-three thousand narrations) were rejected by him. The authority for the accuracy of those *Abadeeth* that he included in his compilation was also his personal vision and assessment. These did not possess the confirmation and approval of Rasul-ullah himself.¹¹³

9.12.2 *Abadeeth* in Support of the Doctrine of *Jabr*

You will certainly be astounded how collections of narrations based on such weak criteria were accepted as *Abadeeth* of Rasul-ullah! Its basis was sentimental i.e. the *Ummah* has unparalleled love for the eminent being of Rasul-ullah (and it should be so, provided it is kept within the limits of the Quran). Its consequence is that

¹¹² Anno Hegirae – The first day of Year One of Islamic calendar was set as the first day of Hijrah, the migration of Rasul-ullah from Makkah to Madina on July 26, 622 C.E. The western convention in designating Islamic dates is thus by the abbreviation AH, which stands for the Latin Anno Hegirae, or ‘Year of the Hijrah.’ From Wikipedia. (Ed)

¹¹³ Details of these matters are available in the book, *The Status of Hadeeth in Islam*, by the author. (Ed)

whatever entity or matter is related to Rasul-ullah, the *Ummah* raises it high above their eyes. These narrations are, at any rate, alleged to be the eminent sayings of Rasul-ullah; our condition is such that in many places in the world certain stones are preserved on which footprints are imprinted. It is renowned about these that they are the prints of the sacred feet of Rasul-ullah; people go there in droves and prostrate before these stones as well. This was that very sentiment which was exploited by those who were concocting fraudulent narrations, and by relating whatever came to their minds towards the messenger, they kept spreading it among the *Ummah* as being the *Abadeeth* of Rasul-ullah. This was that door through which non-Islamic ideologies and beliefs kept becoming a part of Deen. What kinds of *Abadeeth* were fabricated about the issue of *Taqdeer* can be estimated from a few examples which we will present from the chapter on *Taqdeer* (*Bab-ul-Taqdeer*) from Mishkaat, which is considered to be a very trustworthy compilation of *Abadeeth*:

- (1) It is narrated from Abdullah bin Umer that Rasul-ullah said that fifty thousand years before Allah created the heavens and the earth, He wrote down the *Taqdeers* of the creations at the time that His *Arsh* was on water.¹¹⁴
- (2) Ibne Umer narrates that Rasul-ullah said that everything depends on *Taqdeer*, so much so, that even insanity and wisdom.¹¹⁵
- (3) It is quoted from *Hazrat*¹¹⁶ Ali that Rasul-ullah said that there is not a single individual among you whose final abode has not been written down i.e. his abode will either be the fire or in paradise.¹¹⁷
- (4) Abu Huraira narrates that Rasul-ullah said that however much Allah has written down in relation to *Zina* (adultery and fornication) in the *Taqdeer* of a man, he will definitely act on this.¹¹⁸ Furthermore, Rasul-ullah said that Allah created Adam, then rubbed His right hand on his back, then from this (i.e. from the back of Adam) he drew out his progeny and announced that I created these for paradise, they will do paradisiacal deeds. Then He rubbed His hand again on the back of Adam and took out more progeny from him, and then announced that I have created these for hell, these people will perform deeds leading to hell. Having listened to this from Rasul-ullah, an individual enquired, O Rasul-ullah! then what is the point of doing deeds? In reply, Rasul-ullah said that when

¹¹⁴ Reference from *Abadeeth* in Muslim (a well-known compilation of *Abadeeth*).

¹¹⁵ Ibid

¹¹⁶ *Hazrat* – a prefix used as a mark of respect. *Hazrat* Ali was the Fourth Caliph. (Ed)

¹¹⁷ Reference from Bukhari and Muslim.

¹¹⁸ Ibid

Allah creates some individual for paradise, he gets him to carry out tasks that are for the inhabitants of paradise... And as a result of these deeds Allah makes him enter paradise. In the same way, when He creates some individual for hell, then He gets him to enact deeds which are for those meant for hell.... And due to his deeds, Allah places him in hell.¹¹⁹

- (5) Abdullah bin Umer narrates that on one occasion Rasul-ullah came outside, and there were two books in his hands. Addressing us he said, do you know what these two books are? We replied that, O Rasul-ullah! we do not know. He pointed to his right hand and said that this book is from the *Rabb* of the universe - the names of those people destined for paradise are in it... Now nothing can be deducted from it, nor added to it. Next, pointing to the book in his left hand, he said that this book is also from the *Rabb* of the universe. The names of those who are destined for hell are recorded in it, now nothing can be added to it or deducted from it.¹²⁰
- (6) It is narrated from Abu Al-Darda that Rasul-ullah said that Allah has made Himself free from five things regarding every one of his servants i.e. He has written these five things into his *Taqdeer* – his lifespan (age), his good and bad deeds, his place of abode, his return, and *Rizq* (sustenance).¹²¹

9.12.3 A Ban on Discussion and Analysis About Them

These kinds of innumerable narrations are quoted in these books of *Abadeeth*. It is obvious that whichever individual ponders on these narrations in the light of the Quran using knowledge and vision, all types of doubts and misgivings about them will surface in his heart, and he will raise objections to them, and will also ask questions for further clarification. The people who had concocted these *Abadeeth* had also made an arrangement in advance in order to save themselves from such an eventuality. Hence, they had concocted the following kinds of *Abadeeth* alongside them, e.g. Abu Huraira narrates that we were sitting discussing the issue of *Taqdeer* when Rasul-ullah arrived, and on hearing our conversation, his face turned red. It became so red that it looked as if the juice of pomegranate seeds had been squeezed onto his cheeks. Then he said, is this the command which was given to you? Have I been sent among you for this? When nations who came before you disputed on this issue, they were annihilated. I give you this

¹¹⁹ Reference – Malik, Tirmidhi, Abu-Dawood (well-known compilations of *Abadeeth*).

¹²⁰ Reference – Tirmidhi.

¹²¹ Reference – Ahmed.

oath and repeat this oath, that you should never again argue about this issue and do not engage in any debate or disputation about it.¹²²

Have you seen how this has been forestalled by those concocting narrations about *Taqdeer* against the Quran. They declared that Rasul-ullah has said that those *Abadeeth* which are narrated to you (about *Taqdeer*), you should accept them with eyes shut – whichever individual enters into any kind of discussion or analysis about them, he will be annihilated.

After shutting the door of critique and objections to these concocted narrations, these people went a step further, and this situation again merits deep reflection.

9.13 Metaphorical¹²³ and Established¹²⁴ Verses

Some realities in the Quran are explained using allegories (these are called metaphorical verses). They can be understood by men of knowledge and vision according to their own intelligence, and this kind of difference in comprehension makes no difference to ‘actual Deen’. For example, it is noted in the Quran about Allah that ‘He became established on the Throne (*Arsb*)’ (10:3). Some have taken the meaning of *Arsb* literally and have said that there is a real throne in the heavens on which Allah is seated. Others, by taking the metaphorical meaning, have said that this means that Allah has authority, supremacy,

and control over the entire universe. Arguments can be presented for and against each of these two interpretations. But it is obvious that there is no effect on the *Eimaan* of an individual due to this difference i.e. that if it is accepted in one way then a man can be declared a *Momin*, and if it is accepted the other way then he will become a *Kafir*.

But some matters are such that they have to be accepted in principle in the same way as they are noted in the Quran e.g. it is stated in the Quran that, Say! That Allah is One (112:1). Acknowledging that Allah is One is related to actual Deen, there is no allowance in this that if one individual wishes he can accept Allah as being One, and if another wishes (Allah forbid), he can acknowledge two or three.

¹²² Reference – Tirmidhi.

¹²³ Referred to as *Mutashabihaat* in Arabic. (Ed)

¹²⁴ Referred to as *Muhkamaat* in Arabic. (Ed)

Acknowledging that Allah is One is *Eimaan*, and acknowledging more than one is *Kufr*.¹²⁵

9.14 Constituents of *Eimaan*

The Quran has made it clear by accepting what things a person can be a Muslim, and by rejecting what things he becomes a *Kafir*. These are called the constituents of *Eimaan* and they are five i.e.:

*...to have Eimaan in Allah, the hereafter, the Malaika, the Book and the Anbiya...
(2:177)*

At another place it is stated:

*...any who denied Allah, His Malaika, His Books, His messengers, and the hereafter,
has gone far astray. (4:136)*

In the whole of the Quran only these five constituents of *Eimaan* have been noted, but do you know that in order to now acknowledge someone to be a Muslim, what kind of acceptance is demanded from him? He is told to declare (and you may also have been told this):

I have accepted Eimaan in Allah, in His Malaika, in His Books, in His messengers, on resurrection after death, and on this matter that virtue and evil, wrong and good, benefit and loss, Khair and Sharr, all have been preordained (Muqaddar) by Allah.

9.14.1 Addition of a Sixth Constituent – *Eimaan in Taqdeer*

In other words, five constituents of *Eimaan* were defined by Allah, but now a sixth constituent was added into it i.e. the addition of *Eimaan in Taqdeer* – now no individual can become a Muslim until the time that, apart from Allah, the *Malaika*, the Books, the messengers, and the hereafter, he also professes *Eimaan in Taqdeer*. And this addition occurred as a result of *Abadeeth*, for example:

- (1) It is narrated from *Haẓrat* Ali that Rasul-ullah said that no man can become a *Momin* until he has belief in these four things – (a) To be a

¹²⁵ Acceptance of One Allah is acceptance of a fact. If anyone acknowledges more than one, then he is contaminating his mind with a false concept. (Ed)

witness that no one is to be worshipped other than Allah, and that I am the messenger of Allah, I have been sent as *Haqq* by Allah. (b) To accept death as *Haqq*. (c) To accept resurrection after death as being true. (d) And to have *Eimaan* in *Taqdeer*.¹²⁶

- (2) Ibne Welmi narrates that when Ibne Abi Kaab came to me, I told him that some misgivings have arisen in my heart about *Taqdeer*. Narrate some *Hadeeth* to me, so that by listening to it perchance my unease may be eliminated. He said that if Allah grips those living in the heavens and the earth in punishment, then He will not be One who does any kind of injustice to them. And if He has mercy on them, then His *Rehmat* will, in any case, be better and more superior than their deeds. If you spend gold equivalent to the size of the mountain of Uhad in the path of Allah, then this good deed of yours will not be acceptable to Allah until the time that you have total *Eimaan* in *Taqdeer*, and you fully comprehend this point that whatever has come to you, it was not going to be hindered and was not going to err (i.e. you were meant to face it). And that thing which was not meant to reach you, it would never have reached you (i.e. whatever you have achieved, it was not due to your own efforts but was destined to be like this (in your *Muqaddar*), and whatever thing you did not receive, you would not have achieved it despite your efforts, because this was the way the *Taqdeer* of Allah was meant to be). If you hold a belief contrary to this belief (i.e. your belief in the *Taqdeer* of Allah is not absolute) and you die in this condition, then you will most definitely be consigned to hell.

Ibne Welmi narrates that having heard this testimony from Abi Ibne Kaab, I went immediately to Abdullah Ibne Masood. He also said the same. Then I went to Hadeefa bin Alimaan, he also said the same. Then I went to Zaid Ibne Sabit, he also narrated a similar kind of *Hadeeth* from Rasul-ullah.¹²⁷

9.14.2 Elucidation by Syed Sulaiman Nadwi¹²⁸

In this way the ideology of *Taqdeer*, which was borrowed from Zoroastrians, Christians and Jews, became a constituent of *Eimaan* among us. The degree of importance which this ideology has acquired among our religious class can be

¹²⁶ Reference – from the books titled Tirmidhi and Ibne Majah. (Ed)

¹²⁷ From books on *Ahadeeth* called Ahmed, Abu-Dawood and Ibne Maaja.

¹²⁸ Sayyid Sulaiman Nadwi (22 November 1884 – 22 November 1953) was a Pakistani historian, writer, and scholar of Islam. He co-authored *Seerat-un-Nabi*, and wrote *Khutbat-e-Madras*. (From Wikipedia). (Ed)

estimated from this, that the late Syed Sulaiman Nadwi has published a series of volumes on *Seerat-un-Nabi* (biography of Rasul-ullah) in which he has discussed beliefs in the fourth volume of this series. In relation to this, after discussing Allah, the *Malaiika*, the Books, the messengers, and the hereafter, he has added a chapter on '*Qadah* and *Qadr*' (fate and scales) in its own right. He begins it in this way:

*Though this is not mentioned anywhere in the Quran in relation to Eimaan, it has been reiterated so many times in the Quran that its importance demands that it is also given a place in the aspects of Eimaan. Therefore, in some Ahadeeth which are correct, this is declared to be the final link in Eimaaniyat.*¹²⁹

What the practical consequences are of making some ideology a 'part of *Eimaan*', you cannot estimate this today. It can be estimated at that time when power is in the hands of the religious class. The *Fatwa* of these holy ones is that whichever Muslim is a denier of any one of the constituents of *Eimaan* (i.e. he does not accept it in the way in which these holy ones demand), he becomes a *Murtad* (apostate) and the punishment for apostasy is execution.¹³⁰ Thus the degree to which Muslim blood became so cheap in relation to this issue of *Taqdeer* during the era in which our religious clergy was in power, and the killing and mayhem which was unleashed to suppress this '*Fitna* of *Irt'daad*'¹³¹, the soul shivers at the thought of it.

9.15 The Voice of Protest Against It

At this juncture, this question must be repeatedly arising in your mind that was there no voice of protest raised against this from any corner of the *Ummah* when this kind of ideology against the Quran was being widely disseminated? Did such people no longer exist among Muslims who could refute this *Ajmi* concept by presenting the viewpoint of the Quran! Such people did exist, and they also raised

¹²⁹ *Seerat-un-Nabi*, Volume 4, page 840.

¹³⁰ This situation has worsened due to the law of blasphemy in some countries. For example, in Pakistan anything said against the Mullahs' version of Islam is punishable by death. In recent years, many non-Muslims e.g. Christians have been falsely accused of blasphemy. Two people can conspire to falsely accuse anyone of any kind of blasphemy, and a case then becomes registered in a court against that individual. This law of blasphemy is a blatant violation of the Quran (2:256, 10:65). For more details, see the book, *The Quranic Perspective on Apostacy, Slavery and Concubines*, Section 1.11, by the author. (Ed)

¹³¹ *Fitna* means rebellion, riot, chaos, punishment. *Irt'daad* means apostacy. (Ed)

their voice against this with full force. The reasonings presented by them were that:

- (1) In Deen the authority and criterion is the Book of Allah (the Quran), which can be understood through intellect and reasoning, and knowledge and vision.
- (2) The Law of Requitil is among the fundamental principles of the Quran. According to this, man himself is responsible for his own deeds and is accountable for their good or bad consequences. The process of righteous guidance (the messengers and the Book), and reward and punishment (the hereafter), are all for this purpose - if it is presumed about man that he is constrained i.e. that he is not responsible for his deeds, then no further need remains for any of these. Inanimate objects, plants, and animals are constrained, no *Nabi* was sent to them, nor can they be given any reward and punishment.

9.16 Just Sticking on a Label is Sufficient

At this you may inquire what was the response to these reasonings from the supporters of the doctrine of *Jabr* – they responded merely for the sake of argument, and the reply was those same *Abadeeth* from which a few have already been quoted. But in actual fact these people never need to respond logically to any reasonings, that is why their technique for this is totally different. The opponent whose reasonings they cannot rebut, they invent a label for him, and then with sustained propaganda they make this label so offensive that to whomever it is applied, the populace (without thinking or understanding) goes after them in a hysterical frenzy. Leaving aside tales of the past, in our own era Sir Syed Ahmad Khan made certain comments with which the orthodox faction differed. Instead of these people responding to his objections with reasonings, they invented a label against him.

9.16.1 The Label Against Sir Syed Ahmed Khan

Sir Syed had said that the secret of the progress of the nations of the West is that they have harnessed the forces of nature, and are obtaining all kinds of benefits from them. We cannot compete with these nations in the arena of life until we, too, do not acquire education regarding ‘natural science’. These people latched on to the word ‘nature’ and spread it about that Sir Syed was ‘*Natur?*’. And then they

embellish *Naturi* with such meanings that this label became synonymous with atheist, apostate, and non-Deen. Whatever Sir Syed used to say, it was declared in response that this individual is *Naturi*, that no one should listen to his utterances, otherwise he too will become *Naturi*. And no one bothered to even question that Sir! who is it that is called a *Naturi* and what is wrong with this. This is the technique for branding with labels. In relation to this, you may also have heard that famous story about a *Baniya* (Hindu) who used to live in a village in a frontier province. The *Mullah* of the village became annoyed with him over some matter, and going to the mosque, he made an announcement that, O people! do you know that the *Baniya* of your village has become a *Wababi*¹³². On hearing this, the inhabitants of that village rose up against this ‘*Wababi*’ and until he went and apologised to this *Mullah* (i.e. said to him that I am not a *Wababi* but a Hindu), they did not stop pursuing him – this is called inventing labels!

Proponents of the ideology of *Taqdeer* had also invented similar kinds of labels against their opponents, sometimes they were called *Mu'tazila*, sometimes *Qadria*. Then these kinds of *Abadeeth* were concocted about *Qadria* that Rasul-ullah had declared about the *Qadria* that they are *Majus*¹³³ for the *Ummah*. It becomes obvious now that whichever individual (or sect) is declared to be a *Majus*, what doubt remains in his being eligible to be killed due to being an apostate. By reflecting closely, this reality will become apparent that this is a fabricated *Hadeeth* and merely a creation of propaganda, because during the era of Rasul-ullah, neither discussions on *Jabr* and *Qadr* were touched upon, nor was there the existence of any sect in the *Ummah*. But in an environment contaminated by propaganda, who is going to reflect on these matters? In any event, not only were those presenting the Quranic concept of *Taqdeer* imprisoned and sent to the gallows by proclaiming them to be *Murtad*, another tyranny added to this was that their writings were sought and consigned to fire, and in this way, humanity became deprived of an immense treasure of knowledge and literature. Though *Mu'tazila* (or *Qadria*) disappeared in this way, afterwards this technique became customary that the moment anyone said anything based on intellect and reasoning, the label of *It'zaal* was applied to him from the court of the religious clergy. The consequence of this is obvious: in this way, the torches of reasoning and the beacons of intellect kept being extinguished. Thus Sir Syed was also declared to be a *Mu'tazila*, and the charge in the *Fatwa* of *Kufr* which was levelled against me too by one thousand *Ulema* (holy scholars) was also that there are

¹³² *Wababi* – a sect of Muslims in Saudi Arabia. They do not partake in rituals such as *Milad*, *Khatams*, visiting graves, amulets, etc. (Ed)

¹³³ *Majus* – (Magus, plural Magi), originally a term meaning Zoroastrians and specifically Zoroastrian priests. (Ed)

germs of *It'zaal* to be found in the ideas of this individual i.e. he says things based on intellect and reasoning! It is obvious that in the court of the clerics what greater crime can there be than this! In any case, this was the outcome of raising a voice against the ideology of *Taqdeer*.

9.17 Quranic Verses in Support of the Issue of *Jabr*

In connection with this discourse, these kinds of verses of the Quran were also presented by supporters of this doctrine of *Jabr* in which (for example) it is stated that:

... ۞ يُضِلُّ مَنْ يَشَاءُ وَيَهْدِي مَنْ يَشَاءُ ...

And which is translated as ‘Allah misguides whomsoever He wishes, and gives guidance to whomsoever he wishes’ (16:93). And:

... ۞ فَيَغْفِرُ لِمَنْ يَشَاءُ وَيُعَذِّبُ مَنْ يَشَاءُ ...

‘He forgives whoever He wishes, and gives punishment to whoever He wishes’ (2:284). In the coming chapters we will endeavour to present the correct meanings of these kinds of verses. It should be made clear that even if these verses had not been presented by the supporters of the doctrine of *Jabr*, even then it was essential that their correct meaning should be brought before us, because without this the issue of *Taqdeer* cannot be truly understood.

9.18 A Fundamental Principle in Comprehending the Quran

But before we approach these verses of the Quran, we need to understand a few points of principle as an introduction in relation to comprehending the Quran. In the first place, that the Quran has also presented one proof of its being from the direction of Allah the fact that there is no contradictory matter in it:

Do these people not reflect in the Quran, that if it had been from someone other than Allah, then these people would have found many contradictions in it. (4:82)

Therefore the first thing to bear in mind is that no contradictory statements will be found in the whole of the Quran. In other words, it will never happen that at one place it will state that whoever wishes can adopt the straight path, and whoever wishes can become misguided; and state at another place that you cannot

adopt any path of your choice: whoever We wish, We can put him on the right path, and whoever We wish, We can misguide him.

The second point is that if such verses are found in the Quran in which there appears to be a contradiction from a superficial glance, then these should neither be viewed with a cursory glance, nor should we move on with eyes closed. For this purpose the Quran has laid down the condition of cogitation. By concerted thought and reasoning in these verses, their real meaning becomes apparent to us and no further contradiction remains.

For deliberation on the Quran, it is essential to keep two important points in mind. Firstly, to comprehend any one verse of the Quran, it is necessary that wherever all the verses about this topic are dispersed throughout the Quran, these should be kept before us. In this way, the correct meaning of the Quran appears perspicuously before us. It is the proclamation of the Quran that it makes its meanings clear through *Tasreef-ul-Ayat* i.e. by presenting verses repeatedly – this is an intrinsic condition for comprehension of the Quran.

And the second point is that no meaning of a verse of the Quran can be accepted as being correct which is contrary to the entirety of its teaching e.g. the sum total of the teaching of the Quran is that Allah is One and has no partner. Allah is called *Al-Khaliq* (the one who creates) in the Quran, and at another place He is called *Ahsan Al-Khaliqueen* i.e. among those who create, He is the One Who creates the most beautiful and balanced creation (23:14). From this verse it is clear that the Quran also acknowledges other creators besides Allah, which is why it has declared Him to be the most balanced of creators. From this (seemingly) an aspect of Shirk is perceived. This contradiction becomes eliminated by bringing before us other verses of the Quran. It has stated about Allah that:

...He is such a Creator Who brought the universe and the earth into existence from nothing...(12:101)

No one else can be like this. Hence, the difference between Allah being *Khaliq* and man being *Khaliq* is that Allah brings things of the universe into existence from nothingness, whereas man can only do this much, that he can create different kinds of things from whatever ingredients already exist – from this neither an iota of doubt about *Shirk* remains, nor is there any contradiction between these two verses – (23:14) and (12:101).

This is the correct method to study the Quran. In keeping with this, in the coming chapters we will present those verses which in general terms are called verses of *Masbe'at* i.e. verses containing *Ma-Yash'u*, *Ma'in Yash'a*, *Lau Sha Allah* – I seek the guidance of Allah in this regard.

But in this connection, too, it is essential to understand one important point. These kinds of phrases will frequently appear before you in the coming pages about these verses that ‘this is the meaning generally taken of this verse’ or ‘the prevalent translation of this verse is this, but in reality its meaning is like this’. From ‘general meaning’ or ‘prevalent meaning’ it does not signify that this is the way it is known among the general population. These meanings are given in our books of *Tafasir* which have been authored by our scholars, and the translations of the Quran are not done by those who are illiterate either. At this point too, the question will again arise in your heart that why did the *Mufasssirin* give such an explanation, and how did these come to be translated in such a way. This question also merits attention.

9.18.1 *Tafasir* of the Quran

The way that our first history was compiled by Imam Tabari around the fourth century AH, similarly, it was also he who wrote our very first voluminous *Tafasir Al-Quran*. In this *Tafasir* he quoted *Abadeeth* in explanation of every verse, and in this way embedded this idea that the explanation is not his own or that of some other scholar, but is the *Tafasir* propounded by Rasul-ullah himself. Now it is obvious that a *Tafasir* about which it is asserted that this is the statement of Rasul-ullah, which Muslim could reject it, or have the audacity and courage to say that (Allah forbid) this *Tafasir* is not correct, that the *Tafasir* described by me is correct. Hence, following this, all the *Tafasir* which have been written up until today are based on the *Tafasir* of Imam Tabari. If anyone has differed in this, then it is only to the extent of saying that such and such a *Hadeeth* quoted by Imam Tabari is weak, in its place this other *Hadeeth* is the correct one i.e. the *Tafasir* is still done on the basis of *Abadeeth*. After this, when it was the turn of translations, then it is obvious that this issue was ensured that the words of the translation should not be different from those of this *Tafasir* which is continuing to be inherited from the past in line with *Abadeeth*.

Together with *Abadeeth*, this belief also continues to be handed down among us that to differ even slightly from the path of forefathers is a cause for great sin. If it had been adjudged about *Abadeeth* that these are not definitely and unquestionably the sayings of Rasul-ullah, rather are those words and actions which are attributed to him, and that forefathers were also, in any case, only human beings like us, then a different meaning could have been taken of the verses of the Quran from these *Tafasir* in the light of knowledge and vision, and reasoning and evidence. The outcome of not perceiving it like this was that

comprehension of the Quran literally came to a standstill. If exposition of the Quran had been done from the Quran itself, and it was interpreted in the light of human knowledge in our own respective eras, then the complexion of these *Tafasir* of the Quran would have been something entirely different. I have tried to comprehend the Quran in this very way and have defined the meanings of its verses in the same way. And as far as translation is concerned, as has been clarified in the preface of this book, translation of the Quran cannot be done in any language of the world. Synonyms for the Quranic words cannot be found in any language, this is why although an exposition (*Mahfoom*) of the Quran can be done, it cannot be translated – its meanings cannot be truly understood through the words of a translation. This is the reason why, instead of doing a translation of the Quran, I have compiled a *Mafboom*. It is this *Mafboom* which will appear before you in the coming pages, and its authority will be the Quranic verses themselves.

10 Chapter 10 - The Law of *Mashe'at*

There is a root in the Arabic language, *Sh-Y-A*, from which words such as *Sha'a*, *Yasha'u*, *Shai'an*, *Mashe'atu* have been formed. This is generally translated among us as 'to wish'. It is this translation, or you could say it is the unclear meaning of *Mashe'at*, which has become the cause for many misconceptions in relation to the issue of *Taqdeer*. Therefore it is essential to comprehend this accurately.

10.1 Difference Between Intent and *Mashe'at*

The meaning of *Mashe'at* is that of forming an intention. Some linguists have not drawn any distinction between intent and *Mashe'at*, but according to the lexicon (*Lughat*) there is a difference between the two. Merely to wish for something is called an intention, and when that thing materialises as a result of this intention then it is called *Mashe'at*. Therefore *Shai* is the name for the tangible form of an intention. When these words are related to Allah, it is necessary to bear this distinction between intent and *Mashe'at* in mind, although in common usage the meanings of both are taken to be that of 'to wish'. For example, it is stated in the Quran that:

The Amr of Allah is this, that when He intends something, He says to it 'Be' and it becomes. (36:82)

From this it becomes clear that when the intention of Allah adopts the form of having come into existence (*Fa Ya'kun*), then it is called *Mashe'at*. It has been explained in detail in Chapter Two that there are two parts to the creative programme of Allah – one is the domain of *Amr*, and the other is the domain of *Khalq*. In relation to the domain of *Amr*, I have written in my book, *Lughat-ul-Quran*, that:

It is our experience that everything in this world is tied up within the mechanism of cause and effect. But when we extend this process backwards, then such a point will definitely be reached where this process will terminate, and there we will have to acknowledge that an effect has come into existence without any cause. This is that point where the system of the universe commences with the wish, intent, and Will of Allah, and His full autonomy. If someone asks why and how did Allah make this system of the universe, no answer can be given to this other than that Allah made it as He

wished, according to His Will. At this point the Mashe'at of Allah is not tied to any procedure or law (as per our concepts). (Root Sh-Y-A).

This is the domain of *Amr* of Allah, in which everything comes into existence according to His scheme i.e. His creation is initiated and laws are established for it. All this takes place due to the Omnipotence of Allah. These are the same laws which are operating in the domain of *Khalq*. If someone asks why water flows downhill, why fire emits heat, why cyanide is fatal, in response there is no answer other than that the *Mashe'at* of Allah was simply like this i.e. that all this takes place according to those laws which were established in the domain of *Amr* according to the *Mashe'at* of Allah. From the Quranic viewpoint those laws of nature which are functioning in the physical universe are laws of *Mashe'at*, and those laws regarding human life which have been bestowed via *Wahi* will also be called laws of *Mashe'at* i.e. this fact that the nourishment of the human body occurs through those things which he eats and drinks is a law of *Mashe'at*, and this fact that the development of the human self takes place through those things which he gives away to meet the needs of others is also a law of *Mashe'at*.

From these explanations it is clear that wherever words appear about Allah like *Sha'a*, *Yasha'u*, they should not be translated as 'Allah does whatever He wishes'. Their translation should be like this:

Everything takes place according to the law of Mashe'at of Allah.

You will see how with just this difference in translation those aspects of the Quran become clarified which otherwise remain as the source for a thousand confusions due to previous translations, and for which thousands of philosophical expressions and intellectual interpretations are employed in order to resolve these but despite this, instead of these aspects being resolved, they become even more convoluted. In the physical world these laws will be comprehended through scientific knowledge, and in the human world through reflection and reasoning in the Quran. In this chapter these same aspects will be presented.

10.2 *Lau Sha Allah*

This combination has appeared in the Quran at numerous places. It is commonly translated as 'if Allah had wished, then...'. Its correct translation should be as follows - 'if Allah had defined this kind of law of *Mashe'at*, then this would have happened ...'. For example, if we ask why salt is salty, the reply will be that the

law of *Mashe'at* of Allah is that salt should be salty. If His law of *Mashe'at* had been that salt should be sweet, then salt would have become sweet.

10.2.1 The Meaning of *Lau*

If it is said that if Allah Wills, even now salt can become sweet or not, then in response it will be said that if He Wills, this can also happen, but He will never wish it like this because after having established the laws of *Mashe'at*, He Himself has stated that He will not make a change in these laws (details about these matters have already been noted). In this arrangement (*Lau Sha'a*) the meaning of *Lau* (according to the Arabic language) is that this matter will now never happen. Sayyuti has stated in his book, *Itteqan*, that:

*Ibne Abi Hatim has quoted on the procedure of Dhahaak from Ibne Abbas, that he said that wherever Lau appears in the Quran, its meaning is that this thing will never take place.*¹³⁴

10.2.2 Examples from the Quran

Imam Ibne Hazam has also reported the same in his book, *Al-Malal wa Al-Nahl*, and has then explained it in great detail. Let us take a look at examples of this in the Quran.

The law of *Mashe'at* of Allah about the things of the universe (i.e. leaving aside man, the whole of the rest of creation, inert matter, plants, animals, etc.) is that for whatever path they have been created, they tread on it automatically. They do not possess this choice that whichever one of them wishes, it can tread on this path, and whichever one wishes, it can adopt another path. This guidance (which species has to follow which path) has been kept in every creature of every species. This is called instinct and the Quran has termed it as '*Wabi?*' to these things. This is what is known as the *Fitrat* (nature) of these things. It is the nature of water that it will flow down a slope. It is the nature of a goat that it should eat grass, not meat. A lion is by nature carnivorous, it simply cannot eat grass. According to this principle, the nature of all the goats in the world is one and the same. All lions

¹³⁴ *Al-Itteqan fi Uloom al Qutaan*, by Sayyuti, Part 1, Section 40.

have the same characteristics. In other words, every species among these is one *Ummah*, there is no difference among them.

Contrary to this, there is man who has no *Fitrat*¹³⁵ according to which he has been created constrained to follow, and this is why there is no guidance inherently present within every individual of the human species (every human child) – man receives this guidance from outside (via *Wahi*), and he has been given this choice that whoever wishes can live according to this guidance, and whoever wishes can reject it and adopt another path. It is as a consequence of this that the whole of mankind is not automatically ‘one *Ummah*’, there are differences among them. Some are *Momin* and some are *Kafir*, some are virtuous and some are evil. Someone who is evil today can become virtuous tomorrow.

10.2.3 Why Were All Human Beings Not Created Virtuous?

Seeing the evil and chaos, injustice and tyranny, which is rampant in the world, this thought arises in the hearts of people with a superficial outlook that why did Allah not do this, that all human beings should have been made virtuous, no one should have been able to do any evil at all. Why did He not make everyone *Momin*? What difficulty was there for Allah to have made the whole of humanity one single *Ummah* (those who tread on one and the same path), so that there would have been no mutual differences among them, nor would there have been any conflict and chaos.

The Quran has said that it is correct that if this had been in the *Mashe'at* of Allah, then He would also have created man constrained just like other creations, and in this way the whole of humanity would have been one *Ummah* (like sheep and goats). There would have been simply no difference among them, but His *Mashe'at* was not like this. He has created man as the possessor of choice and intent. Now any such technique, pattern, or system which forces him to follow a particular path by removing his choice and intent will be counter to the law of *Mashe'at*. Neither Allah will now do this, nor should any human being do this. Like a compassionate physician, Rasul-ullah desired with all his heart and soul

¹³⁵ The concept of human nature, despite being so global, is absolutely against the evidence, and is contrary to the Quran. *Fitrat* is of the constrained, not the one possessing choice and intent. Even among us (Muslims) this concept of human nature is very common, rather it is also said that Allah has created man based on His Own nature, and that Islam is the Deen of *Fitrat*. These concepts are against the Quran. For further details see *Lughat-ul-Quran*, under the topic of (F-T-R).

that people should abandon the wrong path and adopt the right path, and in this way avoid destruction. This was that intensity of desire of the heart of the *Nabi* referring to which Allah stated:

Will you fret yourself with grief that they do not become Momineen! (26:3) See also (18:6)

Now just note in what way the Quran presents what has been stated above. It is stated in Surah *Yunus*:

If it had been the Will of your Rabb, they would all have had Eimaan – all who are on earth! Will you then compel mankind against their will to have Eimaan? (10:99)

If this had been in the Divine *Mashe'at* then He would have created all human beings like this - that they would all have accepted *Eimaan*. He would have created them constrained just like other things in the universe but His *Mashe'at* was not like this. He did not create man as constrained. Therefore, O Rasul! do you wish to compel people to become Muslims? But this will be against the law of *Mashe'at* of Allah. If it had been the aim of *Mashe'at* to force man to become *Momin*, then this guidance would have been kept in the *Fitrat* of every human child and in this way, (like other animals) they would have been constrained to follow one path only according to the demands of their instincts:

If We had so willed, We could certainly have given every self one guidance... (32:13)

If it had been the requirement of our *Mashe'at* for all human beings to be constrained to tread on one path only, then We would have kept such an instinct within them, but this is not our law of *Mashe'at*. For human beings the law is that We have informed them through the messenger which is the right path for them, and after that have declared:

... Whoever wishes can accept it, and whoever wishes can reject it... (18:29)

The growth of human potentials will take place from this, and the evaluation of this fact, how they utilise their choice and intent (5:48-49). By selecting the right path using their choice and intent, they become unified in thought and deed with each other: in this way, their differences will be able to be erased – these will not be erased by force (11:118-119). If man had been created constrained, then in that situation there would have been no *Kafir* or *Mushrik* (6:107, 6:137), then human beings would not have remained as human beings, rather would have existed as stony rocks, or a herd of cattle.

10.2.4 The Demand for a Miracle

One way to force man who is born with choice and intent to accept something is to hold a sword to his throat, and the other way is to somehow or other suspend the power of his choice and intent (which is far more effective and successful than the first one) – by making him drink an intoxicant, by making him sniff chloroform, or (now) by mesmerizing him through hypnotism. In the *Maslak* of mysticism this objective is achieved by exhibiting magical tricks. At the time of the advent of Islam this custom was prevalent throughout the world. In light of this, the *Kuffar* of Arabia would repeatedly request and demand that Rasul-ullah should demonstrate some supernatural phenomenon to them – in common terminology this is called a miracle i.e. they used to demand miracles from him.¹³⁶ In response to this, Allah used to inform His messenger to say to them that We are declaring that by using your intellect and reasoning like human beings, decide for yourselves about right and wrong, whereas you desire that your intellect and thinking becomes suspended by the display of miracles, and in this way you are compelled to accept this matter. If the intention had been to compel you to obey something, then why would you have been given the power of choice. This does not befit Allah that after having given you the power to choose, He takes it away again.

10.2.5 The Response to This

In the verse referred to above from Surah *Yunus* (10:99) where it is said to Rasul-ullah that do you wish for them to be made *Momin* by force, from this there is a reference to this very demand from the *Kuffar*. It is stated in Surah *Al-An'am*:

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)

These people ask why does Allah not give some miracle to His messenger. Tell them that it is not impossible for Allah to manifest miracles, but they do not have knowledge of this fact, why He does not do this – what He wishes is for you to decide about right and wrong by utilising your intellect and vision. He does not wish to make you accept reality by suspending your intellect and reasoning. Along with this, the messenger was informed that if you could do this, that by making a

¹³⁶ For the correct meanings of those verses of the Quran in which it is considered that miracles by former *Anbiya* are mentioned, see the relevant sections of *Mafhoom ul Quran* by the author.

tunnel in the earth reach the other end, or by erecting a ladder reach up to the heavens, and bring back from there such a miracle through which they become satisfied, they will still not accept *Eimaan*. In other words, it is certainly possible that by becoming mesmerized in this way, these people may bow before you but this cannot be declared as being *Eimaan*. That which is called *Eimaan* is acceptance of the truth following the full agreement and contentment of the heart and mind. No human being can become a *Momin* by being coerced to become a Muslim (regardless of what the form of this compulsion may be). Hence, do not become one among those people who, due to lack of knowledge of the reality, say that why has Allah not made all human beings righteous and *Momin* (6:35). *Eimaan* will only be his who assents after listening with the ears of his heart (6:36).

At another place it is stated that from this demand for miracles which is made by these people (13:27), this thought also arises in the hearts of some members themselves of your *Jamaat* that if their demand is fulfilled and they accept *Eimaan*, then this will be excellent. Say to them that even if there had been such a Quran due to which the mountains began to move, and far off places on the earth could be traversed in the twinkling of an eye, even to the extent that the dead started to speak due to this, even then these people could not have become *Momin*. This is the very reason that Allah has kept all matters under the obedience of His laws (13:31). And in this regard His law is that the matter remains dubious to those people who do not employ intellect and reasoning (10:100). After this it is stated that have members of your *Jamaat* still not comprehended this fact that if it had been the *Mashe'at* of Allah, then it was not at all difficult for Him to have created human beings in such a way that they would all have trodden on the right path.

10.2.6 Why is There This Killing and Destruction?

This thought arises in the hearts of many people from witnessing wars and conflicts, killing and destruction in the world, that why does Allah not ensure that people do not resort to mutual bloodshed. (In the metaphorical account of Adam, the aim from the objection which was raised by the *Malaika*, that we see the flames of bloodshed and chaos in his form, was also to point to this reality). In response to this it is stated in Surah *Al-Baqarab* that it was enjoined in the guidance which we sent via the *Anbiya* that people should not resort to mutual bloodshed and wars. But after the departure of the *Anbiya*, their followers used to again engage in conflicts and fights among themselves. If the aim of *Mashe'at* was this (*Wa Lau Sha Allahu Ma'ketatala...*(2:253)) that differences and bloodshed among people be forcibly stopped, then Allah would simply have created them constrained but He

did not do this. He created them as possessors of choice and intent, the consequence of which is that:

...some among them accept Eimaan, some deny it...(2:253)

The meaning which is generally taken among us of *Lau Sha Allah* is that this is simply what is wished by Allah, that these evils should exist in the world. If He did not wish it like this, then who would have dared to create chaos and conflict in the world. And when this is indeed what Allah wishes, then reproving someone for chaos and conflict, and making an effort that this does not happen is against the Will of Allah. You may perhaps say that no one says this nowadays. It is true that due to the consequence of the light of intellect and reasoning being commonplace, people do not say this, but if you look at the ancestral literature among us relating to *Taqdeer*, particularly that relating to *Tasawwuf*, you will find these same ideas there. (As has already been noted) the Quran informs us that at the advent of Islam the *Mushrikeen* and *Kuffar* used to derive this very meaning from *Lau Sha Allah*. It is stated in Surah *Al-An'am* that the *Mushrikeen* say that:

...If this had not been the Will of Allah (Lau Sha Allah), then we would not have done Shirk, nor would our forefathers have done this...(6:148) See also (16:35, 43:20)

It is stated in Surah *Ya'Sin* that when these people are told to aid the hungry and the destitute, the *Kuffar* say:

...Should we feed those people whom, if Allah had so willed, He would have fed...(36:47)

Should we make provisions for bread for these people whom Allah wishes to keep hungry. If it was not acceptable to Him to keep them hungry, then why did He not make them rich. It is evident from the fact that He has kept them poor that He simply does not wish to provide them with bread. If we provide them with bread, then it will mean that we will have to engage in war with the *Masbe'at* of Allah!

The Quran has declared this mentality to be that of the *Mushrikeen* and *Kuffar*, and has attributed it to extreme ignorance and misguidedness. The Quranic meaning of *Lau Sha Allah* is the one which was explained earlier.

10.3 *Ma Sha'Allah*

Ma Sha'Allah is commonly translated amongst us as 'whatever Allah will wish' and the meaning taken from this is that we can do whatever we want, however, only that will happen which Allah wishes i.e. whatever is acceptable to Allah. It is obvious that this meaning is the product of that concept of *Taqdeer* according to which man is declared to be a constrained being. Since this concept of *Taqdeer* is against the Quran (as previously documented), hence the above noted meaning of *Ma Sha'Allah* is also not correct. Its true meaning is that whatever is happening in the universe, it is taking place according to the law of *Mashe'at* of Allah. Whoever contravenes these laws, he bears its consequences. It is stated in Surah *Al-Baqarah*:

...man cannot acquire anything from Divine knowledge other than through that technique and to that limit which His law of Mashe'at has defined... (2:255)

In other words, according to intellect and vision, or through *Wahi* - these are the two techniques which the law of *Mashe'at* has devised for the acquisition of knowledge. Even through these man can only obtain limited knowledge compared to Divine knowledge.

In Surah *Al-Kahf* the tale of two orchard owners is illustrated as an allegory. One of them maintained a correct outlook, and it is stated about the other:

...he used to commit injustices and excesses against his own self... (18:35)

He was a denier of Allah and also of His Law of Requit. The consequence of denial of the Law of Requit (i.e. denial of this reality that man reaps whatever he sows) was that he neglected his land, and it became ruined. At this his companion (who had *Eimaan* in these matters) told him that you should have said this after seeing your land and orchards, that:

...all this takes place according to the law of Mashe'at of Allah (Ma Sha'Allah). Other than Him, no one else has such power and authority that He can create them and then make them bloom... (18:39)

10.4 Profit and Loss

Cast another eye on whatever has been noted in connection with benefit and loss under the topic of *Khair* and *Sharr*. This reality will appear before us that there is benefit by acting according to the law of *Mashe'at* of Allah and loss by going against it.

In Surah *Yunus* it is stated, O Rasul! these opponents ask you repeatedly that you warn us that if we keep treading on the wrong path our destruction will ensue, then tell us when will that destruction arrive. In response to this it was instructed to tell them that you ask me in such a way as if manifesting this revolution is within my control and so I should be able to tell you when it will arrive. Here, everything takes place according to the law of *Mashe'at* of Allah. Leaving aside that revolution:

...I do not even possess any authority for benefit and loss to my own self against the law of Mashe'at of Allah (Illa Ma Sha'Allah)..(10:49)

This cannot happen that if I desire, I can turn poison into something which is lifegiving for me; or can produce the property of poison in water; or can do this, that wheat ripens in my field in two months, and after a year in the field of my opponent. There is a law of respite defined for everything here. When the time of respite ends, then there is not the delay of even one moment (10:49). Hence this revolution will also take place according to the law of respite. From here the meaning of *لَا أَمْلِكُ لِنَفْسِي ضَرًّا وَلَا نَفْعًا إِلَّا مَا شَاءَ اللَّهُ* has become clear (10:49).

10.5 The Law of Respite

Referring to this law regarding the life and death of nations, it is stated in Surah *Ar-Ra'd* that:

Allah does remove or establish according to His Will (i.e. as per His law - Ma Ya'sha): this is all in the Umm-ul-Kitab (Mother of Books). (13:39)

In other words every period of respite has a law defined for it. That which is to remain established and strong, also remains established and strong according to this law; that which is to become erased, also becomes erased according to it. Here, no nation acquires establishment for no reason, nor is it erased through injustice and deceit. The meaning of *Ma Ya'sha* becomes clear here too.¹³⁷ You will be able to comprehend what the law of removal and establishment is - i.e. what are the determinants according to which a nation achieves ascendancy, and what are the factors due to which nations become destroyed. You can have knowledge about these reasons and causes but you cannot understand why these laws have been made like this. Only Allah has knowledge about this because it is related to the domain of His *Amr*. This essence of the law has been termed *Umm-*

¹³⁷ Details about this will be found in the chapter in which the *Taqdeer* of nations is discussed.

ul-Kitab i.e. the fountainhead of the law, its root - the law of *Masbe'at* operates in a tangible form in the universe, its origin lies within Divine knowledge.

10.6 The Meaning of *Illa Ma Sha'Allah*

At some places in the Quran *Illa Ma Sha'Allah* appears e.g. it is stated in Surah *Al-A'la* that:

O Rasul! We have given you the Quran in such a manner that you cannot forget anything from it. (After this it is stated) Illa Ma Sha'Allah... (87:6-7)

This *Illa Ma Sha'Allah* does not mean that you can only forget that much from it which Allah Wills, you cannot forget any more than that. Not a single word of the *Wabi* which was bestowed on Rasul-ullah from the direction of Allah could be forgotten (17:86). Later, Mufti Muhammad Abdu'hu (compiler of *Al-Minar*) has written that 'continuation in *Masbe'at*' appears everywhere in the Quran for evidence and confirmation i.e. wherever the words *Ma Sha'Allah* etc. appear after *Illa*, it means that nothing will ever go against whatever has been stated. The purpose of stating *Illa* at these places is that for these matters remaining established and continuing is in accordance with the *Masbe'at* of Allah. If His *Masbe'at* had been against this, then he would have made them like that.¹³⁸ Therefore, the meanings of '*Fa'la Tansa Illa Ma Sha'Allah*' in the above verses are that you will in no way be able to forget it.

In this same vein, there are those verses of Surah *Hud* in which it is stated in relation to the eternity of *Jabannum* and *Jannat* that they will stay there as long as the system of the universe remains in place (11:108-109, 6:29).¹³⁹ The meaning of *Illa Ma Sha'Rabbuka* (according to the explanation by Mufti Muhammad Abdu'hu) is that they will stay in them forever, or its meaning will be that they will remain in them in accordance with the law of *Masbe'at* of Allah. Elaboration of this law is available at other places in the Quran.

10.7 *Aay'ma Lu Ma Shai'tum*

¹³⁸ Tafsir al-Minar, Vol 1, pp 416-419. Also see Lughat-ul-Quran.

¹³⁹ For what is meant by the eternity of *Jannat* and *Jabannum*, see my book titled, *The Life in the Hereafter: What does the Quran Say?*

The gist of this discussion is that the meaning of *Ma Sha'Allah* is not that 'as Allah will wish, so it will be'. This is because Allah Himself has stated for man that – *A'ma Lu Ma Shai'tum* (41:40) - do as your heart wishes. The '*Mashe'at*' of Allah was up to the extent of defining the law. Once He had made immutable laws, then after that it will be the '*Mashe'at*' of man which will become operational i.e. if he wishes, he can work according to these laws; if he wishes, he can adopt a path against them. However, bear this fact in mind that the Law of Requit of Allah watches what you do (41:40); the consequences of your deeds will be established according to His Law of Requit. Changing the outcome is not in your '*Mashe'at*' - this takes place according to the '*Mashe'at*' of Allah.

