

A SYNOPSIS OF A SERIES OF TALKS ON

Al Insan

THE HUMAN BEING



The Human Being

"Indeed We have created the human being in the best of makes..."

Suratut Teen - 95:4

☪ Who is 'Insaan' ? Most difficult but most important question that faces any human being. Self knowledge is the most essential of sciences.

☪ Insaan made up of body, nafs & ruh. Ruh binds the body to the nafs. Allah in the Qur'an says: *"And they ask you (O Muhammad) about the ruh; Say: The ruh is from the command of my Lord, and you are not given of the knowledge but a little."*

Suratu Bani Israil - 17:85

☪ The body is a complex system of inter related physical and non-physical systems. The grossest being the digestive system and the subtlest being the nervous system. Total ecological balance necessary for peace.

☪ The nafs is broadly speaking the mind, heart and the intellect. (To be expounded in later lectures)

☪ Creation of the human being - Allah wished to create a khalifa - representative. The angels protested - Do You want to create one who will cause mischief and shed blood...? Allah replies: You do not know what I know. (Suratul Baqara 2:30- 34) HE creates man from the basest of materials - clay as in pottery - mud. Then blows His spirit into it. When angels protest that they are created of smokeless fire and Adam of mud, Allah asks Adam to recite the names (knowledge) to them.



The angels of all ranks do sajda to Adam - so lofty is the position of the human being with knowledge.

- ☪ The human being is therefore 2 dimensional. Basest - mud and most sublime - spirit of Allah. It is up to the human being to choose - to be just mud (thus the saying dust to dust) or most sublime. As long as he/she has not made a decision - the struggle will initiate perpetual frustration within him/her.
- ☪ Another point in the creation of the human being from the Qur'an. Allah calls upon all creation to accept a trust - All refuse except the human being. Therefore the human being also a trustee of Allah. Lots of interpretations of this trust - it is the human being's freewill. This is the superiority the human being has over animals and plants. E.g. No animal can fast for 2 days voluntarily... This also shows relationship between the human being and Allah. Allah possesses absolute will over everything. The human being over his/her fate.
- ☪ Possession of freewill immediately creates a responsibility. A human being must know and plan how to fashion his/her fate/destiny.
- ☪ First the human being must recognise his/her dual dimension.
- ☪ Other religions have seen Allah versus Shaytan as forces in nature. In Islam there is only one absolute force in nature - Allah. The battlefield for Shaytan is the human



being who is 2 dimensional. Shaytan is not standing against Allah but against the divine half of the human being.

- ☪ History shows all civilisations chose either reclusiveness or worldliness. E.g. Chinese civilisation -maximum use of natural resources. Lao Tzu emerges which moved the spiritual side of the human being and they were driven to monasteries. Later Confucius appears and swings China back to worldliness. In India- the Vedic influence moved them towards reclusiveness - There are still those who lie on beds of nails or stand on one foot for years - they have totally ignored the world. In Europe, Rome turned to crime, bloodshed and power. Jesus orients Rome towards the hereafter - Renaissance is born and the pendulum swings back. One Professor Chandel states - “Today’s world has dedicated itself to producing only life’s amenities. It signifies the aimless direction of technology.. Humanity needs another Jesus.” The Prophet (S.A.W.) used to show his disapproval at those who spent all their days fasting and nights in ibada renouncing the world, their other duties and rest completely. He said they had deviated from his sunnah.
- ☪ Islam recognises the 2 dimensional nature of the human being providing a perfect balance.
- ☪ The human being programmed to want perfection. What is a perfect human being from the viewpoint of Islam? We have human being who are physically sound or defective. Do we consider blindness, deafness,



paralysis....as defects to virtue, personality or humanity? e.g. Famous Greek philosopher - Socrates was a very ugly man - but the ugliness did not count as a defect. Therefore a human being has a physical personality and a spiritual personality - which are distinct. One can be physically sound yet be spiritually ill (even if it means having a 'complex').

- ☉ The Prophet (S.A.W.) was the perfect human being combining the 2 dimensions perfectly. The fruits of his training can be seen not only in his ahlulbayt but in Abu Dharr, Salman, Hudhayfa.... The companions of Husayn (A.S.) also portray this perfection.

THE NAFS

- ☉ The essence of the human being is the nafs. The conscience, or the 'I' The Prophet (S.A.W.) has said: "He/she who knows his/her nafs knows his/her Lord."
- ☉ It is the meeting point of the clay (mud) and the spirit of Allah blown into the human being. Any movement towards the clay aspect represents a descent whilst if the spiritual aspect dominates then order and correct proportion will be given to all of the human beings existence - the body too will not be denied it's due, but all aspects will have correct proportion. In Suratush Shams Allah says: *"I swear by the nafs and the order and proportion given to it.....Indeed he/she who purifies it is successful, and he/she who corrupts it fails..."*
- ☉ Descartes* (founder of modern philosophy 1596-1650) said: "I think therefore I am". Gide said "I feel therefore I am". Camus said: "I revolt therefore I am"



*He invented the method of systematic doubt. He determined that he would believe nothing which he did not see clearly and distinctly to be true. By applying this method he gradually became convinced that the only existence for which he could be certain was his own. On the basis of the certainty of *'I think therefore I am'* he set to work to build up again the world of knowledge which his doubt had laid into ruins.

