

Islam - A Code Of Social Life

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This text is a collection of verses of the Holy Qur'an and traditions of the Holy Prophet (S) and his Ahlul Bayt ('a) that show Islamic laws without any ornamentation and embellishment; how they can provide an atmosphere of honesty, resolution, truth and goodness to a world which is burning in the fire of corruption, strife, dispersion, nerve wars, armed conflicts, racial discrimination, mischief and imperialistic designs, and will induce the readers to recognize Islam as a meaningful Code of Life.

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[Morality](#) [5]

[Ethics](#) [6]

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Foreword

In the Name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful.

It is true that whatever the difficulties may be, they can be solved by resolute courage, firm determination and steady efforts.

Our social problems are not a few in number but they are too many and each one of them have to be tackled with in right earnest.

We have powerful and relentless enemies who are keen to suck even the last drop of our blood. If they want to see us alive it is for the reason that we should serve their interests.

We have also some foolish friends amongst us who miss no opportunity to create dissensions and dispersion. It appears that they have been created only to cause conflicts among the people and to sow the seeds of dispersion and disunity.

In fact these people are unpaid agents of our enemies and they provide an effective assistance to them to succeed in their nefarious designs.

When the intelligentsia have not yet succeeded in filling even one fissure of disunity among our ranks and file that one of these lunatics comes round and throws a fresh stone in the well so as to create fresh ripples of dissension and dispersion!

We do not know why the temperament of our society too, is much more prepared to accept the material which leads to differences and disputes as compared with the programs which end in unity, fraternity, friendliness and brotherly feelings. At times we find that if ten persons participate in a meeting they

suggest ten different views, ten ways of thinking and consequently ten contradictory schemes and programs.

Able indeed and influential people in our society usually harp on their own tune and the spirit of co-operation and collective efforts are hardly found in them. Every one of them is like an individual piece of a cloud which passes on, drizzles and vanishes. It is quite evident that the edifice of our society cannot be built up in this hip-shod manner.

This spirit of diversity and dispersion has taken roots in all sections of our society like a malignant tumor and it is for this very reason that collective efforts are not usually made so much so that even the economy of our country is not supported by the real sense of co-operative spirit. Those which are run on partnership basis are in a state of disarray much like the unstable atoms of uranium; and those which are stable and flourishing are in fact one man's show with only the name and structure of partnership-based enterprise.

The present day world complexion is such that individuals, to whatever extent they may be competent, skilled and intelligent are bound to face defeat as the world today is the world of collective bodies, unions and organizations and not of individuals.

Now the question arises as to why are we in this deplorable condition? Have we not yet realized that nothing can be achieved through dissensions or by individual activities?

May be that we have received a wrong guidance which has prompted different sections of our society towards individual activities instead of collective performance. Or perhaps we have not yet acquired sufficient moral strength, spirit of self-sacrifice, tolerance, broad mindedness and high qualities of character which are essential for nurturing a collective system of social activities.

These are the questions replies to which are unfortunately beyond the scope of the task undertaken by us. However, it is our duty to acquaint the Muslims with those problems and to seek solutions for them.

For quite some time class distinction has appeared in our society which has divided it into two divergent groups. One group consists of enlightened individuals and the other of those who cling to old ideas.

The second group considers the first to consist of persons who are new-comers, raw and immature, superficial and brainless and unrestrained and careless whereas the first group considers the second to be stubborn, fanatical, static and ignorant. Thus they are engaged in constant state of confrontation.

It is a fact that our age is an age of revolutionary change and our society is entering a new historical phase. In other words we are leaving behind the times of oil lamps and entering the era of electricity, atom and rockets. And the conflict between the newer elements and those of the past age is a natural phenomenon in every transitional period.

However we do not consider it necessary that we should give up everything for fear of these conflicts.

The best thing would be that we should profit from this contrariety and competition in such a manner that we should adopt whatever is beneficial and useful under the new circumstances and discard all that entails deviation, misfortune and backwardness.

Ours is a strange country. It consists of areas with different dialects, different races, different customs and traditions and different climates. For example, there is no common factor which may unify the residents of northern areas with those of the south areas except one factor.

Yes! The only factor which unifies all these people with different languages, races and geographical zones is Islam which is the religion of an absolute majority constituting its population. It is only this common factor which can serve as a symbol of unity fraternity and solidarity among the people.

Now please ponder on this point! In this world which is spending huge sums of money to create artificial an unstable common values under one or the other group formation or party affiliation, how immensely valuable is the existence of a really strong and stable common value which can bring all of us on one common platform.

However, it may be stated with great regret that this common value is also being neglected like other resources of the Muslim *Ummah*. Not only that it is not being utilized beneficially but we ourselves are also creating means to weaken it!

What should we do so that we may derive maximum possible benefit from this common value (Islam) which once had made Muslims to reach the height of glory and splendor under the glow of its radiant light.

There is certainly no better way than to present Islam in its true perspective and without any pretensions and ostentations to the masses. This is the best and the most effective means of attracting people's attention to this Divine religion.

If some thoughts and beliefs need to be presented in an exaggerated manner with apparent praise and commendation Islam does not need any such instruments of glorification and ornamentations because its teachings and guidance are so genuine that they appeal the mind and touch the soul. Hence it is vitally important that Islam should be presented in its pristine purity so that its blessings could be derived easily by the people.

In the modern times the hearts of some of our educated young men have turned away from Islam. We feel that it is only because they have not been informed of the realities of this sacred religion.

Well-informed sources say: "At present more readiness is observed in the Western world for embracing Islam and it can be said that the civilized world is on the crossroad either to accept Islam or to go atheist. There is no third way"

However, notwithstanding all these possibilities, Islam is not making headway in this sensitive part of the

world. Why? It is because it has not been properly introduced to the western countries.

We believe that one of the reasons for deep penetration and expansion of Islam in so short a time in the bygone days that it stormed the old world and established a new world with a new zest of life, wisdom, virtues and blessings was that it was presented to the people in its right perspective on realistic ground.

It is this very thing which can provide an atmosphere of honesty, resolution, truth and goodness to a world which is burning in the fire of corruption, strife, dispersion, nerve wars, armed conflicts, racial discrimination, mischief and imperialistic designs.

Thus it should be admitted once again that the most effective method of introducing Islam to the outside world is to present its teachings in a pure and simple manner.

It is a matter of great regret that some persons residing at distant places think that Islam is confined to prayers, fasting and occasionally performing *Hajj* of the Holy Ka'bah. Some, who do not perhaps know even this much, believe Islam to consist of lamentation at the time of commemorating the tragedy of Karbala. It may be admitted that the behavior of some followers of Islam who have practically dissociated themselves from all social activities also lend much support to this misunderstanding.

It should also be admitted that our organizations imparting religious instruction are not yet so well-equipped that they should make at least those people who live in our own environments to understand Islam in its original form.

Books on 'Islamic Studies' are, no doubt, included in the syllabus of our schools. However, that too is nothing more than a dry, insipid, difficult and intricate set of teachings which, instead of acquainting our young ones with the true spirit and the realities of Islam, distracts them from Islam and makes them weary and disgusted.

Our people who have visited the West also have some queer ideas about Islam. Whatever they have seen of the practices and religious ceremonies of the Christians is declared by them to be a pattern for Islam viz. they consider the extensive teachings of Islam to be at par with the insipid ceremonials and brief worship of the Christians performed once in a week in the church accompanied with music which have very little social value. On the contrary Islam is the religion of life and contains the most sublime rules and regulations for a prosperous life.

Islam possesses such an extensive, self-contained and rich program that it specifies the itinerary of human prosperity from cradle to grave, from the confines of the house to the theatre of war and from business institutions to the seat of justice.

At the same time, in view of the stimulating strength inherent in this religion, it conforms the conditions of space age and quenches the need of man in different matters. Not only that Islam also lays down man's obligations towards animal care too for which the modern civilization is bragging too much under the

‘Prevention of cruelties to animals’ and ‘Preservation of wild life’.

The object of compilation of this book is to present to the readers the text of the sublime Islamic laws without any ornamentation and embellishment. To achieve this end more than 1900 verses of the Holy Qur’an were collected and out of them 582 which were found to be more interesting, simple and clear have been selected and incorporated in this book. Here we would like to secure the attention of the readers to the following points:

(i) As stated above 582 verses of the Holy Qur’an and traditions of the Prophet of Islam and his progeny have been selected out of more than 1900. The task of collecting the traditions from scores of relevant authentic books was performed by as many as 30 scholars whose names are mentioned in Appendix I.

(ii) The texts of the traditions have been compared with original sources.

(iii) In order to present the original text of Islamic rules and regulations the following method has been adopted:

(a) English translation of the verses and traditions has been given in the book itself.

(b) References of the verses and traditions have been given in Appendix II.

(c) Complete Arabic texts of the verses and traditions have been quoted in Appendix III. This is for the benefit of those who wish to study the original Arabic texts or to conduct further research on the subject.

In some cases only short sentences have been added to elucidate the meanings of some traditions and to show their relationship with one another. At the same time care has been taken to record such sentences separately so that they do not mingle up with the translation of the traditions.

(iv) Care has been taken to give simple and intelligible translation instead of word-for-word translation which is often difficult to understand.

It appears necessary to mention here that in this book only some rules and regulations pertaining to social life have been collected and many books must be prepared to deal with all of them.

We hope that the book in hand will enable different sections of the society and especially the educated young men and women, to observe new horizons of the social laws of Islam and will induce them to recognize Islam as a meaningful Code of Life.

The Publishers

Islam Code Of Social Life Part 1

Campaign Against Ignorance

The first and foremost condition for the vitality of a nation is acquisition of knowledge. It is for this reason that in the term of modern writers the nations which advanced in the matter of knowledge and culture are called 'live' and on the contrary the backward communities are styled as 'dead' and 'uncultured'.

Roots of this interpretation can be observed in the light of the sayings of the pioneer leaders of Islam. The Holy Prophet (S), says: "Learned discussions enliven the dead hearts provided they lead to Allah and His commands".¹

A person who dies while acquiring education with a purpose to enliven the Muslims will be one degree below the Prophets in Paradise.²

In view of this, Islam has encouraged the people soundly to acquire knowledge and wisdom. As a matter of fact it has made it obligatory for them. The Holy Prophet (S), says: "It is obligatory for every Muslim to acquire knowledge. Allah likes those who seek knowledge"³ "It is obligatory for every Muslim to acquire knowledge.

Acquire it from its proper place and impart it to the one who deserves it because imparting knowledge for the sake of Allah is virtue, seeking it is worship, having discussion on it is like praising and glorifying Allah, acting on it is like proceeding on to *Jihad* in the cause of Allah, teaching it to an ignorant person is like giving alms and passing it on to learned persons is the source of coming in close proximity of Allah".⁴

"A person who seeks knowledge is like the one who observe fast during day time and prays during night. It is better for a man to acquire a part of knowledge than to possess a mountain of gold as big as of Abu Qubays and to distribute it in the way of Allah".⁵

And after all the Holy Qur'an says:

"Whosoever is given wisdom and knowledge is blessed with bounties in good abundance"(2:272)

Imam Al-Sajjad ('a), says: "If people had known the advantages of acquiring knowledge they would have acquired it even if it had necessitated the shedding of their hearts' blood or of their going down into the deep seas".⁶

Islam attaches so much importance to the acquisition of knowledge that it has declared the path of knowledge and wisdom to be the path leading to Paradise. The Holy Prophet (S) says: "Allah opens the path of Paradise to one who takes a step on the path of acquisition of knowledge".⁷

Islam considers knowledge to be one of the best legacies which man leaves behind himself. The Holy Prophet (S), says: “The best monuments and legacies which a man leaves behind himself are a dutiful son, useful buildings, knowledge and wisdom which are benefited by the people after him”.[8](#)

Islam has introduced knowledge and wisdom as a means of deliverance from the fire of Hell. No doubt, a true scholar cannot deviate or diverge from the right path and cannot fall a prey to the Flames of Hell. On the other hand his knowledge and wisdom lead him to Paradise.

The Holy Prophet (S), says: “One who wishes to see those who are safe from the Fire of Hell should look at the seekers of knowledge”.[9](#)

Islam has not prescribed any limits for the acquisition of knowledge and wisdom. The Holy Prophet (S), says, “Acquire knowledge even if it be in China”.[10](#) (i.e. there is no restriction of place and distance).

Islam has condemned bashfulness in the matter of acquisition of knowledge at any age or in any situation. Imam Ali (‘a), says: “Do not feel shy of learning what you do not know”.[11](#)

It must, however, be remembered that the pioneers of Islam have always approved of that knowledge only which is accompanied with action and have commended only that wisdom which is associated with lofty character. Imam Ali (‘a), says: “O People! Remember that the excellence of your faith lies in acquiring knowledge and acting upon it. It is more essential for you to crave for knowledge than for riches”.[12](#)

And Imam Ja’far Al-Sadiq (‘a), says: “Knowledge and action are associated with each other because whoever possesses knowledge acts upon it (as the real sign of knowledge is action) and the knowledge and wisdom of the one who puts them into practice remains unimpaired. Knowledge is a Divine voice which invites its bearer to act upon it. If he accepts its invitation and acts (according to his knowledge) his knowledge lasts but if he does not give a positive response it forsakes him”.[13](#)

Islam always commends that knowledge only which is for the sake of Allah. Imam Ja’far Al-Sadiq (‘a), says: “A person who learns a tradition for worldly gains does not benefit from it in the Hereafter, and if he learns it for his betterment in the next world, Allah blesses him in this world as well as in the Hereafter”.[14](#)

Islam has prescribed precise duties for the teacher and the pupil with regard to each other. The gist thereof can be found in the following narrative:

Imam Ja’far Al-Sadiq (‘a), says: “Your teacher enjoys the right over you that you should honor him and pay him respect in different assemblies. You should be very attentive to his words. You should not raise your voice above his. If anybody asks him a question you should not give a reply thereto. You should not converse with others in his presence and you should allow the people to benefit from his knowledge. You should not speak ill of anyone before him. If anybody speaks ill of him in your presence you should

defend him. You should conceal his short comings and bring his virtues to light. You should not associate with his enemies and should not dispute with his friends. If you act on these lines the angels of Allah will testify that you have paid attention to him and have acquired knowledge for the sake of Allah and not to attract the attention of the people. And the right of your pupil on you is that you should realize that in granting you knowledge and opening its path for you, Allah has appointed you to be their guardian. In case, therefore, you teach them properly and do not frighten them and are not furious with them Allah will, through His kindness increase your knowledge. But if you drive the people away from knowledge and as and when they approach you for it you frighten them and get annoyed with them it will be only appropriate that Almighty Allah may take away the light of knowledge from you and may degrade you in the eyes of the people”. [15](#)

One of the real targets of Islam is the establishment of a perfect social and political system and the creation of environments in which people should live as humans and refrain from any act of barbarity and savagery.

There are some pre-requisites for the achievement of this end and at the top of them is the existence of able, learned and faithful persons who should invite the society to virtuous deeds and to the worship of Allah. Hence Islam attaches extraordinary importance to the scholars and leaders of this ideal society. The Holy Prophet, peace be on him and his progeny has given them the status as good as of the prophets. [16](#)

The Holy Qur’an considers the difference and the long distance between the learned person and the ignorant ones to be an established fact and calls human conscience and intellect to witness it and says:

“Say: Are the learned and the ignorant at par with each other? (Never). Only the wise persons take heed”(39:9).

The Holy Qur’an further says:

“Allah elevates to high positions those from amongst you who are faithful and those who have acquired knowledge”. (58: 11).

Imam Ali (‘a), says: “The learned men and scholars will continue to exist till the world lasts. Although their bodies may be hidden from the eyes their impressions will forever remain imprinted in the hearts of the people”. [17](#)

Islam insists particularly that the scholars should be accorded respect superior to that of the devout and the pious because the latter are mindful of themselves only but the former take care of others also.

The Holy Prophet (S), says: “Sleep of a scholar is superior to one thousand *Rak’ats* of prayers offered by a devout person”. [18](#)

“A scholar (although he may not offer prayers other than the obligatory ones) is like a person who

always observes fast and offers prayers and he is like a *Mujahid* who sacrifices his life in the cause of Allah. As and when a scholar dies a breach takes place in Islam which cannot be filled till the Day or Judgement”. [19](#)

It is on this very account that the prayers offered by a scholar are many times superior to those offered by other persons because it is a good deed based on knowledge.

Imam Ali (‘a), says: “Two *Rak’ats* of prayers offered by a scholar are better than seventy *Rak’ats* of prayer offered by an ignorant person”. [20](#)

Islam also encourages people to associate with learned persons because this affords opportunities for profiting from their knowledge.

The Holy Prophet (S), says: “Having the company of learned scholars is (Allah’s) worship”. [21](#) “Looking at their faces is (also) worship”. [22](#)

Luqman, the sage, says to his son: “My son! Associate with the scholars and always sit with them because Allah enlivens the hearts with the light of knowledge”. [23](#)

This matter is so extensive and important that according to the religious leaders, the Pleasure and Wrath of Allah depends on the Pleasure and wrath of a scholar.

Imam Ja’far Al-Sadiq (‘a), says: “On the Day of Judgement Allah will be pleased with a person who honors and respects a Muslim scholar; and He will be annoyed with one who insults a Muslim scholar”. [24](#)

Islam attaches great importance to the aged and the elders of every group and community and looks at them with due respect.

Imam Ja’far Al-Sadiq (‘a), says: “Respect to the aged persons is a sign of respect to Allah”. [25](#) “One who does not show respect to the aged is not one of us”. [26](#)

The Holy Prophet (S), says: “As and when the elder of a community or a nation meets you, honor him and respect him”. [27](#)

Dispute Is Forbidden

It is true that debates and discussions are the key to the solution of difficulties. However, this is so only if discussion is pursued on the basis of search for truth and discovery of facts. In case one or both the two parties commence dispute and contention to assert superiority over the other and to support their own points of view, the result will be nothing except malice, discord, enmity and concealment of the truth.

Islam condemns dispute and contention in worldly affairs as well as in academic discussions and

considers it to be the cause of hostility.

Imam Ali (‘a), says: “Refrain from dispute and controversy because it offends two brothers in faith and creates mutual enmity”. [28](#)

Imam Ja’far Al-Sadiq, peace be on him says: “Refrain from contention in your discourse because it creates anger and exposes one’s secrets”. [29](#) He also says: “One who disputes with others loses manliness”. [30](#)

Imam Ali (‘a), says: “Whoever loves self-respect avoids dispute”. [31](#)

Imam Ja’far Al-Sadiq (‘a), says: “Refrain from dispute because it occupies one’s intellect with itself and places discord and enmity in its place and creates jealousy and hatred “. [32](#)

Islam not only prohibits unjustified dispute and controversy but also forbids a truthful person from indulging in such an act.

Imam Ali (‘a), says: “A person cannot attain perfect faith except when he abandons dispute, even though he may happen to be a truthful person”. [33](#)

The Holy Prophet (S), says: “I enjoy authority over a House above Paradise, another House within Paradise and still another House in the Garden of Paradise. They are for one who abandons dispute and controversy even though he may be right”. [34](#)

For this very reason Islam declares that some actions like *A’tikaf* (Retirement to a *Masjid* for worship) and *Hajj* are invalidated by dispute. Imam Ja’far Al-Sadiq, peace be on him interprets it in this way: You might be swearing “By Allah, yes” and “By Allah, no” [35](#) and this is the lowest stage of strife and controversy.

[Social Responsibilities](#)

In the capacity of being the first guardians of their children the parents should do their utmost to equip their children with outstanding and noble human qualities. The only way to decorate them with these qualities is “character building”, After proper moral and spiritual training and education, the next phase for the man of Islam, is to prepare himself to reconstruct his social environment and to transform it into the light of Islam, filled with justice and virtue

According to the logic of Islam, Islamic brotherhood is the most deep-rooted unity which creates mutual relationship and responsibility.

It is the duty of every Muslim to exhort others to do good and to combat corruption. These two duties, which are known, in Islamic Jurisprudence, as *‘Amr Bil Ma’ruf* and *Nahy ‘Anil Munkar*, enjoin upon all Muslims to keep a constant watch on the society. If they find anybody deviating from the path of justice

and truth, they must invite him to the right path and if they find anybody committing a crime or sin, they restrain him from doing so.

Islam asks every Muslim to keep his social spirit fully alive and hold dear the collective interests. It calls upon every individual to be responsible to all other members of the society and the society to be responsible to all the individuals. All the Muslims have a right to criticize and reform each other and play their role in the formation of a healthy society.

The subject of “exhortation to do good and restraint from doing evil” has been repeated in many verses of the Holy Qur’an. At times the Holy Book praises Muslims for having performed this duty [36](#) and at others it introduces it as a part of good actions.[37](#) And at times it also encourages Muslims to practice this good act by mentioning the exhortations of Luqman to his son.[38](#) And on some occasions Allah’s Blessings are promised to those who discharge this important duty.[39](#)

Islam says if you desire that cruelty and injustice should not prevail in your society and the society should not face destruction, do not forget to make a general scrutiny and constructive criticism.

Imam Ali Al-Ridha’ (‘a), says: “Invite others to good and check corruption otherwise the tyrants will prevail upon you. At that time those among you who are good will invoke Allah’s Mercy, but their invocations will not be accepted”.[40](#)

Imam Ali, peace be on him says: “The earlier nations perished because they committed sin and their religious heads did not prevent them from doing so”.[41](#)

Again, the Holy Prophet (S), says: “My followers will always be endowed with beneficence and prosperity, provided they invite others to goodness and restrain them from doing evil deeds and co-operate in good actions. However, if they fail to do so some of them will prevail upon others and they will find no helper either on earth or in the heavens”.[42](#)

If some persons can prevent others from committing corruption but do not do so, Islam considers them to be accomplices of sinners.

Imam Al-Baqir (‘a), says: “Allah addressed Prophet Shu’ayb (‘a), and said, “I shall torture 100,000 of your followers out of whom 40,000 persons will be evil-doers and 60,000 will be good ones”.

Shu’ayb (‘a), said, “O Allah! So far as the bad persons are concerned it is quite right but why should you torture the good ones?” The Revelation came: “Because they did not admonish the wicked and did not get annoyed with them for My sake”. [43](#)

The order to bid to do good and forbid the evil is subject to some special conditions. One of the conditions is the possibility of its being efficacious. The least that a person should do is that he should not look at the sinner with a cheerful face.

Imam Ali (‘a), says: “The Holy Prophet ordered us to meet the sinners with grim and dejected faces”.[44](#)

Human beings are not equal to one another in the matter of taking into consideration the goodness or evil involved in various fields. On the other hand since the standard of knowledge, strong intellect, age, maturity and experience vary from individual to individual, it often happens that one’s interest in something makes one deaf and blind and conceals its defects from one’s eyes. In that event it becomes necessary that people should render intellectual help to one another and protect one another from falling into error.

Islam, therefore, ordains that Muslims should not fail to tender advice to one another and should communicate to others whatever they know about the goodness or badness of something and should not be negligent in doing their utmost in this behalf.

The Holy Prophet (S), says: “On the Day of Judgement Allah will accord a higher status to one who has been more active in tendering advice to the people “. [45](#) “Everyone should tender advice to his brother just as he is vigilant himself”.[46](#)

Imam Ja’far Al-Sadiq (‘a), says: “You should tender advice to Allah’s creatures for you will not find an act better than this”.[47](#)

Islam has insisted on the performance of this social duty so much so that it considers stinginess in the matter of tendering advice to others to be ‘dishonesty’.

Imam Ja’far Al-Sadiq (‘a), says: “A person who observes his brother doing something improper and does not prevent him from doing it in spite of being in a position to do so has betrayed him”.[48](#)

Education and Training of Child

Islam attaches much importance to the training of children and has held the parents responsible in this regard.

The Holy Prophet, peace be on him and his progeny says: “The parents are responsible with regard to their children in the same manner in which the children are responsible with regard to their parents”.[49](#) Allah blesses those who assist their children in doing good things which they do themselves”.[50](#)

At times the burden of this responsibility has been placed more on the shoulders of the father and it has been given priority to the rights of a father.

Imam Ali (‘a), says: “The child has a right on his father and the father too has a right on his child “[51](#)

Islam considers training during childhood to be very important because the soul of a child is ready to accept every impression.

As Imam Ali (‘a), says: “The heart of a new-born child is like a virgin soil which accepts every seed that is sown on it”[52](#)

The Holy Prophet, peace be on him and his progeny has considered the selection of a nice name for the child and giving him proper training as well as the selection of an appropriate profession for him to be the responsibilities of the parents.[53](#)

There is no doubt about the fact that from the psychological point of view the name of a person has special effect on his mentality and mode of thinking and throughout his life he remains subconsciously under its influence.

It is for this reason that Islam takes so much care in the matter of selection of a name and says: “The most appropriate name is one which makes man remember that he is the servant of Allah and similar is the case with the names of the prophets who were the embodiment of human virtues and an emblem of perfection”[.54](#)

Islam abhors such names which make man egoistic, proud and negligent like Harith, Malik, Khalid, etc.[55](#)

Islam considers that people with good names shall be given good respect.

The Holy Prophet (S), says: “When you name a child ‘Muhammad’ give him due respect, make room for him in the assemblies and do not be peevish towards him “[.56](#)

Islam also attaches a greater importance to religious instruction.

Imam Ali (‘a), says: “One of the rights of a child is that his father should teach him the Holy Qur’an”[.57](#)

And also orders that: “When the children complete their fifth year and can distinguish between their right and left hands, make them sit facing the *Qibla* and order them to perform *Sajda* (prostration). When they complete their sixth year, teach them prayers. And after they have attained the seventh year make them learn the essentialities of *Wudhu* (ablution). And when they become nine years old, make them perform *Wudhu* and offer prayers in full and be strict with them on this account “[.58](#)

Islam also considers archery and swimming important. Imam Ali, peace on him, says: “Teach your children swimming and archery”[.59](#) Islam considers the first seven years to be a period of playful life for the children and orders that they should be given full liberty in this regard.

Imam Ja’far Al-Sadiq (‘a), says, “Up to seven years of age, a child should play, for another seven years he should be taught how to read and write and for still another seven years he should learn about lawful and unlawful things”[.60](#)

In fact even the initial seven years form a part of his training period. On the very day of the birth of a child, *Azan* and *Iqama*, which aims at the declaration of the Oneness of Allah and the invitation to Islam and the exhortation to perform good deeds, should be recited in his ears”[.61](#)

In order to ensure that the children acquire full freedom in life during youth, Islam indicates two periods of their upbringing viz. the first seven years which is the playing period of a child the next seven years is considered to be the period of his complete absorption in learning and acquisition of knowledge about various affairs of life and still another seven years is considered to be a part of the half of the life span for the active participation in life's affairs.

It is as the Holy Prophet (S), says: "A child is a master for seven years, a slave for another seven years and a minister for the next seven years".⁶² Islam lays much stress on being kind to the children. The Holy Prophet (S), says: "A good act is written in the record of virtuous deeds for one who gives a kiss to his child".⁶³

A person came before the Holy Prophet (S), and said: "I have never kissed a child". When he turned and left, the Holy Prophet (S), said to those present: "This stone-hearted person is one of the people of Fire".⁶⁴ (i.e. he will go to Hell).

Islam has forbidden beating a crying child. The Holy Prophet (S), says: "Do not beat a child who is crying because for the first four months his crying is the testimony of the Oneness of Allah and for the following four months it is for blessings on the Holy Prophet and his progeny and for the next four months it is an invocation for the parents".⁶⁵

Islam ordains that the male children should be circumcised as early as possible. The Holy Prophet (S), says: "Purify (circumcise) your sons on the seventh day because the tissues then build-up quickly and the wound heals up easily".⁶⁶

Knowledge and experience has proved that milk has a great effect on the morals and mentality of a child and, therefore, Islam has prescribed special conditions for a nursing-maid. The Holy Prophet, peace on him and his progeny, says: "Keep your children away from the milk of women who are insane or adulteresses because through the milk baser traits are transmitted to the child".⁶⁷

In order that the ears of the child should become acquainted with the remembrance of Allah and the realities of Islam from the moment of its birth, Imam Ja'far Al-Sadiq ('a), says: "When a child arrives in the world, recite *Azan* in its right ear and *Iqama* in its left ear".⁶⁸

Islam ordains that *Aqiqah* should be performed on a child i.e. an animal should be slaughtered for its sake by way of alms. Imam Ja'far Al-Sadiq ('a), says: "*Aqiqah* is necessary for a well-to-do man. As regards a poor person he should also do it when his circumstances permit. And in case it is not possible for him to give it, he is under no obligation in this behalf. Every child that is born is under pledge in respect of his *Aqiqah*".⁶⁹

In this manner the person of a newly-born child has been made a means of help to the poor. In order to keep the spirit of children perpetually vigorous and fresh and to protect them from psychological problems, Islam has forbidden giving a preferential treatment to one over another.

The Holy Prophet (S), says: “Observe justice in dealing with your children in the same manner in which you expect them to observe justice in being kind and good to you”.[70](#)

However, in contrast with the vicious practice of the Dark Age of Ignorance (before the advent of Islam), when the new-born daughters were buried alive, Islam permits that daughters may be given preference over sons.

The Holy Prophet (S), says: “Whoever goes to the bazaar and purchases a present for the members of his family and brings it to them is like one who spends on the needy. However, (at the time of division) he should prefer daughters to sons because whoever pleases his daughter is like one who frees a slave from among the descendants of Prophet Isma’il”. [71](#)

Duties of the Children

Father and mother are two precious being. Everyone knows their value and looks upon them with respect. Islam, too, has stimulated this internal inclination of man which emanates from a sentimental and rational source and has indicated their value in a becoming manner through detailed and repeated statements and has ordered the children that they should not neglect the respect for their parents even for one moment.

In the Holy Qur’an obedience to parents has been mentioned at many places along with the obedience to Allah and in some cases it has been mentioned as the first recommendation to the children of Adam.

At one place the Holy Qur’an says:

“Your Lord has ordained that you must not worship anything other than Him and that you must be kind to your parents. If either or both of your parents should become advanced in age, do not express to them words which show your slightest disappointment. Never yell at them but always speak to them with kindness. Be humble and merciful towards them and say. “Lord, have mercy upon them as they cherished me during my childhood”. (17:23-34).

And on another occasion it says:

“We enjoined man to show kindness to his parents, for with much pain his mother bears him and he is not weaned before he is two years of age. We said: Give thanks to Me and to your parents. To me shall all things return”. (31: 14).

The Holy Prophet says: “Goodness and benevolence towards father and mother is superior to prayers, fasting, *Hajj*, *Umra* and *Jihad* and carries a greater recompense”.[72](#) “Two doors of Paradise are opened for a person whose day commences when his parents are pleased with him”.[73](#)

‘The following tradition quoted from Imam Ja’far Al-Sadiq (‘a), confirms that the recompense for doing

good to parent excels that for *Jihad*:

“A man came in the presence of the Holy Prophet and said: I like to perform *Jihad* in the cause of Allah, but my mother is not at all inclined towards my doing so. The Holy Prophet replied Go back and remain with your mother. I swear by the Lord who has sent me on a true mission that to remain with one’s mother for one night (and serving her and doing good to her) is better than performing *Jihad* in the cause of Allah for a year “. [74](#)

In another place he said: “Go back and remain with your mother because Paradise lies underneath the feet of one’s mother “. [75](#)

Islam considers kindness to parents to be the criterion of excellence and virtue. Imam Ja’far Al-Sadiq (‘a), narrates as under: “One day when the Holy Prophet was in the company of some persons, his foster-sister came. The Holy Prophet accorded her due respect. He was extremely pleased to see her. He spread a sheath of cloth for her to sit and then began conversing with her. The girl departed and sometime later her brother (who was the foster brother of the Holy Prophet) came. The Holy Prophet did not, however, accord similar respect to him. One of those present asked: O Prophet of Allah! What was the reason for this different treatment when this person happens to be a man? The Holy Prophet replied: The reason is that the girl is more respectful to her parents”. [76](#)

Islam considers the right of parents to be the greatest of all rights and prefer it to everything else. Once a man came to Imam Ja’far Al-Sadiq (‘a), and said: “My Parents are Sunnis. The Holy Imam replied: Do good to them in the same manner in which you are under obligation to do good to those who believe in our *Walayat*: that is who are our followers”. [77](#)

And one who neglects to perform this duty or becomes the source of his parents’ wrath is really very unfortunate. The Holy Prophe1 said: ‘Two doors of Hell are opened towards a person who causes the wrath of his parents”. [78](#) “Be afraid of being disobedient to your parents or becoming the object of their wrath because the fragrance of Paradise covers a distance of five hundred years’ time and reaches the nostrils of a man but it does not reach at all those with whom their parents are annoyed “. [79](#)

And as we learned from the verse of the Holy Qur’an (mentioned earlier) the lower degree of such disobedience is that one should display weariness before them.