10.8 *Insha'Allah*

'*Insha'Allah*' (which is usually translated as 'if Allah wishes, then...') is used so frequently among us that it has become a customary phrase. In what sense it is utilised can be assessed (for example) from the following conversation:

- First friend: You will reach by 4 o'clock, will you not!
- Second friend: *Insha'Allah*.
- First friend: Brother, the matter is very serious, never mind *Insha'Allah*, tell me for certain whether you will reach by 4 o'clock or not.

10.8.1 The Accidents of PIA¹⁴⁰

In other words, amongst us *Insha'Allah* is uttered at that time when the matter is not certain. This use of *Insha'Allah* appears to be inconsequential, but on examining it more deeply, then this reality will become evident that this interpretation is not inconsequential. When the belief is that man can make a thousand efforts but only that happens which is the Will of Allah, then you can say nothing definitively. That confidence can simply never be generated within you through which you can declare with absolute certainty that I will definitely do this. You can only say that if it is acceptable to Allah, then I will reach at 4 o'clock. Because the doctrine of *Jabr* has become part of our *Eimaan*, hence its outcome (conscious or unconscious) is that if something is said with certainty (without *Insha'Allah*) then it feels as if we are committing some kind of sin. The airline

¹⁴⁰ PIA – Pakistan International Airlines. (Ed)

service of Pakistan (PIA) was considered to be very reputable and trustworthy. By chance a few airplanes met with accidents (i.e. due to maladministration) because of which great concern arose in the country. In order to determine the causes and reasons for these accidents and to remedy any errors, investigations were commenced, when it was announced from the direction of our religious class that the true cause of these accidents is that at the time of take-off of the airplane, the captain announces that by flying at this speed we will arrive at a certain place at this time – he does not say *Insha'Allah* together with this; this kind of pride is not acceptable to Allah. Therefore, it was decided regarding this that the captain would definitely utter *Insha'Allah*, and despite this, accidents continued to occur!

10.8.2 The Meaning of the Word 'In'

We have already noted the meaning of 'Sha' in *Insha'Allah* i.e. the law of *Mashe'at* of Allah. As far as the word 'In' is concerned, it is generally denoted as meaning 'if' but it has one other meaning as well, which (unfortunately) becomes ignored in the translations of the Quran among us. According to Arabic grammar, it will be said that this word is used to denote a reason or cause i.e. the way in which we use the word 'because' in the Urdu language, it is also used in the Arabic language for the same meaning. Sayyuti has given many examples of this in his book, *Itteqan*.

10.8.3 This Will Definitely Be Accomplished

Let us see what meaning becomes defined according to these meanings of *In* in *Insha'Allah*. This can also be understood from an example. You say to your friend that, brother, I am in a hurry, leave the formality of serving tea as this will take too much time. That friend places the kettle on the cooker and says, how much time can it take to make tea. The fire is burning, I have put the kettle of water on it, the tea will be ready in ten minutes. You say to him, in ten minutes? He says, *Insha'Allah* i.e. whatever I am doing, since it is according to the law of *Mashe'at* of Allah, hence its outcome will definitely be established in this way; or in other words, whatever I am doing, when it is according to the law of *Mashe'at*, it can never be the case that its outcome will not be like this, hence this will certainly be accomplished. (In the books on *Lughat*, *In* also has the meaning of *Iz* which is translated as 'when'). From this aspect of the meaning, see how the matter has

taken a totally different direction. That same *Insha'Allah* which was uttered to denote lack of certainty and absence of confidence in oneself, has now become a reflection of certainty and conviction, and complete confidence. This is the Quranic meaning of *Insha'Allah*. The examples quoted by Sayyuti for the meaning of *In* in the context of 'because' or 'when' are very perspicuous. For example, the meaning of the well-known verse of Surah *Al-e-Imran* (3:139) is that because you are *Momineen*, hence you will be at the most eminent status in the world; or that when you are *Momineen*, it can never be the case that you are not established at the loftiest status.

It is stated in Surah *Al-Fath* (48:27) that because your whole programme is in accordance with the law of *Mashe'at* of Allah, hence you will definitely enter the Kaaba (or Makkah) in peace and safety; or in other words, when your programme is according to the law of *Mashe'at* of Allah, then how can it be that you do not enter *Masjid e Haram* – you will enter it, and will most definitely enter it.

When the parents and other family members of Yusuf came to Egypt, he told them that because all this is taking place according to the law of *Mashe'at* of Allah, hence you will remain in Egypt in peace and comfort (12:99).

When the father-in-law of Moses (about whom it is claimed that he was the messenger Shuaib) came to an agreement in the matter of working for the household, he said to Moses that because I obey the laws of Allah, hence you will find me among the righteous people (28:27). See also (18:69, 37:102).

In the Battle of Ahzab the hypocrites resorted to massive treason. Later on, this question arose that what kind of treatment should be meted out to them. With reference to criminals, the law of Allah is that if any possibility of reformation is seen in anyone, and he is repentant on his conduct, then he should be forgiven, and if such a situation does not exist, then the punishment for the crime should be given. In light of this law, it is also stated regarding these hypocrites that the decision as to whether they should be punished or pardoned will be according to the law of *Mashe'at* of Allah (which is referred to above) (33:24).

10.9 Do Not Say – I Will Definitely Do So Tomorrow!

It is stated in Surah *Luqman* that:

...No self can say with certainty what he will do tomorrow... (31:34)

This is because in relation to the occurrence and materialising of events, certain links in the chain of events also sometimes appear and have an impact about which man can have no prior knowledge. These are those very links which are termed as unseen and about which it is stated that no one other than Allah has knowledge of the unseen. It is stated concerning this that you can say nothing with any certainty about all the links in those matters about the future which are such that their causes are not known to you in advance. For example, you can certainly predict at what time there will be a solar eclipse a hundred years from now, but you cannot predict where this fly will land after flying away from here. In connection with such matters it is stated that:

Nor say of anything that I shall be sure to do such and such tomorrow... (18:23)

You should not say this, that tomorrow I will definitely do something. Whatever you wish to do, keep providing the necessary means for it according to the law of Allah and say that if all the means are made available according to His law, then this will definitely take place. But if such links appear in it about which I do not receive prior knowledge, then it will not happen like this. Regarding thinking about these means and resources and making provision for their availability, keep taking great care to adopt the necessary measures, and if you forget something and thus were not able to achieve your aim, then do not just sit down in despair. Bring to mind what the issue was that you overlooked:

...Instead, say that I am certain that now I will see such a path which will take me even closer than before to my intended destination. (18:24)

10.10 Meaning of 'In' as 'If'

Now let us analyse those places at which *In* in *Insha'Allah* has appeared with the meaning of *Lau* (if). In this connection, cast another glance at the topic of *Lau Sha Allah* again. It is said there that Allah has declared that if We had wished that cyanide should not be a cause for death, then We would have made that kind of law, but because We did not wish it to be like this – Our *Masbe'at* was that cyanide should be a cause for death - thus We did not make a law like that, but made a law like this. This is the meaning of those verses in which *In* has appeared with the meaning of 'if'. For example:

- (1) It is stated in Surah *Ya'Sin* that you can witness how, despite being loaded with so much weight, ships float about on the surface of the water like ducks. This takes place in accordance with Our law of *Masbe'at* (36:43). If

Our law of *Mashe'at* had not been like this, then these would never have been able to float, they would have sunk in the water. Just think how a needle made of steel sinks immediately in the water, but a ship constructed from iron weighing thousands of tons and carrying so much cargo and so many passengers, keeps floating onwards. This is the functioning of Our law of *Mashe'at*, according to which it has been determined what size and weight of something will remain afloat and what will sink in it. The same thing is said in connection with those winds due to whose force sailboats are steered (42:33).

- (2) Nuh used to admonish his people that if you do not desist from your wrong path, you will be destroyed. In reply they used to say that instead of continuing to alarm us in this manner, why do you not just bring about that destruction. He would respond that this destruction comes according to the law of *Mashe'at* of Allah (after a period of respite), it will descend upon you according to that same law (11:33).
- (3) Allah sent down the Quran, completed it, and also took the responsibility for its protection on Himself. Hence, this simply cannot even be envisioned that some part of the Quran has been lost. In this regard it is stated that if this had been in Our *Mashe'at* then We would have taken out some part of the Quran, but this kind of thing was not in Our *Mashe'at*. This is why, having completed it, We have taken on the responsibility for its protection – not a single word of it will be lost (17:86). In fact, it is also stated here that if it had been in His *Mashe'at* then (O Rasul) He would have placed a seal on your heart, and in this way this Quranic message would simply not have been able to enter your heart but the *Mashe'at* of Allah was not like this (42:24).
- (4) After having created man on earth, Allah stated that this is your place of abode and you will have to stay here for a period of time (2:36). This is the law of *Mashe'at* of Allah. How long this system of the universe and heavens and earth will endure in this state, or how long this earth will remain fit as an abode for man, or how long the process of the human race itself will continue like this, these matters are related to the *Mashe'at* of Allah about which man has no knowledge. This is why it is stated:

O mankind! If it was in the Mashe'at of Allah, then He would remove you all from here, and bring about another creation in your stead. Allah has defined scales for this.
(4:133)

This reality has also been reiterated at other places e.g. (14:19, 35:16). There are also laws of *Mashe'at* specified for the establishment and substitution of nations (i.e. one nation being replaced by another nation); their elimination and

establishment is also according to these laws. The words *In Yasba* have appeared for this too (6:133). In the coming chapters, since we are going to discuss the laws of *Mashe'at* relating to guidance and going astray, power and decline, government and rule, poverty and wealth, etc. therefore at this point these summaries are felt to be sufficient, although there is a certain point in relation to this which is very important and requires elaboration, therefore it is necessary to explain it here.

10.11 *Wa Ma Tasha'una Illa An'ya Sha'Allah*¹⁴¹

We have seen that the Quran has informed human beings that 'you can do as you wish (41:40)'. About the Quran itself it is stated that be aware that this is a reminder of those truths which have been overlooked. So whoever wishes can remind himself of these, obtain counsel from it (80:11-12). But there are also those kinds of verses in the Quran which are commonly translated as follows:

- (1) This is but an admonition, then whoever wishes should set his path towards his *Rabb* and you will not wish for anything other than what Allah wishes.¹⁴² (76:29-30)
- (2) This is no less than an admonishment for the worlds (all the worlds), for that individual among you so that he can tread on the straight path, and who does not wish anything other than what Allah wishes, the *Rabb* of all the worlds.¹⁴³ (81:27-29) See also (74:56).

Now just think, what is the situation which appears before us through these translations? - that it is the decree of Allah that We have sent down this code of life, now whoever among you wishes, he should adopt the straight path, and whoever does not wish this, he can become destroyed by treading on the wrong paths. But in the same breath it is also stated that you cannot do anything according to your own volition, choice and intent. Your desire, wish, will, choice, your wishing or not wishing, is nothing to do with your own choosing. You can only wish that which Allah wishes. This implies that what you call your own decision is never your own decision - whatever decision Allah desires, He gets it accomplished by you.

Have you noticed that by inventing this one doctrine of *Jabr*, what kind of concept appears before us about the Quran itself and about Allah Who sent down the

¹⁴¹ See verse (81:29). (Ed)

¹⁴² Translation by Maulana Mahmud ul Hasan.

¹⁴³ Translation by Shah Rafi ud Deen.

Quran? If the issue was only this, that leaving aside the deeds of man, even his own wishes and decisions are not within his own volition – whatever decision Allah wishes, He gets it done from him, man must only wish for that which Allah wishes - then what need was there to proclaim earlier that We have sent down this Book, now whoever wishes can accept it, and whoever wishes can reject it. Saying this kind of thing does not suit the style of Allah.

In these verses the words *Ma Tasha'una* merit close attention. These are generally translated as 'you do not wish'. In this, *Ma* is for the negative (not), and *Tasha'una* is for the action. According to Arabic grammar, the meaning of a negative action is also *Nahi* i.e. do not do it. In grammatical terms this is said to be the inclusion of information in the meanings of *Insha* (wish). This is a technical argument which I have written about in detail in *Lughat-ul-Quran* with support from acknowledged books of *Lughat* and grammar. Those readers who have an interest in these details can refer to it. According to these meanings, the interpretation of *Wa Ma Tasha'una Illa An'ya Sha'Allah* becomes clear, i.e. (it is an instruction of Allah that) We have left you with this choice that you can make whatever decision you wish, but what you should do is to keep your choice and your decision in accordance with Our laws of *Mashe'at*. We only wish for this, that you should live your life according to Our laws, so you should also wish for this. We do not force you, but We will certainly say this much, that you should willingly, with your choice and intent, only adopt that path which is in line with Our laws of *Mashe'at* – 'that you should wish for that which We wish'. What it is that We wish, you are aware of that. If you do not know or have forgotten, then listen:

... We do not wish that you should adopt Kufr. If you adopt the path of Eimaan, then that will be according to Our Will. Together with this, also understand that when We say that We wish for you not to adopt the path of Kufr, then from this there is no purpose or desire for any benefit to Us. If you adopt the path of Kufr, then you will only cause harm to yourself. It is of no consequence to Us whether you adopt the path of Kufr or that of Eimaan.

Our Law of Requitat is that no bearer of burdens can carry the burden of another. Everyone is responsible for his own deeds and their outcomes will appear before you according to Our Law of Requitat. This is the law of that Allah Who, leaving aside your visible deeds, even has knowledge of the hidden secrets in your hearts. Hence your desires and intentions also bear results according to His Law of Requitat. (39:7)

Have you noticed how those same verses which are translated as 'even your wishing is not within your own choice', after proclaiming man to be a possessor of choice and intent, declare him as being responsible for all his deeds and intentions. Iqbal has said about the Quran that if you live according to the Quran,

then it will you make you into that which Allah wishes you to become. This is the meaning of *Wa Ma Tasha'una Illa An'ya Sha'Allah*. You possess this choice that you can make whatever decision you wish for yourself, but when you have this choice then why should you not wish for that which is the wish of Our law of *Masbe'at*. Why should you not make your choice compatible with Our *Masbe'at* as a result of which you will live a life full of prosperities. With what finesse Iqbal explains this reality when he says that:

*Your supplication is that your desire should be fulfilled,
My supplication is that your desire should be transformed.*

And with a change in desire, the whole world of man transforms. Allah states that you should transform your desire in such a way that it becomes congruent with Our law of *Masbe'at*. Our law of *Masbe'at* is this, that *Momineen* are the most eminent and are in authority over all. Desire to become a *Momin*, so that you can acquire that status.

10.11.1 *Manya'sha*

The verses which are presented with great gusto in support and authority for the doctrine of *Jabr* are those in which the words *Manya'sha* appear, and their translation is done as 'whoever He wishes' e.g. 'He gives guidance to whoever He wishes, He misguides whoever he wishes' (16:93). Or 'He forgives whoever He wishes, He gives punishment to whoever He wishes' (2:284). Or 'He gives abundant *Rizq* to whoever He wishes, He restricts the *Rizq* of whoever he wishes' (17:30), etc.

If these are the meanings which are ascertained from the common translations of these kinds of verses, then they go against many verses about these very subjects in the Quran. For example, it is stated about guidance and going astray:

Say to them that Haqq has arrived from the direction of your Rabb, now whoever wishes can accept it, whoever wishes can reject it... (18:29)

Regarding punishment and protection (*Maghfirat*), it has been stated at numerous places that this is the recompense for their own deeds. In connection with the restriction and abundance etc. of *Rizq*, this principle has been described that 'man can only get that for which he strives' (53:39).

As has been stated above, if the meaning of the verses relating to *Manya'sha* are taken as He gives to 'whoever He wishes', that there is no procedure or law established for this, then various verses of the Quran will become contradictory

to each other. And (as has been noted previously) the Quran has provided this evidence of its being from Allah that there is no contradiction in it. Hence the verses quoted above cannot be mutually contradictory. Now the question which arises is, what is their correct meaning.

10.11.2 Two Meanings

According to the convention of the Arabic language, there can be two meanings for *Manya'sha*. One is 'whoever Allah wishes' and the second is 'whichever individual wishes it like this'. For example, one meaning of *Yu'dillu Manya'sha wa Yab'dee Manya'sha* (16:93) can be that Allah gives guidance to whoever He wishes, and causes to go astray whoever He wishes. And the second meaning is that whichever individual wishes to seek guidance, he receives guidance, and the one who wishes to remain astray, he remains astray. In the same way, one meaning of the verse about *Rizq* can be that Allah gives abundant *Rizq* to whoever He wishes, and restricts the *Rizq* of whoever He wishes. And the other meaning can be that whichever individual wishes to obtain an abundance of *Rizq*, he can obtain an abundance, and the one who wishes a restriction in sustenance for himself, his sustenance becomes narrowed down.

10.11.3 An Important Verse of Surah *An-Nahl*

Now the question is, which of these two meanings should be given preference, and the answer is easy. (As has already been noted) that interpretation of these verses will be correct which is in accordance with other verses of the Quran and with its overall teaching. The focal point of the whole teaching of the Quran is the Law of Requitil i.e. man receives the results of his deeds. Hence, only that interpretation of these verses will be in accordance with the teaching of the Quran in which the actor (subject) of *Manya'sha* is viewed as man. In this connection, that part of the verse of Surah *An-Nahl* which we have previously referred to (in Chapter 9) demands profound reflection. The common translation of this whole verse will be:

If Allah had wished, He would have made all of you a single species following one path, but He misguides whoever He wishes, and gives guidance to whoever He wishes, so that He can question you as to what kinds of deeds you performed. (16:93)

You will see what a ridiculous situation appears before us with this translation i.e. the Quran first of all states that guidance and misguidance are not a matter related to your own choice – Allah gives guidance to whoever wishes, misguides whoever He wishes, and after that it states that We will question you regarding what kinds of deeds you did! The question is this, that when guidance and misguidance are simply not within the control of man, man is constrained in this respect - Allah can give guidance to whoever He wishes, can misguide whoever He wishes - then how can people be held accountable for their deeds? It is obvious that this translation and interpretation of the verse is not correct. Its correct meaning will be that if Allah had wished that all human beings should tread on only one path, then He would have created them constrained (like animals), but His *Mashe'at* was not like this. He has created man as possessor of choice and intent, hence His law is that whoever wishes (*Manya'sha*) can adopt the correct path, and whoever wishes can reject it, and it is due to being this possessor of choice and intent that man is declared to be responsible for his deeds. That is why, after bestowing him with choice, We will enquire from him how did he use his choice!

Therefore the correct translation and interpretation of these kinds of verses will be that both kinds of possibilities exist in front of man, he can choose whichever path he wants from among them. Whichever kind of path he chooses, the same kinds of consequences will appear before him.

10.11.4 That Which Allah Wishes

In some verses, instead of *Manya'sha'u* the words *Man'Nasha'u* (whoever We wish) or *Man'Asba'u* (whoever I wish) appear. Therefore in these verses the subject can, in any case, only be Allah. From what we have written at the start regarding this topic, it is clear that by 'Allah wishes it' this means 'according to the law of *Mashe'at* of Allah'. From this the meaning of such verses becomes clear, for example, it is stated in Surah *Al-An'am* (6:83) that We elevate in ranks according to Our law of *Mashe'at*, and the law of *Mashe'at* is that the ranks of everyone are decided according to his deeds (46:19). The same situation applies to the laws of *Mashe'at* which relate to the external universe or to the physical life of man. For example, it is stated in Surah *Rum* that Allah causes the winds to blow, which causes water vapours from the oceans to be raised up, and He then spreads these into the atmosphere according to His law of *Mashe'at* (30:48). The same kinds of physical laws of *Mashe'at* function among human beings in connection with the birth of children (progeny) (42:49-50).

As previously noted, because we are discussing guidance and misguidance, respect and degradation, *Rizq*, etc. in detail in separate chapters, we are confining ourselves to only the main points here. Further verses about *Manya'sha*, *Man'nasha*, etc. will appear at their respective places.

10.12 *Yaf'alu Ma'yasha'u* and *Yahku'mu Ma'yureedu*

Yaf'alu Ma'yasha'u (He does whatever He Wills) and *Yahku'mu Ma'yureedu* (Whatever He intends, He decides in accordance with it). See verses (22:18, 5:1).

Cast another eye on the second chapter. It is noted in it (and later also reiterated) that there are two programmes in the creative phase of Allah. The first phase is the domain of *Amr* in which Allah brings things into existence from nothing and establishes laws for their protection and preservation, nourishment and evolution, removal and substitution. In this phase His complete authority functions in this way that He does whatever He wills – there is no prior procedure or law defined for this, nor any limit or constraint. The correct translation and interpretation of *Yakblu'ku Ma'yasha'u* (42:49) here is that whatever He Wills, He creates. Whatever is in His intention, He does it like that (22:14). No one can question Him that why did He make a certain thing like this, or that those laws which He formulates and the commands which He implements, why are they like that (2:253, 5:1).

10.13 Additions in Creation

This phase of the creative programme of Allah has not ended. There is no doubt in this that He does not make any alteration in the laws which He has established for His creations, but He is not now sitting back free from the process of creation. He keeps making ever new additions to His creations (35:1). And it is obvious that whichever new creation comes into existence, He also defines new laws for it. Ghalib has stated in his unique style that:

He is not yet free from the business of adornment,

In front of him the eternal mirror is still under a veil.

In our known universe His system of creation is like a grain of sand in a desert or a drop in an ocean. We neither have definitive knowledge of the full extent of His existing creation, nor any idea about His infinite process of further creations.

10.14 According to the Law of *Mashe'at*

The second phase of His creation is that in which every affair takes place according to His defined laws, in which He makes no alterations. In this phase *Yaf'alu Ma'yasha'u* will mean – He does everything according to His law of *Mashe'at*. There are numerous examples of this in the Quran e.g.:

(1) It is stated in Surah *Ar-Ra'd* that:

...for each period (Ajal) there is a law (Kitab). Allah does blot out or confirm as per His Mashe'at... (13:38-39)

There is a duration for the outcome of every deed, and this duration is defined according to the established law of Allah. Whether nations and things are to remain in place or become eliminated takes place according to this, and all this takes place in accordance with His law of *Mashe'at*. You have seen here that it is firstly stated that there is a law (*Kitab*) established for every matter, and after that *Ma'yasha'u* is stated. It is obvious that the meaning of *Ma'yasha'u* here can only be that of 'according to the law of *Mashe'at* of Allah'.

(2) About this principle of establishment and elimination it is stated in Surah *Ibraheem* that:

Allah will establish Momineen in strength with the Word that stands firm, in this world and in the hereafter; but Allah will leave to stray those who are unjust (Zalimeen)... (14:27)

Allah has established a concrete law about living, an ideology of life according to which establishment and strength is assigned to the *Jamaat e Momineen* in the world and in the hereafter, and according to which the unjust become destroyed. After this it is stated that '*Wa Yaf'alu Allah'hu Ma'yasha'u*' (14:27) – it is obvious that this means that all this takes place according to the law of *Mashe'at* established by Allah. It does not mean that even after making such a concrete law and principle, 'He does whatever He Wills' i.e. whatever He wishes, He keeps in place, and whatever He wishes, He just destroys without any reason!

10.15 There is No Differentiation Between *Momin* and *Kafir* in Physical Laws

- (3) In Surah *Bani Israel* we are informed that the benefits of the physical world can be acquired according to one's own efforts, there is no differentiation in this between either a *Momin* or a *Kafir*. Whatever kind of effort someone makes, he obtains its fruit according to it. The one who only wishes to obtain worldly benefits, he obtains worldly benefits; the one who wishes to obtain the bounties of the hereafter together with worldly benefits, he can obtain both. In this arena of efforts and deeds no obstacle is placed in front of anyone so that others can advance forward while you cannot – according to Our physical laws, if the *Kuffar* make efforts We cause them to advance forward also; if *Momineen* do this, We keep advancing them too in proportion to their efforts. We do not place obstructions in anyone's path – after declaring all this, it is stated '*Ma' Nasha'u Li'man Nu'reed*' (17:18). It is obvious that this cannot have the meaning that 'in whatever way We wish and whatever decision we make for someone, he can only receive that'. Its meaning is that all this takes place according to these laws of Ours which We have kept established according to Our *Mashe'at* and Will. His 'Will' was that in relation to worldly benefits there should be no difference between a *Kafir* and a *Momin*, but the *Kuffar* will have no share in the hereafter. Here, every matter takes place in accordance with procedure and law, not through injustice and deceit (3:176). Allah has not made any intent whatsoever for injustice to the nations of the world. If any trouble reaches anyone here it is due to their own wrong path (3:108). In this respect, this is the Will (the law of *Mashe'at*) of Allah (5:49). In the outer universe this Will of Allah is busy functioning in the form of physical laws, and for human life these laws have been bestowed through *Wabi*. In this way We sent down these clear laws, now the straight path can only be acquired according to them (22:16).
- (4) In the Quran the story of Bani Israel is explained in great detail. This is because the eternal laws about the rise and fall of nations appear perspicuously before us in a practical form in this. In this connection it is stated in Surah *Al-Qasas* that when the injustices of Pharaoh exceeded the limits, and the time for his destruction arrived after the termination of the period of respite according to the law of Requital of Allah, Moses rose up in opposition. He carried out the suitable education and training of Bani Israel, and after freeing them from the slavery of Pharaoh, took them towards the free and open valleys of the Sinai, so that there they could be made ready for taking responsibility for worldly affairs. The beginning of this link in the account is noted by the Quran in this way, that when the tyrannies of Pharaoh reached an extremity:

...then We 'intended' that the nation which he had trampled underfoot, it should be blessed. Pharaoh and Haman are to be destroyed, and Bani Israel are to be made their successor... (28:5)

10.16 How the Intention of Allah Comes into Action

Allah made this 'intention' but this intention of His did not come into action in the way that it does in the domain of *Amr*, that 'when He makes an intention for something then He says, Be! And it happens!' (36:82). In order to bring this intention into practical form, he provided Bani Israel with a detailed programme, and instructed that if they kept following it, then they will acquire establishment in the land. But this nation did not obey the Divine guidance fully. They began to make equivocations in this, and the consequence of this was that this same piece of land about which it was stated that Allah (*Ka'taballahu La'kum*) had put their name on it (5:21), it was declared to be *Haram* on them for forty years (5:26). During this period the older generation of these people passed away, and the new generation, which had been nurtured in this free environment, rose up and occupied that land in one fell swoop. Have you noticed how the intentions of Allah become fulfilled according to the Divine laws in the domain of *Khalq*? From here it also becomes clear what is meant when it is stated that 'that particular land which was written down for them'. 'Written down' does not mean that they can keep sitting comfortably, they will gain possession automatically. As already noted in Chapter 6, in the Arabic language and in the Quran the meaning of *Kitab* is that of law. Thus the meaning of *Ka'taba* will be 'according to the law'. It was said to Bani Israel that if they obeyed the laws of Allah, then they will acquire this land. Their generation that existed at that time did not obey these laws, so they remained deprived of this land. After them, another generation obeyed these laws, so they then occupied it (details of these matters will be found in a later chapter).

10.17 The Law Regarding Respect and Humiliation

In Surah *Al-Hajj*, verse (22:18) is commonly translated as 'whoever Allah humiliates, no one can give him respect; Allah surely does what He Wills.' From this translation it is obvious that there is no defined procedure and law for respect and humiliation: Allah confers respect on whoever He wishes, He humiliates whoever He wishes – but this concept is not correct. Allah has devised laws and principles regarding respect and humiliation (a detailed discussion about this point

will come later, at this juncture a single example will suffice). It is stated in Surah *Al-Fajr* that when some individual (or a nation) is humiliated, then he declares, See! my *Rabb* has humiliated me for nothing. In response it is stated that, Remember! Allah does not humiliate anyone for no reason. There are causes for it. You have been humiliated because you did not respect that individual who used to become isolated in society. You had established such a society in which man was not respected from the point of view of being a human being. For this you had fabricated quite different criteria. This is the cause for this humiliation of yours – Allah does not humiliate anyone for no reason (89:15-17).

You have observed what the meaning is of *Ma Yasha'u* in the verse mentioned above of Surah *Al-Hajj* (22:18) i.e. 'according to the law of *Mashe'at* of Allah.'

10.18 The State of a Foetus

In this same Surah (*Al-Hajj*) it is stated that We keep the foetus in the mother's womb for a duration of time and after that its birth takes place (22:5). This duration is according to *Ma Nasha'u*. It is obvious that here also the meaning of *Ma Nasha'u* is not that We make a decision about every single foetus that this one should remain in the mother's womb for this duration, and that one for that duration. The duration of pregnancy is defined according to the physical law of Allah. If, in some case there is an increase or decrease in this, even then it is according to a physical law, and this can be determined through medical science.

10.18.1 Progeny of Zakariya

In the matter of the birth of children, another event appears before us, and that is the birth of Yahya into the family of Zakariya. Zakariya was getting old and his wife was infertile, therefore he no longer had any hope of children. When he was given the good tidings about the birth of a son, he exclaimed with surprise that how can a child be born to us in these conditions? In reply it was stated '*Ka'zalika Allahu Yaf'alu Ma'yasha'* (3:40), which is commonly translated as 'whatever He Wills, He does it' but this translation is not correct. This is because Allah Himself has stated at another place that a child was born to them according to the general physical law (the law of *Mashe'at*). This happened because Zakariya possessed the potential for a child to be conceived, however there was some issue with his wife. That fault became remedied (21:90) and the ability to conceive a child became

possible for her. Thus the birth of this child took place according to the general physical law.¹⁴⁴ These kinds of events occur frequently that a woman remains infertile for a period of time, and following appropriate treatment, children are born to them in later life.

From the above explanations it is clear that as far as the domain of *Amr* is concerned, the meanings of *Yaf'alu Ma'yasha'u* and *Yabk'mu Ma'yureedu* are that everything takes place there according to the Will of Allah – Allah does whatever He Wills. But when these same words are about the domain of *Khalq*, then their meaning is that all this takes place according to the law of *Mashe'at* of Allah, knowledge of which has been given to man - either through knowledge of the physical sciences or through *Wahi*. In this regard, an important aspect appears before us, at which our soul becomes awestruck the more our perceptive insight ponders on it.

Regarding the decisions of Allah in the domain of *Amr*, it is declared that Allah cannot be questioned why He did it like this, while all others can be questioned i.e. Allah is not required to follow any law there (21:23).

10.19 Allah Can Also Be Asked Why This Did Not Take Place?

But in connection with the domain of *Khalq*, Allah has stated something else. It has been explained with great clarity in the Quran that if you perform these kinds of deeds then you will acquire *Jannat* as a result, this is the promise of Allah (this is called an absolute and fixed law). In Surah *Al-Furqan* it is stated that it is the promise of Allah that the inhabitants of *Jannat* will live there forever, and that they will receive everything in it which they will desire. After that it is stated that this is the promise of Allah, and it is such a promise that if it is not fulfilled (hypothetically), then He can be questioned as to why it did not become fulfilled? (25:16).

Allahu Akbar! That same Allah Who had stated (in connection with the domain of *Amr*) that Allah cannot be questioned as to why He has done it this way, now states that if some promise of mine is not fulfilled, then you too can question Me as to why this did not take place, and I will give you an answer to this. I will inform you that this promise (law) was predicated on certain conditions. Because you did not satisfy these conditions, therefore Our promise could not be fulfilled – this is

¹⁴⁴ A detailed discussion about the birth of Yahya and Eisa is available in my book titled, *Shola e Mastoor* (The Hidden Flame).

what is called a law, is it not, that if you do such and such then this will be its outcome! This is the difference between a tyrannical dictator and such a ruler in whose kingdom the rule of law is functioning. A dictator 'does whatever comes to his mind' and no one can question him as to why he has done this. In the functioning of a law, the decision for every matter takes place according to the law, and it can be inquired regarding every decision that why has this been done. There is no rule of a tyrannical dictator in the kingdom of Allah, there is the rule of law, and then such a law in which there is never any alteration.

10.20 The Concept of Allah Fabricated In Our Era of *Malukiyat*

Just think, is there such a concept of God to be found in any religion? But when Muslims abandoned the Quran, then even among them the concept of God as an absolute dictator became created, Who possesses no procedure or law. He does whatever comes to His mind, and no one can question Him as to why He did this. The fact is that as long as the rule of law (called the Righteous Caliphate¹⁴⁵) remained in the *Ummah*, the Quranic concept of Allah remained in place, but when after this the Caliphate converted into a monarchy, then the concept about Allah also changed. Although it is said among us that the king is the shadow of Allah on the earth, in reality we have converted Allah into the mould of earthly kings i.e. a tyrannical, absolute dictator, who is neither subject to any procedure, nor to any law. Whatever comes to His mind, He does it. In His presence no one can breathe without His permission. He can bestow respect on whoever He wishes and humiliate whoever He wishes. He can bestow estates on whoever He wishes and can seize everything from whoever He wishes. His mentality (in the words of Saadi) is like that of the 'royal temperament' – if the mood is bad, then a slap is given in response to a greeting; if the mood is good, then lands are allotted to the one who utters a profanity. Allah of the Quran is far above these concepts concocted by human beings themselves.

10.20.1 Change in the Concept of Allah Caused Change in the Collective System

¹⁴⁵ The first four Caliphs after the death of Rasul-ullah are termed the Righteous Caliphs (*Rashideen*). It is believed that after these four Caliphs, *Malukiyat* became established via the Umayyad dynasty. (Ed)

We have said above that as long as the rule of law prevailed in the *Ummah*, the concept of Allah also remained like that of a law-abiding ruler. When monarchy arrived among them, then His concept became like that of an absolute dictator. But we feel that in order to be precise, what should be said is that as long as the concept of Allah remained like this, that His every decision is according to procedure and law, then the basis of our system remained centred on the rule of law. When, according to the doctrine of *Jabr*, the concept of Allah became like that of an absolute dictator (like Qaiser-O-Kasra¹⁴⁶), our system of government converted into an autocratic monarchy, and since this system greatly suited the monarchs, hence our Sultans made tremendous efforts to support this doctrine of *Jabr* until it was made a part of the *Eimaan* of Muslims.

Have you noticed how by an alteration in the concept of Allah, the system of society changes. This is the importance of *Eimaan* in human life. Probably it was Comte¹⁴⁷ who had said that if you tell me what kind of concept of God a nation holds, I will be able to tell you everything about the culture and values, politics and societal life of that nation.

The Quran presents the true concept of Allah for this very reason that human society is the reflection of this concept. Monarchy and dictatorship can never prevail in a nation which has *Eimaan* in Allah according to the Quranic concept. In this it is the rule of law which will always be in operation. That system whose basis is on this eternal and immutable principle (*Hum Yus'a'lun*) that every human being can be held accountable, each one can be asked why he said this and why he did that, can there be even the remotest allowance for dictatorship (*Malukiyat*) in it! In *Hum Yus'a'lun* all are included, great and small, no one is excluded from this.

And this reality about who can hold supreme authority (sovereignty) in the Islamic system of the State also becomes evident from this. The meaning of sovereignty is that authority which holds ultimate control, against whose decision there can be no appeal, who cannot be asked why has he given such a decision? In the Islamic system this status rests only with Allah (His Book). *La Yas'alu* is only for Him, not for anyone else. According to this one principle, the authority of

¹⁴⁶ Qaiser-O-Kasra - Caesar and Khosrow of the Roman and Persian empires respectively. (Ed)

¹⁴⁷ Isidore Comte was a French philosopher, mathematician, and writer, who formulated the doctrine of positivism. (Ed)

Malukiyat, dictatorship, religious clergy, and spiritual rule¹⁴⁸ all disappears. This is the practical meaning of *La Ilaha*¹⁴⁹.

And you will now also have assessed how with the alteration resulting from this one ideology of *Taqdeer*, where the *Ummah* was, and to where it has been taken! 'How profound was this conspiracy - and how destructive were its consequences'!!

10.21 *InnAllah'Ha Alaa Kulli Shai'in Qadeer*

These words have appeared in numerous verses of the Quran. These are translated as - there is no doubt that Allah is controller (*Qadir*) of all things - and the meaning which is assumed from His being controller is that there is no procedure and law established with Him: He does whatever comes to His mind.

10.21.1 The Meaning of *Qadeer*

Have another look at Chapter 2 in which the meaning of words like *Qadr*, *Taqdeer*, *Qadir*, *Qadeer*, etc. have been explained. You will see that the meaning of *Qadeer* is the one who defines and establishes scales. Therefore the meaning of *InnAllah'Ha Alaa Kulli Shai'in Qadeer* is that Allah has defined scales for everything, according to which these remain busy functioning. This is that control of Allah outside of whose orbit nothing in the universe can go:

...He has subdued everything in the heavens and the earth for you... (45:13)

This dominion of Allah encompasses the whole of the universe. As far as man is concerned, he is possessor of free will in his choice and intent, but the consequence of his every intention and his every deed is also determined according to the scales (laws) defined by Allah. In relation to human deeds, this is what is meant by being *Qadeer*. For example, it is noted in Surah *Al-Baqarah*:

...whatever good deeds man performs, their benefit also goes to him, and whatever evil deeds he performs, their loss is also borne by him... (2:286)

¹⁴⁸ This includes all spiritual worship e.g. mysticism, Sufism, worship of saints, *Pir* (spiritual guide or saint), and shrines, idol worship, etc. (Ed)

¹⁴⁹ There is no god but Allah. (Ed)

And just two verses prior to this verse it is stated that:

... Whichever individual wishes, he can seek the means of protection from Allah; whoever wishes, he can purchase ruin – undoubtedly Allah has fixed scales (laws) for every matter. (2:284)

It is stated in Surah *Al-e-Imran* that:

Say to them! Whatever is in your hearts, whether you hide it or manifest it, Allah has knowledge of it. He has knowledge of everything in the heavens and earth. At the time of the manifestation of the results of deeds, the outcomes of the good and evil deeds of every individual will appear before him. (3:29) See also (5:40, 5:119-120)

This is indeed the law of Allah. It is stated in Surah *Al-e-Imran* that those people who boast about their wrong path and desire that they should be praised for work which they have not done, should know that they cannot escape from the grip of Allah. The vast and wide kingdom of the universe belongs to Allah alone (*InnAllah'Ha Alaa Kulli Shai'in Qadeer*) and He has established laws for everything according to which outcomes are established. Therefore, how can man go outside the confines of His Law of Requit (3:188-189).

At another place in this same Surah this matter becomes even clearer. Describing some loss that the *Jamaat e Momineen* had to suffer in a battle (*Ubad*), it is stated that they enquired why have we suffered this loss. O Rasul! Say to them that this has happened through your own error, you yourself are responsible for this. And after this it is stated, *InnAllah Ha Alaa Kulli Shai'in Qadeer* (3:165); Allah has established laws relating to every matter. The one who follows these laws is successful, the one who goes against them suffers a loss.

In Surah *At-Tauba* the *Jamaat e Momineen* are told that, 'If you do not step forward for *Jehad*, then you will be trapped in a severe hardship, and Allah will substitute another nation in your place'. After this, *Wa'Allah'hu Alaa Kulli Shai'in Qadeer* (9:39) is stated. Decisions about the rise and fall of nations take place according to the laws established by Him. For elaboration of this very point it is stated at another place that say to these people who are opposing the system of Allah in this way, and think that there is no one to hold us to account, that you keep travelling to and from different locations and you see there the ruins of the destroyed habitations of former nations - those nations were even greater in strength and power than you, so can you not even understand this matter from this, that when those nations could not remain protected from the ruinous consequences of their path, then how will you remain protected. After this it is stated that Allah is He who is All-Knowing and All-Powerful (*Inna'Hu Kana Aleem'an Qadeer'an*) (35:44).

10.21.2 The Simile of a Field

The Quran has illustrated the Law of Requitat at numerous places through the example of a field. It is obvious that a field functions according to the laws of agriculture defined by Allah. Rain falls on all kinds of land. Vegetation will grow from the land which has been made ready for the sowing of crops. Nothing grows in the land which has become barren. Then it is also His law that ‘sow wheat, get wheat; sow barley, get barley’ – this is also the principle for life and death. It is stated in Surah *Rum*:

Reflect on the effects of the Rehmat (rain) of Allah, how it bestows life to the dead land. In the same way, Allah gives life to those who are dead. He has defined scales for everything. (30:50) See also (18:45, 41:39)

These same principles are also established for the life and death of nations in this world, and also for life after death.¹⁵⁰

As a result of the ruinous consequences of their wrong path, Bani Israel became shackled in the humiliating chains of slavery by the people of Babylon, and it was after almost one hundred years that they again tasted freedom. After describing this episode in their national life in a metaphorical style, the Quran states *Ann-Allah Ha Alaa Kulli Shai'in Qadeer* (2:259) - the decision for the life and death of nations takes place according to the laws defined by Allah.

10.21.3 The Desire of Rasul-ullah

The period of respite holds great significance in the Law of Requitat. For the seed to become a tree and bear fruit (for the outcome of a deed to manifest in a tangible form) there is a time lag. And as has already been explained, this interval, period, or duration, is defined by the law of Allah. This point has been explained in a very eloquent manner at one place in the Quran. In front of Rasul-ullah there was a supreme programme to launch a revolution in the human world. For the achievement of this aim, all of Rasul-ullah's life was spent in continual struggle and striving against all of the combined opposition in situations testing of great courage. In the final stages of his life the emergence of this kind of yearning in Rasul-ullah's heart was a natural instinct, whether the outcome of these

¹⁵⁰ Regarding life after death, see my book *The Life in the Hereafter: What Does the Quran say?*

endeavours will manifest during my life, or will my whole life be spent in simply opposing these hardships! In reply to this it was stated that:

Undoubtedly We possess the power that the destruction about which your opponents are warned, that its manifestation should take place before your very eyes.

But there is a law of Ours established about the respite between a deed and its outcome in which there can be no increase or decrease for the sake of anyone. (23:95)

Therefore:

... Your duty is this, that you keep on passing this message to the people. When will the outcome of your efforts materialise - the 'accounting' of this is Our responsibility. (13:40).

Just ponder that that Allah Who does not cause any increase or decrease in His defined 'calculation' even for the sake of His Rasul, how can this concept about Him be correct that He keeps doing whatever comes to His mind and whenever He wishes. This complete universe is functioning according to the power of 'mathematics', if there is even the slightest increase or decrease in this calculation, then the whole system of the universe will crash in a second. If man takes off from the earth and lands on the moon, and keeps controlling those things he sends there while sitting here on earth, then all this takes place in accordance with mathematics.

10.22 Life in the Heavenly Planets

At the mention of the moon landing, a great verse of the Quran comes to mind. It is stated in Surah *Al-Shura*:

And among His signs is the creation of the heavens and the earth, and the living creatures that he has scattered through them. And He has the power to gather them together according to His Will (law of Mashe'at). (42:29)

From this it appears that there are such planets in the galaxies in which 'life' is present. After this it is stated that at this present time habitations in these various planets are separated from each other (in whatever form these may be), but when it will be the requirement of the law of *Mashe'at* of Allah, then these habitations will connect with each other. Man has only now begun to attempt to make contact with these planets. Who knows whether, after establishing contact with these planets, life exists there. How this contact becomes established according

to the laws defined by Allah, ask those astronauts about this who have returned from the moon, or those who still have contact with the moon today.

In the fifth and sixth verses of Surah *Al-Hajj* the meaning of *InnAllah Ha Alaa Kulli Shai'in Qadeer* is expounded in an extremely beautiful style. We have noted it in the following words in *Mafhoom ul Quran*:

Say to them that if you are in doubt about the life after death because you see this as being impossible, then just ponder awhile on this fact that We initiated your birth from inorganic matter. (With the addition of water in this, the first life cell appeared) then this caravan of life, after passing through various stages, reached to this destination where the continuation of the species takes place through procreation. Fertilisation takes place within the womb of the mother. Then it acquires the form of a leech-like clot. Then it converts into a partly unformed and partly formed lump of flesh. It passes through all these stages so that, to whatever extent latent potentials exist in this embryo, these become manifested through gradual and progressive development.

This foetus remains within the womb for a duration of time according to Our law of Mashe'at. Then you enter the world in the form of a living and awake child. Then slowly and gradually, you reach the age of your adulthood (16:70). Some of you will die in the prime of youth itself. And some others, reaching old age, return to the frailty of age, in which the condition becomes such that, after acquiring knowledge and understanding, man sinks again into incapacity.

This is an example of your own stages of creation. Then after this look at the world around you, and ponder on the countenance of the earth, how it lies barren and dry, with no sign of any life or movement in it. Then when We send down rain on it and as a result it becomes verdant all of a sudden, and its greenery becomes more and more luxuriant each day, in this way a world of beautiful landscapes emerges from this lifeless land.

All this is because the Being of Allah is an established fact, and His law also always produces concrete constructive results. He gives life to lifeless things, hence giving life to the dead is not at all difficult for Him (22:5-6).

And after this it is stated, *Wa Anna'hu Alaa Kulli Shai'in Qadeer* (22:6) i.e. all this manifests according to the scales defined by Allah.

10.23 Taqdeers of Allah

These are those *Taqdeers* of Allah (the scales defined by Allah) according to which things in the external universe are constrained to function. But man has been given this choice that if he wishes he can live a life in accordance with them, and if he wishes he can transgress against them. However, despite possessing this choice, he does not possess the choice that he can also elicit the outcome of his deeds according to his desire. The outcomes of his deeds will be established solely according to the laws established by Allah. From this aspect the Law of Requital of Allah also has control over man himself.

This point is also worthy of attention that *InnAllah Ha Alaa Kulli Shai'in Qadeer* has appeared throughout the Quran i.e. in these verses 'things' are referred to, not man. From this it can also be taken to mean that the things of the universe are constrained to function according to the scales (laws) of Allah, but man is not constrained. Allah does not tie man down in the chains of '*Taqdeers*'. He only gives him the command to live life according to these laws. Now it is his choice whether he obeys this command of Allah or transgresses it. Probably it is this very point which Iqbal had in mind when he said that:

*Plants and animals are bound to Taqdeer,
A Momin is bound only to the Divine commands.*

11 Chapter 11 - Guidance and Misguidance

You will very likely have heard these words in the sermons delivered during Friday prayers (*Juma*), Eid prayers and at a *Nikah*, in fact, at the beginning of every address, that:

The individual to whom Allah gives guidance, no one can misguide him, and the one Allah misguides, no one can give him guidance.

Bear these words in mind and then reflect on the following facts.

11.1 The Process of Righteousness and Guidance

- (1) In the story of the downfall of Adam, addressing mankind, Allah stated that there is nothing about which to be apprehensive:

...Guidance will keep coming to you from Our direction; whoever obeys My guidance, he will have no kind of fear and grief, and those people who reject Our laws and falsify them, they will enter hell and will abide therein. (2:38-39)

- (2) In accordance with this promise, Allah started to send *Anbiya* to mankind, and sent messengers to every nation in the world who would pass the guidance of Allah on to them.
- (3) Those *Anbiya* used to communicate the *Wabi* of Allah to the people and used to inform them that this teaching based on *Haqq* and truth has reached you. After this, whoever among you wishes, he can accept it, and whoever wishes, he can reject it (18:29).

This is a matter of your own choice, but understand this much that whoever follows this guidance, he will remain in peace from fear and grief, whoever goes against it will become destroyed and ruined. Ponder on these facts and then bring those words to mind again with which this chapter was started, and then think that if the matter is simply this, that ‘whoever is given guidance by Allah, no one can misguide him, and whoever He misguides, no one can bring him to the right path’ then this whole procedure of righteousness and guidance, the sending of *Anbiya*, the sending down of *Wabi*, the dissemination of *Risalat*, and the Law of Requital regarding reward and punishment, becomes meaningless. Could you possibly even imagine that on the one hand Allah should declare that ‘the teaching based on *Haqq* and truth has reached you, now whoever among you wishes can

accept it, and whoever wishes can reject it', and on the other hand that same Allah also declares that 'whoever We bring onto the right path, no one can misguide him, and whoever We misguide, no one can bring him to the correct path'. The stature of Allah is assuredly far loftier and elevated, but even a man possessing an ordinary intellect and reasoning power will never say such contradictory things.

But since, from the point of view of their interpretation, these words are deduced from some places in the Quran, it is essential that we refer to the Quran itself for their correct meaning, especially because *Allah, Wahi, Risalat, Eimaan* in the hereafter, are all based on the foundations of guidance and misguidance. Hence it is essential that its Quranic meaning appears before us.

