

# Gateway to the Quran

by Dr. Sayed Abdul Wadud

## INTRODUCTION

Every book begins with a preface which is meant to introduce briefly the object as well as the subject matter of that book. The most appropriate preface is the one which is very brief and at the same time comprehensive. (سورة الفاتحة) the first chapter of the Quran is known as (فاتحة الكتاب) which means that it is an introduction to the Quran. As a matter of fact it is an introduction to the Quran, very small in size, comprising only seven short verses, but it is so comprehensive that it contains in a nutshell all the basic teachings of the Quran and the purport of (الدين) or the way of life, prescribed by Allah Almighty for the guidance of mankind.

## THE NEED FOR WRITING THIS EXEGESIS OF (سورة الفاتحة)

Numerous commentaries on the have appeared from time to time in Arabic, Urdu and English languages. Although they supply material which is fairly useful in understanding the Quran, yet they are replete with so many pitfalls which lead to distortion of the basic concepts of the book of Allah.

The main hurdles that come in the way are as follows :-

### 1. The Quran is essentially untranslatable-

A literal translation of the Quranic text is not possible because equivalent words in other languages are not available. On the other hand the selection of words in the Quranic text is unique. Every word brings in to focus, not only the purport of the verse in which it is placed, but also reflects the Quranic teachings as a whole. Therefore in order to understand the true meanings of a word at a particular place, one has got to go back to the concepts hidden in its (ماده) root. Hence the explanation of a verse, reached after a methodical approach to its purport, is the right way to understand the Quran, rather than a literal translation into other languages. Moreover it is difficult to find even Arabic words equivalent to a certain word of the Quran, placed in its respective place in the text.

### 2. The existing commentaries of the Quran -

The interpreters of the Quran, who have added interoperations to their own translations, have adopted an inappropriate method, to explain the Quranic text which is of their own making. They have depended mostly on speculations,

manmade ideas, legends, Biblical stories and Jewish versions on such subjects as are common to the Quran and the old

Testament; thus compounding truth with falsehood and obstructing the visibility of the Quran by raising clouds of myths around it, although the Quran has openly declared:

"And follow not their vain desires, diverging from the truth that has come to you." 5/51

On the other hand, new commentators go on following sheepishly, the commentaries produced by the earlier ones, without making an attempt to understand the holy book themselves. This mode of interpreting the Quran is UN-QURANIC. The Quran leads the way in every sphere of human activity and has thus provided guidance for its own interpretation by saying:

Thumma inna AAalayna bayanahu (75/19)

"After that it is for us to explain it"

Thus as guided by the Quran itself, a satisfactory explanation of the book of Allah, can be achieved by interpretation based on the Book itself. The Quran is self-explanatory and classifies itself by presenting a subject in various ways and in different contexts, so as to make things easily understandable:

Walaqad sarrafna fee hatha alqur-ani lilnnasi min kulli mathalin... (18/54)

"We have explained to mankind, by displaying different aspects of things in this Quran, with every kind of similitude."

Thus the way to understand the Quran from the Quran itself, is the way shown by Allah Himself.

There is however, another aspect of this issue which is important and forms a part of the true approach to the understanding of the Quran. The Quran has made it incumbent on the believers to explore nature:

Wafee al-ardi ayatun lilmooqineena Wafee anfusikum afala tubsiroona (51/20-21)

" In the earth are clear signs for those who get convinced (after thorough investigation or research), and also within yourselves. Then will you not exercise you vision?"

The more we gain knowledge of the physical laws that operate in the physical world, the more we get convinced of the social laws revealed to the messengers of Allah for the guidance of mankind, as both sets of laws arose from a common source and are equally immutable. Thus, the more we explore nature, the more the meaning of those verses which are related to natural

phenomena, becomes clear. At yet another place, the Quran makes an emphatic declaration:

Sanureehim ayatina fee al-afaqi wafee anfusihim hatta yatabayyana lahum annahu alhaqqu... (41/53).

" We shall show them Qur Signs in the universe and within themselves, until it becomes manifest unto them that this (Quran) is the truth."

But how can the signs of Allah become visible to us unless we explore them. Our orthodoxy is averse to exploration of nature. They have enclosed science and religion in two watertight compartments. Thus, on account of their lack of knowledge of natural phenomena, while interpreting the Quran, they either ignore the interpretation of such verses as are related to nature, or, if at all they make an attempt to do so, they produce explanations which are simply ridiculous, to say the least about it.

The point raised by me that the commentaries of the Quran based on myths and Biblical stories and produced without sufficient knowledge of the phenomena of nature, are most unsatisfactory, is not without foundation. Let me clarify this point by means of examples. Amongst the orthodoxy, Sayed Abul Aala Maudoodi is considered to be an eminent commentator. I therefore shall quote instance from his commentary on the Quran entitled ( **تفهيم القرآن** ) "Tafhimul-Quran"

1. The creation of life on the earth forms a significant part of the Quranic descriptions but our commentators have missed certain important steps in this connection, on account of their lack of knowledge of natural phenomena in general and of the chemical evolution on the earth in particular which occurred for millions of years prior to the first cell formation and appearance of life. The words:

Huwa allathee khalaqakum min turabin...(40/67)

Wahuwa allathee khalaqa mina alma-i basharan... (25/54)

Huwa allathee khalaqakum min teenin...(6/2)

Walaqad khalaqna al-insana min sulalatin min teenin (23/12)

Khalaqa al-insana min salsalin kaalfakhkhari (55/14)

Walaqad khalaqna al-insana min salsalin min hama-in masnoonin (15/26)

Which lie scattered in different parts of the Quranic text, when read together, present a beautiful description of a continuous chemical evolution, on the earth step by step, as a precursor of life., Being ignorant of the basic fact that evolution is a continuous process which began millions of years before the creation of life, they make mistakes in describing even those steps in creation which are related to events after the appearance of life. Moreover the words of

the Quran related to chemical evolution are wrongly interpreted. For example the words ( حَمًا مَسْنُونًا ) is translated as ( بَدْبُو دَار كَارَا ) " putrific mud". It is an established fact that decay was unknown on the earth before the origin of bacteria which are living objects. Thus the words ( حَمًا مَسْنُونًا ) mean old mud which with the passage of time had undergone physical and chemical changes, but not putrefaction which is a biological phenomenon.

According to the holy Quran, life was created from ( سُلَّةٍ مِّن طِينٍ ) i.e. extracts of clay and not from clay itself. سُلَّةٍ مِّن طِينٍ forms the basis of, not only an important but also an impressive and comprehensive chapter of chemical evolution on the earth. But our 'learned men' still believe in the creation of man from a model of clay as a whole. Perhaps they are under the impression that the words ( سُلَّةٍ مِّن طِينٍ ) as they occur in the Quran, are a mere poetical expression.

2. In verse (32:9) it is said

Allathee ahsana kulla shay-in khalaqahu wabadaa khalqa al-insani min teenin  
Thumma jaAala naslahu min sulalatin min ma-in maheenin (32/7-8)

"It is He who has made every thing which He has created in an appropriate form and initiated the creation of man from the inorganic matter of the earth; and made his progeny from an extract of (what may seem to you) a despised fluid."

The Quran here refers to the pre-human chemical evolution which later passed on gradually to the stage of sexual reproduction in plants and animals and ultimately in-to man. But our orthodoxy still believes in the theory of Special Creation which has been in vogue since the time of old Testament. In Tafhimul Quran. (Volume-4, Page 40) after laying great stress on direct creation, it is said :

"If at all it is accepted that the first life cell was directly created, then where is the hitch in accepting that the first individual of every living species of animals came in to being by direct creation by the Creator and from then onwards its progeny proceeded by mean of procreation."

This type of explanation is the result of ignorance about the chemical evolution which occurred prior to the appearance of life, as well as of ignorance about the stage at which sex appeared in living organisms. That is why, in the above said statement. Maudoodi starts with an improvised acceptance of first cell having been directly created and bases his further argument in favour of 'Special Creation' of other animals on a wrong assumption. As a matter a fact the creation of first cells was only a continuation of chemical evolution. Our orthodoxy has got a poor knowledge of Organic Evolution and still believes in the theory of " Special Creation", inspite of the fact that actual forces which brought about evolution were gradually discovered and are now thoroughly understood. That is why they still go on sticking to the idea that the first man created on the earth was Adam who was brought in to existence directly from a

model of clay. In fact, the word Adam, as it occurs in the Quran means 'human species and not any particular individual.

3. The Quran says

[Ma khalqukum wala baAthukum illa kanafsin wahidatin \(31/28\)](#)

"Your creation and recreation is in no other way but as a single life cell."

It means every time a new life starts, from a single cell both in unicellular as well as multi-cellular organisms. In the later case this single cell is a Zygote which is the product of fertilization of a female by a male cell. A Zygote has got the potentiality of developing in to either a male or a female adult. The Quran says:

[Khalaqakum min nafsin wahidatin thumma jaAala minhā zawjahā ... \(39/6\)](#)

"He created you from a single life cell and made from it its opposite sex."

But our 'learned men' translate the word ( [نفس واحدة](#) ) as 'Adam' and having been influenced by Jewish literature produce a fantastic story of the creation of Adam and Eve, the Adam having been created direct from a model of clay and the Eve having been taken out of his body by means of bisection.

4. The Quran says:

[WaAllahu anbatakum mina al-ardi nabatan \(71/17\)](#)

"The divine plan has raised you up from the earth in the form of a (geneological) tree."

In Tafhimul Quran (Vol. Vi, p-102) this verse is translated as follows:

"And Allah raised you up from the earth in a strange way". And it is further said, on page 103:

"Here the creation of man from the earthly materials is expressed as being similar to the growth of vegetation from the earth. As there was no vegetation on the earth before and then Allah created them."

This explanation based on ignorance of evolutionary processes makes no sense. In fact, not only the theory of "special creation" but also the idea that evolution took place from a single cell to man in a ladder-like fashion, is now obsolete. Actually as soon as a new type evolves, it becomes a potential ancestor for many simultaneous descendent lines and each line becomes specially adapted in particular way. The evolution thus forms the pattern of a branching tree.

5. The holy Quran lays emphasis on the point that human evolution started long before man actually assumed the form of a human being i.e., long before

he became capable of wielding a position of such magnificent importance that 'Malaika' the forces of nature bowed down before him. In these pre-human stages of chemical and biological evolution, man was not a thing worth mentioning:

Hal ata AAala al-insani heenun mina alddahri lam yakun shay-an mathkooan (76/1)

"Had there not been upon man a period of time when he was not a thing worth mentioning?"

In Taghimul Quran volume vi P-186 the verse is explained as follows:-

" One part of it (man) in the form of a microscopic male cell in father and the other part in the form of a female ovum in mother. For a long time man did not know that he comes in to existence from these male and female cells, until it was detected by means of microscope."

Thus, according to Maudoodi the word دهر (a period of indefinite continuous duration) means that period of man's existence which occurred before the invention of microscope. What a poor an irrelevant explanation. Being ignorant of the stages of evolution he errs at one step after another.

6. The Quran while describing human evolution, says:

Waqad khalaqakum atwaran (71/14)

"He it is who created you in different stages, forms, measures and environments"

In the Tahimul Quran (vol. 6, P-101) this verse is translated by saying: and the words ( طرح طرح ) are explained further as the different stages of man's development inside the mothers uterus. But in fact the word ( اطوار ) fits exactly in to a variety of steps in evolution of man, pre-human, as well as human, and even into the evolution of the physical universe, prior to it.

7. The Quran says:

Thumma khalaqna alnnuḡfata Aaalaqatan... (23/14)

"Then from نطفه (the reproductive unit) we created علقه 'Alaqa'."

The word علقه is translated by almost all commentators as congealed blood ( جما هوا خون ) although not blood is present in this early embryonic stage; it is just a tiny mass of undifferentiated cells. The word علق root علق means a hanging object attached to a fixed object situated higher up. In this early stage it is only the blastocyst which can be called علقه. The very first impression one gets on observing a blastocyst under the microscope is that it is indeed an 'Alaqa'.

8. The origin and significance of Sex amongst plants and animals, form an important and interesting chapter of the science of Biology. The Quran says:

... waanzalna mina alssama-i maan faanbatna feeha min kulli zawjin kareemin (31/10)

We send down rain from the sky and produce in it (the earth) every kind of growth in pairs."

Here the word زوج is significant and needs detailed explanation. But Maudoodi translates the words (كل زوج كريم) as قسم قسم كى عمدہ اشياء (a variety of good things.) (Tafhim vol. Iv. P-12). He has not been able to realise the significance of the word زوج and thus explain what it means.

9. The Quran lays great stress on exploration of nature and in order to prove the truth of its fundamental principles, brings in to evidence a variety of natural phenomena but to our 'learned man' these phenomena are of no significance. For example, the subject of 'colours' is important in physics, in geology, in chemical and biological evolution, and in genetics etc. The Quran says, "Do you not see that Allah sends down rains from above? With it We then bring out produces of various colours. And in mountains are newly created strata of rocks, white and red of various shades of colour and intensely black. And so amongst men and crawling creatures and cattle are they of various colours. Those who possess the knowledge of these sciences really appreciated the mighty powers of the laws of Allah and are afraid of going against them. They know that His law is omnipotent and provides protection for those who abide by it." (35:27-28)

The above said passage deals entirely with natural sciences and those people who are acquainted with them (i.e. scientists) are termed by the Quran as علماء 'learned men;

In Tafhimul-Quran (vol: iv. P 232) said:

"In these verses 'knowledge' does not mean philosophy history or mathematics etc, but it means knowledge of the attributes of Allah" as regards the words مختلفاً الوانها Maudoodi says: هر طرف تنوع هي تنوع which means 'variety of forms alround. It is apparent how reluctant our commentators are in touching the subjects underlying the Quranic verses,

which are related to natural phenomena and how undignified they feel in calling those people علماء 'learned men' whom the Quran calls as such. According to Maudoodi, عالم is one who is afraid of Allah, without seeing him.

10. Our self designated 'Ulema' have got a poor knowledge of the scientific research that is going on pertaining to the vast spaces of the universe. The scientists have observed that the universe is expanding. The galaxies are

running out with a tremendous speed. It is marvellous that the Quran pointed towards this phenomenon 1400 years ago and said:

[Waalssamaa banaynaḥa bi-aydin wa-inna lamoosiAAoona \(51/47\)](#)

"With power and skill. We did construct the heaven. Verily we are expanding it."

Strenuous efforts are being made to solve the questions from what the universe started expanding? - Where is the center? - And what causes the expansion? On the other hand, our commentators of the Quran make no effort to understand the meaning of the word [موسعون](#) Tafheemul Quran (vol. 5, P151) explains it by saying:

"We have not finished up the creation of this grand universe in one stroke. We are constantly making [توسيع](#) in it." It is not clear what Maudoodi meant by the word [توسيع](#) apparently he means an addition to the substance of the universe. But the Quranic word [موسعون](#) means 'expansion in space', not in substance. The later phenomenon is dealt with in the Quran at a different place when it is said:

[...yazeedu fee alkhalqi ma yashao... \(35/1\)](#)

"He adds to his creation according to his laws."

11. It was formerly believed that interstellar and interplanetary space must be empty. Only recently astronomers have been able to discover the interplanetary gas and dust. The research in this field has well advanced since the year 1950. Yet the Quran repeatedly pointed towards it 1400 years ago. A number of descriptions related to [السموات والارض](#) 'the heavens and earth' are accompanied by the words [وما بينهما](#) for example in (83/85), (20/6), (25/59), (44/7), (15/85), (46/3) and (44/38). The subject is of great importance in understanding the basic process of the creation of the universe and the star formation, as well as the exchange of energy and matter in between the stars and in between the sun and the earth. It is interesting to note that, so far as the modern research goes, the interstellar matter appears to be different in nature and origin from the interplanetary material; and that the Quran has also differentiated between the two. Whereas, in all other verses of the Quran where the words [وما بينهما](#) occur along with the [السموات والارض](#) words that is used is [سموات](#) which is plural and which points towards interstellar space; but in verse (21/16) the word [سما](#) is used which is singular and points towards the space between the sun and the planets.

However, our 'learned men' have not made the slightest effort to find out why the Quran frequently repeats the words [وما بينهما](#) Maudoodi translates it as:

"Everything in between the heaven and the earth" The translation may be correct but it is ambiguous.

12. There are certain passages in the holy Quran in which only adjective principles are described, without any noun having been used. As a matter of fact these passages refer to the 'fundamental forms of energy'. But our commentators having no knowledge of the working of forces of nature, have made a horrible mess in explaining the verses (51/1-6, 77/1-7, 79/1-6 & 37/1-2) one can find its details in my book, the Heavens, the Earth and the Quran, (Chapter VI)

13. The Quran says:

[Fala<sub>u</sub> oqsimu bi<sub>al</sub>khunnasi Aljawari<sub>l</sub> alkunnasi \(81/15-16\)](#)

"Nay! I call to witness (the heavenly bodies) that recede: That flow without hindrance and (still) go on hiding."

In Tafhmul Quran the words ( [جوارالكنس](#) ) and ( [خنس](#) ) are left without any explanation. The only heavenly bodies that appear periodically and again disappear silently; moving constantly within their respective orbits without any hindrance and yet hiding themselves for many years continuously, are none others but comets. The usual translations of the words ( [خنس](#) ) and ( [جوارالكنس](#) ) as 'rising and setting of stars' as Maudoodi calls them (Tafhmul Quran vol., vi P-268) are far from their true import. No. stars behave in this manner, it is the comets that do so.

14. The Quran pointed out 1400 years ago that man can not penetrate the regions of heavens and the earth unless he gets power to do so i.e. unless he gains sufficient knowledge of forces of nature. And so it happened; man explored nature gain sufficient knowledge of the laws of nature and after fulfilling the condition of ( [الابسلطان](#) ) as mentioned in verse (55/33), reached the moon and is now making efforts to reach other heavenly bodies and penetrate in to the wide expanse of space around us.

However Maudoodi categorically denies the human penetration into space (Tafhim vol. 5, P-263). He translates the verse (55/33) as follows:

As a matter of fact the misunderstood the word ( [الابسلطان](#) ) and put its explanation in to some other imaginary channels by saying:

"This verse means that you can not escape the grip of Allah. It is beyond your power to do so."

15. The Quran says:

[Qul a-innakum latakfuroona bi<sub>al</sub>lathee khalaqa al-arda fee yawmayni ... \(41/9\)](#)

"Say: Is it that you deny Him who created the earth in "Two Eras"

[Faqadahunna sabAAa samawat<sub>in</sub> fee yawmayni ... \(41/12\)](#)

" So He completed them as seven (or a number of) heavens in Two Eras."

Thus, according to the Quran, the creation of the heavens and the earth took place in Two Eras. The word ( يوم ) usually translated as 'day', mean here a very very long period of time. The Quran says, it may be a thousand years of your reckoning (32/5) or it may be fifty thousand years (70/4). The figures one thousand or fifty thousands, however, are not specific' it means very lengthy period, may be millions of years.