Imam Ja’far Al-Sadiq (‘a), says: “If the Lord had considered anything to be lower than ‘*Uf*’ (word of disgust) he would have prohibited it. One or the stages of disobedience is that one should cast a fierce glance on his parents”. [80](#)

This fact should also be kept in view that the Prophet says: “The right of an elder brother over his younger brother is similar to the right of a father over his child”. [81](#)

Service To Humanity

There are a number of problems which cannot be solved by one person alone but if he is assisted by some others he can overcome the difficulties involved in them.

In principle, human life has no meaning without co-operation and, without it, it is transformed into animal life. It is for this reason that Islam insists on its followers to assist their brethren-in-faith in solving their problems and not to leave them alone to face difficulties.

The Holy Prophet (‘a), says: “One who does not take interest in the affairs of Muslims is not a Muslim. And that person, too, is not a Muslim who hears a Muslim calling for help and does not respond to his call”.[82](#)

Imam Ja’far Al-Sadiq (‘a), says: “If a brother-in-faith comes to a person and seeks help from him and he does not help him in spite of being in a position to do so, Allah makes him help one of our enemies and then tortures him on this account”.[83](#)

“ If a person possesses a house and a brother-in-faith needs it for purposes of residence and he does not give it to him, Almighty Allah addresses the angels and says: ‘O My angels! Here is a creature of mine who observes stinginess in lending his house to another creature of Mine. I swear by My Glory and Dignity that I will not provide him with a residence in Paradise”.[84](#) “If a brother-in-faith seeks help from a person and he, in spite of being in a position to help him, does not do so Allah will resurrect him on the Day of Judgement in such a condition that his hands will be tied to his neck and will keep him in the same condition till the account of all the people has been settled”.[85](#)

On the other hand the spiritual reward fixed by Allah for such an act is so important and precious that similar reward has been promised for a very few other acts.

The Holy Prophet (S), says: “Allah has inhabited Paradise with some persons who rule there (and enjoy a dignified position). They are the persons who have been meeting the needs of their brothers” [86](#)

“One who fulfills the needs of a brother Muslim like one who has been worshipping Allah throughout his life”.[87](#)

“Allah makes Paradise obligatory for one who helps a Muslim and diverts devastating water and fire from him (i.e. one who rushes to assist victims of flood and fire and saves them)”.[88](#)

And Imam Al-Baqir (‘a), says: “whenever a person seeks my assistance I hasten to provide it to him lest he should become in a position to dispense with it and hence I may be deprived of the blessings attached to it”. [89](#)

Similarly Imam Ja’far Al-Sadiq (‘a), says: “A Muslim who helps another Muslim to fulfill the latter’s need

is like one who has performed *Jihad* in the cause of Allah”.[90](#)

“It never happened that a Muslim fulfilled a want of a fellow Muslim and Allah has not proclaimed that His blessings were with Him and that He would not give him anything short of Paradise” .[91](#)

“On the Day of Judgement Allah will fulfill 100,000 wishes of a person who fulfills one of the wishes of a brother in-faith of his. The first of them will be Paradise for himself and the other will be Paradise for his kinsmen and friends and brethren-in-faith provided they are not idol-worshippers”.[92](#)

“Allah will make matters easy for a believer who solves the problem of a brother and if he conceals his (i.e. brother Muslim’s) error or secret, Allah will conceal seventy of his secrets. By Allah! So long as a person is the helper of his Muslim brother Allah remains his Helper”. [93](#)

Safwan Jammal, one of the companions of Imam Ja’far Al-Sadiq and Imam Musa Al-Kadhim, peace be on them, says: I was present before Imam Ja’far Al-Sadiq, peace be on him. Maymun, a resident of Makkah, arrived and complained about his indigence and lack of means to undertake journey to his home town. The Holy Imam ordered me to get up and assist him. I got up and with Allah’s help succeeded in meeting his needs and then returned to the assembly. Imam enquired from me about the development and I told him that Allah had granted that man’s needs.

The Holy Imam said: “Remember! In my view assisting a brother Muslim is better than going round the Ka’bah seven times”.[94](#)

And in the end the Holy Imam says: “Almighty Allah has said thus: People get their sustenance from Me (and they are my creatures). Hence I like him more who is more kind to them and strives to meet their needs”.[95](#)

No doubt, making Muslims happy becomes the source of one’s happiness on the Day of Judgement. Imam Musa Al-Kadhim (‘a), says: “There is a group of Allah’s servants’ who strive to meet the needs of the people. They will enjoy peace of mind on the Day of Judgement. And Allah will make him happy on the Day of Judgement who makes one believer happy”.[96](#)

In short helping one’s fellow-beings is so much important than that Allah gives spiritual reward even for an intention and resolution to perform it. Imam Muhammad Al-Baqir (‘a), says: “At times it so happens that a Muslim seeks help from another Muslim and the latter, though inclined not in a position to help’ him but is not in a position to do so, Allah will send him to Paradise for this very resolution”.[97](#)

The conclusion of this discussion is contained in the following words of Imam Husayn son of Imam Ali, peace be on them : “The requests which people make to you are Blessings of Allah. So do not feel weary and uneasy”.[98](#)

Imam Ali (‘a), says: “How surprising it is on the part of a person who is approached by a brother Muslim for help and he fails to help him and does not consider himself fit for performing a good act. Does this

act not carry any spiritual award which he should covet? Or can he not mitigate Allah's wrath by this means? Really, should one observe abstemiousness even in the matter of morals and virtues?"[99](#)

Hence, by taking together these explicit statements quoted from the pioneers of Islam and other traditions which it is not possible to amplify here, it becomes quite clear that Islam considers extension of help to the needy Muslims and taking steps for public welfare to be at par with the most important and most sublime worship and has made every Muslim responsible for the performance of this great duty and does not permit negligence or carelessness in this regard.

Good Deeds

Contrary to the thinking of some narrow-minded persons that religion does not care for things other than various forms of worship and obligatory and unlawful matters, Islam attaches great importance to public welfare like construction of *Masjids*, orphanages, propagation centers, bridges and water reservoirs and improvement of roads. In short, everything which contributes to the welfare and the well-being of the people.

The Holy Prophet, peace be on him and his progeny says: "One who passes his days and nights and does not care for the affairs of the Muslims (and does not strive to solve any problem of the society) is not a Muslim". [100](#)

When the Holy Prophet (S), was asked about the person whom Allah likes most, he replied: "He is the person who is more useful to the Muslim society than all others".[101](#) And he said in other words: "The best among the people is the one from whom people benefit more".[102](#)

To such good deeds, Islam gives the name of alms recurring benefits.

Imam Ja'far Al-Sadiq , peace be on him , says: "The record of the activities of everyone is closed after his death and thereafter he does not receive any reward or punishment except in three cases: 'The first one is the alms recurring benefits ' (useful works) which he leaves behind himself and another is a good habit which he leaves as his remembrance and the third one is a dutiful child who proves for his deliverance (and if he has committed any sin his child makes amends for it)".[103](#)

The Holy Qur'an says:

"Wealth and children are the bounties of this life. But deeds of lasting merit are better rewarded by your Lord"(18:44).

Besides attaching so much importance to 'alms recurring benefits' viz. sacred buildings and endowments, Islam particularly stresses on the construction of *Masjid* which is the very basis for Islamic propagation and teachings and it has made special recommendations in this behalf .

The Holy Prophet (S), says: “One who constructs a *Masjid* the Omnipotent Allah will grant him a house in Paradise “. [104](#)

And the Holy Qur’an says:

“And those persons who build Masjids and visit them, who believe in Allah and the Day of Judgement, attend their prayers and pay Zakat (religious tax) and who fear none but Allah”(9: 18)

Islam’s view with regard to social matters becomes clear from this that a comparatively small matter like leveling the streets of Muslims has been given so much importance. The Holy Prophet (S), says: “Allah gives spiritual reward equal to that of reciting four hundred verses of the Holy Qur’an to a person who removes from the path of the Muslims that which inconveniences them “. [105](#)

Whenever Imam Al-Sajjad (‘a), passed through a road and saw a stumbling block lying on it he used to dismount from the animal on which he was riding so that he might remove it with his own hand”. [106](#)

The Holy Prophet (S), said: “It is incumbent upon every Muslim to give alms (and do favors to others) every day”. Someone said: “How is it possible for anyone to do such a good deed every day?” The Holy Prophet replied: “When a person removes impediments from the path of the Muslims it is treated to be ‘alms’ “. [107](#)

Helping The Oppressed

Islam appeared in a society in which cruelty and oppression were fully current along with other evils. Rich and powerful tyrants oppressed their subjects and other weak people as much as possible and made them submit to their authority. There were also some who kept silent on account of fear or for some other reasons and thus practically endorsed the action of the tyrants by their silence. Hence the oppressors continued their oppressions as far as possible.

Islam besides having threatened and condemned the oppressors and considered them distant from Allah’s Blessings also seriously taken to task the second group of people who remain silent and do not strive to rescue the oppressed and has warned them of Divine Wrath.

Imam Ja’far Al-Sadiq (‘a), says: “When a Muslim, in spite of being in a position to assist his brother, abstains from doing so, Allah also abstains from assisting him in this world as well as in the Hereafter “. [108](#)

Islam strictly orders its followers to campaign against the tyrants and to assist the oppressed.

Imam Ali (‘a), says to his son: “Always campaign against the tyrant and help the oppressed”. [109](#) The Holy Prophet (S), says: “Allah appoints an angel to keep that person safe from the Fire of Hell on the Day of Judgement, who saves a believer from the oppression of a cruel person”. [110](#)

Imam Ja'far Al-Sadiq ('a), also says: "It is better for a Muslim to help his oppressed brother than to fast and to sit in *A'tikaf* (seclusion) for one month in *Masjidul Haram*". [111](#)

Imam Muhammad Al-Baqir ('a), says: "Once a true believer lived in the country of a cruel king. The king was very keen to oppress the true believers. The man was, therefore, compelled to leave his country and seek refuge in the country of non-believers and there he took up abode in the house of an infidel.

The infidel accorded him respect and gave him asylum. When the time of the infidel's death drew nearer Allah revealed to him thus: "I swear by My Dignity and Glory that if there had been a place in Paradise for the infidels I would have rewarded you but Paradise is forbidden to the infidels. However, Oh fire! Take hold of him but do not hurt him" [112](#)

In one of his remarks about assisting the oppressed, Imam Ja'far Al-Sadiq ('a), says clearly: "It is the duty of every Muslim and it is incumbent upon him to assist a Muslim (against the tyrants)". [113](#)

Mutual Co-operation Amongst Muslims

At the time of the advent of Islam, the entire Arabia presented a scene of battlefield and was burning in the fire of corruption, contention, mischief and disturbance. People of that peninsula had always been at loggerheads with one another and their hearts were filled with acute rancor.

However, Islam declared the mutual love amongst them to be the basis of its program of inviting people to Allah. The Holy Prophet recited the following verse before them:

"The believers are a band of brothers, Make peace among your brothers and fear Allah so that you may be shown mercy (49: 10).

Then the Holy Prophet (S), embarked upon this task with high ambition and practically established brotherly relationship between two groups of Muslims. From that day onwards the phrase brethren-in-faith along with the phrase kinsmen became current and the former became more in vogue.

In order to root out rancor and animosity Islam ordains to establish peace and tranquility among your brethren-in-faith.

At the time of his last moment Imam Ali ('a), advised his children as under:

"My children! I advise you to adopt piety, keep your affairs organized and always make peace between yourselves because I have heard your grandfather, the Holy Prophet (S), saying that Allah regards creating of peace between two persons to be superior to offering prayers and fasting for one year" [114](#)

For these very reasons the great leaders of Islam attached much importance to this subject so much so that they kept some money with some of their companions so that if there was some financial dispute between two persons the same should be settled through that money.

Abu Hanifa, the *Hajj* guide says: “Once I was disputing with a person in connection with an inheritance. Mufazzal Bin Umar passed by us. He observed us for a moment and then invited us to his residence. He settled the affair between us for four hundred dirhams and himself paid the amount to us. Then he said: “Remember! This money is not mine. Imam Ja’far Al-Sadiq, peace be on him , gave it to me and ordered that as and when two faithful persons are disputing over some property, the matter should be settled by means of this money”. [115](#)

Islam has imposed mutual responsibilities upon Muslims and called them the ‘rights of brethren-in-faith’.

Imam Ali (‘a), quotes from the Holy Prophet, peace be on his and his progeny, as saying: “Every Muslim has thirty rights over another Muslim which he should either perform or the other should spare him from performance thereof, a Muslim should overlook the crisis of his brother-in-faith and should have pity on him when he is in trouble, should guard his secret , should not talk about his shortcomings, should accept his apology, should defend him when others degrade him, give him good counseling and preserve mutual friendship with him, should pay his debts, should visit him when he is sick and should escort his funeral in the event of his death, should accept his invitation and his presents, should recompense him for his gifts, and thank him for his favors, should render him proper assistance, should protect his honor and meet his needs and make him achieve his purpose. If he sneezes he should invoke benediction for him. He should guide him to his lost things, answer his salutation, treat his statements to be correct, consider his gift to be good, confirm his oaths and be friendly with his friends. In case he is the oppressor, he should be stopped from doing evil and in case he is the oppressed one, the requisite assistance is to help him in receiving his dues. He should not leave him alone to face hardships and should consider that thing good for him which he considers which he good for himself and should not desire that thing for him which he does not desire for himself”. [116](#)

Imam Ja’far Al-Sadiq also quotes the Holy Prophet (S), saying: “A believer has seven rights over another believer which the later must discharge. He should respect him openly and be friendly with him in his heart. He should make him partake in his wealth, visit him when he is sick and escort his funeral on his death and even after his death he should not say anything except good about him”. [117](#)

Imam Muhammad Al-Baqir, peace on him, said: “Some of the rights of a believer upon his brother are: He should satiate him when he is hungry, conceal his secrets, make his difficulties easy for him (assist him in his difficulties), pay his debts and protect his children after his death”. [118](#)

Imam Ja’far Al-Sadiq (‘a), also says: “A believer is the brother of the other believer and he is like an eye and a guide for him. He does not commit breach of trust with him, does not oppress him, does not deceive him and he fulfills the promise made with him”. [119](#)

Behavior With The Servants

Even today the treatment of some persons with their servants is just like that meted out by the masters

to their slaves during the Dark Age of Ignorance.

Islam has seriously campaigned against this way of thinking and has considered the relationship between the master and the servant to be a relationship of mutual assistance on the basis of mutual respect and protection based on the concept of human rights and freedom,

The biographies of the leaders of Islam, besides their sayings, clearly indicate that they fully observed equality and respect in the matter of their servant and treated them like helpers and not like beasts of burden.

The Holy Prophet (S), says: “They are your brothers whom Allah has made your subordinates. Hence, if a person has a brother subordinate to himself, he should give him to eat what he eats himself and to wear what he wears himself and should assist him in doing difficult jobs “. [120](#) “As and when you order your slaves (and servants) to do a difficult job, assist them yourselves”. [121](#)

“The worst person is he who travels alone and turns away his guest and beats his slave”. [122](#)

Imam Ali Al-Ridha' (‘a), instructed his two servants named Yasir and Nadir: “If you see me standing by your side at the time when you are taking your meals, do not move from your place (do not pay me any respect) until you have finished with your meals”. [123](#)

Imam Ali (‘a), purchased two shirts, one of which cost three dirhams and the other two dirhams. He kept the cheaper one himself and gave the other to Qambar (his servant). Qambar said: “You are better suited to wear this shirt because you mount the pulpit and address the people”. Imam Ali replied: “Qambar! You are young and still enjoy the prime of youth. I feel ashamed before Allah that I should seek precedence over you in the matter of dress because I have heard the Holy Prophet (S), says: “Give them (slaves and servants) to wear whatever you wear yourselves and to eat what you eat yourselves”. [124](#)

Some people are of the view that so long as they are not harsh with their servants, the latter do not obey them. This way of thinking is, however, incorrect because they are more obedient when they are treated well.

The Holy Prophet (S), says: “Be kind and cheerful with your servants because by doing so your wishes are complied with more properly”. [125](#)

In fact the methods of looking after your household affairs should be learnt from Islam. Islam enjoins us to observe good system even in the case of servants and entrust a particular job to every one of them. Imam Ali (‘a), says to his sons: “Ask each one of your workers to perform a particular job because in this way they do not pass on jobs to one another”. [126](#)

On the other hand the servants too should not exceed their limits and they should pay due regard to the rights of their masters. It is said that Imam Ja'far Al-Sadiq (‘a), once went a sent a slave of his some

work. He went and did not return in time. The Holy Imam went after him and found him asleep. He kept standing there till the man woke up. Then the Imam said to him: “O man! Why do you sleep during the night and during the day? Let the night be yours to sleep but let the day to be mine”. [127](#)

Zakat, The Share Of The Needy

In the modern world the indigence and poverty of a large number of people and the glaring class distinctions have attracted the attention of the intelligentsia who are striving hard to remedy this ailment and to reduce this dangerous gap between different classes.

In order to prevent accumulation of wealth and eradicate the evil of poverty, Islam has prescribed the law of alms and *Zakat*. According to this law the rich persons are under obligation to pay every year a fixed percentage of their wealth to the needy and destitute.

The Holy Qur’an has mentioned it at numerous places [128](#) and it has given it so much importance that it has usually been mentioned along with the greatest of all religious duties namely the offering of prayers (*Salat*). For example it says:

“Offer prayers and pay Zakat for you will be rewarded for whatever good work you do” (2: 104).

The leaders of Islam have mentioned the philosophy underlying the law of *Zakat* and have thereby encouraged the people to pay it. Imam Ja’far Al-Sadiq (‘a), says: “*Zakat* has been prescribed for the purpose that the rich people should be tested and the poor should be helped. If people had paid *Zakat* for their wealth there would have been no indigent Muslim. On the other hand by means of this right fixed for the poor by Allah the poor would have become free from need. Hence, if poor and hungry persons are found, it is on account of the sin committed by the rich and it’s only appropriate that Allah may withhold His Blessings from those people who have not attended to the rights of the needy”. [129](#)

He also say: “Allah has fixed a share for the poor in the wealth of the rich and made the poor as partners in their assets. No rich person deserves praise unless he pays that right viz. *Zakat*. By means of *Zakat* the lives of the poor are guaranteed and with this act, a Muslim is called Muslim”. [130](#)

The following words of Imam Ja’far Al-Sadiq (‘a), also deserve attention: “Allah has fixed 25 dirham as *Zakat* out of 1000 *Dirham* because He has created the human beings and knows the extent of their needs. He knows that out of every 1000 persons 25 are poor (i.e. the number of weak persons and those who cannot do any work and those who in need of immediate help is within these limits) and has fixed their share according! And if the number of such persons had been more than this, He would have fixed a larger share for them because Allah is their Creator and is aware of their condition”. [131](#)

Islam has strictly warned the rich and informed them of the dangers which spring out of class differences. The Holy Prophet (S), says: “Ensure your wealth by paying *Zakat*”. [132](#)

This is so because it is evident that most of the wicked deeds, corruption and thefts and above all the inauspicious melody of communism crop up from poverty and acute need.

Whatever has been said above was with regard to the payment of *Zakat* from the economy point of view. However, it should not be forgotten that its spiritual aspect also enjoys at least as much importance.

Imam Ali ('a), says: "*Zakat*, along with prayers, has been held for Muslims to be a means of proximity to Allah. It becomes an atonement for the sins of a person who pays it willingly and protects him from the fire of Hell. Hence none should pay it with a heavy heart and feel sad on account of its payment". [133](#)

On another occasion he says: "Do not forget to pay *Zakat*, for *Zakat* quenches the wrath of Allah". [134](#)

For the above mentioned reasons Islam has strongly condemned non-payment of *Zakat* and has threatened the well-to-do people who refrain from paying it.

Imam Muhammad Al-Baqir quotes from Imam Ali, who quoted from the Holy Prophet, peace be on him and his progeny: "If people refrain from paying *Zakat*, Allah's Blessings will also be withheld from the earth". [135](#)

Imam Ja'far Al-Sadiq ('a), also says: "One who refrain from paying the minimum amount of *Zakat* (one carat) is neither a believer nor a Muslim ". [136](#)

Islam attaches so much importance to this social act that the Holy Prophet, peace be on him and his progeny formally turned out of the *Masjid* some persons who considered this vital activity to be something quite ordinary and had failed to pay the rights of the poor. He said: "Anyone of you who do not pay *Zakat* should leave 'our *Masjid*' and should not offer prayers in it" [137](#)

Although Islam accords due consideration to economic freedom and acquisition of personal property yet it says: "Allah has made gold and silver coins (money and wealth) to be means of the welfare of the people so that they may meet their needs in different walk of life and achieve their ends. Hence the entire wealth of those who accumulate a good deal of it but comply with Allah's order and pay *Zakat* (i.e. the rights of the poor) shall become pure and lawful". [138](#)

But at the same time Islam considers the non-payment of the rights of the poor to be an unpardonable sin and says: "A person who accumulates sufficient belongings and gold and silver and practices stinginess and does not pay Allah's right (and in its stead) converts it into gold and silver utensils (and leads a luxurious life) shall deserve Divine wrath". Almighty Allah says:

"A day (will arrive when) these coins will be on their red hot with the fire of Hell and will be tattooed their foreheads, backs and the lateral sides". (9:35).

The Financial Rights

In order to reduce the grave distance between different classes Islam has fixed, besides *Zakat*, other right of the needy in the wealth of the well-to-do people and the rich and praises those people.

“Who have themselves opened an account in their wealth and have determined a right in it for the indigent persons of the society, besides Zakat which is their established right.” (70:25–26).

Imam Ja’far Al-Sadiq (‘a), says thus in connection with such rights: “Almighty Allah has fixed other rights, besides *Zakat*, in the property of the rich and He says: “Only those persons can withstand hardships who determine a right in their wealth for the poor. This right is beside *Zakat* and is a right which a person makes obligatory upon himself. He should fix it according to his means and pay it daily or once in a week or once in a month And Allah says again, “Make a good loan to Allah”. This is in addition to *Zakat* and further says: ‘Those people who spend in the way of Allah openly and secretly’.

“And again *Ma’oun* (whose objectors are reproached by Allah) is also the same thing that money should be lent or something may be given on loan or a good deed may be done. And one of the things which are counted as assets besides *Zakat* in the sympathetic consideration about which Allah says: And the people who bold it firmly and about which Allah has given orders. Hence anyone who acquits himself of the duties which Allah has made obligatory upon him has performed what was due from him”. [139](#)

Imam Ja’far Al-Sadiq (‘a), says again: “Do you think that Allah has fixed only *Zakat* in your wealth? (If it is so you are mistaken). That which Allah has fixed besides *Zakat* is more than *Zakat* and the same should be spent on your relatives and on those who ask you of it.” [140](#)

The Holy Imam was asked again as to whether Allah by saying: “Those who fix a right in their wealth for those who ask for it or are needy” meant something other than *Zakat*? He replied: Yes, by it are those people are meant whom Allah has given wealth and who take out of it 1000 or 2000 or 3000 or something more or less than that and give it to their relatives or spend it on the helpless people of their community.” [141](#)

However, Islam considers those rich persons to be virtuous who meet all financial obligations consisting of *Zakat* and rights of the relatives, the beggars and the needy.

Imam Ja’far Al-Sadiq (‘a), said to Ammar Sabati: “Have you much wealth? He replied: “Yes”. The Imam asked: “Do you pay *Zakat* which Allah has made obligatory? He replied in the affirmation. Then the Holy Imam said: “Do you segregate a certain amount of your wealth for the poor?” He replied: “Yes. I do” the Imam said: “Do you give something to your relatives?” He said: “Yes”” The Imam asked: “Do you help your brother-in-faith also? He replied: “Yes” Then the Holy Imam (encouraged him and) said: “O Ammar! Wealth exhausts, human body decays but the action lasts. And the Reckoner is alive and He does not die. O Ammar! Whatever you send in advance belongs to you but whatever you leave behind

will never you”. [142](#)

Charity In The Cause Of Allah

The topic of charity in the cause of Allah which is sometimes called *Sadaqa* in the terminology of tradition (*Sadaqa* is charity in the cause of Allah). It is in itself such a wonderful thing that very few of the recommended precepts have perhaps been given an importance equal to it.

From the, view–point of Islam charity exercises great influence upon everything including life, wealth and riches and above all the Blessings of Allah. The Holy Prophet (S), says: “On the Day of Judgement everyone will rest under the shadow of his charity until the matters are settled between the people”. [143](#)

“Secret charity in the cause of Allah quenches the Flame of Allah’s Wrath”. [144](#)

Imam Ja’far Al–Sadiq (‘a), says: “Every Muslim who clothes a destitute Muslim remains under Allah’s Protection till the shreds of that cloth lasts”. [145](#)

“Treat your sick kindly in the cause of Allah. Seek your sustenance by means of charity for before it reaches the creature it reaches the Hand of the Creator”. [146](#)

Imam Muhammad Al–Baqir (‘a), says: “Goodness and kindness in the path of Allah eradicates poverty, increases one’s longevity and protects him from seventy different types or dangerous deaths. [147](#)

It is however, much better that one should do this noble act while he possesses good health and stamina and not in the shape of a will at the time of his death.

The Holy Prophet (S), was asked as to which charity is better. He replied : “That one which you give personally when you are alive and in control of your affairs when you hope to live and are afraid of indigence and not that you should postpone it till you are about to die and then you say to give that much to one and that much to another”. [148](#)

Don’t Cast A Favor In The Teeth

There is no doubt about the fact that all these recommendations and insistence about charity have mostly been with a view to relieve the indigent from their pitiable condition and to remove their mental agony by meeting their financial needs. And the person who spends attains a higher moral and spiritual satisfaction by means of this pious act and thus he adorns himself with fresh virtue and excellence.

In case, however, spending and charity is motivated by making the recipient feel obliged of this charity then on the one hand not only the real object is not achieved but a severe damage is also done to the spirit of the recipients and on the other hand it becomes known that this act in fact was not for Allah’s sake and consequently one who depends does not derive any moral or spiritual benefit.

For this very reason the Holy Qur'an, while mentioning the subject of charity in the way of Allah, invites the attention of the people on many occasions to the fact that this act should be for Allah's sake only and should not be followed by letting the recipient feel obliged on account of that.

At one place it says,

“Those who spend their property in the cause of Allah and do not make the recipient feel obliged or insulted shall receive their reward from Allah. They shall have no fear nor will they be grieved”. (2:262).

And in two other verses following this it considers such an act to be the cause of loss of spiritual reward and benefit of charity and by comparing an act purely for the sake of Allah with the one other than this it says:

“Believers, do not make your charities fruitless by reproachfully reminding the recipient of your favor or making them insulted, like the one who spends his property to show off and who has no faith in Allah or belief in the Day of Judgement. The example of his deed is as though some soil has gathered on a rock and after a rainfall it turns hard and barren. Such people cannot benefit from what they have earned. Allah does not guide the unbelievers. The example of those who spend their property to please Allah out of their firm and sincere intention is like the garden on a fertile land which after a heavy rainfall or even a drizzle yields double produce”. (2:264 -265).

And in many statements of the leaders of Islam also it has been mentioned clearly that the spiritual reward of a good action is lost by reminding the recipient of the favors done to him. The Holy Prophet (S), says: “Allah nullifies the charity of a person who does good to a Muslim and then hurts him by reminding him of the favors done to him”. [149](#) “And Allah does not pay any attention to a person and He does not purify his heart if that person reminds the recipient of the favor done to him”. [150](#)

Hence, for the achievement of this very end it has been ordered that if anything is given to a person he should not be considered to be low but should be respected. Imam Ali (‘a), says: “When you give something to a person who requests for it, take your hands upto your mouth and kiss them because charity is accepted by Allah”. [151](#)

It is perhaps for this very reason that it has been ordered that charity should, as far as possible, be given secretly. The Holy Prophet (S), says: “There are seven groups of people whom Allah will keep under the shadow of His Blessings on the Day of Judgement. One of them are the people who give charity and keep it a secret so much so that even their right hand does not know what they give with their left hand”. [152](#)

Moderation

As the foundation of true social life has been laid on moderation and maintenance of equilibrium, the sacred religion of Islam has not ignored moderation and equilibrium in any circumstances and even in the matter of daily expenditure it praises those persons ***“who are neither extravagant nor niggardly but keep the golden mean”***. (25:67).

Extravagance and lavishness are condemned by Islam and are considered to be a great defect in a man. Imam Ja’far Al-Sadiq (‘a), says: “Perfection lies in three things and one of them is moderation in life”. [153](#)

Imam Muhammad Al-Baqir (‘a), says: “There is no goodness in the one who is not moderate in his life because this thing (i.e. not being moderate) is not beneficial for him either in this world or in the Hereafter”. [154](#) And the Holy Qur’an says:

“Do not squander your wealth wastefully for the wasteful are Satan’s brothers.” (17:26).

Granting A Loan

While the religion of Islam has considered different types of purchase and sale to be lawful it has declared usury to be unlawful, in whatever shape it may be i.e. whether in connection with purchase and sale or in connection with lending and borrowing. [155](#)

However, as one is compelled to take loan at one time or another, Islam encourages the wealthy persons to grant loans to others. Imam Ja’far Al-Sadiq (‘a), says “If a Muslim grants a loan to a brother Muslim for the sake of Allah (and not for interest) that loan is considered to be a ‘Charity’ till such time that it is repaid”. [156](#)

The Holy Prophet (S), says: “There is a writing on the gate of Paradise to the effect that the reward for charity is 10 times and the reward for loan is 70 times thereof. I enquired from Jibril (‘a) as to why it was so when the property of one who gives charity does not return to him whereas a loan is repayable. Jibril (‘a) replied that it was so because one who takes charity may not be in need of it whereas one who takes a loan really needs it.

Hence charity is sometimes given to a man who deserves it and at other times to one who does not deserve it. It is for this reason that the reward for loan is greater than that for charity and munificence”. [157](#)

However, on the other hand Islam does not permit everyone to obtain loan and considers it to be justified for only those people who really need it because being a debtor is the cause of humiliation for a person.

The Holy Prophet says, "Refrain from becoming a debtor because debt is a matter of shame for man. During the night it keeps him busy with itself and during day it makes him feel ashamed before the creditor". [158](#)

And as anxiety, agitation and disturbance of mind wears out one's nerves it is possible that debt may shorten the life of man. It is on this count that Imam Ja'far Al-Sadiq ('a), says: "Reduce your debts as far as possible because life increases by their reduction". [159](#)

For these very reasons the Holy Prophet (S), says: "I seek refuge in Allah (from two things), from blasphemy and from debt". The people asked: "Do you consider blasphemy and debt to be at par with each other?" The Holy Prophet (S), replied: "Yes!" [160](#)

It is perhaps for this reason that at times a debt becomes the cause of blasphemy.

