

سُورَةُ النُّورِ

Sūrah An Noor

(THE LIGHT)

This Sūrah was revealed at Madinah. Its basic theme is the guarding of one's shame. The violation of chastity and modesty has been declared as heinous and a punishable crime.

Islam authorizes a Qadhi (judge) to adjudge after carefully evaluating eye witness accounts. The circumstantial evidence, the plea of guilty or not guilty by the accused must be duly taken into account. Punishment aims at reforming the society, as well as the criminal, and when awarded by a Qadhi is termed as *T'azīr*. However, there are four aspects in which a Qadhi cannot alter the punishment prescribed by Shari'ah. He can only evaluate the available evidence and decide whether the crime was committed or not. Allah Himself has prescribed the punishment, termed as *Hudūd*. These crimes are, (1) theft (2) accusing chaste women (3) drinking alcohol and (4) adultery.

All these crimes are so heinous that wherever committed, the society is divested of peace and tranquillity. It fails to flourish even in the worldly sense, and is ruined from the religious point of view as it loses the very belief in Allah's Greatness. The use of inebriating drinks and adultery in the Western society present great lessons of admonition, including complete deterioration of the sanctity of relationships. There remains no importance of lineage, nor any concept of modesty and honour. The children of Ādam are living a life below the moral standards of animals while the very fibre of relationships, both worldly and religious, has frayed. A society stripped of modesty, chastity and sanctity of relationships can, by no stretch of imagination, be termed as a human society. It is only an outward facade of superiority which the West puts up for the world; otherwise they are hollow and feeble inside. Despite employing all its military power, America returned from Vietnam in humiliation. Russia invaded and occupied Afghanistan but was destroyed in her war with the Mujāhidīn. Forty countries jointly attacked 'Irāq but could not cause it harm equal to what America, Britain and France incurred in turn. They only use threats and deceit to control the world. If only the Muslim of today would waken and take to Jihād, with Allah's Grace, these nations would soon realise their worth. They are societies plagued by alcohol and adultery,

and are a loathsome burden on the earth. So Islam has enjoined preventive measures to fight these evil forces.

Section 1

In the Name of Allah

The Most Gracious, The Most Merciful.

1. This is a chapter We have revealed and enjoined, and herein We have sent down revelations manifest, that perchance, you may be admonished.
2. The adulteress and the adulterer: Scourge each of the twain with a hundred stripes. And let not tenderness in the Law of Allah take hold of you in regard to the twain, if you have come to believe in Allah and the Last Day. And let a band of the believers witness this chastisement.
3. The adulterer weds not but an adulteress or an associatoress: and the adulteress! - none weds her save an adulterer or an associator; and that is forbidden to the believers.
4. And those who accuse clean women and then bring not four eye-witnesses scourge them with eighty stripes and accept not their testimony for ever. And these! They are the transgressors.
5. Excepting those who shall repent thereafter and make amends.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

• سُورَةُ أَنْزَلْنَاهَا وَفَرَضْنَاهَا وَأَنْزَلْنَا فِيهَا آيَاتٍ يَتَذَكَّرُ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَذَكَّرُونَ ﴿١﴾

الزَّانِيَةُ وَالزَّانِي فَاجْلِدُوا كُلَّ وَاحِدٍ مِّنْهُمَا مِائَةَ جَلْدَةٍ وَلَا تَأْخُذْكُم بِهِمَا رَأْفَةٌ فِي دِينِ اللَّهِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ وَلَشَهِدَ عَدَايُهُمَا طَائِفَةٌ مِّنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٢﴾

الزَّانِي لَا يَنْكِحُ إِلَّا زَانِيَةً أَوْ مُشْرِكَةً وَالزَّانِيَةُ لَا يَنْكِحُهَا إِلَّا زَانٍ أَوْ مُشْرِكٌ وَحُرِّمَ ذَلِكَ عَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٣﴾

وَالَّذِينَ يَزْمُونَ الْمُحْصَنَاتِ ثُمَّ لَمْ يَأْتُوا بِأَرْبَعَةِ شُهَدَاءَ فَاجْلِدُوا لَهُمْ ثَمَانِينَ جَلْدَةً وَلَا تَقْبَلُوا لَهُمْ شَهَادَةً أَبَدًا وَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْفَاسِقُونَ ﴿٤﴾

إِلَّا الَّذِينَ تَابُوا مِن بَعْدِ ذَلِكَ وَأَسْلَمُوا فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ

Verily Allah is Forgiving,
Merciful.

رَجِيمٌ ﴿٦﴾

6. And as for those who accuse their wives and there are not witnesses for them except themselves, the testimony of one of them shall be to swear four times by Allah that he is of the truthful.
7. And for the fifth time that the curse of Allah be upon him, if he be of the liars.
8. And it will avert the chastisement from her if she swears by Allah four times that he is of the liars.
9. And for the fifth time that Allah's Wrath be upon her if he is of the truth-tellers.
10. And had it not been for the Grace of Allah and His Mercy upon you, and that Allah is Relenting, Wise, you had been lost.

وَالَّذِينَ يَزْمُونَ أَزْوَاجَهُمْ وَلَمْ يَكُن لَّهُمْ شُهَدَاءُ إِلَّا أَنْفُسُهُمْ
فَشَهَادَةُ أَحَدِهِمْ أَرْبَعُ شَهَادَاتٍ بِاللَّهِ إِنَّهُ
لَمِنَ الصَّادِقِينَ ﴿٦﴾

وَالْخَامِسَةَ أَنَّ لَعْنَتَ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ إِنْ كَانَ
مِنَ الْكَاذِبِينَ ﴿٧﴾

وَيَذَرُوهَا الْعَذَابَ أَنْ تَشْهَدَ أَرْبَعَ شَهَادَاتٍ بِاللَّهِ
إِنَّهُ لَمِنَ الْكَاذِبِينَ ﴿٨﴾

وَالْخَامِسَةَ أَنَّ غَضَبَ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهَا إِنْ كَانَ
مِنَ الصَّادِقِينَ ﴿٩﴾

وَلَوْلَا فَضْلُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ وَرَحْمَتُهُ وَأَنَّ اللَّهَ
تَوَّابٌ حَكِيمٌ ﴿١٠﴾

Secrets of Revelation

The punishment for adultery is revealed here. Allah declares that the meanings and the interpretation of this Sūrah have been determined by Him. To believe and act upon these is mandatory for all believers. Besides, it carries very clear evidence and bare facts so that the believers may beware and learn a lesson therefrom.

It has been enjoined that a woman and a man guilty of adultery are to be awarded hundred lashes each. No believer ought to display any compassion in the enforcement of Divine Law as it is Allah's Dīn and not the orders of worldly rulers. In other words, it is not only the execution of His Command but also a source of attaining His Pleasure. This aspect, however, would only be considered by the one who believes in Allah and the Day of Judgment. Secondly, this

punishment must be enforced in public, and the Muslims must witness it so that it serves as an admonition, and that insult is added to the injury for such a hideous act. As endorsed by Ḥadīth and the practice of the Holy Prophet^{SAW}, this punishment of flogging is prescribed for adultery where both the offenders are unmarried. If the offenders are married and adultery is proven, both will be publicly stoned to death.