11.2 The Fountainhead of Guidance is Allah Alone

First of all note that in the story of the downfall of Adam, it has been proclaimed that:

... guidance will come to you from Me...(2:38)

This means that man was informed that though you will be able to acquire knowledge about the physical laws of the universe yourself (through study, observation and experience), as far as guidance for your human life is concerned, no man will be able to devise laws and values for it from his own mind, nor will he be able to find it anywhere other than from the *Wahi* bestowed by Allah. The Quran has clarified this reality at numerous places e.g.:

- (1) It is stated in Surah *TaHa* that our *Rabb* is He Who created everything and then provided these with guidance (for them to reach their intended destination) (20:50).
- (2) In Surah *Al-A'la* four phases of the creative programme of Allah are described. Allah initiated the creation of everything, then after carrying out trimmings and adjustments, created proportion and balance in them, then He established scales (laws) for them and guided them towards these (provided them with knowledge of these laws - this is called guidance) (87:2-3).
- (3) It is stated in Surah *Al-Layl* that it is surely Our responsibility to provide guidance (92:12).
- (4) In Surah *Al-e-Imran* it is instructed to inform them that guidance is only that guidance which is received from the direction of Allah. The self-concocted guidance of human beings cannot make anyone reach their

intended destination. Correct guidance can only be obtained from the direction of Allah (3:73). See also (2:120, 6:71).

11.3 Guidance Was Sent to People Via the Messengers

Now let us continue. This guidance of Allah is inbuilt in the things of the universe i.e. guidance is not sent to them from outside. This guidance regarding what pattern it has to live its life on is intrinsic in everything (details of these matters have already been covered). But as far as human beings are concerned, this guidance is not inbuilt in them. The programme for this was that this guidance used to be provided to the messenger through *Wabi* from Allah, and the messenger used to pass it on to other people. It is stated in Surah *An-Nisa* after mentioning different messengers, that they were sent so that no grievance remains among the people against Allah that He had never even informed us as to which is the right path, thus if we have continued treading on the wrong paths then what fault of ours is there in this (4:165). Or be able to contend that if Allah had provided us with guidance then we too would have been among the *Muttaqeen* (39:57). It was for this very purpose that messengers used to be sent, so that people could tread on the right path (32:3). These messengers providing guidance were sent to every nation in the world (13:7).

A messenger would be sent and he would be told that whatever is bestowed to you from your *Rabb*, make it reach the people (5:67). ‘Whatever used to be sent down from Allah’ used to be called the Book of that messenger, therefore the people used to receive the guidance of Allah through this Book which the messenger used to pass on to them. The final, complete, and protected Book of Allah is the Quran, in which guidance for all the nations of the world is present:

Allah provides guidance to people through His Book and brings them out of darkneses towards light. In this way, Allah makes His code of guidance reach the people... (5:16)

And warns them that:

Whoever treads on the straight path after acquiring guidance from this, the benefit of this will be his alone. The one who, despite this, adopts the wrong path, the loss will also be his alone. (10:108) See also (39:41)

From this we have observed how Allah provides guidance to mankind. In other words:

- (1) Allah used to send down guidance on the messengers via *Wabi*.
- (2) And the messengers used to pass this on to the people, and used to tell them that whoever wishes should adopt it and whoever wishes can reject it.

11.4 Allah Bestowed *Nabuwat* on Whomever He Willed

As far as the first part of this programme is concerned, i.e. in this receipt of guidance by the messenger via *Wabi*, there was no role of the choice and intent in this of the individual who used to receive *Wabi* (i.e. Rasul). According to the programme of His *Mashe'at*, Allah used to select and appoint a righteous being for this purpose:

... Allah used to select whomever He wished for this supreme status according to His Mashe'at... (2:105) See also (3:74)

Only Allah knew best on whose head He will place the crown of *Risalat* (6:124). There was no role in this of the efforts and hard work of the potential messenger. *Nabuwat* was something that was bestowed, not earned through skill and effort. Whoever used to receive this according to the *Mashe'at* of Allah, received it as a blessing, not as a reward:

... Whoever Allah considered to be suitable according to His Mashe'at, He conferred it on him as a blessing... (14:11)

So much so, that even the eminent being who was about to be handed this responsibility did not have any knowledge or inkling that he was about to be selected for this. Nor was he aware of the form and nature of *Wabi* and *Nabuwat* prior to this. This is what is stated about Rasul-ullah himself in the Quran (42:52).¹⁵¹

11.5 Human Beings Used to Receive Guidance from Allah in This Way

¹⁵¹ *Nabuwat* is purely conferred from outside, and no one acquires it through his effort and skill. Those people who think and say that man can reach the status of *Nabuwat* stage by stage through his piety and obedience, are ignorant of the form and reality of *Nabuwat*. Details of these matters are to be found in my book, *The Human Self and Iblees*.

From these explanations it is clear that as far as the receipt of guidance by the *Anbiya* from Allah is concerned, it is absolutely correct and based on fact to state that Allah gives guidance to whoever He wishes, and that whoever did not receive guidance from Allah, it was absolutely impossible for him to obtain it from anywhere else. This is that occasion on which a *Nabi* would make this proclamation:

...If my Rabb had not given me guidance, then I would also have been among those who keep treading on wrong paths. (6:77) See also (6:81)

And when the *Nabi* would also acknowledge and proclaim this, then why would other people not say the same. They will also have to say that if Allah had not given us guidance, then we would never have been able to adopt the straight path (7:43). How He provided this guidance is clarified in the next few words that:

...the messengers of Allah came to us bringing Haqq, and this is how the guidance of Allah reached us...(7:43)

In other words, if the *Wahi* of Allah had not reached mankind, then they would have wandered around in darkneses, and they would never have been able to know which is the straight path to reach the intended destination:

...the one treading on the straight path is only he who traverses the journey of life in obedience to the guidance bestowed by Allah...(7:178)

In other words, he follows this Book. Note how clearly this reality is described in Surah *Al-Zumr*. Firstly it is stated that Allah sent down a Book in which those things are written, better than which cannot be found anywhere else. After that it is stated that this is that guidance of Allah through which He shows the straight path to every one of those individuals who wishes to follow this. The individual who deprives himself of this guidance, no one in the world can show him the right path (39:23). There can simply be no alternative to *Wahi*. This is the correct meaning of stating that whoever obtains guidance from Allah, he can never go astray, and whoever adopts other paths in place of this guidance, he can never reach the intended destination. This guidance of Allah is documented in His Book. Now the question which arises is who is it that obtains this guidance from this Book, and who is it that remain deprived of it. These matters should be understood well.

11.6 Which People Can Acquire Guidance

We have seen earlier that the things of the universe are created as constrained i.e. it is simply not within their choice that whatever path they have been given guidance for, by abandoning it they could adopt another path. But man has been given this choice that if he wishes, then he can traverse the journey of life according to the guidance of Allah, and if he wishes, then by avoiding it, he can select other paths. He has been given the code of guidance from the direction of Allah, and he has been told that he should ponder on it using intellect and reasoning, and knowledge and vision. If his heart and mind is satisfied that this guidance is based on evidence and truth, then he should opt for it as a code of life for himself. This is called *Eimaan*. Hence, in order to acquire guidance from the Book of Allah, the foremost condition is that man should accept *Eimaan* in its truth by using his vision based on evidence. The individual who does not even accept this code as being true, how can he benefit from it.

11.6.1 One Objection on *Huda'llil Muttaqeen*¹⁵²

After keeping this code of life in front as a torch for the path, man should begin the journey of life – now this beacon of guidance will keep on telling him at every crossroad of life in which direction he needs to turn. It will keep opening up the expanses of the paths before him – this will be the meaning of obtaining guidance from the Book of Allah after acquiring *Eimaan*. This is why it is stated about those who, together with *Eimaan*, do *Saleh* deeds, that:

... Due to their Eimaan their Rabb keeps widening the paths of life in front of them... (10:9)

After Surah *Al-Fateha*, the proclamation of this reality at the beginning of the Quran is made in these words:

This is that Book in which there is not any kind of doubt or uncertainty. This serves as a guidance for the Muttaqeen. (2:2)

From this it is commonly said that those people who are already *Muttaqeen*, what need do they have of guidance: they are already guided, that is why they are *Muttaqeen*. This objection arises due to not having the Quranic meaning of *Muttaqee* before us.

¹⁵² See verse (2:2). (Ed)

11.6.2 The Meaning of *Muttaqee*

The individual who has arrived into the world will inevitably have to tread the journey of life. Some people undertake this journey in such a way that there is neither a defined destination before them, nor any aim in view. The tussle of individual interests is pulling them from the front, and the force of motivation for their base desires is pushing them from behind. In this way, with eyes shut, they continue on in such a way that they no longer have any awareness whether the path is smooth or uneven, nor any concern as to whether there is a ditch or a well in front of them. Other people undertake this journey in such a way that they have a defined destination in front of them and their every step takes them towards it, and they wish to travel along the path by avoiding the pitfalls. Those who wish to tread the path in this way are called *Muttaqeen*. It is obvious that the need for guidance will only be felt by these people, not by the former ones. Therefore the meanings of *Huda'llil Muttaqeen* are this - that this code of guidance provides guidance to those people who wish to tread the path by avoiding hazardous pitfalls and thorny valleys.

From the above explanations it is clear that the people who obtain guidance from this Book are those who acquire *Eimaan* in the truth of the Divine code using their intellect and reasoning, and wish to traverse the path of life which is teeming with hazards by a secure method. This fact is reiterated at many places in the Quran because these are the fundamental conditions for obtaining this guidance. It is stated in Surah *Al-An'am* that those people who acquire *Eimaan* and do not allow their *Eimaan* to become contaminated by injustice, they obtain guidance (6:82). It is stated in Surah *At-Tauba* that guidance is not received through being born into some nation and by continuing to mechanically fulfil those rituals (which that nation counts as 'pious acts') which are prevalent in it, having been passed down from their forefathers. Guidance can only be received by the one who accepts *Eimaan* himself, and then performs those kinds of deeds which this code of life declares as being 'righteous' (9:19-20). In Surah *Al-Baqarah* it is stated that guidance from the Book of Allah is received in this way, that whenever there are matters in which there are differences, it becomes known which is the correct matter among them. Obviously, this is a great thing (2:213). In this same Surah it is stated a little later that wherever darkness appears on the path of life, this Book takes the travellers safely and securely onwards by becoming a torch on the path (2:257). And at another place it is stated that those people who confront difficulties with great steadfastness and perseverance receive guidance for moving forward (2:156). The meaning of steadfastness is that no matter how testing of patience and demanding of courage the hardships on the path are, man should

never abandon the right path. In the terminology of the Quran this is called holding fast to the rope of Allah (3:103, 4:175). In other words, we can say that no matter how unfavourable the circumstances may be, obedience to the laws of Allah should never be transgressed. In this way, the expanses of life will keep on opening up before man (4:66-68).

From the above explanations it is evident that guidance is acquired through man's own striving and endeavour. This supreme reality is summed up in a few words in Surah *Al-Ankabut*, when it is stated that:

Those people who strive in Our cause, We keep making the paths of life ever wider before them... (29:69)

And

...Those who tread on the right path, the paths keep becoming ever wider for them... (19:76)

We consider that after this there is nothing more that remains to be said in this regard.

11.7 Which People Cannot Acquire Guidance

Allah created man, defined an objective for him, and designated the path to reach it. Wherever a crossroad appeared on this path, a signpost was erected there to show in which direction this path leads and in which direction the other one leads. If some individual does not even look at these signposts, and even if he does read them, by ignoring them he then goes in whichever direction he wishes, it is obvious that such an individual cannot acquire guidance towards the right path. The Quran has made this reality clear at many places. For example, see below.

11.7.1 Those Who Tread with Eyes Shut

- (1) It is stated in Surah *Yunus* that, O Rasul! Can you guide such a person who deliberately shuts his eyes and becomes blind? (10:43). At another place it is stated, O Rasul! You can neither make the dead hear, nor such a one who is deaf, whom though you call, he turns his back and walks away. Nor can you show the path to the one who is blind. You can only cause him to listen who considers your message to be true, and is ready

to bow his head before it (27:80-81, 30:52-53). In another verse it is stated that those people who become deaf by plugging their ears, how can they be made to listen to the subject (31:7). It is stated in Surah *Fatir* that the one who is blind and the one who has sight cannot be equal, nor can darkness and light or shade and sunlight be alike, nor the living and dead. O Rasull! You cannot make those who are lying dead in graves hear. Only he who wishes to listen can be made to hear. (35:19-22)

- (2) It is stated in Surah *An-Nabl* that, O Rasull! though you may desire it a thousand times, these people will not adopt the right path. The individual who himself wishes to tread on the wrong path, how can Allah bring him onto the right path (16:37)? And at another place it is stated that how can Allah show the straight path to those people who do not even consider this code of Allah as being true (16:104).

11.7.2 Those Who Make Their Desires as Their God (*Ilah*)

Those who themselves reject the truth of this code, and also prevent others from coming in its direction (4:167).

- (3) As has already been noted in detail, whatever potentials and abilities Allah has bestowed on man, and whatever emotions have been created in him, these are neither *Sharr* nor *Khair* in themselves – these are merely forces. It is their application that makes them *Sharr* or *Khair*. If power is used to strangle the neck of a victim, then it is *Sharr*. If it is employed to twist the arm of a tyrant, then it is *Khair*. If human emotions are kept within the boundaries of the Permanent Values, then their outcome is constructive; if they are left rebellious and unbridled, then they breed chaos and destruction. It is stated in Surah *Al-Qasas* that, O Rasull! if these people do not acquiesce to your invitation, then this is because they wish to follow their base desires. Just think, who can be more astray than the one who keeps obeying his emotions, devoid of the guidance of Allah. How can *Zalimeen* benefit from the guidance of Allah (28:50, 30:29).

11.7.3 Those Who Follow Blindly

- (4) This was about those people who continue to follow their own desires. But the condition of some people (in fact, the majority of mankind) is such that with eyes shut, without thinking or comprehending, they keep

following on behind others. Now just ponder that if the person in front is treading on the wrong path, then how will those following behind him be able to tread on the right path. This is the worst kind of misguidance. It is stated in Surah *Al-An'am* that if you obey this kind of crowd, then they will cause you to divert from the path of Allah. They themselves are misguided and also misguide others (6:117, 6:119, 5:77). Until the time that these people, by abandoning the path of blind obedience, do not make use of intellect and reasoning, they will not be able to distinguish between the right and wrong path.

11.7.4 *Mushrik*

- (5) Those people whose mindset is such that sometimes they tread on the path defined by Allah, and sometimes on the path proposed by someone else, how can they reach the intended destination¹⁵³. In the terminology of the Quran this path is called *Shirk*, and its consequence is that such an individual strays far from his intended destination (4:116).

The practical meaning of *Eimaan* is that man should make the decisions about all his affairs, or have them made, according to the Book of Allah. But if the situation is such that *Eimaan* is acknowledged from the lips, while the decisions about one's affairs are made according to non-Divine (*Taghuti*) codes, even then man cannot reach the right destination (4:60).

11.7.5 *Munafiq*

- (6) This firm conviction about some path that it will definitely take one to the desired destination is called *Eimaan*. But if an individual who does not have conviction in the validity of the path, but due to some specific self-interest joins those people who are treading on the right path, and at every step endeavours that as soon as he gets the opportunity he will escape in another direction, such an individual will never be able to reach the intended destination. In Quranic terminology he is called a *Munafiq*. It is affirmed about them that they can never come to the right path (4:142-143).

¹⁵³ The destination intended for man as his aim by Allah. (Ed)

11.7.6 *Fasiq*

- (7) There is a skin covering every fruit within which it finds nourishment and reaches maturity. This can be called its pattern. Fruit which escapes from its skin can never reach maturation and becomes rotten. Fruit breaking out of its skin like this is called *Fasq*, and the one who does this is called *Fasiq*. It is declared about them that Divine guidance does not provide any benefit to them – Allah never guides a nation that is *Fasiqeen* (5:108). The Quran has reiterated this at a number of places e.g. (2:26, 9:24). It is stated in Surah *Al-Saff* that when these people, after abandoning the correct pattern, turn towards another direction, then the Law of Requit of Allah also turns their hearts in the same direction. After that it is stated that ‘Allah does not guide a nation that is *Fasiqeen*’ (61:5).

11.7.7 *Zalimeen*

- (8) It is essential for the success of a programme that everything is kept at its designated position. If something is not kept at the place where it should be, then this is called *Zulm*, and it is obvious that the programme in which this situation arises can never become accomplished. This is why Allah made it clear that the paths of vastness never open up in front of the *Zalimeen* (2:258). This reality has been reiterated in numerous places in the Quran. Finally, we bring that illustrious verse of the Quran before us in which it has been clearly stated to whom Allah does not provide guidance:

(Just reflect) how will Allah provide guidance to the nation which, after accepting Eimaan, adopts the path of Kufr, despite the fact that it had witnessed with its own eyes that its messenger is on the path of Haqq, and the clear and perspicuous teachings of Allah had reached them. Remember! Allah never guides this kind of Zalim nation towards the correct destination. (3:86)

What further can be said in this regard other than – O my heavy heart! this appears to be our own tale.

It is obvious that when Allah declares that how can such a nation receive guidance, it does not mean that that nation has become eternally condemned (for all times), that it can now never come onto the right path – no, this is not what is meant by this. From this is meant that as long as this nation keeps treading on its existing path and keeps viewing this path to be correct, it cannot come to the

correct path. At whatever moment it begins to think that the path on which it is treading will plunge it into an abyss of destructions, the possibility of turning towards the correct path will illuminate in it. This is the reason that Rasul-ullah was told that although the glitter of worldly benefits has mesmerised the eyes of these people and they are continuing to tread blindly on the wrong path, you should:

...keep reminding them through the Quran of this fact that the path on which you are treading will lead you towards destructions, so that no individual is destroyed due to his wrong path because there was none to invite him towards the correct path...(6:70)

This verse is very clear regarding the issue of guidance and misguidance. Let us now move forward and address another important topic.

11.8 *Khata-Mallah'hu Ala Qalubi'him*¹⁵⁴

In order to understand the correct meaning of this and other similar verses, it is essential to bear in mind the following aspects:

- (1) In order to obtain guidance (to benefit from Divine guidance), it is essential that man should ponder with a cool head on the matters being presented, and should endeavour to understand realities through the use of intellect and reasoning and correctly assess the weight of the arguments for and against. Removing the blindfold from his eyes, look towards which destination the path on which he is treading is taking him. For such an individual the possibility exists that he may adopt the correct path by abandoning the wrong path. But for the individual who simply does not wish to make use of intellect and reasoning, and who blindly continues on his path with eyes shut, if someone tells him that this path is wrong, he will either just not listen and will ignore what he has heard, or will rebuff it with contumacy and arrogance. For such an individual neither the guidance of Allah provides any benefit, nor can the voice of the individual inviting him towards this guidance be useful to him. Having a receptive mind is a fundamental requirement in order to benefit from correct advice.
- (2) 'Whichever individual closes his eyes, darkness descends in front of him.' The Quran uses various styles in order to explain this reality. Sometimes

¹⁵⁴ 'Allah put a seal on their hearts' (2:7). (Ed)

it states that the one who shuts his eyes like this becomes blind, and sometimes it states that whoever shuts his eyes like this, Allah makes him blind. And sometimes that whoever Allah makes blind in this way, who can give him light. The reality is only one but the ways to express it are various (details of these aspects have been covered previously) i.e. that though every consequence is a result of the deeds of man himself, since the consequence of every deed is established according to the Law of Requit of Allah, hence Allah relates it to Himself. Sometimes it is stated that the individual who puts his finger into fire, his finger becomes burnt; another time in this way, that the fire burns the finger; sometimes that such an individual burns his finger himself; and sometimes like this, that Allah burns his finger. Where the matter is explained in the concluding way (the last one), the meaning which should be taken from this is that Allah (His Law of Requit) does this. From this the matter will become clear and no confusion will remain.

After this introductory explanation, let us look at those verses in which it is stated, *Khata-Mallah'bu Ala Qalubi'him* (Allah puts seals on their hearts), or other similar verses.

11.8.1 There Are Seals on the Hearts of the *Kuffar!*

In the initial verses of Surah *Al-Baqarah*, there is a verse which is translated as:

For those people who are Kafir, it is equal to them whether you warn them or do not warn them, they will not accept Eimaan. This is because Allah has put seals on their hearts and ears, and there are veils covering their eyes, and for them there is a severe punishment. (2:7)

The doubts which arise in the mind from this translation are obvious. But these doubts are the same kind as those which are produced in the heart from the wrong meaning of *Huda'llil Muttaqeen*, and which have been explained in the previous topic. The objection raised there is that what need do those who are already *Muttaqeen* have of guidance, and if this Book only provides guidance to the *Muttaqeen*, then where will non-*Muttaqeen* obtain guidance from? And regarding the verse being viewed, it is said that if it makes no difference to non-Muslims whether they are preached to or not, then who will benefit from preaching? And non-Muslims will not be able to acquire guidance because Allah has put seals on their hearts and ears, and has placed veils over their eyes i.e. Allah has suspended their abilities to see and observe, think and reason, and when this is the reality,

then what fault is it of theirs that they do not come to the straight path. But together with this it has also been declared that they will be given a severe punishment – in recompense for what crime will this punishment be given? First, the paths to guidance are shut on them, and then they are made to suffer a severe punishment for this crime that why did you not tread on the correct path! Have you observed how far off the mark the matter reaches from the incorrect interpretation of these verses.

The Quran has called itself a Guidebook and has informed us right from the start which people will be able to obtain guidance from it.

- (a) Those people who wish to reach the intended destination by remaining secure from the perilous pitfalls on the path. By employing their intellect and reasoning, these people reach this reality that whatever has been stated in this Guidebook, it is based on truth. After this ‘*Eimaan*’, they set out on the journey of life under the guidance of this Book – they are the people who are following the guidance from their *Rabb* and they are the ones who will prosper (2:5).
- (b) But those people who decide right from the start that we are only going to tread on our own path, regardless of whatever someone says even a thousand times, we are not going to listen to him or accept it, this Book cannot provide any benefit to them. For the individual who walks with his eyes shut, it is the same to him whether the streetlights are illuminated or it is pitch-black. They are those people who ‘by selling the Book informing about the right path, purchase books informing about the wrong paths’ (2:16). And after this it is stated that by becoming deaf, dumb, and blind, they keep on treading on the wrong paths (2:18). And no matter if some compassionate guide calls out to them a thousand times (that you are treading on the wrong path), they do not even turn around to glance at him (2:18). The example of such people is like that of sheep, in whatever direction the first sheep is going, the remainder of the sheep follow behind it with eyes shut, without asking or understanding in which direction it is going, and why are we continuing to follow behind it. When they are told to read this Book of guidance, understand it, think, reflect, and then select the path, they reply that we have absolutely no need to think and understand – we will continue to tread on that same path on which our forefathers (fathers and grandfathers) have been treading because this is the real path of security. The Quran states that they will keep treading on this path, even if their forefathers were devoid of intellect and reason and had continued on this wrong path (2:170). ‘Their simile is like that of a herd of sheep who will keep on following with

bowed heads whatever calls the shepherd makes to them?': blind, deaf, and dumb, those who do not make use of intellect and reasoning (2:171). They are those people on whose hearts seals have become placed, and for whom it is equal whether or not they are warned about the dangers of the path. Their state is such that you can call out to them a thousand times, they will not listen even once. And if you happen to meet them face to face, their condition will be such that though they will be looking at you, their attention will be elsewhere. And just reflect, can people with this kind of mentality obtain any benefit whatsoever from invitation and preaching (7:193)?

- (c) Their condition is such that once they have uttered the word no from their lips, then even if you bang your head a thousand times, they will never say yes, they will remain entrenched in their stance (10:74). And after that it is stated that We impose seals in this way on the hearts of these kinds of people who transgress limits (10:74). It is with great pride that they declare that our hearts are wrapped in covers, your words can have no effect on them (4:155). It is not their hearts that are wrapped in covers, rather it is due to this mentality of theirs that Allah has placed seals on their hearts. Therefore until such a time that they abandon this path, there is no possibility of their coming to the right path.
- (d) The state of some people is that if you say anything to them, they do not counter it on the basis of any reason and fact, they just keep opposing it devoid of any logic and evidence and do not listen to anything the other says (40:35). After this it is stated that these are those effigies of arrogance and pride on whose hearts seals become imposed (40:35). The state of their arrogance is such that they are assembled in a gathering, he (the one inviting them to the right path) is explaining the matter, but they are sitting there thinking of something completely different. When the meeting is concluded and people are dispersing, they ask others that what was this individual saying? It is stated about them that these are the people on whose hearts Allah puts seals (47:16) because they move around with eyes closed, inebriated with the intoxication of their emotions. And the level of their arrogance is such that whichever individual states that the outcome of this path of theirs will be ruin, they mock him, and say that these are those same ancient fables and tales which he sits and keeps repeating. Where is that ruin, and what kind of destruction! They are the ones about whom it is stated that covers become placed on their hearts so that they simply cannot think and understand, and their ears become plugged due to which the correct message simply cannot enter their ears (6:25). Their condition is such that if you talk to them about their own

good, they turn their faces away and walk off, and assert with great conceit that there is no point in talking to us about these matters – there are veils covering our hearts, there are plugs in our ears, there is such a thick curtain between you and us that no conversation can pass through it (41:5). You keep on doing your work, leave us alone to do our work. Why are you distressing yourself for no reason due to compassion for us. When destruction comes, we will deal with it ourselves (41:5)! It is stated that the individual who turns away from good counsel, adopts rejection, and takes no heed whatsoever of how destructive the outcome of his wrong deeds will be, how can he come to the right path. Veils become placed on his heart, his ears become plugged (18:57). Not only do these people turn away from the invitation to *Haqq*, they also even assert that these people are fraudsters, do not go anywhere near them (30:59). In this way Allah puts seals on the hearts of these people who do not use their intellect and reasoning. In this way, an invisible, imperceptible veil becomes imposed between these people and the Quran (17:45-46).

11.8.2 Seals on the Hearts of *Munafiqeen*¹⁵⁵

At any rate, this was the condition of those people who do not accept the truth right from the start. Other than them, there are also those people who acknowledge it from their lips, but when the time comes to work in accordance with it, then they seek routes of escape (they are called *Munafiqeen* in Quranic terminology). It is stated in Surah *At-Tauba* that when these people are told to participate in the battlefield (*Qital Fi-Sabi'Lillah*), they begin to seek permission to stay back with strange excuses. It is stated about them that Allah puts a seal on their hearts but they do not have knowledge of it (9:86-87). See also (9:93, 47:20-23).

Remember that this is not only a story about the earlier Islamic era, that at that time there was some specific group of *Munafiqeen* about whom these verses were sent down. This is the portrayal of an eternal reality, and that is that the proclamation whose evidence of being true is not depicted in the conduct and character of a human being, that proclamation cannot be declared as being *Eimaan*. Those who acknowledge it from their lips, but falsify it through their deeds, are *Munafiq*, no matter to which era they may belong. They are those who follow their own desires instead of obeying Divine guidance. Only the benefits of

¹⁵⁵ *Munafiqeen* – usually translated as hypocrites. (Ed)

this worldly life are in front of their eyes, they have no *Eimaan* whatsoever in the hereafter. They are the very people about whom it is stated that have you even pondered on the condition of those people who have themselves made their own emotions (base desires) as their God. They are those people who, despite possessing knowledge and intellect, become destroyed. The consequence of being inebriated due to intoxication by emotions is that seals become imposed on their hearts and ears. Veils are drawn over their eyes. Say! The individual who, by turning away from the guidance of Allah in this way, steps onto wrong paths, who can bring him onto the right path (45:23)! These people declare the benefits of worldly life as being their sole objective and ultimate aim, and shut their eyes completely to the life of the future. The glittering polish of the artificial gemstones of worldly life creates such an allurement in their eyes that they then become simply incapable of seeing anything. In this way seals become imposed on their hearts, ears, and eyes (16:106-108).

In Surah *Ya'Sin*, the following verses are translated as:

Allah's verdict became fulfilled on most of them, that they will never accept Eimaan. We have put yokes around their necks and these are right up to their chins, because of which their heads remain pointing upwards. And We have created an obstruction in front of them and also one at their rear. And a cover has been drawn over them, hence, they see nothing. Therefore it is equal to them whether you admonish them or do not admonish them, they will never accept Eimaan. (36:7-10)

11.8.3 Allah's Verdict is Fulfilled

An explanation of the remaining part of these verses has been given previously, therefore there will be no difficulty in understanding their correct meanings. But a huge doubt is produced by saying this about the first verse (36:7) - that see, it is declared here that the verdict of Allah became fulfilled about them that they will not accept *Eimaan*, which means that Allah had already made this decision about them (before they were even born) that they will not accept *Eimaan*, therefore that verdict came to pass – they did not accept *Eimaan*, nor will they accept *Eimaan* – ‘accepting *Eimaan* is simply not in their *Muqaddar* (destiny).’

This concept is a product of that same doctrine of *Jabr* due to which these kinds of doubts emerge, otherwise the matter is crystal clear. The meaning of *La'Qad Haqq Al-Qawlu* (36:7) is that the law of Allah is that for those people who do not employ their intellect and reasoning, reality will remain clouded, and as a consequence they will not accept *Eimaan*. At another place it is stated:

...Those people who do not use their intellect and reasoning, they remain in confusion. (10:100)

These people are not employing their intellect and reasoning, hence they cannot benefit from the guidance of Allah. Their condition is living evidence of the truth of this law of Allah. In this way, by proving to be true, the verdict (His law) of Allah appears before us. Thus what benefit can admonishment and warning provide to such people:

Admonishment and warning can only benefit the one who follows the advice (guidance) of Allah, and is fearful of those unseen consequences of human deeds which are established according to the Law of Requit of Allah... (36:11)

11.8.4 Created for Hell

This same style of expression has been adopted in verse (7:179) of Surah *Al-A'raf*. The literal translation of the first part of this verse will be that, surely We have created many *Jinn* and *Ins*¹⁵⁶ for hell (7:179). From this translation the thought arises that when Allah has created them for hell, then how can they change their *Muqaddar* and become righteous? But when we look at the remainder of this part of the verse, then the matter becomes clear. It is stated in this:

...these are those people who, though they have a heart, do not employ it for thinking and reasoning. They have eyes, but do not use them to see. They have ears, but do not use them to hear. They are not human beings but animals, rather even lowlier than them. They remain ignorant of their status and the purpose of life. (7:179)

The meaning is clear that those people who remain blind, deaf, and dumb despite possessing the potentials of sight, hearing, thinking, and reasoning, and continue to mindlessly tread wrong paths, this conduct of theirs continuously cries out that these people will go straight into hell. As the saying goes, they are simply meant for hell. The Quran has clarified this same interpretation at another place in this way, that when these kinds of people will enter hell, the custodian there will ask them, what did you do because of which you are being made to enter hell? What was your crime? They will reply, what need is there to go into any great detail:

¹⁵⁶ *Jinn* and *Ins* – nomads inhabiting the desert (e.g. Bedouin) and those living in urban areas respectively. For further details see my books, *The Human Self* and *Iblees*, or *Lughat-ul-Quran*.

... if we had listened to those people who used to warn us about the consequences of treading on the evil path, or made use of intellect and reasoning, then we would never have been among the denizens of hell. (67:10)

Therefore, those people who do not use their intellect and reasoning are firewood for hell, they are the ones on whose hearts seals become imposed.

11.8.5 Their Hearts Place Locks on Themselves

It is stated in Surah *Muhammad*:

Do they not reflect and reason in the Quran? Do they have locks imposed on their hearts (Aqfa'lu'ha)? (47:24)

In addition, the term *Aqfa'lu'ha* in this verse contains profound meanings and cannot be translated. Its meaning is that locks have not been applied on their hearts from somewhere outside, their hearts have applied the locks on their own selves. The heart imposes locks on its own self by itself. When this is the situation, then how can any external power open these locks. They will have to unlock these themselves. You can understand this from the following example, that an individual is sitting in his room and he has bolted the door from the inside. He has bolted it himself, and then he himself wails that how can I get out? He will be told that, Sir! you yourself have bolted the door from the inside, only you can open it, no one can help you from the outside – unbolt the door and come out. This has been illustrated in alternative words as follows:

...when they adopted a twisted path, then Allah (the Law of Requitul) made their hearts twisted...(61:5) See also (51:9)

When they shut the door, the path for their exit became blocked.

11.8.6 One's Deeds Themselves Become Rust

And the final word in this regard is that illustrious verse of Surah *Al-Mutaffifin*, in which the point regarding the sealing of their hearts by Allah is perspicuously explained. It is stated in this that:

Nay! The matter is not the way in which these people understand it. The fact is this, that it is their own deeds, which by becoming rust, cover their hearts. (83:14)

The seals which become imposed on hearts are the evil deeds of man himself.

11.9 *Fa'man Sha'a Fal'yumin Wa Man Sha'a Fal'yak'fur*¹⁵⁷

With regard to human choice and intent, this has already been discussed in detail in a separate chapter. But we think that it is essential that whatever the Quran has specified with regard to guidance and misguidance, that it should be specifically outlined so that no misconception remains. The fundamental teaching of the Quran is that:

In the matter of Deen there is no kind of compulsion, this is because the right and wrong paths have emerged clearly in front, distinct from each other. Now whichever individual, turning away from non-Divine paths, adopts the guidance of Allah, he will grasp the hand of such a trustworthy support which will never let him down; this connection will never break... (2:256)

Now it is obvious that when there is no internal or external duress and no coercion in the matter of Deen, it is left to the choice and volition of man, then it is firstly essential that there is no compulsion in this regard even from the direction of Allah Himself. Therefore He has also clarified this matter. Like a compassionate physician, Rasul-ullah desired from the depths of his heart that people should become saved from destruction and somehow or other accept *Eimaan*. Addressing Rasul-ullah, Allah informed him that if it had been Our *Masbe'at* that people should tread on a single path only, whether willing or unwilling, and that no one could reject *Haqq* and truth, then this was not at all difficult for Us to do. We would have created them constrained (like other things of the universe) but We did not do this. When We have not done it like this, then O Rasul! do you wish that you can somehow compel them to accept *Eimaan*. There is no allowance for *Ikrab* (compulsion) in Deen – that *Eimaan* which is accepted under duress is not *Eimaan* at all (10:99). Say to them that *Haqq* has arrived to you from the direction of your *Rabb*. Now whoever among you adopts the right path, its benefit will reach him alone; whoever treads on the wrong path, its loss will also be his alone. You are not appointed as a guardian over them that you can force them to accept reality (10:108). This is that reality which every *Momin* should know (i.e. if this had been in the *Masbe'at* of Allah that the whole of humanity should be compelled to tread on one single path, then He would

¹⁵⁷ 'Whoever wishes, can accept *Eimaan*, and whoever wishes, can reject it.' (Ed)

simply have created them like this) (11:118)¹⁵⁸. So much so, that Rasul-ullah was also informed that it is also not essential that the one whom you hold very dear and desire from your heart that he accepts *Eimaan*, that he will accept *Eimaan* (28:56). We have given man freedom in this matter, therefore you too should pass the message of *Haqq* on to them, and then say that whoever wishes can accept *Eimaan*, and whoever wishes can reject it (18:29). It is stated in Surah *Al-Dahr* that We created man and then endowed him with hearing and sight, then showed him the path - now whoever among them wishes, he can accept it; whoever wishes, he can reject it (76:3). It is stated in Surah *Al-Abasa* that the Quran is a warning i.e. a reminder of that truth and reality which man keeps forgetting repeatedly, so whoever wishes, he can bring to mind those forgotten truths again through this (80:12). It is stated in Surah *Al-Balad* that We have shown him both paths clearly (90:10), so whoever wishes can adopt the path taking him towards His *Rabb* (73:19). See also (28:57).

Allah bestowed man with eyes, and made arrangements for an external light, placed both the right and wrong paths distinctly before him, and after that told him that:

... Whoever walks with eyes open, the benefit will be to him; the one who walks blindly will bear the loss himself... (6:104)

... Here no bearer of burden will carry the burden of another... (17:15)

Whoever among you treads on the right path, he will remain secure from fear and grief (2:38, 20:123). And also understand this, that if you tread on the right path, then those treading on the wrong path will not be able to cause any harm to reach you. They will only do harm to themselves (5:105).

The *Mushrikeen* used to say that we cannot be indicted for our *Shirk*, it was the Will of Allah Himself that we should have resorted to *Shirk*. If He had not wished this, then how could we have committed *Shirk*. In reply to this, it is stated that they are uttering a falsehood, Allah does not misguide anyone (6:148, 16:35, 43:20). They misguide themselves, do not adopt the right path, and level an accusation against Allah (6:140)! Although it is correct that in the same way that Allah does not forcibly put anyone on the path of misguidance - man adopts that path himself - similarly, Allah does not forcibly put the individual who adopts the wrong path onto the right path:

¹⁵⁸ See also (13:31, 16:9, 16:93, 32:13, 42:13).

...*The one who wishes to remain misguided, Allah does not give him guidance...*
(16:37)

11.9.1 The Religious Clergy

Allah does not misguide anyone, whereas religious clerics are misguided themselves and also misguide others:

...*these people are misguided themselves and also misguide others...*(5:77) See also
(6:145)

In this way, those treading on the wrong path become a large faction, or caravan, and they keep on reinforcing and strengthening each other's false beliefs (7:202). And in this way, the leader of this caravan which is heading in the wrong direction deposits them in that marketplace where there is no buyer for this worthless produce i.e. into hell (14:28-29).

In any event, all this is done by human beings. Allah neither forcibly misguides anyone, nor forcibly brings anyone to the right path. His law is that:

...*Al-Haqq has arrived from the direction of your Rabb, now whoever wishes should accept it, and whoever wishes should reject it...*(18:29)

We now take a step forward from *Haqq*, and this is 'Man Sha'a'.

11.10 Manya'sha'u

A discussion in principle about wherever the word *Manya'sha* has generally appeared in the Quran has already been done. Now we will examine that wherever *Manya'sha* has appeared in connection with guidance and misguidance, what this means. It is clear from whatever has been noted in the previous pages that guidance and misguidance is within the control of man himself i.e. whoever wishes can take the straight path, and whoever wishes can keep treading on the wrong path.

The straight path can be adopted according to the law of *Mashe'at* of Allah i.e. in this way that man should live life with his eyes open, make use of his intellect and reasoning, and only take a step after careful consideration. At every crossroad of life, carefully analyse which is the straight path and which is a crooked one. He should not keep walking behind someone with his eyes closed. This is that law of

Masbe'at according to which man can adopt the right path. Following these explanations, let us look at the corresponding verses of the Quran. It is stated in Surah *Al-Baqarah* that initially man used to live as one brotherhood (one *Ummah*). Then differences arose between them, for the elimination of which Allah initiated the process of righteous guidance: *Anbiya* were sent, and Books were sent down with them. Those people who accepted *Eimaan* in their truth, Allah gave them guidance. After this it is stated that whichever individual wishes to acquire guidance, he receives it through Allah's process of guidance (2:213). The responsibility of these messengers was to pass on the messages of Allah (5:99, 3:19), not to make them tread on the straight path. Hence, Rasul-ullah was informed that:

This is not your responsibility that you make them tread on the right path. Allah will only cause him to tread on the right path who himself wishes to tread on this path ... (2:272) See also (28:56)

In another verse:

Allah extends an invitation to come towards the path of peace and security. After that whichever individual wishes to adopt the right path willingly, he obtains guidance towards this. (10:25)

This invitation (from the direction of Allah) used to be received through the messengers. Whichever individual used to say yes to their invitation, he used to obtain guidance towards the right path (14:4). The messengers used to give this message on the basis of the *Wabi* (verses) sent down from the direction of Allah. Clear laws from Allah used to be sent down for this purpose. By this means Allah provides guidance to every one of those individuals who forms the intention to acquire guidance (22:16). This is also called *Nur* (light) at another place (24:35, 24:40).

In Surah *Al-Zumr* this is called the *Kitab* sent down from the direction of Allah (39:23). In Surah *Fatir* it is stated that the one who is blind and the one who can see cannot be equal; neither can darkness and light, nor sunshine and shadow be the same; nor can the dead and the living be equivalent. After this it is stated that, O Rasull! you cannot make the dead to hear. Allah also only causes those to hear who wish to listen (35:22). 'Those who wish to hear' means those who turn towards Allah for this purpose (13:27). Contrary to this, the one who does not even pay any attention to this, how can he be a beneficiary of the guidance of Allah? This is the law of *Masbe'at* of Allah, according to which whoever wishes can obtain guidance, whoever contravenes this law will not be able to obtain guidance. It is stated in Surah *Al-An'am*:

Those people who falsify the Divine law, becoming deaf and dumb they stumble around in the darknesses; they cannot obtain guidance towards the right path. Only he obtains guidance who wishes to obtain it according to the law of Mashe'at (Manya'sha) of Allah. (6:39)

In Surah *Ibraheem* the right and wrong ideology of life is illustrated through the metaphor of a tree of virtue and an evil tree, and it is stated that those people who accept *Eimaan* in the correct ideology of life achieve steadfastness and resoluteness in the world and in the hereafter. And the *Zalimeen* do not receive the guidance of Allah – why does it happen like this? Why do the avenues of success and prosperity not become opened up for those people who do not wish to abandon the path of exploitation and tyranny? It is stated that this is the law of *Mashe'at (Ma'yasha)* of Allah which He has devised using His Omnipotence (14:27). You cannot ask this question that why is this law like this? This law is such that if you live according to it, then the avenues of freedom and prosperity will keep becoming ever more expansive for you – if you contravene it, then these avenues will become closed.

It is stated in Surah *Fatir* that the individual who commits wrong deeds and these appear to be good in his eyes, remains trapped in this deception that I am doing very good deeds, therefore he does not wish to abandon this path, so then the avenues of prosperity cannot become expanded for him either. This is also the law of *Mashe'at* of Allah. It was stated to Rasul-ullah that do not waste your energies in anguish at the condition of those people who wish to be ruined by being trapped in self-deception in this way. Allah is well aware of the reality of their hollow business (35:8).

(As has been noted previously at another place) at the time of the advent of Islam, this thought used to arise in some hearts that if these opponents were shown miracles then they may accept *Eimaan*. In response to this it was stated that this is not the law of *Mashe'at* of Allah. His law of *Mashe'at* is this - that people should accept the truth with the full acquiescence of their hearts and minds using intellect and reasoning, knowledge and insight. Whoever is going to accept *Eimaan* will accept it according to this law; *Eimaan* cannot be acquired through ignorance (6:111).

Similarly, it is stated in Surah *Al-Muddathir* that according to the law of *Mashe'at* of Allah, the avenues of success and prosperity can be expanded for the one who has full conviction in the truth of His law. The one who lives a life of hypocrisy with doubts and suspicions cannot obtain guidance towards the correct destination. In this way, according to the law of *Mashe'at (Manya'sha)* of Allah,

whoever wishes can adopt the right path, whoever wishes can continue to tread on the wrong paths (74:31).

This is the very meaning of these verses in which is stated that, O Allah! guidance and misguidance is conditional on Your law of *Mashe'at* (7:155). In Surah *Al-Shura* Rasul-ullah is informed that We have appointed you to the status of *Nabummat* which is bestowed absolutely externally, and you assuredly guide people towards *Siraat-e-Mustaqeem* in accordance with it, but your task is only to inform people about the path, not to make them tread on it. With this Quran, We provide guidance to our servants towards the right path according to Our law of *Mashe'at*, and that law of *Mashe'at* is that guidance is acquired by the one who is desirous of receiving guidance (42:52).

And lastly, we note that verse of Surah *An-Nabl* which is the decisive verdict in this regard. It is stated that if this had been in the *Mashe'at* of Allah, then He would have created all human beings constrained to tread on one single path, but He did not do this (16:93). If the first part of the verse is translated as 'Allah misguides whoever He wishes, He gives guidance to whoever He wishes' then what is declared after this, that you will surely be questioned as to what kinds of deeds you did, will not only become meaningless but will also be mutually contradictory. If the reality is that Allah gives guidance to whoever He wishes and misguides whoever He wishes, then how can people be questioned and held accountable? Only the one who does something using his choice and intent can be questioned and held accountable.

Hence, the meaning of the verse is clear i.e. if it had been in the *Mashe'at* of Allah that all human beings tread on only one path, then He would have created them constrained (like other created things) but He did not do this. He created man as possessor of choice, so that whoever wishes can adopt the right path, and whoever wishes can keep treading on the wrong path. It is this choice and intent of man due to which he is declared to be responsible for his deeds. This is why he will be questioned that why did you do such and such a deed? This was that responsibility for deeds, to escape which *Iblees* said to Allah that I did not commit an error – You misguided me (7:16, 15:39). It is this evasion and fleeing from responsibility as a result of which *Iblees* became condemned. The one who views himself as being constrained and makes Allah responsible for his own actions adopts an *Ibleesi* persona according to the Quran.

11.11 Recap

Bring those words to mind once again with which we started this chapter i.e. that the individual to whom Allah gives guidance, no one can misguide him; the one whom Allah misguides, no one can give him guidance – it is clear from what has been said in the previous pages that whatever becomes apparent from this translation is not only contrary to the teaching of the Quran, but this kind of impression or concept about Allah Himself is also incorrect. Allah does not misguide anyone. From this you will have observed that by separating any single verse of the Quran from other related verses, not only does the matter not become clarified from its literal translation, this leads, in fact, to the creation of misconceptions.

11.12 Correct Method to Understand the Quran

The correct method to understand Quranic teaching is that you should place in front of you whatever has been noted in all the places in the Quran regarding the topic being analysed, and then it should be understood what the Quran says about it. And then according to its fundamental teaching, the meaning (not the translation) of the related verses should be established.¹⁵⁹ By doing this, you will find that the correct meaning of the Quranic verses becomes clarified and no kind of misconception arises either. Let us remind ourselves once again that in connection with human life, wherever Allah has declared Himself to be the originator of action (i.e. it is stated that Allah does it like this), this means that this takes place according to the law of *Masbe'at* of Allah, and when it has also been ascertained from the Quran what the law of *Masbe'at* of Allah is in this regard, then the matter becomes crystal clear. In relation to this, reflect on a few verses once again.

It is stated in Surah *Bani Israel* (its common translation is this) - that whoever Allah gives guidance to, only he will be the guided one; and whoever he misguides, then other than Allah no one can be his protector. On the Day of Judgement We will raise him up having made him blind, deaf, and dumb. The abode of these people will be hell (17:97). You will see what a great misconception becomes created by looking at this verse after dissociating it from other related places. But in the very next verse it is stated that this is due to this reason - because they rejected Our laws and rebelled against them (17:98). From this the matter becomes clear, that whichever individual rejects the laws of Allah, he goes astray. This is the law of *Masbe'at* of Allah. Hence, the meaning of the verse quoted above will be that the

¹⁵⁹ I have compiled the Lughat-ul-Quran and Mafoom-ul-Quran according to this very principle.

individual who accepts *Eimaan* in the truth of the laws of Allah, he acquires the guidance of Allah. Whoever rejects it, the right path cannot appear before him. In connection with this, see also verses (18:17, 39:37, 7:178).

11.13 *Al-Mudillu* - A Divine Attribute

Al-Asma ul Husna are specified in the Quran for Allah i.e. the most beautiful and best names of Allah. From this are meant those Divine attributes which are noted in the Quran. In this regard you may have seen ninety-nine names of Allah written in many places; in some places *Al-Mudillu* (i.e. the one who misguides) is also written. This name of Allah is not to be found in the Quran, but it seems as if it has been deduced from those verses in which words such as *Mayn'udlil* have appeared. The correct meaning of these words, or those verses in which these kinds of words appear, has been viewed by us. In light of this meaning, we consider that Allah should never be called *Al-Mudillu* (the one who misguides) - He is, in fact, *Al-Hadi* (the Giver of guidance), and the one Who is *Al-Hadi*, how can He be *Al-Mudillu*. In the Quran *Shaitan* is called *Mudillu-un* (the ones who misguide).