However, none of these things prevents a needy persons from taking a loan. Imam Musa Al-Kadhim ('a), says: "Whoever makes efforts to earn the requirements of life equal to his personal needs as well as the needs of his family is like one who performs *Jihad* in the way of Allah. However, when his expenses exceed his income he may take loan from others. It is for Allah and His Messenger to provide him the needs of his family and if he dies without having cleared his debt it is necessary for the Imam to repay the same from the public treasury of the Muslims". [161](#)

The Holy Prophet (S), says: "Allah is with the debtor provided he has not committed a sin against Allah with that loan". [162](#)

Furthermore, when Imam Ja'far Al-Sadiq ('a), was asked about the correctness of the following incident: "A man from amongst the *Ansar* died when he owed a debt of two dinars and the Holy Prophet, peace be on him and his progeny, did not perform his funeral prayer but asked others to perform the prayers although another person had undertaken to repay his debt. They were under the impression that borrowing is an unlawful act and it was on this account that the Holy Prophet (S), had declined to perform his funeral prayers. The Holy Imam said: "Yes. This incident is correct. The Holy Prophet did so because others should take responsibility in the very first instance for the repayment of his debt (and thus comfort him) and besides people should also have taken a lesson and should not have considered 'debt' to be something unimportant but in spite of this borrowing is not a sin." [163](#)

Just as Islam declares borrowing to be lawful and encourages the rich to advance loans, it also makes the debtors responsible for the repayment of the loan as early as possible.

Imam Ja'far Al-Sadiq ('a), says: "Amends can be made for every sin by means of *Jihad* in the cause of Allah and martyrdom except for a loan for which there is no expiation or atonement other than its repayment or its being forgiven by the creditor". [164](#)

Hence the Holy Prophet says: After the mortal sins there is nothing more serious than a person should

die in debt and should not leave anything, for its repayment”. [165](#)

One of the cases in which Islam attaches importance to intention also besides action is with regard to the repayment of a debt because it says that in case a person is not in a position to make immediate repayment of a loan it is necessary for him to be keen to repay it. [166](#)

Imam Ja'far Al-Sadiq ('a), says: “My son! You should know that if a person takes a loan and has it in view that he has to repay it he is in Allah's Protection till he puts his intention into practice. However, if he does not care for its repayment he is a thief”. [167](#)

Islam says that when a person is in a position to repay his debt he should not be negligent in this behalf. The Holy Prophet (S), says: “If a person, notwithstanding his being in a position to repay another's right, shows negligence and carelessness in its repayment, his daily recompense is like that of a person who forcibly usurps the property of others as punitive taxes”. [168](#)

Imam Muhammad Al-Baqir ('a), says: “If a person withholds the right of a Muslim, in spite of being in a position to pay it, fearing that if he pays it he would become poor should know that Allah is more competent to make him poor as compared with his wish to become independent of needy by withholding the rights of others”. [169](#)

However Islam also orders the creditors that they should not demand repayment of loan at an inappropriate time and should not press a debtor for repayment when he is not in a position to make it.

Imam Ali Al-Ridha' ('a), says: “Just as it is not lawful for a debtor not to repay the loan in spite of being in a position to do so it is also not lawful for a creditor to put the debtor under pressure”. [170](#) In this connection the Holy Qur'an says clearly:

“If your debtor be in straits. Grant him a time until he can discharge his debt; but if you wave the sum as charity it will be better for you, though you know it”. (2:280).

Islam considers it necessary for the debtors to make repayment of loan at the appointed time by whatever means possible even though they may be obliged to sell their belongings. However, the necessities of life like residential house etc are exempted from this rule.

Imam Ja'far Al-Sadiq ('a), says: “A house cannot be sold for repayment of loan because it is necessary for everyone to have a shelter to rest under it” [171](#)

It is reported that Muhammad Bin Abi Umayr, a distinguished companion of Imam Ja'far Al-Sadiq ('a), was a draper and he became bankrupt. His entire property was lost and he became extremely poor. However, he had a claim of ten thousand dirhams against a man. When that man came to know about his need he sold his residential house for 10,000 dirhams and brought the money to him. Muhammad Bin Abi Umayr asked: “What is it?” He replied “It is the debt which I owe you” Muhammad said: “Have you inherited that amount?” The man replied: ‘No’. Muhammad then said: ‘Has anyone given it to you as a

gift? 'The man said: 'No!' Muhammad again asked: "Have you sold a garden or an orchard?" The man said 'No'. Muhammad asked: "Then how have you been able to possess this money?" The man replied: "I had a house which I have sold to repay your debt". Muhammad Bin Abi Umayr said "It has been reported to me from Imam Ja'far Al-Sadiq ('a), that he said: "No one should sell his house for the sake of repaying the debt"

Pick up your money. I do not need it. Although I need every penny but I will not take this amount". [172](#)

To ensure that the rights of creditor are not lost Islam orders that after the death of a debtor his debt should be paid first and thereafter his property should be divided among his heirs. It is only his shroud which is provided for earlier than debt out of his property.

The Holy Prophet (S), says: "The first thing which should be provided for out of the property of a dead person is his shroud. Then comes the turn of his debt and thereafter the property is divided between his heirs". [173](#)

Even if the time fixed for the repayment of debt has not yet arrived, it becomes payable with immediate effect, in the event of the death of the debtor.

Imam Muhammad Al-Baqir ('a), says: "If a debt is payable by a person at an appointed time but he dies before that time, the debt becomes payable with immediate effect". [174](#)

However, if another person stands surety for the repayment of the debt, the responsibility of the debtor to the creditor comes to an end.

Imam Ali Al-Ridha' ('a), said: "If a person who owes a debt dies and another person guarantees its repayment the responsibility of the repayment of the debt is transferred to the surety". [175](#)

Forgiveness And Toleration

In order to suppress and crush their adversaries some persons resort to pay them in the same coin and meet wickedness with wickedness. However, Imam Ali ('a), says: "Punish your opponents with kindness and ward off the harm done by them by means of a good reward". [176](#)

It means that to forgive a mistake is the best method of stopping its repetition. Hence, the Qur'an says in connection with the qualities of the pious people:

"People: who control their anger and forgive the shortcomings of the people"(3: 134).

And then orders that the Muslims:

"Should forgive and overlook. Don't you wish Allah to forgive you? He is forgiving and Merciful". (24:22).

And again it says:

“He that forgives and seeks reconciliation shall be rewarded by Allah”. (26:40).

Forgiveness and toleration are qualities which ensure success and prosperity in this world as well as in the Hereafter. The Holy Prophet (S), says: “Should I lead you to goodness in this world as well as in the Hereafter? Visit him who has abandoned relations with you. Do good to him who has deprived you. And forgive him who has oppressed you”. [177](#) “It is necessary for you to be forgiving because forgiveness and toleration increase the honor of man. Forgive so that Allah may make you respectable”. [178](#)

However, it should be remembered that forgiveness carries value when one is in a position to take revenge and it behoves only that person to forgive who possesses the necessary power. Imam Ali (‘a), says: “Forgive your enemy when you have the upper hand over him and consider it to be thanksgiving for the power which you possess”. [179](#) “The person most suited to forgive is he who possesses more power to punish”. [180](#)

We can understand the importance of forgiveness when we see that while emphasizing the infallibility of Ahlul Bayt (the chosen descendants of the Holy Prophet)

Imam Ja’far Al-Sadiq (‘a), says “We come of the family whose second nature is to forgive those who have oppressed us”. [181](#) He also says: “To forgive, while possessing power to punish is the way of the prophets and the pious people”. [182](#)

Hypocrisy And Double-Dealing

Islam has campaigned seriously against hypocrisy or double-dealing and has warned its followers sternly against it. There are numerous verses of the Holy Qur’an and the traditions of the leaders of Islam which condemn hypocrisy and double-facedness. The Holy Qur’an in this connection with some hypocrites and their end says:

“There are some who declare: We believe in Allah and the Day of judgement”, but they are not true believers. They deceive Allah and the believers. However, they have deceived none but themselves, a fact of which they are not aware. A sickness exists in their hearts to which Allah adds more sickness. Besides this they will suffer a painful punishment as a result of the lie which they tell. When they are asked not to commit corruption in the land, they reply, “We are only reformers”. They are corrupt but do not realize it. When they are asked to believe as everyone else does, they say, “Should we believe as fools do? In fact, they are fools but they do not know it. To the believers they profess belief but in secret to their own devils they say, “We were only mocking”. In fact Allah mocks them and gives them time to continue blindly in their transgressions. They have traded guidance for error but their bargain has had no profit and they have missed the right guidance. Their case is like that of one who kindles a fire and when it

grows bright Allah takes away their sight leaving him in darkness. They cannot see. They are blind, deaf and dumb and cannot regain their senses. Or it is like that of a rainstorm with darkness thunder and lightning approaching. They cover their ears for fear of thunder and death. (Allah encompasses those who deny His Words). The lightening almost takes away their vision. When the lightening brightens their surroundings, they walk and when it is dark, they stand still. Had Allah wanted, He could have taken away their hearing and their vision. Allah has power over all things". (2:8-20).

Allah will not forgive or guide those to the right path who first believe, then disbelieve, again believe and disbelieve, and then increase their disbelief. The Holy Qur'an further says:

"Tell the hypocrites that for them there will be a painful torment. Do those who establish friendship with the disbelievers instead of the believers seek honor? Let them know that all honor belongs to Allah". (4: 138-140).

"For the hypocrites and the disbelievers, Allah has prepared Hell wherein they will live forever. Hell is their proper punishment. Allah has condemned them and they will suffer a permanent torment like that of those who lived before you, whose power, wealth and children were much greater than yours." (9:68).

The Holy Prophet (S), says "A hypocrite is like the branch of a date-palm tree which has been cut off from the tree and its owner intends to utilize it for building but it is not suitable for it and then he wishes to use it for some other purpose but is disappointed again and in the end he has no alternative left but to burn it and destroy it"[183](#) (In short the hypocrites are not only useless persons but dangerous and poisonous elements in whichever society they may be).

The Holy Prophet (S), says: "Hypocrisy is to project oneself to be more pious outwardly than what actually he is internally".[184](#)

He also mentions the sign of a hypocrite as under: "A hypocrite is one who tells lies when he speaks and does not keep his promises and commits breach of trust".[185](#)

Imam Ja'far Al-Sadiq ('a), quotes from Luqman as under: "A hypocrite is one whose words and deeds do not accord with his internal thoughts and his appearance is different from his actual personality".[186](#)

People who practice hypocrisy with others are called 'double-faced' and 'double-tongued' in the terminology of tradition. Imam Muhammad Al-Baqir ('a), says thus about the hypocrites: "One who possesses two face and two tongues is a bad person. He is one who praises his brother-in-faith in his presence and slanders him in his absence. If his brother attains a status he envies him and if he is involved in some difficulty, he leaves him alone and does not help him".[187](#)

The Holy Prophet (S), says "One who is a hypocrite in this world will be having two tongues of fire on the

Dooms Day”. [188](#)

Mutual Trust

It is evident that before everything else society needs ‘mutual trust and confidence’ of its members because unless the people trust one another and look upon one another with confidence and respect they cannot smoothly continue their social life, solve their problems by mutual help and maintain proper relations. The dangers of lack of mutual trust are so obvious that they need not be discussed in detail.

In order to expand and strengthen mutual trust among its followers Islam prohibits them from suspecting one another and considers it to be a sin. The Holy Qur’an says:

“Believers, avoid immoderate suspicion, for in some cases suspicion is a crime”. (49: 12)

Imam Ali (‘a), says: “Bad opinion about a good person is one of the greatest crimes and worst kind of injustice”. [189](#) “It is unjust that one should decide about a reliable person according to his own supposition”. [190](#)

Islam orders that the words of a brother-in-faith should be taken in good faith. Imam Ali (‘a), says: “Till such time a word carries a good sense do not attach a bad meaning to it”. [191](#)

Islam has declared mutual trust and good opinion to be the right of Muslims over one another. Imam Ja’far Al-Sadiq (‘a), says: “One of the rights of a believer over his brother is that he should corroborate what he says and should not contradict it”. [192](#)

However, Islam considers bad supposition to be peculiar to those who are themselves ill-bred and wicked. Imam Ali (‘a), says: “A wicked person does not hold good opinion about his brother and is always suspicious about him because man by virtue of his instinct considers everyone according to his own nature” [193](#)

It should however, be kept in mind that it is the duty of Muslims not to place themselves in a situation which may invite calumny viz. they should not do anything which may make others suspect them. And if such a situation does arise they should clarify the real position. It was on this account that while the Holy Prophet (S), was once sitting with one of his wives named Safia and a man from amongst the *Ansar* happened to pass by and the Holy Prophet made it known to him that the woman was his wife. The man said: “O Prophet of Allah! Is it possible that I should entertain any suspicion about you?” The Holy Prophet then said: “O man Satan penetrates into human body like blood. I, therefore, feared lest it should misguide you to hold a bad opinion”. [194](#)

Islam has strictly prohibited all such things as may possibly cause mutual suspicion among the Muslims e.g. back-biting, hearing a person slandering others, peeping at the secrets of others etc. etc.

Truthfulness

Truthfulness is one of the most basic fundamentals for the establishment of mutual social relations. Islam has, therefore, attached much importance to truthfulness as a moral value and the Holy Qur'an has mentioned it on various occasions.

To evince the importance which truthfulness enjoys in the eyes of Islam it is sufficient to say that whenever the Holy Qur'an wants to praise prophet it makes a selection out of his virtues and introduces him to be a truthful person.

The Holy Qur'an has mentioned Prophet Ibrahim ('a), along with this attribute. [195](#) It has also glorified Prophet Yusuf ('a), with this virtue. [196](#) It also praises Prophet Isma'il ('a), for truthfulness [197](#) and also extols Prophet Idrees ('a), on this account. [198](#) It also narrates about other distinguished personalities and true servants of Allah that they 'possessed truthful tongues'. [199](#)

Imam Ja'far Al-Sadiq ('a), also says: "Allah has never appointed anyone to the Prophetic Mission except the one who has been truthful and honest". [200](#)

Islam considers truthfulness to be the excellent sign of man's merits. Imam Ja'far Al-Sadiq ('a), says: "Do not be misled by one's praying or fasting too much because many persons develop a habit in this behalf and cannot forsake it. On the other hand judge people in the light of their truthfulness and honesty and test them keeping in view these two merits. [201](#)

Islam considers goodness of an action to be dependent upon truthfulness. Imam Ja'far Al-Sadiq ('a), says: "If a man has a truthful tongue, his action is also correct and pious". [202](#)

The Holy Prophet (S), promises the intercession to those people who are truthful. [203](#) And the first advice which he tendered to Imam Ali ('a), was to be truthful and never to utter a lie". [204](#)

Islam considers salvation to be accompanied by truthfulness. Imam Ali ('a), says: "Make truthfulness your second nature because salvation depends on truthfulness". [205](#)

All these are recommendations made by Islam about truthfulness. However, the reproaches and threats which it attaches to falsehood are more serious. The Holy Qur'an declares liars to be the persons who do not believe in Allah [206](#) and considers them to be devoid of Divine guidance [207](#) and thus it says about their fate:

"On the Day of Judgement you will see the liars with black faces and those who insinuated false things to Allah" (39:60).

Imam Ja'far Al-Sadiq ('a), says: "Excessive falsehood causes light from one's heart and brightness from one's face to disappear". [208](#)

Hence, in order that the badness of this act may become patently clear, Imam Muhammad Al-Baqir, peace be on him says: “Allah has closed the door of every evil deed with a lock the key whereof is drinking wine because when a person gets intoxicated he becomes liable to commit any crime as he loses his sense of proportion which normally stops him from committing crimes, but falsehood is worse than intoxication because its consequences are more evil and inauspicious”[209](#)

On another occasion Imam Al-Hasan Al-Askari (‘a), has directly declared falsehood to be the key to curses and evils,[210](#) and it is for this very reason that Imam Al-Baqir (‘a), calls it the destroyer of faith.[211](#)

Imam Ali (‘a), says: “One does not enjoy the taste of faith unless he forsakes falsehood whether this falsehood be in seriousness or in jest”.[212](#)

The Holy Prophet (S), says: “It is possible that a believer may be timid or miser but it is not possible that he may be a liar”.[213](#)

Besides all this, falsehood is not beneficial even in the worldly life. The Holy Prophet, peace be on him and his progeny says: “Falsehood decreases the means of man’s sustenance”[214](#)

Imam Ali (‘a), says: “Being habituated to falsehood results in indigence and adversity”.[215](#)

The Holy Prophet (S), says: “Refrain from falsehood even if you consider it to be advantageous for you because it contains perdition and adversity of which you are not aware” [216](#)

Islam orders that one should also refrain from associating with the liars. Imam Ali (‘a), says: “It is appropriate that a Muslim should not associate with a liar”.[217](#)

Imam Al-Sajjad (‘a), advises his son Imam Muhammad Al-Baqir (‘a), in the following words: “Refrain from associating with people of five categories and do not converse nor travel with them. Out of them the first one is that of the liars because they are like a mirage which shows far off things nearer to and the things which are near are shown to be far off”.[218](#)

Trustworthiness

In the foregoing discussion the stress laid on truthfulness by Islam has become clear in a brief manner and presumably you noticed at that stage that in most of the traditions the subject of trustworthiness has also been mentioned along with truthfulness. The importance of trustworthiness in the eyes of Islam can well be understood by this because it is one of the most important bases for the prosperity of human society.

On one occasion the Holy Qur’an orders the Muslims explicitly to return to the owners the things left by them in their custody.[219](#) And at another place it has mentioned trustworthiness to be one of the primary

qualities of the believers.[220](#) It has also introduced the Prophets like Noah, Hud, Saleh, Lot, Sho'ayb and Musa, peace be on them, as trustworthy messengers.[221](#)

The Holy Prophet (S), says: "A person who is not trustworthy is devoid of a strong and complete faith".[222](#)

Islam considers trustworthiness to be the first trait of a companion. When Imam Ja'far Al-Sadiq ('a), was asked about the rules of companionship during journey he replied: "Protect the thing entrusted by him (i.e. by your companion) to you and return it to him".[223](#)

Imam Ja'far Al-Sadiq ('a), says: "Whenever a person entrusts anything to you do not commit a breach of trust even if that person may happen to be the murderer of Imam Husayn"[224](#)

"If the murderer of Imam Ali entrusts his sword to me and I accept the trust that I shall not misappropriate it and shall return it to him as and when he asks for it"[225](#)

Islam declares that trustworthiness also creates a good impression on one's life. Imam Ja'far Al-Sadiq ('a), tells his son: "My son trustworthiness guards the faith and the worldly affairs of man. Be trustworthy so that you may always be free from want".[226](#) And on another occasion he says to one of his companions: "I recommend two things to one of them is truthfulness and the other is trustworthiness for these two are the key to the means of sustenance".[227](#)

The Holy Prophet (S), also says: "Trustworthiness increases one's means of sustenance and breach of trust is the cause of poverty and indigence".[228](#)

Visiting The Sick

The sick are usually broken-hearted and dejected persons who are soundly in need of affability, kindness and spiritual contentment, because they consider themselves helpless and disabled and at times lose hope completely.

It is evident that in such circumstances visiting friends and brother-in-faith is a source of great consolation for them and which provides them comfort and mental satisfaction. In view of this Islam recommends very strongly the sick should be visited and the act of enquiring about their health should not be neglected.

The Holy Prophet (S), says: "Every Muslim who visits a sick person is absorbed in Allah's Blessings and during the time he is seated by the sick he is benefited by the Divine Mercy. If he visits the sick man in the morning 70,000 angels pray for him till evening and if he visits him in the evening 70,000 angels pray for him till morning".[229](#)

Islam orders that when you visit the sick you should enquire about their health and pray for them

because it is possible that by this means their hearts may be consoled. The Holy Prophet (S), says: “Visit the sick and escort the funerals of the dead so that you may be reminded of the next world. Pray for the sick person and say: “O Allah! Cure him and treat him with Your medicine and keep him safe from calamity”.

When you visit a sick person, take with you a present for him, even if it may be small. The Holy Prophet (S), says: “Whoever is willing to feed a sick person shall be provided by Allah with the fruits of Paradise”.[230](#)

Once when some companions of Imam Ja’far Al-Sadiq (‘a), were going to visit a sick person he met them on the way and asked them to stop. When they stopped he asked them: “Are you carrying with you an apple or quince or citron or some perfume or a piece of aloeswood?” They replied on the negative. Thereupon, the Holy Imam said: “Don’t you know that such things ensure peace of mind on a sick person?”[231](#)

One who visits a sick person should not expect reception or victuals from him. So much so that the Holy Prophet (S), has said that one should not eat anything while sitting with a sick person or else he would lose the spiritual reward accompanying the visit.[232](#)

Islam tells that one should not disturb sick person for three days (during which period the nature of his ailment is not really clear). Imam Ali, peace be on him says: “A sick person should be visited after three days.....” [233](#)

It is also necessary that the visit should not be a source of inconvenience and uneasiness to the patient, It is, therefore proper that one should not sit with him for a long time.

Imam Ali (‘a), says “Among those who visit the sick that person is rewarded more who stays with the patient for a short time unless he knows that he desires him to stay further.[234](#)

Imam Ja’far Al-Sadiq (‘a), says: “It is better that while you visit a sick person you should place your hand on his hand and should get up soon from his side. The fact is that the visit of a foolish person is more troublesome to a patient than his own ailment” (because it causes him more inconvenience)”.[235](#)

Islam orders the Muslims to assist the sick persons in discharging their daily requirements. The Holy Prophet (S), says: “One who assists a sick person in meeting his needs is absolved of his sins whether he succeeds in this task or not”.[236](#)

Sympathy With The Bereaved

Whatever consoles an afflicted and bereaved person to some extent and reduces his grief and gloom amounts to condolence with him. Islam has, therefore, stressed upon this subject and a great reward has been promised for it in a number of traditions. Imam Ja’far Al-Sadiq (‘a), says: “One who consoles a

bereaved person earns a reward equal to his without losing anything as the bereaved person is entitled to a great reward”.[237](#)

It is evident that members of a bereaved family are too much disturbed for some days to think of themselves or of their food. Hence, Islam has ordered that (contrary to what has become customary these days!) their neighbors should arrange for their food for three days. Imam Ja’far Al-Sadiq (‘a), says: “It is appropriate that the neighbors of a bereaved person should feed him for three days”.[238](#)

He also says: “To prepare meals in the presence of the bereaved people is one of the customs of the Dark Age of Ignorance and the course prescribed by Islam is that food should be taken for them in the manner recommended by the Holy Prophet (S), with regard to the family of Ja’far son of Abu Talib, peace be on him” [239](#)

Islam has not only made sympathy with the afflicted people necessary but, as a matter of principle, its entire program is based on sympathetic care and service to humanity. While praising the companions of the Holy Prophet the Holy Qur’an says:

“Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah and those with him are stern to the disbelievers yet kind among themselves”. (48:29).

And while praising some of them it says,

“Those who enjoy fortitude, mercy and kindness.” (90: 17).

Imam Ja’far Al-Sadiq (‘a), says: “There are three types of people whose prayer is certainly accepted (out of them one is) a Muslim who prays for such Muslim who has been sympathetic towards him and similarly a Muslim who curses that one who could help him and could meet his need but shirked it”.[240](#)

Friendship

Islam has attached great importance to the subject of friendship and always instructed its followers to mingle with good and pious men.

The Holy Prophet (S), said: “Whenever you see one of the gardens of Paradise open before you, benefit from it”. The people asked: “O Prophet of Allah! Where is the garden of Paradise?”. The Holy Prophet (S), replied: “I mean association with the believers and those who have faith in their Lord”.[241](#)

The Almighty Allah in the Holy Qur’an instructs His Prophet thus:

“Be patient with those who worship their Lord in the morning and evening seeking His pleasure. Do not overlook them to seek the worldly pleasure, nor obey those whose hearts We have made heedless of Our remembrance and who follow their own desires beyond all limits”. (18:28).

The Holy Prophet (S), says: “A good friend is better than solitude, but solitude is better than mingling with bad people”.[.242](#)

“The most-lucky person is he who associates with noble-minded people”.[.243](#)

“One always absorbs the way of his friend “. [.244](#)

The Holy Prophet (S), defines a good friend in these words: “He is the one whose very sight makes you remember Allah, whose conversation increases your knowledge and whose deeds remind you of the world in the Hereafter”.[.245](#)

Islam says that two friends should act as preachers for each other and each one of them should point out the shortcoming of the other. The better friend is he who performs this duty in a better way. Imam Ja’far Al-Sadiq (‘a), says: “My most beloved friend is he who points out my faults to me”.[.246](#) “When a person finds his friend in error and can prevent him from it but does not do so he commits a breach of trust with him”.[.247](#)

Islam has encouraged the Muslims so much to associate with pious people that Imam Ja’far Al-Sadiq (‘a), says: “The enemy (Satan) overpowers a person whose heart does not give him good counsel and whose soul does not prevent him to commit sins and above all who also does not possess a pious friend”.[.248](#)

Islam similarly prohibits the association of mean and ignorant persons. The Holy Prophet (S), says: “The wisest person is he who shuns the company of ignorant people”.[.249](#) Imam Ali (‘a), says: “The company of bad people becomes the cause of low esteem of the good people”.[.250](#) “A bad companion is one who justifies the sins committed against Allah before the eyes of the people”.[.251](#)

The leaders of Islam have prohibited mingling with the persons who are devoid of decent human qualities and moral virtues.

Imam Muhammad Al-Baqir (‘a), says, “Do not associate with a fool, a miser, a liar and a timid person, because a foolish friend, while thinking that he is doing you good, will cause you harm and a miserly friend will take from you but will not give you anything. In time of need, the timid friend will run away from you as well as from his own parents and a liar who tells too many lies says that which cannot be believed and it is not, therefore, possible to benefit from his ideas and thoughts”.[.252](#)

The Holy Prophet (S), has called a bad friend ‘a dead body’ and he says: “Association with the dead makes the human heart die and ‘the dead’ are persons who have lost their faith and are ignorant of the Laws of religion”.[.253](#)

Imam Ja’far Al-Sadiq (‘a), says: “Test your friends in respect of two qualities and in case they possess these two, associate with them otherwise shun their company: Offering obligatory prayers at their proper time and doing good to their brother-in-faith in weal as well as in woe”[.254](#)

The Decencies

Many people think that prosperity and adversity are the direct result of factors like riches, status and authority. However, according to Islam, prosperity springs from matters which increase man's spiritual and moral values and the fundamentals thereof have been explained in the sayings of the leaders of Islam –one of them being cheerfulness and decent behavior. Imam Ja'far Al-Sadiq ('a), says: "Good behavior is one of the factors of human prosperity".[255](#)

And that being said it is not surprising that the Almighty Allah commends His Prophet for his noble character and He says:

"Yours is a sublime nature" (68:4).

And Allah also bases the rapid advancement of Islam on this factor and says:

"Had you been harsh and cold-blooded they would have surely deserted you". (3: 159).

Islam accords a special consideration to sublime nature and decent behavior. Imam Ali ('a), says: "The faith of one who possesses decent morals is more complete".[256](#) Imam Ja'far Al-Sadiq ('a), says: "Whoever is more well behaved is wiser than the others".[257](#) "The Lord has granted you Islam. You, too should guard it well by being forgiving and tolerant"[258](#)

At times Islam invites people to think about the good spiritual effects of proper behavior and good morals. For example the Holy Prophet (S), says: "The spiritual reward of one who possesses good morals is like that of one who fasts and worships continuously"[259](#) "Piety and good morals are the things which will lead most of my followers to Paradise".[260](#)

Imam Ja'far Al-Sadiq (S), says: "The spiritual reward given by Allah for decent behavior and good morals is equal to that of struggling in His path"[261](#)

"Good morals melt the sins (and make them disappear) just as the sun melts snow on the face of the earth."[262](#) "And (on the other side) misconduct spoils the good deeds of man just as vinegar spoils honey".[263](#)

The Holy Prophet (S), says: "An immoral person can never repent for his sin for whenever he forsakes one sin he will become involved in still a graver sin".[264](#)

At time Islam mentions the social and individual losses which man has to face on account of bad morals and also describes the advantages which accrue from good morals. Imam Ja'far Al-Sadiq ('a), says: "Doing good to the people and behaving properly with them makes the cities populous and increases the span of life".[265](#)

"An immoral person remains involved in torture and anguish".[266](#)

The Holy Prophet (S), tells his kinsmen: “O son of Abdul Muttalib! You cannot please all the people with money but you can meet them with cheerful faces and good behavior so that you may be liked by them for wealth is limited in any case but the decent morals and cheerfulness is inexhaustible”.[267](#)

Imam Ja’far Al-Sadiq (‘a), when asked about good behavior, replied: “Good behavior is that you should be kind to the people and speak with them in a nice manner and meet them with a cheerful face”.[268](#)

Redeeming The Promise

Fidelity is a sacred word which is received with respect everywhere and enjoys extraordinary importance.

Islam considers fidelity to one promise to be one of the most excellent human traits and considers that man to be ‘righteous’ who keeps his promise.[269](#) The Holy Qur’an explicitly orders that:

“Keep your promise because you will be called to account for your promises”. (17:34).

Almighty Allah commends Prophet Isma’il (‘a), a great Prophet of Allah in these words:

“He was a man of his words, a Messenger and a Prophet”. (19:54).

Islam considers ‘keeping of promise’ to be one of the essentials of the faith. Imam Ali (‘a), says: “Redeeming of the promise is one of the signs of the believers”.[270](#)

The Holy Prophet (S), says: “One who does not keep his promise, has no faith”.[271](#)

“One who believes in Allah and the Day of judgement, keeps his promise when he makes it”.[272](#)

And again Imam Ali (‘a), says: “To fulfill one’s promise is a sign of faith”.[273](#)

Islam considers going back on one’s promise to be a sign of hypocrisy. The Holy Prophet, peace be on him and his progeny says: “There are four signs of a hypocrite. One of them is going back on one’s promise”.[274](#)

As already mentioned above the Holy Qur’an praises Prophet Isma’il (‘a), for being ‘a man of his word’. Imam Ja’far Al-Sadiq (‘a), says: “Prophet Ismai’l (‘a), promised to meet a man at *Safah*, a plate situated outside Makkah. The Prophet stayed there for a long time but that man did not turn up. People of Makkah were trying to find out his whereabouts but they could not know where he was. At last a man chanced to pass by him and said: ‘O Prophet of Allah! We have become weak and have been ruined in our absence’. Prophet Ismai’l (‘a), says: ‘I have made a promise to such and such person that I should stay here and shall not move away till he comes’. The people went to that man and said: “O enemy of Allah! You have made a promise with Allah’s Prophet and failed to fulfill it!’ The man then recollected and came to Prophet Isma’il, peace be on him and said: ‘O Prophet of Allah! Forgive me for I had

forgotten my promise'. It was on this account that the Almighty Allah revealed the verse about him". [275](#)

Imam Ja'far Al-Sadiq, also says: "The Holy Prophet (S), promised a man that he would sit on a stone till he come back. That man went away and the sun rose and the weather became hot. The companions of the Holy Prophet said: "O Prophet of Allah! What difference would it make if you come and stay under a shade? The Holy Prophet replied: "I have promised to meet him here and if he does not turn up I will stay here till the Day of Judgement".[276](#)

In fact this is a lesson which makes the importance of keeping a promise abundantly clear. It is that principle the observance whereof on our social life can solve most of our problems.

Consultation

Everyone reflects as to how he should solve the problems of his life and what policy he should adopt to acquit himself well of his responsibilities. One of the best methods of surmounting the difficulties is to make consultations and to benefit from the advice of others.