In fact, the punishment for adultery was also enforced gradually; it was comparatively lenient to begin with but was later made gradually severe. As revealed in Sūrah an-Nisā', if a woman was found guilty of adultery, and the accusation was endorsed by four witnesses, she was to be confined within the house, while her partner was to be tortured, until Allah created some other way, or their death occurred. This Āyah has revealed that 'way', that they be flogged in public, a hundred times each. The Holy Prophet^{SAW} said that this sentence is for the unmarried offenders. Qurān and Ḥadīth are both Divine Revelations and the Companions^{RAU} did not discriminate between the two as they heard both from the Holy Prophet^{SAW}. So it is incorrect to say that stoning is not proper because the Qurān does not mention it. Such a critic commentator cannot be a believer.

Anyone who does not consider Ḥadīth as important and practicable must be asked where did he get the Qurān from? Therefore, the law is that once fornication is proven the offenders will be publicly flogged. It is also at the Judge's discretion that he may add to the sentence a year long exile for the man. However, if a married man and a married woman commit this crime, they will be stoned to death. This is not only endorsed by the sayings of the Holy Prophet^{SAW} but was also his practice. He sentenced a bachelor to be flogged a hundred times, while a married woman was stoned to death. The same punishment was awarded during the era of the four Caliphs and the following Islamic Governments. For details, books on Ḥadīth and Fiqh may be consulted.

The offences entailing such severe punishments are extremely damaging for the society. The testimony to prove these must, therefore, be fool proof. In case of any shortfall or a shadow of doubt, the *Ḥad* of stoning or flogging will not be enforced and the Qadhi shall punish the offenders according to his own judgement, by way of *T'azir*. The evidence of two males or one male and two females is considered enough for *Ḥudūd* but for stoning to death, the testimony of four male eye witnesses is imperative and must prove that the act of adultery has physically taken place. Merely discovering the twain naked, or in some other state repugnant to Shari'ah will invoke *T'azir* and not *Ḥad*. And if the testimony proves to be wrong and fails to establish the crime, the witnesses will be subjected to *Ḥad*.

termed as *Qazf* (wrongful accusation), which is eighty lashes. Besides, the punishment for other acts against the Shari'ah will be enforced by way of *T'azir*.

Adultery is so terribly harmful that it transforms the very nature of the indulgent. A habitual adulterer prefers to marry an adulteress, an immoral or ungodly and polytheist woman, as the aim is to satisfy his lust. Similarly an adulteress also prefers an adulterer or a non believing man to satisfy her lust as she does not seek the real purpose of *Nikah*, which is to protect one's lineage and morality. Adultery, or *Nikah* when aimed merely at satisfaction of lust, is prohibited for the believers. The basic aim of the latter is to lay the foundation of a legal and a noble family. However, the Jurists assert that if two adulterers get married, the *Nikah* will take place, the lineage of their children will be established and the laws of inheritance will be applicable, notwithstanding their intentions. On the contrary, there can be no *Nikah* between a believer and a polytheist at the very outset.

Besides, those who accuse chaste women of adultery and fail to produce four witnesses will be punished with eighty lashes, to ensure that nobody dares accuse a chaste woman out of vengeance or to her tarnish. Moreover, their testimony will not to be entertained ever in future being extremely vile persons. The false accuser will have to endure this punishment. However, if he subsequently repents and reforms himself he will be spared the punishment in the *Ākhirah*, for Allah is indeed Forgiving and Merciful.

In a situation where a husband accuses his wife of adultery he will also have to produce four witnesses. Otherwise he will have to swear upon Allah four times that he is telling the truth, and the fifth time he must declare that if he be lying let him be accursed by Allah. This is termed in Shari'ah as *L'ān* which means 'to accurse'. And if he confesses that he was telling a lie he will be punished for *Qazf* which is eighty lashes. In case of *L'ān*, he will be spared the punishment. In this case the wife will not be sentenced under *Ḥadūd* rather she will also be given a chance to plead. If she confesses as guilty she will be duly punished, otherwise she must swear upon Allah four times that her husband is lying and the fifth time she must say that if he is telling the truth, let Allah's Wrath be on her. She will also be spared the punishment but because of *L'ān* the couple will neither remain lawful for one another nor can they ever remarry. The details of *L'ān* can also be seen in books on Fiqh. The Commentators record several instances of *L'ān* during the Holy Prophet's ^{SAW} period.

Had Allah not been so Beneficent and Merciful towards the believers, their society would have deteriorated like that of the non believers. This indeed is His

Munificence that He has ordained severe punishments to protect Muslim society and has also left the door of repentance ajar, providing the sinners an opportunity to save themselves from eternal damnation. He indeed is the Wisest.

Section 2

11. Verily those who brought forward the calumny were a small band among you. Do not consider it an evil for you; nay, it was good for you. Unto every one of them shall be what he has earned of the sin, and he among them who took the bulk of it, for him shall be mighty torment.

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ جَاءُوا بِالْإِفْكِ عُصْبَةٌ مِّنْكُمْ لَا تَحْسَبُوهُ شَرًّا
لَّكُم بَلٌّ هُوَ خَبَرُ لَّكُم لِكُلِّ أَمْرٍ مِّنْهُمْ مَا أَكْتَسَبَ
مِنَ الْإِنْتِزَاعِ وَالَّذِي تَوَلَّى كِبْرَهُ مِنْهُمْ لَهُ
عَذَابٌ عَظِيمٌ ﴿١١﴾

12. Why, therefore, did not the faithful men and women, when you heard the slander, think well of their own people and say: this is an evident calumny?

لَوْلَا إِذْ سَمِعْتُمُوهُ ظَنَّ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتُ
بِأَنفُسِهِمْ خَيْرًا وَقَالُوا هَذَا إِفْكٌ مُّبِينٌ ﴿١٢﴾

13. Why did not they produce four witnesses thereof? And since they could not produce four witnesses, those! With Allah, they are the very liars!

لَوْلَا جَاءُوا عَلَيْهِ بِأَرْبَعَةِ شُهَدَاءَ فَإِذْ لَمْ يَأْتُوا
بِالشُّهَدَاءِ فَأُولَٰئِكَ عِندَ اللَّهِ هُمُ الْكَذِبُونَ ﴿١٣﴾

14. Had there not been Allah's Grace upon you and His Mercy in the world and the Hereafter, surely there would have visited you a severe chastisement for that wherein you had rushed.

وَلَوْلَا فَضْلُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ وَرَحْمَتُهُ فِي الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةِ
لَسَكَرْتُمْ فِي مَا أَفْسَضْتُمْ فِيهِ عَذَابٌ عَظِيمٌ ﴿١٤﴾

15. When you were spreading it with your tongues and saying with your mouths that of which you had no knowledge, you consider it light but with Allah it was great.

إِذْ تَلْقَوْنَهُ بِأَلْسِنَتِكُمْ وَتَقُولُونَ بِأَفْوَاهِكُمْ مَا لَيْسَ
لَكُمْ بِهِ عِلْمٌ وَتَحْسَبُونَهُ هَيِّنًا
وَهُوَ عِندَ اللَّهِ عَظِيمٌ ﴿١٥﴾

16. And why, when you heard it, did you not say: It is not for us to speak thereof, hallowed be You! That is a slander mighty?
17. Allah exhorts you not to repeat the like of it, if you are believers indeed.
18. And Allah expounds to you His Revelations; and Allah is Knowing, Wise.
19. Verily those who desire that indecency should be propagated among the faithful for them shall be an afflictive chastisement in the world and the Hereafter. Allah Knows and you know not.
20. And had there not been Allah's Grace upon you and His Mercy, and that Allah was Tender and Merciful, you could have perished.