☪ Broadly speaking the nafs is the mind, heart and the intellect.

☪ The mind is basically 'thought flow' . It consists of a computer like memory bank which stores information from past experiences and knowledge but is activated by the input/process/output of thoughts. It is only a mind if it is dynamic, otherwise it is a dead data bank. The mind is never empty of thoughts. As it is a flow there must be quality, quantity & direction

☪ Imam Ali (A.S.) in Nahjul Balagha (Sermon 204) - "Even your mind and your limbs will bear testimony before Him to your thoughts and actions.....Your conscience and your mind are His spies against you. Your private life is fully known to Him." The world famous neuro surgeon Wilde Penfield writes - "Parts of the brain works like an audio-video recording, preserving the minutest details of everything a human being sees or hears. There is hidden in the brain, a record of the stream of consciousness....it holds a record of all the things an individual was once aware of ..but which are lost to voluntary recall after time... This is not memory, as we usually use the word...it is much more real then remembering...."

☪ The heart is the seat of emotion. It has the power of desire, anger and imagination, which used correctly are



all necessary. It is 'happy' if desires are fulfilled. 'Unhappy' if they are not.

- ☪ The intellect or the power of reasoning is the greatest gift given to the nafs. It sheds light on the condition of the mind and the heart, distinguishes between right and wrong, good and evil.... If it dominates the mind and the heart, then the nafs has succeeded. Imam Ali (A.S.) has said: *"Allah has characterised the angels by intellect without desire and anger and animals with anger and desire without intellect. If the human beings intellect (reason) dominates his desire and anger, he rises to a station above the angels...."*
- ☪ At the time of creation the nafs is like a clean tablet which has no features - good or evil. As a human being progresses through life, the nafs develops distinctive features which are directly related to thoughts & actions.
- ☪ Accordingly the nafs falls into 3 main categories - Ammara, Lawwama & Mutmainna.
- ☪ Nafsul Ammara - Most stubborn and selfish states of the nafs which commands to evil. Neither compassion nor reason appeals to this nafs. He/she thinks of him/herself and as long as his/her wants are satisfied and he/she can get away it. Then it is 'all right'. The longer the nafs remains in this state the more it solidifies and the less the chances of change.
- ☪ Kibr (pride) is the major illness of the nafs which leads to the state of Ammara. It hides one's shortcomings



from one's view thus preventing their removal. *"...thus does Allah seal every proud arrogant heart."* **Qur'an - 40:35** Example of horse who would not cross river when he saw his own reflection until reflection was distorted.....

- ☪ Shaytan had knowledge but downfall was Kibr. Same with Abu Lahab, Abu Jahal.

- ☪ Nafsul Lawwama - It's root is 'Lawm' which is to reproach (constructively criticise). It means that the thick skin enveloping the nafs (Ammara) occasionally cracks open a little and a ray of light enters in (guilty conscience). Allah in the Qur'an swears by Nafsul Lawwama emphasising its importance. *"...Nay! I swear by the nafsul lawwama.."* **Qur'an 75:2**

- ☪ Nafsul Lawwama is one's personal preacher. Imam Ali (A.S.) - "He who is not granted a preacher within him/herself, will not be affected by other's preaching." Onus to listen to Lawwama is upon oneself.

- ☪ Narration of Habib Al-Najjar from Suratu Yaseen. Each one of us has a Habib - A voice from the innermost like an echo sounder. The choice is ours just as it was given to the people of Antioch - they chose to kill Habib...

- ☪ We shall call this awareness. It is the key to intelligence, to awakening of reality. The daily salaa always begin with Allahu Akber (Allah is greater than anything, anyone....). This is the highest state of awareness, in



that his/her first thought is that someone else is greater and is to be sought. The Qur'an constantly exhorts - don't you see, don't you think, don't you comprehend, can't you hear?

- ☉ The opening aya of Suratul Insaan jolts us to awareness of what is the 'I' we are so 'proud' of and to the full responsibility of the individual for his/her fate. - *"Has not a time passed over the human being when he/she was a thing not remembered?" Indeed. We created the human being from a sperm drop, mingled, to test him/her -We made him/her hearing, seeing..." Qur'an 76:1,2* Who are you? Was there not a time when you were not even thought of? The test is whether we will be faithful to Him (Allah) or carried away by our self image worshipping the trappings of the world.
- ☉ The first thing to be aware of is that one is responsible for his/her speech, behaviour & deeds both in the individual aspect and the collective aspect in relation to the outer world.
- ☉ The outer world cannot be isolated from the 'I'. Although one of the first things a child learns is his/her individuality, we are not separate from the cosmos. We do not end at the boundary of our skins. Everything is inter-related. Thus the Prophetic tradition that all Muslims are like parts of a single body, if one part is hurt, the others parts rush to it's aid.
- ☉ The second thing to be aware of is the imminence of death and that the sword of time will cut through



every plan. Suratul 'Asr in the Qur'an emphasises the importance of time. Mawlana Rumi about death writes: "O you who attempt to flee death in your fear, It is yourself that you fear - use your intelligence! It is your countenance (character) that is ugly, not the visage of death; Your nafs is a tree on which death is a leaf."