Imam Ali ('a), says: "There is no support like consultations".[277](#) "Consultation is next to guidance". [278](#)

Imam Ja'far Al-Sadiq ('a), says "No one can be misled by consultation".[279](#)

The Holy Prophet, peace on him and his progeny, says: "The prudent way of doing things is that you should consult others to follow their advice".[280](#) And the Holy Qur'an itself directs the Holy Prophet, to consult his companions.[281](#) And praises those people, who accept the Divine invitation and consult others in their affairs. [282](#)

Islam forbids obstinacy and stubbornness. Imam Ali ('a), says: "One who is adamant in his views does not achieve his purpose. However, if he consults others he shares their wisdom".[283](#)

Imam Ja'far Al-Sadiq ('a), says: "One who persists in his views is sitting on a precipice".[284](#)

Imam Ali ('a), tells his son Muhammad: "One who insists on his word involves himself in difficulties and one who seeks assistance from the view of others becomes aware of his mistakes and errors".[285](#)

Islam does not permit us to consult everyone. On the other hand it describes the persons who are pious, experts and competent to do this job. Imam Ja'far Al-Sadiq ('a), says: "Consult that person about your affair who fears his Lord".[286](#) "Always consult those people who are wise and pious because such persons do not utter anything except good and do not oppose them because it will be harmful to your faith as well as to your worldly affairs". [287](#)

On another occasion he: "Consultation has some limitations which must be observed failing which more loss will accrue from it than gain. The person whom you consult should be wise, free, friendly and intelligent so that he may realize your purpose. For if he is wise you will gain and if he is free and pious

he will try to advice and guide you and if he is your genuine friend he will guard your secrets and if he understands your purpose properly it will be possible for him to tender you his best advice”.[288](#)

Islam does not give any consideration to one’s status as we have seen that Almighty Allah orders even His Prophet to consult his companions. Imam Ja’far Al-Sadiq, peace be on him says: “Do not imagine that one become inferior by consulting others. On the other hand Allah exalts him and makes him successful in his affairs and he comes in close proximity to Allah”.[289](#)

Imam Ali Al-Ridha’, says in praise of his father, Imam Musa Al-Kadhim: “Son of Imam Ja’far Al-Sadiq, peace be on them “Although he excelled all others in wisdom yet he used to consult a black slave of his and said: “Often it so happens that Allah solves many problems through his tongue”.[290](#)

Islam forbids consultation with those who are devoid of good qualities and possess undesirable habits .The Holy Prophet said to Imam Ali, peace be on them: “Do not consult a timid person because he will make matters for you and do not consult a covetous person because he will encourage you to do something and to make your inclination intense and he will not care for expediency in the matter”.[291](#)

Just as Islam recommends that people should consult one another it also gives strict orders to Muslims not to deceive anyone while rendering advice but to think of his betterment and suggest their honest views. Imam Ali (‘a), says: “I hate one who deceives a Muslim while tendering advice”.[292](#) “One who renders advice is supposed to be honest”.[293](#)

During Journey

As most of the gifts of life and successes and experiences can be acquired by travelling in different parts of the world the leaders of Islam have encouraged the people to undertake journeys and to have a change for a while in the schedule of their daily lives. The Holy Prophet (S), says: “Travel so that you may remain hale and hearty. Travel so that you may derive benefit and get a windfall” [294](#)

However, numerous rules have been prescribed for a person for the period he is away from his home and every one of which is important from the spiritual and social view–point. One of these rules is that as and when a person gets ready to undertake a journey he should, as soon as possible, find out a companion for himself. The Holy Prophet (S), says: “Should I tell you who the worst man is? He is the one who travels alone and turns away his guest and beats his slave”[295](#)

Islam has directed the people to remember Allah in all circumstances and orders that while undertaking a journey one should not forget invocation.

The Holy Prophet (S), says: “The best protection of a traveler for his family is that while proceeding on his journey he should perform two *Rak’ats* of prayer and say: “O Lord! I entrust to you my own self, my family, my property, my children, my life in this world as well as the next, my trusts and my prospects of life in the Hereafter are under your trust and custody’. Without doubt Allah grants the wishes to the one

who performs this act”[296](#) (and protects him as well as what belongs to him).

As opposed to the belief of the Arabs who considered certain hours to be good for journeying and others to be inauspicious, Islam says travel whenever you like and entrust yourselves to Allah and spend in His Way. Imam Ja’far Al-Sadiq (‘a), says: “Give alms and leave your house as and when you like”.[297](#) The Holy Imam was again asked: “Is it abominable to undertake a journey on certain days, for example on Wednesday?” He replied: “Whenever you wish to go on a journey commence it by giving alms and I recite ‘*Ayatul Kursi*’[298](#)” [299](#)

Again Imam Muhammad Al-Baqir or Imam Ja’far Al-Sadiq, peace be on them, says: “Whenever my father under-took a journey on the last Wednesday of a month or on any other day which the people consider inauspicious for journeying he used to give alms and then leave the house”.[300](#)

Fellow-travelers should observe love and affection for one another and should end their journey with cheerfulness. The Holy Prophet (S), says: “Magnanimity of a traveler lies in that he should make others share with his provisions and should behave well with them and should not commit sin”.[301](#)

Imam Ja’far Al-Sadiq (‘a), says “Magnanimity during the course of journey lies in that you should carry abundant provisions (for the journey) and distribute it among your fellow travelers. When you part with your fellow travelers you should guard their secrets and while travelling you should cut jokes with them but not in such a way that it displeases Allah”[302](#)

The Holy Prophet (S), also says : “One of the good deeds is that when some persons undertake a journey they should share the provisions collectively because doing so is more pleasant for them and is also praise-worthy from the view-point of good morals”[303](#)

“It is magnanimous on the part of a man that he should carry good provisions for his journey”.[304](#)

Fellow-travelers should consider themselves equal to one another and should not seek preference over others and every one of them should pride himself for having served the other. The Holy Prophet (S), says. “The chief of a group is one who serves others while performing a journey”.[305](#)

Once the Holy Prophet (S), was travelling along with others. On the way it was decided to slaughter a sheep and prepare food. One of his co-travelers said: “I shall slaughter the sheep”. Another took the responsibility of striping the sheep of its skin. Still another undertook to cut the meat into pieces. It was also decided that a fourth person should cook the meat. The Holy Prophet then said- “I, too, shall collect firewood”. His companions, however, said, “O Prophet of Allah! We shall do this job as well”. The Holy Prophet replied: “I am aware that you can do this job but Allah is not pleased with a servant of His who is with his companions and claims a special position among them”. Then he stood up and began collecting firewood.[306](#)

Furthermore, Imam Al-Sajjad (‘a), always traveled with those people who did not know him and settled

with them that he would serve them during the course of the journey. Once, while he was traveling with some persons, a man saw him on the way and identified him.

He went up to the fellow travelers of the Holy Imam and said to them “Do you know who this man is?” They replied in the negative. Thereupon, he told them that he was Imam Al-Sajjad, son of Imam Husayn, peace be on them. When they came to about the Holy Imam they fell on their knees and kissed his feet and then said: “O son of the Prophet of Allah! Did you wish us to fall a prey to the Fire of Hell? Just imagine, had we misbehaved with you with our hands or tongues was it not certain that we would have been annihilated? What was the reason for behaving in this manner?” The Holy Imam replied: “Once I was traveling with some people who knew me and paid me undue respect on account of (my relationship with) the Prophet of Allah so I was afraid that you too might act in the same way and for this reason I considered it appropriate not to introduce myself to you”.[.307](#)

Islam also orders its followers to respect the rights of their fellow-travelers and to discharge the same in an appropriate manner. It is for this reason that the Holy Prophet (S), says: “If a traveler falls sick on the way he has a right over his fellow-travelers to wait for him for three days”.[.308](#)

Islam orders that when a person wishes to part with his fellow traveler, he should escort him a few steps and then bid him farewell. Imam Ja'far Al-Sadiq (‘a), says: “Once Imam Ali (‘a), happened to travel with a *Dhimmi* (a non-Muslim who lives under the protection of Islam). The *Dhimmi* asked him about his destination. Imam Ali told him that he was going to Kufa. When they reached the cross-roads the Holy Imam proceeded on the way on which his fellow-traveler was going. The *Dhimmi* was surprised and asked: “Did you not intend to go to Kufa?” Imam Ali replied: “Yes! The *Dhimmi* said: “Then the way of Kufa is that one and you have passed beyond it” Imam Ali replied: “I know it” Then the man said, “Then why are you coming along with me” Imam Ali, replied: “No doubt, good companionship lies in that one should escort one’s companion at the time of separation and our Holy Prophet Muhammad (S), has ordered us accordingly”. The *Dhimmi* wondered and said: “Has your Prophet given such orders?” Imam Ali replied: “Yes” Then the man said: “People do not follow him without just cause. People have been inclined towards him for his supreme morality and that is why they obey him. Hence I too thereby declare that I have adopted your religion”. Then he accompanied Imam Ali to Kufa and when he came to know as to who he was he embraced Islam on his hand”.[.309](#)

Islam prefers that when a person returns from a journey he should not forget to bring a present, however small it may be, because such an act promotes love and affection between the traveler and the members of his family. Imam Ja'far Al-Sadiq (‘a), says: “If one of you goes on a journey and then intends to return, he should bring a present: for his family according to his means, even though it may be a piece of stone”.[.310](#)

According to Islam the pilgrims and other persons who undertake journeys for religious purposes are entitled to special respect. Imam Al-Sajjad (‘a), says: “If a person looks after the household affair of one who has gone to perform pilgrimage of the House of Allah, his spiritual reward is like that of the one who

has gone to Makkah and has kissed the Black Stone”.[311](#) He also says: “O people! Those of you who have not gone to perform the *Hajj*, please the pilgrims, shake hands with them and pay them due respect because this behavior will make you share the spiritual reward with them”.[312](#)

Islam also orders that a traveler should end his journey with invocation in the same manner in which he commenced it with invocation.

Imam Ja’far Al-Sadiq (‘a), says: “When a traveler returns from his journey and reaches home he should not commence any work unless he has washed his body and made himself clean. Thereafter, he should offer two *Rak’ats* of prayer and prostrate before Allah and thank him 100 times”.[313](#)

Jihad

It should not be imagined that a revolutionary movement and a public-spirited campaign based on truth and righteousness, can make its headway without being confronted with opposition and obstruction. It is but natural that profiteers and self-seekers who find their interests in jeopardy or persons who cannot realize the true facts in their true perspective and possibly consider them against their interests try as far as possible to overthrow the new regime and create obstructions in its way.

The Divine religion of Islam, too, which was not only contented with making certain things obligatory or unlawful but considered the enforcement of a correct and useful social system to be one of its basic targets, could not be exempted from confrontations.

It is evident that the advancement and success which springs from Islam necessitates self-sacrifice and devotion in the path of Allah which is called ‘*Jihad*’, and which has been made obligatory for the Muslims who possess competence and who fulfill certain special conditions. It is for this reason that Islam which in itself is a supreme and sacred code of life and which governs the individual as well as the social system of life has acquired its grandeur and glory. Imam Ali (‘a), says: “Allah has made *Jihad* obligatory in order to ensure the glory and grandeur of Islam”.[314](#)

The Holy Prophet (S), says: “Perform *Jihad* so that you may leave honor and supremacy, as a remembrance for your children”.[315](#)

“Good qualities are under the shadow of the sword and it is only the sword which keeps the people upright (and makes them follow the right path). The sword is the key to Paradise and Hell”.[316](#)

Imam Ali, peace be on him, considers the glory of this world and of the Hereafter to be lying under the shadow of *Jihad* and says: “Allah has made *Jihad* obligatory and given it grandeur and treated it to be the support of the faith. By Allah! Without *Jihad* neither the life in this world nor in the Hereafter can be prosperous”.[317](#)

It is evident that if negligence is observed in the performance of this sacred duty and the Muslims fall

into a state of terror this sacred religion will become weak owing to the transgressions and encroachments of the unbelievers and its followers, too, will be humiliated and will become subject of foreign despotic rule. Gradually they will also be subdued in the matter of belief and laws.

The Holy Prophet (S), says: “If a person forsakes *Jihad* Allah makes him degraded and helpless in his life and he also falls prey to perdition and deviation in the matter of his faith”.[318](#)

Imam Ali, peace be on him says: “*Jihad* (struggling in the cause of Allah) is one of the gates of Paradise which the Almighty has opened for His distinguished servants. *Jihad* is the dress of piety and a strong Divine armor and shield. If one abstains from *Jihad* intentionally Allah disgraces and involves him in various difficulties. And on account of his having considered this great obligation to be ordinary he deviates from the right path and falls in adversity and will not get any share of justice and equity”[319](#)

Almighty Allah has attached so much importance to this great duty that He mentioned it in more than 140 verses of the Holy Qur’an and also considers the *Mujahids* and fighters to be entitled to glory and supreme position and says:

“You must not think that those who were slain in the cause of Allah are dead. They are alive and well provided for by their Lord; pleased with His gifts and rejoicing than those whom they left behind and who have not yet joined them have nothing to fear or to regret; rejoicing in Allah’s Grace and Bounty. Allah will reward the faithful.” (3: 167).

Once when Imam Ali (‘a), was encouraging his companions and friends to perform *Jihad*, a young man stood up and enquired from him about the spiritual reward for the Muslim *Mujahids*. The Holy Imam said: “I was riding a camel in the row of the Holy Prophet (S), and we were returning from the Battle of ‘*Zatus Salasil*’. I then put the same question (regarding the spiritual reward for those who fight in the path of Allah) to him and he replied: “When *Mujahids* decide to perform *Jihad* Allah decides to free them from the Fire of Hell and when they prepare to proceed for *Jihad* He is proud of them before the angels and when they take leave of their families the doors, the walls and the house weep for them and they become free from sins just as a snake sloughs its skin”[320](#)

Islam does not make *Jihad* obligatory for everyone and it has exempted the women. The old men, the blind, the disabled persons and those involved in financial difficulties, from the obligation of *Jihad*.[321](#)

Islam grants high status to the soldiers. Imam Ja’far Al-Sadiq, says: “There are three groups of people whose prayers are granted and one of them are the soldiers. You should, therefore, be careful as to how you remember them in their absence”.[322](#)

The Holy Prophet (S), says: “A person who conveys the message of a soldier is like the one who frees a slave and has a share in his spiritual reward”.[323](#) “And Allah’s angels will welcome and greet the person on the Day of Judgement, who encourages a soldier and applauds him”.[324](#)

In The Battlefield

In the battles and campaigns in which the non-Muslims took part before as well as after the advent of Islam there was no obstacle or impediment in the way of the soldiers indulging in murder, assault and theft of property because the battles were based on force and subjugation and not on faith, principles and humanity. However with the dawn of Islam a new chapter was opened in the matter of *Jihad* because Islam forbade all sorts of campaigns and battles except those which were fought for the prevention of oppression or eradication of corruptions and tribulations. The Holy Qur'an says:

“Fight those for the sake of Allah who fight against you but do not attack them first. Allah does not love the aggressors”. (2: 189).

Hence it is evident that the basis for the battles fought by Islam was nothing else then prevention of cruelty and oppression and there was no other underlying motive either political or economic. Hence the Holy Qur'an says:

“Fight against them until trouble terminates and Allah's religion reigns supreme. But if they mend their ways, fight none except the oppressors” (2: 192).

These and other similar verses clearly indicate the real purpose of Islamic battles and put an end to the idle and spiteful gossips of the enemies of Islam in this regard.

Hence, it is to achieve this very end that the Muslim warriors are under obligation, as and when they encounter a group or a community, to invite them, in the first instance, to accept Islam and to make known to them their readiness for reconciliation in case they embrace Islam or agree to pay *Jizya* (i.e. tax paid by non-Muslims residing in areas controlled by Muslims in return for the protection accorded to them).

The Holy Prophet said to Imam Ali, peace be on them, “Never fight against a man without first inviting him to Islam. By Allah if He makes you to guide one person one person it would be better than ruling the whole world”.[325](#)

Islam orders that Muslim warriors should always keep their real target in view and should know that the object of *Jihad* is to quench the fire of mischief, to prevent cruelty and oppression and to invite people to the right path. Furthermore, they should always commence their war slogans with the Name of Allah. Imam Ali (‘a), says: “The Holy Prophet (S), ordered us that before participating in a battle we should specify a slogan and should recite the Name of Allah”.[326](#)

Again, Islam says that Muslims should fight with those people only who obstruct the advancement of this sacred object and act as an impediment. Therefore, the Holy Prophet (S), says: “Do not hurt their old people and children” (i.e. of the unbelievers).[327](#)

In short, Islam has forbidden every act which may be contrary to this sacred object. Imam Ja'far Al-Sadiq ('a), says: "As and when the Holy Prophet (S), decided to send an army to fight a battle he used to call the soldiers and exhort them thus "Proceed with the Name of Allah and in the path of Allah and as the Prophet of Allah. Do not commit breach of trust with your enemies or mutilate their bodies or deceive them. Do not kill chief old men, women and children. Do not plunder the trees unless it becomes absolutely necessary to do so. Everyone among the Muslims, whether big or small, should take care of one unbeliever and provide him asylum. He should be under protection so as to attend the Word of Allah. If he follows you he will become one of your brother-in-faith and if he abstains from doing so send him to his place and seek help from Allah".[328](#)

Here remains one point which is considered to be the distinction of Islam that every Muslim is entitled to provide asylum to one or more unbelievers (the number has been quoted to be up to ten).

The Holy Prophet (S), says: "The responsibility and pledge of all Muslims is one and the same and even the smallest among them can take advantage of it".[329](#) Imam Ja'far Al-Sadiq ('a), explains this tradition as under: "If a Muslim army besieges a group of unbelievers and then one of the unbelievers comes and says: "Provide me a shelter so that I may meet your chief and converse with him. And if any Muslim gives him an asylum it is incumbent upon all distinguished Muslims to honor that pledge".[330](#)

Imam Ja'far Al-Sadiq ('a), again says: "Imam Ali ('a), approved the action of a slave who was under protection and who had given protection to the unbelievers, said: "He too is one of the believers".[331](#)

It appears from this that besides according respect to the Muslim warriors generally and treating all Muslims to be equal to one another Islam uses every opportunity to end warfare and seeks to find out some justification for ending strife through reconciliation. Imam Ja'far Al-Sadiq ('a), says: "If a group of Muslims besieges a city and its residents become helpless and ask for refuge, and the Muslims, for some reason or the other reject their request and despite this the besieged people get the impression of having been granted asylum and they surrendered themselves, in that case they will be treated as having been given protection".[332](#)

[On The Seat Of Justice](#)

Islam does not approve of differences and confrontations. Imam Ali ('a), in this connection says: "Refrain from differences and disputes because these things poison the minds of the brother-in-faith against one other and sow the seeds of discord in them".[333](#)

It cannot however, be denied that due to clash of interests, people are sometimes compelled to have to resort to trial and judgement, Islam orders that in that event they should refer to persons who are competent to give decisions. And, in order to encourage competent persons to adjudicate, Imam Ali ('a), says; "The best people are those who decide justly".[334](#)

Imam Ali (‘a), gave the following orders to Malik al-Ashtar to find out such persons: “Select the wisest person in the land for administration of justice among the people. He should be a person for whom this task is not hard and the litigating parties should not be able to prevail upon his views. He should not persist in his mistake and should not be incapable of returning to truth when he recognizes it. He should not be covetous. He should not consider a matter superficially in arriving at a decision and should give very deep thought to it in case of doubt. Above all he should depend on reason and should not be annoyed by the lengthy explanations proposed by the litigating parties. He should be more patient than anyone else in bringing truth to light and when the real position becomes crystal clear his judgement should explicit and decisive. He should be a person who is not elated by the praise of the people and who is not influenced by the words of deceitful persons. And such persons are very rare”[335](#)

Islam has forbidden women from acting as judges and Imam Al-Baqir (‘a), says in this regard: “A woman should not adjudicate and should not be a ruler”.[336](#)

Islam has strongly repressed unjust adjudication and severely reprimanded oppressive judges so much that the Holy Qur’an has declared them to be transgressors,[337](#) and at another as tyrants[338](#) and at still another as unbelievers.[339](#) Furthermore Imam Ja’far Al-Sadiq (‘a), says: “Whoever gives a wrong decision which is opposed to Divine orders, even with regard to two dirhams, is an unbeliever”.[340](#)

Besides all this Islam considers such state of affairs as a root cause of the cessation of Divine blessings, Imam Ja’far Al-Sadiq (‘a), says: “When the rulers become oppressive in their decisions the sky withholds rains”.[341](#)

And in order to present the status of a judge in its true perspective the Holy Prophet (S), says: “The tongue of a judge is between two flames of fire, and when he arrives at a decision regarding a case his destiny is decided. If he takes a just decision he goes towards Paradise and if he does not do so, he is drawn towards Hell”.[342](#) Islam has prescribed some code of conduct for a judge which fully indicates the great efforts made by this *Din* religion for the establishment of justice.

Imam Ali (‘a), says to Muhammad son of Abi Bakr, who was appointed by him as the Governor of Egypt: “Spread your plumage for the people of Egypt and keep your flanks level for them and remain cheerful in their presence. Observe equality even in the matter of looking at them so that the strong may not expect injustice on your part for the protection of their interests and the weak may not lose hope of receiving justice from you”.[343](#)

And the Holy Prophet (S), orders: “Whoever wishes to arbitrate between the people should observe equality between them in all respect so that he may not differentiate between them in the matter of casting a glance or making a sign or allotting a place. He should also not raise his voice against anyone of them unless he does so with the other also”.[344](#)

When Imam Ali (‘a), deputed Abul Aswad Duwayli to act as his agent in a case but suspended him before the end of the proceedings of the case. He asked the reason at which the Holy Imam replied,

“Because I found that your voice was louder than the voice of your colleagues”.[345](#)

Islam has forbidden the judge to help anyone of the litigating parties in any manner whatsoever. Hence, the Holy Prophet (S), has forbidden a judge to prompt a witness.[346](#)

To ensure that a judge is always accessible to the people, Islam has prohibited him from keeping a mediator. The Holy Prophet (S), says: “If a person enjoys authority over the people in some manner and appoints a mediator for himself Allah will not be kind to him on the Day of judgement although on that day he will be helpless and needy” [347](#) And Imam Ali (‘a), also directed Shurayh to hold court in *Masjid* (and any other place where people had access to him and the proceedings assumed the shape of an open court) and desisted from adjudicating at his house.[348](#)

It is evident that when a person is hungry or angry or is feeling sleepy it is very difficult for him to give a correct decision. Hence the Holy Prophet (S), has prohibited a judge from deciding a case while he is angry or hungry or is feeling sleepy.[349](#)

It is interesting to note that, with a view to ensure that the judges and persons who rule over the people do not make any distinction between them, Islam has prohibited them from making transaction in purchase, sale and trade except with those persons who do not know them because it is possible that by means of such transactions mutual acquaintance or friendship may influence them and which may hinder the administration of justice. Hence Imam Ali (‘a), says: “If a governor engages himself in trade he cannot administer justice” [350](#)

It has also been related that once Imam Ali (‘a), went to the bazaar to purchase a shirt. There he met two sellers but as they knew him he refrained from purchasing the shirt from them. Eventually he came across a third person who did not know him and bought the required shirt from him for three dirhams.[351](#)

Islam has also prohibited a judge from making one of the litigating parties his guest. It so happened that once a person was the guest of Imam Ali and later came before him along with his adversary regarding a case. When Imam Ali (‘a), realized that the man had been his guest for this purpose he was very much annoyed and said to him: “Don’t stay with me for the Holy Prophet (S), has forbidden the judge to accord hospitality to one of the two litigating parties”.[352](#)

It must be mentioned here that Islam has made strenuous efforts to uproot the giving and taking of bribes in a Muslim society so much so that in many traditions a man who accepts a bribe has been called an unbeliever.[353](#) The Holy Prophet (S), says: “May Allah curse the one who gives a bribe and the one who takes it and still the other one who acts as a mediator between the two”.[354](#)

He has also said: “Refrain from taking bribe because it is a blasphemous act and one who takes bribe is deprived of Paradise”.[355](#) And with this objective in view Imam Ali (‘a), instructs Malik al-Ashtar: “Give him (the judge) ample means and make his life so comfortable that there should be no excuse left for him and he should not need anything from the people”.[356](#)

Work And Effort

Although the real object of Islam is to guide and to ensure the intellectual and spiritual magnificence and moral excellence of the people yet it also attaches much importance to a sound and respectable economy which is one of the prerequisites for the achievement of this end. Hence it considers these two things to be associated with each other and believes that with the betterment of economic condition, efforts can be made for spiritual evolution as on the other hand indigent persons soon become involved in various deviations.

The Holy Prophet (S), therefore says: “Affluence is a good help to achieve piety”.³⁵⁷ And Imam Ja’far Al-Sadiq (‘a), says: “The world is a good means to acquire the benefits of the Hereafter”.³⁵⁸

Islam exhorts the Muslims not to depend on others because besides other things, it is possible that by depending on others one may become involved in different kinds of sins. Imam Ja’far Al-Sadiq (‘a), says: “One who depends on others and is a burden on the society is devoid of the Blessings of Allah”.³⁵⁹

For this reason Islam has always encouraged the people to work hard and to refrain from indolence. Imam Musa Al-Kadhim (‘a), says: “Allah hates a lazy person”.³⁶⁰

Imam Ja’far Al-Sadiq (‘a), says: “There are three types of persons whose invocations are not granted, one of them is a man who sits at home and does not go in search of his daily bread and says: “O Lord! Provide me sustenance”. Allah replies: “Have I not opened for you the way for your sustenance?”³⁶¹

“Do not get weary of earning the expenses of your life. Our forefathers also made efforts for their sustenance and searched for it”.³⁶² Imam Ali (‘a), says: “Allah likes an honest worker”.³⁶³ Imam Musa Al-Kadhim (‘a), says: “Whoever seeks his sustenance by lawful means to meet his own expenses as well as those of his family is like one who performs *Jihad* in the way of Allah”.³⁶⁴

It was for this reason that the leaders of Islam also remained busy in work and when some superficial observers who thought that Islam consisted of a set of prosaic prayers only—raised objections to their hard work received harsh replies.

One of such persons named Muhammad Bin Munkadar says: “One hot day I went out of Madina. Imam Al-Baqir (‘a), saw me. He was an obese person and was leaning on two of his slaves. I said to myself: “Allah be praised. It is strange that an old man from among the elders of Quraysh is busy in his worldly affairs”. I decided to give him an advice. So I went up to him and greeted him. He replied in a loud voice when his face was sweating. I said: “May Allah bless you! You are an old man from among the elders of Quraysh! Why are you after worldly affairs in this heat with all the inconvenience? How would you like it that you may die in this condition?” The Holy Imam replied: “If I die in this condition, I will be dying while obeying the Command of Allah. It is this merit for which the members of my family and I are not

dependent on your help nor that of other people.[365](#)

Farming, Animal Husbandry And Trade

We have discussed in the foregoing pages that on the whole Islam has asked man to work and to shun lethargy. However, while mentioning the type of vocations it encourages three of them most viz, farming, animal husbandry and trade and gives them greater importance.

1. Farming: On many occasions farming has been declared to be the best profession.

Imam Ja'far Al-Sadiq ('a), says: "In the eyes of Allah no profession is better than farming".[366](#) A man said to him: "I have heard some people saying that farming is a disapproved and abominable profession". The Holy Imam replied: "They are mistaken. Engage yourselves in farming and in planting trees. By Allah! There is no profession more preferable than farming".[367](#)

Furthermore, the Holy Prophet (S), was asked once as to which commodity is good. He replied: "It is the agricultural produce which one has raised himself and has paid its requisite dues".[368](#)

Islam says that farming is the source which generates wealth. Hence Imam Ali ('a), says: "If a person possesses water and earth and is still poor, Allah deprives him of His Blessings".[369](#)

2. Animal Husbandry: From Islamic point of view 'animal husbandry' is one of the sources of blessings. Hence, the Holy Prophet (S), once asked one of his relatives: "Why don't you have (the source of) blessing in your house? He asked: "In what does blessing lie?" The Holy Prophet (S), replied: "A milch sheep! Whoever has a milch sheep or a she-camel or a cow he possesses the source of blessings for these are the stock of prosperity".[370](#) He also said: "Possess sheep. Sheep are good assets".[371](#) "You should rear sheep and engage yourself in farming".[372](#)

Islam wishes that Muslims should always remain self-respected, honorable and powerful. Hence it encourages them to procure various means of achieving respectability and it has attached great importance in this behalf to the possession of an easy-paced animal for riding.

Imam Ja'far Al-Sadiq ('a), says: "Keep an animal for riding because such animals are auspicious and you meet your needs through them and their sustenance is with Allah".[373](#) And he also says: "It is good luck for a man to possess an animal which he rides at times of need and thus pays the rights of his brethren".[374](#)

The Holy Prophet (S), has also considered possession of easy-paced animals for riding to be something auspicious for man.[375](#)

It should be remembered that in those days animals were the only means of transport and the motor vehicles had not yet been invented. However, in any case, the Holy Qur'an considers all means of

transport to be a Divine blessing for man and recommends that one should remember Allah while boarding them. It says:

“It is He Who has created everything in pairs and the ships and the cattle for you to ride so that perhaps when you ride them you will recall the bounties of your Lord and when you establish your control over it you would say “Glory belongs to Him who has made it subservient to us when we would not have been able to do so ourselves. To our Lord we shall all return”(43: 12-14).

3. Trade: The Holy Prophet (S), says: “If blessing is divided into ten parts, nine parts thereof would be found in trade”.[376](#)

On the Day of Judgement the honest traders will be associated with righteous people”.[377](#) And Imam Ja’far Al-Sadiq (‘a), says: “There are three types of persons who will enter Paradise without any account. They are the just leader, the truthful trader and the old man who ends his life while having remained obedient to Allah”.[378](#)

Imam Ali (‘a), says: “Engage yourself in trade for by this means you will become independent of the wealth of the people”.[379](#)

And Imam Ja’far Al-Sadiq (‘a), also says: “Trade sharpens one’s wisdom”.[380](#) “And abandoning of it reduces wisdom”.[381](#) “Do not forsake trade lest you should be humiliated. Engage yourself in trade and Allah will bless you”.[382](#)

What The Businessmen Should Know

In the foregoing discussions the importance of work and effort (including trade and business) in the eyes of Islam has been clarified to some extent. However, it should be remembered that trade is respectable when it is associated with the remembrance of Allah and the observance of the principles of justice. Hence, the Holy Qur’an praises those persons whose trade and transaction do not make them forget the Almighty Allah.[383](#)

Imam Ali Al-Ridha’ (‘a), says: “When you are busy in purchase and sale and the time for prayers arrives you should leave your transaction and rush to offer the prayers and the trade should not entangle you all by yourself. The Almighty Allah has commanded a group of persons and says: ‘Men whom neither trade nor profit can divert from remembering Him’. These were the persons who traded but when it was time to offer prayers they left their work and came in the *Masjid*. The spiritual reward and recompense of such persons is more than those (the monks) who leave work and business and engage themselves in worship and prayers only”.[384](#)

However, it is much better that one should run one’s trade and business in one’s own town and one should, by this means, serve one’s own people Imam Ja’far Al-Sadiq (‘a), says: “It is auspicious for a man that his place of business should be in his own town and he should be having good friends and

obedient children”.[385](#)

In Islam only those transactions are treated to be lawful which are useful for the individuals and the society. However, transactions which involve interest and which are certainly harmful for a proper economy have been prohibited and are unlawful. Hence, Islam orders that before engaging oneself in trade it is necessary for the people to learn its rules and regulations so that they may not be guilty of unlawful acts.