وَلَوْلَا إِذْ سَمِعْتُمُوهُ قُلْتُمْ مَا يَكُونُ لَنَا أَنْ نَشْكَلَ
بِهَذَا تُبْحَنَكَ هَذَا بُهْتَنٌ عَظِيمٌ ﴿١٦﴾

بِعِطْكُمْ اللَّهُ أَنْ تَعُودُوا إِلَيْهِ أَبَدًا
إِنْ كُنْتُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿١٧﴾

وَرَبِّينَا اللَّهُ لَكُمْ الْآيَاتُ وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ حَكِيمٌ ﴿١٨﴾

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يُحِبُّونَ أَنْ تَشِيعَ الْفَاحِشَةُ فِي الَّذِينَ
ءَامَنُوا لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ فِي الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةِ
وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ وَأَسْتُرُ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿١٩﴾

وَلَوْلَا فَضْلُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ وَرَحْمَتُهُ وَأَنَّ اللَّهَ
رَءُوفٌ رَحِيمٌ ﴿٢٠﴾

Secrets of Revelation

Those who raised such a calumnious storm were a small group of the believers. These Āyāt were revealed with reference to a specific incident. A false accusation was made against the beloved wife of Allah's beloved Prophet^{SAW}, Hadhrat 'Āyeshah Şiddiqah^{RAU}. To understand the meanings of these Āyāt fully it is imperative to know the incident, in brief.

The Incident

In the sixth year of the Hijrah, the Holy Prophet^{SAW} undertook the campaign against Bani Muşţaliq. He was accompanied by his wife Hadhrat 'Āyeshah Şiddiqah^{RAU}. Since it was customary to be veiled, there was a curtained litter borne on a camel's back for her travelling. The routine was that as soon as she would get into it, the attendants would lift it onto the camel's back. When the Holy

Prophet^{SAW} was returning back from the campaign, the caravan halted temporarily, to resume its movement in late hours of the night. Hadhrat 'Āyeshah Siddiqah^{RAU} went out to the thicket for the call of nature and before she had returned the attendants picked up the empty litter and fastened it onto the camel, without feeling her absence as she was very petite and light weight. When she returned the caravan had gone. She very wisely stayed at the same place, instead of running after the caravan, for she thought that as soon as they would discover her absence, a rescue will be sent after her.

She covered herself with her veil and fell asleep. The Holy Prophet^{SAW} had appointed Hadhrat Sufwan bin Mu'aṭṭal to trail the caravan in order to check that nothing had been left behind. When he arrived at the site at daybreak he found her sleeping at the site of her tent. He exclaimed "We are for **Allah** and to **Him** we shall return one day" the Qurānic Āyah normally recited at the time of distress. She sat up on hearing the voice, covered in her veil. Hadhrat Sufwan^{RAU} seated the camel near her, which she mounted and he holding the halter walked along until they caught up with the caravan.

'Abdullah ibn Ubbay the hypocrite was also amongst the entourage and this gave him the opportunity to satisfy his hostility towards the Holy Prophet^{SAW}. He began to utter nonsense. Two of the Companions Hassan^{RAU} and Mishah^{RAU}, and a lady Hamna^{RAU} fell in his trap and joined hands with him. The Companions^{RAU} were deeply aggrieved, and so was the Holy Prophet^{SAW} himself for a dastardly attack on his honour. On return to Madinah the Holy Prophet^{SAW} was very upset while Hadhrat 'Āyeshah Siddiqah^{RAU} had no clue of what was going on. She is quoted in Al-Bukhārī that the Holy Prophet^{SAW} would visit her and leave casually enquiring after her welfare. He did not display the usual love and affection because of which she was taken ill. At last, when she came to know of the cause from Hadhrat Mishah's^{RAU} mother, she couldn't bear it, as it was too traumatic for her. She took leave of the Holy Prophet^{SAW} for her father's house, and shifted there. Her mother tried to comfort her telling her not to worry as a blessed lady like her was bound to have enemies. Yet she could not be pacified and her tears knew no bounds.

At the other end, the Holy Prophet^{SAW} not receiving any revelation during this period, sought advice from Hadhrat Osāma bin Zayed^{RAU} and 'Ali^{RAU}. The former said that to the best of his knowledge there was no room for harbouring any suspicion against her. The latter said that if the Holy Prophet^{SAW} wanted to choose another wife, there was no dearth of noble ladies, yet it was better to investigate the matter through Hadhrat Baraira^{RAU}, who was her maid-servant. The Holy

Prophet^{SAW} opted for the latter and asked Hadhrat Baraira^{RAU}, who said that, to the best of her knowledge, Hadhrat 'Āyeshah^{RAU} was infallible. The only thing she had noticed was that she was prone to doze off many a time after kneading the dough, which was eaten away by the goat.

Now the Holy Prophet^{SAW} expressed his total annoyance with the accusers from the pulpit. Meanwhile in her parent's home, Hadhrat 'Āyeshah^{RAU} was crying so bitterly as if she would cry her heart out, when the Holy Prophet^{SAW} entered. Sitting next to her, he spoke out briefly: "If you are innocent, Allah would certainly exonerate you, otherwise you must repent as He is Forgiving, Merciful." She recalls that her tears dried up and she looked at her mother to speak on her behalf, but her parents excused themselves. So she spoke to the Holy Prophet^{SAW} herself. The gist of what she had said was that the Holy Prophet^{SAW} was hurt on what he heard and if she was to plead innocent no one would believe her, whereas Allah knows that she was innocent. And if she was to plead guilty, everyone would believe it. Therefore, she would entrust the matter to Allah by repeating what Prophet Ya'qūb^{AS} had said to his sons on hearing their false statement: "Patience is seemly. And Allah is to be implored for help in what you ascribe." After ridding herself of the awesome burden she retired to her bed being sure that Allah would inform His Prophet^{SAW} of the true situation, though she never imagined that Allah would reveal Āyāt in her exoneration, which will be recited in Salāt, in worships, in mosques and in the Sacred Precincts until Al-Qayamah. Right then, the revelation began and on completion the Holy Prophet^{SAW} rose cheerfully and congratulated 'Āyeshah Siddiqah^{RAU} that Allah had exonerated her. He recited the Āyāt revealed in her favour.

While elaborating on these Āyāt, the Commentators recount the singular status enjoyed by Hadhrat 'Āyeshah Siddiqah^{RAU} which she subsequently used to recount with pride, in gratitude to His Favours; for instance:

- (1) A picture of her was shown to the Holy Prophet^{SAW} by Hadhrat Jibril^{AS} before her Nikah.
- (2) She was the only spinster wife of the Holy Prophet^{SAW}.
- (3) She was the one who chewed soft the last *Miswak* used by him.
- (4) The Holy Prophet^{SAW} rested in her lap on the eve of breathing his last.
- (5) He is laid to eternal rest in her chamber.
- (6) It was on her bed that he would often receive revelation.
- (7) In her exoneration Qurānic Āyāt were revealed and

(8) She was the daughter of the first Caliph of the Holy Prophet^{SAW}. The Holy Prophet^{SAW}, after this revelation enforced *Had* upon the accusers, *Hadhrāt* *Hasān*^{RAU}, *Misṭah*^{RAU} and *Hamna*^{RAU}. They were punished with eighty lashes each, while the real culprit 'Abdullah ibn Ubbay was punished twice as much. The believers repented thereafter while the hypocrites stayed as such only to be punished in the *Ākhirah*.