- ☪ The final awareness which gives strength to listen to and follow 'nafsul lawwama' (one's own personal preacher), is certainty in the day of Qiyama. Awareness that our striving, sorrow & joys will not go to waste, that we are not advancing towards total annihilation but moving towards Him. In other words, our residence in this body of clay (mud) is temporary.
- ☪ Rousseau - a renowned philosopher (1712 -1778) writes in his work 'Emile': "I know that I am destined to die, why then should I create attachments for myself in this world?... Emile my son! If you wish to live happily and rationally, attach yourself only to the beauties that are imperishable; try to limit your desires and hold duty in higher esteem than all else.....Accept nothing, until your conscience allows you..."
- ☪ A unique and valuable advantage is enjoyed by one who is aware of the hereafter in that he/she knows that his/her future is dependant on his/her conduct and deeds.



Our goal is to achieve a nafsul mutmainna. Our aim is 'qurba' (nearness) to Allah.

☪ We are programmed to love perfection. It is our fitra (nature). Perfection lies only with Allah. "My God! The honour that You are my Lord is sufficient for me, and the pride that I am your slave is sufficient for me. You are exactly as I would have loved You to be; so make me as You would love me to be."

☪ Nafsul Mutmainna - 'Itminaan' means certainty and trust. The nafs is therefore at peace (content). It is the nafs that says: "Everything will end, everything is relative except He from whom I came and to whom I shall return." The Qur'an says: "*O Nafsul Mutmainna, return to your Lord, well pleased and well pleasing; Enter among My servants; Enter My Janna.*" **Qur'an 89:28-30**

☪ Spiritual journey towards attaining Nafsul Mutmainna - One must have a determination to hold fast to the path that will stimulate the nafs to attain its goal. Abu Ali Sina (Avicenna) defines this as "...that longing which a human being feels when he/she finds him/herself lonely and helpless and wants to be united with the truth so that he/she may not have a feeling of loneliness and helplessness." e.g. of Abu Rayhan Biruni - mathematician, sociologist & historian (contemporary of Abu Ali Sina).

☪ Observing all the waajibaat and keeping away from all the muharrimaat.



- ☾ Spiritual exercise (riyadhat). In Arabic the word riyadhat means training a young horse. A daily programme with effective time management of reflection, nafila prayers, salatut tahajjud, Qur'an recitation and gaining knowledge. However, it must be with moderation, and continuance. Imam Sadiq (A.S.) "...Eiman has 10 degrees like the steps of a ladder which are climbed one by one. If you find anyone below you by one step, pull him/her up to you gently and do not burden him/her with what he/she cannot bear, or else you will break him/her." e.g. convert who was pushed to far.
- ☾ Continued tahara - to be in a state of wudhu and/or ghusl as far as possible.
- ☾ The spiritual traveller must constantly assess him/herself. Imam Musa ibn Ja'fer (A.S.) has said: "He who does not take account of him/herself once every day is not one of us."
- ☾ Less food, less sleep, less talk. Imam Sadiq (A.S.) -
 "There are 3 things that Allah does not like in a person : Too much sleeping, too much laughing and eating after the stomach is full."
 "The mu'min enjoys hunger. For him hunger is the food of the nafs." "Silence is a part of wisdom. It is a sign of every virtue." *"They used to sleep only a little while at night and at dawn used to ask forgiveness"* **Qur'an - 51:17,18**
- ☾ Remembrance of Allah - *"He/she who ignores the remembrance of the Rahmaan, We assign to him/her a*



Shaytan who becomes his/her associate.” Qur’an 43:36.

- ✧ Nahjul Balagha - Sermon 198 - A companion of Imam Ali (A.S.) called Hammam wanted signs of a virtuous person (one with nafsul mutmainna); he requested the explanation to be so vivid and graphic that he could visualise it. Some of the signs are: *“...they have visualised mentally the glory of Allah in such a way that beyond Him nothing in this world frightens or overawes them....when they come across an aya (in the Qur’an) describing Janna., they feel attracted towards it developing a keen desire to reach it, while an aya about Jahannam makes them feel if they are seeing and hearing the raging fire and the groans of those who are suffering it’s tortures.....”* *“You will find he/she is firm in faith, resolute though tender hearted and kind...he/she is greedy for knowledge...he/she forgives those who have harmed him/her fully knowing that they have wronged him/her....thought he/she does good deeds he/she feels nervous of his/her shortcomings....every night he/she thanks Allah for having passed one more day under His Rahma (mercy) and every morning he/she starts his/her day with dua....”*

- ✧ **Eiman** - It is not merely an intellectual understanding of spiritual beliefs. Some think it is nothing but a mental assent to truth i.e. if you believe something is true then you are exercising eiman; however that is far from the



truth and is a definition that deceives many. Eiman is believing with the heart, will, with ibada and actions.