Imam Ali (‘a), said thrice, “Jurisprudence (knowledge of legal matters) comes first and then comes trade”,[386](#) And when anyone engages himself in trade without knowledge (of laws relating to it), he gets himself involved in ‘interest’.[387](#)

In Islam that trade is good which is accompanied by good manners and excellent qualities. The Holy Prophet (S), says: “Whoever buys or sells should possess five qualities or else he should neither buy nor sell. He should refrain from taking interest; should not swear; should not hide the defect of a thing; should not praise a thing while selling it and should not find fault with it after purchasing it”.[388](#)

And Imam Ali (‘a), says: “O people of the bazaar! Fear Allah and do not swear for although swearing creates market for a commodity it takes away blessings from it”.[389](#)

Islam offers every opportunity to remind one about Allah. It, therefore, recommends that while visiting the bazaar one should remember Allah.

Imam Ja’far Al-Sadiq (‘a), says: “When you enter the bazaar say: “O Lord! I seek from you the goodness of the bazaar and its people and seek your protection from its mischief and corruption. O Lord! I seek refuge in you from oppressing anyone or being oppressed by others. O Lord! I seek refuge in you from Satan and his hordes and from persecution by the licentious sinners. Allah is sufficient for me and there is no god but He. I rely on Him and he is the Lord of the Great Throne”.[390](#)

Islam orders that Muslims should be fully conversant with the code of business and condemns ignorance about commercial matters. Hence, when a person enquired from Imam Muhammad Al-Baqir about the method of purchase and sale he replied: “If you settle with your brother that you will sell something to him at the purchased price you may do so otherwise you should be cautious in business transactions”.[391](#)

He also says: “It is good for you to talk frankly with the buyer otherwise in business a buyer is likely to be deceived. From Religion’s view–point this deal is a total loss!”[392](#) However, this situation is till such time that an agreement is not reached and after that it is not proper for either the seller or the buyer to discuss about the price of the commodity anymore.

Imam Ja’far Al-Sadiq (‘a), says: “The Holy Prophet (S), has forbidden reduction in price after an agreement has been concluded”.[393](#) However, a Muslim trader should not be impatient and if on a

certain day he does not make any profit he should not get discouraged. The Holy Prophet (S), says: “People come across a time when they complain against their Lord. For example they say: “By Allah! I have not made any profit since such and such day and have throughout been feeding on my capital”. What happens to them? Has not Allah given them the capital?”[394](#)

Islam orders that if a buyer regrets having purchased a commodity the seller should cancel the transaction and take back the commodity from him. Imam Ja’far Al-Sadiq, peace be on him says: “On the Day of Judgement Almighty Allah will forgive the shortcomings of a believer who agreed to return the commodity purchased by him from a Muslim or take back the commodity sold to a Muslim”.[395](#)

Islam orders that one should not interfere in the transactions of others and one should not disengage them from each other and the Holy Prophet (S), has prohibited the people from doing so.[396](#)

Islam insists upon the sellers that they should procure good stuff. Imam Ja’far Al-Sadiq (‘a), said to a dealer of wheat: “Purchase and sell good material because when you sell something good, people will say: ‘May Allah bless you and the one who supplied this material to you’”.[397](#)

Islam strongly prohibits hoarding and withholding of commodities so that their prices may go up and it declares such activities to be unlawful. The Holy Prophet (S), says “If a person purchases wheat and keeps it for forty days so that its price may go up and then sells it, this sin of his cannot be covered even if he gives away the entire sale proceeds in charity”[398](#)

As a matter of principle Islam lays down that there should be no black marketing or commodities in any case.

Imam Ja’far Al-Sadiq (‘a), once gave 1000 dinars to one of his slaves so that he might invest it in trade on his behalf. He bought some commodity and proceeded to Egypt along with a caravan of traders. When they reached the gate of the city they were informed by some persons coming out of it that the commodity which they had brought was dearly wanted and scarce there. When they understood the delicacy of the situation they swore collectively that they would not accept less than one hundred percent profit. In this way the slave of the Holy Imam also earned 1000 dinars as profit on an equal amount of capital. He put each of these sums in separate bags and on his return to Madina placed the two bags before the Imam. Imam Ja’far Al-Sadiq (‘a), was surprised and enquired about the matter. When he came to know the facts of the case he picked up his own capital and returned the profit to the slave and said: “I do not need this interest on my capital”. He then added: “It is easier to fight with a sword than to earn lawful means of living”.[399](#)

The leaders of Islam attached great importance to the conditions of the bazaar and the observance of the principles of justice. Hence, we read in the biography of the Commander of the Faithful, Imam Ali (‘a), that during the period of his rule he inspected the bazaars of Kufa every day. At that time he used to carry a particular bifurcate lash on his shoulder and stood at the end of every bazaar and uttered these words with a loud voice: “O traders! Fear Allah!” As soon as the voice of the Holy Imam was heard, all

people stopped work and listened to him attentively: “Do not consider the blessings of labor to be rigorous. Seek proximity with the customers. Adorn yourselves with patience. Refrain from falsehood and swearing. Avoid cruelty and oppression and procure the rights of the oppressed and the afflicted. Shun usury. Do not sell lesser. Do not buy commodities from people under-cut prices and do not spread corruption on earth”. Then he walked throughout the bazaars and thereafter returned to his headquarters to look after public affairs”.[400](#)

Islam permits the religious rulers to supervise the work of the traders and craftsmen especially in the matter of fixation of reasonably fair prices for various commodities and merchandise. Imam Ali (‘a), says to Malik al-Ashtar: “Accept my recommendation with regard to the traders and craftsmen and advise them to do good, whether they may be those residing in the town and are doing business or those who move about peddling their goods or those who serve the people with their physical labor because they are the source of profit and the back-bone of the country’s economy and they procure their stock through difficult way from amidst wilderness and distant seas and dangerous hills and deserts and from places where no one lives and where no one dare go. They are peace-loving and mild persons who never create any disturbance. Supervise their activities in your own presence and in different parts of the town.

In spite of all this, however, you should know that some of them are exacting and stingy who hoard goods for their gain and fix the prices of things in various transactions according to their own discretion. People usually talk about this complaint and it is indeed bad for the ruler of the town. Hence you should prevent hoarding because the Holy Prophet (S), has prohibited it. You should ensure that their transactions should take place in a fair and just manner and with correct scales and fair prices so that injustice may not be done either to the buyer or to the seller. And when anyone of them is guilty of hoarding after having been prohibited by you, award him proper punishment which should not be too harsh or severe”.[401](#)

Formation Of A Family

Like other inherent instincts the sexual power of man is something natural which has been endowed by Almighty Allah since the very first day. It is evident that if this instinct is not satisfied by marriage which is the only legal method the people will either be compelled to satisfy it by unlawful means or this power will be completely wasted and in either case there will follow a chain of moral, social and hygienic evils.

For this reason Islam has attached great importance to this vital matter and the Holy Prophet (S), therefore, says: “The worst among your dead are those who remained unmarried”.[402](#)

Imam Ja’far Al-Sadiq (‘a), says: “Two *Rak’at* of prayers offered by a married person are better than 70 *Rak’ats* offered by a bachelor”.[403](#)

And the Holy Prophet (S), says: “Whoever marries, ensures half of his faith”.[404](#) “Allah has not sent me

with a law prescribing monastic or secluded life. On the contrary, He has appointed me as a Prophet with a moderate and simple religion. I fast and offer prayers. I have my house too. Whoever loves me should follow my tradition. Matrimony is my tradition”.[405](#)

The thing which deserves attention is the intense friendship and kindness which is generated by conjugal alliance and makes life sweet, happy and peaceful. The Holy Qur’an says:

“And one of His signs is that He created mates for you from yourselves that you may find peace in them and He creates between you love and compassion”. (30:20).

It should, however, be remembered that conjugal life should not be established for sexual satisfaction only. On the contrary its primary object should be to procreate useful and pious progeny so that the number of the followers of truth should keep on increasing. The Holy Prophet (S), says: “Marry and produce off-springs so that you may multiply because on the Day of Judgement I shall pride myself on the number of my followers as also of miscarried children”[406](#)

“What restrains faithful persons from entering into matrimony? It is possible that Allah may give them a child who may honor the earth by saying: “There is no god, but Allah”.[407](#)

There are many who avoid performing this vital act of conjugal life on account of some superstitions and do not marry especially on account of fear that it may later involve them in financial difficulties. Such persons should be told that adverse financial conditions should not prevent them from entering into matrimonial alliance. The Holy Prophet (S), says: “One who does not marry on account of poverty and indigence has entertained a bad opinion about the Almighty because He says: “If those who marry have been needy and poor Allah will make them independent by His Blessings”.[408](#)

The Holy Prophet (S), also says: “Marry to acquire your sustenance because blessing has been placed among women”.[409](#)

Islam also considers it a great service to make efforts for the conjugal life of two persons and to arrange for the preliminaries thereof.

The Holy Prophet, peace be on him and his progeny, says: “Allah provides *Houris* to the person who makes efforts to arrange the matrimony of two believers so that they may be united”.[410](#)

Islam considers marriage to be sacred and religious matter and, therefore, considers purity of faith to be a pre-requisite for a spouse. The Holy Prophet (S), says: “One who chooses a woman for her beauty only does not find in her what he desires and Allah ignores a person who marries a woman for her wealth. It is, therefore, necessary that you should select a faithful and pious spouse”.[411](#)

And Imam Ja’far Al-Sadiq (‘a), says: “When a man marries a woman for her wealth or beauty Allah leaves him to himself and if he selects a faithful and pious woman Allah gives him wealth as well as beauty”.[412](#)

Islam forbids marriage with ignorant and foolish women. Imam Ali ('a), says: "Avoid matrimonial alliance with foolish and ignorant women because association with them is calamity and the child born out of such a wedlock would be good-for-nothing and worthless".[413](#)

Notwithstanding what has been mentioned above Islam has left the selection of a spouse at the sweet will of a husband and considers the interference and imposition by the parents to be inopportune. Hence when a person said to Imam Ja'far Al-Sadiq, peace be on him: 'I wish to marry and have also selected a woman, but my parents have another woman in view', the Holy Imam replied: 'Marry the woman whom you like and leave the other'.[414](#)

It is evident that this recommendation applies only when a person is not influenced by infatuation and sudden outbursts of emotions.

It should be admitted that a great difficulty which has cropped up these days for the young men and makes them desist from marrying is the heavy amount fixed for a dower and the cumbersome ceremonies and the undue demand of many women.

No doubt Islam considers the dower of a woman to be her admitted legal right and it is payable by man how much enormous it may be. It is for this reason that the Holy Qur'an says:

"If you wish to divorce a woman in order to wed another, do not take back from her the dower you have given her even if it happened to be a gilded hide of a cow". (4:24).

However, morally, Islam considers heavy dower and excessive expectation to be misfortune on the part of woman and extols those women whose dower is light and whose expenses are moderate and who are more fit for multiplication of the offspring.

The Holy Prophet (S), says "Inauspiciousness lies in three things viz. a woman, an animal for riding and a house. The inauspiciousness of a woman consists of this that her dower should be heavy and she may with severe difficulty give birth to offsprings".[415](#)

"The best women from among my followers are those who are more beautiful and whose dower is lesser".[416](#) And Imam Ja'far Al-Sadiq ('a), also says: "The auspiciousness of a woman lies in the lightness of her dower and in her fertility and her inauspiciousness lie in her excessive expenses and infertility".[417](#)

What Married Couples Should Know

The number of divorce cases is increasing year after year and the demon of domestic strife is showing off with a still more dreadful appearance. All are anxious to find out the reason for this unfortunate state of affairs and have not yet realized that as a matter of fact the main reason for this is that married couples do not perform their duties properly.

Islam has determined certain responsibilities for husband and wife the proper discharge of which would not only reduce mutual differences and the number of divorce cases but would also create a sort of mutual love and affection in the family which would make their life sweet, pleasant and peaceful.

The Holy Prophet (S), describes a good woman in these words: “The best of your women is she who gives birth to many children, is loving and chaste, lives honorably in the family and is humble before her husband, adorns herself only for her husband and protects herself from others, pays heed to what her husband says and obeys his orders, accedes to his wishes in the privacy and safeguards his property and never spends or bestows gifts from her husband’s property”.[418](#) He further says: “After being a Muslim the greatest gain for a man is a faithful woman who, when she sees him, becomes happy and obeys his orders and protect his property and her own honor in his absence”.[419](#)

Islam has strongly recommended that a woman should show humility and respect to her husband. The Holy Prophet (S), says: “If I wished to direct that a person should prostrate before another (i.e. if it had been permissible to prostrate before anyone except Allah) I would have ordered the women to prostrate before their husbands”.[420](#)

Islam also makes it clear that if a woman obeys her husband it means that she has performed one of best acts of her life. Imam Musa Al-Kadhim (‘a), says: “*Jihad* of a woman is to lead a good conjugal life”.[421](#)

And the Holy Prophet, peace be on him and his progeny, also says: “If a woman does not perform her duty towards her husband she has failed to obey Allah”.[422](#)

It should not be forgotten that as against the duties of wives Islam has also placed heavy responsibilities on men towards their wives. Islam orders that husbands should behave kindly with their wives. Imam Al-Sajjad (‘a), says: “Allah likes that man more who provides better means of comfort for the inmates of his family”.[423](#)

The Holy Prophet (S), says: “The best among you is he who is co-operative with his family”.[424](#) “The duty of man towards his wife is that he should treat her as his equal partner in the matter of food and dress and should not slap her and should not quarrel with her”.[425](#)

Imam Ali Al-Ridha’ (‘a), says: “It is proper for a man that he should not be harsh with his wife and children so that they may not pray to Allah for his death”.[426](#)

Islam has given so much importance to the rights of women that according to some traditions it permits the religious ruler that when a man does not discharge his responsibilities, the religious ruler may in special and specified conditions bring about separation between them. Imam Muhammad Al-Baqir (‘a), says: “If a person has a wife whom he does not give her dress to cover herself or food to satisfy her hunger, the Imam (or religious ruler) is authorized to bring about their separation”.[427](#)

Islam has strongly recommended that a wife should be provided assistance and her needs should be met by her husband. Imam Al-Sajjad ('a), says: "If I enter the bazaar and purchase some meat for my family with the money that I am carrying this act is better for me than setting a slave free".[428](#)

Furthermore, when the Holy Prophet (S), saw Imam Ali assisting Fatima Zahra, peace be on them, in some household affairs he encouraged him to do so and mentioned that this behavior carried Divine reward. He further says in this connection: "If a person helps his spouse in household affairs, Allah rewards for him spiritual reward equal to the number of hair on his body as if he had fasted during days and offered prayers during nights for one year". And after uttering a few words he says: "A person who does not disdain serving and assisting his wife and children will be admitted by Allah into Paradise without taking any account of his deeds". In the end he says: "No one serves his spouse except the one who is one of the very truthful persons or martyrs or a man for whom Allah has desired the goodness of this world as well as of the Hereafter".[429](#)

Islam prefers that married couples should co-operate as far as possible by adjusting themselves with each other's habits and should overlook the inconvenience which they experience from each other. The Holy Prophet (S), says: "If a man tolerates the behavior of his wife, Allah grants him spiritual reward equal to that earned by Prophet Ayub ('a), for his contentment and patience and if a woman tolerates the behavior of her husband the Almighty grants her the position of Asiya, daughter of Muzahim and the wife of Pharaoh".[430](#)

Islam prohibits hurting a woman. The Holy Prophet, peace be on him and his progeny, says: "The best man among the Muslims is he who is gentle with his wife and treats her kindly".[431](#) He also says: "Is it proper that one should beat one's wife and thereafter share her bed?"[432](#)

Islam also recommends that women should be shown extraordinary kindness. The Holy Prophet (S), says: "Jibril ('a) recommended to me so much about a wife that I thought that she should not at all be divorced except when she is guilty of unchastity"[433](#) He further says: "If a man places a morsel of food in the mouth of his wife he earns spiritual reward for his behaviour"[434](#)

Besides all this Islam also orders women to behave with their husbands properly and in a loving manner. The Holy Prophet (S), says: If a woman does not behave with her husband modestly and compels him to do things which are beyond his means none of her prayers and good acts will be acceptable and the Lord is displeased with her".[435](#) "If a woman troubles her husband with her tongue Allah will on no account spare her from punishment and will not accept her good deeds until and unless she pleases her husband. This is so even though she fasts during days and prays during nights and frees slaves for the sake of Allah and mounts easy-paced animals in the path of the Lord yet she will be the first person who will be thrown in the Fire (of Hell). And similar is the case of a man who maltreats his wife".[436](#)

One of the matters to which Islam has attached importance is the adornment and ornamentation. Islam says that woman should adorn herself before her husband in a pleasant and decent manner such that

his eyes and thoughts do not turn towards other women.

Imam Muhammad Al-Baqir or Imam Ja'far Al-Sadiq, peace be on them, says: "It is better for a woman to adorn herself with gold and should not refrain from ornamentation. Let it be with only a necklace. It is also not appropriate for her to give up the use of henna (which was in vogue in those days as a means of adornment) even if she is past her prime".[437](#)

Islam similarly orders men to adorn themselves for their wives so that they (i.e. women) may not get attracted to someone else.

Imam Ali Al-Ridha' ('a), says: "Adornment of man for the sake of his wife adds to her chastity".[438](#) And then a person asked him perhaps by way of criticism: "Have you dyed your hair?" He replied: "Yes, with henna and '*Kitam*' (name of a special grass). Don't you know that this act carries spiritual reward because the woman expects the same thing from you which you expect from her and there are many women who deviate from the path of chastity due to the carelessness and faults of their husbands".[439](#)

Cleanliness And Piety

Some non-Muslim writers have expressed the view that Islam has not given any detailed orders about the health and hygiene of the people. This view is not, however, correct because this Divine religion has made particular recommendations about cleanliness which is a prerequisite of health and hygiene.

Islam has given important hygienic orders regarding the cleanliness of everything ranging from drinking water to residence, dress and even the deep well of water. The Holy Qur'an, while enumerating Allah's Blessings on mankind says:

"Have We not placed high mountains upon it (earth) and given you fresh water for you to drink?"(77:37).

Islam recommends the use of clean utensils. It was on this account that the Holy Prophet (S), preferred to drink water in Syrian cups (which were considered to be clean and fine utensils in those days) and used to say that those were the best containers for that purpose".[440](#)

The matter which modern medical science wishes to control and calls it 'microbes' was checked in earlier ages and given different names. The Holy Prophet (S), forbade the blowing of breath into water.[441](#) And Imam Ali ('a), says: "Do not drink water from the broken side of a vessel and similarly from the side of its handle (which is naturally contaminated) because Satan sits there".[442](#) And the Holy Prophet (S), says: "Do not drink from side of the handle of a vessel because dirt gets collected there".[443](#) And Imam Ja'far Al-Sadiq ('a), says: "Do not drink water from the nozzle of a vessel or from its broken portion because demons drink water from there".[444](#)

Furthermore, the Holy Prophet, peace be on him and his progeny has prohibited the contamination of

drinking water with water contained in one's mouth. He has also prohibited drinking from flowing water like animals.[445](#)

After drinking water, the next important topic is that of eating food. In order that one's hands should be clean Islam orders that one should perform ablution before taking one's meals.

The Holy Prophet (S), says: "The life of a person, who performs ablution before eating his meals, is prolonged and his body becomes secure against diseases".[446](#)

Performing of ablution before taking meals prevents one from poverty and indigence and performing of it after having taken meals prevents him from insanity and keeps his eyesight good".[447](#)

Islam has given detailed instructions regarding the cleanliness of one's body and commends everything which helps the achievement of this sacred object.

Imam Ali (S), says: "*Hammam* (bath-house) is a good place because (on the one hand) it reminds one of Hell and (on the other hand) removes dirt and impurities from the body".[448](#)

Imam Ja'far Al-Sadiq ('a), says about the purity of the water of the bath house: "If it be possible for you to sip the bath house water, sip it".[449](#)

It means that the bath-house water ought to be so clean and pure that it should be fit for drinking.

The Holy Imam recommends the washing of head with marsh-mallow. Imam Ja'far Al-Sadiq ('a), says: "Washing the head with marsh-mallow (blue in color) keeps one safe from headache and keeps one secure from poverty and indigence and prevents one from dandruff".[450](#)

Islam orders to shorten the hair of the moustache and shaving the armpit to ensure safety from dirt. The Holy Prophet (S), says: "No one should let the hair of his moustache grow long because Satan takes his abode there and conceals itself in them".[451](#) And one should also not let the hair of one's armpit grow long because Satan takes its abode there also"[452](#) Imam Ali ('a), says: "Removing the hair of the armpit makes their bad odor disappear".[453](#)

It is evident that there is much more possibility of dirt being accumulated under the nails. Hence the Holy Prophet (S), orders the people that they should cut their nails.[454](#) However, he has prohibited them from cutting them with their teeth[455](#) because in that event the dirt collected under the nails reaches one's mouth.

To ensure that people get inclined towards one another Islam recommends the use of perfumes and similarly other oils which are the means of adornment. Imam Musa Al-Kadhim ('a), says: "It is not appropriate for a man to forsake the use of perfume on any day".[456](#)

It was one of the attributes of the Holy Prophet (S), that he liked to oil his hair and felt uneasy on

account of disheveled hair and used to say: “Oiling one’s head wards off grief and worry”.[457](#)

And more important than all these things is the brushing of the teeth and keeping them clean. The Holy Prophet (S), says “Angel Jibril (‘a) laid so much stress on the brushing of the teeth that I thought that the Almighty Allah was going to make it obligatory”.[458](#) “If it had not been difficult for my followers I would have ordered them to brush their teeth before every prayer” (i.e. I would have made it obligatory for them five times a day).[459](#)

Imam Ja’far Al-Sadiq (‘a), says: “Brushing of the teeth is one of the routines of the prophets”.[460](#)

Furthermore, Islam recommends the rinsing of the mouth with water (*Mazmaza*) and inhaling water through the nostrils and then expelling it (*Istinshaq*) to ensure purification of mouth and nose. Imam Ali (‘a), says: “*Mazmaza* and *Istinshaq* have been recommended to keep the mouth and the nose clean”.[461](#)

Although Islam does not attach any importance to the quality of dress, it attaches much importance to its cleanliness. The Holy Prophet (S), says: “Whoever procures a dress should cleanse it”.[462](#)

Imam Ja’far Al-Sadiq (‘a), says, “Clean dress humiliates one’s enemy”.[463](#)

Islam abhors houses which are filthy and filled with dirt and considers it to be a trait of dirty Jews. The Holy Prophet (S), says: “Keep your houses clean and do not be like dirty Jews”.[464](#) And Imam Muhammad Al-Baqir (‘a), says: “Keeping one’s house clean keeps poverty and miseries away”.[465](#) Imam Ali, peace be on him says: “Keep your house clean of cobweb because it is the cause of poverty”.[466](#)

It is interesting to note that in all cases Islam considers uncleanliness to be a source of poverty.

Besides the fact that Islam considers the desecrating of *Masjid* to be unlawful and declares its consecration to be compulsory it has also laid great stress on its purification from dirt and filth. As such the Holy Prophet (S), says: “Allah forgives the one who sweeps a *Masjid* on Thursday and removes dust from it, even if it may be equal to the collyrium of an eye”.[467](#) “And if a person keeps a *Masjid* neat and clean, the Lord grants him spiritual reward equal to that of setting free a slave”.[468](#)

The Holy Prophet has forbidden the habit of spitting in a *Masjid*[469](#) and says: “A man who refrains from spitting in *Masjid* will meet Allah on the Day of Judgement in a happy mood and his record of actions will be placed in his right hand”.[470](#)

It is an undeniable fact that contamination of ground under fruit bearing trees and the banks of wells and canals from which drinking water is drawn is the cause of various ailments.[471](#) Hence the Holy Prophet has forbidden excreting at such places and similarly Imam Ali (‘a), has prohibited urinating in flowing water.[472](#)

The Dress We Should Wear

Notwithstanding the fact that Islam has restrained its followers from indulging in luxuries and ornamentation and leads them towards virtues, spiritualism and blessings of the next world, it has also prohibited monastic life and abstention from the bounties of this world. The Holy Qur'an explicitly objects to the mode of thinking of the monks and says:

“Say: ‘Who has forbidden you to benefit from the bounties of Allah (wear decent clothes or t eat good things) which He has bestowed upon his servants?’”(7:32).

Hence this Divine religion orders its followers to wear decent and respectable dress. Imam Ja'far Al-Sadiq ('a), says: “Wear good dress, for Allah is the source of goodness and likes goodness, but be careful that you should procure your dress by lawful means”.[473](#) And on another occasion he says: “There are three things regarding which Allah does not take any account from his faithful servant and one of them is the dress which he wears”.[474](#)

It should, however, be remembered that Islam allows the use of adornments when they are utilized for Allah and in the path of Allah and orders that while wearing a new dress one must remember the Almighty. Imam Ali ('a), says: “The Holy Prophet (S), advised me that whenever I wore a new dress should say: I praise the Lord who has given me this new dress so that I may be respectable among the people. O Lord! Make this dress auspicious for me so that by using it I should endeavor to seek your pleasure and should make your *Masjids* populous”.[475](#)

Imam Ja'far Al-Sadiq ('a), says: “When you wear a dress say: O Lord! Cover me with the dress of faith and adorn me with piety. O Lord! Grant me strength to wear away this dress with constant use while remaining obedient to you and your Prophet”.[476](#)

Islam exhorts its followers to keep the dress and its accessories neat and clean. Imam Ja'far Al-Sadiq ('a), says: “Allah is the source of beauty and likes beauty and dislikes depression because, when He endows a blessing on a servant of His, He likes to see its effect”. People asked the Holy Imam as to how man displays the effect of Divine blessings, he replied: “One should keep his dress tidy and use perfume, white-wash his house and keep it clean from dirt. Allah likes lighting of a lamp before sunset as doing so wards-off poverty and enhances the source of a man's livelihood”.[477](#)

Imam Ali ('a), says: “Neat dress clear off worry and grief from the heart of man”.[478](#) At the same time Islam condemns the wearing of a delicate, thin and soft dress which habituates one to self-indulgence. Imam Ali ('a), says: “Wear coarsely woven dresses and refrain from wearing delicate ones”.[479](#)

Imam Al-Sajjad ('a), also says, “If human body wears a delicate dress it rebels and commits sins against the Lord”.[480](#) The Holy Prophet (S), says to Abu Dharr: “Wear rough and coarsely woven dress so that pride may not overpower you”.[481](#)

However, Islam also prohibits wearing of an unusual dress with the object of presenting oneself in the eyes of the people as a religious and pious person. Imam Al-Sajjad (‘a), says: “If a person wears a dress by means of which he intends to become famous and renowned. Allah will make him wear a dress of fire on the Day of Judgement”.[482](#)

And it is surprising that at times some people who were ignorant of the realities of Islam also objected to the leaders of the faith wearing decent dress instead of coarse dress, just as a man appeared before Imam Ja’far Al-Sadiq (‘a), and said: “I have heard that your grandfather Imam Ali, peace be on him wore coarse dress and his shirt used to cost about four dirhams only but now I see that you are wearing decent dress”. The Holy Imam replied: “Yes. Imam Ali (‘a), used to wear such a dress when it was not something unusual. However, such dress is out of fashion these days and if anyone uses such dress now he will make himself conspicuous among the people. The best dress is that which is in vogue at a particular time”.[483](#)

Islam prohibits wearing of a dress by which one may pride himself over others and the Holy Prophet thus spoke to Abu Dharr: “Before the advent of Imam Mahdi there will be some people who will wear woolen dress during winter as well as during summer so that they may pride themselves over others. The inmates of the heavens and of earth curse such people”.[484](#) He also said: “If a person wears a dress and prides himself over others a Flame of Hell overtakes him and he will be rocking in it till the Day of Judgement”.[485](#)

Islam has prohibited the wearing of a long flowing dress which was considered to be a source of pride by the Arabs in those days and which was likely to get soiled. It was for this reason that when Imam Muhammad Al-Baqir once saw his son Imam Ja’far Al-Sadiq, peace be on them, in an assembly, said to him: “My son! Make your dress tidy”. Imam Ja’far Al-Sadiq (‘a), got up and left the place and then returned. Those present thought that the dress of Imam Ja’far Al-Sadiq had been dirty or impure but Imam Muhammad Al-Baqir, peace be on him told them that it was long and he had, therefore, asked him to shorten it”.[486](#)

Islam has prohibited men from wearing the dress of women and vice versa. Imam Ja’far Al-Sadiq (‘a), says: “If the Holy Prophet saw a man wearing a dress resembling that of a woman or a woman having made herself resemble a man he used to admonish them”.[487](#)

Relationship Of Kinsman-ship

Among the different relations in the society the relation of kinsman-ship, carries special respect by Islam and we have already learnt assistance to one’s relations has been treated to be a part of financial rights of the people over their prosperous kinsmen. It is for this reason that wherever the Holy Qur’an mentions assistance to one’s relatives it gives it a preference over spending on the needy person. In this connection a mention may be of the 26th verse of *Surah Bani Israel*[488](#) and 38th verse of *Surah Al-Rum*[489](#).

In the narrations of the leaders of Islam great stress has laid on the fact that giving importance to the relation of kinsman-ship and considering it to be an honorable act ensures long life, prosperity and acceptance of good deeds and prayers.

Imam Ali Al-Ridha' ('a), says: "At times it so happens that if a man who does not have more than three years to live treats his kinsmen well and speaks affably with them Allah extends his age by thirty years (i.e. ten times). And Allah does what He likes".[490](#)

Imam Ja'far Al-Sadiq ('a), says: "Treat your relations with compassion even if it be with a sip of water. The best thing with which you can maintain relationships is that you should protect your relatives from the cruelty and oppression of others. Observance of relationship postpones death and makes a man praiseworthy".[491](#)

Imam Muhammad Al-Baqir ('a), says: "Observance of relationship makes one's actions sacred , averts calamities, increases wealth, prolongs one's age, enhances the means of sustenance and a source of one's becoming popular. So fear Allah and be kind to your relations".[492](#)

Preservation of ties of relationship is important not only from the religious point of view also. Hence Imam Ali ('a), says: "Hold your relatives dear because they are your wings with which you can fly and they are your roots to which you can return and they are your hands with which you can attack your enemies".[493](#)

It is on this account that the Holy Prophet (S), says about persons who do not observe relationship with their kinsmen: "One who does not observe relationship will not enter Paradise".[494](#)

The ties of kinsman-ship are respectable in the eyes of Islam in all events so much so that even Muslims and unbelievers are at par with each other in this behalf. Hence, when a person said to Imam Ja'far Al-Sadiq: "I have relatives who are not like me (i.e. they are not Muslims). Do they enjoy any rights over me?" The Holy Imam replied: "Yes. The right of kinsman-ship cannot be cut off by anything. If they had been Muslims they would have enjoyed two rights over you, one of kinsman-ship and the other of being Muslims".[495](#)

The tie of kinsman-ship is so strong that even if it is cut off from one side it is incumbent upon the other side to maintain it. As such, when a person said to the Holy Prophet: "My kinsmen did nothing to me except that they oppressed me, separated from me and abused me. I have also forsaken them." The Holy Prophet (S), replied: "Allah too will forsake you on this account". He said: "Then what should I do?" The Holy Prophet, replied: "You should unite with one who has broken away from you and should give him who has deprived you and should forgive him who has oppressed you. If you do so Allah will help you".[496](#)

Hospitality

Entertainment of guests is one of the outstanding moral qualities. The nations who possess a larger share of this moral quality take pride in it and it is justified that they should feel proud. The importance of this matter in the eyes of Islam can be realized from the following words of Imam Ja'far Al-Sadiq, peace be on him: "If two believers arrive at the house of another believer and he feeds them to their fill it is like his having freed a slave".[497](#)

We can also understand the importance of this matter to a still greater extent from the following tradition quoted from Imam Ja'far Al-Sadiq, peace be on him: "To feed four Muslims to the point of satiety is equal to freeing a slave from among the descendants of Prophet Isma'il, peace be on him."[498](#)

Islam safeguards the personality of a new visitor or a guest and explicitly says that he is not a burden on the family (i.e. the host), but he has come along with his own sustenance and he is a blessing which is brought to the family. The Holy Prophet (S), says: "A guest is a guide who leads to the path of Paradise".[499](#) And again he says: "When Allah wishes to do good to a family he sends a gift to it. That gift is a guest who comes with his sustenance and carries away the sins of the family with himself". [500](#) He also says: "A guest never comes to a family except that he brings his sustenance with himself".[501](#)

Islam encourages those persons much who are hospitable and praises them for this good quality. Imam Ali ('a), says: "On the Day of Judgement a hospitable believer will arise from his grave in such a condition that his face will be shining like the disc of moon. The people will wonder and think within themselves as to whether he is a prophet. However, the angel accompanying him will introduce him and say: "He is the man who was hospitable and entertained his guests and thus he has no way other than that of entering Paradise."[502](#)

Islam glorifies and respects hospitable persons, whatever their belief or creed may be. Imam Ja'far Al-Sadiq ('a), says: "Once some captives were brought before the Holy Prophet (S), for being executed (on account of the offence committed by them). A man was brought forward for the execution of the death sentence. Angel Jibril ('a) descended and requested the Holy Prophet (S), for the postponement of that man's execution. The Holy Prophet (S), sent back that man and called him again after the execution of his companions. Jibril ('a) again appeared and said: "Your Lord says that this man used to feed others and was hospitable and remained patient in difficult circumstances". The Holy Prophet (S), released him on account of this quality. When that man came to know the matter he wondered and embraced Islam and then said: "I swear by Allah who has chosen you as His Messenger that I have never returned nay person without giving him my wealth".[503](#)

Islam has prescribed some special rules and manners regarding the entertainment of guests. As such Imam Ja'far Al-Sadiq ('a), says: "If a brother-in-faith of yours arrives at your place serve him whatever is available. However, if you invite him to meals entertain him properly".[504](#)

The Holy Prophet (S), says: “The host should begin eating first and should finish it last of all so that the guests may eat with complete freedom and get satiated”.[505](#)

Islam also says that one should escort his guest up to the door of the house. The Holy Prophet (S), says: “One of the rights of the guest on the host is that he should escort him from the room to the gate of the house”.[506](#)

Islam has forbidden rendering assistance to a guest for making his departure. It has been reported that once some Arabs were the guests of Imam Ja’far Al-Sadiq, peace be on him. At the time of their departure the Holy Imam gave them presents etc. But forbade his slaves from assisting them from making preparation for their leaving. When asked about the reason for this action he replied: “We are a family which does not assist its guests in their departure”.[507](#) The Holy Imam by his behavior wanted to make people understand that he was not worried because of the guests and was not all happy on account of their departure.