11.13.1 This Should Not be Uttered

It is stated in Surah *Al-Qasas* that when Moses punched one of the Qubti, and he fell down dead, he commented after this that this is indeed an act of *Shaitan*, undoubtedly, he is an enemy (of man) and one who is known to misguide (*Mudillu-un*) (28:15). At another place it is stated that *Shaitan* wishes to plunge people deep into misguidance (4:60). It is obvious that the act (of misguiding someone) which the Quran declares to be an act of *Shaitan*, how can that be attributed (Allah forbid) towards Allah? Hence, this kind of translation as a result of which Allah is declared to be 'one who misguides' should also not be done of such verses.

Similarly, in these ninety names, *Al-Mu'zillu* (the one who humiliates) is included together with *Al-Mu'Izzu* (the one who gives *Izzat*); or *Al-Dar'u* (one who gives loss) is included together with *Al-Nafe'u* (the one who gives benefit). From the correct meanings appearing before us of those verses from which these kinds of names are drawn, this reality becomes evident that Allah neither humiliates anyone without reason, nor causes harm. *Zillat* (humiliation) and *Zarar* (harm) are

the outcomes of man's own deeds, hence it is more appropriate not to include these kinds of names in the list of *Al-Asma ul Husna*.

That which is translated in Surah *Al-An'am* as Allah misguides whoever He wishes and puts on the straight path whoever He wishes (6:39), this interpretation gives rise to an enormous misconception. The meaning of the verse is that guidance and misguidance are acquired according to the law of *Mashe'at* of Allah. According to this, whichever individual wishes to, he can adopt the right path, and whoever wishes to, he should remain on the wrong path. What is that law of *Mashe'at*? This is clarified in the opening words of this verse as follows:

Those people who falsify the laws of Allah, by becoming deaf and dumb, they keep stumbling around in darknesses ... (6:39).

It is stated in Surah *Al-Rum* – which is commonly translated as whoever Allah misguides, who can give him guidance (30:29) - however, this is not its meaning, its meaning becomes clear from the initial words of the verse in which it is stated:

These unjust people, without knowledge and insight, keep on blindly following their animalistic passions. Now just think that the individual who, according to the law of Allah, continues to tread on wrong paths in this way, who can bring him on to the straight path... (30:29)

In Surah *At-Tauba* it is stated that:

This does not suit Allah at all that He should send His guidance (the Book) to people, and in this way make it clear what matters they need to eschew, and after that misguide them for no reason. If He had intended to misguide people, then why would He send codes of guidance to them... (9:115)

It is stated in Surah *Al-An'am* - the literal translation of which is as follows – the individual whom Allah intends to provide guidance to, He expands his heart for Islam, and the one whom He intends to misguide, He constricts his chest as if he is climbing up towards the heights of the sky (6:125). In the verse prior to this (6:124) those people are mentioned who, when the Divine laws are presented to them, keep objecting and making excuses. They are those criminals who reap a humiliating punishment. After this it is stated:

...to those people who do not accept Eimaan in the truth of the Divine laws, reality remains veiled. (6:25)

From this it is clear that the human heart becoming expanded for Divine guidance is the delightful fruit of *Eimaan*, and it becoming constricted is the essential outcome of the rejection and falsification of this. Since all this takes place

according to the Law of Requital of Allah, therefore Allah has related it towards Himself. The constriction and expansion of the heart takes place according to the outlook of man himself, hence it is stated in Surah *An-Nabl* that a severe chastisement is imposed on the individual who reverts to *Kufr* after accepting *Eimaan*. Bear in mind that this is not announced about that individual whose heart is content on *Eimaan* but who is coerced into performing some deed of *Kufr* - this is announced about that individual who opens up his own heart for *Kufr* (16:106). Note that it is clearly stated here that man himself opens and shuts his heart to *Kufr* (and *Eimaan*).

Allah makes the path to guidance clearly evident through His Book. Whoever accommodates it in his heart by expanding his breast, the paths to successes open up before him. Whoever closes the doors of his heart, he becomes deprived of these blessings. In this way Allah broadens the paths of successes in front of each one of those individuals who wishes to achieve successes. The one who does not wish this, these doors remain closed to him. And the one to whom these doors remain closed according to the law of *Masbe'at* of Allah, no one can show him the right path (39:23). The individual who shuts his eyes himself, who can provide him with sight!

The one who himself wishes to remain misguided, Allah does not give him guidance (forcibly)...(16:37)

On the other hand:

Those people who make efforts and strive and endeavour for Us, We keep guiding them towards Our paths...(29:69)

...This is indeed the established Deen. (12:40)

12 Chapter 12 - Is Rizq in Allah's Hand?

Now we are entering that stage of our journey in which the doctrine of *Jabr* produces the most destructive effects. According to this belief it is asserted that:

Allah has kept Rizq in His Own Hand; whoever He wishes, He can make him rich; whoever He wishes, He can make him poor. Nothing can result from the efforts of man. Hence, there should be no envy on viewing the wealth of the rich, nor should this thought arise that we can obtain their wealth. Thinking like this is tantamount to a complaint against Allah. It is a challenge against His verdict. This is Kufr, this is Al'haad, this is non-Deen. Man should remain satisfied in whatever state He keeps him. Remaining content with the Will of Allah is a sign of the servants of Allah. Contentment is an immense treasure, being satisfied with one's condition has a greatly elevated rank, Allah likes poverty – this world is a corpse, and the one who desires it (the world) is a dog. It is possible for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle, but it is impossible for the wealthy to enter the kingdom of the heavens. Anbiya, saints, those who are near to God, holy men of God, all were poor. They preferred poverty for themselves. Rasul-ullah is quoted to have said that poverty is a cause for pride for me. In another Hadeeth it is narrated that Rasul-ullah stated that Islam initially arrived among the poor, and in the end, it will also prosper among the poor. When one of his disciples complained to Baba Fareed Ganj Shagr about poverty, then one day he took him to a pond. There it was witnessed that those sheep who had quenched their thirst were lying down comfortably snoring, while the thirsty sheep were coming hurriedly to the water. He said to his disciple, my son, have you noticed the difference between riches and poverty. The one who becomes satisfied turns his face away from God. The one who remains in need, runs hurriedly towards God.

These kinds of tales and anecdotes are narrated to the populace in every congregation where sermons are given, and in every gathering with speakers; and the poor are relentlessly patted into a slumber so that their gazes never lift up in the direction of the sky-scraping structures of the palaces of these affluent elites, which are raised up from the plaster made out of the bones of the poor and destitute, and the colourful embellishments of whose opulent abodes are owed to their blood itself. From this you can assess what era these kinds of beliefs are the products of, and the creation of what kinds of minds. And the irony is that like every *Batil* ideology, verses of the Quran are presented in support of these beliefs as well – what a tragedy! In the words of Iqbal:

*In this same Quran there is now the teaching of abandonment of the world,
Which made the Momin the possessor of success and prosperity,*

*The style of their deeds today is 'dependent on Taqdeer',
The Taqdeer of Allah was implicit in their intentions,
That which was distasteful, gradually became acceptable itself,
The conscience of nations transforms under slavery.*

Come, let us see that the Quran which made the *Momin* a front runner in success and accomplishment, what is its teaching in this regard?

The meaning of *Rizq* is the means of sustenance i.e. every one of those things on which human life is dependent. Apart from *Rizq*, the words *Fadl* and *Ma'ash* have also appeared in the Quran for this.

The nature of *Rizq* is like that of guidance which we have discussed in detail in the previous chapter i.e. Allah created man, and together with this declared that showing the right and wrong paths in the world clearly and distinctly from one another is Our responsibility. For this purpose He sent down codes of guidance from His direction, but together with these also declared that differentiating between the two paths and placing them before you was Our responsibility, now it is up to your choice which path you wish to select for yourself. We will not interfere in this selection of yours. Whoever among you wishes to tread on the wrong path, he should adopt this path; whoever wishes to tread on the right path, he can select it.

12.1 Allah Has Made the Means of *Rizq* Available

Similarly, Allah has declared that since We have sent you into the world, then whatever means of sustenance your existence is dependent on, We have already made it available on the face of the earth. Life depends on heat, light, air, water, and food. All this was also created before your birth. This is what is meant when We say that 'We give *Rizq* to you' – but just as in order to obtain benefit from Our guidance, you need to think and reason, in the same way, in order to benefit from the means of sustenance provided by Us, you will need to make efforts yourself. For this, We have established certain rules and codes. The means of sustenance will become available to those people who work according to these; those who do not do this will remain deprived of this. Together with the birth of a child, fountains of milk begin to gush from the breasts of the mother, but the mother who abandons her child and leaves him unattended, he dies screaming from hunger, We do not put even one drop of milk into its mouth. Then the state of this arrangement of Ours is such that initially the digestion of a child is weak and delicate, so there is a lower proportion of fat in the mother's milk and a

greater amount of water i.e. the milk is thin. As the digestive system becomes stronger with the growth of the child, the mother's milk becomes proportionately denser, until such a time that when the child starts teething, and his digestive system is able to digest and absorb other kinds of foods, then these fountains of milk dry up. Now the parents have to make an effort themselves for the nutrition of the child. This was an example of benefitting from 'the *Rizq* provided by Allah' at an individual level. If we look at it from the collective point of view, then the treasures of *Rizq* are buried and concealed in the earth. These have to be extracted from there and acquired according to the laws established by Allah (these are called the laws of nature). The first phase in this process is that of producing or acquiring *Rizq* with one's own endeavour and effort.

12.2 The Issue of Distribution of *Rizq*

After this the next phase is that of the communal life of man, in which the question of the production or acquiring of *Rizq* appears before us, and this is that point where complications arise in this issue, for the resolution of which Divine guidance is needed. If the distribution of *Rizq* is carried out according to the guidance of Allah (which is termed the system of *Rabubiyat*), then the means of sustenance keeps becoming available to every human being with peace and dignity. If the distribution remains under the self-created laws and system of human beings, then this world becomes a *Jahannum* (as is happening currently). Come let us see what teaching is provided by the Quran about these three aspects.

12.3 *Wallah'hu Yarzu'ku'kum*

This is translated as 'Allah provides you with *Rizq*.'

12.3.1 The Responsibility to Provide *Rizq*

Regarding the responsibility of *Rizq*, it is stated:

There is no living thing on the face of the earth, the responsibility for whose Rizq is not on Allah... (11:6)

At another place, a differentiation is made between man and the rest of creation (29:60). It is stated in Surah *Al-Rum*:

Allah is He Who creates you and provides Rizq... (30:40)

It is stated in Surah *Al-An'am*:

... We provide Rizq both to you and your progeny... (6:151) See also (17:31)

Let us make this matter clear here once again, that from this responsibility of Allah is not meant that He provides *Rizq* to man and other things directly. If it is interpreted to mean this, then what will be the reply to this, that (leaving aside other creations) in one famine thousands of human beings die a slow death from hunger. In any event, the state of the world today is such that half of the population on earth does not even receive enough to fill their bellies once a day. From this the objector will say that Allah fulfils this responsibility of His in a strange way, that the world is dying of hunger and He does nothing.¹⁶⁰ As we have written at the start, the meaning of Allah providing *Rizq* is that He has created the means of *Rizq*:

We made your abode in the earth, and placed the sustenance for life in it for you... (7:10) See also (15:20)

12.4 The Natural System for the Production of *Rizq*

The potential for producing food from the land was placed in it and rain was brought down from the sky, in this way the means of sustenance was provided for you:

Allah created the heavens and the earth, then He brings down rain from the clouds, and from this makes Rizq available to you via the crops from the land... (14:32)

At another place it is stated that:

He provides Rizq for you from the earth and the heavens... (35:3)

The Quran has reiterated this reality at numerous places.¹⁶¹ At some places it is stated that if Allah dries up these sources of *Rizq*, then say, who can provide you with *Rizq*?¹⁶² Other than Allah, no one else even possesses this power (*Qudrat*) that he can produce the means of sustenance (16:73, 29:17). It is stated in Surah *TaHa*:

¹⁶⁰ How this responsibility of Allah is fulfilled through human hands will be explained later.

¹⁶¹ See verses (2:22, 10:31, 27:64, 34:36, 40:13, 45:5, 50:11, 51:22, 80:25-32).

¹⁶² See verses (56:63-73, 67:21, 67:30).

... We provide you with Rizq, We do not ask for Rizq from you... (20:132) See also (51:57)

The capacity for production of Rizq from the land is limitless. But at any one time, Rizq can only be acquired from this according to a particular quantity:

We have treasures of everything present with Us, but We send these down (bring these out) each one according to a 'known Qadr'. (15:21)

The words 'known Qadr'¹⁶³ are worthy of close attention i.e. those estimations and scales about which knowledge has been made available, which man can discover through his own research and endeavours. At another place it is stated that We have made this arrangement according to Our law of *Masbe'at* (*Ma'yasha'u*). And the rationale for this is that if this had not been done, and Rizq was continually taken out from the earth without any balance and proportion, then those people who commandeer the sources of Rizq would have created chaos in the world (42:27). From 'known Qadr' this indication becomes apparent that the potential of the land to produce Rizq is beyond measure, but the acquisition of Rizq will be according to the knowledge, ability, and effort of man. From here, we take another step forward.

12.5 The Conditions to Acquire Rizq

What the mutual connection is between human toil and effort, and the sources of sustenance bestowed by Allah and the obtaining of Rizq from them, is noted in Surah *Al-Waqi'ah* in a very attractive and comprehensive style. It is stated:

Just ponder on the cultivation you engage in, how much is your effort in this, and what are all the things that Our law of nature does. You plough the field and place seed in it. Now say, who causes a crop to grow from it. Is it you that does this, or does this take place according to Our law?

Then after the emergence of the crop, who provides protection to it. It may happen that some disaster may occur due to which the ripened crop becomes destroyed. Destroyed in such a way that you sit with your head in your hands, and say to each other that we are totally ruined, completely destitute and doomed. Leaving aside obtaining grain from this field, our hard work and seeds have also gone to waste.

¹⁶³ The words used in the verses are '*Qadr-e-Maloom*' i.e. a known scale. (Ed)

Then reflect on this water on which not only your agriculture, but your own life also depends. Is it you that brings it down from the clouds as rain, or is it Our law of Rabubiyat that does this? These clouds become formed from the water of the oceans which is so brackish that it can neither be used for drinking, nor for agriculture. Just reflect that if rainwater also remained briny like this, then what could you have done?

It is astonishing why you do not reach the correct conclusion on such a clear and straightforward matter by thinking along these lines, and why you do not value and appreciate the system of Allah.

In the same way, reflect on this fire which you kindle and make use of in so many ways. Say, is keeping the potential of heat in this manner within the branches of green trees your skill, or is it Our laws that do this. It is We Who have created all this (your contribution in this is only your work). We have illustrated these facts so that you remember this overlooked reality that We have arranged this whole system in order to provide Rizq to those who are hungry. (56:63-73)

In the early days of human life, food consisted of the general produce from the land, or meat obtained from hunting. After this the era of industrialisation began. But the basis of industrialisation is also that raw material which is produced in the land or extracted from it. From this respect, too, the primary source of *Rizq* is declared to be the earth.

12.6 Wealth Also Became Included in the Meaning of *Rizq*

In the initial period of the communal life of man there was a barter system in place, according to which things of need used to be mutually exchanged. After this man invented coins, according to which *Rizq* (the necessities of life) began to be purchased in exchange for gold and silver. As a result, wealth and possessions became a route for the acquisition of *Rizq*, and it was from this very thing that all those complexities arose which, the greater the efforts to try and resolve them, the more complicated they keep on becoming. (This is a separate topic, at this point in time we only wish to note that) wealth and possessions also became included in the terminology of *Rizq*, and the acquisition of *Rizq* no longer remained confined to the cultivation of crops from the land, rather it also came to mean the earning of wealth – so much so, that things have reached such a state that the concept of acquiring *Rizq* from the land has been pushed into the background, and the concept of earning assets and wealth has taken the foremost and highest status. Now the criterion for wealth and poverty is declared to be money, and it is this that has become the standard for fixing the recompense for

work. Hence the meaning of the ability to acquire *Rizq* now means the ability and capacity to earn money. In this ‘potential’ the intellect and reasoning, knowledge and experience, expertise in economic trickeries, and last of all the hard work of man are all included – in fact, more often than not, hard work has no role in it – capital, and the devious schemes employed in its usage, are professed to be the prime means of earning wealth. A discussion will take place on this subject a bit further on. At this point it will suffice to understand that the primary meaning now of the acquisition of *Rizq* is that of earning wealth.

12.7 The Demand and Quest for *Rizq*

The Quran has stated that the fundamental condition for acquiring *Rizq* is the desire for it and its pursuit. In Quranic terminology it is called ‘*Ibt’ghai Fadl Allah*’ i.e. seeking the *Rizq* bestowed from the direction of Allah. He has stated that the alternation of day and night are among the Divine signs, and they have been made bright and illuminating so that:

...So that you can seek the Fadl (*Rizq*) of your Rabb...(17:12)

It should be made clear that *Ibt’gha* does not simply mean to seek: intent, search, and acquisition are all included in this. In this desire and pursuit of *Rizq*, there is specific reference to boats, which in those times were an ideal means for transporting *Rizq* from one place to another. Even today their benefit is no less:

... You can see with what speed vessels float along on the oceans, so that you can seek the Fadl (*Rizq*) of Allah...(16:14)¹⁶⁴

The desire and quest for *Rizq* in this way is crucial for both *Momin* and *Kafir*. Thus among those characteristics which are mentioned about Rasul-ullah and his companions, it is also stated that:

...they desire and seek the Fadl (*Rizq*) of Allah...(48:29)

This has also been reiterated in (73:20); in fact, at another place the *Momineen* are commanded to do this. It is stated in Surah *Al-Jumu’ah* that:

... When you become free from Salat, then disperse in the land and seek the *Rizq* of Allah...(62:10)

¹⁶⁴ See also (30:46, 35:12, 45:12).

12.8 There is No Differentiation in This Between *Kafir* and *Momin*

As a consequence of this desire and quest, '*Rizq*' will be obtained according to the laws of nature defined by Allah, and (as has been previously noted) there is no differentiation and distinction between a *Momin* and a *Kafir* in the laws of nature. Whichever individual ploughs his land and tends it according to the laws of agriculture, his crop will be better - whether he is Harnam Singh or Abdul Rahman – it will not be the case that if Harnam Singh wishes and makes efforts, barriers will be placed in his path so that he cannot go beyond this, while the paths are left clear for Abdul Rehman – this will never happen. Just note with what transparency the Quran explains this fact when it states that:

The individual who wishes to acquire worldly benefits, We provide him with worldly benefits according to our law of Mashe'at which We have made according to Our choice and intent... (After this it is stated that his abode in the hereafter will be in Jahannum)¹⁶⁵. And the individual who desires (worldly benefits and) the benefits of the hereafter, and after accepting Eimaan in the truth of the laws of Allah undertakes full endeavours for them according to these laws, his endeavours bear full fruition. For the acquisition of the means of Rizq, which We have made widely available as a bounty to humanity, We keep advancing everyone according to their efforts and endeavours, whether Momin or Kafir. No gates are erected in front of these Divine bounties of Allah, that a Kafir can only go so far and no further, while a Momin can roam freely however far he wishes – not at all! Allah is Rabb-il-Alameen, that is why the means of Rizq are kept open for the whole of humanity; whoever wishes to acquire it with his toil and efforts, can do so. (17:18-20)

This same reality is illustrated in Surah *Al-Shura* in these words:

'Whoever desires the tilth of the hereafter (future), We keep enhancing the yield of the land according to his toil and efforts. And whoever desires the fruits of the world, We keep bestowing on him the produce of the world according to his toil and efforts, though they will have no share in the hereafter.' (42:20)

12.9 Restriction in *Rizq* Due to Contravention of Allah's Laws

¹⁶⁵ Details of this will be given later.

This is that law of *Masbe'at* of Allah according to which restriction and abundance of *Rizq* takes place. Hence He has declared in clear words, that:

Whichever individual (or nation) turns away from Our laws, his sustenance will become restricted... (20:124)

(After this is stated that the one whose *Rizq* is cut short here, he will also be raised up blind on the Day of Judgement – this is not the place for an elaboration on this).

It is clear from this that a restriction in *Rizq* is a consequence of turning away from the Divine law, and an explanation of the Divine law has been covered earlier, that to whatever extent an individual makes efforts according to the law of nature, he will acquire an abundance of *Rizq* in the same measure. This same law was sent to his *Ummah* via every messenger. Thus it is stated about the Jews and the Christians that if these people had remained firm on the Torah and the Bible and on everything that Allah has sent down, they would have received abundant *Rizq* from above and below (5:66, 7:96).

12.10 Hunger is the *Azaab*¹⁶⁶ of Allah

Allah has declared an abundance of *Rizq* in this way to be His *Naimat* (blessing) and *Ihsan* (favour). Therefore it is stated about the Koresh that they should accept the rule of that *Rabb* of the Kaaba, Who has:

...Provided food to them to eliminate hunger and preserved them from fear. (106:4)

Contrary to this, fear and hunger are declared to be the *Azaab* of Allah. It is stated in Surah *An-Nabk*:

Allah makes the matter clear through the metaphor of a habitation. It was living in peace and tranquility. Rizq was being drawn towards it from all directions in abundance, but they manifested Kufr against the Naima of Allah, so Allah made them taste of the Azaab of hunger and fear, and all this was the consequence of their own machinations. (16:112)

Similarly, He has stated about the nation of Saba that they possessed great prosperity but they displayed a disregard with respect to their crops and orchards, therefore they were all ruined and destroyed (34:15-16).

¹⁶⁶ *Azaab* – punishment. (Ed)

After these explanations the Quran has stated that the condition of people is such that when *Rizq* becomes restricted on them, they level an accusation against Allah that He has ruined and humiliated us for no reason. The Quran states that inform them that Allah does not ruin and humiliate anyone for no reason. All this is the outcome of man's own evil deeds and *Batil* system. You did not respect those who were abandoned in society, this is why you became humiliated and ruined. You never made arrangements for food for the destitute and used to continue to accumulate wealth and assets from every direction, so you became ruined (89:16-20).

12.11 Sustenance Based on Dignity

We have seen that *Zillat*¹⁶⁷ and hunger are the *Azaab* of Allah, this is why the Quran has described one of the traits of *Momineen* to be that they receive 'sustenance with dignity':

*...protection from every kind of danger and dignified sustenance is made available to them. (8:74)*¹⁶⁸

And this is that *Rizq-e-Kareem*¹⁶⁹ for which even the *Anbiya* used to supplicate to Allah. That is why after its construction, the builder of the Kaaba, Ibraheem, had entreated this in his very first supplication:

...O Allah of all the worlds! I have located my progeny in this desolate place so that they can take care of your House. Make such an arrangement so that the means of sustenance keep becoming attracted towards them, and they do not remain hungry...
(14:37) See also (2:126, 28:57)

And this was the same *Ma'ida*¹⁷⁰ from the heavens for which the messenger Eisa had beseeched for his followers (5:114). We have seen that the law of Allah is that the acquisition of *Rizq* is the outcome of the toil and efforts of man. But we witness that an individual works himself to the bone, but despite this remains impoverished and destitute, he and his children die from hunger. In contrast to this, another individual toils very little, and lives a life of luxury. What is the reason for this?

¹⁶⁷ *Zillat* – humiliation and disgrace. (Ed)

¹⁶⁸ This is repeated at numerous other places e.g. (8:4, 22:50, 24:26, 33:31, 34:4).

¹⁶⁹ *Rizq e Kareem* – to earn a living with respect and dignity. (Ed)

¹⁷⁰ *Mai'da min Assama'i* – a Divine feast from the heavens laid out on a table. (Ed)

For an answer, we now enter the next destination of our journey.

12.12 The System for the Distribution of *Rizq* (Economic System)

12.12.1 Wealth and Poverty

Bring to mind once again the question which we have just raised i.e. that we witness that the poor and labourer class toil with great industriousness, but despite this their needs of life are not met. Their condition is such that neither they nor their offspring obtain enough to fill their bellies, nor sufficient clothing to cover their bodies, they have neither a hut in which to shelter their heads, nor any funds to fall back on in a time of calamity. If they fall ill for a few days then they do not possess any money for treatment, while at the same time, because they become incapacitated and unable to work, their income also comes to a stop, and if after this they die then there is nothing in the house for the coffin and burial. And following their demise, their aged mother, poor wife, and small children have no one to take care of them, they become destitute. On the other side are such people who do not lift a finger all their lives and even their dogs have those things to eat which are not available to the children of the poor. Why is this the case?

The answer that Brahmin has given to this ‘why’ is that this is the fruit of their deeds in their previous lives. Those who did good deeds in that life live a life of luxury; those who did bad deeds undergo hardships. And because all this takes place as a result of the command of *Eshwar Parmatma*, hence no one can change it.

The sermon preacher declared that the *Rizq* of everyone is written down by Allah – poverty and riches are all the game of *Taqdeer*, which cannot be altered even if we try a thousand times. Whatever is written by *Qismat* is immutable.

12.12.2 What the Quran Said

And the Quran announced that this is neither the outcome of the deeds of a former life nor is it written by *Qismat*, this is all the handiwork of human beings. The matter is clear.

A poor man purchases the items for a dowry for his daughter using his lifetime earnings (in fact, by taking out a loan), and on the way robbers seize everything from him, and he returns home weeping and wailing.

A labourer, after a whole day's toil and effort, goes to the bazaar with a few rupees in his pocket, so that he can buy some flour and daal for his children. On the way, a pickpocket steals all his scarce rupees, and the unfortunate man returns home empty-handed.

12.12.3 A Wrong Economic System

We can see these kinds of thieves, robbers, and pickpockets, but if we advance a bit deeper into society, then the situation there is such that theft, robbery, and pickpocketing occurs on a far larger scale, but no one declares them to be either a thief or a robber, or a pickpocket or a pirate, rather they are considered to be the most respectable individuals of society. Who are these people?

The landlord of a village becomes the owner of thousands of acres of land. The tenant farmers toil hard for the whole year, and he takes away the best part of the produce for his own house. Neither he nor anyone else has any concern that whatever is left behind with the hapless farmer, whether he and his family will even be able to subsist on it for a whole year?

The owner of a factory, sitting at home, keeps accumulating millions of rupees, and those through whose efforts this money is acquired do not earn more than a few rupees each day. When it is put to him that this is an injustice to the labour class, he retorts with great haughtiness that this is not injustice, this is exactly what justice is, I pay them their fixed wages fully and on time. No one questions who has determined this wage from which they cannot even obtain two square meals, and according to what principle and law?

When a labourer goes to the market with a few rupees so that he can buy flour and daal from there for his family, he asks the shopkeeper, O brother! Yesterday you sold me the daal for two rupees per kilo, why are you asking for two and a half rupees today. He replies that its rate has gone up today, if you want it then buy it, otherwise go elsewhere. And this matter is not understood by anyone how the rate goes up by itself, and if it does not go up by itself, then who increases and decreases it.

These and other questions of this kind have just one answer, and that is that all this takes place according to that economic system which human beings

themselves shape. There is neither the hand of *Taqdeer* in this, nor any link to the deeds of a previous life of human beings. Allah created *Rizq* but did not keep its distribution in His Own Hand (the system of distribution of *Rizq* is called the economic system). For this He bestowed principles and laws through *Wahi*, and announced that if the distribution of *Rizq* is carried out according to these principles, then no human being in the world will remain deprived of the needs of his life. But if human beings carry out its distribution according to the system devised by themselves, then such imbalances will become created in the society due to which the human world will descend into a den of beasts.

12.13 The Economic System of the Quran

This is not the place to go into a lengthy discourse about the principles and limits which the Quran has specified for this economic system. It is a subject in its own right on which I have written a great deal in detail.¹⁷¹ At this point in time a few fundamental points will suffice.

- (1) The fundamental resource of *Rizq* is land, which has been made the means for the provision of sustenance for the whole of mankind, hence the question of having personal possession over this does not even arise. This is the reason that the Quran has explicitly declared the earth to be *Ard-Illah* (11:64) i.e. called it the earth of Allah, and has clarified that:

...Has created for you all things that are on earth... (2:29)

In other words, no one can have ownership over the land. Whatever lies within it (the means of sustenance) has been created by Allah for the benefit of the whole of mankind. The means of sustenance resides in this for all of you (7:10, 15:20), in other words, the means of *Rizq* for the servants of Allah (50:11). Therefore it should remain equally available for all those who are in need (41:10). These people who call themselves owners of the land, their reality is nothing more than that in some era during a wrong system, someone had drawn lines around tracts of land and had declared that these are in my ownership. Following this, this 'ownership' of his either became transferred continuously as a legacy, or he sold it into the hands of another. It is obvious that the thing whose ownership was *Batil* from the start, how will it be able to be declared as *Haqq* (legitimate) through inheritance, or through buying and selling. In

¹⁷¹ In this connection see my book, *The Quranic System of Sustenance*.

the Quranic system, land does not remain in the personal ownership of anyone. It remains in the control of the society, and the system of the State makes such arrangements that the maximum produce should be acquired from it and that it is distributed according to the needs of the people.

- (2) Man invented coins (currency) so that the movement and transportation, or the buying and selling of the means of sustenance is facilitated due to this – instead that an individual should load his cart with sacks of wheat and take it fifty miles away, and from there bring back a bale of cloth in exchange, it was easier that by selling sacks of wheat in his own place, he goes and purchases cloth from another place. The invention of coinage occurred for this purpose, but people began to accumulate it and hoard it, and began to usurp the earnings from the labour of others on the back of this. In economic terminology you can understand it as this, that now the recompense was not of the work but became that of the capital. This is called the Capitalist System i.e that system in which capital keeps on automatically multiplying itself. In the terminology of the Quran this is called *Riba*, which is a declaration of war against the Quranic system of sustenance (2:275-279).

The Quran has declared in clear words that the accumulation of wealth is like providing fuel for that hell in which humanity burns and becomes reduced to a heap of ashes (9:34-35, 70:15-18). This should remain in circulation in society and that, too, in such a way that it does not just remain in circulation within the upper echelons, just like the circulation of blood it should flow throughout the body (59:7). Therefore, in a Quranic society money does not remain with anyone beyond their need (2:219).

- (3) The abilities to produce *Rizq* (i.e. to do work) are different in different people. This difference in abilities should only be for this purpose that the various tasks of society are accomplished with ease: this is called the distribution of tasks (43:32). Individuals with different abilities should work according to their respective ability and capacity, and its outcome (the means of *Rizq*) should be distributed according to the needs of everyone (16:53, 16:71). The system in which this mentality takes birth that whatever I have earned is the result of my own skill, why should I give it to others (28:78), is *Qarunijat*¹⁷² (the godless system of capitalism).

¹⁷² Qarun was the capitalist in Pharaoh's regime. (Ed)

The Quran declares that it is this very mentality which is the root of all *Fitna*, and the cause for the unleashing of *Fasad* in the world (39:49).

- (4) The government which brings this kind of economic system into play is one which is established for the implementation of the laws of Allah (this is called an Islamic State). When Allah had stated that We are responsible for providing *Rizq* to you and your progeny, then this duty of His becomes fulfilled through the hands of this government. In this State no individual remains deprived of his needs of life, nor does anyone retain any wealth beyond their needs.
- (5) This government becomes established through the hands of those people who make this covenant with Allah that 'we sell our wealth and life into the Hand of Allah. And in return for this, Allah promises to bestow them with *Jannat*' (9:111). In worldly life, this '*Jannat*' is shaped through the hands of the Islamic State, and the *Jannat* of the hereafter according to the law of *Mashe'at* of Allah.

This is that system in which no individual has to shed tears over his *Taqdeer*, because in this no one's need remains unfulfilled. In this no one is dependent on anyone, nor is the subject of any other human being, hence in this everyone receives '*Rizq e Kareem*' i.e. sustenance with dignity. *Rizq* is obtained under a *Batil* system too, but in this the condition of the upper oppressive class is such that the abundances of *Rizq* obtained without any toil or effort makes them drunk with the intoxication of power, and in this way that society becomes destroyed (28:58). And in the underclass all those evils germinate which are a natural outcome of poverty and destitution, and because of which it is stated that 'the one whose sustenance becomes curtailed, he also remains blind on the Day of Judgement' (17:72, 20:124). In contrast to this, the *Rizq* which is received by distribution in accordance with the laws of Allah is *Khair-un wa Abqa* (20:131) i.e. better and also pleasant, reliable, and enduring. In this, individuals not only receive according to their efforts, but far greater than this i.e. sufficient to cater for their needs. In connection with this, it is stated that this society is established for this purpose that Allah gives them recompense in a balanced way for their works, rather He bestows with His *Fadl* more on them than their efforts (24:38). Thus Allah bestows so much on them that the worldly standards for fixing remuneration for work are left stunned. The criterion for defining this 'remuneration' is totally different from their evaluations and calculations. This is that Divine standard in view of which Allah has declared Himself to be the Best of those who provide *Rizq* (23:72, 62:11). *Rizq* is also obtained in a non-Allah system, but the nature and form of the *Rizq* which is obtained in the system of Allah is quite different. This question which now comes before us is which nation achieves this kind of government, and how do they achieve it. For this, see the next chapter.

12.14 Availability of *Rizq* Without Measure¹⁷³

The following reality appears before us from what has been detailed in the previous pages, that:

- (a) When Allah created man, together with this He also made the sources and means of *Rizq* available.
- (b) But *Rizq* can only be acquired from these sources and means through toil and effort i.e. according to the laws of nature.
- (c) The issue of distribution of the *Rizq* which is acquired is very important. This can neither be resolved through the laws of nature, nor through human intellect and reasoning alone – for this the guidance of *Wahi* is needed.
- (d) The comprehensive term used by the Quran for both the laws of nature and the laws of *Wahi* is the *Mashe'at* of Allah i.e. those laws which Allah has established through His Will and intent, His wish and *Mashe'at*.
- (e) In the matter of *Rizq*, wherever *Manya'sha* appears in the Quran, if Allah is the operator it will mean that Allah brings about restriction and abundance of *Rizq* according to His laws of *Mashe'at*. And where the operator is man, then it will mean that those people who obey the laws of *Mashe'at* will obtain *Rizq* in abundance and with dignity, those who contravene these laws will suffer in the humiliating punishment of poverty and deprivation. In relation to this, cast another eye on section 12.5 in which the conditions for obtaining *Rizq* are documented.

In light of these explanations, the meaning of *Manya'sha* will become clearly evident.

12.15 The Correct Meaning of *Manya'sha*

Describing a *Qaruniyat* mentality, it is stated in Surah *Al-Zumr* that the condition of man is also strange. When trouble descends on him, he begins to beseech Allah, and when prosperity and an abundance of *Rizq* become available, then he becomes arrogant and declares that I have achieved this as a result of my skill, therefore how can anyone else have a share in it, whereas it is this very mentality

¹⁷³ *Yarzu'ku Manya'sha'u Beghair e Hasab* (24:38). (Ed)

which is the root of all conflicts and the fundamental cause for the creation of imbalances in human society. But the problem is that most people are not aware of this fact. This mentality is neither confined to one individual, nor to men of one era. The capitalists of every era have been repeating the same thing. But together with this, history will also provide evidence of this fact that the outcome of such a mentality is nothing other than ruin and destruction. The destructive outcome of their wrong path appears before them, and this law of Ours (that the outcome of a wrong economic mentality and system is destruction) was neither applicable to any particular era, nor confined to a particular nation. O Rasul! among your own nation too, which is being addressed, those people who adopt this kind of path of injustice and subjugation, and exploitation and appropriation, their end will also be the same. These people will never be able to defeat Our Law of Requit (39:51).

Up till now we have seen that the Quran has declared that these kinds of destructions appear as a result of the deeds of human beings themselves. After this it is stated that do these people not know that Allah bestows *Rizq* in abundance (according to His law of *Masbe'at*) and gives it in full measure (according to His law of *Masbe'at*).¹⁷⁴ There are signs in this for each one of those nations which has conviction in the truth of the laws of Allah to reach reality (39:52). According to prevalent translations this verse will be translated as this: 'Do these people not know that Allah enlarges *Rizq* for whoever He wishes, and constricts the sustenance of whoever He wishes.' In other words, it has been continuing to be noted from before that We have an immutable law according to which *Rizq* is made abundant or narrowed down, even now the same will take place according to this very law. To declare after this that We do not have any law or procedure with Us, that We restrict the sustenance of whoever We wish and We give abundant *Rizq* to whoever We wish, will not only be illogical but will be mutually contradictory and opposing. And when the situation is such that there is no procedure or law in place for the abundance and restriction of *Rizq*, it depends on the wish of Allah i.e. He bestows abundant *Rizq* on whoever He wishes, and He narrows down the sustenance of whoever He wishes, then it also becomes meaningless after this to proclaim that there are signs for *Momineen* to reach the reality in this matter. This will only be proclaimed in that situation where the aim is to inform us that all this takes place according to principles and procedures, and the historical accounts of past nations provide evidence of this. Hence, the meaning of this verse will be that (this is Our law for the abundance and restriction of *Rizq*) whichever nation adopts a path according to this law, it

¹⁷⁴ The term used in the verse *Li Manya'sba'u*. (Ed)

will acquire abundant *Rizq*; whichever one goes against it, its *Rizq* will be narrowed down. This can be summarised as (according to this law) whichever individual wishes to obtain abundant *Rizq*, he will acquire plentiful *Rizq*; the one who wants barely enough sustenance, he will receive sustenance accordingly.

And if in this verse (39:52) Allah is declared to be the operator, then its translation will be like this - that Allah gives abundant *Rizq* according to His law of *Mashe'at*, and narrows down *Rizq* according to this same law of His.

12.15.1 The Example of Qarun

In Surah *Al-Qasas* this reality is explained by referring to Qarun, and it is stated that after seeing the end of Qarun, those people who used to view him with envious gazes during his period of prosperity, spontaneously uttered:

...undoubtedly the abundance and restriction of Rizq takes place not according to man's own views, but takes place according to the law of Mashe'at of Allah... (28:82)

Similarly, it is stated in Surah *Al-Rum* that when We bestow *Rizq* in abundance on man, then he becomes very haughty, and when privation visits them due to their own deeds, then they fall into despair. After this it is stated that whoever wishes to acquire abundances of *Rizq*, he should act according to this law; whoever wishes to remain in privation, he should go against it (from this the meaning of *Li Manyasha'u* becomes very clear). Hardships due to sparseness of *Rizq* are the outcome of the handiwork of men themselves (due to their wrong system) (30:36-37).

It is stated in Surah *Ra'd* that those people who sever the agreed covenant with Allah, and instead of viewing and turning mankind into one brotherhood, divide it into classes, their end is destruction. After that it is stated that the abundance and restriction of *Rizq* takes place according to the law of *Mashe'at* of Allah (13:26). According to this law, any individual or nation can acquire *Rizq* of whatever kind and whatever scale they wish.

In Surah *Bani Israel*, after giving details of a balanced character in society, it is stated that the matter is clear-cut, whatever kind of society you establish, the abundance and restriction of *Rizq* will be according to that (17:30). There will be an abundance of *Rizq* in the society in which there is good behaviour and pleasant interactions with your close associates and the wider population, whereas economic imbalances will be created in the society in which the situation is such that every man is fending for himself.

12.16 What is Meant by *Anfaaq*?

The basis of economics in the society which is shaped according to Quranic values is on '*Anfaaq*'. This term of the Quran is very profound. Its root is (N-F-Q). In olden times money was kept in a sack or a small moneybag. It is obvious that though the upper part of this sack or moneybag was open so that coins can be put into it, the lower part was closed so that money does not fall out from it. In contrast to this, that tube whose both ends are open was called *Na'yufequn* i.e. in which money is continually inserted at one end and it keeps coming out from the other end. From this the meaning of *Anfaaq* will become understood i.e. such an economic system in which *Rizq* does not remain closed off at one place but remains open for the requirements of the needy. And kept open also for the sake of Allah (*Fi-Sabi'Lillah*) i.e. without thought of any recompense, keeping the outcome of one's own work available for meeting the needs of others. Hence, it is stated in Surah *Al-Baqarab*:

...they ask you how much wealth should we keep available for others. Say to them, all that which is beyond your own needs...(2:219)

This is that system about which it is stated that its simile is like that of a fertile field in which hundreds of grains are produced from one seed. See in what a joyful style the blessings of *Anfaaq Fi-Sabi'Lillah*¹⁷⁵ are described in verses (261-267) of Surah *Al-Baqarab*. At other places it is termed as 'giving a loan' to Allah, which is paid back multiplied many times (2:245). In this connection, it is stated in Surah *Saba*:

Say to them that the abundance and restriction of Rizq takes place according to the law of Mashe'at of Allah, (and that law is that) the greater the extent to which you keep Rizq open, the more it will be returned manifold. Remember! Allah is the Best amongst those who provide Rizq. (34:39)

12.17 *Rizq* Beyond Measure

It has already been noted that there are two forms of abundance and restriction of *Rizq*. The first is to produce and acquire *Rizq* according to the physical laws of

¹⁷⁵ *Anfaaq Fi-Sabi'Lillah* - keeping *Rizq* freely available on the path of Allah. (Ed)

Allah (the laws of nature) using knowledge and intellect, toil and effort. And the second is to distribute *Rizq* according to the Permanent Values defined by Allah i.e. to shape the economic system of society in accordance with the Divine laws. From this *Rizq* 'beyond measure' is acquired. We have explained what the correct meaning is of 'beyond measure'¹⁷⁶. It does not mean that there is no procedure and law defined for this either from Allah - there, the decision about every matter is according to procedure and law. It means that if the acquisition and distribution of *Rizq* is as per the laws of Allah, then the abundance of *Rizq* is so bounteous that it is beyond your estimation – it is far greater than your calculations and expectations. We have experienced this among us also.

12.17.1 Our Own Experience

Agriculture was continuing among us according to ancient methods, as a result of which from one acre of land 25 maunds¹⁷⁷ of wheat would be produced at the most. We adopted modern methods of agriculture, acquired machines for farming, imported 'Maxi Pak' seeds, applied artificial fertiliser prepared through the scientific method, and managed irrigation through procedure and law, the outcome being that from this same land, 150 maunds of wheat was produced per acre (from which at one time no more than 20-25 maunds of wheat used to be produced). It exceeded all the estimations and calculations of the farmers (in fact, even our agricultural experts).

But after this, the capitalist economic system began its subterfuges. The rate of wheat started to fall in the markets and the prices of other consumable products rose. The sale and purchase of wheat stagnated, and grain began to be smuggled out of the country illegally through back doors, the consequence being that instead of prosperity in the country, poverty and deprivation increased even more than before. The way in which we had produced wheat in so much abundance by conforming to the laws of nature, if its management had also been according to the Permanent Values of Allah, then streams of 'milk and honey' would have started to flow in the land. Then we would indeed have acquired *Rizq* beyond measure. The Quran has described this fact in a very comprehensive style when it states that when the system of a society is in the hands of those people whose individual business self-interests do not allow them to become distracted from the Divine laws, and they declare that the provision of the means of sustenance

¹⁷⁶ See Section 12.14. (Ed)

¹⁷⁷ One maund (a measure of weight used in the Indian subcontinent) is equivalent to 37kg. (Ed)

and nourishment (*Aita'e Zakat*) to mankind is their responsibility, and remain fearful of the destructive revolution which appears as a consequence of a wrong economic system, then in this society Allah bestows a beautifully balanced recompense for their efforts (their fields produce hundreds and hundreds of maunds of grain per acre). And due to the correct distribution of *Rizq*, there is an even further increase in it (24:38). In this way Allah makes *Rizq* so abundant that it is beyond your imagination and expectation – and this profusion of *Rizq* and prosperity can be acquired by each one of those nations who wishes to acquire it (*Manya'sha*).

12.18 *Momineen* of the Initial Era

The economic condition of the *Jamaat e Momineen* was not good in the initial era of Islam. As a result, their opponents (the leaders of the Koresh) used to ridicule them that their condition is such that they have neither any bread to eat nor any clothes to wear, whereas the dreams they are dreaming are those of the throne of Qaiser and Kasra.

It was declared that they do not know that this nation has stood up to work according to the laws of *Mashe'at* of Allah. In the initial days of this programme they have to face immense troubles and difficulties – hunger, deprivation, loss of life and possessions, destruction of crops and fields, all this has to be borne (2:155), but ultimately Allah bestows *Rizq* without measure on those people who work according to His laws of *Mashe'at* (2:212) And so that same deprived and helpless nation received *Rizq* without measure in such a way that not only the Koresh of Makkah, even all the mathematicians in the world were left astounded and bewildered – and remain astounded and bewildered to this day. This was that very nation that, when it achieved these abundances of *Rizq*, the words spontaneously arose on their lips that, O Allah! there is no doubt in this that whoever remains in harmony with Your law of *Mashe'at*, You bestow *Rizq* without measure on him (3:27).

We think that with these explanations the meaning of *Manya'sha'u* and *Man'tasha'u* will have become clearly evident before us. However, we would like to finally present two further verses due to which the mirror will become even clearer. In Surah *Al-Shura* it is firstly stated that the auspicious blessings of Allah are countless. He bestows *Rizq* according to His law of *Mashe'at* in this way that the individual who desires the benefits of the future, We give an increase in his harvest accordingly, and the individual who merely desires worldly benefits according to the physical laws, We also give him his recompense for his work (42:19-20) but

since he does not follow the Permanent Values in the distribution of *Rizq*, hence he has no share in the prosperities of the future.

Note that *Man-Yureedu* is stated here i.e. the individual who desires it like this, We do it like that for him (42:20). *Yarzu'ku Manyasha'u* – whatever one wishes, he obtains *Rizq* accordingly (42:19).

And finally is that verse of Surah *Ya'Sin* in which it is stated that when these *Kuffar* are informed to keep the *Rizq* bestowed by Allah freely available for the general *Rabubiyat* of mankind, they say to the *Jamaat e Momineen*, what a strange thing to say! Allah has kept the abundance and restriction of *Rizq* in His Own control – He can give plentiful *Rizq* to whoever He wishes, He can keep poor and deprived whoever He wishes. These poor and destitute ones are deprived because Allah does not wish to provide them with plentiful *Rizq*. So when you tell us to provide them with food, then this will be against the wish and *Mashe'at* of Allah. If He does not wish to keep them hungry, then He should provide them with *Rizq* Himself. In response to this it was instructed to inform them that how greatly misguided you are that you take *Yarzu'ku Manyasha'u* to mean this (36:47). Allah neither gives an abundance of *Rizq* to anyone for no reason, nor kills anyone with hunger. *Rizq* is acquired according to His law of *Mashe'at*, both an abundance as well as a restriction. Whatever kind of *Rizq* one desires, he should work accordingly and establish a corresponding system.

12.19 Allah Has Bestowed *Fadl* in *Rizq* on Some Over Others (16:71)

Before we take a step towards the next stage from here, it is essential to examine those two verses from which the prevalent ideology of '*Qismat*' or '*Taqdeer*' in the matter of *Rizq* becomes strengthened due to not having their correct meaning before us. One of those verses is (16:71) whose first part has been noted above. The conclusion drawn from this is that when we observe that some people have superiority in *Rizq* over other people, then (this is the decree of Allah) this is bestowed by Him, hence riches and poverty are in the Hand of Allah.

In the matter of *Rizq*, the issue of superiority over one another applies to nations as well as individuals i.e. we observe that some nations in the world are very prosperous, and compared to them other nations are very backward. Likewise, there is a substantial difference in the abilities and capacities to earn *Rizq* among different individuals. If this difference is simply a creation by Allah, then (according to the proponents of the doctrine of *Jabr*) why is it wrong to assume that Allah has kept *Rizq* in His Own Hand, and that man has no choice in this?