☪ The opposite of eiman is doubt, reluctance and indecision.

☪ *“Said (Firawn): And who is the Lord of you two O Musa!. Said he (Musa): Our Lord is He who gave everything it’s form and then guided it.” Quran 20:49,50* Professor Ravaillet writes: “In order to have a complete conception of the world, it is enough to know that the number of galaxies in the infinite expanse of the universe is greater than that of all the grains of sand on all the shores of the world.” Examples of Isaac Newton’s model of the universe, the bee - Suratun Nahl.

☪ Eiman is the axis around which the life of a child revolves. However, this eiman despite it’s purity is incomplete because it does not originate from consciousness accompanied by analysis. It therefore does not stand it’s ground when faced with doubts in later years. It is the duty of every human being irrespective of the ideas imparted to him/her by parents or the environment to exercise his/her mind, seek answers, and contemplate on him/herself and the world around until he/she arrives at a basis of firm belief, and personal and social behaviour in life.

☪ To know what eiman is, you have to see it in action. If you do not live it, you do not believe it. Even if one is on the right path, you will get run over if you just sit



there.. The Qur'an speaking of a group of nomadic Arabs who came to the Prophet (S.A.W.) saying "We have eiman" says "...*You do not have eiman, but say - we submit for eiman has not yet entered your hearts...*"

Qur'an 49:14 Why? They had refused to accompany the Prophet (S.A.W.) on the pilgrimage yet when they were afflicted by a famine, they flocked into Madina with their entire families to claim relief and professing eiman. Allah continues describing those who have eiman - "*Indeed the mu'mineen are those who have eiman in Allah and His rasul, they do not doubt after that, they strive with their wealth and their lives in the way of Allah...*" **Qur'an 49:15**

- ☉ Imam Ja'fer As-Sadiq (A.S.) explained the difference between Islam (in the personal sense) and eiman: "Eiman has a daar (zone) of it's own, just as Islam and kufr have. A person is a Muslim before he/she becomes a mu'min...So, when someone commits a big or small act which Allah has forbidden (sin), he/she comes out of the zone of eiman and loses his/her title to eiman, although the title of Islam still remains with him/her. And when he/she turns away from his/her sin and does tawba and istighfaar (repents), he/she returns to the zone of eiman." Imam Ja'fer As-Sadiq (A.S.) also said: "...Islam is the deen of Allah. One who acknowledges the deen of Allah is a Muslim, and one who acts according to that which Allah has commanded is a Mu'min." "Eiman is iqraar (testimony) accompanied with deeds and Islam is iqraar (testimony) without deeds."



- ☪ In the story from the Qur'an regarding Firawn, he summons his magicians in order to defeat Prophet Musa (A.S.). When they saw the miracles granted to Musa (A.S.), the magicians turned to eiman in the Lord of Harun & Musa. The furious Firawn, threatened them saying he would punish them with the worse of tortures - the cutting of their limbs. However, a revolution had taken place in the nafs of the magicians - they replied with steadfastness - *"Never will we prefer you (Firawn) to what has come to us of clear signs, and to Him who fashioned us, so you can order whatever you order; **for you can only order about the life of this world.**" Qur'an Suratut Taha 20:72* It is eiman which creates a feeling of outrage against corruption, exploitation, tyranny and oppression

- ☪ The centre point of eiman is therefore eiman in the unseen. *"...Those who have eiman in the unseen and establish salaa and they give (in the way of Allah) what We have provided them with.."* **Qur'an 2:3** Eiman in the unseen is not just a belief in Allah, the angels, the revelation, Qiyama, Janna, Jahannam... rather eiman in the relationship between one's nafs and the Creator. It is that which inclines us to serve only Him and at the same time tells us that because of this relationship we are helped through our dua to attain our goal. *"You only do We serve; to You only we ask for help."* **Qur'an 1:5**

- ☪ Eiman in the relationship between one's nafs and the Creator. The seed of this relationship is ingrained in our



fitra (nature). To be successful in this relationship one must have **spiritual freedom**.