An Aspect of the Shi'ite's Infidelity

After the revelation of these *Āyāt*, if still someone persists on accusing her, he will be deemed a non believer. And since the Shi'ites continue to accuse her, besides harbouring other heretic ideas, they are undoubtedly infidels by a consensus of the *Ummah* as reported by Mufti Mohammad Shafi^{RAU} in his *Mu'arif al Qurān*.

So Allah reveals that this storm raised by a few is of no significance, being totally whimsical, without any evidence at all, and is by way of rumour mongering. And secondly it would cause no harm; rather it became a source of virtue, namely: (1) A Divine Law for the Muslims in general was laid down. (2) These *Āyāt* stand out forever as evidence to the exalted status of *Hadhrat* 'Āyeshah.

However, those who launched this calumnious campaign were sure to be punished. Those who agreed with it were punished under *Hadūd* while those who took to silence after hearing it were also sinners. In fact, anyone who even let the thought cross his mind incurred a proportionate sin. Thereafter, all the Muslims repented and the fabricator duly qualified for a awful doom. Ibn Ubbay, who being a hypocrite had already earned a place in Hell, now qualified for a far more severe and tormenting punishment by causing grief to the Holy Prophet^{SAW}.

Allah questions as to why did the believers, upon hearing, not refute and reject the news as a preposterous lie? Why did they not harbour in their minds positive assumptions with due regard to his honour? And if at all the accusers had any proof they should have come out with it and produced eye witnesses. Islam provides complete protection to human dignity and honour, giving a chance to the erring to repent and reform. So if the evidence is not complete, and only a single person witnesses the event, he should not become a source of infamy to others, else he would be punished under *Qazf*. This is because publicity makes the guilty determined on the crime and when he is not punished, others pick up the courage, threatening the whole society. Therefore, Islam takes the honour of an individual as the honour of the entire society. And care must be taken that either *Had* is enforced where proof is available in order to reform the society, otherwise the offence is not just publicised.

Had not the Muslims been under Allah's Mercy and Favours, both in this world and in the Ākhirah, they would have certainly been dealt with severely for spreading such a rumour. Some of them unwittingly indulged in senseless talk by merely picking up the baseless words of a hypocrite assuming that it was a minor affair to raise fingers at the Holy Prophet's^{SAW} household. However, with Allah, it was a very serious crime; indeed an enormity. Their reaction on hearing such rubbish should have been the instant decision not even to repeat such words. Perfection is for Allah Alone Who is free of any short coming, yet this was an enormous accusation. Allah forbids the believers from repeating and harbouring such thoughts in their mind, (but the Shi'ites still believe it to be right and are thus expelled from Islam). Allah expounds for the believers clear injunctions and pearls of wisdom as He is all Knowing, Wise.

Obscene Literature and Movies

All those who wish to promote obscenity in Muslims and the Islamic society will be awarded painful punishment, not only in this world but also in the Ākhirah. How detrimental it is for the Muslim society and how painful will be the doom awaiting the promoters is well known to Allah. The devastating effects of obscenity cannot be fully gauged by human intellect, as well as the doom that awaits its promoters. What Ibn Ubbay had done is being repeated by the makers, promoters and broadcasters of pornographic films, or those who write vulgarity. They must ponder what a great punishment they are earning in return for petty gains.

Had Allah not favoured them because of His Mercy, He would not have shown such leniency. This accusation was of such a grave nature that a great catastrophe would have befallen them. However, He showed clemency and gave them the opportunity to repent, accepting the contrition. All those who had let the thought cross their minds must ask Allah's Forgiveness, including those who had stayed mute over it.

Section 3

21. O you who believe! Do not follow the footsteps of Satan. And whoever follows his footsteps, then Satan only bids to indecency and abomination. And had there not been Allah's Grace upon you

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَتَّبِعُوا خُطُوَاتِ الشَّيْطَانِ
وَمَنْ يَتَّبِعْ خُطُوَاتِ الشَّيْطَانِ فَإِنَّهُ يَأْمُرُ بِالْفَحْشَاءِ
وَالْمُنكَرِ وَلَوْ لَا فَضْلُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ وَرَحْمَتُهُ مَا زَكَا
مِنْكُمْ مِنْ أَحَدٍ أَبَدًا وَلَكِنَّ اللَّهَ يُزَكِّي

and His Mercy, not one of you could have ever been cleansed, but Allah cleanses whoever He will. And Allah is Hearing, Knowing.

مَنْ يَشَاءُ وَاللَّهُ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ ﴿١٠﴾

22. And let not the men of affluence and plenty among you swear off from giving to the kindred and the needy and the emigrants in the way of Allah; let them pardon and overlook. Do you not love that Allah should forgive you? And Allah is Forgiving, Merciful.

وَلَا يَأْتِلْ أُولُوا الْفَضْلِ مِنْكُمْ وَالسَّعَةِ أَنْ يُؤْتُوا أُولِي الْقُرْبَىٰ وَالْمَسْكِينِ وَالْمُهَاجِرِينَ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَلْيَعْفُوا وَلْيَصْفَحُوا أَلَا تُحِبُّونَ أَنْ يَغْفِرَ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ وَاللَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ ﴿١١﴾

23. Verily those who accuse chaste, unknowing, believing women shall be cursed in the world and the Hereafter, and for them shall be a mighty chastisement.

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَرْمُونَ الْمُحْصَنَاتِ الْفَاضِلَاتِ الْمُؤْمِنَاتِ لُعْنُوا فِي الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةِ وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ عَظِيمٌ ﴿١٢﴾

24. On the Day when their tongues and hands and feet will bear witness against them for what they used to work.

يَوْمَ تَشْهَدُ عَلَيْهِمْ أَلْسِنَتُهُمْ وَأَيْدِيهِمْ وَأَرْجُلُهُمْ بِمَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿١٣﴾

25. On that Day Allah shall pay them their recompense in full and they shall know that Allah is Manifestly True.

يَوْمَ يُوفَّىٰ بِهِمُ اللَّهُ دِينَهُمُ الْحَقَّ وَيَعْلَمُونَ أَنَّ اللَّهَ هُوَ الْحَقُّ الْمُبِينُ ﴿١٤﴾

26. Vile women are for vile men, and vile men are for vile women, and clean women are for clean men and clean men are for clean women; these are quit of what the people say. And for them is forgiveness and an honoured provision.

الْخَبِيثَاتُ لِلْخَبِيثِينَ وَالْخَبِيثُونَ لِلْخَبِيثَاتِ وَالطَّيِّبَاتُ لِلطَّيِّبِينَ وَالطَّيِّبُونَ لِلطَّيِّبَاتِ أُولَٰئِكَ مُبَرَّءُونَ مِمَّا يَقُولُونَ لَهُمْ مَغْفِرَةٌ وَرِزْقٌ كَرِيمٌ ﴿١٥﴾

Secrets of Revelation

O' Muslims! Do not follow the footsteps of Satan. Whoever listens to him or goes along with him, is coaxed into immorality and obscenity. Or he adopts such measures and presents immorality in such a fashion that one cannot help falling for his trap. All activities that spread vulgarity in society such as musical concerts, nudity and obscene movies, generally organised under the guise of cultural heritage, are works of the same devil. And it does not befit a believer to associate himself with such enterprises, lest his own faith is also divested. And had it not been for Allah's Mercy no one would have been spared from such influences nor could anyone repent and get rid of these evils. And Allah purifies whoever sincerely seeks reformation from Him. He grants the capacity to repent and also accepts the repentance.