In scientific term, the period of creation of the material world is called 'Azoic' i.e., without life. The Quran however, divides this period into two and calls it يومين (Two Eras).

I translate the word يوم as 'Era' because an Era starts with a specific event. Modern scientific research throws some light on the division of Azoic Era, by the Quran, in to two, which is as follows - To begin with the entire space was full of smoke. " He comprehended in His design the heaven when it was smoke" (41/11). Smoke, as we know is a mixture of gases and solid particles. Areas of condensation appeared later in this gas and dust cloud resulting in to the formation of Prostars, which further developed in to stars. The stars further became divided in to planets and other smaller heavenly bodies. The division of one complete whole of (دخان) in to prostars is a great event. Thus we may call the period of time before the occurrence of division of the complete whole of (دخان) as (يوم الاولى) or Era -I of the creation of the universe; and the period of time after this division till the appearance of life as (يوم الثانى) or Era-II.

On the other hand our so called 'learned men' who are averse to science but are fond of copying the Biblical stories translate the word (يومين) as 'Two days' and from the work 'day' they mean "The time between two successive sunrises'. Thus Maudoodi translates the word (يومين) as 'forty eight hours'. In Tafhimul Quran vol. Iv, P-446; it is said :

"As soon as it was ordered, the matter condensed and shrunk obediently according to its Mater plan and within forty eight hours, the entire universe, including the earth, came into being" What a fantastic explanation?

The Quran divides the time of creation after the appearance of life on the earth into four Eras (اربعة ايام).

( يومين ) plus ( اربعة ايام ) make ( ستة ايام ) 'Six Eras' of evolution (32/4). Maudoodi leaves the words ( اربعة ايام ) and ( ستة ايام ) without explaining, as to what they are and how long they lasted. But it is apparent that from ( ستة ايام ) he means six days of a week, because the Bible says so. The Bible describes that the creation of the universe occurred in six days, followed by a day of rest, the 'Sabath'. That is why the Jews take rest on Saturday.

16. The Quran says:

... yaAAalamu ma yaliju fee al-ardi wama yakhruju minha wama yanzilu mina alssama-i wama yaAAaruju feeha ... (57/4)

"He knows what enters the earth and what comes out of it, what comes down from the heaven and what mounts up to it."

It is a vast subject which deals with the exchange of the physical and chemical forces between the outer space and the earth which change every bit of the earth's substance, inorganic as well as organic. The exchange of radiation between the heaven and the earth is a subject of great importance. All the seasonal climatic changes and the environmental cycles which occur on the earth depend on this exchange. Living matter is interposed between these cycles, and as the earth's components circulate, some of them become raw materials for the use of living matter. Dependant on these cycles, inorganic matter and living matter give rise to each other in a cyclic order:

...yukhriju alhayya mina almayyiti wamukhriju almayyiti mina alhayyi... (6/96)

"It is the divine law that causes the living matter to spring from the non-living and the no-living to spring from the living one."

In Tafhimul Quran this verse is explained as follows:

"A grain in the interior of the earth sprouts and rises upwards. Rain falls from the heaven; Water vapours ascend from the sea, to the heaven." What a limited explanation of a subject of unlimited nature.

So far I have briefly produced just a few examples, in order to bring into focus, how lack of knowledge of natural phenomena, affects the exegesis of the Quran. It is beyond the scope of this work to deal with the subject in full detail because the verses related to the phenomena of nature, cover about one eighth of the Quranic text. However, it is worthwhile, if I mention at least one more example, in order to explain, how the subjects other than those related to the natural phenomena, are dealt with by our commentators, and how instead of explaining the Quranic verses from the Quran itself, they take pleasure in the display of distorted views based on the most hateful man-made stories, present in the Jewish scriptures. For this, we refer to chapter 38 of the holy Quran. The Quran says: "Remember our servant David, the man of strength and who ever bowed down to out laws" (38/17). "We strengthened his kingdom and gave him wisdom in speech and decision.: (38/20). " Has the story of disputants reached thee? Behold they climbed over the wall of the private chamber. When they entered the presence of David and he was terrified of them, they said : fear not, we are two disputants, one of whom wronged the other; decide now between us with truth and treat us not with injustice, but guide us to the even path - This man is my brother. He has ninety nine ewes and I have (but) one. Yet he says, commit her to my care, and moreover he overpowers me in speech., David Said, 'He has undoubtedly wronged thee, in demanding the (single) ewe, to be added to his (flock) of ewes. Truly many are the partners (in business) who wrong each other, not so do those who believe and work deeds

according to the divine laws, and how few are they? And David gathered We had tried him; he asked for forgiveness of his Rabb, fell down, bowing (in prostration) and turned to Allah in repentance." (38/21-24)

The case described in the above-said verses was a simple case of economic injustice. One man had ninety nine ewes and the other had only one and still the former asked the latter to transfer his single ewe to his flock. David decided in favour of the latter and said that the former had done wrong. Moreover he lamented this unjust attitude that was common amongst business partners except a few. After making this decision David felt that the case was in fact his own trial by Allah because a wrongful and unjust economic system prevailed in his kingdom where the rich were getting still richer and the poor were getting still poorer. David felt that it was his responsibility to put right this wrongful economic system and he thus bowed down to Allah in repentance.

It is amply clear that the case was one of economic injustice and there was dearth of those people who actually believed and worked deeds according to the divine laws, as the words of the Quran ( **قليل ما هو** ) (How few are they) indicate. But our commentators being influenced by shameful Jewish fairy tales, have produced fantastic explanations of the above said verses. Regarding the point as to why David repented and asked for forgiveness by his Rabb, our commentators have attributed disgraceful accusation to a person who according to the holy Quran was a pious man and who always bowed down to the divine laws. The accusations, brought about against David by the Jews, was that he had raped a certain woman who was the wife of ( **اورياحتى** ) an army officer in his kingdom: not only that, he also planned to get that officer murdered and after words married his wife. This fictitious tale described by Jews in \*Samuel-II Chapter 11-12, has been almost fully accepted by some of our commentators, as stated in (Tafhimul Quran vol. Iv. Page 329); and others accepted it partly and brought it under lengthy discussions. Instead of outright rejection of this accusation on the basis of Quranic text, they have taken pains to discuss it at length. Maudoodi has written Pages After pages to disprove the accusation of rape, yet he could not resist the temptation of sticking to this fanciful tale by trying to prove the David had only a strong inclination toward that woman which was not objectionable. He thus explains the verse (38/24) of the Quran by saying:

"From the narration given in the Quran it appears that David only expressed his desire to Uriah-the-Hittite, to divorce his wife who on account of the great personality of David felt himself compelled to divorce her." (Tafhim at Part 2, P=96).

No body knows to which Quran Maudoodi refers to. There is no mention of this tale in the Quran revealed to Muhammad (P.B.U.H.). The Quran describes only a case of pure and simple economic injustice prevalent in David's time, for which he repented and determined to put things right. But our commentators are so much impressed by this shameful though attractive tale, of which there is no mention in the Quran, that they fail to use their own intellect and take guidance from the Quranic text only. It is surprising how they dare to play with the Quran.

Let me conclude by pointing out that late Allama Ghulam Ahmad Parvez was the pioneer in the field of interpreting the Quran by the Quran itself. He produced his commentary entitled Matalab-ul-Furqan in Urdu language. However there are people, especially those living abroad, who are interested in the study of the Quranic interpretations in English. They have asked me off and on to make it possible for them to have a glimpse of this new approach to the Quranic studies. It is beyond my capacity as a professional man, advanced in age, to undertake this gigantic task. However in order to meet their demand, I have ventured to produce herewith the exegesis limited to Surah-e-Fatiha only; in the hope that this Surah being an interesting one in the Quranic research. Although I have explained it in my own way, especially while touching the points related to the natural phenomena, yet I have followed the pattern laid down in the Matalab-ul-Furqan.

Let me also admit that all that is said or explained in the following pages is not final or irrevocable. The text of the Quran is always open to further explanation and research, with the advancement of human knowledge, through ages. On the other hand, if any body points out to me a genuine error in my understanding any particular points I shall gracefully accept it.

## Gateway to the Quran

by Dr. Sayed Abdul Wadud

### *Bismi Allāhi alrahmāni alrahēemi (1/1)*

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Allah Almighty proclaims that the revelation, of the verses that follow, is meant to display the attributes of His Rahmnaiyyat and Raheemiyat."

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The usual translation of the words **Bismi Allāhi alrahmāni alrahēemi** is "In the name of Allah, the most Gracious, the most merciful". However a close study of the Holy Quran reveals that these words carry a different and much wider import. The words 'Allah', 'Rehman', and 'Raheem' shall be explained in the verses of 'Sura-e-Fateha' which follow immediately.

اسم The word اسم means 'Name'; but when used in relation to Allah, it means a divine attribute. As a matter of fact اسم is a 'sign' by means of which a certain thing can be recognised. As Allah can be recognised only by means of his attributes, these attributes are called اسماء. For instance in chapter 59 of the holy Quran, certain attributes of Allah are described first, followed by saying : [lahu al-asmao alhusna](#)

Thus it said:

[Huwa Allahu alkhaliq albari-o almusawwiru lahu al-asmao alhusna \(59/24\)](#)

“ He is the Creator, the Evolver, the Bestower of forms and to Him belong the most proportionate attributes”.

Thus to proclaim the words **Bismi Allāhi alrahmāni alrahēmi** before we begin to do a certain thing, means that any thing said or done after this proclamation shall aim at the practical presentation of Allah's attributes of being Rehman and Raheem. When these words precede the Quran or any part of it, it means that Allah almighty himself proclaims that the revelation of the verses that follow, is meant to display the attributes of His 'Rahmaniyyat' and 'Raheemiyyat'.

And when a believer says **Bismi Allāhi alrahmāni alrahēmi**, he proclaims that he makes a start of such and such a thing, in order to display the divine attributes of 'Rhmaniyyat' and 'Raheemiyyat'.

In other words Allah revealed the Quran, as to make his attributes of 'Rhmaniyyat' and 'Raheemiyyat' prevail in the human world and that man may develop these attributes in his ownself and make it the basis of any programme he undertakes.

### **Alhamdu lillāhi rabbi alAAalameena (1:2)**

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“ Pondering over the beauty, proportion and perfection of the living and non-living objects of nature, excites in man a spontaneous praise for the One who sustains every component of the universe, from its initial stage, to the stage of its final destination. “

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The usual translation of this verse is –

“ Praise be to Allah the cherisher and sustainer of the worlds”.

Non-Believers may raise an objection or criticise that these words indicate a self-praise by Allah. However, it is a misconception. As a matter of fact, these words are instructive. Allah instructs man to say so. The word **قل** “ Qul” is silent here. Thus it means actually that man should always keep in mind that all praise is due to Allah.

**"Alhamd"** The word 'Hamd' is usually translated as 'praise', but this does not represent the true sense of the word. There are other words for 'praise' in Arabic language but these have not been used by Quran, which indicates that the word 'Hamd' has a special significance, and that it is essential to grasp the true meaning of it. The expression of intense feelings of appreciation which arise in one's mind on witnessing a beautiful, proportionate and rare object is what is called 'Hamd' in Arabic. But it has certain preconditions attached to it, which are as follows:-

1. The object of 'Hamd' or its traits must be visible to the one who praise, because an invisible object is not able to excite such feelings of appreciation.
2. The act, committed by a certain person, who is the object 'Hamd', must come into play by his own choice. A mechanical occurrence can-not

become the object of ‘ Hamd ‘ so much so that the beauty of an object bestowed upon it by the Creator can-not by itself become the object of ‘ Hamd ‘. Thus while appreciating the beauty of a certain object the word حمد is not used for it. For example in the dance of a peacock, the peacock deserves مدح while the Creator of peacock deserves حمد ‘ Hamd ‘.

3. The feeling of ‘ Hamd ‘ must arise spontaneously from within. A praise brought about by pressure is not ‘ Hamd ‘ such as a praise which is the result of show or hypocrisy.

4. The feelings of ‘ Hamd ‘ must arise out of a thorough knowledge of the object, of ‘ Hamd ‘. A vague or undefined picture of a certain object, or a blind faith in its being, can not excite such feelings.

5. The beauty and proportion of the object of ‘ Hamd ‘ must be perfect.

The one described above is the concept of the word حمد in Arabic and it has been used by the Holy Quran in that sense. When we say الحمد لله it means that ‘ Hamd ‘ is due to Allah alone. But Allah is not visible to us. As described earlier, the first precondition for ‘ Hamd ‘ is that one should feel the presence of the object of ‘ Hamd ‘. As a matter of fact, according to the Holy Quran you come to know Allah through his creation. Thus when we come across a beautiful and attractive object, we see it with our own eyes, our mind appreciates it and our tongue expresses the words of praise for the Creator. The Quran says:

[Alhamdu lillahi allathee khalafa alssamawati waal-arda wajaAala alththulumati waalInnoora \(6/1\)](#)

“ Hamd ‘ is due to Allah who created the heavens and the earth and made the darkness and the light ”.

The object of Allah’s creation that are lying scattered around us, in every nook and corner of the universe, are so beautiful, proportionate and attractive that they spontaneously create the feelings of praise for Him. Consequently it is incumbent upon man to explore nature and use the outcome of exploration for the benefit of humanity.

The Quran says :

[Inna fee khalqi alssamawati waal-ardi waikhtilafi allayli waalInnahari laayatin li-olee al-albabi. Allatheena yathkuroona Allaha qiyaman waquAoodan waAAala junoobihim wayatafakkaroon fee khalqi alssamawati waal-ardi rabbanā mā khalaqta hatha batilan subhanaka faqina AAathaba alInnari \(3/190-191\)](#)

“ In the creation of the heavens and the earth and the alternation of the day and night, there are indeed signs for men who ponder over it, men who

keep before themselves the divine law, standing, sitting and lying down on their sides and contemplate ( the wonders of ) creation in the heavens and the earth, (with the thought) our Rabb: Thou hast not created all this without purpose. Praise be to thee. Give us knowledge to discover the laws of nature to save ourselves from destruction”.

The Quran terms them علماء ‘ Ulema ‘ , those who ponder over the phenomena of nature:-

Alam tara anna Allaha anzala mina alssama-i maan faakhrajna bihi thamaratin mukhtalifan alwanuha wamina aljibali judadun beedun wahumrun mukhtalifun alwanuha wagharaabeebu soodun. Wamina alnnasi waalddawabi waal-anAAami mukhtalifun alwanuhu kathalika innama yakhsha Allaha min AAibadihi alAAulamao inna Allaha AAazeezun ghafoorun... (35/27-28)

“ Do you not see that Allah send down rain from the sky? With it We then bring about produces of various colours. And in the mountains are newly created strata of rocks, white, red and various shades of colour, and intensely black. And so among men and crawling creatures and cattle are they of various colours. Those who possess the knowledge (of these sciences) really appreciate the mighty power of the laws of Allah and are afraid of going against them. They know that his laws are omnipotent and provide protection for those who abide by it ”.

There is yet another set of laws which are given to humanity for their guidance, which are as immutable as the physical laws, both arising from the common source. Those who ponder over these divine laws, given in the book of Allah, are also aroused by the mighty powers, beauty, proportion, utility and straight forwardness of these laws and spontaneously express the feelings of praise by saying:

Alhamdu lillahi allathee anzala AAala AAabdihi alkitaba walam yajAAal lahu AAiwajan (18/1)

“ Praise be to Allah who hath sent to his servant (P.B.U.H) the book and hath allowed therein no crookedness”.

Thus the Hamd of Allah can arise only after pondering over the laws that lie scattered in every nook and corner of this universe, as well as those given to mankind for its guidance through the messengers of Allah; those given to his last messenger (P.B.U.H) now lie safely inside the Quran.

The last Rasool of Allah (P.B.U.H) who made the ‘Hamd’ of Allah to prevail amongst mankind, thus came to be known as ‘ Ahmad ‘ i.e., the one who indulged in the ‘ Hamd ‘ of Allah to his utmost; and he himself thus became Muhammad which means the object of praise. That is why it was said:

...AAasa an yabAAathaka rabbuka maqaman mahmoodan (17/79)

“ And the hope that thy Rabb will send thee to the place of praise and glory”.

It was on account of his efforts that **الدِّين** ( the way of life prescribed by Allah) came : into : being; which was the praise of all those who witnessed it, from all over the world. It was on account of him that all those nations, who were committed to tyranny and high handedness, were washed off from the face of the earth.

[FaḩṩiAAa ḩabiru alqawmi allatḥeena tḥalamoo waalḩamdu lillāhi rabbi alAAalameena \(6/45\)](#)

“ Of the wrong-doors the last remnant was cut off. Praise to be to Allah, the cherisher of the worlds”.

With the elimination of tyrann’s, the ‘Hamd’ of Allah came to be displayed all over the world.

The above said verse makes it clear that to bring about the revolution described above, the manifestation of the attribute of ‘ Power ‘ associated with Allah’s personality must come into play. It means that appreciation of the aesthetic aspect of Allah’s creation runs side by side with the display of Allah’s supreme power. That is why it is said:

[.....lahu almulku walahu alḩamdu.... \(24/1\)](#)

“ To him belongs dominion and to him belongs praise ”.

The source of ‘ Hamd ‘ and Domination is Allah, and if the latter is not displayed along with the former the entire organisation of the universe shall disintegrate. On the other hand if the display of power is not associated with ‘ Hamd ‘ which is the result of the aesthetic aspect of creation, it assumes thworst from the tyranny. That is why the Quran has said that Allah sent down ‘ Iron ‘ along with the book and the balance, (57 : 25). Without the power to establish **الدِّين** the teachings of the Quran remain only a sermon. The believers become **حامدون** by the reciprocal display of the force of the ‘ Iron ‘ and the Book’.

The above description has clarified the concept and the aim of the utterance, by a believer of the words **الحمد لله** .

It is not a mere utterance of words; it aims at bringing in to being the establishment of the way of life prescribed by the Creator, by exploring and gaining control of the forces of nature and utilising them for the benefit of humanity, subject to divine guidance; and to eliminate all forces which form hurdles in its way.

**ALLAH**

In الحمد الله the word next to حمد is الله. It is a combination of letters ال and the word اله. ل means ‘ for ‘. Thus the words الحمد الله means ‘ Hamd ‘ in its extreme and complete form is specifically due to Allah. The word الله is proper noun, used for Him alone. The root of the word اله is ا

ل which bears the following concepts underlying it --- (1) to seek protection in a state of anxiety (2) to become perplexed (3) to be out of sight and to have an exalted status (4) to accept subservience of some body or to admit sovereignty of some body.

Accordingly, the Quranic word, ‘ Allah ‘ means the Supreme Existence which is out of sight, whose extremely exalted position leaves the human intellect perplexed, whose sovereignty regins supreme in the universe and to Whom subservience is due by all components of His creation.

Allah is beyond human perception:

[. La tudrikuhu al-absaru..... \(6/103\)](#)

“ No vision can grasp Him “.