On the other hand, Islam also makes the guest realize that they should not stay at one place for more than three days lest the host should be disturbed. The Holy Prophet (S), says: “Whoever believes in Allah and the Day of Judgement honors the guest. Entertainment is for three days only and thereafter it amounts to alms”.[508](#)

No doubt Islam orders the host to do his best to honor and entertain his guest so much so that Holy Prophet (S), says: “The rights of a guest consist in that you should provide him (even) a toothpick”.[509](#)

However, notwithstanding this, Islam orders the guest to behave in such a manner that the host is not disturbed. It directs inter alia that he should sit at the place appointed by the host. As Imam Muhammad Al-Baqir (‘a), says: “When one of you arrives at the house of a brother-in-faith he should sit at the place appointed by the owner of the house as he knows better the situation of the house and the parts of it which should not be made public”.[510](#)

It has also been mentioned in the biography of our great leader, Imam Ali (‘a), that one day a person invited him to meals and he replied to him thus: “I accept your invitation on three conditions”. The man inquired: “What are those conditions?” The Holy Imam said: “You will not procure anything from outside the house, will not hesitate to offer whatever it is available in the house and will not disturb your family”.[511](#)

Showing Love To Orphans

One of the unfortunate sections of the society are the children who lose their parents when they are quite young and are deprived from love and affection. It is evident that if such children are left to themselves they would grow up to be careless and mischievous. Islam therefore, orders its followers to do their best to look after such children and to bring them up under their supervision. The Holy Qur’an

says:

“They ask you about the orphans. Tell them: ‘The best thing to do is what is for their good. They are your brethren if you would associate with them. Allah knows who is corrupt or a reformer. Had Allah wanted He would have brought upon you hardship. Allah is Majestic and All-Wise.’” (2:220).

There is no doubt about the fact that such children are grieved and broken-hearted on account of the deficiency which they observe in themselves and suffer from an inferiority complex. What a good thing it would be if amends are made for their loss and proper care is provided to them which serves as a source of consolation for them.

The Holy Prophet (S), says: “Allah makes Paradise essential for one who acts as guardian of an orphan and trains him properly so that he may become self-sufficient.”[512](#)

Imam Ja’far Al-Sadiq (‘a), says: “Whoever puts an affectionate hand on the head of an orphan will be awarded by Allah a glow of light on the Day of Judgement, equal to the number of his hair which will pass from below his hand” [513](#)

Imam Ali (‘a), in his bequest says to his children: “Fear Allah in the matter of orphans. Do not leave them satiated at one time and hungry at another and do not pamper them while they are with you”.[514](#)

The practical aspect of kindness shown to orphans may be seen in the following tradition. The Holy Prophet (S), says: “One day Prophet ‘Isa (‘a), passed through a graveyard and saw with his special insight that one of the dead was being tortured. He again passed from there after a year and saw no signs of torture in that particular grave. He enquired from the Almighty about the matter. It was then revealed to him that the man was a sinner but he had a son who was pious and who had provided food and shelter to an orphan and repaired a road during the year in question and Allah forgave the sins of his father on this account”.[515](#)

The Holy Prophet (S), says again: “If a person looks after an orphan and meets his expenses, he and I will be close to each other in Paradise in the same manner in which fingers of a man’s hand are close to one another”.[516](#)

Respect For The Dead

The respect and honor which Islam considers as important for Muslims are of two kinds, one, during the lifetime of a Muslim and the other, after his death. Just as Islam does not tolerate that a Muslim should be insulted during his lifetime so it prescribes respect and special ceremonies in the event of his death. Hence, it does not allow any disrespect shown to the dead bodies of Muslims. Imam Ali (‘a), says: “The same respect is given to a Muslim after his death which he enjoyed during his lifetime”.[517](#)

Islam orders that the dead bodies should be cleansed and washed and it has made this act obligatory for others. The Holy Prophet, peace be on him and his progeny says: “It is obligatory for my followers to wash their dead and offer prayer for them”.[518](#) Imam Ja’far Al-Sadiq (‘a), says: “It is obligatory that the dead should be washed”.[519](#)

It is also necessary that due attention should be paid to matters relating to modesty with regard to the dead bodies of the Muslims in the same manner in which it is cared for during lifetime. The dead body of a man should be washed by a man and that of a woman by a woman or by those who are their *Mahram* i.e. those who are so closely related with them and with whom marriage is prohibited.

Hence, when Imam Ja’far Al-Sadiq (‘a), was asked about the washing of the dead body of a woman who dies while journeying and is not accompanied by a woman or a *Mahram* he replied: “She should be buried in her own clothes and similarly if a man dies and is not accompanied by anyone except a woman who is not his *Mahram*, he too should be buried in his own clothes”.[520](#)

The dead body of a Muslim should be washed and shrouded and thereafter prayers should be offered for him. The Holy Prophet, peace on him and his progeny, says to Abu Dharr: “O Abu Dharr! Offer prayers for the dead. It is possible that this thing may make you grieve but still grief for the sake of Allah carries a good reward”.[521](#)

The dead bodies of Muslims should be buried as early as possible. The Holy Prophet (S), says: “Honor and respect for a dead person lies in that he should be carried to his grave expeditiously”.[522](#)

Islam orders that funeral of Muslim should be escorted because by doing so one pays homage to them and one is also reminded of his own death. The Holy Prophet (S), says: “Visit the sick and escort the funeral of the dead so that you may be reminded of the Hereafter”.[523](#)

Imam Ali Al-Ridha’ (‘a), says: “Whoever escorts the funeral of one of our friends is absolved of his sins and he becomes as innocent and void of sins as a newly born child”.[524](#) It should, however, be kept in view that while escorting a funeral one should remember Allah and the Hereafter. The Holy Prophet (S), says to Abu Dharr: “When you are escorting a funeral remind yourself of your own death and fear it and remember that you too will meet it one day”.[525](#)

Islam orders that one should cherish the good memories of the dead and pray for them so that the Lord may forgive them.

It has been reported that one day the Holy Prophet (S), was escorting the funeral of a dead person. He heard some persons praising the departed soul and saying that he was a good man. The Holy Prophet (S), said: “I swear by the Lord of the Ka’bah that the path to Paradise has become secure for this man because the believers have witnessed his goodness and Allah does not reject their testimony”.[526](#)

In order to ensure the honor of the dead bodies of the Muslims, Islam orders that when one who washes

a dead body he should not tell anyone about the defects which he observed. The Holy Prophet (S), says: “A Muslim who washes (the dead body of) a brother Muslim and does not leave him dirty and does not look at his private parts and does not divulge his defects and thereafter escorts his funeral and offers prayer for him and then stays there till he is buried is absolved of his sins”.[527](#)

Islam also prohibits everything which is a cause of disrespect to the dead. The Holy Prophet (S), says: “If I have to walk over burning desert or fire or to place my foot on the edge of a sharp sword I would prefer it to trampling down the grave of a Muslim”.[528](#) He also says: “The Almighty Allah has considered a few things to be undesirable for my followers. One of them is laughing in the graveyard or between the graves”.[529](#)

However, Islam recommends that people should visit the graves occasionally and remember the departed souls and seek Allah’s forgiveness for them. Imam Ja’far Al-Sadiq (‘a), says: “It is one of the rights of a Muslim over another Muslim that he should visit his grave”.[530](#)

Protection Of Animals

As opposed to what some people think the problem of ‘protection of animals’ is not something which has been brought into existence by the present-day world. On the contrary it can be seen in the Islamic instructions in a more extensive and complete form.

Islam has placed the relations between man and animals under a fixed law and given them (i.e. the animals) extensive rights, the gist of it may be observed in the following tradition. The Holy Prophet (S), says: “Every animal for riding has six rights over its master:

1. Whenever he halts at a halting place he should first provide it with fodder.
2. Whenever he passes by water he should let it drink water.
3. He should not beat on its face because it praises Allah.
4. He should not ride on its back except in the cause of Allah (i.e. he should keep riding on it only while performing the journey and should dismount it when, for example, he halts to converse with some other person for a long time).
5. He should not overburden it beyond its capacity.
6. He should not compel it to go on a path which is not possible for it to cover”.[531](#)

Besides the above-quoted traditions many other responsibilities of a man vis-à-vis animals have been mentioned in the sayings of the religious leaders, a summary whereof is given below:

1. Be careful in providing them fodder. Imam Musa Al-Kadhim (‘a), says: ‘It is an honor for a man that

his animals reserved for riding should be fat and fleshy” (viz. that there should be no carelessness on the part of their master in providing them the necessities of life).[532](#)

When Imam Ali (‘a), distributed the war booty and fixed the shares of the warriors, he allocated to the rider who had brought two horses– one for riding and the other as a spare horse three shares each two for their horses and one for themselves and each of the foot–soldiers got only one share”.[533](#)

2. Don’t keep them thirsty. Imam Muhammad Al–Baqir (‘a), says, “Allah likes cooling down the heat of sore livers. If a person quenches the thirst of animals with heart–burns, Allah will accommodate him under His own shadow on the Day on which there will be no shadow available except His”.[534](#)

3. Don’t hit them on their faces. Imam Ja’far Al–Sadiq (‘a), says: “There is a dignity and respect for everything and the dignity of the quadrupeds lies in their faces”.[535](#)

4. The Holy Prophet (S), says: “Don’t mount on the quadruped with legs flexed together and don’t make their backs as your seats”.[536](#)

5. The Holy Prophet (S), says: “Three of you should not ride a quadruped at a time because the third person is accursed and is far from the Blessings of Allah”.[537](#)

6. Lighten the burden of feeble animals at halting place.

7. Don’t overstay in dry deserts and do not make them your halting place.

8. Drive slowly through jungles where water and grass are available such that the animals may make use of them. The Holy Prophet (S), says: “Almighty Allah likes gentleness and leniency. Hence if you travel with weak quadrupeds bring down their load at each halting place and if the desert is dry pass through it and halt in green land”[538](#) Imam Muhammad Al–Baqir (‘a), says: “Drive slowly through green lands and try to cross the dry lands quickly”.[539](#)

9. Don’t drive the animals too fast. Imam Muhammad Al–Baqir (‘a), says: “Do not accept the evidence of a pilgrim to Ka’bah who reaches his destination earlier than all others because by doing so he must have tortured his animal”.[540](#)

10. Don’t beat the animals unnecessarily. The Holy Prophet, peace be on him and his progeny, says: “Beat the animals if they are refractory or vicious or run away but refrain from beating them for slipping or falling down on the ground”.[541](#)

11. Don’t kill the animals (or birds) unnecessarily. The Holy Prophet (S), says: “If a person kills a sparrow it will complain on the Day of Judgement and will say “O Lord! Ask this person as to why he killed me without any reason”.[542](#)

Imam Ja’far Al–Sadiq (‘a), says: “A woman was subjected to Divine torture because she had fastened a

cat which died of thirst”.[543](#)

12. Don't slaughter an animal in presence of another. Imam Ali ('a), says: “Don't slaughter lamb at a time when it is looking at another”.[544](#)

13. It is better that you should not slaughter an animal which has been reared up by you. A man said to Imam Ali Al-Ridha' ('a), “I reared up a sheep in my house for one year and then I decided to sacrifice it. When I caught it and made it lie on the ground it looked at me. I felt pity for it and, therefore, waited for some time and then slaughtered it”. The Holy Imam replied: “I dislike this behavior. Don't kill an animal which you have reared up yourself”.[545](#)

- [1.](#) Usul al-Kafi, p. 20.
- [2.](#) Munyat al-Murid, p. 9.
- [3.](#) Usul al-Kafi, p. 15.
- [4.](#) Bihar al-Anwar, vol, I, p. 55.
- [5.](#) Munyat al-Murid, p. 9.
- [6.](#) Bihar al-Anwar, vol. p. 59.
- [7.](#) Munyat al-Murid, p. 11.
- [8.](#) Munyat al-Murid, p. 11.
- [9.](#) Bihar al-Anwar, vol. I, p. 58.
- [10.](#) Bihar al-Anwar, vol I, p. 57.
- [11.](#) Nahj al-Balagha, p. 1113.
- [12.](#) Usul al-Kafi, p. 15.
- [13.](#) Usul al-Kafi, p. 22.
- [14.](#) Bihar al-Anwar. vol. I, p. 111.
- [15.](#) Makarim al-Akhlaq. p. 484
- [16.](#) Bihar al-Anwar, vol, I, p. 76
- [17.](#) Nahj al-Balagha, p. 1146
- [18.](#) Bihar al-Anwar, vol. I, p. 76.
- [19.](#) Bihar al-Anwar, vol. I, p. 82.
- [20.](#) Bihar al-Anwar, vol. I, p. 65.
- [21.](#) Bihar al-Anwar, vol, I. p. 64.
- [22.](#) Bihar al-Anwar. vol. I, p. 61.
- [23.](#) Bihar al-Anwar, vol. I, p. 64.
- [24.](#) Bihar al-Anwar, vol, I, p. 82.
- [25.](#) Wasa'il ash-Shi'ah, vol. II, p. 214.
- [26.](#) Wasa'il ash-Shi'ah, vol. II, p. 214.
- [27.](#) Wasa'il ash-Shi'ah, vol, II. p. 215
- [28.](#) Usul al-Kafi, p. 451
- [29.](#) Usul al-Kafi, p. 451
- [30.](#) Bihar al-Anwar, vol. I, p. 103
- [31.](#) Nahj al-Balagha, p. 1245
- [32.](#) Usul al-Kafi, p. 452
- [33.](#) Safinat al-Bihar, vol, II, p. 532
- [34.](#) Wasa'il ash-Shi'ah, vol. II, p. 232
- [35.](#) Tahzib, vol. I, p. 531
- [36.](#) Surah Ale Imran, 3:109

- [37.](#) Surah Ale Imran, 3:113
- [38.](#) Surah Luqman, 31:16
- [39.](#) Surah Al-Tawbah, 9:70
- [40.](#) Furu' al-Kafi, vol. I, p. 343
- [41.](#) Furu' al-Kafi, vol. I, p. 343
- [42.](#) Tahzib, vol. II, p. 58
- [43.](#) Furu' al-Kafi, vol. I, p. 343
- [44.](#) Furu' al-Kafi, vol. I, p. 344
- [45.](#) Usul al-Kafi, p. 414
- [46.](#) Usul al-Kafi, p. 414
- [47.](#) Usul al-Kafi, p. 414
- [48.](#) Bihar al-Anwar, vol. XV, p. 136
- [49.](#) Furu' al-Kafi, vol. II, p. 94
- [50.](#) Furu' al-Kafi, vol. II, p. 94
- [51.](#) Nahj al-Balagha, p. 1264
- [52.](#) Nahj al-Balagha, p. 903
- [53.](#) Furu' al-Kafi, vol. II, p. 94
- [54.](#) Furu' al-Kafi, vol. II, p. 86
- [55.](#) Furu' al-Kafi, vol. II, p. 87
- [56.](#) Wasa'il ash-Shi'ah, vol. III, p. 123
- [57.](#) Nahj al-Balagha, p. 1264
- [58.](#) Makarim al-Akhlaq, p. 252
- [59.](#) Furu' al-Kafi, vol. II, p. 94
- [60.](#) Furu' al-Kafi, vol. II, p. 94
- [61.](#) Furu' al-Kafi, vol. II, p. 88
- [62.](#) Makarim al-Akhlaq, p. 255
- [63.](#) Furu' al-Kafi, vol. II, p. 95
- [64.](#) Furu' al-Kafi, vol. II, p. 95
- [65.](#) Wasa'il ash-Shi'ah, vol. III, p. 130
- [66.](#) Wasa'il ash-Shi'ah, vol. III, p. 130
- [67.](#) Makarim al-Akhlaq, p. 256
- [68.](#) Makarim al-Akhlaq, p. 261
- [69.](#) Makarim al-Akhlaq, p. 260
- [70.](#) Makarim al-Akhlaq, p. 252
- [71.](#) Makarim al-Akhlaq, p. 254
- [72.](#) Jami'a as-Sa'adat, vol. II, p. 259
- [73.](#) Jami'a as-Sa'adat, vol. II, p. 259
- [74.](#) Jami'a as-Sa'adat, vol. II, p. 260
- [75.](#) Jami'a as-Sa'adat, vol. II, p. 261
- [76.](#) Jami'a as-Sa'adat, p. 260
- [77.](#) Jami'a as-Sa'adat, p. 260
- [78.](#) Jami'a as-Sa'adat, p. 257
- [79.](#) Jami'a as-Sa'adat, p. 257
- [80.](#) Jami'a as-Sa'adat, p. 258
- [81.](#) Jami'a as-Sa'adat, p. 262
- [82.](#) Usul al-Kafi, p. 390
- [83.](#) Usul al-Kafi, p. 476
- [84.](#) Usul al-Kafi, p. 476

- [85.](#) Bihar al-Anwar, vol, XVI, p. 80
- [86.](#) Wasa'il ash-Shi'ah, vol. II, p. 523
- [87.](#) Wasa'il ash-Shi'ah, vol. II, p. 523
- [88.](#) Usul al-Kafi, p. 390
- [89.](#) Bihar al-Anwar, vol. XV, p. 89
- [90.](#) Mustadrak al-Wasa'il, vol. II, p. 407
- [91.](#) Wasa'il ash-Shi'ah, vol. II, p. 523
- [92.](#) Wasa'il ash-Shi'ah, p. 223
- [93.](#) Usul al-Kafi, p. 410
- [94.](#) Usul al-Kafi, p. 409
- [95.](#) Usul al-Kafi, p. 409
- [96.](#) Wasa'il ash-Shi'ah, vol. II, p. 524
- [97.](#) Wasa'il ash-Shi'ah, vol. II, p. 523
- [98.](#) Bihar al-Anwar, vol. XV, p. 90
- [99.](#) Durarul Hikam, p. 496
- [100.](#) Usul al-Kafi, p. 390
- [101.](#) Usul al-Kafi, p. 391
- [102.](#) Bihar al-Anwar, vol. XV, p. 124
- [103.](#) Bihar al-Anwar, vol. III, p. 175
- [104.](#) Wasa'il ash-Shi'ah. vol. I, p. 304
- [105.](#) Bihar al-Anwar, vol. XV, p. 131
- [106.](#) Bihar al-Anwar, vol. XV, p. 131
- [107.](#) Bihar al-Anwar, vol. XV, p. 131
- [108.](#) Bihar al-Anwar, vol. XV, p. 123
- [109.](#) Nahj al-Balagha, p. 986
- [110.](#) Jami'a as-Sa'adat, vol. II, p. 221
- [111.](#) Bihar al-Anwar, vol. XV, p. 123
- [112.](#) Usul al-Kafi, p. 403
- [113.](#) Bihar al-Anwar, vol. XV, p. 123
- [114.](#) Nahj al-Balagha, p. 968
- [115.](#) Usul al-Kafi, p. 414
- [116.](#) Bihar al-Anwar, vol. XV, p. 65
- [117.](#) Bihar al-Anwar, vol. XV, p. 61
- [118.](#) Usul al-Kafi, p. 393
- [119.](#) Usul al-Kafi, p. 392
- [120.](#) Bihar al-Anwar, vol. XV, p. 41
- [121.](#) Bihar al-Anwar, vol. XV, p. 41
- [122.](#) Bihar al-Anwar, vol. XV, p. 41
- [123.](#) Bihar al-Anwar, vol. XV, p. 41
- [124.](#) Bihar al-Anwar, vol. XV, p. 41
- [125.](#) Bihar al-Anwar, vol. XV, p. 41
- [126.](#) Nahj al-Balagha, p. 930
- [127.](#) Rawdhat al-Kafi, p. 87
- [128.](#) For example Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:40, 2:104 and 2:173; Surah Al-A'raf, 7:155; Surah Al-Hajj, 22:42 and Surah Al-Mo'minin, 40: 4.
- [129.](#) Man La Yahdhuruh al-Faqih, p. 151
- [130.](#) Furu' al-Kafi, vol. I, p. 140
- [131.](#) Man La Yahdhuruh al-Faqih, p. 151

- [132.](#) Wasa'il ash-Shi'ah, vol. II, p. 4
- [133.](#) Nahj al-Balagha, p. 635
- [134.](#) Kitab Salim Bin Qays, p. 15
- [135.](#) Furu' al-Kafi, vol. I, p. 142
- [136.](#) Wasa'il ash-Shi'ah, vol. II, p. 5
- [137.](#) Man La Yahdhuruh al-Faqih, p. 152
- [138.](#) Wasa'il ash-Shi'ah, vol. II, p. 4
- [139.](#) Furu' al-Kafi, vol. I, p. 140
- [140.](#) Furu' al-Kafi, vol. I, p. 156
- [141.](#) Furu' al-Kafi, vol. I, p. 140
- [142.](#) Furu' al-Kafi, vol. I, p. 140
- [143.](#) Jami'a as-Sa'adat, vol. II, p. 143
- [144.](#) Jami'a as-Sa'adat, vol. II, p. 144
- [145.](#) Usul al-Kafi, p. 412
- [146.](#) Jami'a as-Sa'adat, vol. II, p. 144
- [147.](#) Jami'a as-Sa'adat, vol. II, p. 144
- [148.](#) Jami'a as-Sa'adat, vol. II, p. 148
- [149.](#) Wasa'il ash-Shi'ah, vol. II p. 55
- [150.](#) Majma'ul Bayan, vol. I, p. 375
- [151.](#) Jami'a as-Sa'adat, vol. II, p. 131
- [152.](#) Majma'ul Bayan, vol. I, p. 385
- [153.](#) Wasa'il ash-Shi'ah, vol. II p. 534
- [154.](#) Wasa'il ash-Shi'ah, vol. II p. 534
- [155.](#) Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:275
- [156.](#) Wasa'il ash-Shi'ah, vol. II p. 621
- [157.](#) Mustadrak al-Wasa'il, voll, p. 490
- [158.](#) Mustadrak al-Wasa'il, vol. II, p. 488
- [159.](#) Mustadrak al-Wasa'il, vol. II, p. 488
- [160.](#) Wasa'il ash-Shi'ah, vol. II p. 620
- [161.](#) Furu' al-Kafi, vol. I, p. 353
- [162.](#) Mustadrak al-Wasa'il. vol. II p. 489
- [163.](#) Furu' al-Kafi, vol. I, p. 353
- [164.](#) Furu' al-Kafi, vol. I, p. 353
- [165.](#) Mustadrak al-Wasa'il, vol. II, p. 489
- [166.](#) Wasa'il ash-Shi'ah, vol. II, p. 621
- [167.](#) Mustadrak al-Wasa'il, vol. II, p. 489
- [168.](#) Wasa'il ash-Shi'ah, vol. II, p. 622
- [169.](#) Wasa'il ash-Shi'ah, vol. II, p. 621
- [170.](#) Mustadrak al-Wasa'il, vol. II, p. 490
- [171.](#) Furu' al-Kafi, vol. I, p. 354
- [172.](#) Wasa'il ash-Shi'ah, vol. II, p. 622
- [173.](#) Mustadrak al-Wasa'il, vol. II, p. 491
- [174.](#) Wasa'il ash-Shi'ah, vol. II p. 623
- [175.](#) Mustadrak al-Wasa'il, vol. II, p. 491
- [176.](#) Nahj al-Balagha, p. 1155
- [177.](#) Usul al-Kafi, p. 361
- [178.](#) Usul al-Kafi, p. 361
- [179.](#) Nahj al-Balagha, p. 1082

- [180.](#) Nahj al-Balagha, p. 1102
- [181.](#) Wasa'il ash-Shi'ah, vol. II p. 224
- [182.](#) Safinat al-Bihar, vol. II, p. 207
- [183.](#) Usul al-Kafi, p. 485
- [184.](#) Usul al-Kafi, p. 485
- [185.](#) Bihar al-Anwar, vol. XV, p. 30
- [186.](#) Bihar al-Anwar, vol. XV, p. 30
- [187.](#) Bihar al-Anwar, vol. XV, p. 172
- [188.](#) Bihar al-Anwar, vol. XV, p. 173
- [189.](#) Ghurar al-Hikam, vol. I, p. 433
- [190.](#) Nahj al-Balagha, p. 1174
- [191.](#) Nahj al-Balagha, p. 1244
- [192.](#) Usul al-Kafi, p. 394
- [193.](#) Ghurar al-Hikam, vol. I, p. 80
- [194.](#) Jami'a as-Sa'adat, vol. II, p. 283
- [195.](#) Surah Maryam, 19:41
- [196.](#) Surah Yusuf, 12:46
- [197.](#) Surah Maryam, 19:54
- [198.](#) Surah Maryam, 19:56
- [199.](#) Surah Maryam, 19:59
- [200.](#) Usul al-Kafi, p. 360
- [201.](#) Usul al-Kafi, p. 360
- [202.](#) Wasa'il ash-Shi'ah, vol. II, p. 222
- [203.](#) Wasa'il ash-Shi'ah, vol. II, p. 222
- [204.](#) Wasa'il ash-Shi'ah, vol. II, p. 222
- [205.](#) Bihar al-Anwar, vol. XV, p. 125
- [206.](#) Surah Al-Nahl, 16:107
- [207.](#) Surah Al-Zumar, 39:3
- [208.](#) Wasa'il ash-Shi'ah, vol. II, p. 233
- [209.](#) Wasa'il ash-Shi'ah, vol. II, p. 233
- [210.](#) Jami'a as-Sa'adat, vol. II, p. 318
- [211.](#) Jami'a as-Sa'adat, vol. II, p. 318
- [212.](#) Wasa'il ash-Shi'ah, vol. II, p. 234
- [213.](#) Wasa'il ash-Shi'ah, vol. II, p. 233
- [214.](#) Jami'a as-Sa'adat, vol. II, p. 317
- [215.](#) Safinat al-Bihar, vol. I, p. 473
- [216.](#) Mustadrak al-Wasa'il, vol. II, p. 100
- [217.](#) Wasa'il ash-Shi'ah, vol. II, p. 233
- [218.](#) Bihar al-Anwar, vol. XV, p. 57
- [219.](#) Surah Al-Nisa, 4:58
- [220.](#) Surah Al-Mo'minun, 23:8
- [221.](#) Surah Al-Shu'ara, 26:107, 125, 143, 163 and 178 and Surah Al-Dukhan, 44:18
- [222.](#) Bihar al-Anwar, vol. XV, p. 149
- [223.](#) Wasa'il ash-Shi'ah, vol. II, p. 203
- [224.](#) Bihar al-Anwar, vol. XV, p. 148
- [225.](#) Furu' al-Kafi, vol. I, p. 365
- [226.](#) Bihar al-Anwar, vol. XV, p. 149
- [227.](#) Safinat al-Bihar, vol. I, p. 41

- [228.](#) Bihar al-Anwar, vol, XV, p. 148
- [229.](#) Bihar al-Anwar, vol. XVIII, p. 146
- [230.](#) Bihar al-Anwar, vol. XVIII, p. 145
- [231.](#) Wasa'il ash-Shi'ah, vol. I, p. 122
- [232.](#) Bihar al-Anwar, vol. XVIII, p. 146
- [233.](#) Bihar al-Anwar, vol. XVIII, p. 146
- [234.](#) Furu' al-Kafi, vol. I, p. 33
- [235.](#) Furu' al-Kafi, vol. I, p. 33
- [236.](#) Bihar al-Anwar, v. XVIII, p. 144
- [237.](#) Wasa'il ash-Shi'ah, vol. II, p. 166
- [238.](#) Wasa'il ash-Shi'ah, vol. II, p. 169
- [239.](#) Wasa'il ash-Shi'ah, vol. II, p. 169
- [240.](#) Bihar al-Anwar, vol. XV, p. 112
- [241.](#) Bihar al-Anwar, vol. XV, p. 51
- [242.](#) Bihar al-Anwar, vol. XV, p. 52
- [243.](#) Bihar al-Anwar, vol. XV, p. 51
- [244.](#) Safinat al-Bihar, vol. I, p. 168
- [245.](#) Bihar al-Anwar, vol. XV, p. 51
- [246.](#) Wasa'il ash-Shi'ah, vol. II, p. 205
- [247.](#) Bihar al-Anwar, vol. XV, p. 52
- [248.](#) Bihar al-Anwar, vol. XV, p. 51
- [249.](#) Bihar al-Anwar, vol. XV, p. 52
- [250.](#) Bihar al-Anwar, vol. XV, p. 52
- [251.](#) Bihar al-Anwar, vol. XV, p. 52
- [252.](#) Bihar al-Anwar, vol. XV, p. 52
- [253.](#) Bihar al-Anwar, vol. XV, p. 52
- [254.](#) Wasa'il ash-Shi'ah, vol. II, p. 220
- [255.](#) Mustadrak al-Wasa'il, vol. II, p. 83
- [256.](#) Wasa'il ash-Shi'ah, vol. II, p. 220
- [257.](#) Wasa'il ash-Shi'ah, vol. II, p. 221
- [258.](#) Wasa'il ash-Shi'ah, vol. II, p. 445
- [259.](#) Wasa'il ash-Shi'ah, vol. II, p. 221
- [260.](#) Wasa'il ash-Shi'ah, vol. II, p. 221
- [261.](#) Wasa'il ash-Shi'ah, vol. II, p. 221
- [262.](#) Wasa'il ash-Shi'ah, vol. II, p. 221
- [263.](#) Wasa'il ash-Shi'ah, vol. II, p. 221
- [264.](#) Wasa'il ash-Shi'ah, vol. II, p. 485
- [265.](#) Wasa'il ash-Shi'ah, vol. II, p. 221
- [266.](#) Wasa'il ash-Shi'ah, vol. II, p. 475
- [267.](#) Wasa'il ash-Shi'ah, vol. II, p. 222
- [268.](#) Wasa'il ash-Shi'ah, vol. II, p. 222
- [269.](#) Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:177
- [270.](#) Safinat al-Bihar, vol. II, p. 675
- [271.](#) Safinat al-Bihar, vol. II, p. 295
- [272.](#) Jami'a as-Sa'adat, vol. II, p. 327
- [273.](#) Mustadrak al-Wasa'il, vol. II, p. 60
- [274.](#) Bihar al-Anwar, vol. XV, p. 143
- [275.](#) Bihar al-Anwar, vol. XV, p. 144