- ☪ Freedom is a requisite for life and evolution and one of the greatest needs for all living creatures. It means the absence of obstacles in the way of growth. Human beings need both social and spiritual freedom.
- ☪ Social freedom is having freedom in connection with other individuals in society, so they do not hinder growth, do not imprison them, enslave them, exploit all their physical and mental powers in their own interests.
- ☪ With reference to the Bani Israil - Firawn tells Musa (A.S.) - *“What is your answer, Musa? These are my servants and slaves.”* **Qur’an 23:48** Firawn was open about his exploitation and enslavement - today human beings deprive others of their rights and freedom under the pretext of defending peace and liberty. Social freedom can only be secured when there is spiritual freedom.
- ☪ Spiritual freedom is freedom from one’s own shackles - prison (desires....) as against social freedom which is freedom from the bonds of others. Self purification is spiritual freedom. The most significant programme of the Prophets was to provide spiritual freedom. *“Those who follow the rasuland he removes from them their burdens and shackles which were upon them.....”* **Qur’an 7:157**



- ☪ This prison of the nafs is the worst of all prisons although it's walls are invisible as it renders the human being as the most helpless prisoner. Today, the human being is more knowledgeable & capable than in any other time freeing him/herself from the prisons of history, nature, social order, race, culture....yet the shackles - prison of the nafsul ammara remains the same. Neither science, technology, nor materialism can free him/her. Sequence of principles - the human being fulfils his/her needs and embraces comfort → comfort terminates into futility → futility ends up in rebellion → rebellion ends up in reclusiveness.

- ☪ The shackles and burdens collectively - the prison - can be called 'the love of the world'. It keeps the human being away from religious exercises, prayers and strengthens his/her physical nature. As a result it weakens his/her willpower.

- ☪ "One who passes his evenings and mornings in such a way that the world is his/her biggest concern, Allah ordains poverty between his/her 2 eyes and causes his/her affairs to be divided and wasted, while he/she does not attain anything but that which was apportioned for him/her. And as for one who passes his/her evenings and mornings while his/her biggest concern and goal be the hereafter, Allah puts contentment in his/her heart and gives a wholeness and unity to his/her affairs." **Imam Ja'fer As-Sadiq (A.S.)**



- ☪ The example of the world is that of sea water; the more a thirsty person drinks from it, the thirstier he/she becomes until kills him/her.” “Whosoever has a heart attached to the world, has 3 things attached to his/her heart - unremitting sadness, unfulfilled desires, & unachievable hope.” **Imam Sadiq (A.S.)**

- ☪ “Who is the most important among people?” **Imam Ali Zaynul Aabedeen (A.S.)** was asked. He replied: “ The one who does not regard the whole world to be equal to his/her worth.”

- ☪ Spiritual freedom can only be achieved when reason/willpower of the nafs dominates all other physical and material desires. Each one of the ibadaat and a’maals prescribed by sharia’, besides possessing heavenly forms (to be discussed in later lectures) are elements that produce their won specific effects on the nafs, little by little strengthening and perfecting it’s strength. Therefore, the greater the effort required for ibada, the more productive it is. *“The best of deeds are those which are the most difficult.”* **Prophet (S.A.W.)**
- ☪ Eiman manifests itself as 2 qualities in a human being - **sabr & shukr**. The English translations patience and thankfulness are too shallow to express the essence of these terms. *“Eiman is divided into 2 halves; one half lies in sabr (Patience) and the other half in shukr (thankfulness).”* **Prophet (S.A.W.)**

- ☪ **Sabr** - *“...Indeed Allah is with those who have sabr.”* **Qur’an 2:153** The Prophet (S.A.W.) said: “Sabr is of three kinds- Sabr at the time of hardship. Sabr in



regard to obedience & Sabr in regard to disobedience...”

- ☪ Sabr at the times of hardship is the lowest form of sabr. Hardships are of 2 types - The first comprise of those which come from Allah without an intermediary e.g. illness, infirmity, death of a near one... Here sabr means not to complain overtly, wail and injure oneself. As Imam Ali Zaynul Aabedeen (A.S.) said “When you are tried by a slip, do not complain of the Merciful to the merciless.” The second kind of hardship is that caused by other human beings whether by offensive words or otherwise. Sabr here means to prevent oneself from hating the offender if he/she is a Muslim, wishing him/her to come to harm, preventing one’s tongue from praying to Allah against him/her...The Prophet (S.A.W.) said: “A herald will call on the day of Qiyama - ‘Let those whose reward MUST be granted by Allah rise!’ and there shall arise those human beings who were forgiving of others.”
- ☪ Sabr with regard to obedience means persevering in the acts of ibada, showing zeal in performance and performing them in the correct and lawful manner. This sabr is helped by remembering Allah’s reward, both immediate and to come for obedience.
- ☪ Sabr with regard to disobedience means the sabr required in renouncing sins. The very beginning of a sin is a thought. Abandoning the thought is the first step. This kind of sabr is helped by remembering Allah’s threat of punishments in this world and in the hereafter. Anyone who puts his/her hand in the fire knowingly only does so because he/she wishes to burn him/herself. It does not as a rule happen. Why do we



avoid fire? Because our knowledge tells us it is dangerous and we are sure of this knowledge. In the same way those who strive to perfect their nafs, have yaqeen in the 'burning' power of sins and therefore avoid them. It is said that sabr is the commander of the mu'min's defence against sins. "Sins will take you further than you want to go; Sins will keep you longer than you want to stay, but sins will cost you more than you want to pay." It is said: "To abandon a single sin is of more benefit to the nafs than a years ibada."