A finite thing cannot grasp an infinite object. However, we know Him through his attributes given in the Quran. Accordingly, belief in Allah means to accept the sovereignty of One Whose attributes are described in the Quran.

The concept of a supreme authority exists amongst people all over the world, even amongst the most primitive tribes; and all of them bow down to it, although the picture of that authority is different in the minds of people belonging to different tribes and different religions, ‘ Yahawa’ of Jews, ‘ Father of Christians, ‘ Ishwar’ or ‘ Paremashwar’ of Hindus and ‘ Yazdan ‘ of Zoroastrians, all bear a different concept. On the other hand, Allah described in the Quran, is different from all of them. It appears that the ‘ Rasools ‘ who appeared on the earth, from time to time, for the guidance of mankind, introduced the same concept of the Supreme Authority as given in the Quran but that it was gradually adulterated by man-made ideas and baser human sentiments, and ultimately made to disappear. Thus the self oriented concept of God in one religion becomes different from that of the other. That is why the Quran has said:

[...subhanahu wataAAala AAamma yaṣifoona \(6/100\)](#)

“ Glory be to Him ( for He is ) above what they attribute to Him”.

Thus the real concept of Allah is the one that arises out of the manifestation of the attributes of Allah as laid down in the Quran. Since the concept of God amongst the non-Muslims is of their own making, their belief in God is not the same as prescribed by the Quran. Thus it is said :

[Fa-in amanoo bimitthli ma amantum bihi faqadi ihtadaw... \(2/137\)](#)

“ So if they believe, as you believe, they are indeed on the right path”.

When the Quran says:

...laysa kamithlihi shay... (42/11)

### **“ There is nothing whatever like into Him ”**

It means not only that you can not form an idea of Allah's Personality by means of an example ( because an example after all shall be that of a perceptible object and Allah's personality is infinite and imperceptible; it also means that gods to whom the non-believers bow down, none of them is like Allah whose concept is given by Allah himself. And that is why the word ‘ Allah ‘ cannot be translated in to any other language, because a translation of the word الله. In to any language shall present the specific concept of those who speak that language. For example, the word ‘ God ‘ shall present the concept that is prevalent amongst Christians and the word ‘ Ishwar ‘ that of Hindus.

The next question arises, why is it essential to believe in Allah? How does it affect the human life? One man accepts the Christian concept of ‘ God ‘, the other the Hindu Concept of ‘ Ishwar ‘ and still other the Quranic concept of ‘ Allah ‘. Does it make any difference in the practical lives of these different sets of people? The answer is yes. To believe and act according to the laws, prescribe in the Quran, for the guidance of mankind, changes the entire outlook on life. According to the holy Quran, man is composed of two different entities: Physical body and Personality or Self. The physical body is controlled by the physical laws, as is the case with other animals; the human personality on the other hand is controlled by the laws revealed to the Allah's messengers. Physical body is destructible and undergoes constant metabolic changes, while human personality has got potentialities which, when actualised, make the developed personality indestructible and capable of further evolution. The development of human personality is controlled by human actions. This is a world of cause and effect. In other words every human action is rewarded. An act may be good or bad. A good act is one which is consistent with the divine laws; a bad act is one which is inconsistent with them. A good act produces a positive or constructive effect on human personality and a bad act has a negative or disintegrating effect. The act may be manifest or concealed, it makes no difference. In requires no outside policing. The reaction is automatic as in other phenomena of nature. The aim of human life is the development of man's personality, because as said already, it becomes capable of passing on to the higher stage of evolution.

On the other hand, it is essential for a certain person to have knowledge of the fact that his personality is actually undergoing the process of development. Without it, one may be under self-deception regarding his own personality, as is the case with mystics. The personality in its perfect form is that of Allah Himself and the divine attributes described in the Quran are the different facets of that Supreme Personality. Leaving aside certain attributes which are specifically related to Allah's personality, as for example, ‘ Being beyond the

realm of time and space', the rest of those described in the Quran are placed in the human personality in a potential or undeveloped form. As the human personality undergoes development, these potential attributes gradually assume a manifest form. Thus to check either the presence or absence of development of human personality, or to check the stage of its development, the attributes of Allah described in the Quran serve as an objective standard; and this acts as a deterrent to self-deception. On the other hand it serves as the basic aim, as well as the basic necessity of belief in Allah. But as stated earlier, the development of human personality can take place only by leading a life consistent with the laws and Permanent Values which lie safely preserved in the pages of the Quran; which means to accept the sovereignty of Allah and to act accordingly. The entire creation of Allah is subservient to Him. The inanimate objects receive direct guidance through physical laws which are placed in their very substance. The animals receive direct guidance through instinct as well as physical laws. Man, however, is governed by two distinct sets of law; his physical body being controlled by the same physical laws and instincts as in the case of other animals but his personality is controlled indirectly by a set of laws received by through the messengers of Allah and which today lie safely inside the pages of the Quran. The entire organic and inorganic world, including the physical body of man are bound to obey the laws initiated by Allah for their existence.

But as regards human personality and the given to man for its development, man is bestowed with the faculty of freedom of choice. He can choose to follow that guidance or reject it. However, if he chooses to follow, it cause the development of his personality; and if he chooses to disobey, his personality disintegrates and remains undeveloped. The existence and development of human physical body can take place even if man is cut off from the society but the development of human personality can occur only through social living. That is why the Quran is against Monasticism:

...warahbaniyyatan ibtadaAAooha ma katabnaha AAalayhim... (57/27)

**“ But the monasticism which they invented, we did not prescribe for them”.**

The Quran ordains:

...wairkaAAoo maAAa alrakiAAeena ... (2/43)

**“ Bow down before the divine laws, along with those who bow down”.**

That is the programme prescribed by the Quran for the believers who are ordained further to live a life in company with the truthful:

...koonoo maAAa alssadiqeena (9/119)

**“ Be with those who are true “.**

According to the holy Quran, the condition laid down for admission in to ‘ Jannah’ ( a life of peace and plenty is to live in the company of those who are subservient to the divine laws:

[Faodkhulee fee AAibadee Waodkhulee jannatee \(89/29-30\)](#)

“And you enter the company of those who are subservient to me and you enter Jannah”.

Accordingly the Quran prescribes social laws for mankind. Those who believe in the concept of secularism say that the social laws should be framed by the human society itself. But the Quran says that such man-made laws are bound to create chaos and disruption amongst mankind and this is borne out by human history. The social laws, the Quran says, must arise from the same source from which the physical laws came into existence, the perfect order and beauty of which you can observe in the vast spaces of the universe. The social laws given to mankind now lie safely inside the Quran (15/9).

A section of the secularists admit that the physical world is the creation of God but they do not believe in the divine origin of social laws. Such people are described by the Quran as follows:

[Qul limani al-ardu waman feeha in kuntum taAAlamoona. Sayaqooloona lillahi qul afala tathakkaroonaa. Qul man rabbu alssama<sup>w</sup>ati alssabAAi warabbu alAAarshi alAAat<sup>h</sup>eemi. Sayaqooloona lillahi qul afala tattaqoonaa. Qul man biyadihi malakootu kulli shay-in wahuwa yujeeru wala yujaru AAalayhi in kuntum taAAlamoona. Sayaqooloona lillahi qul faanna tusharoonaa \(23/84-89\)](#)

“Say: ‘ To whom belongs the earth and all beings therein? (say) if you know’’. They will Say, ‘ To god, Say:’ Yet will you not receive admonition? Say: Who is the sustainer of the seven heavens and the Rabb with the supreme authority? They will say (‘They belong) to God’. Say: ‘ Then are you not afraid of going the wrong way? Say: ‘ Who it is in whose hands is the governance of all things—Who protects (all), but is not protected (of any)? (Say) if you know’ They will say, ‘it belongs to God’. Say: Then how are you deluded?”

The Quran emphasises again:

[Wahuwa allat<sup>h</sup>ee fee alssama-i ilahun wafee al-ardi ilahun...\( 43/84\)](#)

“ And it is He Who is the Sovereign in heaven and Sovereign on earth (to Whom subservience is due). I.e., in the physical world and in the human world”.

The belief in Allah means that one should submit to both set of laws, given by him to mankind, direct and indirect. If Allah is considered to be Sovereign in the physical world and not in the human affairs, it shall result in chaos all round. Thus it is said:

Law kana feehima alihatun illa Allahu lafasadata... (21/22)

“ If there were in the heavens and the earth other sovereigns besides Allah there would have been confusion and disruption in both”.

Not only that the Quran considers the application of man-made law, in human society, to be contrary to belief in Allah, it goes a step further and says:

Afaraayta mani ittakhatha ilahahu hawahu waadallahu Allahu AAala AAilmin wakhatama AAala samAAihi waqalbihi wajaAAala AAala basarihi ghishawatan faman yahdeehi min baAAadi Allahi afala tathakkarona (45/23)

“ Then you see such a one who takes as his sovereign his own vain desires? Allah has, knowing (him as such) left him astray and sealed his hearing and his understanding and laid cover over his sight. Who then will guide him after Allah has withdrawn guidance? Will you not then receive admonition?”.

Accordingly, such people who become subservient to their own vain desires, lose the capacity of using their faculties of seeing, hearing and thinking in the right direction. Thus in spite of their being knowledgeable people they lead themselves to a path of destruction, from which they cannot escape without coming back to the subservience of the divine laws.

*Human sentiments* --- Before the revelation of the Quran to Muhammad (peace be upon him), Mysticism made deep inroads into the human society. Mystics believe that one can achieve the nearness of God after crushing his sentiments. This is against the teaching of the Quran. Human actions are based on emotions, without which man is like a piece of stone. The Quran ordains man to keep his sentiments under control of the divine guidance:

...waman adallu mimmani ittabaAAa hawahu bighayri hudan mina Allahi... (28/50)

“ And who is more astray than the one who follows his own lusts, devoid of guidance from Allah”.

At yet another place it is said:

Bali ittabaAAa allatheena thalamoo ahwaahum bighayri AAilmin faman yahdee man adalla Allahu wama lahum min nasireena (30/29)

“ Nay the wrong doers (merely) follow their own lusts. Being devoid of knowledge. But who will guide those whom Allah leaves astray? To them there will be no helpers.”

Thus the Quran does not prohibit the use of desires and sentiments. It rather advises man to make use of them but not without divine guidance and knowledge; because if they go astray they put themselves outside the pale of the knowledge of what is for their own good.

## ‘ RABB ‘

The next word in **الحمد لله رب العالمين** after **الله** is **ربّ** Rabubiyyat is one of the attributes or basic characteristics of Allah and it means – the provision of sustenance to an object from its initial stage to the stage of its final destination. One who provides this nourishment and sustenance to the innumerable creatures in the universe is called ‘ Rabb ’ by the Quran.

Life on this earth evolved from unicellular organisms to multicellular organisms of complex nature. As soon as a new type evolves, it becomes a potential ancestor for many simultaneous descendent lines and each line becomes specially adapted in a particular way. The evolution thus forms the pattern of a branching tree. The Quran says:

[WaAllahu anbatakum mina al-ardi nabatan \(71/71\)](#)

“ Allah has raised you up in the form of a (Geneological) tree”.

It is said further that creatures in their evolutionary history have passed through different stages, each type of creatures remained temporarily in one particular stage and was then handed over to the next stage for further disposal and that Allah knows their nutritional needs at every stage which are met with according to his laws:

[Wama min dabbatin fee al-ardi illa AAala Allahi rizquha wayaAAalamu mustaqarraha wamustawdaAAaha kullun fee kitabin mubeenin \(11/6\)](#)

“ There is not a moving creature on the earth but its sustenance depends on Allah. He knows how long a creature shall stay temporarily in one stage and when it shall be handed over to the next stage ( and what type of nutrition they need at each particular stage). All this is in clear record.”

However, ‘ Rabubiyyat ‘ includes not only the provision or nourishment but also the provision of different patterns of development, safety and stability, along with the elimination of all that is surplus at different evolutionary stages of Allah’s creation, so as to bring about the realisation of their potentialities. Now let us quote here a few examples to illustrate the different patterns of nourishment amongst living organisms that evolved on the earth---

### Example 1.-

Life appeared on earth in the form of cells. The cells that exist today are composed of the same types of chemicals which constituted the first cells on the earth, billions of years ago i.e., water, minerals, adenosine phosphates, poly-saccharides, fats, proteins and nucleic acids. The early cells drew inorganic as well as organic matter directly from sea water, for their nourishment. This was a simple form of nutrition. There had been tremendous expansion of living mass from the first cells on the earth. It makes an interesting study from the Quranic point of view, how with the gradual disappearance of free molecular food

from the oceans, the nutrition of a vast number of organisms that branched out from the first cells, could be maintained? This happened in the following ways:-

**Parasitism**— With the disappearance of free molecular food from the oceans, organisms began to procure food from the bodies of living organisms. One cell could invade another cell for obtaining food. This type of procuring food is called parasitism. Even today viruses and bacteria get their food by parasitism.

**Saprotrophism**----- Here the organisms began to live on dead bodies of other organisms. Many types of bacteria adopted this method of obtaining food.

**Holotrophism**-----It is the process of eating whole living cell. In parasitism the smaller cell eats the substance of the larger cell, while in holotrophism, the larger cell engulfs and eats the smaller cell.

It is evident from the above description that the above three methods of food gathering did not add anything to the total food stores on the earth. It was just one cell eating the other, dead or alive. Thus unless some new food sources had become available, life would have gradually ceased to exist on the earth such food sources did evolve within the cells and the cells started manufacturing foods themselves.

In early stages, the nutrients were produced by methane, ammonia and water, and energy was supplied by the sun and lightening in the clouds surrounding the early earth. This method of food production became inadequate at a later stage. As with the disappearance of the permanent clouds, lightening became rare and with the formation of CO<sub>2</sub> screen in the earth's atmosphere, high energy solar radiation became unavailable. Thus evolution of some new methods of manufacturing organic compounds became necessary. Water was still abundantly available and in addition to methane and hydrogen cyanide, carbon dioxide was available directly within cells as source of carbon, this being the product of respiration. With water and carbon dioxide, cells could produce organic compounds provided a source of energy was available. ATP could supply such an energy, but this itself was an organic compound and its production depended on an external source of energy. These cells could continue to exist only if they had evolved methods of utilizing external sources of energy. This happened in two different ways:

**Chemosynthesis** – Early Monera and Protista especially certain types of bacteria started extracting energy from sulphur, iron and nitrogen compounds. They absorbed these compounds into their bodies and on account of certain reactions that took place, bonds were broken and bond energy became available for the synthesis of carbohydrates from carbon dioxide and water. But the process had its limits as it depended on the availability of certain chemicals.

**Photosynthesis**—Another method in which materials and energy could be available in abundance came into existence. A huge store of energy was

present in light rays of the sun. Only an energy – trapping substance was required within the cell. Such substance came to be evolved in the form the Chlorophyll. The process of manufacturing organic compounds by means of Chlorophyll and light rays came to be known as photosynthesis and is still used by the plant cells all over the world. It saved the living organisms from premature extinction.

We note that out of the five food procuring methods that came into existence, sooner or later, i.e. Parasitism, Saprotrophism, Holotrophism, Chemosynthesis and Photosynthesis, only the last two added to the total food supply on the earth. It appears that Monera adapted all methods of getting food except eating. Protista adapted photosynthesis as well as holotrophism (eating). Two different types of organisms evolved from Protista. One group specialized in photosynthesis and all the plants on earth evolved from this group. The other group specialised in holotrophism (eating) and at became animals.

The above discription of nutritional evolution illustrates a beautiful link in the chain of Allah's Rabubiyat.

### **Example --2**

With the passage of time, cells became organized into complex multicellular organisms because at any level, a higher organization is functionally more efficient than the lower one. For instance non-aggregated cells require more energy and material for their individual survival than if the same number of cells were united to form a tissue. There are two reasons for it. Firstly because duplication of effort is avoided. For example a single cell is exposed to environments all round and thus has got to spend energy and materials to protect itself against the effects of environments from all sides. On the other hand, in the case of a compact aggregated tissue, only the cells at the periphery are in direct contact with the environments and they only take up protective functioning. Secondly in an aggregated tissue not only that a duplication of effort is avoided, there is also a continuity of effort. For example a unicellular organism has got to perform all the functions of respiration, digestion, excretion, locomotion and reproduction etc. The whole cell surface is involved, say in the case of feeding and locomotion. Thus it can perform only one function at a particular time, the others being temporarily suspended in the meantime. As reproduction is also the function of the same cell, it suspends both feeding and locomotion. In multicellular organisms, on the other hand, there is a division of labour. Every individual function is the responsibility of a particular group of cells. For example movement is the responsibility of the muscle cells, digestion is the function of the alimentary canal, secretion is the function of glands and so on. Thus each group of cells is specialized in a particular way and the provision of nutrition is taken up by the cells of the alimentary canal only.

### **Example ---3**

In still higher forms of animals, there developed a division of labour so that the nutrition of some individuals became dependent on the others. A few

individual organisms of the same kind make up a family. A number of families together make a herd or tribe. Next higher organization where the number organisms of same kind is very large and which occupy a given area is called a population. In some cases a population is a far more closely knit group. The unifying link being not only interbreeding but the individuals live together in an integrated manner so that each contributes in some special way to the welfare of all. Such special type of organization is called a Society. Societies are characteristics of animals, i.e insects and vertebrates. They are highly developed among termites and many ants, bees and wasps. Each member of an insect society is guided by an inherent instinct and is bound to follow the way shown by it. The Holy Quran calls it “ Wahi” (revelation). We may produce as an example the honey bee society. A honey bee society consists of three social ranks. Only one of them is a queen who is the mother of all the members of the colony; several hundreds are drones and the rest are all workers. The queen and the stingless drones are reproductive. The queen lays the eggs and the drones fertilize the new queens. The daily work and strife of the colony devolves upon the workers , who are sexually developed females in which reproductive system is vestigial. They, therefore, do not lay eggs but spend their time carrying water, collecting nectar and pollen, secreting wax, building the combs, collecting food for all castes, attending the queen and rearing the young, and cleansing, airing and defending the hive. Thus division of labour have developed at this stage and the function of procurement of food and water devolves on one particular group but not all the individuals of the society.

Waawha rabbuka ila alannahli ani ittakhithee mina aljibali buyootan wamina alshshajari wamimma yaAArishoona. Thumma kulee min kulli alththamarati faoslukkee subula rabbiki thululan yakhruju min butoonihā sharabun mukhtalifun alwanuhu feehi shifaon lilnnaasi inna fee thalika laayatan liqawmin yatafakkaroonā (16/68-69)

“ And thy ‘ Rabb ‘ placed in the bee His guidance to build its hives in hills and in trees and from where to control ( its operations). Then to eat of all kinds of fruits and obediently follow the path of thy Rabb. Then comes forth from their bellies a drink of varying hues, wherein is healing for mankind, Verily in this is a sign for those who think over it.