- [276.](#) Bihar al-Anwar, vol. XV, p. 144
- [277.](#) Wasa'il ash-Shi'ah, vol. II, p. 207
- [278.](#) Wasd'ilush Shi'ah, vol. II, p. 207
- [279.](#) Wasd'ilush Shi'ah, vol. II, p. 207
- [280.](#) Bihar al-Anwar, vol. XV, p. 146
- [281.](#) Surah Ale Imran, 3:160
- [282.](#) Surah Al-Shura, 42:38
- [283.](#) Nahj al-Balagha, p. 1155
- [284.](#) Bihar al-Anwar, vol. XV, p. 146
- [285.](#) Wasa'ilush Shi'ah, vol. II, p. 208
- [286.](#) Wasa'ilush Shi'ah, vol. II, p. 207
- [287.](#) Wasa'ilush Shi'ah, vol. II, p. 207
- [288.](#) Wasa'ilush Shi'ah, vol. II, p. 208
- [289.](#) Wasa'ilush Shi'ah, vol. II, p. 207
- [290.](#) Wasa'ilush Shi'ah, vol. II, p. 208
- [291.](#) Wasa'ilush Shi'ah, vol. II, p. 208
- [292.](#) Bihar al-Anwar, vol. XV, p. 144
- [293.](#) Wasa'ilush Shi'ah, vol. II, p. 208
- [294.](#) Bihar al-Anwar, vol. XVI, p. 57
- [295.](#) Bihar al-Anwar, vol. XV, p. 41
- [296.](#) Wasa'ilush Shi'ah, vol. II, p. 182
- [297.](#) Furu' al-Kafi, vol. I, p. 244
- [298.](#) Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:257.
- [299.](#) Furu' al-Kafi, vol. I, p. 244
- [300.](#) Wasa'ilush Shi'ah, vol. II, p. 182
- [301.](#) Bihar al-Anwar, vol. XVI, p. 75
- [302.](#) Bihar al-Anwar, vol. XVI, p. 75
- [303.](#) Bihar al-Anwar, vol. XVI, p. 75
- [304.](#) Bihar al-Anwar, vol. XVI, p. 76
- [305.](#) Bihar al-Anwar, vol. XVI, p. 77
- [306.](#) Bihar al-Anwar, vol. XVI, p. 77
- [307.](#) Wasa'ilush Shi'ah, vol. II, p. 189
- [308.](#) Usul al-Kafi, p. 625
- [309.](#) Usul al-Kafi, p. 626
- [310.](#) Wasa'ilush Shi'ah, vol. II, p. 193
- [311.](#) Wasa'ilush Shi'ah, vol. II, p. 189
- [312.](#) Wasa'ilush Shi'ah, vol. II, p. 191
- [313.](#) Bihar al-Anwar, vol. XV, p. 80
- [314.](#) Nahj al-Balagha, p. 1187
- [315.](#) Furu' al-Kafi, vol. I, p. 329
- [316.](#) Furu' al-Kafi, vol. I, p. 327
- [317.](#) Furu' al-Kafi, vol. I, p. 329
- [318.](#) Furu' al-Kafi, vol. I, p. 327
- [319.](#) Nahj al-Balagha, p. 85
- [320.](#) Mustadrak al-Wasa'il, vol. II, p. 243
- [321.](#) Sharay'ul Islam, p. 87
- [322.](#) Wasa'ilush Shi'ah, vol. II, p. 417
- [323.](#) Wasa'ilush Shi'ah, vol. II, p. 417

- [324.](#) Mustadrak al-Wasa'il, vol. II, p. 245
- [325.](#) Wasa'ilush Shi'ah, vol. II, p. 421
- [326.](#) Mustadrak al-Wasa'il, vol. II, p. 265
- [327.](#) Wasa'il ash-Shi'ah, vol. II, p. 425
- [328.](#) Wasa'il ash-Shi'ah, vol. II, p. 424
- [329.](#) Mustadrak al-Wasa'il, vol. II, p. 250
- [330.](#) Wasa'ilush Shi'ah, vol. II, p. 425
- [331.](#) Wasa'ilush Shi'ah, vol. II, p. 425
- [332.](#) Wasa'ilush Shi'ah, vol. II, p. 425
- [333.](#) Usul al-Kafi, p. 451
- [334.](#) Bihar al-Anwar, vol. XXIV, p. 7
- [335.](#) Nahj al-Balagha, p. 1000
- [336.](#) Bihar al-Anwar, vol. XXIV, p. 9
- [337.](#) Surah Al-Ma'ida, 5:47
- [338.](#) Surah Al-Ma'ida, 5:45
- [339.](#) Surah Al-Ma'ida, 5.44
- [340.](#) Bihar al-Anwar, vol. XXIV, p. 6
- [341.](#) Bihar al-Anwar, vol. XXIV, p. 6
- [342.](#) Wasa'il ash-Shi'ah, vol. III, p. 396
- [343.](#) Nahj al-Balagha, p. 877
- [344.](#) Jawahirul Kalam, Kitabul Qaza
- [345.](#) Mustadrak al-Wasa'il, v. III, p. 197
- [346.](#) Mustadrak al-Wasa'il, v. III, p. 195
- [347.](#) Jawaharul Kalam, Kitabul Qaza
- [348.](#) Mustadrak al-Wasa'il, v. III, p. 197
- [349.](#) Mustadrak al-Wasa'il, v. III, p. 195
- [350.](#) Jawaharul Kalam, Kitabul Qaza
- [351.](#) Jawaharul Kalam, Kitabul Qaza
- [352.](#) Wasa'il ash-Shi'ah, vol. III, p. 398
- [353.](#) Bihar al-Anwar, vol. XXIV, p. 9
- [354.](#) Bihar al-Anwar, vol. XXIV, p. 6
- [355.](#) Bihar al-Anwar, vol. XXIV, p. 9
- [356.](#) Nahj al-Balagha, p. 1001
- [357.](#) Man La Yahdhuruh al-Faqih, p. 353
- [358.](#) Man La Yahdhuruh al-Faqih, p. 353
- [359.](#) Furu' al-Kafi, vol. I, p. 347
- [360.](#) Man La Yahdhuruh al-Faqih, p. 357
- [361.](#) Ithna 'Ashriyah, p. 107
- [362.](#) Man La Yahdhuruh al-Faqih, p. 353
- [363.](#) Man La Yahdhuruh al-Faqih, p. 353
- [364.](#) Wasa'il ash-Shi'ah, vol. II, p. 529
- [365.](#) Wasa'il ash-Shi'ah, vol. II, p. 529
- [366.](#) Bihar al-Anwar, vol. XXIII, p. 20
- [367.](#) Furu' al-Kafi, vol. I, p. 404
- [368.](#) Bihar al-Anwar, vol. XXIII, p. 19
- [369.](#) Bihar al-Anwar, vol. XXIII, p. 19
- [370.](#) Bihar al-Anwar, yol. XIV, p. 686
- [371.](#) Bihar al-Anwar, yol. XIV, p. 686

- [372.](#) Bihar al-Anwar, vol. XIV, p. 684
- [373.](#) Wasa'il ash-Shi'ah, vol. II, p. 193
- [374.](#) Wasa'il ash-Shi'ah, vol. II, p. 193
- [375.](#) Bihar al-Anwar, vol. XVI, p. 82
- [376.](#) Bihar al-Anwar, vol. XXIII, p. 5
- [377.](#) Ihya'ul Ulum, vol. II, p. 45
- [378.](#) Bihar al-Anwar, vol. XXIII, p. 5
- [379.](#) Furu' al-Kafi, vol. I, p. 370
- [380.](#) Furu' al-Kafi, vol. I, p. 370
- [381.](#) Furu' al-Kafi, vol. I, p. 370
- [382.](#) Furu' al-Kafi, vol. I, p. 370
- [383.](#) Surah Al-Nur, 24:37
- [384.](#) Mustadrak al-Wasa'il, v. II, p. 464
- [385.](#) Bihar al-Anwar, vol. XXIII, p. 5
- [386.](#) Furu' al-Kafi, vol. I, p. 371
- [387.](#) Furu' al-Kafi, vol. I, p. 372
- [388.](#) Furu' al-Kafi, vol. I, p. 371
- [389.](#) Mustadrak al-Wasa'il, v. II, p. 467
- [390.](#) Furu' al-Kafi, vol. I, p. 373
- [391.](#) Wasa'ilush Shi'ah, vol. II, p. 576
- [392.](#) Wasa'ilush Shi'ah, vol. II, p. 583
- [393.](#) Wasa'ilush Shi'ah, vol. II, p. 582
- [394.](#) Wasa'ilush Shi'ah, vol. II, p. 582
- [395.](#) Furu' al-Kafi, vol. I, p. 372
- [396.](#) Wasa'ilush Shi'ah, vol. II, p. 583
- [397.](#) Furu' al-Kafi, vol. I, p. 386
- [398.](#) Wasa'ilush Shi'ah, vol. II, p. 579
- [399.](#) Furu' al-Kafi, vol. I, p. 374
- [400.](#) Furu' al-Kafi, vol. I, p. 371
- [401.](#) Nahj al-Balagha, p. 1008
- [402.](#) Wasa'ilush Shi'ah, vol. III, p. 3
- [403.](#) Wasa'ilush Shi'ah, vol. III, p. 2
- [404.](#) Safinat al-Bihar, vol. I, p. 561
- [405.](#) Wasa'ilush Shi'ah, vol. III, p. 14
- [406.](#) Safinat al-Bihar, vol. I, p. 561
- [407.](#) Wasa'il ash-Shi'ah, vol. II, p. 2
- [408.](#) Wasa'il ash-Shi'ah, vol. II, p. 2
- [409.](#) Man La Yahdhuruh al-Faqih, p. 410
- [410.](#) Safinat al-Bihar, vol. I, p. 561
- [411.](#) Wasa'il ash-Shi'ah, vol. III, p. 6
- [412.](#) Wasa'il ash-Shi'ah, vol. III, p. 6
- [413.](#) Wasa'il ash-Shi'ah, vol. III, p. 11
- [414.](#) Safinat al-Bihar, vol. II, p. 586
- [415.](#) Wasa'il ash-Shi'ah, vol. III, p. 104
- [416.](#) Wasa'il ash-Shi'ah, vol. III, p. 104
- [417.](#) Wasa'il ash-Shi'ah, vol. III, p. 104
- [418.](#) Furu' al-Kafi. vol. II, p. 3
- [419.](#) Furu' al-Kafi. vol. II, p. 4

- [420.](#) Furu' al-Kafi. vol. III, p. 60
- [421.](#) Furu' al-Kafi. vol. III, p. 60
- [422.](#) Makarim al-Akhlaq, p. 247
- [423.](#) Jami'a as-Sa'adat, vol. II, p. 141
- [424.](#) Jami'a as-Sa'adat, vol. II, p. 139
- [425.](#) Makarim al-Akhlaq, p. 250
- [426.](#) Jami'a as-Sa'adat, vol. II, p. 141
- [427.](#) Makarim al-Akhlaq, p. 249
- [428.](#) Jami'a as-Sa'adat, vol. II, p. 144
- [429.](#) Jami'a as-Sa'adat, vol. II, p. 140
- [430.](#) Makarim al-Akhlaq, p. 245
- [431.](#) Makarim al-Akhlaq, p. 248
- [432.](#) Furu' al-Kafi. vol. II, p. 61
- [433.](#) Makarim al-Akhlaq, p. 248
- [434.](#) Jami'a as-Sa'adat, vol. II, p. 139
- [435.](#) Makarim al-Akhlaq, p. 246
- [436.](#) Makarim al-Akhlaq, p. 246
- [437.](#) Makarim al-Akhlaq, p. 107
- [438.](#) Makarim al-Akhlaq, p. 101
- [439.](#) Makarim al-Akhlaq, p. 91
- [440.](#) Wasa'il ash-Shi'ah, vol. III, p. 310
- [441.](#) Mustadrak al-Wasa'il, v. II, p. 131
- [442.](#) Wasa'il ash-Shi'ah, vol. III, p. 310
- [443.](#) Wasa'il ash-Shi'ah, vol. III, p. 310
- [444.](#) Wasa'il ash-Shi'ah, vol. III, p. 310
- [445.](#) Man la Yahdurul ul-Faqih, p. 467
- [446.](#) Mustadrak al-Wasa'il, v. III, p. 90
- [447.](#) Mustadrak al-Wasa'il, v. III, p. 90
- [448.](#) Wasa'il ash-Shi'ah, vol. I, p. 69
- [449.](#) Wasa'il ash-Shi'ah, vol. I, p. 71
- [450.](#) Wasa'il ash-Shi'ah, vol. I, p. 73
- [451.](#) Wasa'il ash-Shi'ah, vol. I, p. 83
- [452.](#) Wasa'il ash-Shi'ah, vol. I, p. 83
- [453.](#) Wasa'il ash-Shi'ah, vol. I, p. 83
- [454.](#) Wasa'il ash-Shi'ah, vol. I, p. 82
- [455.](#) Wasa'il ash-Shi'ah, vol. I, p. 82
- [456.](#) Wasa'il ash-Shi'ah, vol. I, p. 84
- [457.](#) Wasa'il ash-Shi'ah, vol. I, p. 85
- [458.](#) Wasa'il ash-Shi'ah, vol. I, p. 99
- [459.](#) Wasa'il ash-Shi'ah, vol. I, p. 68
- [460.](#) Wasa'il ash-Shi'ah, vol. I, p. 66
- [461.](#) Wasa'il ash-Shi'ah, vol. I, p. 58
- [462.](#) Wasa'il ash-Shi'ah, vol. I, p. 279
- [463.](#) Wasa'il ash-Shi'ah, vol. I, p. 278
- [464.](#) Wasa'il ash-Shi'ah, vol. I, p. 319
- [465.](#) Wasa'il ash-Shi'ah, vol. I, p. 319
- [466.](#) Wasa'il ash-Shi'ah, vol. I, p. 320
- [467.](#) Wasa'il ash-Shi'ah, vol. I, p. 308

- [468.](#) Wasa'il ash-Shi'ah, vol. I, p. 308
- [469.](#) Wasa'il ash-Shi'ah, vol. I, p. 307
- [470.](#) Wasa'il ash-Shi'ah, vol. I, p. 307
- [471.](#) Wasa'il ash-Shi'ah, vol. I, p. 43
- [472.](#) Wasa'il ash-Shi'ah, vol. I, p. 45
- [473.](#) Wasa'il ash-Shi'ah, vol. I, p. 277
- [474.](#) Wasa'il ash-Shi'ah, vol. I, p. 277
- [475.](#) Wasa'il ash-Shi'ah, vol. I, p. 283
- [476.](#) Wasa'il ash-Shi'ah, vol. I, p. 284
- [477.](#) Wasa'il ash-Shi'ah, vol. I, p. 278
- [478.](#) Wasa'il ash-Shi'ah, vol. I, p. 278
- [479.](#) Wasa'il ash-Shi'ah, vol. I, p. 281
- [480.](#) Wasa'il ash-Shi'ah, vol. I, p. 282
- [481.](#) Wasa'il ash-Shi'ah, vol. I, p. 284
- [482.](#) Wasa'il ash-Shi'ah, vol. I, p. 280
- [483.](#) Wasa'il ash-Shi'ah, vol. I, p. 279
- [484.](#) Wasa'il ash-Shi'ah, vol. I, p. 281
- [485.](#) Wasa'il ash-Shi'ah, vol. I, p. 283
- [486.](#) Wasa'il ash-Shi'ah, vol. I, p. 282
- [487.](#) Wasa'il ash-Shi'ah, vol. I, p. 280
- [488.](#) Surah Bani Isra'il, 17:26
- [489.](#) Surah Rum, 30:38
- [490.](#) Usul al-Kafi, p. 383
- [491.](#) Usul al-Kafi, p. 384
- [492.](#) Usul al-Kafi, p. 384
- [493.](#) Nahj al-Balagha, p. 930
- [494.](#) Bihar al-Anwar, vol. XV, p. 27
- [495.](#) Usul al-Kafi, p. 386
- [496.](#) Usul al-Kafi, p. 383
- [497.](#) Bihar al-Anwar, vol. XV, p. 242
- [498.](#) Bihar al-Anwar, vol. XV, p. 242
- [499.](#) Bihar al-Anwar, vol. XV, p. 242
- [500.](#) Bihar al-Anwar, vol. XV, p. 242
- [501.](#) Bihar al-Anwar, vol. XV, p. 241
- [502.](#) Bihar al-Anwar, vol. XV, p. 242
- [503.](#) Furu' al-Kafi, vol. I, p. 176
- [504.](#) Bihar al-Anwar, vol. XV, p. 240
- [505.](#) Bihar al-Anwar, vol. XV, p. 240
- [506.](#) Bihar al-Anwar, vol. XV, p. 240
- [507.](#) Bihar al-Anwar, vol. XV, p. 240
- [508.](#) Bihar al-Anwar, vol. XV, p. 242
- [509.](#) Bihar al-Anwar, vol. XV, p. 241
- [510.](#) Bihar al-Anwar, vol. XV, p. 240
- [511.](#) Bihar al-Anwar, vol. XV, p. 240
- [512.](#) Bihar al-Anwar, vol. XV, p. 120
- [513.](#) Bihar al-Anwar, vol. XV, p. 120
- [514.](#) Nahj al-Balagha. p. 968
- [515.](#) Bihar al-Anwar, vol. XV, p. 119

- [516.](#) Bihar al-Anwar, vol. XV, p. 119
- [517.](#) Misbahul Fagih, vol. I, p. 806
- [518.](#) Mustadrak al-Wasa'il, v. I, p. 117
- [519.](#) Wasa'il ash-Shi'ah, vol. I, p. 128
- [520.](#) Wasa'il ash-Shi'ah, vol. I, p. 134
- [521.](#) Wasa'il ash-Shi'ah, vol. I, p. 111
- [522.](#) Wasa'il ash-Shi'ah, vol. I, p. 128
- [523.](#) Mustadrak al-Wasa'il, v. I, p. 119
- [524.](#) Mustadrak al-Wasa'il, v. I, p. 118
- [525.](#) Mustadrak al-Wasa'il, v. I, p. 131
- [526.](#) Mustadrak al-Wasa'il, v. I, p. 147
- [527.](#) Mustadrak al-Wasa'il, v. I, p. 99
- [528.](#) Mustadrak al-Wasa'il, v. I, p. 132
- [529.](#) Man La Yahzurhul Faqih, p. 573
- [530.](#) Mustadrak al-Wasa'il, v. I, p. 129
- [531.](#) Man La Yahzurhul Faqih, p. 228
- [532.](#) Wasa'il ash-Shi'ah, vol. II, p. 194
- [533.](#) Wasa'il ash-Shi'ah, vol. II, p. 433
- [534.](#) Wasa'il ash-Shi'ah, vol. II, p. 50
- [535.](#) Wasa'il ash-Shi'ah, vol. II, p. 196
- [536.](#) Man La Yahzurhul Faqih, p. 228
- [537.](#) Wasa'il ash-Shi'ah, vol. II, p. 197
- [538.](#) Man La Yahzurhul Faqih, p. 229
- [539.](#) Man La Yahzurhul Faqih, p. 229
- [540.](#) Wasa'il ash-Shi'ah, vol. II, p. 415
- [541.](#) Furu' al-Kafi, vol. II, p. 230
- [542.](#) Mustadrak al-Wasa'il, v. III, p. 58
- [543.](#) Wasa'il ash-Shi'ah, vol. II, p. 203
- [544.](#) Wasa'il ash-Shi'ah, vol. III, p. 239
- [545.](#) Wasa'il ash-Shi'ah, vol. III, p. 247

Islam Code Of Social Life Part 2

In the Name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful.

A Few Words

In the first part of this book, we have studied some Qur'anic verses and traditions that constitute the code of social life and now in the second part, we are presenting without any elaboration some more traditions, which talk of moral, ethical and spiritual uplift of an individual and ultimately of a society.

All the traditions collected in this part have been quoted from *Tuhaful Uqul 'Am Ale Rasid* compiled by Abu Muhammad Al-Hasan Bin Sho'ba Al-Harrani, the prominent *Muhaddith* (traditionalist) of the fourth

century Hegira.

As the name of the book suggests, all the traditions in it are narrated on the authority of Ahlul Bayt, the Chosen Descendants of the Holy Prophet, peace be on them.

Hisham Bin Salim and Hammad Bin 'Isa narrate that Imam Ja'far Al-Sadiq ('a), said: "My narration is the narration of my father, his is that of my grandfather, his is that of Husayn, his is that of Hasan, his is that of Ali, the Commander of the Faithful, his is that of the Holy Prophet and the narration of the Holy Prophet is the Command of Allah"¹.

"When we reply to a question in any matter, it is from the Holy Prophet. We do not speak of our own will".²

That is why our Holy Prophet (S), urged upon us to adhere to his *Ahlul Bayt*, who are purified and honored personages as ordained by Allah in the Holy Qur'an³.

The Holy Prophet (S), has said: "I leave among you two inseparable precious entities i.e. the Book of Allah and my *Ahlul Bayt*. Whosoever adheres to these two shall be saved from going astray".⁴

We pray to Almighty Allah to grant us strength to follow in the footsteps of *Ahlul Bayt* so that we may be blessed in this world and the Hereafter.

Sayings Of Ahlul Bayt

Desire

Imam Ali ('a), says: "(O Lord,) Your slave does not prolong his desire except that at last he forgets You".

Imam Ja'far Al-Sadiq ('a), says: "Allah bestows numerous blessings on His slave which he does not desire and there are many desirous persons whose desires are fulfilled by others and there are many persons who meet their death and are deprived of their share".

Gift

The Holy Prophet (S), says: "Accept gifts. The best gift is that of perfume which is comparatively light and sweet-smelling".

Goodness

The Holy Prophet (S), says: "Wearing dress reveals one's riches and doing good to one's servant crushes one's enemy".

“Compensate one who does good to you. And if you do not compensate him praise him for praise is his reward”.

“It is necessary for one to whom good is done to give compensation for it. And if he does not give it he should praise the person who has done good to him. If he does not do so he is guilty of ingratitude”.

Sincerity

The Holy Prophet (S), says: “There are four signs of a sincere person. (i) His heart is sound (ii) His limbs are harmless (iii) He does good to others (iii) He refrains from doing evil “.

Good Morals

The Holy Prophet (S), says: “Good behavior makes its owner attain the level of one who fasts during day-time and prays at night. He was asked: “What is the best gift which one can bestow upon one’s slave?” He replied: “Good behavior”.

“Amongst the believers one whose morals are best possesses the most perfect faith”.

Imam Musa Al-Kadhim (‘a), says: “A generous person who possesses noble disposition is under the protection of Allah and He never ignores him and He takes him to Paradise. Allah never sent any prophet who was not generous. And my father always recommended to me to be generous and good-natured till he passed away”.

Management Of The Household

Imam Al-Ridha’ (‘a), says: “The reward for one who seeks sustenance to support his family is greater than one who fights for the cause of Allah”.

Perseverance

Imam Ali (‘a), says: “Safety lies in perseverance, and prayer is the key to achieve blessing”.

Prodigality

The Holy Prophet (S), says: “There are four signs of a prodigal: (i) He prides himself on false things. (ii) He eats that which is not suitable for him. (iii) He is not inclined to do good. (iv) He opposes everyone from whom he cannot derive benefit”.

Imam Ali (‘a), says: “Thrift is better than affluence and extravagance”.

Moderation

The Holy Prophet (S), says: “My Lord has recommended nine things to me: (i) To be sincere secretly as well as openly. (ii) To maintain justice, whether it is pleasant or not. (iii) To be moderate in spending, whether I am poor or rich. (iv) To forgive one who has been unjust to me. (v) To give to one who has refused to give me something. (vi) To befriend one who has severed connections with me. (vii) That I should reflect while I am quiet. (viii) That my speech should be Zikr (supplication). (ix) The aim of my seeing is to take a lesson”.

Friendship

Imam Ali (‘a), says: “Blessed is he who, while being obedient to Allah, befriends the people and they befriend him”.

“The best way to win the hearts of one’s friends and remove grudge from the hearts of one’s enemies is to meet them cheerfully and enquiring about their welfare during their absence and being happy in their presence”.

Honesty

The Holy Prophet (S), says: “Honesty brings sustenance and dishonesty entails poverty and indigence”.

Imam Ali (‘a), says: “O Kumayl! You should understand and know that none is permitted to withhold the thing entrusted to him. Whoever narrates that we have accorded such a permission says something absurd and commits a sin and will be punished by being thrown into Hell, for he tells a lie. I swear that before breathing his last the Holy Prophet, said to me thrice: O Abul Hasan, return the thing entrusted to you by a good man or a sinner whether it is big or as small as a needle and a thread”.

“Return to its owner the thing entrusted to you although he may have killed the children of the prophets”.

Equity

Imam Ja’far Al-Sadiq (‘a), says: “Brothers among themselves need three things to do. If they do them they remain firm, otherwise they part with one another and also become enemies. Those three things are: (i) Dealing equitably with one another. (ii) Being kind to one another. (iii) Not envying one another”.

Charity In The Path Of Allah

Imam Zaynul ‘Abidin (‘a), says: “It is one of the morals of a believer that howsoever meager his income may be he spends something in the path of Allah”.

Imam Musa Al-Kadhim (‘a), says: “Beware of refusing to spend for the cause of Allah and then spend twice as much in disobeying Allah”.

The Holy Prophet (S), says: “The hands are of three kinds: The one that requests, the one that gives and the one which is parsimonious. And the best of the hands is the one that gives”.

“Do not wear a ring on your forefinger and middle finger.....Do not keep your little finger bare”.

Imam Ja’far Al-Sadiq (‘a), says: “Wearing a ring on one’s hand is the Sunnah of the Holy Prophet”.

Faith

The Holy Prophet (S), says: “A believer is like an ear of corn which suddenly falls on the ground and then suddenly stands erect. And an unbeliever is like a hard tree which always stands erect possessing no sense (to bow his head before truth)”.

Imam Ali (‘a), says: “O Kumayl! Faith is either firm or a borrowed one. Take care that you may not be one of those whose faith is a borrowed one. Indeed it is proper that your faith should be firm, for then you proceed on a lighted path and are not misled”.

“The title of the book of a believer is cheerful disposition”.

Parsimony

The Holy Prophet (S), says: “From amongst you the person most distant from me is one who is parsimonious and scurrilous”.

Imam Husayn (‘a), says: “A miser is one who shirks greeting others”.

Imam Ja’far Al-Sadiq (‘a), says: “One who hates three things acquires three other things viz: (i) One who hates doing evil deeds acquires respect. (ii) One who hates pride acquires greatness. (iii) One who hates stinginess acquires honour”.

Mistrust

The Holy Prophet (S), says: “Refrain from being suspicious about the people”.

Brotherhood

Imam Ali, peace be on him, says: “How bad is falling apart after uniting, and oppression after friendship and brotherhood, and enmity after kindness”.

“The believers are brothers of one another and nothing is more dear to a brother than his brother”.

“If you do not love your brother you are not his brother because a believer is one who has faith in what we believe in and whoever goes against it is guilty as regard to us and whoever is guilty regarding us is not amongst us and whoever is not amongst us shall go to Hell”.

Forbearance

Imam Ali (‘a), says, “Learn forbearance for forbearance is the friend and helper of a believer and knowledge is his guide and modesty is his brother and wisdom is his companion and patience is the commander of his army”.

Imam Muhammad Al-Baqir (‘a), says: “There are no other two things which associate better with each other than forbearance does with knowledge”.

Imam Ja’far Al-Sadiq peace be on him: says: “There are three persons who are not recognized except on three occasions: (i) A forbearing person is not recognized except for the time of anger. (ii) A brave man is not recognized except in the battlefield. (iii) A brother and friend is not recognized till the time when you need his help”.

Goodness

The Holy Prophet (S), says: “There are ten signs of a righteous person: (i) His friendship is for the sake of Allah. (ii) His enmity is for the sake of Allah. (iii) He becomes a companion for the sake of Allah (iv) He parts for the sake of Allah. (v) He is angry for the sake of Allah. (vi) He is pleased for the sake of Allah. (vii) He works for the sake of Allah. (viii) He seeks Allah. (ix) He fears Allah at the time of danger and fear. He is pure and sincere. He is modest and vigilant. (x) He does good to others for the sake of Allah”.

“The sign of an ignorant person is that he acts sluggishly while doing something good”.

Imam Ja’far Al-Sadiq (‘a), says: “Four things are the attributes of the Prophets: (i) Righteousness (ii) Generosity (iii) Bearing unpleasant things with fortitude (iv) Standing up to defend the right of believer.

Rebellion

The Holy Prophet (S), says: “The quickest evil is the punishment for rebellion”.

Imam Ja’far Al-Sadiq (‘a), says: “The following three things, in whomsoever they are, are harmful for him: (i) Deceit (ii) Breach of promise (iii) Aggression. This is what the word of the Almighty Allah means when He says:

“Does not the evil plot recoil only on those who make it?” (35:41)

“Now see what the result of their plot was. We destroyed them and their people all together.”

(27:51)

And the Almighty Allah says:

“Men, it is your own soul against which you revolt. You enjoy this worldly life only for a while.

(10:24)”

Imam Ja'far Al-Sadiq ('a), says: “A believer does not possess the following six attributes: (i) Severity (ii) Ignorance (iii) Jealousy (iv) Obstinacy (v) Falsehood (vi) Aggression”.

The Helpless

Imam Ja'far Al-Sadiq, peace be on him says: “How bad it is to take revenge from the helpless”.

Imam Ali ('a), says: “Remember Allah in respect of the helpless. Let them participate in your life”.

Independence And Poverty

The Holy Prophet (S), says: “Seeking less assistance from the people is independence and seeking much help from them is abjectness and poverty”.

A man in the presence of Imam Zaynul Abidin, peace be on him: “O Lord! Make me independent of other. The Holy Imam said: “No, it is not so, because people live in society. You should say: “O Lord! Make me independent of wicked people”

Imam Musa Al-Kadhim ('a), says “If you are satisfied to the extent you need, the smallest thing of the world will be sufficient for you. And if you are not satisfied to the extent you need there is nothing in the world which can satisfy you”.

Regret

The Holy Prophet (S), says: “Regret itself is repentance”.

Imam Ja'far Al-Sadiq ('a), says: “Salvation lies in three things viz.: (i) You should control your tongue (ii) You should stay in your house, and (iii) You should regret your fault”.

Imam Ja'far Al-Sadiq ('a), says, “Three things entail regret (i) Taking pride in something (ii) Boasting and (iii) Using violence to acquire honor”.

Resignation And Fortitude

The following is an extract from the letter of condolence sent by the Holy Prophet to Ma'az in connection with the death of his son.

“I learn that you are impatient on account of your son. Allah granted him to you till the time of his death and took away his soul at the appointed time. We are from Allah and we have to return to Him. Beware, that impatience should destroy your spiritual reward. If you attain the spiritual reward attached to your calamity you will come to know that for those who are patient and resign themselves to the Divine Will the calamity is very meager and brief as compared with the great spiritual reward of Allah. You should know that impatience does not bring back a dead person and cannot restrain the Divine decree. Be cheerful and accept the destiny. It should not be that you may grieve on account of something which is attached to you as well as to all other human beings and shall come at the time fixed for it. Peace be upon you”.