Effects of this Acceptance

The immediate effect is that a person becomes weary of his past sins and deliberately avoids repeating these in future. His practical life is reformed. This is however, attained by seeking Allah's Forgiveness with the utmost sincerity, for He is All Hearing, Knowing.

The address now turns to those who had unwittingly indulged in the scandalous gossip as discussed earlier. Hadhrat Mistah^{RAU} was one of them. He was a poor relative of Hadhrat Abu Bakr Siddiq^{RAU}, who supported him financially. After the truth was revealed, Hadhrat Abu Bakr Siddiq^{RAU} swore not to help him anymore. Allah disallowed it on the ground that a single mistake or lapse on part of a person must not nullify the rest of his good deeds.

It is indeed a lesson of tolerance for the Islamic society. Anyone can make mistakes and even blunders. But once he repents and reforms himself, his other good deeds must not be ignored so that he may return to normal life, for the outcast become the bane of society. Therefore, the affluent must not vow to stop helping, especially when the beneficences are needy and deserving relatives who have also migrated in the Cause of Allah. They must be forgiven and their mistakes overlooked. Human shortcomings must be overlooked particularly when a person takes to reformation, for anyone can err. Would one not like to be relented and forgiven by Allah, Who is extremely Gracious and Merciful? So Hadhrat Abu Bakr Siddiq^{RAU} revoked his pledge and resumed his financial support to Hadhrat Mistah^{RAU}.

And the people slandering chaste women who guard their honour and are unaware of the evils prevalent in the society and have perfect faith like the noble wives of the Holy Prophet^{SAW}, are accursed and deprived of Allah's Clemency both in this world as well as in the Ākhirah. For them lurks a great torment and one day their own limbs will testify against them; their tongues, their hands and their feet will speak, exposing their conduct.

Rampage of the Tongue

There was a lady from the family of butchers. She converted to Shia'ism and managed to mislead a few others also. She was extremely impudent towards the Holy Prophet's^{SAW} household and would often speak abusively in private gatherings. Some years before her death, her tongue dangled out about three inches. It would not retract even after treatment from the best available doctors. Whenever she would try to speak, with her tongue dangling out, the movement of her jaws would only create sound like the howling of a dog. A very noble physician also treated her; but she died in the same condition. This is an admonition manifest in this world, while in the Ākhirah it will be far worse.

Allah will punish the guilty thoroughly in the Ākhirah and they will know for sure that He indeed is the Truthful, fully Aware and capable of unveiling every secret. It is human tendency that vile and immoral women fall for vile and immoral men and can get along with them. Similarly the vile men also prefer vile women and have no liking for noble women, who prefer noble men and are happy to be with them. And pious men always seek pious ladies and so they qualify to be under His Forgiveness and rightfully deserve His bounties.

Wives of the Prophets^{AS} are Exemplary Women

This evaluation of the human nature proves that the Prophets^{AS} whose piety and purity is exemplary have wives also of exemplary character. While the Holy Prophet^{SAW} is the leader of all, his wives also lead the women of the world in terms of purity, chastity, modesty and honour. It is a law that no wife of a Prophet^{AS} was ever involved in any immorality. Although the wives of Prophets Nūḥ^{AS} and Lūṭ^{AS} were not Muslims, yet no finger can be raised on their morality. Ḥadhrat ibn 'Abbās^{RAU} asserts a principle categorically that no Prophet's wife ever committed any act of immodesty.

27. O you who believe! Do not enter houses other than your own until you have asked leave and invoked peace on their inmates. That is better for you; perhaps you may take heed.
28. That if you find no one therein, do not enter until leave has been given you. And if you are told: Go back, then go back. It is cleaner for you, and Allah is Knower of what you do.
29. No fault it is with you that you enter a house uninhabited in which there is some property for you; Allah Knows what you disclose and what you conceal.
30. Say you to the faithful that they shall lower their sights and guard their private parts; that is cleaner for them. Verily Allah is Aware of what they perform.
31. And say to the believing women that they shall lower their sights and guard their private parts and shall not disclose their adornment except what appears of it: And they shall draw their shawls over their bosoms, and shall not disclose their adornment save to their husbands or their fathers or their husband's fathers or their sons or their husband's sons or their brothers or their brothers' sons or their sisters' sons or their
- يٰۤاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا لَا تَدْخُلُوْا بُيُوْتًا
غَيْرِ بُيُوْتِكُمْ حَتّٰى تَسْأَلُوْا وُتَسَلَمُوْا
عَلٰى اَهْلِهَا ذٰلِكُمْ خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَذَكَّرُوْنَ ﴿٢٧﴾
- فَاِنْ لَمْ تَجِدُوْا فِيْهَا اَحَدًا فَلَا تَدْخُلُوْهَا
حَتّٰى يُوْذَنَ لَكُمْ وَاِنْ قِيْلَ لَكُمْ اَرْجِعُوْا فَاَرْجِعُوْا
هُوَ اَزْكٰى لَكُمْ وَاللّٰهُ يَعْلَمُ مَا تَعْمَلُوْنَ ﴿٢٨﴾
- لَيْسَ عَلَيْكُمْ جُنَاحٌ اَنْ تَدْخُلُوْا بُيُوْتًا غَيْرَ مَسْكُوْنَةٍ
فِيْهَا مَتَاعٌ لَّكُمْ وَاللّٰهُ يَعْلَمُ مَا تَبْدُوْنَ
وَمَا تَكْتُمُوْنَ ﴿٢٩﴾
- قُلْ لِّلْمُؤْمِنِيْنَ يَغْضُوْنَ مِنْ اَبْصَرِيْهِمْ
وَيَحْفَظُوْا اَفْروُجَهُمْ ذٰلِكَ اَزْكٰى لَهُمْ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ
خَبِيْرٌ بِمَا يَصْنَعُوْنَ ﴿٣٠﴾
- وَقُلْ لِّلْمُؤْمِنٰتِ يَغْضُضْنَ مِنْ اَبْصَرِيْهِنَّ وَيَحْفَظْنَ
اَفْروُجَهُنَّ وَلَا يُبْدِيْنَ زِيْنَتَهُنَّ اِلَّا مَا ظَهَرَ
مِنْهَا وَلْيَضْرِبْنَ بِخُمُرِهِنَّ عَلٰى جُجُوْبِهِنَّ وَلَا يُبْدِيْنَ
زِيْنَتَهُنَّ اِلَّا لِبُعُوْلَتِهِنَّ اَوْ اَبَائِهِنَّ
اَوْ اَبَاءَ بُعُوْلَتِهِنَّ اَوْ اَنْسَاۤءِهِنَّ
اَوْ اَنْسَاۤءَ بُعُوْلَتِهِنَّ اَوْ اِخْوَانِهِنَّ

women or what their right hands own or male followers wanting in sex desire or children not acquainted with the privy parts of women. And they shall not strike their feet so that there be known what they hide of their adornment. And turn penitently to Allah you all, O you faithful! Perhaps you may thrive.

32. And wed the single among you and the fit ones among you male and female slaves. If they are poor, Allah will enrich them of His bounty. Allah is Ample, Knowing.

33. And those who do not find means to marry shall restrain themselves until Allah enriches them of His bounty. And from among those whom your right hands own those who seek writing, write it for them if you find any good in them, and give them of the wealth of Allah which He has given you. And do not constrain your handmaids to harlotry if they would live chastely, in order that you may seek the chance gain of this world. And whoever will constrain them, then verily Allah is, after their constraint, Forgiving, Merciful.