#### **Example---4**

Let us describe here another remarkable link in the chain of Allah’s Rabubiyat. We know that fish and amphibia lay eggs inside the natural bodies of water. The eggs are in direct contact with water which is the source of their nourishment. There is no danger of drying up either. The eggs are thus without any protective shell. In reptiles and birds, on the other hand, the eggs needs protection against desiccation and physical shock. Hence it is protected by shell and amniotic fluid has developed as a shock absorber. As long as the embryo remains within a shell it is not capable of obtaining food from outside. Hence a big store of yolk within the egg itself. The shell itself is a unique specimen of Allah’s creation. It allows air for respiration to pass through, yet the water is not allowed to evaporate. In mammals the egg

become well protected inside the uterus. Thus the shell is eliminated. The nutrition and respiration are carried through the mother's blood. Thus the quantity of yolk is insignificant, just to sustain the embryo during the period of its journey through the Fallopian tube and before it gets embedded in the uterine wall. At birth after the new born gets disconnected from the placenta, the milk food is ready in the mother's breasts.

### Example—5

Of all the minerals of the planet earth, water is the most abundant one. Nearly three-fourth of the earth's surface is covered with water and it is also contained in large amounts in the atmosphere and in the lithosphere. It is also the major component of living matter. The basic water cycle is quite familiar. Heat of the sun evaporates water which is thus transferred from hydrosphere to the atmosphere. The evaporated water cools and condenses when it reaches high altitudes. Clouds are formed and after precipitation as rain or snow, water is returned to the hydrosphere. This is the most massive process of any kind on the earth, consuming more energy and more material than any other. The rain water as we know comes into contact with gases and rocks and the process of erosion thus gradually turns fresh water into salt water. These two bodies of fresh water and salt water thus constantly move in a gigantic global cycle. They are free to intermingle and do intermingle and yet they are kept apart by the physical laws of heat and gravitation which serve as a barrier in between two types of water. This colossal phenomenon of the hydrological process and the barrier between two segments of hydrosphere is a glorious manifestation of Allah's " Rabubiyat " but for this the life on the land could not exist. The Quran say:

[Afaraaytumu almaa allathee tashraboona. Aantum anzaltumoohu mina almuzni am nahnu almunziloona Law nasha o jaAalnahu ojajan falawla tashkuroona.\(56/68-70\)](#)

“ Do you not observe the water which you drink? Do you bring it down from the clouds or do we? If it were Our will, We could make it salty ( and bitter) then why do you not give thanks?”

It means that it was the divine plan not to allow salinity to accumulate in all parts of hydrosphere because in that case life on the land could not continue further.

When one ponders over the ways and means provided by Allah for the sustenance of His creation, he is bound to proclaim **الحمد لله رب العالمين**. That the manifestation of Allah's attribute of ' Rabubiyat ' is not confined to any one unit of animate or inanimate objects. It prevails all over the universe for which the word **عالمين** is used.

**عالمين** --- In **الحمد لله رب العالمين**, the word **عالمين** comes after the word **رب**. The root of the word **عالمين** is **ع ل م** which mean ' to know ', to recognise. Thus **عالم** means ' one who knows ': a knowledgeable person

and **عالم** means a sign from which a certain thing could be know or recognised, as for instance a flag, or an insignia on the arm of a soldier which indicates that he belongs to so and so a unit. Allah's personality is beyond human perception, but He can be recognised from His creation. The presence of the physical world indicate that there is a Creator behind it. The word **عالمين** is the plural of the word **عالم** There are innumerable physical worlds but there is one Creator. Hence the word **عالمين**.

Allah's creation did not stop at some particular point in the past. It continues increasingly. The Quran says:

...yazeedu fee alkhalqi ma yashao... (35/1)

“ He adds to creation according to the laws initiated by Him”.

That is why Allah is **رب العلمين**, the One Who sustain every componet of the innumerable physical worlds of His creation. The word **عالمين** might also mean ‘ the different nations of the world’. The Quran has also used this word in this sense. As for example, the Quran calls itself:

(12/1-4) **ذكر للعالمين** “ message for all sections of humanity” or

(2/185) **بصائر للناس** “ clear evidence to mankind” or

Guide to mankind.

Similarly the Quran calls the Rasool (P.B.U.H): **رحمت للعالمين** “ The one who provided a pattern of living to mankind”.

Thus **رب العالمين** comes to mean the Cherisher and Sustainer of all the different types of creation in the universe and not of any one tribe, nation or species.

### *Alrrahmani alrraheemi (1/3)*

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“ His provision of sustenance to the universe is by process of slow, graudal and ascending evolution, interrupted off and on by spontaneous revolution

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The root of the word **رحمن** ‘Rehman’ and **رحيم** ‘ Raheem ‘ is **رحم**. The word **رحمت** is also from the same root, and it stands for mean of nourishment manifest or hidden provided to a certain person or a thing , according to need. A mother's uterus is called **رحم مادر** as it provides nourishment to a fetus. A fetus has got all the potentialities of a full fledged human being and its nourishment growth and development is provided free as a gift, in an atmosphere of perfect ease and harmony. This is an example of ‘ Rahmat’ provided by Allah. Thus Raheem means “ One who provides nourishment within a specified pattern”.

The question arises why two different words رحيم and رحمن have occurred in Quran? In most of the English translations, these two words have been translated as “Merciful and Gracious”, but this does not signify the true import of these words. Arabic is scientific and methodical language. Arabic words arise from a root called ماده. The words that take origin from particular ماده belong to different groups formed on the basis of their vocal expression. Such groups are called اوزان ‘Auzan’ (singular وزن ‘wazan’), or ابواب ‘Abwab’ (singular باب Bab, means door). Although the basic meaning of all the words that arise from a common root (ماده) is the same, yet the words that come under the heading of a particular ‘wazan’, have got a distinct characteristic which differs from the characteristic of the words which belong to the same root but to a different ‘wazan’. The words رحيم ‘Raheem’ and رحمن ‘Rahman’ arise from the same root ماده which is رح م but each of these two words belong to a separate ‘wazan’. The word رحيم ‘Raheem’ belongs to the ‘wazan’ فعيل and the word رحمن ‘Rahman’ belongs to the ‘wazan’ فعلان. Any words that creates the sound or vocal expression of the word فعيل carries the concept of a happening which is slow and gradual. On the other hand any word which creates the vocal expression of the ‘wazan’ فعلان carries the concept of a happening which is sudden and violent.

All the component parts of the universe have undergone evolution since its creation, which still continues. The Quran says:

[Yudabbiru al-amra mina alssama-i ila al-ardi thumma yaAaruju ilayhi fee yawmin kana miqdaruhu alfa sanatim mimma taAAuddoona \(32/5\)](#)

“ He plans His affairs from the highest seat of authority. When a plan is intended to be executed its starting point is made at the lowest level. Then it is raised up step by step to the highest level (passing through various evolutionary stages). It arises from one stage to another in a certain period which may be a thousand years of your reckoning’.

At still another place it is said fifty thousand years (70/4). As a matter of fact, the above figures ‘one thousand’ or fifty thousands are not specific. They mean very long periods of time.

The evolution generally has been slow, smooth and gradual but off an on its course had been interrupted by sudden revolutions which gave it entirely a new shape, at each occasion. Keeping in view the above said phases of evolution, now let us elaborate by means of examples, the difference between the words رحيم ‘Raheem’ and رحمن ‘Rahman’.

**Example ----1**

**THE PROCESS OF EVOLUTION**

Based on date obtained from radioactive and fossil clocks, geologists have constructed a geological table which indicates the age of successive earth layers and thus provides a calendar of the earth's past history. The calendar consists of five successive main divisions known as Eras. The Quran, however, divides the evolutionary periods of earth, along with the heavenly bodies into ستة ايام Six Eras. The Azoic Era ( i.e the Era before life began on the earth) is described by the Quran as يومين ' Two Eras ' which include the evolution of the earth as well as of heavenly bodies:

.....bi<sup>l</sup>al<sup>l</sup>at<sup>h</sup>ee khal<sup>a</sup>qa al-<sup>a</sup>r<sup>d</sup>a fee yaw<sup>m</sup>ayni..... (41/9)

“ Who created the earth in two eras”

Faq<sup>a</sup>d<sup>a</sup>h<sup>u</sup>n<sup>n</sup>a sab<sup>A</sup>Aa sam<sup>a</sup>w<sup>a</sup>t<sup>i</sup>n fee yaw<sup>m</sup>ayni... (41/12)

“ So He ' completed ' them as a number of heavens in two eras.

### Time Table of Evolution

وقت س

بم آي ا

Quranic Time Table	يَوْمَيْن	أَرْبَعَةَ أَيَّامٍ			
		يوم الثالثة	يوم الرابعة	يوم الخامسة	يوم السادسة
Geologic Time Table	Azoic	Precam- brion	Paleozoic  (Ancient Life)	Mesozoic  (Middle Life)	Cainozoic  (Modern Life)
Periods of earth 's Evolution	3000  Million  Years	1500  Million Years	300  Million Years	130  Million Years	75  Million Year.

The point, that is being emphasised here, is that the plant and animal life that existed in each Era were entirely different from one another. After explaining the cause of difference between the pattern of life in each Era, we shall be able to explain the difference between رحيميت Raheemiyat and رحمانيت Rahmaniyyat.

In يومين or the first Two Eras there was no life on earth.

In يوم الثالثة or Precambrian (Era III) only unicellular organisms existed.

In يوم الرابعة or Ancient life (Era IV) Muticellular organisms like green Algae, sponges, snail and jawless fish, appeared. Later very big trees like giant club moss and amongst animals bony fish, sharks, amphibia, insects, spiders etc. became evolved.

In يوم الخامسة or Middle life (Era V), flowering plants and huge big animals like pterosaurs, Ichthyosaurs and Dynosaurs came in to being, some of them being 87½ feet in length and 35 tons in weight.

In يوم السادسة or Modern life (Era VI), entirely different types of animal and plants came in-to being such as birds, Mammals (including man) and all other species of plants and animals that we see around us today.

The pattern of life in the fourth fifth and sixth Eras are entirely different from one another, except a few species of insects etc. Those present in ancient life became extinct in Middle life; and those present in Middle life became extinct in Modern life. Why it so happened? Because the course of evolution has not been smooth an uninterrupted. Major disturbances in the earth 's crust, caused important changes in geography and climate which in turn affected or influenced evolution and distribution of plant life and consequently the animal life. These major disturbances separate the four Eras of geological history described above, which together are called اربعة ايام or (Four eras). The rocks formed as the result of these disturbances are grouped together in different systems. Thus the evidence deduced from rocks and fossils reveals not only the general pattern of evolution in plant and animal life but also the development of world 's oceans, continents, mountain ranges and rivers, and the consequent changes in climates. The transition from the Ancient life (Era IV) to Middle Life (Era V) dates the Appalachian revolution during which the mountain ranges of that period were built. By now these mountain are already reduced by erosion. Similarly the transition from Middle life (Era V) to Modern Life (Era VI) was marked by Larmide revolution which produced the high mountain ranges of today, the Himalayas, the Rockies, the Andes and the Alps.

These phenomena of the appearance of new mountain ranges resulting in changes of climates, and changes in the distribution of water and the conditions of landscape, caused the appearance of new plant and animal life which met their needs from the changed environments and assumed new shapes and forms. This has been beautifully explained by the Quran as follows:-

[WajaAAala feeha rawasiya min fawqiha wabaraka feeha waqaddara feeha aqwataha fee arbaAAati ayyamin sawaan lilssa-ileena \(41/10\)](#)

“ He set on the (earth) mountains standing firm, high above it and bestowed self-perpetuation (preservation stability, growth, development and manifestation) on the earth and measured therein all things to give them nourishment in due proportion, اربعة ايام four Eras, in accordance with the needs of those who seek sustenance. ” \*

The above description of the evolutionary process (which still continues) has simply clarified the point that the course of earth 's evolution which has been smooth.

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\* (a) The above phenomena are fully explained and well illustrated in my books “ Phenomena of nature and the Quran ” and “ The Heavens, the Earth and the Quran ”. The latter book also explains why the Azoic Era (Era without life) is called (Two Eras) by the Quran.

(b) A false notion exist amongst certain people that biological evolution in man has stopped and they question why? The fact is that biological evolution in man still continues. Human evolution has only been super added to it. Chemical evolution as we know continued for millions of years (and still continues) till such compounds came in to being in which the appearance of life became possible. the biological evolution thus became super-added to Chemical evolution. Similarly biological evolution continued for millions of years before human evolution (with the appearance of self or personality in man) became super-added to it. The biological evolution of man still continues as evidenced by the presence of vestigial organs in human body.

from the last 4500 million years, became interrupted off and on by revolutions which made sudden changes, in the life created and sustained by ‘ Rabb ‘. The smooth evolution and provision of sustenance to the created objects by means, continuous and measured according to needs, is the manifestation of Allah ’s ‘Reheemiyyat ’; on the other hand sudden changes, off an on, in the pattern of life is the manifestation of Allah ’s ‘ Rahmaniyyat ’.

### **Example --2**

The creation of man is the manifestation of Allah ’s Reheemiyat as well as Rahmaniyyat. The origin of man has been a topic of great interest for a long time. Primitive people had myths that implied human origin from non-living materials by acts of supernatural forces. But the structure and function of the human body, its embryonic development, and historic, prehistoric and fossil records, all indicate that modern man evolved through the operation of the same forces which produced all other organisms. Man belongs to Phylum Chordata, Subphylum Vertebrata, Class Mammalia, Order Primate, Super — family Hominoid, Family Hominid, Genus Homo, and Species Homo Sapians.

Man, however, became differentiated from the other animal by certain characteristic features which are of two types (1) Those that evolved gradually through the operation of the same forces, as stated above, which brought about the structure and functions of all other animals to their modern shape, (2) Those that appeared suddenly without any link with the early stages of his development.

The first type of the characteristic features in man are as follows:-- Flatter and more vertical face; reduced eye brow ridges: hairs long and of continuous growth on the head, but sparce and short on body: hands more generalised with opposable thumb; legs 30% longer than the arms; buttocks well developed, resulting in erect posture; brain very much larger with far greater functional ability; highly developed cerebrum with memory, intellect and judgement far too advanced. He has a unique functional ability to make tools which enabled him to exploit and finally dominate nature. His range of emotions is great.

These characteristic features of man developed gradually under the influence of Allah 's ' Raheemiyat '.

The second type of characteristic feature of man appeared without any link with the early evolutionary stages and these are as follows:-

1. The first one is the possession of ' Ruh ' or Divine Energy ':

Allathee ahsana kulla shay-in khalaqahu wabadaa khalqa al-insani min teenin. Thumma sawwahu wanafakha feehi min roohihi wajaAAala lakumu alssamAAa waal-absara waal-af-idata qaleelan ma tashkuroona (32/7-9)

“ It is He who has made all that is created in due proportion. And initiated the creation of man from the inorganic matter of the earth and made his progeny from an extract of the nature of a despicable fluid. Then He fashioned him in due proportion and breathed in to him his 'Ruh ' and gave you the faculties of hearing, sight and mind. But very few of you make the right use of these faculties. ”

The first part of this verse refers to the pre-human stage of creation of life from inorganic matter, the second part refers to the pattern of reproduction in viviparous animals. These stages of evolution appeared under the influence of Allah 's ' Raheemiyat '. The appearance of ' Ruh ' at the human stage was, however, the result of Allah 's attribute of ' Rahamniyyat '.

In human individuals the 'Ruh' or divine energy appears in a specific form, known as 'Nafs' in the Quranic terminology. This is the other name for Human personality, described earlier. From this stage, man developed the faculty of freedom of choice which is absent in all other animals and thus entered a new phase of evolution. The first change over 2000 million years ago, super-added biological to chemical evolution and laid open a vast field of opportunity for matter to rearrange itself in so many different ways. On the other hand the present change over has super-added human to biological evolution and has created new possibilities. At this stage of evolution man is described as **خلفا آخر**

...thumma ansha/nahu khalqan akhara.... (23/14)

"Then We brought Him forward as entirely a new and distinguished creation:"

2. The other feature that distinguishes man from lower animals is the faculty of speech:

Khalaqa al-insana. AAallamahu albayana (55/3-4)

" He created man. He taught him speech."

Speech is the use of symbols to express thoughts and receive thoughts of others. This faculty also appeared in man without any link with the prehuman evolution and is thus the manifestation of Allah's attribute of 'Rahmaniyyat'. From here onwards human ideas began to flow from one man to the other, and from one generation to the other, thus causing the accumulation of knowledge through successive generations. The latter phenomenon taken place not through genes but through written speech. As human evolution required a much closer and broader link among men inhabiting different parts of the globe at one time and between men living in different periods of time, the link, between them became possible through the permanent records of speech, because the spoken words when uttered are gone for ever, like the breath which carries them. The Quran says:

[Allathee AAallama bialqalami AAallama al-insana ma lam yaAAalam \(96/4-5\)](#)

“He who taught (the use of) pen. Taught man what he knew not.”

As the divine message was to spread, far and wide, through time and space and the message was not carried to human beings individually, written speech formed the nucleus for the spread of human knowledge.

### Example –3

#### GUIDANCE TO MANKIND

Allah is رب العالمين the nourisher and sustainer of the entire universe. He guides growth, development, and evolution of each individual component of the universe. The physical world or the inanimate objects get direct guidance through physical laws which are ingrained in their very substance. Animals also get direct guidance through physical laws as well as instincts, but a change occurred in the case of man. His body gets direct guidance as in the case of other animals but his Self or personality get indirect guidance, by means of laws revealed to the messengers of Allah. This change, in the mode of guidance from Allah, occurred under the manifestation of Allah's attribute of 'Rahmaniyyat'. But why this sudden change at the human level? That is because human evolution took entirely a different turn. It is in fact the evolution of human Self. The development of human self takes place through the development in it, of divine attributes. This, in turn, can take place only through social living. The more you act for the benefit of humanity, within the pattern prescribed by the divine laws, the more you can acquire the attributes of Allah within your 'selves'. Thus the development and evolution of human Self being not an individual but an organisational affairs, required a central control, in order to achieve a coordinated functioning of the society. This role could only be taken up by the messengers of Allah. Hence a different way of providing guidance at the human level. This indicate how the manifestations of the attributes of 'Raheemiyyat' and 'Rahmaniyyat' change alternatively under the divine plans, accroding to needs.

—رحمت The Quran itself is called رحمت 'Rahmat'

Wanunazzilu mina alqur-ani ma huwa shifaon warahmatun lilmu/mineena...  
(17/82)

“ We sent down (stage by stage) in the Quran that which is a healing (to the injuries inflicted by man on his ‘ Self ‘ by his own misdeeds and a رحمت (provision of nourishment ) to those who believe”.

As stated already the nourishment of human ‘ Self’ takes place by obedience to the laws and Permanent Values provided by revelation. When it is said :

...kataba rabbukum AAala nafsihi alrahmata ...(6/54)

‘ Your Rabb has inscribed for Himself رحمة the provision of nourishment ‘.

‘ Rahmat’ includes both the nourishment of body as well as of hum ‘ self ‘.