12.19.1 The Correct Meaning of *Fadda'la*

In this connection it is essential to first of all understand the correct meaning of *Allahu-Fadda'la*. As has already been discussed, in order to understand the Quranic meanings correctly it is extremely important to bear in mind the context in which they are written. For example, when it states that Allah does this (in the domain of *Khalq*), then from this is not meant that He does this devoid of any procedure and law. Its meaning is that Allah does this according to His law of *Mashe'at*. For example, we have seen in the previous chapter that Allah has declared that He puts seals on their hearts, and after that the Quran informs us that the wrong deeds of human beings themselves, by becoming rust, become imprinted on their hearts, as a result of which their potential to think and understand becomes suspended. Many other similar examples have appeared before us; this is the same situation as 'Allah has Bestowed *Fadl* one over another'.

12.19.2 This is the Outcome of Man's Own Effort and Action

The superiority of *Rizq* over one another is not because of '*Qismat*' or '*Taqdeer*', it is the outcome of the efforts and deeds of human beings themselves. In this regard we have documented a number of verses from the Quran in the previous pages. It is important to reiterate a few among these e.g. see verses 17 to 21 of Surah *Bani Israel*, in which it is stated tha

t the individual who desires the immediate benefits of the world and strives for these, We give him immediate benefits. The one who, together with these, also wishes to acquire the prosperities of the hereafter, and strives for this, he achieves the bounties of both this life and the hereafter. We keep advancing both of them according to their efforts and deeds. We have not placed any barriers on the path, so that one group is prevented while the other group is allowed to go forward. And after that it is stated:

... see how (*Kaifa*) We give superiority (*Fadl*) to one group over another group...(17:21)

The emphasis here is on 'how' (*Kaifa*) i.e. though there is differentiation in *Rizq* between different groups, you should try to analyse how did this difference arise? Details of this have been given in the first verse i.e. this occurred because of the efforts and deeds of these groups. Allah did not do it like this, that one group is

stopped, and the other is allowed to advance freely. Have you noted how that same verse, from whose wrong meaning the doctrine of '*Qismat*' and '*Taqdeer*' is invented, is refuting this belief!

12.19.3 The Meaning of *Nahnu Qasam'na*¹⁷⁸

Now let us look at the second verse in this regard. Its common translation will be:

...In worldly life We carry out the distribution of sustenance among people, and We raise some of them above others in ranks... (43:32)

From the word '*Qasam'na*' in this verse, the concept of '*Qismat*' was created, and it was asserted, see! Allah has kept the distribution of *Rizq* in His control - this is what is called the *Qismat* of a human being.

As a principle, in light of what we have noted in connection with *Allahu-Fadda'la* or *Faddalna*, there can be no difficulty in ascertaining the meaning of *Qasam'na*. We wrote at the beginning of this chapter that Allah created the means of sustenance but did not keep its individual distribution in His control. This distribution is done according to the economic system of human beings. In a wrong system (non-Quranic) imbalances arise due to this distribution. In a correct system (Quranic) these imbalances are eliminated. From that which is stated here after *Qasam'na*, that We have raised some of them in ranks above others, the principle itself of the distribution of *Rizq* becomes clear. Regarding the defining of ranks, it is stated in the Quran:

The ranks of everyone are defined according to their deeds... (6:132)

And there is further elucidation at a number of places about how ranks are defined in accordance with deeds. In Surah *An-Nisa* it is stated as a principle that the ranks of the *Mujabideen* (those who toil and strive) are higher than the *Qaideen* (those who remain sitting or those who are slothful) (4:95). At another place it is stated that the ranks of the *Mujabideen* and *Muhajireen* are higher than those who set up water stalls for pilgrims, or carry out the decoration and adornment of *Masjid ul Haram* (9:19). There are also other similar verses in the Quran.

¹⁷⁸ *Nahnu Qasam'na* – this means We distribute. (Ed)

12.20 Two Basic Elements in the Acquisition of *Rizq*

Now, moving forward, (as noted previously) two elements are fundamental in relation to the acquisition of *Rizq*:

- (1) Those resources and means which are obtained freely and without any return from the direction of Allah e.g. land, and whatever is contained within it, light, heat, air, water, etc. which Allah has termed as *Naima*.
- (2) And human toil and effort.

As far as the first aspect is concerned, this is not equal in every part of planet earth – snow covered tracts and frozen oceans in the Poles, mountainous regions, forested areas, deserts, and on the other side green and lush landscapes, and fertile arable zones. Within these there is a difference in the productive potential of the land and also variability in the climate and environment. The effect of this also impacts the nations living in these areas. This is that ‘distribution’ over which human beings fundamentally have no choice, though the consequences of this variation can be reduced and gradually eliminated through toil and effort.

As far as the second aspect (toil and effort) is concerned, it is dependent on the choice and intent of man himself. The ‘distribution of *Rizq*’ in nations takes place through a combination of these two elements.

12.20.1 Differences in the Potentials of Individuals

Now let us turn to individuals – it is our observation that certain people have far greater abilities and others have fewer, and it is due to these that there is a difference in their earnings. The reasons and causes for this difference and variation in abilities are briefly as follows:

- (1) Some cognitive limitations are transferred to children through inheritance.
- (2) Some defects are those which become created within a foetus prior to birth.

As has already been said, these limitations and disabilities are physical and related to the machinery of the human body. As science continues to advance, options for the prevention and rectification of these are continuing to emerge. We cannot say at this stage that gradually such a time may come when all children will be born with equal abilities. But it is a recognised fact that these differences are

gradually decreasing. Hence their connection is not with some 'immutable *Taqdeer*'.

- (3) The initial training and education of a child and the environment in which he is brought up.
- (4) The resources and means for the nurturing of the abilities of children; institutions of education and their scholastic syllabus; furthermore, taking care of their health, psychological evaluation, etc.
- (5) Opportunities for the utilisation of these abilities, the problems of supply and demand, etc.

It is obvious that these matters are related to society i.e. individuals do not have full control to make their choices freely in these, they are constrained at the hands of the system of the society. But the question of '*Taqdeer* or *Qismat* fixed by Allah' does not arise here either, because the establishment of a correct society is also counted by the Quran as being among the *Naima* of Allah. Hence, the Quran declares the benefits (advantageous positions) which individuals acquire as a result of a balanced society to be the *Naima* of Allah as well. It follows that there are two basic factors which are applicable in the acquisition of *Rizq*:

- (a) Human effort and action, and
- (b) The *Naima* of Allah – whether these are basic resources and means of *Rizq*, or the advantages acquired by individuals due to the balanced organisation of society.

12.20.2 Society is Responsible for This

The question which arises is that, though they themselves are not responsible for those losses which a nation or individuals reap due to the scarcity of the '*Naima* of Allah', those nations fall behind other nations. Compared to other individuals, those individuals live life at a lower level – who is it that is responsible for this!

The Quran declares that it is the system of the society (or the world) which is responsible for this. If this system is established on the foundations of the Permanent Values, then no differentiation appears in the circumstances and ranks of nations or individuals because of this difference. As far as nations are concerned, the Quran wishes to shape a universal brotherhood in which humanity is not divided into different fragments. When humanity becomes divided into nations, then it is the endeavour of every nation to acquire supremacy over another nation by legitimate or illegitimate means (16:92). But when it acquires the form of a universal brotherhood, if at that time people in one particular region

of the planet obtain an abundant share of the ‘*Naima* of Allah’ then they do not loot and rob nations on the basis of this. This is that reality which the Quran has described in these words:

Allah bestowed power and authority on you in the land, and one group received a higher rank over another so that it could be seen what you do with whatever you received from Allah... (6:165)

Within a correct system this is utilised for the universal benefit of mankind, because the Permanent Value is:

...stability and endurance are only for that entity which is a cause for the good of universal mankind (not for any specific group, class, or nation)... (13:17)

Now remains the issue of those people who possess different abilities. In this connection the Quran has provided teaching of such principles according to which there is no kind of effect on individuals due to these differences. The first difference in the variation of abilities is economic. The Quran has stated regarding this that this difference will only be for the distribution of work – there will be various kinds of tasks in society for which different abilities will be required. The domain of this difference should remain confined to this, it should not exceed this - so that work can be obtained from one another (43:32).

As far as economic disparity is concerned, the Quran has presented such a system for the eradication of this, that as human vision ponders on it, the soul becomes amazed. And this system is presented in that same verse which is noted in the heading of this topic.¹⁷⁹ The translation of the complete verse is generally as follows:

Allah has bestowed His gifts of sustenance more freely on some of you than on others. Those more favoured are not going to share their possessions with those whom their right hands possess (lower than them), so as to be equal in that respect. Will they then deny the Naima of Allah? (16:71)

The meaning of this verse is that it is a fact that there is a difference among people in the abilities to earn *Rizq*, but people possessing an immoral mentality take a wrongful advantage from this disparity (according to the corrupt system of the society). Those who earn more due to their superior abilities become owners of this by declaring it as their personal possession, and do not return it to those working under them, whose earnings are insufficient to meet their needs. They say that by doing this we will all become equals! The Quran declares, ask them

¹⁷⁹ See Section 12.19. (Ed)

how many of those elements are included in this excess earning of theirs which are neither purchased by them, nor are created by their own selves – among them are the fundamental resources and means which are bestowed by Allah, while the causes for the superiority in abilities are a provision of society. Then the cooperation of their subordinates holds a very significant position in this. When the reality is this, that the causes for this excess earning are mostly those which they have obtained as ‘*Naima* of Allah’ i.e. which are not the outcome of their own personal toil and effort – then their saying that we are the sole owners of this excess earning is a denial of this fact that the greater part of this (excess earning) is owed to the *Naima* of Allah. They should know that those things which you receive as ‘*Naima* of Allah’, those are not your own, they are received from the direction of Allah, hence you cannot be the master of their fruits either (16:53). They should be utilised according to the commands of Allah alone. This is the right of those people whose earnings are not enough to meet their needs:

And those in whose wealth is a recognised right (Haqq) for the needy who asks, and for the one who is prevented (for some reason from asking). (70:24-25)

In this verse (70:24) the word *Haqq* is worthy of profound attention i.e. that they do not receive it as a charity, they receive it as a right and can demand it. This is the very reason that in a Quranic system of society, this principle will be in operation that every individual should work according to his abilities and potentials, and the system of the State should be responsible for fulfilling their needs. Have you observed how in a correct Quranic society, the variation in abilities does not impact the condition of individuals in any way.

12.21 The Criterion for Eminence

As far as the question of respect in society is concerned, according to the Quran wealth is not at all a criterion for human respect and dignity. According to the Permanent Values bestowed by the Quran:

- (1) Every human child, merely due to being human, is deserving of equal respect and dignity (17:70).
- (2) The defining of ranks within society is based on the deeds of every individual – on eminence of character and conduct (6:133).
- (3) The one who is most worthy of honour and eminence is he who obeys the laws of Allah the most (49:13).

Therefore, when there is no effect on their circumstances and conditions as a result of the differences in the abilities of individuals, then this question as to why this difference exists does not even arise! This question arises in a wrong society in which this difference influences not only the whole life of individuals, but every aspect even after the end of life. In such a society people are deprived of the resources and means due to which these potentials are developed right from the start, and then they are condemned by being told that they simply have no ability – they are rejected at every step, and with this goal in mind that their gaze should not turn towards this direction that these people who are condemning us in this way are themselves responsible for the lack in our abilities. They are fed these sermons that this difference is from Allah, and in support of this, these kinds of deceitful logics are presented that Allah has made feet for this purpose so that they can carry the weight of the whole body, and remain covered with the dirt of the land. The head is made for this purpose, so that it can wear a royal crown: you cannot confer the status of the head on to the feet.

These are those meaningless and out-dated logics on which the structure of the doctrine of *Jabr* becomes raised. Now let us see what law Allah has established for the prosperities of the royal crown.

13 Chapter 13 - *Tu'Izzu Man'tasha'u Wa Tu'zillu Man'tasha'u*¹⁸⁰

There is a verse of Surah *Al-e-Imran* which is commonly translated as (translation by Maulana Mahmud ul Hasan):

Say! O Allah! Possessor of the Kingdom – bestow a kingdom upon whoever You wish, and snatch away the kingdom from whoever You wish. And bestow Izzat¹⁸¹ on whoever You wish, and humiliate (Zillat) whoever You wish. All good is in Your hand; undoubtedly, You are in control of everything. (3:26)

The concept of government and kingdom is beyond the intellectual level of the populace, hence these are not generally discussed, but conversations about respect and humiliation take place in every street and neighbourhood. Nowadays, it is wealth that has acquired the criterion for respect, therefore when they see that yesterday an individual was struggling to earn a living, and today he has become the owner of millions (regardless of whether that wealth may have been obtained through gambling, theft and deceit, smuggling, bribery, etc.); and on the other hand the son of an affluent family, who used to travel in a limousine for leisurely outings until yesterday, can now be viewed begging (even if he has lost his wealth as a result of gambling and alcohol), then they say to each other, O my brother! This is all due to the greatness of Allah - He gives *Izzat* to whoever He wishes, and He humiliates whoever He wishes - no one can dare to question Allah about this.

13.1 The Meaning of *Izzat* and *Zillat*

Before presenting the correct meaning of this (and other verses like this), it is essential to understand a couple of matters as an introduction. First, the meanings of these words *Izzat* and *Zillat* that appear in this verse (and in other places in the Quran) are not those meanings in which they are used among us. In the Arabic language *Izzat* means power, intensity, and supremacy, and *Zillat* means subjugation, the decline of power, becoming feeble. The word *Takreem* (eminence) appears in the Arabic language (and the Quran) for those meanings in

¹⁸⁰ The meaning is explained in the discussion of verse (3:26). (Ed)

¹⁸¹ *Izzat* – respect, dignity, and power. (Ed)

which we employ the word *Izzat*, and the word *Taubeen* (insult), the root of which is (*W-He-N*), for *Zillat* (according to our prevalent meaning).

Second, that the materialistic doctrine of life has infiltrated the world to such an extent that the criterion for *Izzat* is now declared to be wealth. A rich man, no matter what his character may be, is considered highly respectable in society, and everyone views the poor with contempt, even though it was not so long ago that the criterion for *Izzat* among us used to be good character, not wealth.

Third, this meaning which is drawn from this verse that Allah has not defined any procedure and law for government and authority, and respect and eminence - that He bestows government and authority on whoever He wishes (for no reason) and takes it away from whoever He wishes (for no reason); He confers respect on whoever He wishes (for no reason) and humiliates whoever He wishes (for no reason) – is refuted by these words (*Bi'Yadikal Khair*) themselves from this verse i.e. that Allah is the fountainhead of good and beauty. The taking away of government and the erasing of *Izzat* are not good and beautiful, therefore this thing is far from Allah (Who is the fountainhead of good and beauty) that He will humiliate and degrade someone for no reason.

13.2 The Preconditions for Acquiring Authority

After this, we now return to the original topic. First let us consider government and State, control and authority. In Chapter 6 we have discussed the '*Taqdeer* of nations' in detail. From this you will have seen what the eternal laws are for the rise and fall of nations, there is no need to repeat these details. At this point it will be sufficient to describe what the preconditions are according to the Quran to acquire government and authority. These will be called the laws of *Masbe'at*. It is noted in Surah *Anbiya*:

After giving essential commands and directions in the Zabur (or every Book of Wahi), this matter was decreed as a fundamental law that only those people will inherit the land (authority and State) who possess the ability for this. This fundamental law contains a far-reaching reality within it for each one of those nations which lives its life under the obedience of Our laws. (21:105-106)

In other words, the fundamental law of inheritance in the land is that it becomes attained by the '*Salebeen*'. A particular meaning of '*Salebeen*' (and from this respect '*Amaal-e-Saleb*') has become customary among us, in which there is no need to go

into details. When Deen becomes converted into ‘*Madhab*’, then this is what its terminology becomes reduced to.

13.3 What is Meant by *Saleheen*?

According to the Quran, ‘*Saleheen*’ are those people who possess the ability for that task which is being referred to – and by *Amaal-e-Saleh* are meant those tasks which develop human potentials. In the matter of government and State, when it is stated that the *Saleheen* will be able to attain it, from this will be meant those people in whom the ability to acquire a State and to establish authority will be present. Two things will be included in this ‘ability’: one will be physical ability i.e. all those physical characteristics and means on the basis of which a State is acquired, and the second will be those human abilities on the basis of which the government transforms the communal life of human beings into an earthly paradise. It is obvious that the nation which only possesses physical powers and is devoid of humanitarian capacities, its government will be that of Pharaoh, Halaku Khan, or Genghis Khan, or atheistic nations of the modern era. Contrary to this, the nation which does not possess the physical abilities for government and State will simply not be able to acquire this authority. But the nation which possesses the physical abilities, and together with this also has *Eimaan* in the Divine Permanent Values, its government will come into existence to fulfil the responsibilities of Allah. This is that government about which it is stated in the Quran that:

Allah has promised to those who have Eimaan and do Saleh deeds, that He will establish them in the land... (24:55)

Those people who maintain a firm conviction in the truth of the laws of Allah, and after this carry out those tasks which draw out their potentials, We will bestow authority and State on them. This is Our promise (immutable law). The outcome of such a government will be the establishment of the Deen of Allah. There will be no kind of fear and grief in it; in this there will be obedience purely to the laws of Allah, not to that of any human being (24:55).

13.4 The Importance of Protection of Physical Resources

It was also emphasised to these people that following the acquisition of government, this should not happen that you become oblivious regarding the physical means which are required for its strengthening – never do this:

For the security of your borders, whatever sinews of war and cavalry is required, keep these ever ready, so that as a result your threat is maintained in the hearts of your enemies, and the enemies of the Deen of Allah, and also of those whom you know not... (8:60)

13.4.1 The Story of Bani Israel

For the elucidation of this reality that ability is a prerequisite for government and State, the Quran has described the story of Bani Israel in detail and with great emphasis. After explaining the various links in this account at different places, it is stated in Surah *Al-Qasas* that:

And We wished to be gracious to those who were being depressed in the land, to make them leaders and make them heirs, to establish a firm place for them in the land... (28:5-6)

Ultimately, We formed the intention to extend *Ihsan* on the nation which had been made extremely weak after being gripped in the chains of slavery and subjugation; to provide them with leadership of their compatriot nations, and by giving them power in the land, make them heirs of government and State. It is stated here that ‘Allah had formed the intention for this’ - one intention of Allah takes place in the domain of *Amr* (36:82), that He forms the intention and that thing appears in actuality. But His other intention takes place in the domain of *Khalq*, for the fulfilment of which different stages are required, and it comes into shape through human hands. Therefore, for the accomplishment of this intention of Allah regarding Bani Israel, a detailed programme was given to Moses, the basic prerequisite of which was the correct education and training of an enslaved nation like Bani Israel. Moses tried his utmost to implement this but they did not listen to a single thing he said. They simply would not agree firmly on any one thing. Due to this heedlessness of theirs, Moses used to say to them repeatedly that:

Said Moses to his people: ‘Ask for help from Allah,’ and be patient: for the earth is Allah’s to give in inheritance to such of His servants as per His law, and the end is best for Muttaqeen. (7:128)

It is true that Allah has declared that you will acquire government and a State, but this is not obtained just like that. This is obtained according to the law of *Mashe’at*

of Allah, according to which the primary condition is that you should create the ability within you for it, and to create this ability it is essential that you remain firm on this programme with discipline and perseverance, and have *Eimaan* in this reality that no matter how many hardships appear on the path, ultimately those people who adhere to the laws of Allah will definitely succeed. But this nation did not change its path, the consequence of which was that:

Allah declared: '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 Fasiq people.' (5:26)

For forty years that same land which was earmarked for them became forbidden to them, and Moses was told to let them wander about in the Sinai Desert, and to focus his attention on the education and training of their younger generation. Therefore, in this way these ease loving 'great elders' accustomed to an environment of slavery faded away, and when their new generation reached maturity, they occupied this land in one fell swoop. And that proclamation which Allah had made about Bani Israel became fulfilled in this manner (7:137). It became accomplished because they remained steadfast on their programme with courage and resoluteness:

...In this way We made Bani Israel heirs of this kingdom... (26:59)

13.4.2 The Story of Talut

Have you observed how the law of acquiring inheritance in the land is dependent on ability? In the account of Talut, the meaning of *Manya'sha* emerges clearly before us. The nation of Bani Israel said to their *Nabi* that we are ready for battle but first appoint some commander. This *Nabi* told them that Allah has appointed Talut as your commander. They retorted, how has Talut been appointed as the commander, he does not possess any treasure or wealth. Their *Nabi* told them that treasure and wealth is not a requirement to command an army. For this it is essential that he should possess the necessary physical prowess, and that he is also acquainted with the art of war and weapons. Both of these abilities are possessed by Talut, that is why he has been selected for this position.

Have you observed with what clarity Allah has explained why this authority was given to Talut. And after this it is stated:

...Authority and control are obtained according to the law of Mashe'at of Allah. Remember! Divine knowledge is far vaster in comparison to your knowledge. Your

knowledge was confined to only this, that wealth should be the criterion for selection, whilst We knew what kinds of abilities are necessary for the command of an army. This is Our law of Mashe'at according to which the selection of Talut has taken place. (2:247)

Have you seen what the meaning of assigning power is according to the law of *Mashe'at*? Not this - that He bestows authority and government on whoever He wishes for no reason. After this it is stated that Talut came with his army to confront Jalut (Goliath). These wishes of his heart were continually appearing on his lips as prayers that:

...O our Rabb! Bestow on us the blessings of courage and strength – bestow on us steadfastness in the battlefield... (2:250)

In this battlefield Dawood killed Jalut, and in this way Allah bestowed power on him (2:251). After this Allah explained the *Hikmat*¹⁸² in this, why the need arises to engage in this kind of battle and combat. It is stated that:

...If this did not happen that Allah had protection from tyrannical and unjust nations carried out by other groups of human beings, then tyrannical forces will unleash destruction in the world. But because Allah does not wish the destruction of human beings, hence He has put such an arrangement in place. (2:251)

13.5 Fulfilment of the Divine Programme Via Human Hands

See with what clarity it is stated here that the protection of one group of human beings is only carried out through the hands of another group of human beings. Allah does not do it directly. This first group is that which acquires authority merely on the basis of the power of physical forces and makes life difficult for its subjects. Another group rises up against them, which is equipped with the faculties of human eminence together with physical forces. For elaboration of this, look at these illuminating verses of Surah *Al-Hajj* in which it is described why permission for battle was given to the *Jamaat e Momineen* (22:39-41). Following this, when they acquired government, it was stated to them in clear words that:

...so that We can observe what kinds of deeds you perform. (10:14)

If you, too, adopt the same path of tyranny and injustice, or the potentials for combat fade in you, then another nation will take your place:

¹⁸² *Hikmat* – wisdom, sagacity, rationale, etc. (Ed)

...and that will not be like you, it will possess better abilities than you...(47:38)

From this you have seen what the meaning is of 'You bestow power according to Your law of *Mashe'at*, and You take away power according to Your law of *Mashe'at*' (3:26). (Greater detail has been covered in Chapter 6 under the topic of 'Taqdeer of Nations').

13.6 The Law of *Izzat* and *Zillat*

Now let us look at the second part of this verse (3:26) i.e. the Divine law regarding *Izzat* and *Zillat*. We will first examine the Quranic meanings of the words *Izzat* and *Zillat* i.e. power and supremacy, ascendancy and eminence; and opposite to this, weakness and subjugation, backwardness and deprivation. For this a comprehensive principle has been proclaimed in Surah *Fatir*. It is stated that:

Whoever among you wishes power and control, ascendancy and supremacy (Izzat), he needs to know that true Izzat can be achieved from Allah (i.e. by obeying the laws of Allah)...(35:10)

Note that it is declared here - whoever among you wishes to achieve *Izzat*. It is clear from this that *Izzat* is only obtained by the one who wishes to achieve *Izzat*, it is not received automatically from Allah. Following this it is stated that the first step for this is that you need to adopt the correct ideology of life (this is called *Eimaan*). There is the potential to reach pinnacles in Quranic ideology i.e. the correct ideology of life, in which there is the potential to bear fruits (this is called *Tayyab*). In this there is the power to rise and ascend towards heights, and *Amaal-e-Saleb* become the means to carry him upwards. Therefore *Izzat* is the natural consequence of *Eimaan* and *Saleb* deeds. Contrary to this, for those people who adopt such measures due to which imbalances are created and due to which evil spreads, and they acquire *Izzat* in this manner, the outcome of this is severe destruction. All their schemes ultimately turn to dust (35:10).

It is declared in Surah *Yunus* that those people who become His companions in taking the Divine programme to its accomplishment through *Eimaan* and *Saleb* deeds in this way (in Quranic terminology they are called *Auliya* Allah), they have no kind of fear and grief - they are those people who, after acquiring firm *Eimaan* in the truth of the laws of Allah, observe these fully and wholeheartedly. For them there are glad tidings of all kinds of bounties in worldly life and also in the life of the hereafter. This is that law of Allah in which there is never any alteration: this is a supreme success and achievement. Therefore, if in the initial period of this

programme opponents say all kinds of discouraging and mocking things, there is no need to become disheartened. Remember! All (sources of) *Izzat* is with Allah (10:65). It is stated in Surah *An-Nisa* that the *Munafiqeen* collude with the opponents in this Divine system; what, do they seek *Izzat* among them? Say to them that *Izzat* with all its ascendancy can be achieved through association with the laws of Allah (4:139).

13.7 This is a Collective Effort

But conformity with the laws of Allah is not an individual act, for this it is essential to unite in this collective system which is being shaped through the hands of Rasul-ullah and his companions to establish these laws practically. This collective system is referred to in Surah *Al-Munafiqun*:

...Power (Izzat) belongs to Allah and His messenger and to the Momineen... (63:8)

Contrary to this, those people who oppose this system to the extent of entering the battlefield should know that they will be humiliated. This is because Allah has decreed that:

Allah has written that it is His immutable law that Allah and His messengers will always prevail – this is because He is the Possessor of supreme power, Omnipotent. (58:20-21)

13.7.1 Izzat Through Hasanaat

It is stated in Surah *Yunus* that those people who live life in a balanced way, perform those deeds due to which their self and universal humanity is reformed – its consequence is that their life keeps on becoming beautiful, even more beautiful than their own balance-creating deeds. Disgrace and *Zillat* will never come near them (10:26).

13.7.2 Zillat as a Consequence of Sayya'at (Evildoing)

In contrast to them, those people who perform deeds which create imbalances (those who are defacers of the beauty of the universe), the balance of their own life will keep becoming disrupted to the same degree i.e. the darkness of

humiliation will cast a shadow on their faces (10:27). It was this wrong path of life as a consequence of which a nation possessing power and glory like Bani Israel became ensnared in a hell of disgrace and degradation:

Shame is pitched over them wherever they are found...and pitched over them is destitution...(2:61)

After this it is made clear that this did not occur by chance, this occurred because they adopted a path of rejection and transgression of the laws of Allah – they violated the limits (3:112).

13.8 Izzat in the Meaning of Takreem

Now let us examine this meaning of *Izzat* which is prevalent among us, and for which, as has been stated previously, the word *Takreem* has appeared in the Quran. And opposite to this is the word *Tauheen* for disrespect and disgrace, whose root is (He-W-N).

The Quran first of all made this fact clear that the criterion for respect is not wealth, race and tribe, or any other similar kinds of relative standards. Its criterion is purity of character and eminence of conduct i.e. righteous and balanced conduct. It announced that caste, race, families, and tribal specifications are merely for the sake of identification:

...according to the criterion defined by Allah, the one who is most deserving of respect and possessor of Izzat is the one who is the most righteous in conduct...(49:13)

Elaborating this at another place, it is stated about the devotees of Allah who become eligible for *Jannat* in return for their deeds, that:

...They are the ones who are deserving of respect and eminence. (37:42)

In Surah *Ya'Sin* there is mention of that *Momin* man who raised the voice of *Haqq* with great courage among the crowd of opponents, and declared that I wish my nation knew what blessings Allah has bestowed me with:

...He has bestowed extreme respect and eminence on me. (36:27)

Contrary to this, it has proclaimed the outcome of the wrong path to be a humiliating and chastising punishment. How this humiliation and chastisement descends is noted in Surah *Al-Hajj*:

Those people who reject and falsify the laws of Allah, they become trapped in a severe chastisement. (22:57)

At another place it is stated that those people who mock the Divine laws and ridicule them suffer from a humiliating penalty (45:9). In Surah *Ha-Meem* it is proclaimed as a principle that a humiliating punishment descends in return for your own deeds (41:17).

13.8.1 The Wrong Criterion for Respect

At one place the Quran has described a very far-reaching reality in a very refined way. It has already been noted that people attain control and authority on the basis of injustice and tyranny, and then by declaring power and authority, or wealth and status as being the criteria for *Izzat*, become the possessors of *Izzat* and *Takreem* in society. Every individual bows down in greeting to them (from fear of them), and seats them in an elevated place. Regarding the *Izzat* (supremacy) acquired through Pharaonic tyranny and oppression, and the veneration and elevation accorded based on an erroneous criterion of superiority, the Quran states that the eventual end of this kind of respect and status is a humiliating destruction. Therefore (to illustrate this abstract reality through a tangible metaphor), the Quran states that this is the kind of individual who will be brought to *Jahannum* and will be given extremely humiliating and chastening means of food and drink, and it will be announced:

Taste now the outcome of this humiliating and chastening destruction; you used to consider yourself very unaccountable and worthy of respect. (44:49)

13.8.2 Supremacy with Intrinsic Seeds of Decline

How those claimants of false authority and artificial veneration will be treated in the hell of the hereafter, that is a later issue. What the end is in this world of these kinds of men of government and authority, and claimants of respect and status, we witness this edifying spectacle on a daily basis. Allah has declared this kind of control and authority to be *Al-Izza'tu Bil-Ithm* (2:206) i.e. that control and authority from which it seems to be apparently gaining great power, but which is in reality leading towards degeneration - this is that control and authority which is obtained by discarding *Haqq* from one's hand. The consequence of this is the

punishment of humiliation (46:20). In a wrong society power is acquired in this way, and respect also according to this criterion.

13.9 Defining Ranks According to Deeds

In contrast to this, in a society founded on *Haqq* the defining of ranks is based on eminent character and good conduct. The principle which operates in this is:

...everyone's ranks according to their deeds, full recompense for everyone's actions – no one is treated unjustly. (46:19)

The meaning of *Zulm* is that a thing which should be at its requisite place is not there – if someone does not obtain that status in society which he deserves based on his personal achievement and eminent character, then this is also *Zulm*, and the individual who obtains that status which he does not deserve, that too is *Zulm*.

Zulm does not occur in a Quranic society. Everyone's status of *Izzat* and *Takreem* is defined according to their deeds:

... in this, every possessor of eminence (Fadl) receives his rank according to his degree of eminence... (11:3)

Every possessor of knowledge is bestowed with rank according to his capability – Allah knows the deeds of everyone. (58:11)

...He becomes their Companion on the basis of their deeds. (6:127)

On the basis of their deeds – this is the immutable law of *Mashe'at*, according to which government and State is acquired and *Izzat* and *Takreem* also. (This is covered in Section 12.21 as well).

13.10 The Correct Meaning of Verse (3:26)

In light of these explanations, bring this verse of Surah *Al-e-Imran* before you which is being discussed under this topic, and see how clear its meaning is:

O Allah! You are the true Master of power and authority. Those people who operate according to Your law of Mashe'at, You bestow authority on them. Those who go against it, You snatch authority away from them. Izzat and Zillat is bestowed and snatched away according to Your law of Mashe'at – this does not occur due to

deception. How could this take place through deception, because You are indeed the fountainhead of Khair (all good). How can evil become created from the fountainhead of good? You have fixed scales, estimates, and laws for everything, and whichever decision is in accordance with the law of Haqq, there cannot be an iota of injustice and tyranny in it. (3:26)

O *Ilah* of *Alameen*! Being Allah suits only You.

13.11 Aid and Support from Allah

We have seen this testimony from Allah that He becomes the companion and helper of human beings based on their deeds (6:127). This supreme companionship¹⁸³ of Allah is called his aid and support (words about invisible support are commonly referred to among us). The question is this: what is this support of Allah and who receives it? From the words ‘invisible support’, the mind thinks in this direction that no action of man is included in this – this appears from the unseen just like that. And in support of this, verses such as (3:13) are presented and translated as: ‘But Allah does support with His aid whom He pleases.’

13.11.1 The Meaning of *Nusrat* (Support)

In the Arabic language the meanings of *Nusrat* are for the rain to irrigate the land, for streams and tributaries to meander far off into the wadi so that they can be used for irrigation. It is obvious that rain can only be beneficial for that farmer who prepares his land for cultivation. Physical means and resources are lying dispersed throughout the universe. The individual who is acquainted with their characteristics and properties, and also knows how to utilise them based on procedure and law - and then also uses them accordingly - his efforts bear fruition. The one who does not take advantage of these based on procedure and law remains unsuccessful. This can be described in other words as obtaining the aid and support of Allah, by making efforts according to the laws of Allah. As an

¹⁸³ Raul-ullah had stated in the final moments of his earthly life that I am going towards Him, Who is a Supreme Companion (*Rafique-e-A'la*) i.e. the relationship between Allah and man is that of mutual companionship. In this mutual companionship, Allah is the higher companion, and man is the companion at a lower level – how great is this reality which Rasul-ullah depicted in two words!

example, an individual rows his boat in the direction of the flow of water in a river, and another goes against the current – the time in which one will traverse ten miles by going downstream, the one going upstream will perhaps not be able to cover more than a mile, and over and above this, the degree to which his energy will be consumed is obvious.

13.11.2 The One Who Helps Allah, Allah Helps Him

Hence, the *Jamaat* which rises up for the fulfilment of the programme of Allah, and works according to the laws defined by Him, their efforts will establish full results. Note in what an eloquent style the Quran has explained this reality. It is proclaimed:

O Jamaat e Momineen! If you would help Allah, then Allah will help you... (47:7)

Just observe here! Taking the lead or initiative to help will be from the direction of human beings i.e. the *Jamaat* which helps Allah, Allah will help it. It is obvious that Allah is not dependent on the help of anyone, hence the meaning of helping Allah is that of making efforts for the completion of His programme (the establishment and strengthening of Deen). After this, then see what this help from Allah will do? It is stated:

...He will bestow on you firm footedness... (47:7)

For the success of any programme, steadfastness and perseverance is the foremost condition, and this is only possible when there is firm *Eimaan* in the veracity of this programme, and full conviction in this fact that the path which we are adopting (the method which we are using) will of a surety take us to the shores of success. From this that tranquillity of heart (collective resolve) is acquired whose practical outcome is steadfastness. After this it is stated that:

And those people who deny the laws of Allah, in their share are failures and despairs: their deeds go to waste, they do not produce the desired results. This is because these people dislike the laws and values sent down through Wahi. Hence their deeds remain without results. (47:8-9)

Whatever task is done contrary to procedure and law, it will remain without any result.

It is stated about those *Muhajireen* (migrants) who, for the sake of participating in the establishment of the Deen of Allah, had come to Madina having left everything of theirs behind:

...They are those people who aid Allah and His messenger. These are the very people who are truthful in their proclamation of Eimaan. (59:8)

It is about them that it is declared:

...Certainly, Allah helps the one who helps Allah...(22:40)

Which people Allah helps is elucidated further at another place. It is stated:

Allah is He Who sent His messenger with the code of guidance i.e. sent with this system of life which is absolutely based on truth, so that this system overcomes all Batil systems of the world, even if this thing is very distasteful to these people who wish to obey the commands of different 'gods' instead of obeying the laws of One Allah.

In this connection, O Jamaat e Momineen! Come, let Us inform you about a principle of life. It is obvious that every individual in the world wishes to do such business in which he attains benefit. But you also witness that man engages in many such transactions in which there is loss to him instead of profit. Now think, if you become apprised of such a commerce in which there is never any loss, then how great will this transaction be? Come! We will tell you about such a commerce in which there is never any possibility of loss, and in this way, it protects you from a chastising punishment.

That commerce is this: that you maintain full conviction in the truth and concreteness of this system of Allah, which is being shaped through the hands of His messenger. Make full strivings and endeavours for the establishment of this system. Also spend your wealth and possessions for this, and if the need arises, even lay down your lives as well. If you reflect using your knowledge and reasoning, then you will see how much profit lies in this commerce.

This system will make available such provisions for you due to which you will be saved from those destructions which remain chasing behind you, and it will provide you with such a paradisiacal life in this world and in the life of the hereafter, in whose sparkle and freshness there will never be any change. For example, perennial gardens with very pleasant dwellings to live in: this is a supreme achievement for whoever acquires it. (61:9-12)

After this it is stated that:

And over and above this, all that which is very dear to you i.e. the aid of Allah and forthcoming victories. O Rasul! Give glad tidings of this to the Jamaat e Momineen. (61:13)

Have you observed which people receive aid (*Nusrat*) from Allah?

13.11.3 The Necessity of the Sword for *Nusrat*

It has already been noted that for the success of any aim, the primary condition is that you need to have firm conviction in the truth of this aim. After this, the second condition is that the required resources and means are made available for the achievement of this aim, and that they are utilised according to procedure and law. See with what clarity the Quran has explained these two conditions. It is stated in Surah *Al-Hadeed* that We sent Our messengers with clear laws i.e. sent down Divine Books with them so that people can live life according to justice and fairness. This is the Divine guidance. After this it is stated that together with these directions, We also sent down ‘a sharp-edged sword’; this has great hardness and cutting ability, and when it is used according to the laws of Allah, this proves to be of great benefit for mankind. We made all this arrangement for this reason: ‘...so that Allah witnesses who among you aids Him and His messengers *Bil-Ghaib* (unseen) (57:25).’

The word ‘unseen’ here is worthy of deep reflection. In the initial stages of the programme of the Deen of Allah there are countless hardships and difficulties. In this it is necessary to persistently toil and strive, and no tangible result appears in front. In this period only he can bear such life consuming hardships, who (like a farmer) has conviction in this fact that one day this programme will produce outstanding results. Only *Eimaan* in the unseen outcomes of this programme can make man agreeable for such persistent striving and keep him firm footed. This is called ‘*Eimaan bil Ghaib*’, which is declared at the beginning of the Quran to be the fundamental condition for success (2:3). This same ‘*Nusrat bil Ghaib*’ is mentioned in (57:25).

Similarly, we attach our expectations for unseen help from Allah, and Allah expects ‘unseen aid’ from us! This is why He has stated, *O Jamaat e Momineen!* become helpers of Allah (61:14). After this we are informed that Eisa said the same thing to his followers, and with what zeal they declared their acquiescence to it. (This is a separate story about which I have written in detail in my book, *Shola e Mastoor*).

13.11.4 The Battlefield of Badr

The very first practical demonstration of this *Nusrat* took place in the arena of Badr, where on one side was that *Jamaat* which had entered the battlefield with sword in hand for the sake of the establishment of the Deen of Allah - the Quran has termed this as '*Qital fi Sabeel Allah*'¹⁸⁴ - and on the other side was the *Jamaat* of the opponents, whose *Qital* was '*fi Sabeel Al-Taghut*'¹⁸⁵. The *Jamaat e Momineen* were aiding Allah by taking their lives in their hands, and it was the *Haqq* and veracity of the law and system of Allah that was helping them. At this point it is stated in (3:13) - which can have two meanings - that 'whoever wishes to seek Allah's help in this way (*Manya'sha'u*), Allah provides him with help' and also that 'Allah helps in this way according to His law of *Mashe'at*'. This help is not just acquired accidentally, it is acquired rationally according to a procedure and code, because it is stated after this that there is the means of instruction (*Ibrat*) in this for men of vision and those possessing intellect and reasoning (3:13). *Ibrat* means to reach a conclusion after examining the causes in the light of facts and evidence. That event which takes place in such a way that nothing can be known about how it came into existence (such is the concept of unseen support), the question of inviting the use of intellect and reasoning according to knowledge and vision regarding it does not even arise. This was that Divine *Nusrat* about which it was declared that it will become a cause for joy and celebration for the *Jamaat e Momineen* (30:5).

13.11.5 Help Via *Malaika* (Universal Forces)

It has been explained in the verses themselves that the aim from that aid via the *Malaika*, which is mentioned in these campaigns, was to provide composure to the hearts of the *Jamaat e Momineen* (8:9-10) so that, in this way, there should be no tremor in their steps (8:12)¹⁸⁶ - this is that very steadfastness and resoluteness through which the aid of Allah is obtained. For this, the condition is:

...*If you face challenges with resoluteness and keep obeying the laws of Allah, then you will achieve the Nusrat of Allah...*(3:122-125)

If there are one hundred *Mujabideen* among you who remain steadfast, then they will overcome two hundred. In this way Allah is with those who remain steadfast (8:66). The technique to obtain this Divine *Nusrat* is that you should obey Allah

¹⁸⁴ *Qital fi Sabeel Allah* - fighting in the cause of Allah. *Sabeel* means path and *Qital* means fighting. (Ed)

¹⁸⁵ *Fi Sabeel Al-Taghut* - on the path of the wrongdoers. *Taghut* means transgressors. (Ed)

¹⁸⁶ Details of these matters will be found in my book, *Mairaj-e-Insaniyat*.

and His messenger. Do not engage in mutual conflicts: if you do this, then you will founder. Remain steadfast (8:46).

Remember! Allah gives support to those who remain steadfast, and no one can overpower those people who acquire the *Nusrat* and companionship of Allah like this. When Allah aids you, then no one can overpower you (3:160). And if He forsakes you, then who can aid you after that. The fundamental condition for this supremacy and *Nusrat* is this:

...if you are Momineen, then you will remain in authority over all. (3:139)

This is that *Jamaat* which is entitled to the *Nusrat* of Allah.

14 Chapter 14 - *Yaghfiru Li Manya'sha'u Wa Yu'azzi'bu Manya'sha'u*¹⁸⁷

In some verses of the Quran these kinds of words appear: ‘...*Yaghfiru Li Manya'sha'u Wa Yu'azzi'bu Manya'sha'u...*’ (3:129) and their literal translation is done as ‘Allah forgives whoever He wishes, and allots punishment (*Azaab*) to whoever He wishes’. And the structure which is raised on the foundation of this translation is obvious. The final consequence, or outcome, of this process of righteousness and guidance and Law of Requitat is *Azaab* or *Maghfirat*, and if its state is also such that there is no defined principle for it, nor any procedure or law – He gives punishment to whoever He pleases, and forgives whoever He pleases – then what is the point of this whole arrangement? This becomes the ‘royal mood’ in the words of Saadi – if the mood is sour, then a slap is given in return for a *Salaam*; if the mood is merry, then estates are conferred on the one who utters a profanity. It is obvious that these behaviours cannot be those of Allah. Therefore we need to see what guidance is received from the Quran in this respect.

14.1 Meanings of *Azaab* and *Maghfirat*

When we mention the word *Azaab*, the idea of hell appears in our minds in which ‘sinners’ are seen to be suffering in a severe penalty. The existence of *Jabannum* is a reality, and its punishment is also a fact. But according to the Quran, *Azaab* is not just confined and limited to *Jabannum* only. The harmful outcome of every wrong step of man is called *Azaab*, which can manifest both in the world and also in the hereafter. The expressions of these outcomes are different, so much so that the Quran has also called the punishment received by the criminal from the court as *Azaab*.

As far as *Maghfirat* is concerned, its meaning is also not that of ‘bestowing forgiveness’. The meaning of this word is to provide the means of protection (from the point of view of its root). Concerning the Law of Requitat, we have seen in Chapter 4 that there is an interval of time between a deed and the manifestation of its outcome in a tangible form. During this period of respite, if

¹⁸⁷ Normally translated as ‘whoever He wishes He gives *Azaab* to, whoever He wishes, He forgives.’

man performs those (good) deeds due to which that damage becomes rectified that was going to manifest due to his wrong action, then he becomes saved from its harm. This is called *Maghfirat*.¹⁸⁸

14.2 *Azaab* is the Name for the Consequence of Wrong Deeds

Now let us see how *Azaab* becomes imposed, and who are those people who are deserving of it. In Surah *Al-Maida*, after mentioning the crimes of the Jews, it is stated:

... Whatever they have sent forward (Ma-Qaddamat) for themselves, it is very evil. Due to this they have become eligible for the punishment of Allah, and as a consequence of this they will remain suffering in Azaab. (5:80)

The elucidation of *Ma-Qaddamat* has been covered earlier. It means those deeds of man whose result has not yet appeared before him. From this verse it is clear that *Azaab* is the result of men's own deeds.

In Surah *Al-e-Imran* those crimes of the Jews are mentioned due to which they became deserving of *Azaab* i.e. rejection and transgression of the laws of Allah, the unlawful killing of *Anbiya*, and the murder of those who used to give them the command about *Haqq* and justice. Then it is stated, O Rasul! Announce to them the glad tidings of a grievous penalty (3:21). A little further on in this Surah it is stated:

Those people who adopt a path of rejection and transgression of the laws of Allah, they suffer from a severe penalty in this world and in the hereafter. ..(3:56)

They cannot escape this *Azaab*, even by offering all the wealth and treasures of the entire world in lieu (5:36). It is stated in Surah *Al-An'am*:

Those people who falsify Our laws, they will suffer from an Azaab due to their Fisq¹⁸⁹. (6:49) See also (7:165)

In Surah *At-Tauba* it is stated that these opponents from the Koresh are bent upon this tyranny and injustice because they think that we possess a great deal of wealth and possessions as well as our numbers being vast, so we can do whatever we like, who is there to hold us to account? The Quran declares that it is this evil

¹⁸⁸ Details of these matters will be found in my book, *The Life in the Hereafter: What Does the Quran Say?*

¹⁸⁹ *Fisq* – falling outside of the pattern presented by the Quran. (Ed)

mentality of theirs which will itself place them into an *Azāab* (9:55). And this *Azāab* will descend on them through your hands in the battlefield (9:52, 9:85).

In Surah *Hud* it is stated that these people neither reflect nor reason, nor make use of their intellect and awareness, nor heed the advice of anyone, nor pay attention to the path before treading on it. If they do not suffer from an *Azāab*, then who else will? (11:18-22, 2:7).

In some verses the word *Rehmat* has appeared as opposite to *Azāab*. It is stated in Surah *Al-e-Imran* that, O *Jamaat e Momineen*! See that you do not become like those people who created mutual dissensions among themselves, and after receiving clear teaching from Allah, began to differ with one another. They will be caught in a severe penalty. The day that the results of deeds appear in front in a tangible form, some faces will be dark and gloomy and others will be glowing brightly. Those people whose faces will be dark will be told that you adopted *Kufr* again after having accepted *Eimaan* (i.e. after becoming a united *Ummah*, you created sectarianism), therefore taste the pleasure of *Azāab* as a consequence of your *Kufr*. And those people whose faces will be brightly lit, they will be within the *Rehmat* of Allah (3:105-107).

14.3 The Meaning of *Manya'sha'u*

From these descriptions it is clear that man suffers from punishment due to his own deeds; this is what is known as the Law of Requitat which in alternative words is called the law of *Mashe'at*. Those verses in which the operator of *Manya'sha'u* is Allah, from this is meant this very law of *Mashe'at*. It is stated in Surah *A'raf* that Moses supplicated that, O Allah! ordain for us that which is good for us in this life and in the hereafter. In reply, Allah stated that, (you are fearful of My *Azāab* and wish to remain secure from it, then understand that) My *Azāab* becomes imposed according to My law of *Mashe'at*, not in this way - that We blindly make people suffer in *Azāab* for no reason. Hence there is nothing to be fearful about in this. As far as My *Rehmat* is concerned, that is encompassing the whole of the universe. But among human beings We ordain it for those people who follow *Taqwa*, organise the administration of *Zakat*, and maintain *Eimaan* in the truth of Our laws (ultimately, this *Rehmat* will fall into their share), those who will follow this *Ummi Nabi* of Ours, reference to whom they will find in the Torah

and the Injeel (Bible), who will promote *Maroof*¹⁹⁰ and forbid *Munkar*¹⁹¹ (7:156-157). It has become clear from here what the principle and law of *Mashe'at* is for *Azqaab* and *Rehmat*, and what the meaning of *Manya'sha'u* is.