Piety

The Holy Prophet (S), says: “Death is sufficient to take a lesson and piety is sufficient for being rich”.

Imam Ali (‘a), says: “Speak truth in all circumstances, associate with the pious, shun the libertines, keep aloof from the hypocrites and do not associate with the treacherous”.

“Truly speaking everyone is proceeding towards the Hereafter and the thing on account of which we are enamored by it is the pleasure of Allah and the high ranks in Paradise which every pious person inherits”.

Pride

Imam Ali (‘a), says: “Whoever is self-conceited goes astray and whoever dispenses with his intellect stumbles and whoever treats the people arrogantly is humiliated”.

Imam Muhammad Al-Baqir (‘a), says: “By Allah, an arrogant person quarrels with the Almighty in the Authority of His Greatness”.

Laziness

The Holy Prophet (S), says: “There are four signs of a lazy person: Sluggishness to the extent of negligence; negligence to the extent of giving up one’s duty; giving up one’s duty to the extent of committing sin and finally feeling annoyed to perform one’s duty”.

The Holy Prophet (S), says: “There are three signs of a lazy person: He is sluggish till he becomes

negligent. He is negligent till he loses and he loses till he commits sin”.

Imam Muhammad Al-Baqir (‘a), says: “Abstain from laziness and despondency because these two are the key of all evils. One who is lazy does not pray the right of another and one who is despondent is not contented with his own right”.

Humility

Imam Ali (‘a), says: “The best ornament of a believer is humility and his beauty is his modesty and his dignity lies in understanding religion and his honor is in abandoning absurd talk”.

Imam Muhammad Al-Baqir (‘a), says: “Humility is that you should agree to sit at a place which is below your dignity and salute everyone you meet and do not contend even though you may be right”.

Imam Al-Hasan Al-Askari (‘a), says: “Humility is such a blessing as on account of which the people are not jealous”.

Wealth

The Holy Prophet (S), says: “Wealth does not consist of owning a large quantity of goods. On the other hand it means having a heart which is free from want”.

Repentance

The Holy Prophet (S), says: “There are four signs of repentant: (i) He acts only to please Allah (ii) He abandons falsehood (iii) He considers truth to be necessary (iv) He is fond of doing good deeds”.

Imam Ali (‘a), was requested to explain what sincere repentance is. He said in reply: “Heartfelt regret and asking forgiveness with the tongue and determining not to repeat the sin”.

Kumayl Bin Ziyad said to Imam Ali: “O Commander of the Faithful! A person may” commit a sin and then ask forgiveness. What is the limit of asking forgives? Imam Ali replied, O son of Ziyad! It is repentance. Kumayl asked: Is that all? The Imam replied: No. Kumayl asked: Then how is it?

The Imam replied: Whenever a person commits a sin he should say “I seek Allah forgiveness” and should move. Kumayl asked: What is meant by moving? The Imam replied: He should move his two lips and tongue with the intention that he should be followed by reality. Kumayl asked: What is reality? The Imam replied: He should repent sincerely and determine not to repeat the sin for which he asks forgiveness.

Kumayl asked: Suppose I do so, will I be forgiven? The Imam replied: No. Kumayl asked: Why is it so? The Imam said: Because you have not yet reached its root. Kumayl asked: Then what is the root of

asking forgiveness?

The Imam replied: It is return to repentance from the sin for which you have asked forgiveness (and that is the first degree of the devout) and the abandonment of sin. 'Asking forgiveness' is a term which carries six meanings: (i) Regretting the past deeds (ii) Determination of not repeating the sin (iii) Paying the right of every creature to whom you are indebted (iv) Paying all the binding rights of Allah (v) Reducing the flesh which has grown on your body by unlawful means till your skin sticks to your bones and then fresh flesh grows between them. (vi) You should make your body taste the pain of submission as you made it taste the deliciousness of sin".

Trust In Allah

Imam Al-Ridha' was requested to explain what 'trust in Allah' means. He replied: "It means that you should not fear anyone except Allah".

The Holy Prophet (S), says: "Whoever wishes to become the most powerful person should rely on Allah".

Imam Ali ('a), says: "Recite the name of Allah every day and say: *La Hawla wa la Quwwata illa billah* (No one possesses power and strength except Allah) and rely on Allah".

Calumny

The Holy Prophet (S), says: "A person who suffers at the hands of a thief and continuously accuses the innocent people till his sin becomes greater than that of the thief".

Imam Ali ('a), says: "Whoever makes himself the object of calumny should not reproach one who holds a pessimistic view about him and whoever keeps his secret hidden exercises control on himself".

Peeping At The Sins Of Others

Imam Ja'far Al-Sadiq ('a), says : "Whenever you see that a person peeps at the sins of others and has forgotten his own sins you should conclude that he has been captured by Divine plot".

Jihad (Holy War)

Imam Ali ('a), says: "It is not possible to do *Jihad* except in the company of just Imam (leader) and there is no question of booty except in the company of a learned Imam".

Imam Ali ('a), says: "I remind you of Allah in the matter of *Jihad* with your wealth, life and tongue. Indeed, only two persons perform *Jihad*: A true Imam and one who obeys and follows him".

Flattery

Imam Muhammad Al-Baqir (‘a), says: “Flattery and envy do not form part of the morals of a believer except for acquiring knowledge”.

Love For Worldly Passions

Imam Musa Al-Kadhim (‘a), says: “Allah sent revelation to Dawud, peace be on him: O Dawud, warn your friends against worldly passions, for the hearts of those who hanker after them are far from Me (My Mercy)”.

Jealousy

The Holy Prophet (S), says: “A jealous person has three signs: (i) Backbiting, (ii) Flattery and (iii) Taunting at the time of one’s misfortune”.

Imam Ali (‘a), says: “The jealous persons are not happy, the kings have no friends and the liars lack courage”.

The Holy Prophet (S), says: “Go ahead when you take a bad omen and do not take a decision when you are suspicious and do not be aggressive when you are jealous”.

Imam Ali (‘a), says: “A believer is neither a flatterer nor jealous except for acquiring knowledge”.

“I have not seen any oppressor who resembles an oppressed person more than does one who is jealous”.

Truth

Imam Ali (‘a), says: “Indeed, the benefit which you derive from your world is that it should be good for your life in the Hereafter. Spend in the cause of truth and do not be a treasurer for others”.

“Recognize the right of a person who has recognized your right, whether he is exalted or unimportant”.

“You must fear Allah openly and secretly and should speak truth at the time of happiness and anger”.

Wisdom

Imam Musa Al-Kadhim (‘a), says: “Do not teach wisdom to the ignorant for by doing so you will do injustice to it and do not withhold it from those who deserve it for in that event you will do injustice to them”.

“Just as the people have left wisdom for you, you too should leave the world for them”.

The Holy Prophet (S), said: “When you see that a believer is quiet seek his proximity so that he may teach you wisdom. A believer talks less and works much. A hypocrite is talkative and works less.”

Modesty

The Holy Prophet (S), says: “Modesty emanates from faith”.

Imam Zaynul Abidin (‘a), says: “Seeking help from the people brings about abjection and destroys modesty and reduces dignity and brings poverty, and seeking less from the people is indecndence”.

Imam Muhammad Al-Baqir (‘a), says: “Modesty and faith are tied with one string. If one of them goes the other follows it”.

Deceit

Imam Ali (‘a), says: “Do not neglect the deceit of Satan and say: “Every time I see something unlawful withdraw my hand”.

‘Do not practice deceit for it is a part of the morals of mean people”.

Intellect

The Holy Prophet (S), says: “The Almighty has divided intellect into three parts. The intellect of one who possesses all these parts is complete. And he who does not possess even one of these parts does not possess intellect. These three parts are: (i) Recognizing Allah well (ii) Obeying Allah fully (iii) Accepting Divine fate with complete patience”.

“Indeed everything good is recognized by means of intellect and whoever does not possess intellect does not possess faith”.

Imam Ali (‘a), says: “There is no wealth like intellect and no poverty is worse than ignorance”.

Humility

The Holy Prophet (S), says: “Let it not be that you should practice humility hypocritically which means that the body may be humble but the heart may not be humble”.

Imam Ali (‘a), says: “Be extremely humble before your Lord when you achieve your object and are guided towards your aim”.

“O Kumayl, dignity does not lie in offering prayers, fasting, and giving alms; but dignity lies in offering

prayers with a pure heart and your deeds should please Allah and your humility should be sincere. You should also see in what and on what you are offering your prayers because if they are not performed in a lawful manner they are not acceptable”.

Sincerity

Imam Ali (‘a), says: “The first step of religion is to accept, understand and realize Him as the Lord; thorough understanding lies in conviction and confirmation, and the right conviction is to sincerely believe that there is no god but He. The true belief in His Oneness is to realize that He is so absolutely Pure and above nature, that nothing can be added to or subtracted from Him; because one should realize that there is no difference between His Blessing and His attributes”.

“Seek sincerely from your Lord whatever you need because to give or to withhold is in His hand”.

Cheerfulness

The Holy Prophet (S), says: “Cheerfulness destroys grudge”.

Dishonesty

The Holy Prophet (S), says: “A believer may be habituated to anything except falsehood and dishonesty”.

Imam Ja’far Al-Sadiq (‘a), says: “If one entrusts something to a dishonest person Allah does not guarantee its return”.

“A believer has not been created to tell lies or commit treachery and there are two things which cannot combine in a hypocrite; a good mien and comprehension of Islamic faith”.

Goodness

Imam Al-Hasan (‘a), says: “The goodness which has no evil about it is thanking Allah for a blessing and enduring adversities with patience”.

Imam Zaynul ‘Abidin, peace be on him, says: “The best thing is that one should guard oneself (from sins)”.

“Help one who seeks good from you. If he deserves it you have done your duty. And even if he does not deserve it you yourself deserve it. And if a person abuses you from your right side and then turns to your left side and apologizes to you, you should accept his apology”.

Using Abusive Language

Imam Muhammad Al-Baqir (‘a), says: “Allah hates an impudent person who uses abusive language”.

Remembering Allah

The Holy Prophet (S), says: “The best deeds are three in number: (i) You should pay the rights of the people. (ii) You should become equal to your brother for the sake of Allah (iii) You should remember Allah in all circumstances”.

“Allah’s Zikr (Devotion to Allah) is better than only giving alms”.

“Allah rewards the person who always remembers Him”.

Friendship

Imam Muhammad Al-Baqir (‘a), says: “Twenty years of friendship is as good as relationship”.

Imam Ja’far Al-Sadiq (‘a), says: “A friend can be tested by means of three things. If he possesses them he is a true friend, otherwise he is a friend in weal but not in woe: (i) That you may ask him to give you something. (ii) That you may entrust something to him. (iii) That you may be associated with him in adverse circumstances”.

“If you wish to find out whether your friend is sincere you should annoy him. If he remains friends with you in spite of this he is your brother, otherwise not”.

Leniency

Imam Musa Al-Kadhim (‘a), says: “Be lenient, for leniency is auspicious and ill-disposition is inauspicious. Indeed, leniency, goodness and cheerfulness make the houses prosper and increase sustenance”.

Hypocrisy

The Holy Prophet (S), says: “There are four signs of a hypocrite. (i) He is very keen to pray to Allah in the presence of others. (ii) He is lazy while alone. (iii) He seeks praise in every matter. (iv) He endeavors to pretend”.

“Do not do anything good to make a show of it and do not feel ashamed to do it”.

Piety

Imam Ali (‘a), says: “A pious person in the world is he whose patience is not out of control in the face of unlawful things and who is not prevented from thanksgiving by lawful things”.

The Holy Prophet (S), says: “Piety consists of cutting short one’s desires and thanking Allah for every blessing and restraining oneself from things declared by Allah to be unlawful”.

A man asked Imam Zaynul ‘Abidin, peace be on him: “What is piety? The Imam replied: There are ten stages of piety. The highest stages of piety are the lowest stages of continence and the highest stages of continence are the lowest stages of conviction and the highest stages of conviction are the lowest stages of submission. Indeed piety has been defined very nicely in the sacred verse which says:

“You may not grieve for what you have missed, nor rejoice over what Allah has given you” (57:23)”.

Generosity

The Holy Prophet (S), says: “Indeed, Allah likes him who is generous in the discharge of his obligations”.

“When your leaders are good and your rich are generous and every work is done in consultation with all of you, the face of the earth is better for you than its interior (graves). And when your leaders are corrupt and your rich are misers and your affairs are in the hands of your women it is better that you should be under the earth.”

“The Almighty has said: “This is a religion which I have chosen for Myself and nothing becomes it except generosity and good conduct. So long as you are by its side honor it by means of these two”.

Imam Ali (‘a), says: “The greatest persons among the people in this world are the generous and in the Hereafter the pious”.

Salutation

Imam Ja’far Al-Sadiq (‘a), says: “To salute is recommended and its reply is obligatory”.

“If a person talks without having saluted first do not give a reply to him.”

“Perfect salutation for a resident of a place is shaking hands with him and complete salutation who has arrived is embracing him”.

Ill Nature

The Holy Prophet (S), says: “It is necessary for you that you should be truthful and nothing false should ever escape your lips. Never pick up courage to commit breach or trust. Fear Allah as if you were seeing Him and sacrifice your property and life for the sake of your religion. Adopt good manners and shun bad ones”.

Imam Ja’far Al-Sadiq (‘a), says: “Whoever is ill natured tortures himself”.

“Ill-nature entails adversity and indigence”.

Evil Deeds

The Holy Prophet (S), says: “Indeed Allah has made and moulded the hearts of his slaves in such a way that they love a person who treats them well and hate one who harms them”.

Thanksgiving

The Holy Prophet said to Imam Ali: “O Ali! The Islam of one who possesses these four qualities is perfect: (i) Truthfulness (ii) Thankfulness (iii) Modesty and (iv) Good behavior.

The Holy Prophet (S), says: “Whoever eats and thanks Allah is better than one who fasts and remains silent (does not thank Allah)”.

Imam Ali (‘a), says: “During indigence the right of Allah is submission to His Will and patience, and during affluence His right is that He should be praised and thanked”.

Patience

The Holy Prophet (S), says: “Faith consists of two halves. One half of it is patience and the other is thanksgiving”.

“Three things form the key to goodness: (i) Possessing a generous heart (ii) Being sweet-spoken (iii) Remaining patient on being harmed”.

Imam Musa Al-Kadhim (‘a), says: “Adversity is single for one who is patient and double for one who is impatient”.

Truth

The Holy Prophet (S), says: “There are four signs of one who is truthful: (i) Truthfulness (ii) Believing in the promises and threats of Allah (iii) Being faithful to one’s promises (iv) Remaining aloof from

treachery”.

“On the Day of Judgement he from amongst you who is most truthful, most honest, most good-natured and nearest to the people will be nearest to me”.

Imam Ali (‘a), says: “The substance of faith is that slave of Allah should make truthfulness his habit so that he may hate falsehood even when he stands to gain by it. And one should not consider one’s speech to be one’s distinction”.

Alms

“Do not refute the request of one who begs and give him something even though it may be a piece of a grape or a palm-date, because alms increases before Allah”.

Imam Muhammad Al-Baqir (‘a), says: “Four things form part of the treasures of goodness: (i) Keeping ones need hidden (ii) Giving the alms secretly (iii) Keeping one’s pain hidden and (iv) Keeping one’s suffering hidden”.

Imam Muhammad Al-Baqir (‘a), said: “May I tell you about a thing which, if practiced by you will keep the mischief of the king and Satan away from you? Abu Hamza said: Yes. Please tell us about it so that we may practice it. The Imam said: You should give alms in the morning because they blacken the face of Satan and keep the mischief of the king away from you on that day”.

Observation Of Friendship

The Holy Prophet (S), says: “Observation of relationship increases one’s life”.

“Punishment for the following four things is awarded quickly: (i) When you do good to a person and he in return does you harm. (ii) When you do not oppress a person and he oppresses you. (iii) When you make an agreement with a person and in intend to be faithful to it, but his intention is otherwise and (iv) When you observe relationship with a person but he breaks it off”.

Imam Al-Ridha’ (‘a), said: “Observe relationship although it may be by means of a gulp of water and the best observance of it that you should refrain from doing harm to your relative”. He added: “The Almighty Allah says in the Holy Qur’an:

“Do not render your charity useless with taunts”. (2:264).

Feast

Imam Ali (‘a), says: “Invite others to food and do not withhold it from them, because you do not at all provide sustenance to anyone and Allah will reward you suitably for this deed. Behave well with your

friend and vacate the seat for him and do not be suspicious about your servant”.

Covetousness

Imam Ali (‘a), says: “O people! The wonderful thing in the body of man is his heart. Heart has stocks of wisdom as well as of things which are its opposite. If hopefulness affords it an opportunity covetousness humiliates it and if its covetousness increases its greed kills it”.

“Covetousness plucks the hearts of the ignorant and they become pledged to desire and deceit prevails in them”.

Oppression

Imam Ali (‘a), says: “The oppressor, his associate and the one who is agreeable to be oppressed are all partners of one another”.

“May it not be that you should oppress a person who has none to assist him against you except Allah”.

Welfare

Imam Ali (‘a), says: “O people! Pray to Allah for conviction and resort to welfare because it is the greatest blessing and the best doing which is firmly rooted in the heart is conviction. The cheated one is he whose faith is injured and he who possesses perfect conviction should be envied”.

Imam Ja’far Al-Sadiq (‘a), says: “Welfare is a light blessing which is forgotten when it is in one’s possession and is missed when it is lost”.

Self-Conceit

Imam Ali (‘a), said: “Whoever is able to protect himself from four things deserves that he should not suffer any harm at all. On having been asked as to what those things were he replied: They are: Hastiness, obstinacy, self-conceit and laziness”.

Imam Ja’far Al-Sadiq (‘a), says; “Three things cause enmity viz. hypocrisy, oppression and self-conceit”.

“Allah knows that for a believer there is no sin worse than self-conceit and if it had not been so no believer would have been polluted with sin”.

Justice

Imam Ali (‘a), says: “Give your blood and wealth to your brother and be just to your enemy and deal with the people with cheerfulness and kindness and salute others so that they may salute you”.

Imam Muhammad Al-Baqir (‘a), says: “The saddest person on the Day of Judgement will be one who praises justice but himself I acts against it”.

Imam Ja’far Al-Sadiq (‘a), says “Indeed, the person who orders others to do good and restrains them from evil possesses three qualities: (i) He knows what he is ordering others to do and what he is asking them not to do. (ii) He is just on what he is ordering others what to do and is also just in what he is asking them not to do. (iii) He orders others (to do good deeds) gently and also restrains them (from doing bad deeds) gently”.

Honor

Imam Ali (‘a), says: “Do not display your indigence to the people and in order to please Allah bear it patiently with honor and secrecy”.

Imam Al-Hasan (‘a), was asked: “Do you find place in greatness?” He replied: Rather (you should say) is there honor in me? Allah says:

“Honor belongs to Allah and to His Prophet and to the believers.” (63:8).

Chastity

Imam Ali (‘a), says: “Indeed the best thing which the human beings will take before Allah as specimen (of their conduct) besides belief in Allah and His pious slaves is preservation of their honor, forbearance and patience”.

Imam Zaynul ‘Abidin (‘a), says: “After recognizing Allah there is nothing that Allah likes more than piety in the matter of one’s womb and private parts and there is nothing that Allah likes more than that you should make request to Him.”

Imam Ali (‘a), says: “Sadness is better than begging from the people. Observing piety in privation is better than rejoicing in debauchery”.

Imam Muhammad Al-Baqir (‘a), says: “Best worship is the chastity of womb and private parts”.

Forgiveness

The Holy Prophet (S), says: “My Lord has recommended to me that I should forgive one who has oppressed me”.

“The dignity of our family lies in forgiving one who oppresses us and bestowing upon him who deprives us”.

“May I guide you to the manners which are best in this world as well as in the Hereafter? You should associate with one who severs his connection with you and give to one who deprives you and forgive one who oppresses you”.

Forgiveness And Remission

A companion of the Holy Prophet says that the Holy Prophet addressed him and said: “May I inform you about the worst human being?” I said: “Yes, O Prophet of Allah!” He said: “It is one who does not forgive and does not overlook a lapse”. Then he added: “May I inform you about one who is even worse than that?” I said: “Yes O Prophet of Allah!” He said: “It is he from whose mischief the people are not safe and is good for nothing”.

The Holy Prophet (S), says: “If Allah promises spiritual reward to anyone He honors the promise and if He threatens punishment for a deed He possesses the authority to forgive it”.

Knowledge And Learning

The Holy Prophet (S), says: “Confine your knowledge in writing”

“Knowledge is not taken away from the people but the scholars are taken away till not even remains. The people then select ignorant chiefs. They are asked to give judgements and they give judgement without requisite knowledge. They are misled themselves and also mislead others.”

“Make enquiries from the learned persons and talk with the sages and associate with the poor”.

“The treasures of knowledge are opened by asking questions. May Allah bless you. Ask questions because four persons are rewarded: the questioner, the speaker, the hearer and their friends.”

“I consider knowledge to be more valuable than worship and your best religion is humbleness and piety”.

Imam Ali (‘a), says: “If the bearers of knowledge bear it properly Allah, the angels and those who obey Allah love them. However, if they acquire knowledge for worldly gains Allah hates them and they become abject and despicable in the eyes of the people”.

Imam Muhammad Al-Baqir (‘a), says: “A learned person by whose knowledge others profit is better than 70,000 worshippers.”

Imam Musa Al-Kadhim (‘a), says: “Small deed by a wise person is accepted and its twice as much and a good deal of deeds done by the egotistic and ignorant person is rejected”.

Table Manners

The Holy Prophet (S), says: “Allah keeps seventy diseases away from a person who begins his meals with salt, the most minor of them being leprosy”.

Imam Ali (‘a), says: “Do not finish your meals hurriedly so that your companions may also eat their fill and also enjoy the food”.

“When you have finished your meals thank Allah for His having given you your daily bread and thank Him loudly so that another person may also thank Him and your spiritual reward may increase”.

“Do not fill your belly with food but stop eating while you are still a little hungry. If you do so the food will become wholesome for you. In fact good health lies in eating less and drinking less’.

Vanity

Imam Ali (‘a), says: “Those who are enamored by the world are like the people who are residing in a land of affluence (this world) and wish to go to a place of famine and suffering (grave) and there is nothing more obnoxious and dreadful for them than separation from the place where they are and from where they are proceeding to another place”.

Anger

The Holy Prophet (S), says: “Do not be angry and when you are angry sit down and think about the Power which the Lord has over His slaves and how much forbearing He is with regard to them. And when you are asked to obey Allah discard your anger and return to forbearance”.

A man requested the Holy Prophet to recommend him something. He said: “Don’t be angry”. The man repeated his request and the Holy Prophet gave him the same reply. Then he added: “Braveness does not lie in making your adversary fall on the ground .On the contrary a brave is one who can control himself while he is angry”.

Imam Ali (‘a), says: “There are four pillars of infidelity: (i) To be enamored (ii) To be timid (iii) To be filled with fury and (iv) Anger”.

Negligence

The Holy Prophet (S), says: “There are four signs of a negligent person: (i) Blindness, (ii) Oversight (iii) Sportiveness and (iv) Forgetfulness”.

Imam Ali (‘a), says: “Dear son, pondering brings light and negligence brings darkness and dispute brings deviation”.

Imam Ja’far Al-Sadiq (‘a), says: “O believers and confidants! Remind yourselves and think when the forgetful are negligent”.

Worrying For Sustenance

The Holy Prophet (S), says: “Do not worry for tomorrow’s sustenance for the daily share for every following day is destined”.

Back-Biting

The Holy Prophet (S), says: “When a person co-operates with the people and does not oppress them and tells them the truth and does not tell lies and makes promises with them and does not violate it his manliness is perfect, his righteousness is evident, his spiritual reward is recorded and it is unlawful to speak ill of him in his absence”.

Imam Ali (‘a), says: “Let it not be that you should indulge in backbiting, because a Muslim does not speak ill of his brother in his absence when the Almighty Allah has forbidden it”.

Corruption

Imam Ali (‘a), says: “The lapse of one who is in the fort is most serious lapse, and falsehood is an aching malady and corruption destroys much”.

Wickedness

The Holy Prophet (S), says: “There are four signs of a libertine: (i) Buffoonery (ii) Idle talk (iii) Aggression and (iv) Calumny”.

Imam Ali (‘a), says: “Speak the truth in all circumstances and befriend the pious and shun the wicked and keep aloof from the hypocrites and do not associate with the treacherous”.

“Do not be one of them about whom Allah has said: They forgot Allah and with the result that He made them forget themselves. It is they who are wicked. (59: 19)”.

Hard-Heartedness

The Holy Prophet (S), says: “Four characteristics bring about adversity: (i) Dryness of the eyes (ii) Hard-heartedness (iii) Prolonged desire and (iv) Love for worldly things”.

Imam Muhammad Al-Baqir (‘a), says: “Allah awards spiritual and corporeal punishment to His slaves like indigence, and laziness in the matter of worship and no punishment is worse than hard heartedness”.

Retaliation

Imam Ali (‘a), says: “Whoever fears retaliation refrains from oppressing the people”.

Contentment

Imam Ali (‘a), says: “Be contented so that you may become respectable”.

Falsehood

Imam Ali (‘a), says: “Allah’s slave cannot relish the taste of faith unless he gives up telling lies whether by way of jest or in earnest”.

“A Muslim should not befriend a liar”.

Imam Zaynul Abidin (‘a), says: “Refrain from falsehood, whether it is small or big and whether it spoken by way of jest or in earnest, because when a person tells a small lie he picks up courage to tell a big one”.

Lawful Earning

The Holy Prophet (S), says: “Worship consists of seven parts and the highest of all is lawful earning”.

Curbing One’s Anger

Imam Ali (‘a), says: “I recommend to you to fear Allah and to offer prayers at the appropriate time and pay *Zakat* and I recommend to you to forgive the wrongdoings to others and to curb your anger”.

Imam Ja’far Al-Sadiq (‘a), says: “One who possesses three things is the master: (i) Curbing one’s anger (ii) Forgiving an evil-doer (iii) Rendering assistance and observing relationship by means of life and wealth”.

Three things are the proof of the magnanimity of a person: (i) Good nature (ii) Curbing one’s anger and

(iii) Keeping one's eyes downward".

Ingratitude

The Holy Prophet (S), says: "Whichever habit a believer may acquire he does not acquire the habit of falsehood and treachery".

Imam Ali ('a), says: "Not being thankful for a blessing is meanness and associating oneself with an ignorant person is inauspicious".

"Do not be ungrateful to your benefactor because not being grateful for a blessing is the worst blasphemy".

Begging

Imam Muhammad Al-Baqir ('a), says: "If the beggar knew what is in begging he would not have begged at all and if the person from whom the beggars beg knew what is in refusing a request he would not have refused a request at all."

Obstinacy

The Holy Prophet (S), says: "Refrain from obstinacy, for it begins with ignorance and ends in remorse".

Manliness

Imam Ali ('a), says: "The manliness of a person is not perfect unless he understands his religion, leads his life moderately, bears the hardships patiently and tolerates bitterness of his friends".

Imam Ali ('a), was asked: "What is manliness?" He replied: "That you should not do a thing secretly if you feel ashamed while doing it publicly".

Imam Al-Hasan ('a), was asked as to what is manliness. He replied: "To be anxious for religion and to reform wealth and to rise for the sake of rights".

To Brush The Teeth

The Holy Prophet (S), says: "It is necessary for you to brush your teeth regularly because brushing the teeth is means of purity of mouth and pleasure of the Lord and light of the eyes. And your tooth-picking makes you dear to the angels because the angels are annoyed with a man with stinking mouth who does not pick his teeth after eating".

Consultation

Imam Ali ('a), says: "A person who thinks about or seeks good is not distressed and one who consults others in his affairs does not have to regret".

Imam Al-Hasan ('a), says: "People are rightly guided by holding mutual consultations".

Imam Ja'far Al-Sadiq ('a), says: "A person has no excuse to offer in the matter of three things: (i) Consultation with a benevolent person. (ii) Dealing leniently with a jealous person. (iii) Finding friends out of the people".

Knowledge

Imam Muhammad Al-Baqir ('a), says: "No action is acceptable unless it is based on knowledge and knowledge is useless unless it is accompanied by action. When a person acquires knowledge it guides him to action and he who is ignorant does not perform action".

Imam Ja'far Al-Sadiq ('a), says: "The best worship is to recognize Allah and to be humble before Him".

Deceit

The Holy Prophet (S), says: "Let it not be that you should practice deceit for the Almighty Allah has said: Deceit does not fall except upon one who practices it".

Hypocrisy

The Holy Prophet (S), says: "There are four signs of a hypocrite: (i) He is of dissolute nature (ii) His tongue and heart differ from each other (iii) His words are not accompanied by action (iv) His interior is different from his exterior. Woe betide the hypocrite for he will burn in the Fire or Hell".

Imam Ja'far Al-Sadiq ('a), says: "In whomsoever these three qualities are found is a hypocrite although he may fast and offer prayers: (i) When he speaks he tells a lie (ii) When he makes a promise he violates it (iii) When something is entrusted to him he commits breach of trust".

Tale Bearing

The Holy Prophet (S), says: "Telling truth in the following three matters is bad: (i) Tale-bearing. (ii) Communicating information to a man about his wife. (iii) Refuting a person who claims to be pious."

"Refrain from backbiting and tale-bearing, because back-biting nullifies the fast and tale-bearing is the cause of torture in the grave".

Deceit And Fraud

The Holy Prophet (S), says: “One who defrauds or harms or deceives a Muslim is not one of us”.

Keeping One’s Promise

The Holy Prophet (S), says: “Whoever believes in Allah and in the Day of Judgement keeps his promise”.

Imam Ali (‘a), says: “There are certain signs of the pious by means of which they are identified: Truthfulness, repayment of trust, keeping the promise, observation of relationship, taking pity on the weak, associating less with women, being kind, good-naturedness, perfect forbearance and following knowledge which is the source of proximity to Allah. How happy they are and how good is their end”.

Imam Al-Ridha’ (‘a), says: “We are a family who consider our promise to be our debt, as was done by the Holy Prophet”.

Gift

The Holy Prophet (S), says: “Gift is of three kinds: (i) Gift for which something is given in return (ii) Gift for affinity and (iii) Gift for the sake of Allah”.

Imam Ja’far Al-Sadiq (‘a), says: “My dearest friend is he who gives a gift of my faults to me”.

Neighbor

Imam Ali (‘a), says: “Remember Allah in the matter of your neighbors because the Holy Prophet (S), made such continuous recommendations about them as we began to think that he might make them heirs”.

Imam Musa Al-Kadhim (‘a), says: “Good neighborhood is not only harmlessness but it is observing patience on being harmed by the neighbor”.

Imam Al-Hasan Al-Askari (‘a), says: “One of the onerous misfortunes is a neighbor who hides one’s good act seen by him but divulges a bad one”.

Despair

Iman Ali (‘a), says: “O people! The most wonderful thing in the body of man is his heart. Heart has stocks of wisdom as well as of things which are its opposites. If hopefulness affords it an opportunity, covetousness humiliates it and if its covetousness increases, greed kills it. And if despair increases,

regret kills it. And if its anger increases, its indignation is severe. And if it prospers it forgets self-control”.

1. Usul al-Kafi, vol, I. p. 53.

2. Basairud Darajat, pp. 300– 301.

3. Vide, Surah Al-Ahzab, 33:33.

4. Sahih Tirmizi, vol. V, p 328, printed by Darul Fikr, Beirut, Sahih Muslim, vol. V, p 362, printed by ‘Isa Al-Halabi.

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