رحم ‘ Mercy’ – The attributes of ‘ Rahimiyyat’ in Allah’s Personality also carries the concept of ‘ mercy’. But the Quranic concept of mercy and the one prevalent in the world especially among Christians, are two widely different things. The Christian concept of ‘mercy’ spread amongst the Muslims through Mysticism.. Christian believe that every human child is born on this earth as a sinner, on account of the sins Committed by Adam and Eve. Consequently no human being is fit for entry in paradise. In order to save humanity from this punishment Allah sent His only son Jesus Christ on this earth, so as to enable his opponents to crucify him. The Christ’s blood thus became the compensation (Kaffarah ( كفارة ) ) for human sins. Thus according to the Christian belief, human salvation does not depend on human deeds, it rather depends on the ‘mercy’ of god; and only those people are fit for this mercy who believe in the (Kaffarah) or compensation of human sins by the Christ’s blood. Accordingly the Christian slogan is “ God is mercy”.

The Quranic concept of ‘mercy ‘ however is different. The entire edifice of Quranic teachings is based on the law of Requital, which means that this is a world of cause and effect. Every human action good or bad is repaid. A poison shall kill a man and not do otherwise. The shall burn an object exposed to it and not do otherwise. The fire shall burn an object exposed to it and not do otherwise. The law of Requital applies to all human actions, physical or social. It forms the basis of عدل or organization of justice in all spheres of life. On the other hand as we have said already, the word “ Raheemiyyat ‘ also carries the concept of mercy. Let us explain these two incompatibilities by means of an example:- Supposing a man burns his finger resulting in acute pain. This the result of a cause and its effect, and is thus based on ‘ Justice ‘. Here mercy does not come into play. But, on the other hand, the One who initiated the law that fire shall burn, has also bestowed upon man the intellect to prepare medicines for wound healing and for the amelioration of pain. This is the manifestation of رحم ‘Raham’ which accomodates both ‘mercy’ as well as ‘Justice’ or the rule of law.

In human life this concept is called توبه ' Tauba ' in Quranic terminology. Let us clarify this by means of another example – A certain person proceeded on a journey, the object being to reach the point A. On a cross road which is situated on the road to point A, he lost his way and took a turn to a wrong road. After he travelled for a certain distance, some body pointed out to him that he is on the wrong track. On realising his mistake he halts, turns back and again reaches the cross road where he took the wrong turn; and from then onwards proceeds on the right path leading to point A. This turning back to the cross road is called توبه ' Tauba ' and further proceeding on the right track is called اعمال صالحه ' good deeds ' ( or deeds consistent with the divine guidance). Thus توبه compensates for the misdeeds and the laws prescribed by Allah for the compensation of the human misdeeds, are by way of mercy from Allah. The concept of توبه does not exist amongst Jews, Christian or Hindus etc.

The Quran says

[Qul ya AAibadiya allatheena asrafoo AAala anfusihim la taqnaṭoo min rahmati Allāhi inna Allāha yaghfiru alththunooba jameeAAan innahu huwa alghafooru alrraḥeemu. Waaneeboo ilā rabbikum waaslimoo lahu min qabli an ya/tiyakumu alAAathabu thumma la tunṣaroonā \(39/53-54\)](#)

“ Say: O my servants who have transgressed against their Selves, despair not of the رحمت of Allah, for the untoward consequences of the deeds inconsistent with the laws of Allah can be entirely erased by deeds consistent with His laws. An obedience to His laws makes good the loss produced by misdeeds, and it provides means of self construction, as well as protection against the forces of disruption. Thus you turn towards the laws of your ‘ Rabb ‘ and submit to them, before the period of respite is exhausted after which you shall not be helped”.

The details given above are described in a nutshell:

When it is said:

[... inna alḥasanāti yuthhibna alssayyi-ati....](#)

“ For, those things that are even remove those that are uneven”.

It means that all your constructive works remove the effects of those that are destructive. The more constructive work you do, the more the effects of misdeeds are erased. That is how the رحم mercy of Allah comes in to play and how it forms a part of Allah’s “Raheemiyat”.

*[Maliki yawmi alddeeni \(1/4\)](#)*

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"His law of requital controls the results of human deeds in this world and in the hereafter."

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مالك The word مالك root م ل ك (with all the three short vowels - Fatiha I, Kasra I and Dhamma I).

The basic concepts of this root are -(1) To dominate (2) Authority (3) A stout foundation on which a certain thing rests (4) Means to set right and bring to perfection, a certain thing or issue. A cementing force.

In the sense of sovereignty, when the word is used in the case of man, it means to put other people under the bond of slavery. But when the same word is used for Allah, the concept of high handedness and usurpation of other people's rights does not come in, because in spite of being all powerful, Allah Himself is not oppressive. For example it is said :

[Alam taAAalam anna Allaha lahu mulku alssamawati waal-ardi wama lakum min dooni Allahi min waliyyin wala naseerin \(2/107\)](#)

"Know you not that to Allah belongs the dominion of the heaven and the earth? And besides Him you have neither patron nor helper."

This verse, no doubt, refers to the sovereignty of Allah, but it also contains the concept of this sovereignty being a cementing force and a source of nourishment and development. Here it is said that if people disobey divine laws and do not follow the way of life prescribed by Allah, they can not find the remedy of their ailments elsewhere. Thus while interpreting the words with the root ( م ل ك ), We have got to keep in view the above said variations in their meaning. Hence the word (مالك) in the verse (1/4) ( مالك يوم الدين ) means Sovereign.

يوم - The word is often interpreted as 'day' (Consisting of 24 hours). Although the word is used in Arabic language in the above sense as well, yet it has got a much wider concept. It means an Era. An era starts with a particular event. For example, Christian Era. Started with the birth of Christ, or Muslim Era which started with the 'Hijrat' of Muhammad (P.B.U.H.) FROM Mecca, or Mezozoic Era which started with the Appalachian Revolution.

The Quran says:

[... biallathee khalaqa al-arda fee yawmayni ... \(41/9\)](#)

"Who created the earth in يومين two eras."

A yaum may be one thousand years of your reckoning (32/5) or it may be of fifty thousand years (70/40) which means that the word 'yaum' represents a very very long period of time.

الدين -It is a comprehensive term and is the essence of Quranic teachings. It is a center around which all the injunctions, laws, fundamental principles and permanent values revolve and bring in the prominence the ultimate objective. Its true concept brings in to focus the meaning of the world Islam.

The word 'Din' has very wide meaning. On the one hand, it means Sovereignty; reins of power; state; constitution; law and order; judgement sound result; reward and punishment; cause and its effect. On the other hand it means to be subservient; to obey; to bow down. When it attributed both to Allah and to man, it means the obedience to the laws of Allah. A number of Quranic verses can be quoted in support of the above said concepts. We quote here a comprehensive one.

The Quran says:

[Afaghayra deeni Allāhi yabghoona walahu aslama man fee alssamawati waal-ardi tawAAan wakarhan wa-ilayhi yurjaAAoona \(3/83\)](#)

"Do they seek for other than the 'Din' of Allah while all creatures in the heavens and the earth bow down to his laws willingly or unwillingly and (ultimately) all come back to it"

It means that Allah is the Sovereign of the universe. The entire creation is bound by the splints of His laws. The inanimate objects submit to Him by means of the physical laws which are ingrained in their very substance. They thus submit to the divine command willingly. As regard animals they receive the divine guidance by means of instincts. They also can not deviate from the way of life given to them by the Creator and thus submit to the divine laws willingly. However, the case is different with man. Human physical body like all other creatures, is controlled by physical laws and instincts and thus submits to the divine command willingly. But human personality is controlled by another set of laws which were given to mankind through the messengers of Allah.

This is followed by saying:

[Waman yabtaghi ghayra al-islami deenan falan yuqbala minhu wahuwa fee al-akhirati mina alkhasireena \(3/85\)](#)

"If any one follows a way of life other than Islam (i.e. submission to the laws of Allah) never will it be accepted of him; (He may gain the pomp and glory of the present) but he shall be the loser in the end."

Accordingly, 'Din' is the way of life consistent with the divine laws. But this can be achieved through an organisation where the central command becomes an instrument to enforce these laws. Such an organisation comes into being, as the result of belief in Allah and the deeds consistent with the laws revealed by Him in other words, the organisation of 'Din' can not be established without having an independent State. The Quran says:

[WaAAada Allāhu allatheena amanoo minkum waAAamiloo alssalihati layastakhlifannahum fee al-ardi kama istakhlafo allatheena min qablihim ... \(55/24\).](#)

"Allah has promised those amongst you who work deeds consistent with the divine laws that He will, of surety grant them in the land succession (of power) as He granted it to those before them."

What is the object of this succession of power, has been explained in the later part of the same verse:

... walayumakkinanna lahum deenahumu allathee irtada lahum walayubaddilannahum min baAAadi khawfihim amnan ... (24/55).

"That they will establish in authority their 'Din' the one which He has chosen for them: and that they will change (their state) after the fear in which they (lived) to one of security and peace."

It means that the succession of power in the land is only the means to establish the organisation of Din, so that believers may be able to live a life of peace and security. This peace and security, on the other hand, is not an end by itself. Its objective is explained in the next part of the same verse

...yaAAabudoonanee la yushrikoona bee shay-an ... (24/55)

"That they will bow down before My laws (only) and not associate aught with My Sovereignty"

Again this is followed by saying :

... waman kafara baAAada thalika faola-ika humu alfasiqoona (24/55)

"If any rejects it, after this they are rebellious (they break the pattern in which the organisation of Din flourishes)."

الدين -has two prominent aspects and those are (1) اقامت صلوة and (2) آيتاي زكوة thus the verse 24/55) described above is followed by saying:

Waaqeemoo alssalata waatoo alzzakata waateAAoo alrrasoola laAAallakum turhamoona (24/56)

"So establish 'Salat' (the way of life consistent with the divine laws) and provide 'Zakat' (provision of nourishment to individual human beings) and obey the Rasool, so that you may undergo development, with the specified pattern."

Thus the object of holding the reins of power is the establishment of the organisation of 'Din,' so that the believers may be able to give a practical shape to the institutions of 'Salat' and 'Zakat', as it was practiced by the Rasool (P.B.U.H.) was the first head of an Islamic State. The obedience to the central authority thus became the pivotal point in the establishment of 'Din' which in fact was the obedience to the divine laws. However, this organisation of Din was not meant to remain confined to the life time of the Rasool (P.B.U.H.) but to continue after his death. The Quran explains this point by saying

Wama muhammadun illa rasoolun qad khalat min qablihi alrrusulu afa-in mata aw qutila inqalabtum AAala aAAaqabikum waman yanqalib AAala AAaqibayhi falan yadurra Allaha shay-an wasayajzee Allahu alshshakireena (3/144).

"Muhammad is no more than a messenger of Allah: many were the messengers that passed away before him: if he dies or is slain, will you then turn back on you heels? If any does turn back on his heels, not the least harm will he do to Allah. But (Allah on the other hand) will swiftly reward those who keep steadfast on the way shown by divine guidance."

At yet another place it is said:

Allatheena in makkannahum fee al-ardi aqamoo alssalata waatawoo alzzakata waamaroo bialmaAroofi wanahaw AAani almunkari walillahi AAaqibatu al-omoori (22/41).

"They are those who if we establish them in the land, establish the way of life consistent with the divine laws, and provide nourishment to individuals, enjoin the right and forbid wrong: With Allah rests the end and decision of (all) affairs,"

It means that the social organisation of Din shall make the law of the country, to enjoin all acts consistent with the divine laws and to forbid all acts that go against them. This has amply clarified the point that in the organisation of Din, Allah is the Supreme Authority and that all affairs shall be finally decided under the laws revealed by Him. Thus it is said:

... ini alhukmu illa lillahi... (12/40)

"The command is for none else than Allah."

It is further declared that those who do not decide their affairs according to the divine laws, are non-believers:

... waman lam yahkum bima anzala Allahu faola-ika humu alkafiroona (5/44)

"Those who do not judge according to the book of Allah, they are non believers

The Rasool (P.B.U.H.) himself was ordained.

... faohkum baynahum bima anzala Allahu ... (5/48)

"O Rasool! So judge between them according to what Allah has revealed."

What has been stated above has clarified the verse (1:4) (مالك يوم الدين) i.e., it is period of time, in which the organisation of Din shall be established, The Quran puts a question:

Wama adraka ma yawmu alddeeni (82/17)

"And what will explain to you, what is 'Yaumid-Din'

After this Quran itself, explains the most prominent and basic feature of the period in which 'Din' gets established:

Yawma la tamliku nafsun linafsin shay-an waal-amru yawma-ithin lillahi (82/19)

"The period of time is which no human being shall have power over any other human being, for the command in that period shall be (wholly) with Allah."

It means that all types of exploitation of man by man shall end during that period, whether political, intellectual or economic, because human affairs shall be subjected to divine laws. There shall be no subservience of one set of people to the other.

liyawmin la rayba feehi wawuffiyat kullu nafsin ma kasabat wahum la yuthlamoon (3/25)

"In this period of time in which there is no doubt, each person shall be paid out just what he has earned, without any injustice."

At yet another place it is said:

... fala yakhafu thulman wala hadman (20/112)

"Will have no fear of harm, nor of any curtailment (of what is his due)."

Opposition to الدين or the rule of divine laws- As stated above, in the organisation of 'Din' there shall be no room for exploiters. The exploiters, who have opposed الدين brought about by the messengers of Allah in all ages, belong to three different categories, which are as follow:

1. The Rulers whose rule may be of any type, i.e., kingship, dictatorship or modern democracy..
2. The Capitalists, who keep the working classes subservient to themselves.
3. Religious priests who exploit the sentiments of the people.

These three groups of exploiters have always, opposed the establishment of Din brought about by the messengers of Allah; and if at all it came in to existence somewhere, they tried to demolish it. These three groups have always been in league with each other. Falsehood can not prosper on its own merit, until it presents itself in the disguise of truth. Had these opponents openly opposed the 'Din' prescribed by divine guidance, no body would have followed the. Thus they skillfully adopted a different technique. They preserved the nomenclature of 'Din' but changed its concepts. They did not disturb the practical details and outward appearance of the basic pillars of Din but made them lifeless by extracting and destroying its essence. After doing so, the religious exploiters kept the religious affairs under their own control and made the political exploiters the custodians of worldly affairs, thus dividing the 'Din' prescribed by Allah in to two water-tight compartments of 'Church' and 'State'. This happened not only with 'Din' brought about successively by the previous messengers of Allah, but Islam also met the same fate. After the first four Caliphs, kingship made its appearance and simultaneously priesthood came into being, thus bifurcating the 'Din' established by Muhammad (P.B.U.H.) and practiced by the first four Caliphs. The part which came under the custody of priests came to be known as 'religion' instead of 'Din'. Where 'religion' exists the state is always run on secular lines. This mutilated shape of Islam exists up to the present day, and out priests openly declare that you do not need an independent state for the establishment of Din, because Prayers in congregation, Fasting, Haj and Zakat are allowed to be practiced under the rule of any secular form of Government. Moreover, as they say, the sovereignty of Allah in human affairs concerns the life hereafter. Accordingly the words ( **مالك يوم الدين** ) are translated as "Ruler of the day of Judgement." And as they say it has got nothing to do with the present world.

This is how the 'Din' of Islam changed into 'Religion'. At the time of the revelation of Quran, only 'religions' existed all over the world; 'Din' or the rule of divine laws existed now-where. The same state of affairs exists now in states ruled by Muslims. The difficulty with other religions is that neither of them, now possess the revealed books brought to them by the messengers of Allah, respectively. Thus it is not possible for them to again change their religions into 'Din'. On the other hand, Muslims have got the Quran with them, lying safely in its original form. Thus is not impossible for them to come back to the 'Din' prescribed for them by their 'Rabb'. Any Muslim state that decides to enforce the rule of Quranic laws can bring about the establishment of Din. However when we say ( **يوم الدين** ), it comprises not only that period of rule of the divine laws which relates to the present world but also that which is related to the life hereafter; because according to the holy Quran, life is a continuous process and the future of man takes shape on the basis of his deeds in the present world. Accordingly the divine rule prevails in this world as well as in the Hereafter.

As stated earlier, in 'Religion' the terms and outward appearance of 'Din' are preserved but its concepts are changed. The next chapter deals with its details.

*Iyyaka naAAbudu wa-iy<sup>u</sup>ka nastaAAeenu (1/5)*

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"We bow down to your laws and seek your help in shaping our lives within your prescribed pattern."

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اياك نعبد (Iyyaka naAAbudu) A believer after he realises the true concepts of the words 'Hamd' 'Rabb, Rahman', 'Rahim' and 'Malik' spontaneously proclaims اياك نعبد "We bow down only before your laws." The word نعبد encircles the entire organisation of 'Din'. The words اياك نعبد are often translated as - "To thee we worship". It is a wrong translation which changes the concept of 'Din' in to 'Religion' which is the other name for the private relationship between a worshipper and his object of worship.

عبادت root ع ب د It means slavery or subservience. When Pharaoh called Moses ungrateful and reproached his with all the favours which he had received from the Egyptians;

Moses said in reply what favours?:

Watilka niAAmatun tamunnuha AAalayya an AAabbadta banee isra-eela (26/22)

"And this is the favour which you reproach me that عبادت you have enslaved the children of Israel?"

When Moses and Aaron inspired by Allah's authority invited Pharaoh and his chiefs to 'belief in Allah?', he behaved insolently and said:

Faqaloo anu/minu libasharayni mithlina waqawmuhuma lana Aaabidoona (23/47)

"Shall we believe in two men like ourselves? And their people are عبود subject to us."

The above verses and so many other like them, clarify the meaning of the word عبيت 'Abdiyyat' i.e. subservience to Allah. In chapter 18 the words عبيت Abdiyyat and محكوميت 'Mahkoomiyyat' (slavery) have occurred as synonymous terms:

...wala yushriku fee hukmihi ahadan (18/26)

"Nor does He share his command with any person whatsoever."

Again it is said:

... wala yushrik biAAibadati rabbihi ahadan (18/110)

"And in the subservience of Allah (بعبادته) admit no body as partner."

Joseph the messenger of Allah said to his companions.

... ini alhukmu illa lillahi amara alla taAAbudoo illa iyyahu thalika alddeenu alqayyimu... (12/40)

"The command ( حكم ) is for none but Allah: He has commanded you that ( تعبدوا الاياه ) that you become subservient to none but Him; That is 'Din' which is stable."

It is thus amply clear that عبادت 'Ibadat' of Allah means subservience of Allah or obedience to His laws: and that is دين قيم the stable way of life on which you can stand upon for the provision all your necessities. In other words, the development of your potentialities within the pattern provided by the divine laws and make use of them for the benefit of mankind is 'Din'.