It is stated in Surah *Bani Israel* that, O Rasul! Say to My servants that they should always say good things among themselves, remain on good terms, because *Shaitan* wishes to sow the seeds of dissension and enmity among you. Do not obey him, he is your openly avowed enemy. After this is stated that Allah is well aware of your deeds. If those (deeds) are according to His law of *Mashe'at*, then you will become deserving of His *Rehmat*. If they are in opposition to this, then His *Azqaab* will become imposed on you. Now whoever among them wishes, he should open in front of himself the gates of the *Rehmat* of Allah; whoever wishes, he should impose His *Azqaab* on himself. O Rasul! We have not sent you as a guardian over them, to force them to follow the straight path so that the shadow of Allah's *Rehmat* remains over them (17:54).

14.4 Two Forms of *Maghfirat*

Let us now look at *Maghfirat*. It will have two forms. You will have observed that when there is an outbreak of disease in some habitation, the weak among them quickly become victim to it, while those who have a stronger immune system (power of resistance) remain protected from this. This is that means of *Maghfirat* (protection) which man acquires through his balanced conduct and because of which he simply never suffers from *Azqaab*.

14.4.1 The Meaning of *Tauba*

The second form is that a disease has attacked someone; the life of the invalid was saved, but he became very weak. The physicians recommend certain medicines and diet for this due to which his drained energy returns, in fact he becomes even stronger than before, so that the disease cannot attack him again. This is the second form of *Maghfirat*, which is achieved through *Tauba*. At this point it is also vital to understand the Quranic meaning of *Tauba*. You wish to travel to some village, on the way a crossroad appears, and you step in the wrong

¹⁹⁰ *Maroof* – that which the Quran has noted as good. (Ed)

¹⁹¹ *Munkar* – that which the Quran declares as evil. (Ed)

direction. After travelling some distance, you realise and come to know that the direction taken is wrong. What will you do in this situation? You will retrace your steps to that same place from where you took a step in the wrong direction. Returning to that place like this is termed *Tauba*. But just returning to that place is not enough, it is also necessary to step in the correct direction from there. This is called *Amaal-e-Saleh* (i.e. right action). Just see with what clarity the Quran explains this. In Surah *An-Nisa* it is stated:

According to the law of Allah, Tauba is by those people who take a wrong step in error, and after that, the moment they realise this, they immediately turn back. They are the ones towards whom Allah will also return... (4:17)

This is the first step of *Tauba*. Its next step is:

After returning in this way, he should maintain firm conviction in this reality about which path is the straight one and which is crooked, and then set out on the right path. (28:67)

Only then will *Tauba* be completed.

14.4.2 *Hasanaat* Rectify the Effects of Wrong Deeds

This will be the second form of *Maghfirat*. The principle for this is that:

...Remember! The pleasant outcomes of good deeds rectify the harm done by wrong deeds... (11:114)

14.4.3 Punishment and Forgiveness

In light of these explanations the meaning of *Yu'aẓẓi'bu Manya'sha'u Wa Yaghfiru Li Manya'sha'u* becomes clear i.e. that the individual who, after committing an error then remains obdurate on it, will be engulfed in *Aẓaab*; the one who stops doing it and reforms himself will be protected from *Aẓaab*. Note how the Quran has explained this reality. In Surah *Al-Maida* it is firstly stated that the punishment for a thief is this, then after that:

But the criminal who is repentant on his action, and abandons this path and reforms himself, then Allah will return to him. Surely, Allah is the One Who bestows Maghfirat and Rehmat. (5:39)

The question which arose from this was, what need was there to keep *Aẓaab* and *Maghfirat* together (in common terms, punishment and forgiveness)? This question used to arise because among the Jews there was punishment alone, there was no allowance for forgiveness, and among the Christians there was only mercy and no concept of punishment whatsoever. In response it is stated that:

Do these people not know how the authority of Allah is operating in this great system of the universe? This is operating according to His laws of Mashe'at. These kinds of laws of Mashe'at have also been defined for the communal life of human beings. It is according to these that the decision is made who should receive punishment, and whose error should be overlooked (5:40).

Have you noticed which criminal receives *Aẓaab* (punishment), and who receives *Maghfirat*? Can the decision for this possibly be taken like this, that Allah punishes whoever He pleases, and forgives whoever He pleases? Not at all. The principle which has been described is that the criminal who reforms himself after having repented on his action will be forgiven (*Yaghfiru Li Manya'sha'u*), and the one who does not cease from crimes should be given a punishment (*Wa Yu'aẓẓi'bu Manya'sha'u*).

This is the Quranic meaning of these words, and this is the principle according to which the decision is taken about this matter, whether the criminal is deserving of punishment or merits forgiveness. In connection with this it is stated that:

... Whatever is in your heart, whether you show it or keep it secret, it makes no difference to the Law of Requit of Allah. It makes an account of every matter. After this, this outcome is decided according to the law of Mashe'at of Allah, who can obtain Maghfirat, and who is deserving of Azaab. (2:284)

At another place it is stated:

The individual who wishes to face punishment according to the law of Mashe'at of Allah, he should adopt that kind of path; whoever wishes to become deserving of Rehmat, he should do those kinds of deeds. (29:21)

14.5 There are No Favourite Children of Allah

It is stated in Surah *Al-Maida* that the Jews and Christians declare that we are the favoured children of God, hence this cannot happen that Allah will give us *Aẓaab*. In reply to this it is firstly stated that if the reality is as you aver, then leaving aside the *Aẓaab* of the hereafter, tell us why does Allah then give you punishment in

recompense for your crimes in this world if you are indeed His favoured children. After that it is stated that Allah has neither any favourite children, nor any stepchildren – with Him it is the law of *Masbe'at* of cause and effect that is functioning, which is applicable equally to all of humanity. The decisions for *Azāab* and *Maghfirat* are made according to this very law (*Yaghfiru Li Manya'sha'u Wa Yu'azẓi'bu Manya'sha'u*). After this it is declared that the dominion of the heavens and the earth belongs to Allah (5:18). Details of this have already been covered.

In this same Surah it is made clear that:

To those people who accept Eimaan and do Saleh deeds, Allah has made a promise of Maghfirat and a supreme reward. (5:9)

In Surah *Al-Fath*, after enumerating the lofty attributes and shining characteristics of Rasul-ullah and his companions, it is stated that:

...Allah has promised Maghfirat and a supreme reward to those who have Eimaan and perform Saleh deeds. (48:29)

In Surah *Hud* it is stated that the recompense for *Saleh* deeds and steadfastness is *Maghfirat* and a great reward (11:11). This has been reiterated in verse (33:35). In Surah *Al-Ahzāb*, after listing the traits of Muslim men and women, it is declared that:

...Allah has prepared for them Maghfirat and a great reward. (33:35)

Contrary to this, it is stated at another place that *Maghfirat* cannot be acquired through *Shirk* (4:48, 4:116). At another place it is stated that those people who commit *Kufr* and *Zulm* (and do not desist from these activities of theirs), they cannot receive *Maghfirat* (4:168).

This is the correct meaning of *Yaghfiru Li Manya'sha'u Wa Yu'azẓi'bu Manya'sha'u*. This belief that there is no procedure and law defined by Allah, and that He can give *Azāab* to whoever He pleases and can forgive whoever He pleases, is against the fundamental teaching of the Quran, and is a negation of the true concept of Allah. See in what a beautiful way He declares:

If you accept Eimaan in the truth of the laws of Allah and value His Naima, then what will He gain by giving you Azaab? ... (4:147)

14.6 Punishment Proportional to the Circumstances of a Criminal

In relation to *Azqab* and *Maghfirat*, the Quran has also drawn attention to another important principle. One individual is born into a cultivated family, his education and training take place in an excellent manner, his environment is well informed, he knows the law and is well aware of the consequences of crimes. He commits a crime. In contrast to this, that same crime is committed by one who is both illiterate and backward. His life was spent in an environment in which there was neither any concern for good character, nor the slightest guilt about a crime. The principle put forward by the Quran is that these criminals should not be given the same punishment. According to this same principle it has declared the punishment for *Zina* to be half for concubines¹⁹² as compared to ladies from cultured families (4:25), and announced to the distinguished ladies of the family of the *Nabi*, that if some crime is committed by you, then a double punishment will be meted out (33:30-32).

14.7 Collective Punishment

Moving forward from the circumstances and particulars of an individual, it is also essential to bear in mind the overall collective condition of a society. The Quran has stated that when evil becomes commonplace in society, then *Sharr* flies around everywhere and infects freely (76:7). When destruction descends on such a society, then the criminals and the virtuous all become engulfed in its folds. This is why it has warned the *Jamaat e Momineen* to make such an arrangement so that society does not become engulfed in this kind of flood:

And fear tumult or oppression, which affects not in particular (only) those of you who resort to wrongdoing and injustice. And know that Allah is strict in punishment.
(8:25)

Be alert to this *Fitna*¹⁹³, take measures and plan to remain protected from it, because when it comes then it does not specifically overwhelm those due to whose crimes it descended, but all become encompassed in its grip. For example, if the bank of a river bursts due to the dishonesty or incompetence of the department for canals or infrastructure, then not only will the dwellings of the officials of these departments collapse due to this flood, but town after town also

¹⁹² At the time of the advent of Islam, slaves and concubines were commonplace in Arabian society. Wherever the Quran has mentioned '*Ma Malakat Aimaan u Kum*' (slaves and concubines), this means slaves and concubines of that particular era. After this the Quran had ended slavery.

¹⁹³ *Fitna* – the root is (F-T-N). The meaning here is punishment, misery, war, going astray, deception and fraud, to burn. It is used as the opposite of *Khair*. (Ed)

becomes flooded from it. That *Fitna* does not remain specifically confined to any particular class - the flood does not even inquire who resides in this dwelling - in these kinds of collective destructions innocent individuals also become victim to the calamity. The reality is that an individual is not constrained by the hand of *Taqdeer* but is helpless in the hands of society. This is the reason that the Quran places emphasis on the reformation of collective life, and tells individuals that instead of bemoaning *Taqdeer*, strive to shape society on correct (Quranic) lines. By transforming society, the '*Taqdeers*' of individuals will automatically change. *Ad-Deen* is the name for the correct system of society. In such a society, neither are cries heard at midnight, nor wailing in the early morning. In this the life-giving melodies of *Salaam-un, Salaam-un* from every direction become the sound of paradise in the ears.

In any event, what we were saying was that in connection with *Azqaab* and *Maghfirat*, the Quran explains this principle that it is essential that the particulars and circumstances of an individual and the general state of the society should be kept in view for its determination. Wherever the Quran has stated *Yu-Hasibkum* (to evaluate it) before *Yaghfiru Li Manya'sha'u Wa Yu'aẓẓi'bu Manya'sha'u*, it means that while evaluating this, the Law of Requital of Allah keeps this fully in view to what extent an individual himself is responsible in this crime, and to what extent those elements over which he had no control are responsible. This was that very principle according to which the second Caliph Umer did not punish the servants of that individual who was not in the habit of providing them with enough to satiate their hunger, and because of which they had stolen grain and eaten it. He punished their employer rather than his employees. Similarly, during the period of famine, he suspended the punishment for the stealing of grain up to the extent of the satisfaction of hunger. This wisdom is also implicit in *Yaghfiru Li Manya'sha'u Wa Yu'aẓẓi'bu Manya'sha'u* i.e. the law of *Masbe'at* of Allah also takes account of these matters.

14.8 Supplications for Forgiveness from Allah

The deep pits of destruction into which this belief has pushed this nation - that *Najaat* (salvation) and *Maghfirat* (forgiveness) are not a result of man's own deeds, they are dependent on the *Fadl* (blessing) and *Rehmat* (mercy) of Allah, that He can forgive whoever He wishes, and He can give *Azqaab* to whoever He wishes - cannot be estimated. This belief became commonplace among them that you can commit as many wrong dealings and evil behaviours as you like, just say *Astaghfar-*

allah (thirty-three times) after each *Namaz*, and complete its *Tasbeeh*¹⁹⁴ after the morning *Namaz*, all sins will become forgiven. Keep praying to Allah constantly for *Bakhshish*¹⁹⁵, since He is *Ghafur Ar-Raheem*, he will certainly forgive you. Have you noticed what impulse is concealed beneath this granting of *Bakhshish*? Allah had declared that:

This is that Jannat (paradise) whose owner you are being made in return for your deeds. (43:72)

In other words, according to the Quran, *Jannat* is received as a recompense for deeds, but they concocted this belief that *Jannat* is not received in return for deeds, this is a *Bakhshish*¹⁹⁶ of Allah which He can bestow on whoever He wishes i.e. according to their belief, *Jannat* is not a recompense for deeds - it is bestowed as ‘*Bakhshish*’ from Allah. This is why they keep constantly praying for *Bakhshish*, that we wish to obtain *Jannat* also as a charity, not through doing anything. In the words of Iqbal, this nation of beggars wants *Jannat* for free from Allah (*Fi Sabeel Allah*).

This is the condition of that nation whose Allah had declared:

Or are you sitting there thinking that you will enter Jannat for nothing, whereas you have not yet even gone through those life-threatening stages which former nations have gone through. They had to face difficulties and dangers to such a degree in confronting their opponents, that the land beneath their feet shook, and the messenger himself and his companions cried out, O Allah! When will your aid (Nusrat) come? At that time, they were given this glad tidings that, Do not lose heart! Allah's help will arrive very soon. (2:214)

This is what their Allah had proclaimed, and their messenger had informed them, that ‘*Jannat* lies beneath the shadow of swords.’ And the condition of this same nation now is such that it solicits *Jannat* as a handout. How ironic! Just see where this nation has ended up due to this incorrect interpretation of *Manya'sha*!

14.9 Pride in Being Sinful!

¹⁹⁴ *Tasbeeh* – root (*S-B-H*) actually means following Allah's laws. However, here this term is used to denote the ritual of counting rosary beads. (Ed)

¹⁹⁵ *Bakhshish* - this is an Urdu word used to mean blanket forgiveness from Allah. (Ed)

¹⁹⁶ *Bakhshish* – an Urdu word meaning tip, charitable giving; certain forms of corruption and bribery. (Ed)

Not only this, but now this nation takes pride in being sinful – among them even the big religious leaders write words like *Aa'si* and *Maznunb*¹⁹⁷ with their names; though it is asserted that these words are written as a sign of humility, students of psychology know that the emotion of pride is concealed in the folds of this 'humility'. The meaning of *Aa'si* is a criminal. Just think that those people who do not feel any embarrassment in declaring themselves as a criminal, how can committing a crime become a cause for guilt for them? Never mind crime being a cause for guilt, their belief is that not committing a crime is a very sinful matter.

14.9.1 If You Do Not Commit Sins Then Allah Will Eliminate You

This may be a surprising matter for you, and probably you will not even be ready to accept it, but it is indeed a reality. Two books of *Abadeeth* are declared to be the *Sabi'bayn* i.e. extremely correct books - one among these books is called Bukhari and the other is called Muslim. There is a *Hadeeth* in Sahi Muslim that Rasul-ullah said that:

*I swear in the name of that Being in Whose Hand is my life, that if you become such that you do not commit any sin whatsoever, then Allah will remove you from the earth, and will produce another group in your place, whose practice will be this, that it becomes immersed in sins and then seeks Bakhshish and Maghfirat from Allah.*¹⁹⁸

Whichever nation holds this belief (and it attributes this belief to Rasul-ullah) that if you do not commit a sin then Allah will erase you from the surface of the earth, and will substitute such a nation in your place which will commit sins and will then ask for forgiveness from Allah, just reflect that if crimes and failings do not become commonplace within that nation, then what else can possibly occur? When this same belief came into the hands of our poets, then the gates of hell opened - they described the importance of sins with such great zeal that as a result of this sins became the aim of life for the nation, and the end-purpose of the universe. According to one poet:

Are my sins greater in number, or is it Your Rehmat,

¹⁹⁷ *Aa'si* and *Maznunb* – these terms mean 'I am a sinner'. (Ed)

¹⁹⁸ It can be clearly seen in which era and for what purpose these kinds of *Abadeeth* were fabricated. But amongst us they are considered to be so accurate and firmly established that Imam Muslim included these in his collection, and we are wandering around clasping these close to our bosoms. Maulana Abul Kalam Azad has quoted this with great pride in his *Tafsir* on Surah *Al-Fateha* (Tarjman ul Quran, Volume 1). We have also copied the above translation from there, so that no one harbours any doubt about it.

O Allah! Only You can tell me after tallying it.

14.10 Humorous Tales About the Followers of Mysticism

After Persian and Urdu it was the turn of Punjabi, and the poet went a step further, stating:

*What is the concern there, O Raqib! All there is free,
One who does good is punished, sinners are set free.*

(O *Raqib!* Allah is utterly carefree to do as He wishes.¹⁹⁹ The state of His freedom is such that those Who are righteous there are seized, and sinners are let go free). And the followers of mysticism think they have free reign from Allah to say whatever they want. Only those who have scanned the literature of mysticism can evaluate what kinds of colourful fabrications they added in this regard. For example, one of these saintly men recounts that a devout mystic sat in the jungle for twelve years worshipping Allah. After twelve years a voice was heard saying that We have accepted your worship – ask, what is it you wish? Now he could not think what to pray for from Allah. He was sitting in this state of bemusement when he saw an elderly man approaching him, who asked him, why do you appear so perturbed? When he told him about the issue, this elderly man said, the answer to this is very easy. You have worshipped for twelve years, demand that you want *Adl* (justice). So he told Allah that I want *Adl*. At this, the reply came, very well, We will do *Adl*. You have sat on this stone for twelve years, the demand of *Adl* is that now this stone should sit over you for twelve years! Now he understood that the individual he had considered to be an elderly man, was *Shaitan*, who had misguided him. But what could be done now. He had asked for *Adl* and he got *Adl*. For twelve years he continued to sit beneath the stone, and continued to worship Allah for twelve years after this. Then a voice was heard saying, ask, what do you want! He replied that, O Allah! I beseech Your *Fadl* (blessings), not *Adl*. The answer came that We have made you *Qutb*²⁰⁰. Remember! The demand for *Adl* is that of *Shaitan*. Our servants always ask for *Fadl*

¹⁹⁹ The translation of *Allah Hu'Samad* (112:2) among us is that Allah is least concerned, or does whatever He wishes!

²⁰⁰ In Sufism a *Qutb* is the perfect human being. (Ed)

14.11 The Influence of the Teachings of St Paul

Do you know what the fountainhead is of these kinds of beliefs? That teaching of Christianity which St Paul invented. If you look at the letters by St Paul in the Bible (New Testament), you will find written in them that:

*For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith – and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God – not by works, so that no one can boast.*²⁰¹

At another place it is stated:

*For we maintain that a man is justified by faith apart from observing the law.*²⁰²

The belief of Christians that God is Mercy became commonplace on this very basis, and these were those beliefs which also became a part of Deen among us, in fact, became the spirit of Deen, and in support of them these kinds of *Abadeeth* were fabricated that, for example, no person among you will be able to enter *Jannat* based on his deeds.²⁰³

This is the consequence of the wrong interpretation of *Yaghfiru Li Manya'sha'u Wa Yu'azzi'bu Manya'sha'u* and its translation that 'Allah gives *Azaab* to whoever He wishes and bestows *Bakhsbish* to whoever He wishes.'

And these are the magical exhibitions and devastations of the doctrine of *Jabr* (*Taqdeer*).²⁰⁴

²⁰¹ New Testament – Ephesians (2:8-9)

²⁰² New Testament – Romans (3:28)

²⁰³ Taj ul Aroos has copied this narration, and from there Lane has included it in his lexicon (under the word *Ba*). It is obvious that this and other similar kinds of narrations are fabricated.

²⁰⁴ Further details about *Azaab* and *Maghfirat* are available in my book titled, *The Life in the Hereafter: What Does the Quran Say?*

15 Chapter 15 - The Day of Death is Pre-Fixed

Is this a reality, or is it merely poetry? The belief which prevails among us is that it is a fact that the age of every individual is pre-written, and there can be no increase or decrease in it of even a second. Until the time of death does not descend on someone, no one can kill him, and when *Ajal* (the appointed time) arrives, then no one can stop it. And not only death, it is even already written down about illness that it will come at such and such a time, and then will disappear at such and such a time, or will kill the invalid.

15.1 Our Belief and Our Practice

But just look at those who hold this kind of belief, when illness visits them, they run around for its treatment. If the disease becomes a bit prolonged, they change the treatment. They repeatedly enquire, Oh doctor! when is the temperature of the child going to go down? He is becoming weaker by the day, give him some such medicine with which the fever can break quickly – and if it is felt that the invalid will not get better, then the degree to which efforts and strivings are made for this are regularly witnessed by us - the most renowned doctor after another, one expensive medicine after another, supplications to Allah, donations and offerings, prostrations at shrines, requesting prayers from saintly men - what is all this for? It is so that the invalid can avert death. At this time no one will say that the day for death is appointed, it cannot come before this, and if his time has come, then your thousand treatments and potions, and thousands of prayers and offerings cannot postpone it by even a second. If the patient survives, they will claim with considerable pride that we initiated this treatment and made that effort. And if he dies, then it will be said that we tried everything, but he only had this amount of time ordained for him; what remedy can there be for death! And at that time no one asks them (nor do they themselves think) that when death was going to surely arrive at its appointed time, then what was to be achieved from all this effort and striving. Why was all this done? That is the belief, and this is the conduct in practice! And it is the contradiction between belief and practical conduct as a result of which nations become destroyed. From this neither strength in intention is created, nor firmness in implementation. One can never shoot a target with trembling hands.

The reason for this belief is stated to be that because of this the human heart becomes at peace from fear and anxiety; he does not fear death, immense courage

and limitless valour become created in him. This is why soldiers are informed and taught that the bullet on which your name is not written can never touch you, and the one on which your name is inscribed, you cannot save yourself from it - but together with this they are also instructed to make full arrangements for your own protection. Never put yourself in danger deliberately – they are told about that belief, while they are taught this conduct!

15.2 Death is for Everyone

The machinery of the human body functions according to the physical laws of Allah and its movement ceases according to these same laws. The ceasing of the movement of this machinery in this way is called death. Death has to come to everyone who breathes (3:185):

Wherever you are, death will find you out, even if you are in towers built up strong and high... (4:78)

You cannot run away anywhere from it (62:8), so much so that it is stated even about Rasul-ullah:

They (opponents) will die, and so will you die. (39:30)

15.3 The Meaning of Death as *Bi-Izn-Allah*

The literal translation of the verse in Surah *Al-e-Imran* is as follows:

Death cannot come to anyone without the command (Izn) of Allah, this is such an Ajal which is ordained... (3:145)

In this verse the words *Izn*, *Kitab*, and *Ajal* merit attention. The Quranic meanings of these words have previously been explained in detail (in Chapter 6). You will see from there that the meaning of *Izn* is the law of Allah. The meaning of *Ajal* is an interval or duration, and the point at which that interval ends is also termed *Ajal*. And the meaning of *Kitab* is that of a code of laws. According to these meanings, the interpretation of the above-mentioned verse is that life and death are under the obedience of the law of Allah. The intervening period (*Ajal*) between the birth and death of man is called his lifespan, and this period or duration is defined according to the law of Allah. For every period and duration there is a law (13:38). When the final moment of this period arrives (which is

called death) then there can be no increase or decrease in that time (63:11). This means that the moment when the lifespan of a human being comes to an end is what is actually called death, hence the question does not even arise about this moment whether it has come sooner or later. The question is whether or not there can be a decrease or increase in the interval between birth and death, which is called the lifespan.

15.4 Can a Lifespan be Reduced or Increased?

We utter these kinds of words every day but never pay any attention to what they mean. For example, we remark that he lived to a ripe old age, or that he died at a young age. Long or short (or similar kinds of words) are relative terms e.g. we ask someone to bring a stick which is one yard in length. If he brings a stick which is four feet long then we say this is too long, and if he brings a two-foot stick then we say it is too short. In relation to long and short, more or less, or increase and decrease, a scale needs to be set and these words can be said according to this scale. Now consider that when we remark that this individual has lived a long life, what is meant by this? From this is meant that this individual has remained alive for longer than the age to which people among us generally live. The average age of people of a country or nation is called the physical lifespan, and this fact is not hidden from those who possess knowledge, that nations increase the 'physical age' among their population through adhering to hygienic principles of health, a balanced diet, taking preventive measures against diseases, and by raising the standard of living, etc. and are continuing to increase this. Compared to them, the physical lifespan in those nations which do not pay attention to these matters is relatively shorter – as with nations, the state of individuals is also the same. Those people who take care of their health, and keep an eye on those means and resources through which the machinery of the body functions smoothly live to a longer age (if no accident takes place). And those people who ruin their health through their own hands die early, so much so, that the one committing suicide can end his life whenever he desires. The Quran has described this reality in these words:

...Neither does anyone get a long age, nor is there any reduction in the age of anyone, except that it occurs according to the law...(35:11)

It is obvious that if the lifespan of every individual had been fixed in advance (i.e. it had been written down even before his birth that his life will be this long) then as a result the question of an increase or decrease in his lifespan does not even arise. For example, Allah has decreed about an individual that his age will be fifty

years. After this decree of Allah (*Taqdeer*) it is impossible for him to die before reaching the age of fifty, or to remain alive after this. The possibility of an increase or decrease in age is only possible when a lifespan has not been predetermined. Furthermore, the verse mentioned above provides evidence for this fact that lifespans are not determined in advance. Physical life is lived according to physical laws. By living life in accordance with these laws, man attains a longer life. By going against these, he reduces his lifespan. It should be made clear that when we talk about physical laws, then inherited traits from parents; suitable protection and nourishment of the foetus in the mother's womb; after birth, its diet and taking care of its hygiene; general social conditions; causes and effects of mental health and balance; access to a healthcare system; measures for the prevention of accidents, etc. all of these are included.

15.5 The Scales (Laws) Governing Death

These are the scales according to which lifespans are determined. In the words of the Quran:

We have established for you scales for death... (56:60)

Whatever kind of scale any nation or individuals desire, they can choose it for themselves. For this it has been advised that:

...make not your hands contribute to your own killing²⁰⁵... (2:195)

Just reflect that if the time of death was already fixed, then what was the point in giving this counsel? Then also reflect that if it had already been decided that a certain individual is going to die at a certain time on a certain day in a certain way, then why should an individual who kills someone be declared to be a criminal? According to the Quran, murder is a very grave crime for which the punishment is the death penalty. But if, 'as per *Taqdeer*', the death of the victim was going to take place at his hands like this, then what fault is there in this of the criminal? The Quran has differentiated between premeditated murder and manslaughter (someone's death occurring in error or unintentionally at the hands of someone), and has proposed different punishments for them. In the case of killing in error blood money can be accepted, while for premeditated killing a punishment is

²⁰⁵ Though this verse relates to the collective life and death of nations, this same principle is also applicable to individuals, since an individual also places himself in the jaws of death through his own hands, from which he has been forbidden.

given (4:92-93). It is also obvious from this difference between premeditated killing and killing in error that in this instance the criminal is held responsible. If all this is pre-destined, then what is the crime of the criminal, and what is the purpose of the differentiation between the two? (There will be further discussion about these matters further on).

Now let us move a step further than even this. It is cautioned in Surah *Al-Maida* to remember that whoever kills even a single person without *Haqq*, other than in the case when the punishment of the death penalty has been given to him for the crime of murder or treason (*Fasad*), consider it as if he had killed the whole of humanity. And whoever bestows life on any single person (saves his life), consider it as if he bestowed life on the whole of humanity (5:32).

If the day of death is predetermined, then how can anyone save the life of another! The possibility of killing someone or saving his life can only occur in that situation when these matters are not decided in advance, and this is the reason that even soldiers entering a battlefield, who are prepared to die, are instructed to carry full protective gear with them for their safety, and to take all kinds of precautionary measures (4:71). So much so, that it is even instructed that during a time of danger, adopt this posture for collective *Salat* that one group is included in the gathering, while another group stands behind to provide them with protection, and after one prostration, that group steps back to stand, while the group providing protection should participate in the gathering (4:102). It is obvious that if a soldier is not going to be hit by that bullet on which his name is not written, and he simply cannot escape the bullet on which his name is written, then these kinds of protective measures become meaningless.

15.6 Becoming Fearless of Death by *Eimaan bil Akhlat*²⁰⁶

Now the issue which remains is, how can the heart of man become at peace from fear and uncertainty, and how can he overcome the fear of death. For this that doctrine of life and death needs to be examined which the Quran presents with such clarity and detail. That doctrine is that life is not just this physical life, its process also continues after death. Life, by passing through its evolutionary phases, reaches the human form. At this level, the ability to traverse further evolutionary stages of life becomes created in the individual who lives life

²⁰⁶ *Eimaan bil Akhlat* – *Eimaan* in the existence of the life in the hereafter i.e. after our physical death. (Ed)

according to the programme proposed by the Quran. The next arena of these evolutionary stages commences after death. The process of life and death is created for this very purpose so that you can test to what extent ability has been created within you for traversing further evolutionary phases of life (67:2).

Now just ponder that, according to that doctrine that death is the gateway to manifesting a far broader life, loftier status, extremely beautiful possibilities, will death then be something to fear for the possessors of such a doctrine? He will endeavour to protect the existing life so that he can gain even greater opportunities to awaken his potentials, and for further strengthening of his self. And when, after this, death appears in front and lifts the veil from this spectacle where the most dazzling beacons of life will be displayed, then he will leap forward and embrace death. These are those eminent individuals, possessors of *Eimaan* and *Saleb* deeds, about whom Iqbal has said:

*Besides other attributes, the sign of a man of Haqq
Is that when death arrives, there is a smile on his lips.*

The student who, following success in an exam, moves on to the next class, he does not have any regrets about leaving his former class, indeed he celebrates this occasion.

15.7 Status of Those Laying Down Their Lives on the Path of Allah

The list of deeds of life through which human potentials are developed is very long. The principle is that when there is a tussle (tie) between some physical demand of life and a Permanent Value, then at that time preference should be given to the Permanent Value over the physical demand. The more attractive, dear, and valuable the physical desire is, the more this deed will be weighty. In the demands of physical life, the demand for self-preservation (protection of life) is the most intense and valuable. When such a time comes that even life has to be laid down for the protection of a Permanent Value (*Haqq*), the Quran declares that such an individual should not even be called dead:

...In fact, only he is alive in reality, but you cannot encompass this reality at the existing level of consciousness of physical life. (2:154)

Iqbal defines this with *Isbq*²⁰⁷ (based on Permanent Values) and states that:

²⁰⁷ *Isbq* – Iqbal uses this word frequently in his poetry to signify deep and passionate love. (Ed)

How can I explain the status of death and Ishq,

Ishq is eminent death; dead life is devoid of eminence.

This is that *Eimaan* due to which the heart of a *Momin* becomes the abode of a fearless flame of courage like lightning, and he leaps valiantly into ‘the fire lit by Nimrod’ because he knows that:

If the self is alive, then death is just one phase of life,

Ishq tests the strength of the self through death.

He does not await the ‘defined moment of death’ like helpless dust, instead in the tussle between *Haqq* and *Batil*, he calls out to death himself, so that by meeting with it he achieves eternal life. It is his *Eimaan* that sometimes life is just about living, and sometimes it is about sacrificing life for a higher purpose which is called living. If the time, place, and mode of death was pre-fixed, then why would the Quran instruct these *Mujahideen* to take the lives of their opponents, and lay down their own lives for the sake of *Haqq* according to its programme.

16 Chapter 16 - The Plight of Women!

While addressing the Tolu-e-Islam Convention held in March 1966, I had presented an article titled ‘*Khuda Ki Marzi*’ (the Will of Allah) which became very well received. At the beginning of this, I had stated as an example that:

Nur Khan's wife bore four daughters one after another. On the arrival of each girl there was mourning in his home. After the birth of the fourth daughter, at the insistence of his parents and relatives, Nur Khan formed the intention to marry for a second time. His wife prevented him by imploring him a thousand times. At that time he stopped, but warned his wife clearly that if a girl is born again, then he will definitely marry for a second time – and just see the misfortune of the poor woman, a girl was born again for a fifth time. The wife of Nur Khan was reeling from waves of shock, and was suffering from palpitations of the heart, but all the family members were angry with her. Her husband would not even come anywhere near her. She remained lying on a bed, weeping constantly. Women from her street and community would visit, and console her that this is all dependent on the Will of Allah. He bestows boys on whoever He wishes, and bestows girls on whoever He wishes. There is nothing to be gained by your tears and weeping. When Allah had written it to be like this, then who can erase it - just be patient and grateful and bear this trouble. Whatever Allah does is always good, He is the Master and can keep us in whatever state He desires. The messenger Suleman once had a complaint which he kept in his heart, for that he had to stoke a stove with fire for twelve years. Hence, do not bring any such complaint on your tongue: He is free from all concerns.

16.1 Mourning at the Birth of a Girl

What the correct meaning is of ‘Allah bestows girls on whoever He wishes, and bestows boys on whoever He wishes’, we will address this later. To begin with, let us probe what the reason is for this melancholy that descends on a household when a girl is born, and this melancholy does not just affect uneducated families, even in extremely civilised and educated households the situation is that one odd girl is fine and nothing is said, but if the situation is such that there are three or four, then even there tears begin to be shed – and even if these tears are not shed, the heart is certainly heavy. No matter how often the husband may repeat that we do not make any distinction between a boy and a girl – a distinction is definitely made. The question is, why is this distinction made, and why does the arrival of a

girl become a cause for heavy-heartedness! There is no doubt in this that one reason for this is economic. In our society women are economically dependent on men, and the thought of the immense hardships which are faced in the search for a suitable match for marriage for girls, and in order to meet the sky-high demands (from the prospective groom's side), makes the parents of a girl despondent. After this, if the marriage is not successful, and the girl returns to live with her parents with a few children in tow, then this calamity is also no less heart-rending.

16.2 A Woman Is Considered Lower in Status

But the reason for this mourning is not just economic, its basis is something else, and that is that a woman is simply considered to be of a lower status in comparison with a man. The question is whether a woman is of a lower status than a man simply due to being a woman, or is this belief an invention of man!

16.2.1 The Status of a Woman Among the Religions of the World

Hindus have not even included woman in the category of human beings. They have declared her to be a commodity which remains in the ownership of someone or other. If she is a daughter, then she is in the ownership of her father, if she is a wife, then she is in the ownership of her husband; and if she is a mother, then she is in the ownership of her son. She cannot be the owner of anything. Whatever is given to her is given as *Daan* (charity). As far as her being a wife is concerned, at any one time a woman can have several husbands. Hence, it is stated in the Mahabharat that Draupadi had five husbands, and they lost her in a bet during gambling. According to the narration of the Paranas, seven Rishis²⁰⁸ married Narapsi Kanya. Ten Brahmin brothers by the name of Parchita all married a woman by the name of Darkishi at the one time. These brothers were also Rishi of Veedun. Since the Hindu religion is formulated by the Shaster Brahmins, hence special privileges are awarded to Brahmins in this. Thus it is noted in Atharva Veda (also in Rig Veda) that:

²⁰⁸ *Rishi* - a Hindu sage or saint. (Ed)

If a woman already has ten non-Brahmin husbands, and a Brahman takes her hand, then he alone will be considered as her husband, because only a Brahman is the master of women.

What the status of a woman becomes in Hindu society according to their *Dharam* (religion) under these circumstances is obvious.

16.2.2 The Position of a Woman According to the Torah

It is said among the Jews (in the Torah) that God created Adam (man), following which he began to be sad as a result of loneliness. In order to entertain him, God created Eve from his rib cage i.e. the real aim was to create only man, woman was created for him as a toy. Then woman fell into the deception of *Shaitan*, and by misguiding Adam, she caused him to be expelled from paradise.

16.2.3 According to Christianity

Among Christians, according to this same fictional tale, woman is considered to be the source of all evils, and it is said that a human child is born together with this sin of his first mother and father, for the redemption of which there is no other way than by belief in the atonement of Jesus Christ. Due to being the source of sins, woman is considered among them to be so worthy of hatred that even touching her is viewed as a cause for becoming stained. This is the reason that their saints live a life of celibacy, so much so that in the initial era of Christianity, there was a sect by the name of Valesians, who by self-castration used to enter the category of those near to God. It is the belief of Christianity that a woman cannot enter paradise. From this the difficulty then arose about what was to be done regarding Mary (Maryam). In order to resolve this issue, it was stated that in the hereafter all women will be turned into men, and in this way the one who is to enter paradise will enter as a man. Saint Paul used to make this teaching commonplace that, 'Man has not been created from woman, woman has been created from man. Man has not been created for woman, woman has been created for man. Therefore, according to law, woman should remain at a lower status compared to a man.' If you look at the religious literature of Christians, such a repellent picture of woman is drawn in this that disgust is triggered from its image.

16.2.4 According to Philosophers

Stepping aside from the world of religion, let us turn to the domain of philosophy, in which the same kind of treatment will be seen to be extended to woman. Aristotle, who is considered to be the grandfather of philosophers, used to present this ‘philosophy’ that woman happens to be inferior to man in every respect. So much so, that (he used to say) man has thirty-two teeth in his mouth and there are twenty-eight in the mouth of a woman (he had such firm conviction in the truth of this philosophy of his that he never even troubled to open the mouth of his wife, and see how many teeth are in it!). It was his maxim that, ‘All we need to understand about the character of a woman is that a deficiency has remained in the programme of nature.’ Plautus²⁰⁹ used to say, ‘This question simply does not arise in the case of a woman that someone should say that I will select a good woman – in this selection every other woman will turn out to be worse than the previous one.’ These are, in any event, tales from ancient times. Rousseau, who in the modern era introduced Europe (rather the world) to human rights and the concept of democracy, used to say, ‘Woman has only been created for this purpose that she should remain obedient and subservient to man, and bear his injustices.’ Up until the nineteenth century, the research of scholars of the West was that ‘in ancient times the first animal who was domesticated by man was a woman.’ It was only yesterday that during the era of Queen Victoria, when women in England began a movement to acquire their rights, the Queen made this announcement in a great rage (bear in mind, not a male king, but a female queen herself) that:

It is the heartfelt wish of Her Majesty the Queen that every one of those scholars who can write or say something to stop this insanity and ridiculous demand of these women, should become the hand and arm of the Queen. This issue is so provocative and inflammatory that Her Majesty the Queen cannot contain herself. God has created man and woman as different entities, hence women should not exceed their confines.

And in this regard, what more is there left to say. H. L. Mencken writes that, ‘The concept of love has been invented to inculcate the false notion that one woman is different from another - this is an illusion, all women are alike.’ C.O. Skinner says, ‘The most fantastic of inventions of the human mind is this idea that there is also some good in a woman.’

In the modern era, the United States of America is said to be the most advanced nation, and the belief about woman there is that she happens to be very

²⁰⁹ Titus Maccius Plautus (c 254 – 184 BC) was a Roman playwright of the Old Latin period. (Ed)

independent, and that there is no discrimination made between men and women there. In front of me at this moment in time is a magazine from there (in one sense a representation of the opinion of the government), titled Dialogue, Volume 3, Issue number 4 (1970), in which the direction of all the research is that women should not be considered as being the equivalent of men.

16.3 The Proclamation of the Quran

This is that position which women have been continuing to receive from the direction of men. The fact is that no animal in the world has done to its partner what man has done to his life's partner. At the advent of Islam, Christianity was reigning in the world, and the sentiments of degrading and viewing women as inferior had reached to an extreme intensity. It was into this that the Quran arrived, and it proclaimed with full force that all these ideas are concocted by men themselves, they have no relevance to reality. Man and woman are both human beings, and both a man and a woman are included equally in those characteristics which are possessed by a human being, and the eminence and dignity which a human being possesses:

... Your Rabb commenced the creation of man from a single cell and from this created male and female... (4:1)

When the fountainhead of their life is one, then how can there be any differentiation with respect to their birth! It is true that in physical life (biologically) their roles are different, but that difference is only in the distribution of tasks, not of eminence and dignity. As far as human potentials are concerned, those exist equally in both, and from this respect whatever one (man) can become, the other (woman) can become too.

16.3.1 Men and Women Side by Side

Look at this illuminating verse of Surah *Al-Abzab*, and then reflect how the Quran shows men and women working together, shoulder to shoulder, in the arena of life. It is declared:

If men possess this ability that they can obey the laws of Allah, then women also possess this ability. If men can become members of this Jamaat, which by having Eimaan in the truth of these laws becomes responsible for the peace of the world,

then women can also become its members. If men possess this potential that they can maintain this capacity such that it is employed for the Divine programme, women also possess this potential. If men are capable of demonstrating their proclamation of Eimaan through action, then women are also capable of this. If men can remain steadfast, then women can also do this. If men are capable of this, that as their abilities keep developing, they bow even more before the laws of Allah, then women are also capable of this. If men have the potential to sacrifice, then this potential also exists in women. If men can manifest such self-control that from wherever they are asked to desist they do so, then women can also do this. If men can keep their sexual proclivities within the limits defined by Allah, then women can do this too. If men are able to understand the laws and keep these constantly in their sight, then women are also able to do this. It is obvious that when all these potentials are present equally in men and women, then their outcomes should also exist equally for both of them. Therefore, Allah has prepared a great reward and Maghfirat for all of them. (33:35)

Look at these explanations of the Quran, and then reflect about which aspect of life is it stated that although men have this ability, women do not, or that a man has a greater ability for this and a woman has less. This is why the Quran has declared that the *Saleh* deeds of both men and women will produce results equally:

And whoever among you does Saleh deeds, whether a man or a woman and is a Momin, they will enter Jannat, and there will not be the slightest reduction in their deeds. (4:124)

16.3.2 Equality in Rights and Responsibilities

As far as the life of a husband and wife is concerned, from the legal point of view the Quran has announced that:

...according to procedure and law, however many the responsibilities of women are, they have a similar number of rights as well... (2:228)

Although in one matter men are allocated a different position, and that is that in the case of divorce, or on becoming a widow, a woman cannot marry again during the period of *Iddat*, whereas a man can do so. And its rationale is obvious, that if

the woman is pregnant, then there should be no confusion in relation to the paternity of the child.²¹⁰

16.4 The Aim of Marital Life

As far as this belief which is prevalent among us is concerned, that men are rulers and controllers of women, and that men have the right that they can also beat their wives, this will be discussed further on. At this juncture we only wish to present one point before you. The Quran has declared the following to be the aim of marital life:

So that tranquillity and Rehmat and love become created between you. (After this it is stated that) those people who use their intellect and reasoning will find signs in it to arrive at the reality of this. (30:21)

With even a little reflection and reasoning, this fact can become apparent that if the belief and assumption about a husband and wife is that the husband is the ruler over the wife, is a warden, that the woman should remain obedient and subservient to him in every circumstance, and that if she does not do this then the husband can also beat her, then in this kind of relationship and conduct can a bond of mutual affection be established, and can an environment of peace and *Rehmat* become created in the home? Though the relationship of coercive ruler and helpless subject can be formed from this, the relationship of companionship and love can never be created. From this arrogance and supremacy continually on one side, and on the other side feelings of an inferiority complex, fear and harassment can arise, but feelings of harmony and mutual understanding, companionship and unity can never become created. Hence, according to the Quran this belief is *Batil* that man has any superiority over woman, that woman happens to be inferior compared to man, and that the relationship between husband and wife are that of a governor and the governed. Man and woman are both members of humanity and equal possessors of human potentials. As husband and wife, their rights and responsibilities are similar, and their relationship is that of affection and companionship, for which equality is a fundamental condition. When someone is considered inferior to oneself, and the other considers herself lowly in comparison, a relationship of companionship can never be associated with them.

²¹⁰ At this point this explanation suffices. Those readers who are interested in further details may refer to my books titled, Letters to Tahira, or What is Islam?

16.5 What Happened After This?

This was the teaching of the Quran in this regard. But when, after this, Muslims sidelined this supreme Book of Allah, whatever beliefs and concepts were prevalent in other religions about women, these infiltrated among them one after another and gradually became a part of Islam. Such a technique was adopted for these which has already been mentioned i.e. false *Abadeeth* were concocted and were attributed to that eminent being who was the greatest flagbearer of human rights and supreme proclaimer of the equality of human beings in the world. First of all this belief was replicated from the Torah (Old Testament) that Allah created Adam first (i.e. man), but when he began to feel lonely, then in order to eliminate his isolation, his wife was extracted from his rib.

16.5.1 Concocted *Ahadeeth*

It is noted in the *Tafsir* of Ibne Kathir:

It is mentioned in Sahih Hadeeth that woman is created from a rib, and the topmost rib is the most twisted of all. Hence if you try to make it completely straight, then you will break it, and if by keeping some twist in it you wish to take advantage from this, then you can draw benefit.

In Sahih Bukhari there is a narration from Abu Huraira that Rasul-ullah said that if Bani Israel had not existed, then meat would never have become rotten, and if there had been no Eve, then no woman would have been dishonest towards her husband.

There is another Hadeeth from Bukhari that Rasul-ullah said that after me, there will be no Fitna which will be a greater cause for harm to men than women.

In another Hadeeth it is narrated that Rasul-ullah said that a bad omen is contained in three things – woman, house, and horse.²¹¹

It is noted in Bukhari's Kitab-ul-Anbiya that Rasul-ullah said that I saw Jannat and the majority there were paupers, and I saw that in hell women were in the majority.

Numerous narrations of these kinds were entered into the books of *Abadeeth*.

²¹¹ Bukhari, Kitab-ul-Nikah.

16.5.2 The *Tafsir of Ar-Rijalu Qawwa'muna Ala An-Nisa*

In relation to this, as far as husband and wife are concerned, there is no dearth of those kinds of *Abadeeth* either in which man is affirmed to be the ruler and warden. Such *Abadeeth* were initially fabricated, and then a *Tafsir* of the Quranic verses was compiled in accordance with them. It is in this connection that this verse of Surah *An-Nisa* is presented with great intensity and emphasis, in which it is stated *Ar-Rijalu Qawwa'muna Ala An-Nisa...*(4:34), and which is commonly translated as 'men are wardens over women'. (Whereas its meaning is that since the majority of the time of women is spent in the bearing of children and their rearing and upbringing, while men are free from these commitments, hence keeping the distribution of tasks in mind, this principle is proclaimed that providing the means of sustenance of life to women is the responsibility of men. According to the Arabic language, this is the true meaning of *Qawwa'muna Ala An-Nisa*²¹²). For the sake of making its meaning to be that of a 'ruler and warden', it is claimed as the reason for its revelation (*Shan-e-Nazool*) that a woman complained to Rasul-ullah that her husband has slapped her. Rasul-ullah had just given the order for retribution when this verse was sent down, and Rasul-ullah had to withdraw his decision. In another *Hadeeth* it is narrated that Rasul-ullah said, do not beat women. After this Umer came to him, and pleaded that upon hearing your command, women have become emboldened against their husbands. On hearing this, Rasul-ullah gave them permission to beat them. Now widespread beatings by men began to take place, and many women came to Rasul-ullah complaining. On this, he said to the men that those people who beat up women do not do good. But when he wished to allow women to retaliate, then this verse was sent down. Hence, it was this command which remained that since men are rulers over women, they can beat them. Thus, Ash'at (reported to be a companion of Rasul-ullah) states that he was once the guest of Umer, when it chanced that there was a harsh exchange between husband and wife, and Umer beat his wife. Then he told me that, Ash'at, remember three things which I have heard and remembered from Rasul-ullah. One is this, that a man should not be questioned on what account he has beaten his wife; secondly, to not go to sleep without saying *Witr* (part of *Namaz* at night); and the third item the narrator was unable to recall.

And not only this, that men are appointed as rulers over women, but there is also a *Hadeeth* in which it is narrated that Rasul-ullah said that if he could have

²¹² A detailed discussion about this verse will be found available in my book titled, Letters to Tahira.

commanded anyone to perform prostration before someone other than Allah, then he would have commanded a woman to prostrate before her husband.