34. And assuredly We have sent down to you revelations illuminating and a similitude for those who passed away before

أَوْبَنِي إِخْوَانِهِمْ أَوْ بَنِي أَخَوَاتِهِمْ أَوْ نِسَائِهِمْ
أَوْ مَا مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَانُهُمْ أَوِ التَّيْبِعِينَ غَيْرِ أُولَى
الْإِزْبَةِ مِنَ الرِّجَالِ أَوِ الطِّفْلِ الذِّبِّ لَمْ يَطْهَرُوا
عَلَى عَوْرَتِ النِّسَاءِ وَلَا يَضْرِبْنَ بِأَرْجُلِهِنَّ لِيُعْلَمَ
مَا يُخْفِينَ مِنْ زِينَتِهِنَّ وَتُوبُوا إِلَى اللَّهِ جَمِيعًا
أَبْنَاءَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَفْلَحُونَ ﴿٣١﴾

وَأَنْكِحُوا الْأَيْمَىٰ مِنْكُمْ وَالصَّالِحِينَ مِنْ عِبَادِكُمْ
وَأَمَّا بِكُمْ إِن يَكُونُوا فُقَرَاءَ يُغْنِهِمُ اللَّهُ مِنْ فَضْلِهِ
وَاللَّهُ وَاسِعٌ عَلِيمٌ ﴿٣٢﴾

وَلِيَسْتَعْفِفَ الَّذِينَ لَا يَجِدُونَ نِكَاحًا حَتَّىٰ يُغْنِيَهُمُ اللَّهُ
مِنْ فَضْلِهِ وَالَّذِينَ يَبْتَغُونَ الْكِتَابَ مِمَّا مَلَكَتْ
أَيْمَانُكُمْ فَكَاتِبُوهُمْ إِنْ عَلِمْتُمْ فِيهِمْ خَيْرًا وَآتُوهُمْ
مِنْ مَالِ اللَّهِ الَّذِي آتَاكُمْ وَلَا تَكْرِهُوا فَتَيَانَكُمْ
عَلَى الْبِعَاثِ إِنْ أَرَدْتُمْ حَصْنًا لِيَبْتَغُوا عَرَضَ الْحَيَاةِ
الدُّنْيَا وَمَنْ يُكْرِهْهُمْ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ مِنْ بَعْدِ إِكْرَاهِهِمْ
غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ ﴿٣٣﴾

وَلَقَدْ أَنْزَلْنَا إِلَيْكُمْ مَا يَنْتَ مُبَيِّنَاتٍ وَمَثَلًا مِنَ الَّذِينَ
خَلَوْا مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ وَمَوْعِظَةً لِّلْمُتَّقِينَ ﴿٣٤﴾

you and an exhortation to the
God-fearing.

Secrets of Revelation

Now preventive measures are revealed to preclude the spread of immorality in a society. The foremost step is that whenever a believer visits the house of another, he will not enter without seeking permission. Although he does not need to seek permission to enter his own house where his wife or his mother is living; yet it is commendable that he informs them of his arrival, either by coughing or speaking out loudly. But it is mandatory to seek permission to enter somebody else's house. The mode of seeking permission is to call out loudly and identify yourself, or if you have knocked at the door because you feel that the voice may not be heard inside then introduce yourself when someone attends to the door. Or if there is a door bell, ring it gently, or if you have a visiting card, send it across. However, under no circumstances, one must cause any inconvenience to the inmates. Do not raise your voice and be mindful of time, as people often rest in the afternoons, particularly during summer.

Once allowed to enter the house, one must offer greetings to the members according to the Sunnah so that the visit or conversation opens with noble words. Besides, the visitor must neither bother nor embarrass anyone, nor create a situation where in spite of not being welcome he forces his way in, like some ignorants who barge in and then ask "May I enter!" This is not permitted. It is possible that a person may be doing something strictly private inside his house, which he wouldn't like to disclose and a barging in would compromise his secret. So it is imperative to take permission before entering any house for both believing men and women. For a chaste society, and for upholding of honour, these are the most appropriate measures prescribed for those who understand. It is also not proper that upon receiving no answer and assuming that no one was inside, one enters someone's house. The only way of entering a family house is by seeking prior permission. There may yet be another situation where a person is denied the permission and told to return for whatever reason. So he must return as this is the most virtuous and graceful thing to do. Allah is fully Aware of what everyone does and He has reserved this right for the one being visited, that if he does not wish to meet, the visitor must not impose himself. Details as given in the Ahādīth are that a visitor also enjoys the right to be welcomed open-heartedly and listened

to, and that he must not be returned without meeting but for a compelling reason. The Sunnah is to seek permission for admission thrice and if no one answers, the visitor must realise that either there is nobody around or they do not wish to be disturbed, so he must return.

The non-residential public buildings like shops, mosques, schools, inns and shrines etc can, however, be entered without seeking any formal permission. Everyone is allowed to benefit from them. However, the hidden matters, that is, the intentions for entering, or the manifest, that is, the actions that are taken after entering are all known to Allah. Therefore, whatever one does, Allah's awareness must be the top priority. Similar are the rules that must be observed while talking to someone on telephone. The person calling must only let the bell ring for a reasonable time. If he wishes to converse for a longer time, the person called may be asked if he has the time to spare or should he be called some other time. On the other hand, those on the receiving end must respond to the ringing telephone quickly. It is not proper that the bell keeps on ringing and nobody bothers to answer.

The next measure to prevent immorality is to avoid such situations which might lead to indecency in any form. So the believers are being instructed to lower their gaze. They must not stare at what is forbidden, or look lustfully at the one lawfully forbidden. And so should the believers safeguard their honour and must never indulge in any lewdness. This indeed is the most graceful way of life. However, if someone covertly indulges in indecency, he must know that Allah is well Aware of his actions. Besides, the believing women are also commanded to lower their gaze and safeguard their honour.

Modern Scientific Approach

What Islam laid down fourteen centuries ago has been discovered by the modern science today. The scientific research reveals that every human being exudes certain vibes, including those related to sexuality, which are transmitted into the atmosphere through the eyes. The vibes of every human being have a frequency, so if the frequencies of a man and a woman match the moment their eyes meet they will be attracted to one another. The more compatible their frequencies, the more they will desire each other. However, where glances are not exchanged this phenomenon is avoided altogether. Praise be to Allah! How long has it taken science to discover a single advantage behind this Quranic injunction? Only He knows what more benefits the future has in store or which may never ever be known.

The female adornment is also a source of attracting males attention. It is, therefore, not permissible for women to display their fashion and ornaments before others save what is inevitable in compelling circumstances such as hands, feet and face. This exposure being permitted in Ṣalāt is taken as a standard of *Pardah*. However, if these are also covered in a veil and not opened unneeded, it is the ideal form of *Pardah*. Besides, even if the hands and the feet are exposed, the covering of the heads must be extended to cover the bosoms so that the body and its physical contours are concealed. The tight fitted veil that silhouettes the body further falls under exposure. It is not permissible for believing women to go out in public adorned, to attend mixed parties, or to roam around in hotels, clubs or parks. Appearing on the television in make-up and trendy turnouts is also forbidden. However, there are people whom women can meet without *Pardah* like husband, father, father-in-law, children, the children of husband from another wife, brothers, nephews and other Muslim women.