- ☪ **Shukr** - *"..If you do shukr, surely I will increase for you (my favours).."* **Qur'an 14:7** Shukr means the appreciation of the ni'mah (blessings) of the Provider. The effect of shukr must appear in the heart, on the tongue, and in bodily actions and movements. Shukr is therefore compensating for the ni'mah (blessings) through niyya (intention), words and deeds. The opposite of shukr is kufr meaning to conceal, cover up....
- ☪ Shukr manifests itself in the heart as praise of Allah, contemplation of His creation, and His rahma on all creation.
- ☪ Shukr on the tongue manifests itself as expressing the praise of Allah as well as discharging the duties such as Amr bil Ma'ruf and Nahy anil Munkar.
- ☪ Shukr of the bodily members as obedience of His orders, worship and in preventing sins. e.g. The eyes should be used for studying His creation, reading His book and the ahadith of the ma'sumeen.



☪ Shukr rests on 3 supports. The first being the ma'rifa (knowledge) of Allah. This knowledge is only perfected when one realises that all apparent and hidden blessings are only from Allah. The second is humility, awe and delight of the blessings. It is appreciation of the blessings. Thirdly, it is action that result from this state - it produces an impulse for action. Prophet Dawud (A.S.) asked Allah - "O Lord! How can I do your shukr for my shukr is itself a blessing of Yours which requires thanksgiving!" Allah revealed to him: "O Dawud! When you have known that every blessing that you have is from Me, you have done my shukr." "One's shukr is complete when one says - 'Alhamdu lillahi rabbil 'aalemeen' (All praise belongs to Allah, the Lord of the worlds)" **Imam Ja'fer As-Sadiq (A.S.)**

☪ "There are 3 things in whose presence no harm can reach one - dua when afflicted, istighfaar for one's sins and shukr for Allah's blessings." **Imam Ja'fer As-Sadiq (A.S.)**

☪ **'Amalus Saalihaat** - 'Saalih' means righteous, right, godly, useful, good, proper.... Wherever Allah in the Qur'an mentions good deeds, it is always with 'eiman' (in over 65 ayaat). This is because - *"Say: Everyone acts according to his/her character...."* **Qur'an 17:84**

☪ The first requisite of a good deed is a truthful niyya (intention). "And intention is superior to action, or, rather, intention is the complete reality of the act itself" **Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.)** The success or failure of an act depends on the intention with which it



is done. Niyya is the base of a deed, according to it one's deed will either be good or bad, sound or unsound. The word niyya means the aim which makes one decide to do or say something. In the case of one with eiman, it means not to desire any reward for his/her action from anyone except Allah. E.g. The 3 days iftaar given by the Ahlul Bayt - Suratud Dahr.

- ☪ In the rational sciences, it is demonstrated that an objects actuality depends on it's form and not on it's matter. Niyya constitutes the form of a deed and the action it's matter. The apparent semblance of the salaa of Imam Husayn (A.S.) in it's element may not have differed from that of Umar ibn Sa'd, but whereas for Imam it was a means of nearness to Allah and had the highest spiritual form; for Umar ibn Sa'd it was just a physical action. The difference was niyya.
- ☪ The second requisite is submission to His orders with regards to the performance of ANY act. Submission comes with knowledge. Knowledge makes one aware of what is wajib, haram, mustahab, makruh & jaaiz, how to fulfil my wajibaat Those who worship without knowledge may end up receiving more harm than benefit. How many times has one who worships tired him/herself out in worshipping whilst persistently committing a sin. One who submits to the orders of Allah, should not begin anything unless he/she knows the amr (order) of Allah regarding the matter. i.e. is it wajib, haram.....what is the correct way of performing it?



- ☾ *“My abd (servant) draws nearer to Me with nothing more pleasing than that which I have made wajib on him/her, and then continues to draw near Me with mustahabaat until I love him/her; and when I love him/her I become his/her hearing when he/she hears, his/her sight when he/she sees.....Should he/she ask Me, I shall surely grant his/her request; should he/she ask Me for protection, I shall surely protect him/her;.....”Hadith e Qudsi*
- ☾ No deed, behaviour, thought, word and moral is lost from the most important to the most trivial. Each will appear as a form. We know that *“..the day when every nafs will find present whatever it has done of good and whatever it has done of evil, it will wish that the interval between itself and the evil was wide (both in time and space).....” Qur’an 3:29* *“....On that day shall come out people (from their graves) in groups, to be shown their deeds; then he/she who has done an atom weight of good shall see it and he/she who has done an atom weight of evil shall see it.” Qur’an 99:6,7,8.*
- ☾ In the past it was believed that there was a barrier between matter and energy. Today we know that matter can be transformed into energy. It is entirely conceivable that future scientific progress may prove the transformation of energy into matter. Every act (even speech) of a human being counts as a good or bad deed. It expends itself as differing forms of energy. We know that energy can never be destroyed, only converted into different forms. Therefore, the energy expended of our deeds is stored up in the archive of



nature established by Allah. One will find one's deeds 'illustrated' and 'manifested'. Good deeds will be manifested in attractive, pleasant figures which will be a source of joy and pleasure whilst evil deeds will be manifested as terrifying, harmful figures which will be a source of pain and suffering. *"On that day, the human being will become aware of all the deeds, good and evil, he/she has committed through out his/her life"* **Qur'an 75:13**