However, there is another aspect of the word عبديت. In Arabic language, the تعبيد word means "to harness" a camel or a horse i.e. to train the animal in such a way that he may be able to use his strength and capabilities according to certain rules and regulations. Man is bestowed with so many capabilities. If he uses them freely subject to his own sentiments and without any bindings, rules or regulations, he is bound to create lawlessness and destruction. But if one uses the same capabilities within the boundary line laid down by the divine laws, it promotes not only the nourishment of humanity but also the nourishment of the personality of that individual himself. Let us recall the verse (24/55) quoted earlier: "Allah has promised to those amongst you who believe and work deeds consistent with the divine laws that He will of surety grant them in the land, inheritance (or power) as he granted it to those before them; that he will establish in authority their دين 'Din', the one which He has chosen for them and that He will change (lived) to one of security and peace." This is followed by saying : يعبدونى 'The will he subservient to me (alone) and not associate aught with me."

This has made it abundantly clear that عبوديت or subservience to Allah can only be accomplished if the believers are in power and have an independent State of their own, where they can lead a life consistent with the divine laws. An independent State is not required for the purpose of worship which can be carried out even under the rule of non-believers. Before the Quran was revealed to Muhammad (P.B.U.H.); the concept and practice of 'Din' were nowhere to be seen in any part of the world, but 'Religion' prevailed every where. As explained already, there is concept of 'worship' which is common and not that of subservience to the laws of Allah. Thus the Arabic speaking non-believers began to translate the word ( عبادت ) into worship'. Therefore, in places where the word ( عبادت ) occurred in the Quran, in relation to non-believers, it shall mean 'worship' and where it is used in relation to those who believe in the Quranic concept of Allah, it shall mean, 'subservience to Allah by the believers and the Sovereignty of Allah." The Quran has amply made it clear that it is in fitness with man's creation not to bow down before anything except the divine laws:

Wama khalaqtu aljinna waal-insa illa liyaAAbudooni (51/56)

"I have created men, civilised and uncivilised, only to become subservient to Me."

It is a grand proclamation of independence and freedom of man, a freedom from the subservience of all except Allah. But by subservience to the laws of Allah, you do not do anything for the benefit of Allah, in fact it is for your own benefit. 'Hurriyyat' or freedom and 'Istaghna' or independence are the two attributes of Allah's personality and thus the development of these attributes in man, means the growth and nourishment of his own personality. This is illustrated in the later part of the verse (1/4) **اياك نستعين**

**اياك نستعين** "Is usually translated as " And thine aid we seek."

There are so many other words in Arabic language which are equivalent to the word 'aid' in English, but the selection of words in the Quranic text is unique. It brings into focus, not only the meaning of the particular verse in which it is placed, but it also reflects the Quranic teachings as a whole. Now let us explain the word **نستعين**.

**استعان** Istaan, root **ع و ن** means as animal in the height of its youthfulness, with fully developed and well balanced capabilities. Thus **استعان** means, one's wish for the full development and balancing of his personality and to seek some body's help for this purpose. Allah Himself is called **مستعان** "one whose help should be sought".

Accordingly **اياك نعبد و اياك نستعين** means we use all our capabilities according to your laws and injunctions and we seek your help for the nourishment and balancing of our personalities, which purpose can be achieved by your guidance only. (We should neither be **محكوم** slave of any one, nor **محتاج** dependent).

On realising that Allah is our 'Rabb', He is 'Raheem' 'Rahman' and 'Malik-e Yaumid- Din' and also on realising our short comings and His all sufficient power, we at once bow down and pray for His help, because it is He only who can help us. Any human action is preceded by an idea which strikes one's mind. The more acute is the wish to do a certain thing, the more efforts we make for its achievement. Every wish of a believer must be in consonance with the laws and Permanent Values given by Allah. That is why it is said:

[Wama tashaona illa an yashaa Allahu ... \(76/30\)](#)

"But you should not wish except what Allah wishes."

Allah wisdom comprehends the good of all.

However, it does not follow that as soon as a man prays before Allah, his needs must get fulfilled immediately. To achieve the result of his Prayers, one has got to act according to the programme laid down by Him.

[Yā ayyuhā allat̤heena amanoo istāAAeenoo biāḥḥsabri waalḥḥsalati inna Allāha maAAa alḥḥsabireena \(2/153\)](#)

"O You who believe! Seek help with patient perseverance and 'Salat' for Allah is with those who patiently persevere."

This is followed by saying; "Be sure We shall test you with some fear and hunger, some loss in goods and life, or the fruits (of your toil) but give glad tidings to those who patiently persevere (2/155)

The words [نستعين](#) and [نعبد](#) are in plural form and so is the case with the prayers of the believers. It indicates that believers can achieve their objectives, laid down before them by divine guidance, only through collective efforts and mutual cooperation:

[wataAAawanoo AAala albirri waalḥḥtaqwa wala taAAawanoo AAala al-ithmi waalAAudwani \(5/2\)](#)

"You cooperate with one another in matters of broadmindedness and matters consistent with the divine laws, and do not cooperate in matters of sin and enmity."

The word [اثم](#) is usually translated as 'sin', but it actually means acts which produce debility and prostration in your personality.

It can be concluded from the above that you cannot seek Allah's help while sitting in seclusion, as the mystics do.

As stated earlier, a human action starts with the idea that strikes one's mind. That is followed by making up his mind to do it practically. Supposing we make up our mind to reach a certain place. In order to reach the destination we must set our foot on the right track that leads to it. On the other hand, if we proceed on a wrong track, it shall be a waste of time and energy; and not only that we shall not reach the destined place, we shall be gradually drifting away from it. Thus when we seek the help of Allah to reach our destined place by proclaiming [اياك نستعين](#), we wish that He may lead us to the right path. Our wish thus comes to our lips in the form of a prayer, asking [اهدنا الصراط المستقيم](#)

### [Ihdina alḥḥsirata almustaqeema \(1/6\)](#)

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*"Guide us to the straight path which leads us to our destination in the hereafter."*

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The first word in the verse (1/6) is [اهدنا](#) which means "We seek guidance." As stated earlier, the word 'Rabubiyyat' means the provision of sustenance to an object, from its initial stage to the stage of its final destination. Accordingly every individual object in nature has got to follow which that particular object cannot reach its final stage of development. That is what is meant by guidance

from Allah which is open, manifest and conspicuous. During the course of evolution variations occur amongst individuals at each stage. Individuals having variations unsuited to the particular conditions in nature, are eliminated, where as those whose variations are favourable to the environments, continues to exist and reproduce. The Quran says:

[Sabbihī isma rabbika al-aAAala Allathee khalaqa fasawwa Waallathee qaddara fahada](#) (87/1-3)

"Glorify the name of your 'Rabb', most High. He initiated the creation, and further (by eliminating all that is surplus) gave it order and proportion: who ordained measures and [ثم هدى](#) granted guidance."

Thus it is our Rabb, who cherishes, guards from harm, sustains, grants all means and opportunities for the development of man. He endows us with forms and faculties exactly suited to what is expect of us and to the environments in which our life is cast, providing, to every thing, due order and proportion. Moreover, He has ordained laws and decreed by which we can develop and fit ourselves in his whole scheme of evolution prepared for all His creation. When Pharaoh asked Moses, who is your Rabb? Moses replied: our Rabb is He who gave to each (created) object its form and nature, ( [ثم هدى](#) ) and gave it guidance.

[Allahu nooru alssamawati waal-ardi ...](#) (24/35)

"Allah is the light of the heavens and the earth."

The light of revelation prevails all over the universe. He guides the heavens:

[...waawha fee kulli sama-in amraha...](#) (41/12)

"The Rabb inspired in each heaven its mandate."

He Guides the earth:

[Bi-anna rabbaka awaha laha](#) (99/5)

"For that the Rabb inspired her the earth".

And He guides the animal kingdom.

[Waawha rabbuka ila alnahlī](#) (16/68)

"Thy Rabb inspired the bee."

His guidance to mankind was revealed to His 'Rasools' ; the last revealed book being the Quran:

[... qad jaakum mina Allahi noorun wakitabun mubeenun](#) (5/15)

"There hath come to you light from Allah in the form of a perspicuous book."

Thus Allah guides His creation in different ways: As stated earlier, the guidance to the physical world is direct, through physical laws initiated by Him, which are ingrained in the very substance of inanimate objects. For example, the fire burns, water flows from above downwards, objects expand on heating, the maximum density of water is at 4 °C etc. The animals also receive guidance direct, by means of physical laws and instincts. Carnivorous animals like lion, tiger etc., eat meat and not vegetables. The herbivorous animals like sheep and goats eat vegetables, not meat. A swan floats on water, a dog walks on the ground. All the three forms of honey bee, queen, workers and drones have their specific functions to perform as guided by their Rabb. These are instance of guidance by instinct. In the case of man however, the guidance is direct as well as indirect. The human body is controlled by the same physical laws and instincts as in the case of other animals. For example, man's digestion, respiration, reproduction etc are controlled by the same physical laws as in the case of other animals. A newly born baby begins to suck milk from the mother's breast immediately after birth and that is by instinct. Human personality, on the other hand, is guided indirectly by means of laws given to mankind through the messengers of Allah.

Man is bestowed with a measure of free will and is expected to use it in such a way as to bring his whole being in harmony with the universal Will and Law. For this he will have to answer for the right use of his talents and opportunities. Thus it is said:

[Inna AAalayna lalhudā Wa-inna lana lal-akhirata waal-oolā \(92/12-13\)](#)

"Verily we take upon Ourselves to guide (mankind) and verily unto Us (belong) the End and the Beginning."

Abraham, the messenger of Allah, said to his father and his idol worshipper companions:

[Allathee khalaqanee fahuwa yahdeeni \(26/78\)](#)

"Who created me and it is He who guides me (to my destination)."

When Adam fell in to disgrace and got disappointed about his future, Allah assured him against disappointment by saying:

[fa-imma ya/tiyannakum minnee hudan faman tabiAAa hudaya fala khawfun AAalayhim walā hum yahzanoona \(2/38\)](#)

"And if, as is sure, there comes to you هدى guidance from Me, whosoever follows My guidance, on them shall be no fear, nor shall they grieve.

It follows from the above verse that the Allah has taken upon Himself the responsibility for the guidance of mankind, although His messengers. A Nabi or messenger of Allah was the first to receive guidance and through him if was

imparted to the rest of mankind. Thus in the case of Muhammad (P.B.U.H.), the last of His messengers it was said :

Wawajadaka dallan fahada (93/7)

"He found thee wandering (in search of reality) and He gave thee guidance."

The guidance to a 'Nabi' is called 'The Book', which acts as a nucleus for the spread of divine laws. The guidance to the last Nabi (P.B.U.H.) is contained in the Quran:

Inna anzalna AAalayka alkitabā liInnāsi biAlhaqqi famani ihtada falinafsihi waman dalla fa-innama yadillu AAalayha wama anta AAalayhim biwakeelin (39/41)

"Verily We have revealed the book to thee in truth for (instructing) mankind. He then, who receives guidance benefits his own 'self': but he that strays injures his own 'self'. Nor are thou set over them to dispose of their affairs."

It clarifies the point that the task of a 'Nabi' was to carry the guidance to humanity but not to force them to follow him against their will, because if they reject his teachings, the account of rejection is with the Allah's law of requital. It was not the divine intention, to provide guidance to mankind forcibly, as it was the case with lower animals who are bound to obey:

Inna hadaynahu alssabeela imma shakiran wa-imma kafooran (76/3)

"We showed him the way, whether he gracefully accepts it or rejects it."

That is because man is bestowed with the faculty of 'freedom of choice' which forms the basis of evolution of his 'Self'. Moreover it was beyond the reach of a 'Nabi' to make every individual follow the divine guidance, howsoever much he desired.

"It is true that you will not be able to guide every one whom you love; but Allah guides those who act according to His laws and He knows best those who receive guidance."

It means that guidance is meant for those who make up their mind to reach the destined place and not for those who do not make any attempt to move. It is said further:

Afaanta tusmiAAu alssumma aw tahdee alAAumya waman kana fee dalalin mubeenin (43/40)

"Can you then make the deaf to hear or give direction to the blind or to such who wander in manifest error."

Thus the one who has no intention to hear or to open his eyes, shall sink deeper and deeper into error. Only those can receive guidance who make strenuous efforts to find the path which leads to the destined place:

Waallatheena jahadoo feena lanahdiyannahum subulana wa-inna Allaha lamaAAa almuhsineena (29/69)

"And those who strive in our (cause) we will certainly guide them to Our paths: for verily Allah is with those who do right.

Although the way of Allah is one straight path **وصراط المستقيم** man has often strayed from it in all directions. But those who make efforts to get to the right path, we lay open for them numerous ways or possibilities, so that they might come back to it.

Consequently true guidance one can get only from Allah:

... qul inna hudā Allāhi huwa alhudā ... (2/120)

"Say, the guidance of Allah, that is indeed the (true) guidance."

The caravan of humanity can not reach its destination without it, because the revelation unveils the ultimate human destination as well as the road that leads to it with its clearly visible sign-posts. On the other hand, one who daily recites the Quran, the only book of divine guidance, now available on the face of earth, but practically makes no effort to set his foot on the right path, is like the one who daily consults a railway Time Table but has neither any intention to go anywhere, not makes any attempt to move to the railway station. His consultation of the Time table is a waste of time.

صراط المستقيم

## SIRAT-E-MUSTAQEEM

صراط المستقيم is usually translated as "straight path" As a matter of fact it is only the word **صراط** which means the 'straight path' **مستقيم** is an addition to it. The root of the word **مستقيم** is **ق و م** the word **قيام** has also got the same root. **قيام** 'Qayam' means 'to stand up'. It is apparent that only that person is able to stand who has got well balance nervous and muscular systems. If the control of nervous system over the muscular system is lost, that person shall not be able to stand up. By implication **صراط المستقيم** means, a well balance, Well-leveled and absolutely straight path. That brings in to focus a very important concept of life. The Quranic words present a peculiar combination of the promotion of positive concepts, along with the condemnation of negative and unreal concepts. The word **صراط** is a true example of it.

The ancient concept of life - Human intellect invented the idea of a cyclic order of life. Ancient Greeks, when they pondered over the heavenly bodies travelling inside their respective orbits, came to the conclusion that human life like heavenly bodies runs in a cyclic order. A circle, as we know start at a certain point and ends at exactly the same point. Pythagorus, a Greek philosopher and a renowned Geo-meter, born in the island of Samas near Greece, in 582 B.C., introduced the idea of 'Transmigration of Soul' which means that a man born in this world, gets himself polluted by his misdeeds and that this stigma can be wiped out only by leading a devoutly religious life, which happens to appear and re-appear in a cyclic order.

The doctrine of Salvation is based on the belief in the original sin. The followers of most religions are Obsessed with the idea of Sin and their chief aim is to lessen its hold on their souls. However, each religion has got its own distinct view, as regards the source of sin and the means by which it can be eradicated. In Hinduism, Muktiy or salvation is conceived as liberation from 'Awagawn' or the cycle of 'death and rebirth'. The doctrine of 'Karma', explains why one man is born in a well to do family; and the other in a poor family, doomed to a life of misery. That is so because in his previous life, the former had lived virtuously, while the latter committed sins which he had to expiate in the present life. In order to get rid of the pollution of sin, the human soul is sent back to this world, after his death, in the garb of a lower animal. Thus the soul has got to pass through different garbs not once, but millions of times, in order to achieve the same status of purification form which it started. These cycles go on and on. But it is important to realise that if its aim is to instill the lore of virtue and the hatred of evil, in the mind of man, how can it be accomplished through the cycle of alternative death and birth; because no memory of his former life exists in the mind of man.

Vedantic philosophy (Hindu mysticism) presents the same idea in a slightly different form. It is essentially a pantheistic creed - That the individual soul has its source in the cosmic soul. It was separated from its source because of some unknown cause. The soul is lonely and unhappy. And longs intensely of reunion with its source. That can be achieved only by running away from the world of matter and submitting one's self to the rigorous discipline which is prescribed in vedas. Salvation for an individual soul lies in its merging again into the Infinite soul. This again is another version of the cyclic order of human soul.

Christianity - also inculcates in its followers the dogma of 'original sin'. They say that Adam and Eve were guilty of disobedience to God, and were punished by expulsion from heaven. Every man is born with his soul stained by the original sin. He can wipe out this stain only by 'belief in the Christ' and by living a life of asceticism and hard discipline. Salvation means, the regaining of the state of bliss which was forfeited by man through the original sin, not by daring adventure but by self - abnegation and refusal to take part in the affairs of the world. The aim is not self-fulfillment by self-renunciation. Such was the teaching of the church in medieval ages.

Thus the Vedantic concept of asceticism was borrowed successively by Jews, Christians and Muslim Soofis, which gave birth to so many distorted views about human life: the main theme of the cyclic order of human life being that its ultimate objective is to reach the point from where it started.

The Quranic concept of life is different. The holy Quran emphatically rejects the idea of cyclic order but impresses upon man that his life moves on a straight, forward and uprising path and that the aim of human life is not Salvation but Achievement. According to the holy Quran, a human Personality is not the part of Allah's Personality. Every Personality is an indivisible entity which can not be divided into parts. A part of an object, separated from its whole, leaves that object incomplete and defective. By division a personality remains no more a Personality. Thus human Personality is not a part of Allah's personality. Allah bestows upon each human individual an undeveloped Personality and the object of man is to provide development to his own Personality so as to enable it to pass through various evolutionary stages, leading to its final stage of destination which lies in the hereafter. Thus our prayer before Allah **اهدنا الصراط المستقيم** "Guide us to straight path", not only repudiates the false concept of the 'cyclic order' of life, it also places before man a positive and constructive programme which brings forward and raises step by step the human Personality:

[Latarkabunna ṭabaqan AAan ṭabaqin \(84/19\)](#)

"Surely you are (and shall be) raised from one stage to another, step by step."

The Quran says further:

[... inna rabbee AAalaḡ sirātin mustaqeemin \(11/56\)](#)

The usual translation of the verse is " Verily it is my 'Rabb' who is on the straight path." But it actually means that **"every component of the entire**

**universe moves forwards on a straight and uprising path in consonance with the laws initiated by Allah.**

In the human world, the one who steps on the right path first is a 'Rasool', a messenger of Allah. That is why the last messenger of Allah (P.B.U.H.) is addressed by saying :

[Faistamsik biallathee ooḡiya ilayka innaka AAalaḡ sirātin mustaqeemin \(43/43\)](#)

"So hold fast to the revelation sent down to thee" Verily thou art on the Straight Path."

The concepts underlying the words **اياك نعبد** " We are subservient to you", followed by saying **اهدنا الصراط المستقيم** "Guide as to the path that is straight' are combined together when it is said:

Inna Allaha rabbee warabbukum faoAAabudoohu hatha siratun mustaqeemun (3/50)

"(O Rasool ! say) it is Allah Who is our Sustainer. Then be subservient to Him. This is the path that is straight."

The word in the سبيل verse (5/18), that follows, needs further elucidation:

...qad jaakum mina Allahi noorun wakitabun mubeenun Yahdee bihi Allahu mani ittabaAAa ridwanahu subula alssalami wayukhrijuhum mina alththulumati ila alnnoori bi-ithnihi wayahdeehim ila siratin mustaqeemin (5/15-16)

"There has come to you from Allah a (new) light and perspicuous Book, wherewith Allah guides all who seek His good pleasure ( سبيل السلام ) to ways of peace and safety and leads them out of darkness, by His command, unto the light and guides them to the path that is straight."