Purdah from a Non Believing Woman

The learned Commentators assert that a believing woman shall also observe *Pardah* from a non believing woman. There will be no *Pardah* from maid servants, but it will be observed from the slaves or male servants. There is no *Pardah* from men who are insane and live as dependants on others, and also from children who have not attained maturity and are unaware of the peculiar qualities of women. And it is imperative for women to safeguard their adornment even under *Pardah*. So they must not step in a manner whereby their anklet or any jewellery may jingle. The tinkling of the bangles also falls under the same slot. They add that a gaudy veil boosts the adornment and is not allowed. Men and women must all seek Allah's Forgiveness and pledge to refrain from what has been forbidden in order to attain total success in life.

One of the causes of immorality is celibacy, so all men and women must be married; the bachelors, the spinsters, the widows, the widowers and the divorcees. In other words, nobody must remain without Nikah unnecessarily due to restraints of the customs and thus promote immorality. If the slaves, male or female, qualify to be married, that is, can fulfil their duties, the masters must not stand in the way of their Nikāh. And it must never be a consideration hindering Nikah that one is poor or has children as liabilities, because to provide is the domain of Allah, He can enrich a poor person having children, or impoverish a rich person without children. It is He Who controls all sources of life while human beings are all needy. He is well Aware of the state everyone is in.

Family Planning is Forbidden; its Advertisements Illegitimate

According to the scholars, if health of the woman is at stake, temporary measures of contraception are permitted without altering the natural anatomy through surgery etc. However, family planning initiated with the intention that the resources of life are not overburdened is totally forbidden and all allied advertisements illegitimate, as the resources are at Allah's Command. Instead of restricting the number of children it is far more important to arrest the wastage of resources.

If someone has no means of Nikah, being impoverished or unemployed, he must control his natural instincts and must work hard to earn a livelihood so that Allah may bless him or improve his situation. Or if a disease prevents a person from getting married, he must seek treatment. In short, if a man feels that he shall not be able to fulfil his duties towards his wife, he must be patient, until Allah eases out his condition.

The next step towards the reformation of the society is that if a slave of any gender seeks contract for his or her redemption on payment of some money, he or she must be facilitated. The previous injunction ordained that they be given the right to get married provided they had the capacity to fulfil their marital duties. This is because if they are forced into celibacy under compulsion they may indulge in immorality, and plague the entire society. Redemption means that on payment of a fixed amount, they shall become free. However, the master must ensure that they are virtuous and their freedom shall not compromise the national interests by their spying or other hostile activities against the State.

Slaves Men and Women

Since Islam allowed men captured on the battlefield fighting against Muslims to be taken as slaves, the women in their households too became bondswomen. If a couple was captured, both were slaves, yet remained as husband and wife. While those captured single, male or female, were slaves as such. The treatment meted out to the vanquished and their household by the nations critical of Islam over this issue, is worth studying, especially that of the Jews and the Christians, in order to draw a comparison. Islam forbids genocide of the vanquished and delivers peace to those who do not participate in the battle. Neither the crops are decimated, nor their houses and worship places are damaged. However, those who fight and are defeated lose their freedom and are taken as slaves. They nevertheless enjoy religious freedom. Besides, Islam encourages their masters to free them every now and then, and calls upon the believers to feed them well and not to make them do

what is beyond their strength. They are also allowed to get married and can be redeemed under a contract after payment of a mutually agreed amount, either by earning wages or receiving gifts from affluent Muslims, subject to the condition that they would not revert to the crime they had been captured for. A bondswoman is permissible only for her master; no one else may dare set eyes on her with malafide intentions. Did any other nation or ideology offer these rights to the prisoners of war, other than Islam? To cap it all, Allah also wants the believers to help the slaves in their liberation, from the wealth He has blessed them with.

Reformation of Society and Economics

The life line for any society is its economic system. Globally, apart from Islam, two well known economic systems are being followed. Firstly, the 'Capitalism' in which every individual enjoys the right of ownership. Everyone can attain everything by whatever means he chooses and can spend wherever he wants. This system created an affluent and aristocrat class while the masses were enchained by the elite. Secondly, the 'Socialism', which is based on partnership. It disallows individuals to own anything. In this system every individual works and the output goes to the State Treasury, which, in turn, caters to the needs of the workers. This system proved far too detrimental than the Capitalism, and subjected people to the worst form of slavery.

Islam enjoins the basic rule of economy that everything is owned by Allah. So provisions of life must be acquired within the limits laid down by Him. However, the one who acquires these provisions remains as a custodian while the real ownership belongs to Allah. Therefore, the spending must be in accordance with the wishes of the real Owner. The custodian is allowed to enjoy good food and clothing, without being extravagant and is enjoined to help the have-nots who, due to any shortcoming, lag behind in the attainment of livelihood. Allah desires that whatever provisions He has given to the believers should be used to help the slaves pay the agreed money to their masters. This shall supplement their earnings in order to facilitate their freedom. And the believers must never force their slaves or bondswomen into immorality. The slavery in vogue prior to Islam was completely different from the Islamic concept, whence anybody could be overpowered and sold as a slave. The masters would force their slave women into harlotry, as a source of income. Islam allowed slavery only as a penalty for a grave crime otherwise liable to capital punishment by merely divesting the criminals freedom and allowing them respite to reform and repent. It strongly prohibited forcing the slave women into prostitution, as they were also human beings and none amongst the mankind is devoid of natural modesty. So long as a

person possesses an inkling of humanity, he detests immorality. The entire blame for harlotry would go to the masters who forced them into it, for Allah is Forgiving and Relenting towards the oppressed. It was strictly forbidden to force the bondswomen into indecency. Allah expounds to the believers clear evidence from the history of preceding nations so that those who have established a link with Him, may be admonished and avoid the path of His Annoyance.

Section 5

35. Allah is the Light of the heavens and the earth; the likeness of His Light is as a niche wherein is a lamp; the lamp is in glass; the glass is as though it is a star brilliant; lit from a tree blessed, an olive, neither of the East nor of West; its very oil will shine forth, even though no fire touched it; Light upon Light. Allah guides unto His Light whom He Will. Allah propounds similitudes for mankind; and verily Allah is the Knower of everything.

36. They worship in houses which Allah has bidden to be exalted and His Name to be remembered therein; they hallow Him therein in mornings and evenings.

37. Men whom neither trade nor business diverts from the remembrance of Allah and the establishment of the Ṣalāt and the payment of Zakāt, in awe of a Day whereon heart and sights will be upset.