16.5.3 Narrations Attributed to Ali

In the book, Nahj Albalagha, these kinds of narrations are attributed to Ali (the companion of the messenger) that he said:

O people! The beliefs of women, their share, and their intellects are flawed. (Therefore) stay away from women of bad character and also remain wary of the virtuous ones. And also do not obey them even in righteous deeds, so that they do not expect your compliance in bad deeds.

At another place it is narrated that he said:

Woman is a well socialised scorpion. If you remain with her, then there is certainly pleasure, but she never hesitates to sting.

And also that:

Woman is an evil from head to toe, and the even greater evil than this is that you cannot do without her.

But on the one hand there are these kinds of fabricated *Abadeeth*, while on the other hand it is also narrated that Rasul-ullah said that ‘paradise lies beneath the feet of a mother’ - as if a mother is not included among women!

These kinds of *Abadeeth* were fabricated during our era of *Malukiyat*²¹³ when the situation was such that women were sold in markets. Ahmed Amin Misri writes in *Zaha al Islam* that during this era:

In Baghdad the commerce of slaves and concubines was commonplace. One bazaar was even called Shar e Darul Raqeeq (the Bazaar of Slaves). Those engaging in this kind of commerce were called Nakhaas. This word was in fact used for those who dealt with the sale of cattle; later on, it began to be applied to dealers in slaves and concubines. There used to be an inspector appointed over them from the government, who was

²¹³ Our history and all the books of *Abadeeth* were compiled during the Abbasid era, and the book, Nahj Albalagha, was compiled after these even.

called Qayyam Al-Raqeeq. In the Harem of Caliph Mutwakkul, there were four thousand concubines based on Mut'ah²¹⁴.

The philosophy of mysticism arrived among Muslims from Iran, but they learned the doctrine of Monasticism (*Maslak e Khankai'ya*) from Christians. What the status of women was among Christians, we have seen some of its reflection earlier. Therefore, even Sufis among us preferred a life of celibacy (like Christian monks and Hindu *Jogis*), and used to declare woman as being the source of all evils. Ali Hajwary (Data Ganj Bakhsh) writes that:

The origin of the first Fitna in paradise which became the fate of Adam, was woman. The first and foremost Fitna which appeared in the world i.e. the fight between Habel and Qabeel (Abel and Cain) – its cause was also a woman. And when Allah wished to punish two angels (Harut and Marut), its cause was also declared to be a woman. And today the root causes of all Deeni and worldly Fitnas are also women.

16.6 The State of Our Civilised Society

In light of these descriptions, just reflect that the nation in which these kinds of ideas are prevalent about this 'inferior commodity', if grief is not felt at her birth, then will there be celebrations and joy? And if by suffering from an inferiority complex, she will not feel ill-fated, unfortunate, and luckless, then what else will happen! It will be said that we have now become educated and civilised, hence these kinds of ideas no longer exist about women - this claim of being educated and civilised may well be justified and correct, but we venture to inquire that this demand that takes place in our very educated and civilised families for a dowry consisting of a bungalow, motor car, and a great deal of money in return for the very beautiful, educated, well-mannered girl selected to be brought in as a wife or daughter-in-law, what does it indicate about our 'beautiful outlook' (regarding woman)? By doing this we have sunk to an even lower level than that of the era of ignorance. In that era, when a woman was acquired by being purchased, then some payment was made for her. Now when we acquire a woman, we also demand millions of rupees together with her. Then examples of the condition that becomes of woman due to our prevalent laws (which are unfortunately called laws of *Shariat*) can be found at every step. According to these laws, man always possesses this right that whenever he wishes he can divorce the woman and turn

²¹⁴ *Mut'ah* – a form of legalised prostitution, in which a temporary 'marriage' is arranged. See the book by the author, *The Status of Hadeeth in Islam*, for further details. (Ed)

her out of the house. In contrast to this, even if a thousand cruelties are visited on her, she has to knock at the doors of courts in order to gain freedom from the tyranny of a cruel and unjust husband. And at the thought of how these wretched, honourable ladies are dealt with there, these victims prefer to die at home through slow suffocation instead of seeking justice. Even if they somehow gain freedom after thousands of humiliations, then the question of how to spend the rest of their life becomes a further source of severe distress for their soul. In this the economic issue is not the only cause for anxiety, the question of protection and honour also becomes a cause for the creation of a thousand fears.

In our society the roof of a man is considered indispensable for the security of a woman. Even if a woman somehow makes arrangements for her physical security, this apprehension always creates an underlying fear that if at any time a scoundrel spreads around any accusation about her, then she will not be able to show her face in society - and preventing the slanders of scoundrels is never within anyone's control - this is, however, an issue further down the line. Nowadays it is becoming commonplace among us that an innocent, simple girl is going to school or college, and thugs kidnap her on the way. Even after this innocent and simple victim is retrieved by her parents after many hurdles, she no longer retains any worth. The remainder of her life is spent in hell - and this is in penance for what crime? Allah had stated to the backward Arabs who used to bury their innocent daughters alive, that, Say! when this female child will be asked:

For what crime were you killed? (81:9)

Then what will be your reply to this. But in our society innocent and victimised girls themselves ask Allah – and this is not an imaginary fictional tale, these kinds of girls themselves ask me this question – what crime did we commit that You created us as girls, and what did our brother do that was so great that You created him as a boy, but they do not get an answer for this from anywhere. The Brahmin had at least invented an answer to this, that this is the punishment for the sins of your previous life, for the carrying out of which Brahma has made you a woman. You may scoff at the irrationality of this logic, but just reflect, what is the logical outcome of the answer which is received from your own quarter? The answer which is provided from your side is that this is the Will of Allah, He can make whoever He wishes a boy, and whoever He wishes a girl. He can confer respect on whoever He wishes, and can humiliate whoever He wishes. You cannot ask Him why He did it like this. Just think to what conclusion this 'logic' takes man. The rationale of the Brahmin may be wrong, but there is no accusation levied on Brahma himself due to that. The view of him (Brahma) is that of a just being who allocates a status in the new life for men according to their deeds, but the kind of

view of Allah which appears before us from your reply, we do not have the courage to bring it on our lips.

16.7 Wrong Use of the Example of the System of Nature

This response is given by our class of religionists, and verses and *Abadeeth* are quoted in support of it. Then in further support of them, rationales are also presented (from their own minds) and those are along the lines that the creation of male and female is necessary for the completion of the creative programme of Allah. A cow has no right to question why she is made a cow and not a bull. Furthermore, it is also part of the programme of nature for some of creation to be superior and for some of it to be inferior. A donkey does not have the right to complain why it is not made an Arabian stallion.

These programmes of nature are justified and correct, but those presenting these kinds of rationales do not even reflect that they are presenting examples of animals, and here we are talking about human beings (if they possessed the ability to think, then why would they even present such absurd rationales!). There is simply no awareness of respect and humiliation in animals. There is no feeling of superiority and inferiority in them. Neither the bull has this sense that it is superior to a cow, nor is the cow conscious of being inferior to the bull. The stupidity of a donkey is a well-known saying, but no donkey has this sense and consciousness that it is a 'donkey'. Contrary to them, man is a possessor of consciousness and also aware of this. And when we say 'human', this includes both man and woman. When Allah had declared that We have created mankind as worthy of respect and dignity (*Takreem*) (17:70), He did not state that He has created men as worthy of respect and dignity and not women, or made some kind of differentiation in this *Takreem*. Remember! making something the reason for the humiliation and degradation of a conscious and sensitive being (i.e. a human being) for which he is not responsible, and over which he has no control to change, nor any possibility of rectifying it, does not suit that Allah Whose decree is that:

... We do not do injustice to human beings. (50:29)

Any kind of differentiation between one individual and another from the point of view of birth cannot be the work of Allah, *Rauf-ur-Raheem*. These differentiations and discriminations are inventions of ours, and we feel neither any fear nor any shame in relating these to Allah. If our beliefs and concepts are in accordance with the Quran and our society is shaped on Quranic values, then there will be neither any scenes of mourning in households at the birth of a girl,

nor will a woman have to weep over her '*Qismat*'. For the performance of natural duties of life there is a biological difference between a man and a woman, but there is no impact on the status as a human being between a man and a woman as a consequence of this difference. For this, the principle is this:

...the rank of everyone will be defined according to their deeds (conduct and character)...(46:19)

Whether man or woman (3:195), the difference which exists between a man and woman for the performance of natural duties, in this too nowhere is it said that according to this men are superior to women. It is stated that:

In certain matters men have an edge over women, and in certain matters women have an edge over men...(4:32)

Therefore, none among these species should think that because the other has different roles, how I wish that I had had that characteristic, or why did I did not become that! Nowadays, because woman is the victim, hence, sighing deeply, she muses how I wish I could have been a man. And those nations in which at some point in time women were in a position of authority (a matriarchy), at that time man must have been musing how I wish that I had been a woman. Through the equality of man and woman, the Quran ended both these disquieting sentiments. According to the Quran, the attributes of conduct and character became the reason for distinction and honour, not gender discrimination – we do not know when man who is engulfed in self-deceptions will rise to this level of the Quran!

16.8 The Birth of Boys and Girls

As far as the birth of boys and girls is concerned, in verses (42:49-50) of the Quran *Manya'sha* is translated as 'whoever Allah wishes' and *Qadeer'un* as 'He has control over everything', and based on these, the verses are translated as Allah gives girls to whoever He wishes, and gives boys to whoever He wishes, or gives both boys and girls, and keeps childless whoever He wishes. He is the One Who knows everything and is in control of everything - if there is no kind of differentiation in the status of a boy or girl (due to merely being a boy or girl), or there is conceived to be no disadvantage, then there can be no issue with the translation 'whoever He wishes'. But if a differentiation is kept between the two, which has been explained in detail earlier, then from 'whoever He wishes' an objection can definitely be levied, which has been presented in the form of a question by the repressed girls. According to the Quran, (as already stated) there is no difference

in status between man and woman from the point of view of being human. Furthermore, the meaning of *Manya'sha* is that the matter of progeny can be understood according to the law of *Mashe'at* of Allah. As far as being infertile is concerned, Allah Himself has explained in the account of Zakariya that his wife was infertile, and this is why he had given up any hope of progeny. But after that the Quran stated that:

That defect of his wife became removed, and a son (Yahya) was born to them.
(21:90)

Nowadays, infertility (both of the man and woman) can generally be treated. This is because man has understood the law of *Mashe'at* of Allah (law of nature) in this matter, and further research is taking place in this field. As far as the birth of either a boy or girl is concerned, there is also extensive research being carried out in this field in Europe. It is stated in Surah *Al-e-Imran*:

Shape is given to the foetus in the mother's womb according to the law of Mashe'at of Allah... (3:6)

According to this research, it has been established to date what that law of *Mashe'at* of Allah is according to which the shaping of the foetus (as male or female) takes place within the womb of a mother. Now they are busily engaged in researching how to make changes in these constituents, based on which the sex of the foetus is determined according to this law of Allah. Their claim is that if this research is completed, then it will be possible to give birth to a boy or girl according to one's choice. When Allah had declared that He has kept the potential in man to acquire knowledge about all the things of nature (2:31), then from this is meant that this ability is kept within man that, whatever laws of Allah are functioning in the domain of *Khalq* (which are called the laws of nature), he can acquire knowledge about all of them. And when he can acquire knowledge about them, then according to these same laws, by changing the composition of the created constituents, he can also give them ever new forms according to his desire. The number of varieties that man is creating in plants and animals are all before us. Therefore, if he claims that by acquiring knowledge of the law of *Mashe'at* of Allah, a boy or girl can be conceived according to one's wish, then it will be the manifestation of a link in that characteristic according to which Adam was declared to be deserving of prostration by the *Malaika* (2:34). The law of creation of Allah is immutable (30:30), and these kinds of changes are possible only by acquiring knowledge of this law.

In this way man is gradually becoming the ‘*Taqdeer* of Allah’²¹⁵ himself – but this is just the status as Adam. When Adam also brings his own self within the obedience of these laws which have been bestowed via *Wahi* (the Quran), then he will reach to the stature of a *Momin* – and there is no limit to the heights of the stature of a *Momin*. In the words of Iqbal:

Can anyone imagine the power in his arms?

Taqdeers transform from the gaze of a Momin.

²¹⁵ As per Iqbal: ‘It is futile to complain about *Taqdeer* from Allah, Why don’t you yourself become *Taqdeer* from Allah’.

17 Chapter 17 - *Dua* (Supplication)

We are now entering that valley of our investigative journey where (as they say) even the wings of angels get burnt. This aspect of our topic is related to the most delicate corner of the human heart. The relationship of supplication is purely with human emotions, and the instruction and emphasis of the Quran is that you should employ intellect and reasoning regarding all problems of life and reflect on them according to knowledge and vision. This is that tussle between intellect and emotions in view of which we have stated that now we are descending into that valley where even the wings of angels get burnt.

17.1 Universality of the Motivation for Supplication

When the first human beings appear before us on the stage of history, we find them supplicating to some supernatural, unseen power (or powers). And this scene appears before us continuously and successively in human history in every era, every period, every country and every nation. There may be thousands of differences in the life of nations, thousands of variations in their styles of living and modes of economic transactions, their civilisations and culture may be different from each other, they may speak different languages, their races may also be different. In summary, they may have nothing in common. Despite this, one thing will most certainly be found among them as a common theme – and that will be to supplicate to some supernatural power. Their beliefs about this power will be disparate²¹⁶, the customs and manners of supplicating to it will be different, their demands and requirements will also be at variance, but the motivating desire behind all these tangible forms will be just one – i.e. to intreat some unseen power for one's aid, to implore it for something. This is what is known as *Dua*. So much so, that even that which is called worship is in reality also *Dua* or the preface to a *Dua*. The conclusion of every programme of worship is with a *Dua*. Whatever offerings and donations are made before this unseen power or are pledged to it, are also linked conditionally to the acceptance of the *Dua*. Words such as 'if a certain desire of mine becomes fulfilled, then this is what I will do' are heard in every era. *Dua* is the support for every helpless being, the

²¹⁶ (Here) our aim is not to present the concept of Allah according to *Wabi*. It makes no difference in this with the variation and difference in time and space. We mean here the concept invented by the human mind.

refuge for every destitute being, the last hope for those who are despairing, the means of strength for the weak and feeble, a voice of life for the voiceless, a ray of hope for every dejected being, the means of relief for every distressed heart, an ointment for the healing of every aching heart, a hand of reassurance for every weeping eye, and a final abode of shelter for each one of those who is dispossessed and repulsed at every turn. When the world of intellect and reasoning terminates, then the world of *Dua* is initiated, and the most sincere and heartfelt supplication is that in which there is not the slightest contamination of intellect and reasoning. The higher the extent of absorption in a *Dua*, the greater will be the expectation of its acceptance – and absorption means that man becomes so engrossed in it that he becomes oblivious to the world and its environment.

Just think that if this is the state of a sentiment, then reflecting on it using intellect and reasoning and trying to comprehend it, and make it comprehensible based on knowledge and vision, if this is not called insanity then what else will it be? But the constraint of a Quranic student is that he cannot abandon the sphere of intellect and vision even in these delicate matters. That Quran which also emphasises reflection and reasoning in the reality of a metaphysical matter like the hereafter (2:219–220), how can it give permission for any issue, based on its sensitivity, to be handed over to a whirlpool of emotions – it teaches us to comprehend that too by using knowledge and vision, and directs us to understand it using intellect and consciousness, especially because this (*Dua*) has a profound connection with the issue of *Taqdeer*, and a greatly fundamental relationship to the practical world. We will examine this topic from this angle and will request our readers that they also try and understand it in this way, and do not allow their emotions (which may possibly suffer a knock at some places) to become a barrier in this. The journey is a difficult and thorny one – so difficult and thorny that even a visionary like Iqbal was compelled to say here that:

Iqbal easily passed through the stage of intellect,

But that intellectual became caught in the stage of love.

But we are hopeful that if in this goal we do not let go of the companionship of the eternal guidance from such as the Quran from our hands, we will reach the fountainhead of life very easily, because its declaration is:

Those who strive in Our (cause), We will certainly guide them to Our paths...(29:69)

17.2 The Common Meaning of Supplication

The usual meaning of *Dua* among us is taken to be that of requesting something from Allah. In this the concept of requesting is so dominant and profound that we commonly use the term ‘requesting a *Dua*’, whereas if we take the meaning of *Dua* itself as being that of ‘requesting’ then the combination of ‘requesting a *Dua*’ becomes meaningless and illogical. In the Arabic language the meaning of *Dua* is not that of requesting but is that of calling out to someone, drawing the attention of someone, and uttering something out loud. But since someone is usually called out to for assistance, hence its meanings are taken to be that of seeking help.

The style of the Quran is that it uses the same word for those people who are not followers of the pure Deen brought by the *Anbiya* but are followers of the tampered form called religion, and also in relation to those who are the followers of pure Deen (the Quran). When it uses a word in reference to the former, then it takes on the same meaning which is prevalent among them; when it uses this same word in reference to the latter, then from this it denotes the correct Quranic meaning. For example, it uses the word *Ilah* for both, but its concept among the religionists is different from that specified by Deen - or when it uses the word *Ibadat*, then among the religionists its meaning is that of worship and rites, but according to Deen its meaning is that of obedience to the commands and laws of Allah. In Deen there is no concept of worship, instead there is the concept of obedience and rule, and *Ilah* denotes that Supreme and Omnipotent Being Whose commands and laws are to be followed. Similarly, it uses the words *Da'a*, *Yad'u*, etc. for religionists, and from this is meant that belief according to which they beseech their goddesses and gods for aid. But when this same word is used in relation to Allah, then from this is not just meant ‘calling out to’ but also that of obeying Allah. In order to understand the Quranic meaning of *Dua*, it is essential to bear this fundamental difference in mind. First, we will discuss those places in the Quran in which this word is used to mean obedience.

17.3 *Dua* Means to Obey

It is stated in Surah *Al-Momin*: He (Allah) is alive and life-giving, there is no Sovereign except Him. Hence ‘call upon’ Him by specifying pure and exclusive obedience and authority to Him (40:65). (We will translate this as ‘calling upon’ Him, so that it is made clear that according to the Quran, the meaning of calling out to Allah is that of obeying Him). After this it is stated, (O Rasul!) Say to them

that I have been forbidden from adopting *Abudiyat* (the rule of and obedience to) to those whom you ‘call upon’ by forsaking Allah (40:66). Note that here the words *Dua* (calling upon) and *Ibadat* (obedience) are used with synonymous meanings. And at the end it is stated that I have been commanded that I only bow my head before the laws of *Rabb-il-Alameen* (40:65-66). The word *Usli’ma* has made the meanings of the words *Dua* and *Ibadat* completely clear i.e. to bow before the Divine laws.

In Surah *Maryam* in reference to the illustrious account of Ibraheem, it is stated that he said to his people that I sever my relationship with you and also with those whom you ‘call upon’ by forsaking Allah. I ‘call upon’ my *Rabb* (19:48). And after this it is stated:

‘...consequently, when he severed his relationship with them, and with those whom they used to worship...’(19:48-49)

Note here also that the words *Tad’una* and *Ya’Bu’duna* are used with synonymous meanings. In Surah *Al-Momin* it is stated that your *Rabb* instructs you to ‘call upon’ Me, I will answer your call. (The Quranic meaning of ‘answer your call’ will be covered further on). After this it is stated that those people who adopt rebellion against My *Ibadat* (obedience to Me, My rule), they will enter *Jahannum*, humiliated and disgraced (40:60). Note here, too, the words *Dua* and *Ibadat* appear with synonymous meanings.

It is stated in Surah *At-Tur* that the inhabitants of paradise will be asked by those who question, that what did you do due to which you became deserving of paradise. In reply they will say that before this (in the worldly life) we used to ‘call upon’ Allah (52:28). It is obvious that from this it can only mean obedience to the Divine commands, because no one can become deserving of paradise, and its inheritor, by merely calling out to Allah.

At one place it is stated to Rasulullah to say to them, that I only ‘call upon’ my *Rabb* and do not associate anyone with Him (72:20). Here, too, ‘calling upon’ means to adopt obedience to Allah and to not associate anyone else in this. (The meaning of *Shirk* is, in reality, obedience to a non-Allah authority). This was the general invitation of the *Anbiya*, to not ‘call upon’ anyone else other than Allah (26:213, 28:88, 72:18).

It is stated in clear words in Surah *Al-An’am* that, O Rasul! Say to these people that when I have received this kind of enlightened guidance from Allah, then after this how can I possibly ‘call upon’ a non-Allah entity. And I have been commanded that I should bow down before *Rabb-il-Alameen* alone and not obey anyone else’s commands (6:71) – the words Divine guidance and bowing your

head in front of this clearly demonstrate that the meaning of ‘calling upon Allah’ is that of obedience to His commands and laws.

17.4 The Prevalent Concept of *Dua*

After this we come to those verses in which the meaning of ‘calling upon Allah’ is taken (generally held belief) to be that of ‘making a *Dua*’. But before analysing these places, we consider it essential to examine those doubts and objections which arise from this meaning of *Dua*.

17.4.1 Doubts Which Arise from This

If the belief is that Allah has already pre-written whatever is to occur in human life, and that this is immutable (documented as *Qismat*), then *Dua* no longer retains any utility. For example, it is already decided about an individual that he will remain sick for a certain number of days and then will die, so then whether he himself or his relations now perform a thousand *Duas*, there can be no alteration in what is written as his fate (*Qismat*). He will remain sick for a certain number of days and then will die. But if it is said that, no, *Taqdeer* does change through *Dua*, then this belief that whatever is written as *Qismat* is immutable will be declared as being false. That decision which can be altered - whether through *Dua* or through planning – cannot be declared as being immutable. And together with this, according to this belief a strange sort of concept appears before us about Allah Himself, that first He formed a decision about a matter and declared that this decision of Ours is absolute, then after that He began to wait, so that if this individual (or his relations) appeals to Us, then We will alter our decision, and if he remains silent then this decision will become implemented. Just think what kinds of impressions are generated from this kind of concept about Allah.

If it is said that every matter is not decided in advance, rather Allah carries out the decision on every matter concurrently, then even further complexities arise from this. For example, there is a mutual court case between Zaid and Bakr on which the court has to give a verdict. Zaid is in the right (on *Haqq*) and Bakr is a liar. Both beseech to Allah that the decision is made in his favour. It is obvious that the *Dua* of both of them cannot be accepted, as inevitably the decision of the court can only be in the favour of one of them. The question is that whose *Dua* will be accepted from between these two. If we say that the *Dua* of the one who supplicates with greater humility will be accepted, then it is possible that Bakr will

supplicate with even greater submissiveness and meekness, so then the meaning of this will be that Allah will accept the *Dua* of the one who is not in the right (not on *Haqq*) and the court case will be decided against the one who is in the right!

And if it is said that Allah will accept the *Dua* of the one who is in the right (i.e. that of Zaid), then the question which arises from this is that if Zaid had not made a *Dua*, then what would have happened. Would Allah then have favoured Bakr because he supplicated, while Zaid did not make a *Dua*?

And if it is said that Allah will, in any event, aid the one who is a follower of *Haqq*, then firstly, this is contrary to what takes place in practice. Among us there are verdicts delivered on a daily basis which are against *Haqq* - so much so, that many innocents are even hanged on the gallows - but even if it is accepted that Allah is on the side of the one who is in the right, then in that situation *Dua* becomes meaningless. Whether the one in the right makes a *Dua* or not, Allah will nevertheless be with him; and the one who is not in the right, even if he makes a thousand *Duas*, Allah will not hear him.

If it is said that a mere *Dua* is not enough, rather planning is also necessary together with it, through a *Dua* plans become successful, then that same difficulty confronts us as a result of this. Zaid and Bakr both do their planning, but Bakr also does a *Dua* along with this, and Zaid does not do a *Dua*, so will the planning of Bakr then succeed in this situation because he also made a *Dua*, and Zaid will remain unsuccessful because he did not make a *Dua* (even though he was in the right).

These are those thoughts which arise in our minds because of the prevalent beliefs in relation to *Dua* among us. In this very connection that verse of Surah *Al-Baqarah* appears before us which is presented at a fundamental level regarding *Dua* and its acceptance, but whose incorrect interpretation adds further to these difficulties. That verse is this (and it is commonly translated as follows):

(O Rasul!) When My servants will ask you about Me, say to them that I am near them. When someone wishing to call to Me, calls upon Me, then I listen to his call and accept it... (2:186)

The difficulty which arises from this translation is that every day we witness that the deprived and oppressed, the poor and the weak, the destitute and helpless, people stricken by calamities, supplicate to Allah with great devotion and fervour, but none of their troubles are rectified. Their whole life is spent suffering under the burden of tyranny and oppression. Therefore, in view of this practical evidence, how can it be accepted that Allah hears the *Dua* of every caller who calls

upon Him, and fulfils his supplication. In response to this objection, what is commonly said is that though Allah hears each and every one, He only does that which is good (*Haqq*) for the one who is making the *Dua*. Therefore, if someone's *Dua* is not fulfilled, then he should assume that whatever has happened is what was best for him. But this answer (leaving aside the fact that because of this the oppressed, grief-stricken, unjustly treated human being cannot have any real satisfaction from this) becomes the cause for very far-reaching (destructive) consequences. An oppressed human being supplicates to Allah against the excesses of a tyrant, and then after this he observes that his condition has not improved even the slightest, instead the injustices of this brutal tyrant keep on increasing. (Then, according to the response noted above) he should understand that the injustice of the tyrant is good (*Haqq*) for him, and is entirely according to the Will of Allah. Therefore, he should now neither open his mouth against his tyrannies, nor should he think of taking any steps to try and protect himself against this. Just reflect how these kinds of beliefs become the cause for leaving tyrants unrestrained. Before this, (at least) feelings of revenge would have arisen in the hearts of the victims against these tyrants, and it would have been possible that they may have thought to take some steps to protect themselves against their excesses. But after this belief, the situation will be such that not only will the oppressed tolerate this excess and injustice with total peace in his heart, but will also pray in favour of the tyrant that he is creating better conditions for him. (What a bizarre state of affairs!). You have witnessed what kinds of beliefs tyrannical powers keep concocting for the subjugated and oppressed, so that they can slaughter them, and yet they should remain grateful to them.

17.4.2 Allah Hears the *Dua* of His Servants

Moving forward from here, this belief appears before us that Allah does not listen to everyone. He accepts the supplications of His favourite servants. The consequence of this belief is that on the revered doorstep of every '*Hazrat Sahib*' can be seen a crowd of people suffering from hardships and stricken by calamity, fervently appealing with hands clasped and many even kissing their feet, begging that, O *Hazrat!* do a *Dua* for me otherwise I will be ruined and doomed. And this process does not remain confined to the life of the '*Hazrat Sahib*', but after their demise (which is not called death, but is termed *Wasal* i.e. their joining with their beloved - i.e. God) becomes associated with their *Mazar-e-Sharif* (mausoleum), where requests and the fulfilment of wishes are implored from them by falling into prostrations. When they are questioned, in response they say that we are sinful people, hence we cannot have access to Allah: these holy people have access

to the court of Allah, hence Allah accepts their requests. This belief is held, and together with it that verse of the Quran is also recited which we have noted above, that:

When my servants enquire about Me, say to them that I am near to them. I respond to the call of everyone who calls... (2:186)

17.5 Belief that a Sultan is the Shadow of Allah on Earth

It is obvious that this belief about a plea reaching Allah via those who are near to Him is an invention of our era of *Malukiyat*. In that era it was embedded in the minds that '*Al-Sultan Zil'lillah Ala Al-Ard*' – the King is the shadow of Allah on earth. Therefore, whatever kind of 'shadow' was witnessed on earth, the same kind of 'original embodiment' about Him was imagined to be in the heavens. According to this shadow, the picture of Allah which appears before us is obvious. Just like the kings here, He too is thought of as an autocratic ruler (King of Kings) – neither constrained by any procedure, nor any law – whoever He wishes is captured, whoever He wishes is bestowed with rewards; whoever He wishes is forgiven, whoever He wishes is chained. In the same connection, the king's court appeared before them, in which first of all guards and gatekeepers were to be found standing. Then among the entourage of the court, the elite, officials, ministers, and close royal attendants would appear. For a common man it was simply not possible that he could make his application reach the grand Sultan directly. For this he needed the medium of the royal attendants. This is the same blueprint which we have drawn of the court of Allah. According to this, in order to make our supplication reach Allah, the requirement for those who were close to Him was declared to be necessary. This is that requirement in view of which there is a search for the medium of some '*Hazrat Sabib*' to make a *Dua* reach Allah. They make our request reach Allah and also offer intercession together with this. Allah accepts their plea and our request (*Dua*) becomes accepted. Together with the request, some kind of donation also has to be made, exactly as gifts are presented before kings, or their courtiers have to be 'serviced'.

This is that concept of Allah which royalty imprinted on our minds, and which gradually acquired the form of holy beliefs. With the passage of time, these beliefs became embedded in our hearts in such a way that if now something is said against them, then *Fatwas* of *Kufr* and *Al'haad* from the custodians of *Shariat* are imposed

on him. And the devotees of *Tareeqat*²¹⁷ begin to quake at the thought of who knows what wrath will descend from the direction of 'Hazrat Sabib', despite the fact that the proclamation of Allah about these people is that they are human beings (servants of Allah) just like you (7:194). And it is stated about those shrines to which they go and make supplications for the fulfilment of wishes, or which are declared to be the medium for conveying supplications to Allah, that you can call upon them a thousand times, they simply cannot hear you. And even if (supposing) they hear you, then they cannot even answer back (35:14). Whatever you call out repeatedly to them, they are totally unaware of it (46:5). They do not even have any knowledge about themselves regarding when they are going to be resurrected (16:21). Those who are ignorant even about their own condition, how are they going to listen to you, and what help can they extend?

17.6 Whose Supplications Are Accepted?

Now let us deal with this question of whose supplications are accepted, and how these are accepted. First of all ponder on this verse, one part of which we have twice quoted above, i.e. 'When My servants ask you about Me, then say to them that I am near to them. I respond to the call of everyone who calls upon Me.' After this it is stated that:

...say to them that if you desire that your wish is granted, then the procedure for this is that you should maintain full conviction in the truth of My guidance (laws) and obey Me (respond to My commands). In this way, the correct path of success will appear before you. (2:186)

It is stated in Surah *Al-Shura*:

... It is those who accept Eimaan and do Saleh deeds whose supplications are granted ... (42:26)

In other words, the essential and natural outcome of *Eimaan* and *Saleh* deeds is success, and this is the very purpose of *Dua*. It is stated in Surah *Al-Momin* that call upon Me, I will respond to your call, but listen carefully to this:

... Those people who adopt rebellion against obedience to Me (their supplications will not be accepted), they will enter hell, humiliated and disgraced. (40:60)

²¹⁷ A school or order of mysticism. (Ed)

In Surah *Al-A'raf*, together with calling to Allah it is stated:

...He does not approve of those who exceed limits. (7:55)

Remember! Those people who reject the truth of the laws of Allah, their supplications go to waste (40:50). For the acceptance of supplications the foremost condition is *Eimaan*, and know also regarding *Eimaan* that, 'Only those people will be considered to have truly accepted *Eimaan* whose condition is such that when the laws of Allah are presented before them, they bow their heads in acceptance, and then make full endeavours to make the attribute of *Rabubiyat* of Allah a cause for *Hamd* and appreciation, and they do not resort to transgression in obedience to Allah under any circumstances. In this striving, those people even make their sleep during the night *Haram* on themselves. In this way, they call upon Allah in both the states of hope and fear, and whatever Allah has bestowed upon them, they keep it available for the *Rabubiyat* of all' (32:15-16).

In Surah *Al-e-Imran* this reality is described in a very attractive style. We present the meaning of the related verses from *Maqboom ul Quran*. It is stated:

For those people who make use of intellect and insight, there are great signs in the creation of the universe, and the alternation of night and day, of the strength and comprehensiveness of the laws of Allah.

These men of intellect and vision, and possessors of perspicacity and insight, who in every aspect of life, whether standing, sitting, and lying down, keep the laws of Allah before their eyes, and keep reflecting and pondering on the creative programme of the universe, and after conducting their research, declare based on their observation and evidence that, O our Rabb! You have not created this system of the universe without any purpose or devoid of meaning, nor to establish destructive outcomes. Your Being is far beyond this, that you would create something without aim, and without purpose and need. Bestow on us this ability that (after research based on knowledge and practical experimentation, we draw correct benefits from the things of the universe, and in this way) we remain protected from destructive outcomes.

Those nations which remain deprived of the benefits of the things of the universe through not engaging in this kind of research, the fields of their efforts and deeds wither, and they live a life of humiliation and ignominy – and it is obvious that there is no friend and helper of such humiliated and disgraced nations.

*But it is also essential that by harnessing the forces of nature, these are not employed for the destruction of the world, instead these are brought into use for the universal *Rabubiyat* of mankind. Only that nation can do this which maintains a firm conviction in the guidance of Allah. Hence, the call of these men of intellect and vision is also*

that, O Rabb! We heard from one who calls, that, Come! Have Eimaan in the truth of the law of your Rabb. We have said yes to his invitation, and have accepted Eimaan in Allah.

After this, such yearnings arise in the hearts of these men of knowledge and Eimaan that (they make supplications), O our Rabb! If we commit some error or omission, then keep us protected from its harmful effects, and keep erasing the effects of our minor errors of judgement and planning mistakes, and make our end in the company of those people before whom the paths of the vastness and greatness of life have become opened.

O our Rabb! Bestow on us the bounties and successes which You have promised us through your messengers (via Wahi), and do not let us be humiliated and disgraced in the eyes of the world at the time of the manifestation of the results of deeds. We have conviction that You do not go against your promise. (3:190-194)

You have seen both the attributes of those who supplicate and also their supplications. Now listen to the response from the direction of Allah. It is proclaimed:

Allah answered their supplications, saying (We have heard your pleas, but keep in mind) We do not let the work of anyone who strives go to waste. Whether a man or a woman, everyone gets the full recompense for their deed...(3:195)

This is the response from the direction of Allah to supplications, and the condition for their acceptance.

17.7 Acceptance of Supplications of the *Anbiya*

This was the situation for ordinary *Momineen*. Now let us also examine the circumstances for the acceptance of supplications of the *Anbiya* so that the matter becomes even clearer.

It is stated about the messenger Nuh that when his nation fiercely opposed him, then he called upon Us, and We are the best to respond to supplications (37:75). What answer was given in response to his *Dua*, listen attentively to it:

We sent Wahi towards him, that you need to build an ark under our supervision, according to Our instructions...(23:27)

In other words, in response to the supplication of Nuh it was not stated that you should remain sitting comfortably, We will make arrangements for your

protection. He was informed of that technique through which he and his *Jamaat* could remain secure from the impending flood.

When Moses was instructed to go to Pharaoh and have Bani Israel released from his tyrannical grip, then sensing the challenging nature of this campaign and the dangers associated with it, he supplicated to Allah for many supporting means and resources, so that these become a source of strength for him. In reply to this it was stated that:

O Moses! Whatever you have requested, We have bestowed it upon you. (20:36)

It is obvious that when Allah has declared this to be the case, that your *Dua* has been accepted and your wish has been fulfilled, then there could not have been any need to do anything further. But along with this, he was also told:

Both of you (Moses and his brother Haroon) go to Pharaoh, and remember! Do not slacken even the slightest in bringing to fruition the programme which is given to you. (20:42)

At another place it is stated:

Allah stated that I have accepted your Dua, now you remain steadfast on this programme. And remember! You should never obey these people who do not possess knowledge of the reality. (10:89)

In the same way, Moses supplicated that the bounties of the world and the hereafter are bestowed on his *Ummah*; in response it was stated that this will take place, provided that these people obey the final messenger. There is no doubt in this that My *Rehmat* encompasses the whole universe, but it only becomes available to those among mankind who have conviction in the truth of Our laws; observe these fully, and provide the means of sustenance to others (7:156-157).

Zakariya made a *Dua* for a son, and he was given the glad tidings for this at the same time. But this *Dua* was fulfilled in this way, that the defect in his wife, due to which they did not have children, became rectified (21:90).²¹⁸

17.8 Thirsty on the Banks of a River

From these explanations you will have noticed that regarding the supplications about which it is stated that these have been accepted by Us, it is also emphasised

²¹⁸ In relation to the supplications of the *Anbiya*, further details will be covered further on.

that the physical resources and means required for their success should be provided, and to act with determination and steadfastness on your programme - not this, to make a supplication and to then sit back doing nothing. With respect to these kinds of supplications, it is stated in Surah *Ar-Ra'd* to just imagine a thirsty person who is standing on the edge of a river beseeching with both his hands outstretched, will the thirst of such a man become quenched? Never! The thirst of that person will be quenched who, stepping forward, cups his hands, fills them with water and drinks it. Remaining standing with hands outstretched towards the water will never alleviate thirst until doomsday:

...those people who deny the truth of the laws of Allah, their supplications go to waste like this. (13:14)

17.9 How are the Supplications of the Oppressed Heard?

At this point it will be said that whatever has been described is correct in its own way, but the question is whether in the dominion of Allah, is there no one to hear those who are suffering from oppression and destitution! Is there no solution to their sorrows, is there no remedy for their hardships, is there no one at all to hear their supplications? The Quran gives a response to these questions in the affirmative. It states that their supplications are both heard and accepted, but the technique for this is different. What is that technique - listen to it intently.

After striving year after year, and following persistent toil and efforts, the *Jamaat e Momineen* got their own State established in Madina, but the issue of the oppression of those Muslims who were trapped in Makkah at that time became even more intensified from the direction of the Koresh. In this condition of extreme helplessness and oppression, they prayed to Allah to help them, and to create some way of becoming free from the cruelty and tyranny of these oppressors. They supplicated to Allah, and do you know what Allah did? Allah addressed the *Jamaat e Momineen* of Madina, and told them that:

O Jamaat e Momineen! What has happened to you that you do not rise to fight in the path of Allah. Do you not hear how the people of Makkah, who are oppressed and persecuted, helpless and vulnerable, weak and feeble, men, women, and children, are imploring Us profusely that, O our Rabb! Take us out from this habitation whose inhabitants are so bent upon injustice and oppression. O flagbearers of the Islamic State! Do you not hear their supplications? And if you are listening, then what are you waiting for. Why do you not rise up to help them? Do you not hear with

what anguish they are imploring Us? They are asking Us to create some companion and helper for them, some supporter and benefactor (4:75).

Just reflect that the oppressed in Makkah are supplicating to Allah, what difficulty was there for Allah to help them directly and to free them from the enemy. But He did not do this. Instead He asked that State, that government, that system which was established in His name to implement His laws, that you need to respond to their call, you need to rise up to help them.

17.10 The Pleas of the Persecuted are Heard by the Islamic State

This is the correct procedure for the acceptance of the supplications of the persecuted. This same *Jamaat e Momineen*, which was now in Madina, remained the testing ground for endless tyranny by the Koresh of Makkah for thirteen years. During that period they would certainly not have made any fewer supplications to Allah! But since at that time there was no such system in the world which had come into existence to rescue the oppressed, there was no means available to aid them. They were continuously told to remain resolute on their programme with courage and steadfastness. One day your government will become established, then the solution to these difficulties will be automatically found. And in this way not only will your own hardships be resolved, but you will also become enabled to help those persecuted human beings who will make supplications for help and support from Us (Allah). Just see with what eloquence the Quran has described this reality at another place. It is stated:

Say, who is it that hears the supplications of those with distressed hearts and removes their troubles and worries! (What does He do for this) He grants you with a State and power... (27:62)

This is that procedure of Allah through which the troubles of the persecuted become rectified (it should be borne in mind that this power is also not bestowed by merely supplicating. This is the consequence of their *Eimaan* and *Saleh* deeds (24:55)). At another place it is stated about this same *Jamaat e Momineen*:

These are the people who respond and move forward on the call of their Rabb, who fully obey His commands and laws. They settle their affairs of State in the light of these through mutual consultation, and whatever means of sustenance Allah has provided to them, they keep it available for the general welfare of others. (42:38)

Have you noticed that here, too, the reference is to that system of government ('through mutual consultation') which is shaped to remove injustice and

oppression from the world. This was that method through which Bani Israel were freed from the injustices of the people of Pharaoh. It is stated in Surah *Al-Qasas*:

Pharaoh had resorted to great injustices in his country. In order to maintain the strength of his power, he used to keep dividing the people of his nation into different parties, and in this way he would keep making one party (Bani Israel) ever weaker (so that they would not be capable of rising up). What he used to do for this was that by humiliating and condemning those individuals of this nation who displayed signs of courage and mettle, he would render them ineffective; and those who did not possess these qualities, he would bring them forward and promote them. In this way, he kept creating imbalances among them.

In view of this transgression and these injustices of his, the decision of Our Law of Requital was that the nation which was being weakened so greatly in this manner should be bestowed with Our bounties i.e. they should be bestowed with leadership and success in the land, and they should be made possessors of such a piece of land where they have their own government. (28:4-6)

17.10.1 When Does the Need to Make a Supplication Arise?

Have you ever reflected when and where those who are persecuted and destitute need to resort to making a supplication to Allah? Its need arises in that wrong society where there is nothing which follows any procedure and law, there is injustice everywhere; rights are not accorded to the one who is entitled to them; where there is none to help the oppressed and stop the hand of a tyrant. Where there is none to help the individual who is left isolated in society; where lawlessness is such that living life is made unbearable for righteous people; where the state of chaos and self-centredness is such that if someone happens to fall down, all trample over him and walk on, no one cares to help him up; where no one is concerned about whose children are hungry and who has no clothes with which to cover himself. In a society where an impoverished invalid dies an uninvited death just because he does not have money to pay for the treatment, and a widowed mother is distraught at the thought of how will she avail herself of money for a coffin and burial of her dead adult son, and now what will happen to me – this is that society in which the poor and destitute have to resort to supplications to Allah at every step, because they have no hope of support other than this. (As we have already written) this is that very society, being moved by which, someone has said that:

The one who is not acquainted with hardship,

The one who has not been ensnared by pain and grief,

The one who has never faced suffering,

The one who has never awoken weeping in the night,

He does not know what a Dua is,

What does he know of what Allah is.

17.10.2 This Does Not Happen in a Balanced Society

When a society is shaped on the correct lines (the Permanent Values of Allah) then every matter in it is decided according to procedure and law. Everyone receives the rights they are entitled to, and that too without any anxiety or obstruction. There is no injustice to anyone, nor any deceitfulness. The needs of life in it for every individual continue to be fulfilled from the direction of the State, hence there is no one in it who is either dependent or unheard. No one in it finds himself isolated or without support. In such a society no one feels any need whatsoever to ask Allah for those things for which we feel needy and helpless at every step and beseech Allah.

17.10.3 A Very Comprehensive Declaration by Caliph Umer Farooq

This supreme reality has been described by Umer Farooq in such a comprehensive and profound manner that whenever we ponder on it, our soul becomes ecstatic. You have already seen one of his sayings i.e. when he decided to migrate from the plague affected area to that area which was not affected by plague, it was said to him that are you trying to escape from the *Taqdeer* of Allah. In reply to this he had said, 'Yes! I am going from one *Taqdeer* of Allah to another *Taqdeer* of His.' Now note another saying by him, and reflect with what great astuteness this companion of Rasul-ullah had comprehended the spirit of Deen. And what an eloquent style the Divine guidance had blessed them with to express such profound realities in words which could be commonly understood. He said, O people! listen and remember that:

I have been given the responsibility of Khilafat so that I can stop your supplications from reaching Allah.

Allah O Akbar! What a supreme reality which has been expressed in such simple words. The meaning is clear, that the aim of the establishment of *Khilafat* is that the need of any needy one does not remain unfulfilled. When this will be the

situation, then no individual will feel any requirement to supplicate to Allah for his needs. And if any individual is found to be supplicating to Allah for his need, then this will mean that I have been unable to fulfil my duty, and it is as if that individual is complaining to Allah against me. That is why I will have to immediately hold myself to account, and endeavour that no complaint against me reaches the court of Allah, that the need of the one who is needy becomes fulfilled before that.

17.11 The Supplications of *Momineen* Are Collective

This is the condition of that society which becomes shaped under the guidance of *Wahi*. In this no one ever has to supplicate to Allah for their individual needs. The one who receives everything automatically, what need will he have to beg for it! This is the reason that whatever supplications of the *Momineen* are mentioned in the Quran, they are all collective, not individual. For what purpose these collective supplications are made can be gauged from the supplications themselves. Note some of these entreaties of the *Momineen* here:

- (1) O *Rabb-il-Alameen!* Show us the straight and balanced path of life – the path of those people on whom your blessings were showered (1:5-7).
- (2) O our *Rabb!* Bestow on us *Hasnaat*²¹⁹ of this world and also *Hasnaat* of the hereafter (2:201).
- (3) The supplications of the *Mujabedeem*: O our *Rabb!* Bestow on us steadfastness and resoluteness so that there is no wavering in our steps. If we do err and commit some lapse, then provide us with protection from the harm due to it, and grant success to us against our opponents (2:250, 3:147-148).
- (4) O our *Rabb!* Overlook our lapses and errors, that we do not become buried under the burden of ignorance and darkness under which previous nations were buried. Bestow so much power on us that we can fulfil our responsibilities as a result. Bestow on us supremacy and victory over those people who are opponents of your system (2:286, 3:16).
- (5) O our *Rabb!* May this not happen that after finding the right path, our footsteps again step in the wrong direction. Keep providing us with the means of nourishment (3:8).
- (6) O our *Rabb!* Fulfil the promises which You have made to us through Your messengers (3:193-194).

²¹⁹ *Hasnaat* – the bounties and blessings of life. (Ed)

- (7) May we be counted among the category of *Salebeen* (5:84), not among the category of *Zalimeen* (7:47).
- (8) Decide between us and our opponents with *Haqq* (7:89) - this was the supplication of the messenger Shuaib and his followers. The *Anbiya* and their *Jamaat* used to make these kinds of supplications in their confrontations with their opponents.
- (9) The supplication of the followers of Moses was, O *Rabb!* Do not make us a testing board for the *Zalimeen* (10:85). This was the same *Dua* of the companions of the messenger Ibraheem (60:5).
- (10) Supplications to remain protected from the punishment of hell (25:65).
- (11) That our wives and children become the cause for the contentment of our hearts (that family life be one of peace and tranquillity) and that we may be declared as the flagbearers of the *Muttageen* (25:74).
- (12) O our *Rabb!* Provide us with protection and also to those of our brothers who have already left this life with *Eimaan*. O our *Rabb!* Do this, that no ill feelings should remain in our hearts about our brothers (59:10).
- (13) The supplications of the *Momineen* in *Jannat*, that our light may be completed (66:8).

This is the pattern of the supplications of the *Momineen*. All their supplications are collective, through which sentiments for the good of the whole society, *Jamaat*, and system, abound and become apparent. The question which arises here is that these prayers may be collective, but what transpires from them? What is their outcome? This is an important question, and merits deep reflection and understanding because this is that focal point around which the whole issue of *Dua* revolves.

17.12 What Happens Through *Dua*?

If any task is to be carried out, initially a desire emerges in our heart for this. In the world the basis of a deed is desire. The intensity of this desire will result in a corresponding strength in resolve, and the degree to which our resolve is strong, we will strive to the same extent for the attainment of this goal. Iqbal has written a poem for children, which we hear daily on the lips of every primary school pupil i.e. that poem whose first couplet is that:

*My desire appears on my lips as a Dua,
O Allah! May my life be like a beacon of light.*

Although whatever is recited in the first line of this verse is for children, the reality which is described in it is very profound i.e. when the heartfelt desire of man appears on his lips in words, then it is called a *Dua*. The deeper the desire, the more sincere is the *Dua*. The more intense the desire, the more ardent the call.