The word سبيل is the plural of the word سبيل which means a track, a path, or a line of travel or motion. The point that needs clarification is that straight path that leads to man's destination is one, but in the above verse the word سبيل has been used which is plural.

Explanation - Man, depending upon his intellect alone, without the divine guidance, is often surrounded by darkness, at every step of his life. But those who earnestly seek the light of divine guidance are not left alone unattended Allah guides them at every step and shown them the ways ( سبيل ) which lead to the straight path which is one. That light, that guidance lies inside a perspicuous or clearly understood Book named the Quran.

*Sirata allatheena anAAamta AAalayhim ghayri  
almaghdoobi AAalayhim wala alddalleena (1/7)*

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"The path of those who strived in consonance with your laws and won your favours, but not the path of those who disobeyed your laws and met slavery, hunger, humiliation and destruction: Nor the path of those who stray."

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After the above said description of the concept of the 'path that is straight', we now come to its objective and the consequences of travelling on that path, with a picture of those who already traveled on it. The verse 1/7 describes the path of انعمت عليهم those on whom Allah bestowed his favours. This gives as a vivid picture of the fruits of what is sown by those who put 'Din in to practice; the fruits of which may appear in this world or in the hereafter. The results of putting 'Din' into practice, serve as a standard by which we can judge whether a certain people are actually bestowed by the favours of Allah, and whether our belief in Allah and Quran, as well as our deeds, are indeed in consonance with the divine guidance? And if this is not so, it is only a self-deception to think that we believe in Allah and do good deeds.

تنعيمة Means a plant that grows on water, and has got the characteristics of having soft, delicate and evergreen leaves. At the same time, the root ن ع م bears the concept of height and achievement. Thus a building situated on a hill top is called النعمة The word is also used for a land mark placed on a height. The above concepts of the root ن ع م make it clear that every aspect of human life, which is pleasant, expansive, soft and highly place, is the manifestation of نعمة . Those possessing these virtues are called منعم عليه 'Munim Aleh.'

The holy Quran explains the word نعمة by means of explicit examples of the prizes or awards by Allah, in the verses that follow:-

1. Freedom from the bondage of a tyrannical rule is a نعمة from Allah:

Yā banee isrā-eela othkuroo niAAamatiya allatee anAAamtu AAalaykum waannee faddaltukum AAalā alAAalameena (2/47)

"O children of Israel! Call to mind نعمتي the favour which I bestowed upon you and I preferred you to all others."

Wa-ith najjaynakum min ali firAAawna yasoomoonakum soo-a alAAathabi yuthabbihoona abnaakum wayastahyoona nisaakum wafee thalikum balaon min rabbikum Aaathheemun (2/49)

"And remember we delivered you from the people of Pharaoh: They set for you hard tasks and punishments, slaughtered your sons and let your women folk live; therein was a tremendous trail from your Rabb".

2. Superiority over the contemporary nations of the world is a نعمة favour from Allah, as shown in the verse (2/47) above.

Again the followers of Muhammad (P.B.U.H.) are guided that they shall be rewarded with mastery over others, if they remained steadfast in their efforts and belief in the divine laws:

Walā tahinoo walā tahzanoo waantum al-aAAalawna in kuntum mu/mineena (3/139)

"So lose not heart; nor fall in to despair, for you must gain mastery, if you are true in you belief (in Allah)."

Solomon was king bestowed by Allah with great power and wisdom. He prays before his Rabb:

... waqala rabbi awziAAanee an ashkura niAAamataka allatee anAAamta AAalayya waAAalā walidayya ... (27/19)

"O my Rabb! "So order me that I may be grateful for نعمتك the favours which thou has bestowed on me and on my father.

3. The fulfillment of the necessities of life is نعمة from Allah.-

The permanent dwellings; homes of rest and quiet, the temporary dwellings (tents) during travel, the shade of the hills, the garments to protect you from hurt, are all (نعمة) favours bestowed by Allah upon mankind, during peace and war and during rest and travel and they direct man to be grateful to Allah by bowing down before His laws:

WaAllahu jaAAala lakum min buyootikum sakanan wajaAAala lakum min juloodi al-anAAami buyootan tastakhifoonaha yawma thaAAanikum wayawma iqamatikum wamin aswafiha waawbariha waashAAariha athathan wamataAAan ila heenin. WaAllahu jaAAala lakum mimma khalaqa thilalan wajaAAala lakum mina aljibali aknanan wajaAAala lakum sarabeela taqEEKumu alharra wasarabeela taqEEKum ba/sakum kathalika yutimmu niAAamatahu AAalaykum laAAallakum tuslimoona (16/80-81)

"It is Allah who made your habitations, homes of rest and quiet for you; and made for you out of the skins of animals (tents for) dwellings, which you find so light (and handy) when you travel and when you stop (in your travels; and out of their wool and their soft fibers and their hair, rich stuff and articles of convenience (to serve you) for a time. It is Allah Who made out the things He created, some things, to give shade; of the hills he made some for your shelter; He made for you garments to protect you from heat, and coats of mail to protect you from you (mutual) violence. Thus does He complete His favour نعمة on you that you may bow down to His laws.

4. Allah's bounties are manifest, as well as hidden -Allah has subjected to mankind all that is present in the heavens and on the earth, and thus Allah's bounties work for man at all times. In things which we can apprehend with our senses we can see these bounties before us; but even then there are so many others which are beyond our knowledge and comprehension and which we can discover only by exploration of nature.

Alam taraw anna Allaha sakhkhara lakum ma fee alssamawati wama fee alardi waasbagha AAalaykum niAAamahu thahiratan wabatatan ... (31/20)

"Do you not see that Allah has subjected to you all things in the heavens and on the earth and has made نعمة His bounties flow to you in exceeding measure (both) seen and unseen."

5. Allah's favours are innumerable - It is beyond the capacity of man to count all the favours bestowed upon him by Allah. In fact Allah has given man all that is required by him, in order to fulfill his needs. Yet man is ungrateful:

Allahu allathee khalaqa alssamawati waal-arda waanzala mina alssama-i man faakhraja bihi mina alththamarati rizqan lakum wasakhkhara lakumu alfulka

litajriya fee albahri bi-amrihi wasakhkhara lakumu al-anhara. Wasakhkhara lakumu alshshamsa waalqamara da-ibayni wasakhkhara lakumu allayla waalnnahara. Waatakum min kulli ma saaltumooahu wa-in taAuddoo niAAamata Allahi la tuhsooha inna al-insana la/haloomun kaffarun (41/32-34)

"It is Allah Who has created the heavens and the earth and sends down rain from the sky and with it brings out fruits where-with to feed you: it is He Who has made the ships subjected to you, that you may sail through the sea by His command; and the rivers He has made subjected to you. And He has made subjected to you the sun and the moon, both diligently pursuing their courses; and He has made the night and the day subject to you. And He gives you all that you ask for. But if you count **نعمة الله** the favours of Allah, never will you be able to number them. Verily man is given up to in justice and ingratitude."

6. **نبوت** 'Nabuwwat' is also a **نعمة** favour from Allah. As stated earlier man comprises two distinct entities- His physical body and his Personality or Self. The Self id given to man in a potential form and its nourishment and development depends on following the laws given to him through the messengers of Allah. Thus whereas all the bounties for the nourishment of his body are bestowed upon man, direct by Allah, the bounty for the nourishment of his Self comes through 'Nabies' who receive and further transmit this bounty to mankind in their capacity of being 'Rasools' :

Ola-ika allatheena anAAama Allahu AAalayhim mina alnnabiyyeena ... (19/58)

"Those were some of the 'Nabies' on Whom Allah did bestow His favour."

However, it must be kept in mind that 'Nabuwwar' is a favour which is not earned by a 'Nabi', through his personal efforts. He is rather chosen for it by Allah on account of his being considered fit for discharging the huge responsibility entrusted to him :

This ( **نعمة** ) favour of Allah came to an end with His last messenger (P.B.U.H.) Thus it is said :

... alyawma akmaltu lakum deenakum waatmamtu AAalaykum niAAamatee... (5/4)

"This day I have perfected Your 'Din' for you and completed my favour upon you.

This ( **نعمة** ) from Allah now lies safely in the pages of the Quran and shall serve as a guidance to mankind for all times to come.

7. Those who are the recipients of this favour brought to them by the last 'Rasool (P.B.U.H.) can be recognised by one great symbol, i.e. they get united in-to one compact Ummat and never get divided amongst themselves:

WaiAAtaṣimoo biḥabli Allāhi jameeAAan wala tafarraḡoo waothkuroo niAAamata Allāhi AAalaykum ith kuntum aAAdaan faallafa bayna quloobikum faasbaḡtum biniAAamatihi ikhwanan wakuntum AAala shafa ḥufratin mina alnnari faanqathakum minha kathalika yubayyinu Allāhu lakum ayatihi laAAallakum tahtadoona (3/102)

" And hold fast together by the cable of Allah (i.e., the way of life prescribed by the divine laws) and be not divided amongst yourselves. And remember with gratitude ( **نعمة الله** ) Allah's favour on you; for you were enemies and He joined your hearts in love, so that by His grace ( **نعمة** ) you became brethren; and you were on the brink of the pit of fire and He saved you from it, Thus does He make His signs clear to you, that you may be guided (to the path that is straight)."

The bounties bestowed by Allah to mankind are the results of belief in Allah and the balanced deeds consistent with the divine laws:

...niAAama ajru alAAamileena (29/58)

"An excellent reward for the toilers.:

Succession of power on the earth is one such reward:

WaAAada Allāhu allatheena amanoo minkum waAAamiloo alssalihati layastakhliḡannahum fee al-arḡi kama istakhliḡa allatheena min qablihim ... (29/58)

"Allah has promised to those among you who worked deeds consistent with the divine laws, that He will of surety grant them in the land inheritance (of power), as He granted it to those before them."

Yet there are other gifts from Allah, Such as the provision of Sustenance to his creatures.

The other important issue is that the bounties bestowed by Allah are not the ultimate objective by themselves. The real objective is how to make use of them. If they are used in the right direction i.e., in consonance with the divine laws and Permanent Values prescribed by Allah, they become ( **شكر نعمت** ) i.e. means of expression of thankfulness to Allah. On the other hand if they are made use of against the divine laws they become ( **كفران نعمت** ) i.e., disbelief in Allah and His bounties. The Quran says that you shall be questioned as to how you have spent the bounties provided to you by Allah :

Thumma latus-alunna yawma-ithin AAani alnnaAAeemi (102/8)

"Then you shall be questioned about the bounties you enjoyed."

If you make wrong use of the gifts and awards from Allah, the result is that you get deprived of them and thus the ultimate result is fear and hunger. The Quran illustrates it by means of an example:

Wadaraba Allahu mathalan qaryatan kanat aminatan mutma-innatan ya/teeha rizquha raghadan min kulli makanin fakafarat bi-anAAumi Allahi faathaqaqa Allahu libasa aljooAAi waalkhawfi bima kanoo yasnaAAoona (16/102)

"Allah sends forth a parable: a city enjoying security and quiet, abundantly supplied with sustenance from every place ( فـكـفـرت بـانـهـم الله ) yet was it ungrateful for the favours of Allah: So Allah made it taste of hunger and terror in extremes (closing in on it) like a garment, because of the (evil) which (its people) wrought."

That evil was the result of their misdeeds.

Power should become the instrument of good. On the other hand those who are selfish leaders make it the instrument of evil:

Alam tara ila allatheena baddaloo niAAamata Allahi kufran waahalloo qawmahum dara albaawari. Jahannama yaslawnahā wabi/sa alqararu (14/28-29)

"Have you not turned thy vision to those who have changed ( نعمة الله ) the favour of Allah in to blasphemy and caused their people to descend to the House of destruction - in the Hell. They will burn therein - an evil place to stay in."

However, a nation is not doomed on account of the misdeeds of its leaders alone, the entire nation becomes responsible for it. The Quran has laid down the principle:

Thalika bi-anna Allaha lam yaku mughayyiran niAAamatan anAAamahā AAala qawmin hatta yughayyiroo mā bi-anfusihim waanna Allaha sameeAAun Aaaleemun (8/53)

"Because Allah will never change the favour which He has bestowed on a people, until they change what is in their (own) Selves. And verily Allah is He Whose powers of hearing and knowledge are boundless."

Thus the deprivation of bounties, bestowed by Allah, do not come into play until a mental or psychological change grips a nation. It means that it is a change in the psychological condition of a nation which determines the grant or deprivation of a people, of Allah's favours. If the change is in consonance with the divine guidance it takes up the form of 'belief in Allah'. And if it is in the opposite direction, it becomes a 'disbelief in Allah.'

When a believer says اِيَّاكَ نَعْبُدُ " We are subservient to you alone", the response from Allah is :

waoshkuroo niAAamata Allahi in kuntum iyyahu taAAabudoona (16/114)

"And be grateful for the favours of Allah, if it is He to Whom you bow down."

Thus to demonstrate practically, that we are grateful to Allah, is by spending the bounties provided by Him, in consonance with His laws. This process shall serve, not only to maintain Allah's favours but also, to promote their expansion:

Wa-ith taaththana rabbukum la-in shakartum laazeedannakum wala-in kafartum inna (14/7)

" And remember! Your Rabb caused to be declared (publicly) 'If you are grateful I shall add more (favours) unto you; but if you show ingratitude, truly My punishment is terrible indeed."

But what is this punishment which is the result of disbelief in Allah? This shall be explained in the later part of the verse 1:7

ghayri almaghdoobi AAalayhim wala alddalleena (1/7)

In verse 1/6 and 1/7 it was said

Ihdina alssirata almustaqeema Sirata allatheena anAAamta AAalayhim ghayri almaghdoobi AAalayhim wala alddalleena (1/6-7)

" Guide us to the straight path of those past nations who strived in consonance with your laws and won your favours; but not the path of those who disobeyed your laws and met slavery, hunger and humiliation."

It must be emphasised that it is wrong to conclude from the above that Allah guides either way; to the path of those whose portion is favour, or to the path of those whose portion is humiliation. As a matter of fact, it is man himself who takes the right or the wrong course, by either obedience or disobedience respectively, of the divine laws. Consequently the guidance is attributed to Allah.

The Quran also clarifies a subject, at different occasions, by bringing two opposites together ; for example ( نور ) light opposite of ( ظلمت ) darkness, ( أعمى ) blind opposite of ( بصير ) one possessing vision etc. Similarly the above verses show contrast. The meaning is clear - "Show us the path of those who won your favour and not your wrath.

مغضوب عليهم

غضب Root غ ض ب carries concept of intensity, 'heat', 'domination', 'firm grip' and 'stability'.

When the word is used in relation to man, it mans wrath and aggressive feelings. On the other hand, Allah is free of sentiments. Thus the word غضب

when used in relation to Allah, means 'the firm grip of the Allah's law of requital.' A similar concept underlies the verses that follows :

[Inna baṭsha rabbika lashadeedun \(85/12\)](#)

" Truly strong is the grip of your Rabb."

[FaAAaṣa firAAawnu alrrasoola faakhathnahu akhthan wabeelan \(73/16\)](#)

"The Pharaoh disobeyed the 'Rasool' and We seized him with a firm grip."

The same is the concept of the غضب i.e. the destruction and disruption resulting from the disobedience to the divine laws based on the immutable law of requital. Thus the meaning of the words إنعام and غضب is clarified by bringing these two opposites together.

While describing the favours of Allah on the children of Israel, it was said :

[...waannee faddaltukum AAala alAAalameena \(2/47\)](#)

"And that I preferred you over all other nations."

And after that when they left the path which brought preference to them, it was said:

[waduribat AAalayhimu althhillatu waalmaskanatu wabaoo bighadabin mina Allahi \(2/61\)](#)

"And they were covered with humiliation and misery: They drew on themselves the غضب Wrath of Allah."

The same is called the shame in life.

[... wathillatun fee alhayati alddunya ... \(7/152\)](#)

"And humiliation in the life of this world."

This also shows that the shame and humiliation on account of treading on the wrong path appear in the present world.

The word ذلت (humiliation) (in 2/61) signifies dependence, weakness, slavery, disappointment and lowliness of all kinds. It is opposite to the word افضاليت in (2/47). Both these words clarify the meaning of what is إنعام favour and what is غضب or Grip of Allah.

Life is the other name for heat and motion; constant struggle being the essence of life. The nations who make halt on the high way of life, lose heat. It results not only in their halt but also in their drift backwards, because the contemporary nations, in the meantime push forward. Thus مسكنت is the

point where movement stops. As stated earlier, this stoppage of motion, amongst a certain peoples, is the result of a psychological change and the loss of Allah's favours occurs only after this change. In other words, the stoppage of forward move on the highway of life is the result of mental stagnation. Such a nation no more ponders over the ever changing issues of life. They start ancestral worship and become blind followers of what they received from their ancestors. They stop, keeping their eyes open and desist from the use of their intellect. They become entrapped in the process of thinking themselves as fallible and their ancestors infallible. The Quran has rejected this mode of thinking and has explicitly explained that such people are bound to face the

غضب Wrath of Allah. Hud, the messenger of Allah, addressed the Aad people and called upon them to become subservient to the laws of Allah; to which the replied:

[Qaloo aji/tana linaAAabuda Allaha wahdahu wanathara ma kana yaAAabudu abaona fa/tina bima taAAiduna in kunta mina alssadiqeena \(7/70\)](#)

"You have come to us that we become subservient to laws of Allah alone and give up the cult of our forefathers? Bring us what you threaten us with. If so be that you tell the truth.

[Qala qad waqaAAa AAalaykum min rabbikum rijsun waghadaabun atujadiloonanee fee asma-in sammaytumooha antum waabaokum ma nazzala Allahu biha min sultanin faintathiroo innee maAAakum mina almuntaathireena \(7/71\)](#)

"He said, ( رجس ) punishment and ( غضب ) penalty have already come upon you from your Rabb. You dispute with me over names which you have devised, you and your forefathers, without authority from Allah? Then wait, I am amongst you, also waiting."

In spite of the warning by Hud that their dispute over imaginary gods and their inventions of mind shall bring them disaster, they remained adamant, whitt the result :

[waqataAAna dabira allatheena kaththaboo bi-ayatina wama kanoo mu/mineena \(7/72\)](#)

"And we cut off the roots of those who rejected Our signs and did not believe,"

That is how the ancestral worshippers of the people of Aad, became washed off from the surface of the earth.

How beautiful the Quran has clarified the fate of the two sets of people respectively the ( منعم عليه ) 'Munim Aleh' (on whom Allah bestowed His favours) and the ( مغضوب عليه ) 'Maghdub Aleh' (on whom Allah has brought death and destruction).

A distinguishing feature of the people who are (منعم عليه) is that (as explained earlier) their hearts are joined together:

... faallafa bayna quloobikum ... (3/103)

"And He joined Your hearts in love."