- ☛ Qays bin Asim relates that he visited the Prophet (S.A.W.) in Madina with some companions. Qays requested the Prophet (S.A.W.) to give them some words of admonition as they were desert dwellers and rarely got an opportunity to visit him. The Prophet (S.A.W.) replied: "Pride is followed by humiliation, life by death, the world by the hereafter. Everything is subject to accounting.....There is reward for every good deed and a punishment for every evil deed..." O Qays! You have a friend and companion who will be buried with you. When you are buried, he will still be alive...If your companion is noble, he will honour you, and if he is vile, he will torment you. He will be resurrected with you and you with him. No questions will be put to you; they will be directed to you. Choose then a worthy and righteous companion, for if your companion is righteous he will comfort you, but if he is wicked, you will wish to flee from him in terror. **That everlasting companion and friend is none other than your deeds."**

Reference of these notes are essentially from 'Qadha & Qadr' by Seyyid Mujtaba Musawi Lari



- ☪ **The human being is the author of his/her own autobiography.** He/she determines his/her own fate. Therefore what is **the role of qadr (measure) & qadha (divine decree).** Everything in this world is based on a precise calculation, logic and law. It has been put in its place according to an exact measurement, and it derives its defining characteristics from the causes and factors on which it is dependent.
- ☪ The Prophet (S.A.W.) said: “An age will come for the people of my Umma (community) when they will commit sin and injustice, and in order to justify their corruption and pollution, they will say -‘Allah’s qadr and qadha decreed that we act thus’. If you encounter such people, tell them I disown them.”
- ☪ Qismah (Kismet) - Its root word is ‘qasama’ which means to share, divide, distribute. We translate it as good or bad luck, fortune.. We call it lucky when a desired outcome has been enhanced by an unexpected occurrence. We usually call an event a misfortune when we expected a desirable outcome and the unusual occurred and the result disappointed us. These terms of luck and misfortune are expressions of ignorance because we do not have the knowledge of the relevant causes and effects.
- ☪ **Qadr (measure)** - Qadr means that Allah has created the world of being with a planned and systematic structure. In other words, it means the fixing of the limits and proportions of a thing, externally and objectively. Before executing his plan, an architect will prepare in his mind the qualities and dimensions of the complex he proposes to build. *"We have created*



everything according to a fixed proportion." Qur'an - 54:49 "God has fixed a quantity and proportion for all things." Qur'an - 65:3 e.g. the law of gravity.

- ✧ Imagine that someone is suffering from appendicitis. This is a qadr arising from a particular cause. Two additional, separate qadr await this human being - either he agrees to surgery, in which case he will recover his health, or he fails to agree, in which case he dies. Both of these choices represent a form of qadr. Qadr can, then, be interchangeable, but whatever decision he/she takes and acts upon will not be outside the sphere of what Allah has 'measured'. Wherever we go and whatever we do, we are in the embrace of His qadr.
- ✧ The Prophet (S.A.W.) has said: "None of you will have eiman, unless he/she believes in qadr - it's goodness it's badness, it's sweetness it's bitterness." If we do not believe that these laws are set, we will consider them to be sweet or bitter depending upon **our** reaction to the outcome of events. e.g. if we have acted wrongly, and the laws have an effect upon us, we will consider them bitter; yet they are there whether we like it or not.
- ✧ The Qura'n describes as divine norms the systems and laws of nature that rule over the world and follow inevitable and unchanging courses: *"The divine norm is unchanging."* **Qur'an 33:62** The unchanging norm of Allah's qadr, among other things, that: *"If a people provides itself with the capital of eiman and performs good deeds, it will be triumphant on the stage of life and win the vicegerency of the earth."* Qur'an 24:55 Another unchanging qadr: *"Allah will never change a*



society until its people change that society." Qur'an 13:11

- ☪ **Qadha (Final decree)** - It means something that is settled. The word qadha in Arabic means to decide, to settle, to judge. It has been used in the Qur'an in relation to giving a final verdict or a decisive action.

- ☪ The Prophet (S.A.W.) one day laughed until his teeth showed and said: "Do you not ask what causes me to laugh?" The people around him said: "Yes! Ya Rasulallah" He said: "I am surprised with the Muslims, for there can be no **qadha** that Allah makes upon him/her except the good end of his/her affairs."

- ☪ Imam Ali (A.S.) explained that qadr is like the nafs and action like the body. A nafs without the body cannot be discerned and a body without a soul cannot have life. The two combine to produce qadha (final decree). e.g. the usage of the word Insha'Allah (If Allah wills). Very simply acceptance of qadha is for us as human beings to strive towards Allah with eiman, the best of niyyaat (pl of niyya) & knowledge in obeying the orders of Allah and serving His creation, and willingly accepting the outcome whatever it may be with full trust that He will ensure a good end to it.