17.12.1 A Psychological Change Occurs

A student of psychology is familiar with this reality about the type of psychological transformation which takes place within man with the emergence of desires. And then whatever kind of desire it is, the psychological change is of the same kind. With this psychological transformation the outlook of man changes, and it is obvious that with a change in outlook, a change occurs in the outer world.

As I have stated in the foreword, in this book I do not wish to discuss the issue of *Taqdeer* and its intricacies from the philosophical viewpoint, because by doing this the matter will not remain generally comprehensible, and our journey will also become very protracted, otherwise what subjective idealism states is that there is no existence even of an external universe, its environment and circumstances are reflections of our hearts.

Nonetheless, it is a fact that with the intensity of desire of man, such a psychological change takes place within him that it alters his outlook, and the extent to which his desire becomes focused, his energies keep multiplying proportionately. The reason that one leap of love accomplishes everything is that this occurs due to the energy created by the intense desire.²²⁰ In this regard, when we look in somewhat greater depth at the Arabs of the 'era of ignorance', then we are amazed that despite being so devoid of civilisation and culture, and so unacquainted with philosophy and reasoning, how elevated was their vision and how profound was their intellect. And they only had one way to demonstrate this i.e. their language – *Lisan e Arabi e Mubeen*. When those Bedouins used to milk their animals, they used to leave some milk behind in the mammary glands. This milk used to become the catalyst for bringing down that milk which the animal had kept back higher up. The milk left behind like this was called *Al-Dayya'tu* by them. From this the meaning of *Dua* can be comprehended i.e. that state which becomes the cause for the stirring of human emotions, and for generating action

²²⁰ According to Iqbal: 'One leap of love bridged the whole gap, I had thought the earth and the heavens to be beyond reach.'

in him, from which his hidden potentials (concealed milk) manifest and emerge – this occurs due to the intensity of desire, for which another name is *Dua*.

17.13 Keep Your Desires Congruent with *Mashe'at*

In relation to desire, two aspects are fundamental. One is what kind of desire is it. Different kinds of desires keep emerging in the heart of man, but the criterion for a 'correct desire' which the Quran has kept before a *Momin* is that:

You should only desire that which Allah desires... (81:29)

Keep your desires in accordance with the *Mashe'at* of Allah. Whatever matter is considered to be wrong by Allah, you should also consider it to be wrong; whatever He considers to be good, you should also consider it to be good. You should strive to become that which Allah wishes you to become. Iqbal has stated about the Quran that:

This will make you all that which Allah wishes you to become.

Consider it in very clear words in this way, that the aim of all the endeavours and striving of human life is that the development of his self takes place. And as a criterion to verify to what extent my self has become developed, it should be seen to what degree the Divine attributes are reflected by it. One set of attributes of Allah are those which are specific to His Being e.g. He is the First and the Last. The other attributes are those which man can create within himself (within human limits) e.g. *Rabeem*, *Kareem*, *Rauf*, *Razzaq*, etc. The degree to which the conduct of an individual reflects the Divine attributes i.e. the degree to which his character and deeds display those attributes which are analogous to the Divine attributes, it can be deemed that his self is developing to the same extent. Hence, the primary goal for the human character and conduct is that only those desires should emerge in his heart which are in complete harmony with the *Mashe'at* of Allah. This is created by keeping the Quranic values in front. To that end, the key issue is a change in the desires of man. Iqbal has described this reality in a very captivating style when he states that:

Your Dua is that your desire becomes fulfilled,

My Dua is that your desire becomes transformed.

This change in human desires is not without the guidance of *Wahi*. Without the guidance of *Wahi*, the state of man is such that:

Instead that he prays for those things which are better for him, he keeps praying for those things which are harmful for him. The reality is that man happens to be very hasty. (17:11)

We witness the hastiness of man at every step in life – not only of others but also our own impulsive behaviour, and then also witness the subsequent embarrassment and regret. Therefore, the very first essential stage is that we check whether the desire which is arising in our heart is in line with the Permanent Values defined by Allah or not. If it is not, then by changing it we should bring it into line with the Permanent Value.

17.14 What is Meant by the *Dhikr* of Allah?

The next step is that this desire, this aim, this criterion, should be kept in front all the time. The conduct which the Quran has described of the *Momineen* is a reflection of this very reality. It states that these are the people who, standing, sitting, and lying down, keep the Divine laws of Allah in front of their eyes (3:191). As a result, maturity is developed in their desire and its purity is also not tainted. In Surah *Ha'meem* the Quran has described this reality in greater detail, when it states that:

Those people who declare with the total conviction and contentment of their heart that our Rabb is Allah, and then remain resolutely steadfast on this proclamation, not allowing even the slightest tremor in this, the Malaika descend upon them, telling them do not be fearful, do not grieve, and receive the glad tidings of this life of Jannat which has been promised to you. We are your companions and helpers in the life of this world, and also in the life of the future... (41:30-31)

After this it is stated that whatever you wish in it (*Jannat*) will take place; whatever you ask, you will receive. In this, every desire of yours will be fulfilled, every *Dua* will be granted (41:31).

‘Whatever you wish will be available’ - in this is a very great promise. It is obvious that according to these explanations which have already been noted, a *Momin* will only wish for that which will be in accordance with the Permanent Values (Allah’s *Masbe’at*). Hence, he will never even desire anything which is wrong, and he will only ask for that which Allah has made a promise to give the *Momineen* i.e all kinds of bounties, successes, *Rizq e Kareem*, control and supremacy, power and authority i.e. all the blessings of a Quranic society. The state of affairs in it will not be that:

I accorded You with reverence, despite your disregard,

*That which was not desired, happened; and that which was desired, never happened,
The only complaint I have with Providence is that I received that which I did not desire,
And that which I desired, I never received.*

All this happens in a society based on *Jahannum*, this does not happen in a society based on *Jannat* in which whatever a *Momin* desires, that happens; whatever he asks for, he receives it – this is because every demand and desire of his is in line with the *Masbe'at* of Allah.

Have you noticed what kinds of supplications the *Momineen* make, and how these are fulfilled! These supplications are of that *Jamaat* which rises up in the world for the shaping and strengthening of the system of Allah, and continues to traverse the journey of life in the light of the *Wahi* of Allah. In their breasts is a multitude of virtuous desires, in their hearts a yearning for the achievement of their goal, a clear aim before their eyes, strength in their arms, and resoluteness in their steps. They are those people whose selfs are a reflection of the Divine attributes (within human limits). The deepest desire of a *Momin* is that his thoughts, goals, aims, wishes, points of view, and ultimate vision should all become compatible with the *Masbe'at* of Allah. I had presented this very reality in the following words in my book, *The Human Self and Iblees*:

What is Dua? The beautiful desire to become mutually harmonious with the ultimate melody of the musical voice of nature; the agitated desire to become one colour with the heart enchanting beauties being manifested of the unveiling reality; the fervent, intense desire in the breast of a partridge to clasp the moon within its breast like the Milky Way; the enthusiasm and excitement in the heart of a moth to absorb the style and manner of the euphoric and dancing flame of the burning torch i.e. the fierce desire of the human self to continue to make its finite expanse ever wider, and for the satisfaction of this desire, the beautiful demand of the dewdrop for the wings of an eagle from the rays of the sun. If we observe closely, then we will see that Eimaan, Dua and deed, are all rays of one flame, and petals of one flower. Eimaan is the name of the acknowledgement of this truth that the secret of the elevation of human character is concealed in mutual harmony with the centre of goodness and virtue of the worldly system. Dua is the intense longing for this harmony and one colour, and action is the live manifestation of this craving and the resolute pursuit for its achievement.²²¹

These are those supplications of the *Momineen* which become granted. It is through their very hands that the establishment of the Divine system comes to pass – that system in which no one has to wake up during the nights to beseech for their individual needs and requirements. This system ‘prevents their

²²¹ *The Human Self and Iblees*, Section 9.22, p 236.

supplications from reaching Allah'. It ensures such an arrangement so that the *Dua* (plea) of every needy one is fulfilled before it strikes against the throne of Allah.

As far as the support of the *Malaika* is concerned, for this the Quran has clarified that such a psychological change occurs within man from this, due to which he achieves contentment of the heart (8:10). And the consequence of this contentment of the heart is that resoluteness and steadfastness is created in his steps (8:11). This is what happens as a result of *Dua* i.e. a psychological change occurs within man himself due to this. How enviable is that manner in which Iqbal has expounded such a lofty and profound reality in two verses, from which a more comprehensive and alluring style cannot be envisioned – listen, and revel in it too. He says that:

*With your Dua, destiny (Qadha) cannot be changed,
But it is possible from this that you may change.*

And we consider that this is the final word in this regard. (The word *Qadha* here means the law of Allah).

17.15 Supplicating for Each Other

As far as the issue of making a *Dua* for each other is concerned, this is in reality the expression of our good intentions in their favour, through which they receive solace. In the sphere of human affairs, this is called moral support. Due to this a kind of psychological force becomes awakened in this individual himself, the effects of which are extremely pleasant. The invalid whose face lights up on seeing the one whom he loves more than life itself (in the words of the poet Ghalib), one can imagine the effect that uttering a few phrases of consolation, or a few words of appreciation, creates in his heart. This is the same situation for the expression of a few good words for the dead; though it makes no difference to the deceased, it lessens the grief and sadness of those he leaves behind. This is the benefit of these kinds of societal interactions. Due to this a human being does not feel isolated within society, his morale remains high during even the most trying of circumstances. This is why Rasul-ullah was informed that when these people bring their donations to you, after accepting them, say appreciative words to them, appreciate this deed of theirs, say a *Dua* for them. This is because:

... Your Dua is a cause for great satisfaction for them... (9:103)

17.16 The Individual Supplications of the *Anbiya*

In the Quran there is also mention of some individual supplications of the *Anbiya*. For example, the messenger Ayub called on Allah during his state of extreme distress, and Allah rectified his suffering (21:83-84). The messenger Yunus called upon Allah in a state of torment due to his sorrow and pain, and he achieved freedom from his trouble (21:87-88). Firstly, the Quran has not provided details about what kinds of measures were created to remove their troubles and distresses, and secondly (and this is a fundamental point), *Nabuwat* is such a status²²² whose form and constitution it is not possible for a non-*Nabi* to comprehend. We simply cannot know what kind of mutual relationship there was between Allah and a *Nabi*. How Allah communicated with the *Nabi*, how the *Nabi* talked to Allah. Hence, it is futile to discuss and argue about that reality which we simply cannot comprehend! In any case, after the ending of *Nabuwat*, this question cannot even arise about what is the nature of the mutual relationship between Allah and a *Nabi*. After the ending of *Nabuwat*, the connection between Allah and human beings is established according to this *Wahi* of Allah which is preserved within the Quran. Other than this, there is neither the possibility nor any means of creating a direct connection with Allah. The one who makes a claim to this is essentially proclaiming *Nabuwat*, no matter what kinds of words or terminology he employs for this. Since a proclamation of *Nabuwat* is now *Batil*, hence claiming a direct connection with Allah is also wrong. Concepts such as *Kashf*, *Alhaam*, etc. are all non-Quranic and borrowed from others. These words have not even appeared in the Quran.

The personal *Dua* of Rasul-ullah which has appeared in the Quran is the most sublime specimen of a beautiful desire for every human being until the Day of Judgement. He was told that:

...*Say! O my Rabb! Bestow on me abundant knowledge. (20:114)*

If only the followers of Rasul-ullah had made their hearts the abode of this one desire, what would their stature have been today!

17.17 *Dua* is *Rehmat* and Despair from *Rehmat* is *Kufr*

²²² And now we should say 'was such a status' since *Nabuwat* ended with Rasul-ullah.

It is stated that by not having belief in *Dua* and its acceptance, man becomes hopeless of the *Rehmat* of Allah, and being hopeless of the *Rehmat* of Allah is *Kufr*. Those who say this do not know what is meant by *Rehmat* according to the Quran, and who it is who becomes hopeless of it. In order to understand its correct meaning, bring to mind once again the meaning of *Tauba* which we have previously described.

In the fiery *Shariat* of the Jews, there was no room for *Tauba*. If anyone committed some error, he had to definitely undergo its punishment, there was no possibility of rectifying it. This was the same situation among the Hindus according to the doctrine of 'Karam Yug'. The individual who had committed evil deeds in his previous life had to suffer the punishment for these in the present life. There was no way to remain protected from this in the present life. If he did good deeds, then their fruit would be received in the next life.

The belief of Christians is that every human child arrives in the world with the burden of the sin of the first father and mother (Adam and Eve) on his back, and whatever he may do, he cannot obtain deliverance from this stain. When God saw that in this way all human beings will end up in hell, then He felt compassion for his creation. Therefore He sent His 'only son' to the world, who by giving his life on the cross, paid for the atonement of the sins of mankind. After this the situation became such that those people who accept belief in the atonement of Jesus, they will achieve salvation. This is the reason that their belief is that salvation does not occur through deeds, but occurs through faith. When it is said by them that God is Mercy, this is what is meant.

17.18 The Correct Meaning of *Rehmat*

The world was becoming an abode for these contradictions and paradoxes i.e. where there was *Adl*, there was no *Rehm*, and where there was *Rehm*, there was no concept of *Adl* - then the Quran arrived, and declared on arrival that both these beliefs are wrong. Both *Adl* and *Rehm* are present in the Law of Requit of Allah, but the concept of *Rehm* in it is not that which exists among Christians. Its concept of *Rehm* can be understood through this example, that an individual puts his hand into fire and it becomes burnt, and due to this he suffers an agonising punishment (pain). This is *Adl*, but that Allah Who has placed this property in fire that it can burn a hand, has also created such things through which the one who is burnt can be treated. The creation of such things is called the *Rehmat* of Allah. But only he can obtain benefit from these things, who after being burnt by fire, turns towards these things. In Quranic terminology this is termed as *Tauba* i.e. the effort and

endeavour to rectify the damage which has been caused from taking a wrong step. The one who despairs of the *Rehmat* of Allah is the one who does not make efforts and endeavours to rectify the ill effects, who after his error does not try to remedy it. We have already stated that (according to the allegorical account of Adam) an error was made by Adam and also by *Iblees*. When Adam realised this, he was very remorseful for his action and he readied himself for the rectification of the ill effect. He took advantage of the *Rehmat* of Allah. *Iblees* refused to accept his crime and remained stubborn in his transgression – he became deprived of the *Rehmat* of Allah.

This is the Quranic meaning of *Rehmat* i.e. the provision for rectification in the Law of Requitul – see with what clarity the Quran explains this meaning. It is stated in Surah *Al-Zumr*.

O Rasul! Say to those of My servants who have committed a wrong against themselves to not be hopeless of the Rehmat of Allah. Allah has created the means of protection from the harm resulting from every error. He is the bestower of the means of protection and extends Rehmat in this way. (The procedure for this is that) if you have stepped in the wrong direction, then return from there and come to the path proposed by Allah i.e. bow down before His commands and laws, before that the time arrives for the tangible results of your errors. In that event, no one will be able to save you from harm. (39:53-54)

At another place this principle has been clarified in these words:

O Rasul! When those people who have Eimaan in the truth of Our laws come to you, say to them that your Rabb has made Rehmat mandatory on Himself... (6:54)

What is that *Rehmat*?

... That Rehmat is that if someone among you unwittingly makes a mistake, and after that he is repentant on this and reforms himself, then he will find Allah to be Ghafoor and Raheem. (6:54)

This is the aim of the *Rehmat* of Allah. But this does not mean that having carried out *Taubah* once, one can keep doing whatever one wishes, and there will be no accountability. The Quran states that:

In this way Allah will bless you with His Rehmat. But if you return to your wrong way, then Our punishment will also return and come in your direction... (17:8)

It is obvious that only he who has conviction in the Law of Requitul of Allah will repent and reform (*Taubah*) after his mistake. The one who does not even have any conviction in this, that a wrong path is destructive, what reformation of himself

can he carry out! These are the people about whom it is declared that they are hopeless of the *Rehmat* of Allah. It is stated in Surah *Al-Ankabut*:

Those people who reject the laws of Allah and the Law of Requital, they remain hopeless of the Rehmat of Allah... (29:23)

At another place it is stated:

... The people who are hopeless of the Rehmat of Allah are the ones whose state is such that if they are treading on the wrong path, even if they are warned a thousand times, they will continue on that same path, they will never come to the right path. (15:56)

Contrary to this, see also who are the candidates for the *Rehmat* of Allah:

Surely, those people who accepted Eimaan, and they migrated and did Jihad in the path of Allah, are the people who can be hopeful of the Rehmat of Allah. It is for them that Allah's attributes of Ghafoor and Raheem will become manifested. (2:218)

These are the people who become deserving of Divine *Rehmat*, not those who keep sitting with their hands in their laps doing nothing waiting for tomorrow to come, or at the very most, keep reciting the *Tasbeeh* of *Astaghfar-ullah*²²³. Note what the Quran states in this regard:

*Even among the Jamaat e Momineen, those people who are sluggish - excepting those who are disabled, and those people who do Jihad with their life and possessions, can never be equal. Allah has given superiority in rank to those who do Jihad with their life and possessions over those people who remain sitting due to idleness. It is true that all will benefit from the bounties of this system, but compared to those who lag behind, the ranks of the Mujahideen are surely very lofty - higher ranks, and protection (*Maghfirat*), and nourishment (*Rehmat*) – surely, Allah is Ghafoor and Raheem. (4:95-96)*

And finally, bring those verses of Surah *Al-A'raf* before you in which it is stated that Moses supplicated to Allah that He should bless Bani Israel with His *Rehmat*. In reply to this, it was stated that there is no doubt that Our *Rehmat* encompasses the whole universe, but among human beings it can only fall into the share of those who adopt *Taqwa* (follow the laws of Allah), execute *Zakat* (i.e. provide the means of nourishment to humanity), and have *Eimaan* in the truth of Our laws, and in the subsequent era obey that *Ummi* (unlettered) *Nabi* whose eminent mention will be found in the Torah and Injeel (Bible). He will give the command

²²³ This is taken to mean 'May Allah forgive me.' Its correct meaning is seeking the means of protection from Allah through the practical application of His laws. (Ed)

for *Maroof* (righteousness) and will forbid from *Munkar* (evil). He will declare that which is pure and good as being *Halal*, and will declare that which is impure and harmful as *Haram*, and will remove all kinds of (non-Allah) yokes of enslavement from their necks in which they are shackled, and will remove and throw down those heavy burdens from their heads under the weight of which they are being buried - this *Rehmat* of Allah which is encompassing the whole expanse of the universe like blessed shade will only be available in this way - there is no other way to benefit from it than this (7:156-157).

These are the very people whose supplications are accepted, and these are the people upon whom the shade of the blessed clouds of the *Rehmat* of Allah is cast. *Dua* is the name given to calling upon the law of Allah at the crossroads of life, the response to which can be found from the court of the Divine Book by every one of those individuals who makes an effort to understand it through knowledge and vision, and by purifying the intellect and vision, embeds it in the depths of his heart. As a result of this, that transformation occurs in his inner world on which revolutions in the external world depend – due to this change, ‘the *Taqdeer* of man changes’. Iqbal states:

If your self changes, then the external world changes accordingly,

This is the immutable law of Allah and His *Rehmat*. This is why He has called His Book a *Rehmat*, and also called the one who presented it a *Rehmat*.

18 Chapter 18 - Summary of the Topic

(The Muslim freed himself from action by making Taqdeer an excuse)

It is worth casting another glance at everything that has been presented in the previous pages so that all aspects of this important and delicate issue appear perspicuously before us once again, and so that the Quranic realities become fully registered in the mind.

18.1 Inert Things, Plants and Animals

Allah created the universe and defined and set the scales from the beginning for the path on which the earth and heavens, rivers and mountains, vegetation and rocks, fire and water, so much so that everything organic and inorganic was to tread. After that life was initiated, and (according to the Quranic descriptions) passing through different valleys, traversing its evolutionary stages, it reached the animalistic form. In this link of the process of creation too, everything only had one path before it on which it was to tread, willingly or unwillingly. In other words, up until this stage of the creations, no one had the choice that it could select some path for itself. When the path itself was only one, then the question of choice and selection could not even arise.

18.2 The Human Form

But when it moved forward from here, then life took a new turn, and it appeared in such a form which the Quran has termed as '*Khalq e Akbir*' – a new kind of creation. This was the human form. It is stated in Surah *Al-Mu'minun*:

We began the creation of man from a quintessence of clay (inert matter). Then Our creative programme gradually reached that stage where procreation takes place through reproduction. In this way we made it a fertilised ovum, which rested in the uterus and became established within the female, and this clot We made into a lump (into a leech-like form). Then out of that lump, a foetus of flesh, and then a skeleton of bones was created in it, and then this skeleton was covered by a layer of flesh...

(23:14)

Up until this point animals are also included equally in the programme of creation. The young of every animal passes through these same stages in the uterus of the mother but after that:

...then We turned it into another creation altogether... (23:14)

What was this creation of another kind? What was the difference between this and animals? What was that characteristic on the basis of which this creation became distinct and superior to the previous links of the creative programme? Regarding this it is stated that Allah infused His ‘*Ruh*’ into it. In the Arabic language, energy is called *Ruh*. Hence the meaning of this characteristic is that Allah breathed a quintessence of Divine energy into it. What happened as a consequence of this? It was bestowed with hearing and sight (senses) and mind, due to which it became capable of reaching some decision by analysing whatever information reached the mind via the senses (perception) (32:9).

The purpose for which this new procedure was adopted is explained in Surah *Al-Dabr* in these words:

He is bestowed with hearing and seeing, then he is shown the path, and is informed that whoever wishes can adopt it, whoever wishes can reject it. (76:2-3)

At another place it is stated:

We placed both paths before him, and told him that he can choose whichever path he wishes from them. (90:10)

The creation before this only had one defined path before it, therefore the question of choice and intent simply never arose for them. Two paths (possibilities) were placed before man; in other words, man was made possessor of choice and intent. This was that great characteristic which was not available to any creation before him, only man was endowed with this. Within the universe only the Being of Allah was the possessor of choice and intent. Now Allah also bestowed one part of His chief attribute to man, which has been termed ‘*Nafk e Ruh*’ – this is the choice and intent of man, as a result of which there is dynamism in the pulse of the universe, and turbulence in the continuously flowing stream of life. Without choice and intent this world would have been a dull abode (zoo) of mountains, rivers, a colourless collection of forests, and beasts, cattle, and birds. There would have been no sparkling light of beauty and vibrant flame of love in its destiny.

18.3 The Enthralling Exhibitions of Choice and Intent

All these are the enthralling exhibitions of ‘*Nafk e Ruh*’ because of which this wilderness has become an arena of colour and fragrance. If you look at the

metaphorical account of Adam, the first introduction to Adam is with this, that both the forces of prostration and transgression have been created and kept within him. It is this very power (of choice and intent) which is the reason for his success and eminence. It is due to this that he is worthy of obedience from the *Malaika* and director of other forms of creation. If, in the tussle of life, there are exhilarating attractions, it is owed to this; and if in the ups and downs of life there are colourful circumstances, it is due to its presence. If slumbering melodies awoken in the strings of the continuity of life as a being, it is because of this strumming; and if in the bland water of the spring of life, azure and fragrant waves arise, it is because of this agitation. If there is a beating heart in the breast of the universe, it is because of this dynamism; and if there are tantalising energies of tumultuous desires in his heart, these are due to this same drive. All in all, if man is man, then it is due to this; and if this world is a world, then it owes itself to this. If this choice and intent had not existed, then man would have been a statue of stone, or just another ordinary thing among the things of the universe. He would never have been worthy of the obedience of the *Malaika* or capable of harnessing the universe. The truth is that virtue is only that virtue which is enacted despite possessing the power for evil. Obedience is only that obedience which ensues despite having the power to transgress. Appreciation of a display of eminence is only worthy from the one who is an embodiment of loftiness himself. There is joy only in the bowing down of that head on whose forehead the eminences of the whole world are reflected. The one who does not have the power to avenge, what virtue is there in his forgiveness. From the one who does not have the courage to stand up as an equal, his bowing in greeting is a display of slavery. The one who does not have the seat of power beneath his feet, his being saintly is equivalent to beggary. Exercising self-control despite possessing authority is the embodiment of the eminence of humanity.²²⁴ It is from this that strength becomes produced in the self, and only the one in whose self there is strength can declare with pride that:

*Despite inner turmoil, composure is being displayed,
There is self-control over the heart through choice.*

18.4 The Universe is Enabled to Be Harnessed

²²⁴ In view of the importance of this subject, I referred to a page in my book, *The Human Self and Iblees*, (pp 55). I have taken these words from there. Further details will be found in this book. In the birth of man, Adam, *Iblees*, etc. are written about in detail.

This was that human being, possessor of the immense power of choice and intent, about whom it is stated that:

*Whatever is in the earth and heavens, Allah has subjected it all to you
(Sakhar'alakum)...(45:13)*

We can comprehend the *Tafsir* (exposition) of *Sakhar'alakum* with greater ease and transparency compared to previous generations. At the time that I am writing this, I am listening to this news from the United States that the American space rocket, the Appollo 14 mission, has returned successfully and safely with its astronauts.²²⁵ What is the secret of this capability and accomplishment? Just this, that everything in the universe is obeying a well-defined law, and man has been bestowed with this potential that he can discover these laws. In scientific terminology these laws are called the laws of nature. But in the terminology of the Quran these will be called Divine *Mashe'at*, and the functioning of these things in obedience to these laws will be called their *Taqdeer*.

As far as man is concerned, there are two levels in his life. One is the physical life which man and animals have in common. But the second level of his life is that which may be called 'human life'. For this life there is another code of laws, which are known by the term Permanent Values. This code of laws is bestowed through the laws of *Wabi* and is now preserved within the Quran. If man keeps these forces of nature, which have been subjected to him, under the obedience of the Permanent Values, then through this his human life becomes developed. This is what is called the growth and development of the self.

18.5 The Status of a *Momin*

Merely harnessing the forces of nature is the status of Adam (i.e. the status of man). But to keep these forces under the obedience of the Permanent Values of Allah is the status of a *Momin*. In other words, an ordinary man keeps his choice and intent under his desires and goals, while a *Momin* uses it in the light of the *Wabi* of Allah. Through this his latent potentials become manifested in such a way that other human beings cannot even conceive of this. This was that very *Jamaat* which the Quran had called *Al-A'lowna* (the most superior) (3:139).

In the words of Iqbal:

²²⁵ On the morning of 10th February 1971.

*A Momin always desires to be the most eminent,
He does not like anyone to be even his equal.*

18.6 Revenge on the *Jamaat e Momineen*

This was that motive to be superior in eminence spurred on by which the *Jamaat e Momineen* of the initial era overturned the thrones of Qaiser and Kasra in a matter of days, and wrapped up the powerbase of every system of *Batil* in the world – and it was this very thing which became a thorn in the side of those tyrants with vested interests, and they determined to take revenge for their defeat and failure due to this *Jamaat*. Following profound analysis, they reached this conclusion (and this was such an open reality which did not require the wisdom of Aristotle to comprehend it) that this is the effect of the teaching of the Quran, which has filled their veins with immense energies of dynamism and fire, and disclosed this secret to them that man writes his destiny with his own hands, and constructs his future using the strength of his own arms. Consequently, they realised that until the time that they are not caused to be estranged from this ideology, it will not be possible to take revenge on them. In that era, this belief of the Magians that the destiny of man is predetermined which no one has the power to change, was prevalent in every religion and every nation – the Quran was a challenge against this life extinguishing and humanity destroying ideology. Consequently, through a well thought out and orchestrated conspiracy, they started to spread this ideology, subconsciously and imperceptibly, among the Muslims. In the first place, they entangled them in the philosophical complexities of *Jabr* and *Qadr*, and in convoluted intellectual discourses; and after this, through fabricated *Abadeeth*, the doctrine of *Jabr* was clothed in the deceptive attire of religious piety. This was that era when the very first *Tafsir* (*Tafsir e Tabari*) of the Quran was written, and the very first history of the initial era (*Tarikh e Tabari*) was compiled. The basis for both of these (*Tafsir* and *Tarikh*) was oral narrations which were attributed to Rasul-ullah or his honourable companions. The collections of *Abadeeth* were also compiled during this same era. In this way, gradually this doctrine (of *Jabr*) also acquired religious authenticity, so much so that it was made a constituent of *Eimaan*.

18.7 The Ideology of *Taqdeer* Was Made Commonplace

Due to this ideology of *Taqdeer*, this idea continued to become widespread that government and adversity, respect and humiliation, wealth and poverty, prosperity and hardship, success and failure, are all in the hands of Allah. Only that happens which Allah wishes, nothing happens as a result of human intellect and planning. Not even a leaf can move without the command of Allah. Hence, what man needs to do is to remain contented in whatever condition Allah keeps him; remaining contented with the Will of Allah is the style of a *Momin*. Whichever individual is viewed by you as being cruel and oppressive, he is the means and instrument for bringing the *Mashe'at* of Allah into implementation, hence no feeling of opposition or hatred against him should awaken in your heart. The arrow which pierces someone's heart is not blameworthy, the one who is responsible for it is the one in whose hand is the bow. Hence the oppressed and destitute should bear all kinds of injustices and exploitation happily because this is the Will of Allah. Bringing any word of complaint on the lips against this is an affront to the glory of Allah.

This was our era of *Malukiyat*, and it is obvious that these kinds of dogmas suit dictatorial rulers very well. As a result of these they sit back tranquilly to keep doing whatever they wish, because not even the thought of any complaint can arise against their tyranny and oppression in the hearts of those who are unjustly treated and downtrodden. And then this is also a reality that *Malukiyat* and the religious priesthood have always been intimately linked like the body and the soul. No Pharaoh can maintain his tyrannical rule without the support of a Hamaan²²⁶. This is why it was not at all difficult to obtain religious support for these beliefs. This is that reality to which Iqbal refers in his famous poem, *Iblees Ki Majlis e Shura*,²²⁷ in which *Iblees* is shown to be stating proudly that:

I taught the lesson of Taqdeer to the poor.

18.8 The Devastations of Mysticism

In order to dress up these authentications with even more holiness, a destructive *Maslak* like *Tasawwuf* (mysticism) was introduced among Muslims. (It should be made clear that the word *Tasawwuf* neither appears in the Quran, nor is there any trace of it in our initial era – this is also an addition from our era of *Malukiyat*). According to this *Maslak*, not only was this opium being fed to the oppressed and

²²⁶ Hamaan was the head priest under Pharaoh. (Ed)

²²⁷ *Iblees Ki Majlis e Shura* - the consultative council of *Iblees*. (Ed)

destitute that whatever is happening to you is taking place due to the Will of Allah, there is no fault whatsoever in this of these tyrannical rulers, instead they even went so far as to say that (Allah forbid) in a way Pharaoh had the right that he should declare that 'I am your *Rabb*, most high' (79:24), because Pharaoh was not detached from the Being of *Haqq* although his appearance was that of a Pharaoh.²²⁸ The poet Hafiz did not dare to go that far, and satisfied himself by saying that:

Although the (original) sin was not owed to our misdeed, O Hafiz!

You ought, nevertheless, to proceed to be polite and courteous,

And admit that the sin was indeed ours!

Iqbal said to *Murshid* Rumi²²⁹ that the ideology of *Taqdeer* is very insolvable, to which he replied that it is not such a complex issue. The matter is clearly evident that the ability to fly is available to an eagle and falcon, as well as to a vulture and crow. On the basis of their inner nature, falcons acquire access to kings, while vultures and crows, because of their natural instinct, roam around desperately scavenging for carrion. Maulana Rumi made an observation about birds which have been created constrained by the Creator of nature, and applied the outcome of this observation of his to man, to whom Allah has given wings and instructed to use these as you wish.

In this way *Tasawwuf* dissolved the ideology of *Taqdeer* into the very particles of the blood of Muslims. The technique of *Tasawwuf* is that it presents its beliefs and concepts through tangible metaphors and allegories, and has these acknowledged as principles. These metaphors and allegories are very alluring and mesmerising – this is, in fact, 'poetry'. These metaphors become glued to the heart and mind of man, and presuming them to be established principles, he becomes infatuated with these beliefs. Proponents of *Tasawwuf* never allow these to be scrutinised using logic and reasoning, because according to them, intellectual reasonings are totally untrustworthy – they are well-known to be deadly enemies of intellect and reasoning, in fact, also of knowledge and vision.

Through the non-Quranic interpretations of *Tawakkul*, *Sabr*, *Shukr*, remaining contented with the Will of Allah, etc. the *Maslak* of *Khankai'yat* (monasticism) imposed death on the nervous system of this nation in such a way that it became reduced to a heap of ashes before our very eyes. These are those death inviting

²²⁸ Fusus ul Hukm, Sheikh Akbar, Mohiuddin Ibne Arabi.

²²⁹ Maulana Jalaluddin Balkhi, known in Persia as Jalal ad-Din Muhammad Balkhi and in the West as Rumi, was born on September 30, 1207, in Balkh Province, Afghanistan, on the eastern edge of the Persian Empire. Iqbal was inspired by some of his poetry and addresses him here as *Murshid* (spiritual teacher, guide, instructor). Here, he is asking the question rhetorically. (Ed)

dogmas which are continuing to prevail among us as a legacy for centuries, and which are continually and persistently repeated from every *Mibrab* and pulpit, and are ingrained in the depths of the hearts in every monastery and abbey. The consequence of this is that the same nation from whose gaze the *Taqdeers* of the world once used to transform, today it is continually shedding tears over its own *Taqdeer*. The one from whose frown the fortune of nations used to be overturned, today is sitting with its head between its knees, helpless and captive, due to the 'writing on its forehead' by its own hands. That nation about which it was declared that the earth, sky, moon, sun, and stars have been subjected to your control, its state is such that the '*Kafir* and *Mulbad*' (non-Muslims) of the world are sending probes and spacecrafts to the moon and sun, and this 'theist' who believes his *Taqdeer* to be under the control of the stars, is wandering around among fortune tellers seeking his fortune, and does not comprehend that:

*How can a crystal-gazer know the status of your eminence,
Because you are a living entity, not under the spell of a star.*

Has the gaze of the heavens ever witnessed a greater revolution than this?

18.9 Our Duplicity

Have you observed how the fortunes of nations change with an alteration in one belief? The power of beliefs is so unassailable and their grip is so strong that no other power on earth can compete with it.

But our condition is strange. Since this belief that everything happens from the direction of Allah cannot work in practical life, hence we remain constantly trapped in a quandary. An individual murders a relative of ours: the belief that we hold is that all this takes place by the command of Allah - the age of the victim was only destined to be this much; it was written in his destiny to be killed like this; no one can alter what *Qismat* has written; this is simply what Allah willed – this is what we keep repeating from our lips, and at the same time we launch a charge against the murderer.

When we launch a charge, on the one hand we say that only that will transpire which is willed by Allah, but at the same time we take every possible step for the success of the court case – even to the extent of ignoring the distinction between what is legitimate and what is illegitimate. If successful, then we shower praises on our good planning; if we fail, then we declare that this is simply how Allah had willed the matter.

When a child becomes sick, we hold this belief that Allah has pre-written when he is going to fall sick, how many days the sickness is going to last for, and what its outcome will be. But in practice we run around for his treatment, if he does not improve then we alter the treatment. Every day we ask the doctor when the fever will break. We implore the doctor to do something so that the child can get well quickly. When he recovers, then we expect praise from everyone for our efforts and planning, and we spread the word about the expertise of the physician. If he dies, then we declare it to be Divine Will and sighing deeply, announce that we did not leave any stone unturned to cure him, but when this was the age that was pre-written for him, then what can we do about it. And if someone questions that that is all very well, that whatever is to happen is pre-determined, that no one can change *Qismat*, so then why do you run around so much. Can whatever is written in someone's *Qismat* change as a result of this! In response to this it is stated that whatever is pre-written by *Taqdeer* is certainly *Haqq*, but it is also a duty to undertake planning.

Every individual repeats these kinds of words and no one thinks about what they are saying! If *Taqdeer* is immutable, then why is planning a duty!

18.10 The Consequence of This Tussle

On the one hand there is this *Eimaan* that *Taqdeer* is immutable, we are fearful that by denying this, we may become *Kafir*. On the other hand we are also afraid that if we do not offer treatment, the child will die. If we do not make efforts and endeavours, the court case will be lost.

This is that dilemma in which we remain unconsciously trapped at every turn in life. The outcome of this is that because of this confusion and uncertainty, our schemes also remain unsuccessful - no aim which is taken with trembling hands can hit its intended target - if we have *Eimaan* in the concreteness of the laws of Allah, then after our failure we should pause and reflect at what juncture we took a step in opposition to the relevant law, what deficiency remained in our assessment, what flaw was there in our plan, and when we have ascertained this, we should strive for this again from the start. It cannot be the case that our effort is according to the law of Allah, and we do not succeed - if the seed, land, and all the protective measures are correct, then why should the crop not grow? And if the *Eimaan* is that whatever happens is according to the command of Allah, that the *Taqdeer* of man is immutable and that planning cannot alter it, then why plan for matters facing us. Remain sitting contentedly at home, allow whatever happens to take place, and gradually, by adopting a route of escape from the

challenges of life, keep reciting ‘Allah, Allah’ inside caves – this kind of outlook on life leads man nowhere.

18.11 The Correct Path of Action

This is that tussle in which this *Ummah* is continuing to suffer for centuries, and its outcome is staring us in the face. But there is no need to be despondent about this. The living and eternal Book of Allah is among us, which is the authority and criterion for our beliefs and *Masalak*. The requirement is for us to examine every prevalent belief of ours in the light of this Book - that which is supported by it, consider it worthy of acceptance; that which it refutes, reject it. When, in this way, we will become possessors of the correct Quranic concepts, then we will acquire our past glory once more. This is because:

The power to smash Taqdeer still remains within him,

Whom the unwise declare to be a prisoner of Taqdeer.

The focal point of Quranic teaching is the Law of Requital i.e. this law that the consequence of every deed of man always catches up with him. It is obvious that this is only possible when man is acknowledged to be responsible for his deeds. If the situation is such that whatever he does, there is no provision in it for his choice and intent, everything is being done from him like a machine, then the question of reward and punishment for him will not even arise. According to this concept, the Law of Requital, the procedure for righteousness and guidance from Allah, and the life of the hereafter, all become meaningless.

Descending from here, then according to the doctrine of *Jabr*, the worldly system of justice also becomes redundant. When the argument for the defence of the accused is that I did not commit this crime with my own choice and intent, it was written like this by Allah, that is why it occurred like this – He neither asked me about it at the time He was writing this, nor was I given this choice that I should not act in this way, therefore why should I be declared a criminal - if this reasoning is declared as being correct, then no one who is accused of anything can be declared to be a criminal. And when someone is not even acknowledged to be a criminal, then how can there be any punishment for his action?

And not only the system of justice, according to this belief even the code of ethics no longer holds any standing. When man is accepted as being constrained, then no individual will be declared as praiseworthy for good deeds, nor will he deserve to be reprimanded for his wrong deeds. We can neither call a goat well-mannered, nor a lion as having an evil character – this is because the former is not docile

through its own choice, neither is the latter a beast of prey through its choice and intent – the question of good conduct and bad character only arises when someone is acknowledged as possessing the freedom to choose.

Have you noticed that no matter from what aspect it is looked at, the prevalent ideology of *Taqdeer* cannot be declared as being worthy of acceptance? Contrary to this, the living evidence of its devastations is our own current condition. It is a fundamental law of the Quran that no matter what trouble reaches you, it is brought about through your own hands (42:30). The cause for this is either some mistake of your own, or the wrong system of your society is responsible for this. If this teaching of the Quran had been in front of us, and the edifice of our ideology and feats had been raised on this, then it would not have been possible that we would have fallen into deep and horrific abysses of humiliation and degradation, and even if we had fallen into them due to some mishap, that we would not then have endeavoured to extricate ourselves from them. Remember! Allah neither pushes any nation into the abysses of humiliations, nor does He lift up any nation which has fallen into these abysses and take it out Himself. In the domain of *Amr* it is the *Masbe'at* of Allah which is operating, in which man cannot interfere. In the arena of creation and destruction (in the world), man is made the possessor of *Masbe'at*, in which Allah does not interfere despite possessing limitless powers. This concept of human freedom is the unique teaching of the Quran, which is not found in any religion of the world.

18.12 An Objection

It is said that if Allah is made to be bound by laws in this way, then this casts an aspersion on His being Omnipotent. This objection is based on a superficial and flawed outlook. If some other being places any kind of constraint on the authority of Allah, then from this an aspersion is certainly cast on Allah being Omnipotent. But if Allah places this constraint on Himself through His own choice, then no aspersion is cast on His being Omnipotent. This is in fact another evidence and proof of His being possessor of sovereignty and authority. When He establishes some laws through His choice and intent, and along with this declares that there will be no change in these laws, then how can there be any aspersion cast on His authority from this (10:64)? Undoubtedly, He can bring about a change in these laws, but when He Himself has made this decision that He will not make any change in them, then who else can create a change in them.

18.13 An Immutable Command Becomes a Law

It is also stated that by obedience to the laws of Allah, the Being of Allah becomes removed from the middle - obedience remains to His laws, not to Allah. The ones who raise this objection are those people who declare day and night that we should obey the commands of Allah. The question is that if by obeying the commands of Allah, He is not removed from the middle, how can Allah become excluded from the middle by obeying the laws of Allah? When we obey the laws of some country, then if it is not obedience to this country, then who is it obedience to? Those who raise such objections do not know that:

- (1) When some command is given on a permanent basis i.e. it is decreed that this command will remain immutable, and
- (2) together with this it is also stated that by acting in accordance with it the outcome will be such and such, then this is called a law.

The immutable commands of Allah are themselves His laws, which it is essential to obey. When Allah commanded water to flow down a slope and also announced that it will always do this, then this command of Allah became His law. The commands of Allah which were (and are) implemented in the universe were immutable from the very beginning (in the form of the laws of nature). His commands about human life, which were continually given through *Wabi*, became automatically immutable after the ending of *Nabummat*. And the Quran also informed us what consequences will become established by acting according to them, and what will be the outcome of transgressing them. Hence, what doubt remains in their being laws too.

It is said that why not say the 'Will' of Allah or His 'command', why say 'obedience to His law'. What is so important about words that we place so much significance on their alteration – the pearl hunter is interested in the pearl, not in the shell. It is true that words are not an aim in themselves, therefore altering them does not hold much importance. But when some words or terms acquire such a meaning which then obscures from our sight that aim for which they were originally defined, and that wrong meaning becomes commonplace, then in order to bring that correct aim before us again it is essential that in place of these words, those words should be used which possess the correct meaning. The concept which arises in our minds from the 'Will of Allah' or the 'command of Allah' is that these can change anytime. Today His Will is one thing, and tomorrow it will be something else. By saying 'the law of Allah', its being immutable becomes clear.

18.14 The Difference Between a Command and a Law

But there is another far reaching consequence of the concept of ‘command or Will’, and that is very important. An individual commands his servant to go and give this letter to some gentleman. Now the servant neither knows what is written in this letter, nor why this letter is being sent to this person. His task is only to obey this command and no more, nor can he ask his master why did he give him such a command. So much so, that in this letter and its dispatch there is no personal benefit of his, some purpose of his master is implicit in it. If he is asked, the most he can say is that I obey the commands of my master in this eager manner because through this he feels pleased, and I desire his happiness.

The manner of the obedience with which we undertake the commands of Allah (under the concept of command and Will) is exactly this. But if His law is obeyed, then its shape and outcome will be something different. It can be illustrated as follows: the doctor advises you to take this medicine, use it in this way, and together with this, take these precautions. From this, after three days at the most, your suffering will be eradicated. You follow his instructions. If, after three days, your problem is not resolved, then you wonder where did something go wrong in this programme - was the diagnosis of the doctor wrong, was the prescription incorrectly dispensed, was the composition of the medicine impure, was some error committed in taking it, were the correct precautions not able to be taken. And after this investigation, you try to resolve this fault and rectify this error – and keep on doing this until the time that your suffering is not eradicated - in other words, when we follow a law, it can be ascertained from its outcome whether it is being followed correctly or not.

18.15 Is the Outcome of a Deed Becoming Established or Not?

Together with all the commands which the Quran has given, it has also stated that if you do this, then this effect will be established. In the terminology of the Quran, a command is called ‘*Kitab*’ and its purpose or outcome is called ‘*Hikmat*’. When it has stated that *Kitab* and *Hikmat* are both sent down from the direction of Allah, then it means that Allah Who has established these laws has also informed us that the result of acting on them will lead to this outcome. Now we have to see whether whatever we are doing, is that effect which Allah had informed us about becoming established from it or not. If that effect is not becoming established, then we will need to think where are we making an error,

and then will need to rectify it. For example, the Quran gave the command of 'establishment of *Salat*', and together with this also informed us that *Salat* will definitely prevent from shameful and corrupt practices (*Fahsha* and *Munkar*) (29:45). The outcome of the establishment of *Salat* will be that shameful and corrupt practices will no longer persist among individuals and in society. We are observing the 'command' of *Salat*, and what is taking place in reality is that *Namaz* are being continuously recited, while shameful and corrupt practices are multiplying among individuals (in fact, among the *Namaz*i themselves) and in society. This practice of ours is continuing for centuries, and these evils are also becoming commonplace in society for centuries. We never stop to think, why is this happening? If we had accepted the establishment of *Salat* to be the law of Allah, and its outcome the prevention of shameful and corrupt practices (*Fahsha* and *Munkar*) (29:45), then when this outcome did not materialise, we would have stopped to think why is this the case. We could not have said that the One who declared this (Allah forbid) has done so wrongly (Allah forbid), that such an outcome cannot emerge from the establishment of *Salat*. We could only have been forced to admit that there is some flaw in this practice of ours because of which its promised outcome is not being established, and after this we could have verified what that error is using the light of the Quran. If we had rectified it, then its promised outcome would have taken shape and appeared before us.

This is merely an example which we have given. This is the pattern of the whole teaching of the Quran. In this, every command and principle has been noted in the status of a law, and we have been informed what outcome will be established from it, and how this will appear before you in this very world (the outcome in the hereafter is over and above this). If this had not been elucidated in the Quran, then we would have had no means to evaluate this fact, whether or not these commands are being acted upon correctly. We ignored this *Hikmat* of the Quran, the consequence of which is that the nation undergoes innumerable hardships in obeying (in their own mind) these commands, and its condition is also deteriorating further with each passing day. The difference between 'religion (*Madhab*)' and 'Deen' is that in religion commands are obeyed, and the aim from this is to seek the pleasure of Allah, and that is it. Under Deen the laws of Allah are followed, whose lively and dynamic, prosperous and successful outcome appears before us. When Islam was before us in the status of Deen, then the concept of Allah was that of a giver of law, and the robustness and stanchness of obedience to His commands was to be judged by their outcomes. This was the concept about Allah, and this was also the concept of the State established in His name. In this, too, obedience was to the law, not to the wish of the rulers. After this, when Deen converted into a religion, then the concept about Allah became like that of an absolute dictator, and the status of rulers also like that of dictators.

It is as a consequence of this very thing that while today we understand the meaning of 'obedience to commands', we do not understand the meaning of 'obedience to laws'. Remember! Whatever kind of concept exists in a nation about Allah, the map of the society of that nation will also be the same. Allah of the Quranic concept, despite His limitless powers, is Allah of procedure and law. Hence the nation which accepts Him will be a nation which follows procedure and law in the world to an extremely high degree. This is the practical meaning of *Taqdeer* i.e. obedience to the laws of Allah through one's own choice and intent.

If this meaning of *Taqdeer* appears before the nation, then the '*Taqdeer*' of this nation could transform in days. The reality of the teaching of the Quran is:

When it (the Quran) descends on the human self, it brings about a change in it.

And:

*When the self changes (due to the Quran), the world becomes something else,
And the reality of the earth and the heavens changes into something else.*

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- (6) Reasons for the Decline of Muslims
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LAHORE – 54660, PAKISTAN

E mail: tolueislam@gmail.com

Telephone: 00 92 (0)42 35753666 – WhatsApp 00 92 300 5842023

& 00 92 310 4800818