But when a people get disunited, mutual slaughter and bloodshed begins and as a result the wrath of Allah falls upon them :

Waman yaqtul mu/minan mutaAAammidan fajazaohu jahannamu khalidan feeha waghadiba Allahu AAalayhi walaAAanahu waaAAadda lahu AAathaban AAatheeman (4/93)

"If a man kills a believer intentionally, his recompense is جهنم 'Jahannum' to abide therein (for ever), and (غضب) Wrath and curse of Allah are upon him and a dreadful penalty is prepared for him."

جهنم is the place where the march forward of life stops.

سخط الله The word سخط occurs in the Quran and is more or less equivalent to the word (غضب). The place where this word has occurred need attention, as it involves the important issue of 'duplicity' - The way of life prescribed by Allah, is a complete whole which must be followed in its entirety. In other words it must be organised in such a way that any issue that arises, must be settled according to the code of laws prescribed by Allah. But it so happens that some people, decide certain issues under the code of divine laws and leave the rest to be decided by man-made laws. This Dualism results in degradation and humiliation:

... afatu/minoona bibaAAdi alkitabi watakfuroona bibaAAdin fama jazao man yafAAalu thalika minkum illa khizyun fee alhayati alddunya wayawma alqiyamati yuraddoona ila ashaddi alAAathabi ... (2/85)

Then is it only a part of the Book that you believe in, and do you reject the rest? But what is the reward for those among you who behave like this? - but disgrace in this life and on the day of judgement they shall be reserved for the most server penalty."

Such people are termed by the Quran as مغضوب عليه. At yet another place this has been further clarified by saying that there are people who, after the receipt of guidance from Allah, revert to their old way of life. This is termed as ارتداد - that is, in some matters they again begin to follow those who are averse to the way of life prescribed by Allah. The result of this attitude is terrible:

Inna allatheena irtaddoo AAala adbarihim min baAAdi ma tabayyana lahumu alhuda alshshaytanu sawwala lahum waamla lahum Thalika bi-annahum qaloo

[lillatheena karihoo ma nazzala Allahu sanuteeAAukum fee baAAadi al-amri waAllahu yaAAalamu israrahum Fakayfa itha tawaffat-humu almala-ikatu yadriboona wujoohahum waadbarahum Thalika bi-annahumu ittabaAAoo ma askhata Allaha wakarihoo ridwanahu faahbata aAAamalahum \(47/25-28\)](#)

"Those who turned back as apostates, after guidance was clearly shown to them, - the Evil One has instigated them and buoyed them up with false hopes. This, because they said to those who hate what Allah has revealed, 'We will obey you in part of (this) matter' but Allah know their (inner) secrets. But how (will it be) when the angels take their souls at death, and smite their faces and their backs? This because they followed that which called forth **سخط الله** the wrath of Allah's (law of requital) and they hated Allah's good pleasure; so He made their deeds of no effect."

The people described above become too impervious to facts and truth, because without the courage to oppose Allah's cause openly, they secretly intrigue with Allah's enemies and say that they will follow them part of the way, and that by remaining partly in their camp they will be far more useful as spies than by going over altogether. But one can just imagine what they shall feel when they come to face death and see the dreadful results of their double dealing standing before them and that how all they did during their life-time have become wasted.

The last words of the above said verse 47/28 " So He made their deeds of no effect," are significant.

Those who practice Duplicity might think that they shall at least be rewarded for part of their deeds that are good. The Quran says that all their deed including the good ones shall go waste. If one gets a prescription from a competent doctor and mixes it up with an another prescription from a quack, it shall result in total waste, not partial. The organization of 'Din' requires all its true components, each lying at its proper place and exactly fitting one into the other. The laws and permanent values revealed to the messengers of Allah when mixed with man-made ideas become **شرك** which means the acceptance of dual sovereignty. One God, one and the final code of laws laid down by Him and given for the guidance of man through His last Rasool (P.B.U.H.), one united Ummat' obedient to His laws, means ( **توحيد** ) 'Tauheed'. Any adulteration in the divine laws amounts to accepting the subservience of others than that of Allah and that is what is called 'Shrik'. Islam is a Din or a way of life, not religion. In religion people profess a nominal belief in Allah, they corrupt it by their belief in others, as if they were Allah's partners or had some share in the shaping of world's destinies:

[Wama yu/minu aktharuhum biAllahi illa wahum mushrikoona \(12/106\)](#)

"And most of them believe not in Allah, without associating (others as partners) with Him."

(Other references (39/45, 40/12, 17/47).

Such people remain 'Mushrik' even after their nominal belief in Allah.

The holy Quran has described the fate of **مغضوب عليه** at so many other places. However, there is one more point in this connection, which requires further elucidation. As described earlier in the verse (16/112), people who are ungrateful to the favours bestowed upon them by Allah, are bound to face hunger and terror. But, on the other hand it is said:

**Wakam ahlakna min qaryatin baṭirat maAAeeshataha fatilka masakinuhum lam tuskan min baAAadhim illa qaleelan wakunna nahnu alwaritheena (28/58)**

"And how many populations we destroyed, which exulted in their life (of ease and plenty), those habitations of theirs, after them are deserted - All but a miserable few! And we are their heirs."

The question arises, if hunger is the sign of **غضب** wrath of Allah, how those people, who lived a life of ease and plenty, met destruction? It is quite clear that only that economic system can lead to development and prosperity, in which the distribution of wealth is balanced and proportionate. In a system in which this balance is disturbed, one section of the population becomes rich and wealthy and the rest of the people are doomed to misery and hunger. This results in the destruction of the entire nation both rich and poor. The Quran says:

**Kuloo min tayyibati ma razaqnakum wala tatghaw feehi fayahilla AAalaykum ghadabee waman yahliil AAalayhi ghadabee faqad hawa (20/81)**

"Eat of the good things we have provided for your sustenance, but commit no excess therein, lest my **غضب** wrath should justly descend on you and those, on whom descends my wrath, do perish indeed."

A balance exists in the organisation of the entire physical world, without which the structure of the universe would crumble. So is the case with the human society which surely meets destruction if it is unbalanced:

**Alshshamsu waalqamaru bihusbanin WaalInnajmu waalshshajaru yasjudani Waalssamaa rafaAAaha wawadaAAa almeezana Alla tatghaw fee almeezani (55/5-8)**

"The Sun and the moon follow courses exactly computed. The stars (in the heaven) and the trees (on the earth) are equally subjected to the divine laws. And the celestial bodies He raised high and put them (in space) perfectly balanced. That you may not transgress the limits (O mankind!) prescribed by the Creator for the maintenance of balance (in the human society)."

If man transgresses the limits laid down by the divine laws, the result is **غضب** and destruction. The Quran not only prohibits to follow the way of life that leads to **غضب** it also ordains not to develop friendly relations with those on whom the **غضب** of Allah descends:

Alam tara ilā allatheena tawallaw qawman ghadība Allahu AAalayhim ma hum minkum walā minhum (58/14)

"Have you not turned your attention to those who turn (in friendship) to such as have the غضب wrath of Allah upon them? They are neither of you, nor of them.

It means there is nothing common between the believers and such مغضوب عليه people.

At yet another place it is said :

Ya ayyuha allatheena amanoo la tatawallaw qawman ghadība Allahu Aalayhim... (60/13)

O ye who believe! turn not (for friendship) to people on whom is the غضب of Allah."

The Quran has thus amply clarified the path of those on whom the wrath of Allah descends.

The last part of the verse (1/7) is:

ولا الضالين "(Nor the path) of those who stray"

As stated earlier, the Quran, in order to clarify issues, brings opposite words for the sake of contrast. As has been said before, the word مغضوب عليه was in contrast to the word منعم عليه Here the word ضلالت (to go astray) has come in contrast to the word هدايت (guidance). Basically ضلالت root ض ل ل

Means 'perplexion or confusion', to wander about'. 'to go astray', 'to become hidden or to disappear', 'the amalgamation of different things in such a way that it becomes difficult to separate them, such as milk mixed with water'. A Nabi, before revelation descends on him is dissatisfied with the prevalent wrong nations and wanders about in search of the truth. This state of ضلالت confusion remains till he receives guidance from Allah. About Muhammad (P.B.U.H.) the Quran says:

Wawajadaka dallan fahada (93/7)

"And He found thee wandering (in search of the truth) and He gave thee guidance."

It may, however, be kept in mind, that the above verse only refers to the state of mind of a Nabi before revelation, as a Nabi does not get Nabuwat by his own efforts: he is rather chosen for it by Allah.

Wandering in search of Truth - The case is, however, different with an ordinary man. Any body other than a Nabi also passes through a phase of confusion, when he is in search of a truth. The one who remains satisfied with the prevalent notions of his age and makes no efforts to the right path. According to White-Head, the well-known modern philosopher, it is idol-worship to keep one's self stuck to the beliefs and concepts of his age without pondering over them. The Quran says that those who do not make use of their intellect, never come to the right path, they are destined to meet (a life of standstill and destruction):

Walaqad thara/na lijahannama katheeran mina aljinni waal-insi lahum quloobun la yafqahoonah biha walahum aAyunun la yubsiroonah biha walahum athanun la yasmaAoonah biha ola-ika kaal-anAAami bal hum adallu ola-ika humu alghafiloonah (7/179).

"Many are amongst the people (both) uncivilized and civilized, We have made for جهنم They have minds wherewith they understand not, eyes wherewith they see not and ears, wherewith they hear not, they are like cattle, بل هم اضل nay more confused, for they are heedless (of warning)."

These are the people about whom the Quran points out to the Nabi (P.B.U.H.) that they are like dead people and that you cannot make them hear :

Fa-innaka la tusmiAAu almawta wala tusmiAAu alssumma aldduAAaa itha wallaw mudbireena Wama anta bihadi alAAumyi AAan dalalatihim ... (30/52-53)

"So verily you can not make the dead to hear, not can you make the deaf to hear the call, when they show their backs and turn away. Nor can you lead back the blind from their عن ضللتهم straying."

Those people who do not make use of their intellect are divided by the Quran in to two categories:-

1. Those who when they reach a cross road of life, do not think it necessary to find out which way to go, or to ask some-body to guide them to the right path. They follow, without hesitation, the way a crowd is going. They believe in the way they have inherited from their forefathers. The Quran says that when they reach 'Jahnam' after following thin path, they shall be questioned, as to why they took this path? Their answer shall be:

Waqaloo rabbana inna ataAAna sadatana wakubaraana faadalloona alssabeela (33/67)

"And they would say: 'Our Rabb! We obeyed our chiefs and our great ones and they misled us as to the (right) path.

2. The people in the other category are those who know what is right but their self-interests compel them not to follow the right path. They are

overcome by their sentiments which make them blind, thus making them unable to use their intellect and knowledge. The Quran says:

Afaraayta mani ittakhathā ilāhahu hawāhu waadallahu Allāhu AAalā AAilmin wakhatama AAalā samAAihi waqalbihi wajaAAala AAalā baṣarihi ghishawatan faman yahdeehi min baAAadi Allāhi afalā tathakkaroonā (45/23)

"Then you see not such a one who takes as his god, his own vain desires? **واضله الله** And Allah has knowing (him as such) left him astray, and sealed his hearing and his heart (understanding) and put a cover over his sight. Who then will guide him after Allah has withdrawn guidance? Will you not then receive admonition?"

Thus the only way for them to come to the right path is by forsaking their vain desires. But it may be emphasised that human desires and sentiments are not by themselves the object of contempt, it is only their wrong use which leads to destruction. If human sentiments are subjected to divine guidance, they bring about constructive results. Quran says:

Fa-in lam yastajeeboo laka faiAAalam annama yattabiAAoona ahwaahum waman aḍallu mimmani ittabaAAa hawāhu bighayri hudan mina Allāhi inna Allāha lā yahdee alqawma *alḥthalimeena* (28/50)

"But if they harken not to thee, know that they follow their own lusts: **ومن أضل** and who is more astray than the one who follows his own lust, devoid of guidance from Allah. For Allah guides not people given to wrong doings."

In modern times there is another aspect of ( **ضلالت** ) (going astray) which has assumed a wide-spread form and which is often considered a great achievement of this age; and that is Western Democracy which is based on the concept that a decision by majority is always right. The Quran rejects this concept and say:

Wa-in tuṭiAA akthara man fee al-arḍi yuḍillooka AAan sabeeli Allāhi in yattabiAAoona illā *alḥthanna* wa-in hum illā yakhrūsoona (6/116)

"Were you to follow the common run of those on earth, they will lead thee away from the way of Allah. They follow nothing but conjecture, they do nothing but lie."

On the other hand:

Inna rabbaka huwa aAAalamu man yaḍillu AAan sabeelihi wahuwa aAAalamu bialmuhtadeena (6/117)

"The Rabb know best ( **من يضل** ) who strays from His way. He knows best who they are who receive guidance."

This guidance is further illustrated by saying:

... famani ittabaAAa hudaya fala yadillu wala yashqa (20/123)

"Whosoever follows My guidance ( لا يضل ) will not lose his way ( ولا يشقى ) nor fall into hardships and misery (like the ones who are deprived of my favours)"

As described earlier, one concept of the root ض ل ل is that when two different things are mixed in such a way that they can not be separated from each other, it is called ( ضلالت ). When ( الدين ) prescribed by Allah changes in to religion, it becomes a mixture of Truth and Falsehood, which become amalgamated to such an extent that it becomes difficult even to recognise either of the two constituents. Then, those indulged in religious business, sell the goods they have manufactured, like a milkman who sells a mixture of milk and water. The Quran says:

Wamina alnnaasi man yashtaree lahwa alhadeethi liyudilla AAan sabeeli Allahi bighayri AAilmin wayattakhithaha huzuwan ola-ika lahum AAathabun muheenun (31/6)

"But there are among men who purchase idle tales ( ليضل عن سبيل الله ) to mislead men from the path of Allah, without having the knowledge (of it) and making it the object of ridicule: for such there will be a humiliating penalty."

Here the Quran clarifies the point that there are people, who have no knowledge of ( الدين ) or the way of life prescribed by Allah. Yet they call themselves ( علما ) men of knowledge. They attract around them a large number of their followers whom they keep spellbound, by means of their glib tongue and fairy tails and makes such a fantastic show of their religious knowledge that people who mistake it as 'Din', begin to think the path of Allah a ridiculous affair,

A cursory look at the nations of the world, reveals that most backward people are those who are sunk deep in religion (as opposed to 'Din' or the way of life prescribed by Allah) and, consequently, are leading a life of hunger and humiliation. That is ( عذاب مهين ) the humiliating penalty or shameful doom described in the above verse.

There is yet another point; related to an unbalanced economic system which the Quran describes as a manifest error - when it is pointed out to men, who are wealthy as well as selfish, as to why do they not spend their wealth on those who are needy? Their reply is that it was God's will to keep such people needy and poor. If it were His will, He himself could have provided them sufficient wealth. The Quran says that such people are in manifest error:

Wa-itha qeela lahum anfiqoo mimma razaqakumu Allahu qala allatheena kafaroo lillatheena amanoo anutaAimu man law yashao Allahu atAAamahu in antum illa fee dalalin mubeenin (36/47)

"And when they are told, 'spend ye (of the means of sustenance) with which Allah has provided you' the non-believers say to those who believe, 'Shall we then feed those whom if Allah had so willed, He would have fed (Himself)? - (Allah's reply is) you are in nothing by ( ضلل ميين ) manifest error".

The error pointed out by Allah is that He does not distribute, means of sustenance, directly to individuals. It is through an economic system, organised by ( منعم عليه ) (those on whom Allah showers His bounties) that the equitable and balanced distribution of wealth is brought about amongst individuals.

The above references from the holy Quran have amply clarified the issue, as to who are the people who are ( ضالين ) (who stray from the path of Allah.) A believer repeats these words several times, during his every-day prayers, all day long, "Our Rabb! Guide us to the straight path, the path of those who followed your laws and won your favours. They were not the people who disobeyed your laws and met slavery, hunger, misery and humiliation, nor were they the people who were led astray by their base sentiments or by other self interested men".

The Quran lays further stress on the point by saying:

[...wala tattabiAAoo ahwaa qawmin qad dalloo min qablu waadalloo katheeran waadaloo AAan sawa-i alssabeeli \(5/77\)](#)

"Nor follow the vain desires of people, who went wrong in times gone by, who ( اضلو كثيرا ) misled many and ( ضلو ) strayed (themselves) from the even path."

However, when the Quran describes those people on whom falls the wrath of Allah ( مغضوب عليه ) and who stray from the straight path ( ضالين ), it does not mean any particular nation. It refers to all people past or present, who leave the path of Allah. An idea is prevalent amongst we Muslims that ( مغضوب عليه ) are Jews and ( ضالين ) are Christians and we keep ourselves under the self deception that these words do not apply to us. As a matter of fact, we are in the habit of attributing, all that is bad, to other people and all that is good to ourselves; and think that our destiny is bound to be paradise and their destiny is bound to be hell. But self-deception does not change the reality, We can claim ourselves to be a منعم عليه nation, only after we put ourselves to a test, against the standard laid down by the holy Quran.

I conclude with the humble prayer:

[.... rabbana la tu-akhithna in naseena aw akhta/na... \(2/286\)](#)

"Our Rabb' ! Take us not into account, if we forget or fall in to error."

**THE PURPORT IN NUTSHELL**

## Bismi Allāhi alrahḡmāni alrahēemi

### Alḡamdu lillāhi rabbi alAAalameena Alrahḡmāni alrahēemi

Pondering over the beauty, proportion and perfection of the living and the non-living objects of nature, excites in man a voluntary praise of the One Who sustains every component of this universe, from its initial stage to the stage of its final destination: by processes of slow, gradual and ascending evolution, interrupted off and on by spontaneous revolutions.

### Maḡliki yawmi alddeeni

The sustenance of human body is a gift from Allah: but the nourishment and development of his Personality is subject to the deeds he performs, the results of which are under complete control of Allah's law of requital, in this world and in the hereafter.

### Iyyaka naAAabudu wa-iyyaka nastaAAeenu

(Our Rabb!) we bow down to your laws for the development of our potentialities, by using our capabilities for the benefit of humanity, and we seek your help in shaping our lives within your prescribed patters.

### Ihdina alssirata almustaqeema

Guide us to the straight path which leads to our destination in the hereafter.

### Sirata allatheena anAAamta Aalayhim...

"That is, the path of those past nations who strived in consonance with your laws and won your favours, on whom you bestowed power on the earth with all its pomp and glory, whom you relieved from the bonds of tyrannical rules, whom you gave superiority over contemporary nations of the world, and whose necessities of life you fulfilled, providing them a prosperous life of peace and plenty,

### ...ghayri almaghdoobi Aalayhim...

They were not the people who had disobeyed your laws and consequently came into the grip of your law of Requital which gave them slavery, misery, hunger, humiliation and destruction.

### ...wala alddalleena

Nor were they the people, who were lead astray by following their own baser sentiments or by following other self-interested and wrongful people, like their chiefs and ancestors, and thus fell into hardship and misery.