- ☪ **The Perfect Human Being** - *"Indeed for you (O Muslims) in the messenger of Allah is an excellent example.."* **Qur'an 33:56** Every human being is born with an instinct to follow an ideal. Consciously or unconsciously,



regardless of race, creed, colour, or religion the human being follows one who meets with his/her own liking (to his own nature). Prophet Muhammad (A.S.) and his Ahlul Bayt are ideals from Allah and not from human desire.

- ☉ For **women** the ideals of Hajra, Aasiya, Maryam, Khadija, Fatima, Zaynab (A.S.) need to be studied and their examples followed. If a woman cries with her whole being at the recollection of the name of Fatima & Zaynab (A.S.), yet does not know them save for the day of 'Ashura until noon, it will not help her to know who she wants to be? It is only when the life and 'seerah' (way) of an ideal is studied and followed can one perfect oneself as a human being.
- ☉ In Christianity, the first sin was the sin of a woman. That is why women in the thoughts of the people of the Middle Ages is so hated, weakened and held back from the ownership of anything. Even today, if a woman marries, she changes her name. She has no essential existence - A name is significant - she does not possess sufficient value or credit to have a name.
- ☉ With industrialisation, little by little women became economically independent. From society's point of view, this also meant that she was socially independent. She no longer **needed** to be part of a family. So much so that a child too restricts freedom and child bearing is delayed until one can 'afford' home help, etc..... Yet, she is the one who rocks the cradle and rules the world. The Prophet (S.A.W.) has said: "If you want to see the



success or the failure of a person, first look in his/her mother's womb." He also said: "Janna is under the feet of your mothers."

- ☪ In the consumer society, sexuality replaces love. In our traditional culture love takes the form of **intellectually, religiously thinking** restrictions. She is like a fly caught in a spider's web. The question, "who should I?" needs a role model! Islam revolutionises the position of women.

- ☪ All mankind follows the memory of **Hajra** in the rituals of Hajj. The validity of Tawaf is dependant on making sure that *Hijre Ismail* is within the tawaaf. The semi-circular wall resembles a skirt and hijr means a skirt. It is here where Ismail was raised and here where Hajra is buried. All Muslims from all over the world do the tawaf of the grave of Hajra. A *black, woman slave*. He (Allah) further says: "*Indeed Safa and Marwa are from the signs of Allah*" - **Qur'an 2:158** "...And he who gives Greatness to the signs of Allah - it is he/she who has *taqwa* in his/her heart.." - **Qur'an 22:32** Why are Safa & Marwa His signs? In memory of Hajra and her '*Sa'ee*' (*striving*) to find water for her son.

- ☪ "*Allah sets the example to those who believe of the wife of Firawn; when she said Lord make for me with You a house in Janna and save me from Firawn and his works and save me from the unjust people*" **Qur'an 66:11** Firawn claimed he was God. **Aasiya** disclaimed his Lordship & cursed all those who claimed to be Gods. She was pegged to the ground & killed. Why did she ask Allah for a house? After all she had all material luxury-



Mufasssireen say a house is an abode of return and permanence - She wanted a permanent place near her Lord.

☪ Bibi **Maryam** was called "*Tahira*" Told to go the town with her baby - An unmarried mother! The whole world doubted her purity. "*O sister of Harun! you father was not a bad man and neither was your mother an unchaste woman*" **Qur'an 19:28** Her eiman and strength knew Allah would save her. She replied: *She pointed to him (the child)..19:29 They said How can we talk to a child in the cradle?....19:29* Prophet Isa (A.S.) replied *..Indeed I am a servant of Allah, He has given me the book and made me a nabi... 19:30*

☪ "*..And He found you in need, and made you independent.*" **Qur'an 93:8**. Bibi **Khadija** was known as the princess of Arabia. She made her entire fortune an endowment for Islam. There has never been a better 'investment' in the entire history of humankind, for it's dividends will pay to the end of time.

☪ "*Indeed We have granted you Kawthar (abundance)*" **Qur'an 108:1** Muhammad (S.A.W.) is born of faith, jihad, revolution, thought and humanity. He is the inheritor of Nuh, Ibraheem, Musa, Isa..(A.S.) **Fatima (A.S.)** is his only heir. She is the Kawthar. Allah made the final link - Fatima (A.S.) - a woman. Glimpses into her life - Umme Abeeha (the mother of her father), Mubahila, Dahr, the threat to burn down her house, Fadak, her social responsibility not neglected because of her ethical purity. She continues to fight the



oppressive Khilafate. After her death she becomes a slogan for all the oppressed, all those whose rights have been destroyed by pressure or deceit. Her children too are as she was.

- ☾* Every revolution has 2 faces - sacrifice (the blood) and the message. It was Husayn (A.S.) who gave the blood, but the message was carried by **Zaynab (A.S.)**. Her courage, forbearance and foresight will continue to inspire those who study her life and sayings.



NOTES