38. That Allah may recompense them the best for what they worked and

اللَّهُ نُورُ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ مِثْلُ نُورِهِ
كَمِثْكَوَرٍ فِيهَا مِصْبَاحٌ الْمِصْبَاحُ فِي زُجَاجَةٍ
الزُّجَاجَةُ كَأَنَّهَا كَوْكَبٌ دُرِّيٌّ يُوقَدُ مِنْ شَجَرَةٍ
مُبَارَكَةٍ زَيْتُونَةٍ لَا شَرْقِيَّةٍ وَلَا غَرْبِيَّةٍ يَكَادُ زَيْتُهَا
يُضِيءُ وَلَوْ لَمْ تَمْسَسْهُ نَارٌ نُورٌ عَلَى نُورٍ يَهْدِي
اللَّهُ لِنُورِهِ مَنْ يَشَاءُ وَيَضْرِبُ اللَّهُ الْأَمْثَلَ
لِلنَّاسِ وَاللَّهُ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمٌ ﴿٣٥﴾

فِي بُيُوتٍ أُذِنَ لِلَّهِ أَنْ تُرْفَعَ وَيُذْكَرَ فِيهَا
أَسْمُهُ يُسَبِّحُ لَهُ فِيهَا بِالْغُدُوِّ وَالْآصَالِ ﴿٣٦﴾

رِجَالٌ لَا تُلْهِيهِمْ تِجَارَةٌ وَلَا بَيْعٌ عَنْ ذِكْرِ اللَّهِ وَإِقَامِ
الصَّلَاةِ وَإِيتَاءِ الزَّكَاةِ يَخَافُونَ يَوْمًا تَتَقَلَّبُ فِيهِ
الْقُلُوبُ وَالْأَبْصَارُ ﴿٣٧﴾

لِيَجْزِيَ اللَّهُ أَحْسَنَ مَا عَمِلُوا وَيَزِيدَهُمْ مِنْ فَضْلِهِ ﴿٣٨﴾

may increase to them of His Grace. And Allah propounds for whom He Will without measure.

39. And those who disbelieve their works are like a mirage in a desert which the thirsty deems to be water until when he comes thereto, he finds nothing, and finds Allah with himself, and He pays him his account in full; and Allah is Swift in reckoning.

40. Or, like darkness in a bottomless sea; there covers him a wave from above it, a wave overcast with a cloud; layers upon layers of darkness. When he puts out his hand he can scarcely see it. And to whom Allah does not appoint a light his shall be no light.

وَاللَّهُ يَرْزُقُ مَنْ يَشَاءُ بِغَيْرِ حِسَابٍ ﴿٣٨﴾

وَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا أَعْمَلُوا كَمَرَابٍ بِقِيعَةٍ يَحْسَبُهُ
الظَّمْثَانُ مَاءً حَتَّى إِذَا جَاءَهُ لَمْ يَجِدْهُ شَيْئًا
وَوَجَدَ اللَّهَ عِنْدَهُ فَوَفَّاهُ حِسَابَهُ وَاللَّهُ
سَرِيعُ الْحِسَابِ ﴿٣٩﴾

أَوْ كَظُلُمَاتٍ فِي بَحْرٍ لُجِّيٍّ يَغْشَاهُ مَوْجٌ مِنْ فَوْقِهِ
مَوْجٌ مِنْ فَوْقِهِ سَحَابٌ ظُلُمَاتٌ بَعْضُهَا فَوْقَ
بَعْضٍ إِذَا أَخْرَجَ يَدَهُ لَمْ يَكْذِبْهَا وَمَنْ لَمْ يُجْعَلْ لَهُ
لَهُ نُورٌ فَمَا لَهُ مِنْ نُورٍ ﴿٤٠﴾

Secrets of Revelation

Allah is the Light of the heavens and earth. Light denotes something which is not only manifest and radiant by itself but also illuminates and manifests other things. Here it means that the Real Being is Allah Who is manifested through each and every thing, and illuminates all other objects. The metaphor of 'Light' that denotes an object is not applicable to His Being. Rather it signifies the light that is endowed by Him, for the real Owner of light and radiance is Allah. The likeness of His endowment of light may be compared to an illuminated lamp placed in a niche, covered in a glass which is pellucid and as bright as the stars. The lamp is lit with clear and precious oil extracted from the blessed olive tree. Olive oil besides being the most illuminating and nourishing is also the best liniment. Moreover, it is characteristic of olive oil to burn without fumes. But the greatest of its merits is that Allah has made it very auspicious. This oil is derived from a tree so located that there is no barrier between it and the sun from morning to evening. The finest oil has been derived from the most superior tree, so fine and pure as to

exude light, as if it would illuminate without even igniting and once it is ignited it would dissipate radiance.

The Light of Prophet Muḥammad^{SAW}

The best example of this metaphor is the purest heart of the Holy Prophet^{SAW} and his blessed light. It is naturally so pious, so pellucid and luminous that even before his formal raising many of its virtues were manifested, and many miraculous events took place as portents of his exaltation and Prophethood. A detailed account of these wonders may be seen in the Commentaries of the Qurān and the Books on the life the Holy Prophet^{SAW}. His blessed nature was such that he was readily inclined towards obedience well before receiving a Divine Command and the society benefited from him even before his formal raising. And once raised, it was as if a lamp inside a beautiful glass, placed in an elevated niche and provided the most superior oil was turned into a beacon light that illuminated the globe, rather the entire universe.

The Light of a Believer

The same simile can be used for a believer who has the natural light endowed by Allah. There is an inborn capability in him to become radiant. So when he is blessed with the light of faith it is as if this lamp has been ignited. Now he is not only personally enlightened but also becomes a source of enlightenment for the entire mankind; a source of guidance and welfare, divorcing the darkness of evil and dissipating the light of faith, justice and equality. Once such souls find an accomplished Shaikh their passions flare up, their hearts are illuminated like the sun and they become the guiding lights for mankind.

Company of a Shaikh

This indeed is the Islamic Taṣawwuf in its pristine purity that the lamps placed inside the bosoms of the Muslims are lit with the Light of Prophethood and lined up along the path of mankind. A Ṣūfi himself must be the best example of adherence to Shari'ah and must exert all his efforts towards its implementation. Allah declares that He blesses whoever He pleases with this wealth, yet people pass away in deprivation.

The Inborn Light is Lost due to Evil Deeds

Qurān repeatedly declares that Allah guides everyone who seeks guidance. This is because every human being enjoys the inborn capacity to seek guidance and is duly equipped with the light of nature. According to the Holy Prophet^{SAW} every child is born on nature. It is his parents who convert him into a Jew, a Christian or

a Zoroastrian. In other words, the curse of human misconduct, the misdeeds of parents, and the adverse influences of the society put together overturn his niche, smash the glass, and break the lamp into fragments spilling the oil away. In other words, the inherent capacity to seek guidance is lost. The effect of this evil reflects in the future generations. So for them, whose inherent light is extinguished, there is no guidance. Allah reveals these similes to expound things so that mankind may take heed, for He enjoys the Most Comprehensive Knowledge of everything.

Mosques and Spiritual Centres of the Aulia'

And where to find persons with illuminated bosoms and hearts as radiant as lamps? They can be seen in houses wherein Allah's Commands are executed. Allah Commands the construction of such houses as well as their glorification and respect. The construction of magnificent mosques, the décor and beautification, thereof dates back to the era of the Companions^{RAU} and the Tab'a'in^{RUA}, namely Hadhrāt 'Usmān^{RAU} and 'Umar bin 'Abdul 'Azīz^{RUA} respectively. There are certain etiquettes that must be observed inside a mosque so as to uphold its reverence and dignity. The Holy Prophet^{SAW} has clearly explained that the mosques must be kept clean and no body should enter therein with any impurity. No substance, oil etc with a repugnant odour must be used inside the mosque. The worshippers mouths should not carry the foul smell of onion or garlic, tobacco, cigarette or hubble-bubble. A person suffering from a disease with foul smell must not enter the mosque. There must be no noise or disruption made inside nor should worldly matters be discussed there. The mosques should be beautifully built and diligently respected. And Allah's Zikr must be practised in plenty, which includes all forms of Zikr; Practical, Lisāni as well as Qalbi.

The Chambers for Zikr Allah

The small chambers built specially for Allah's Zikr will also command the same respect, and the same rules will apply as for the mosques. Similarly the institutions promoting religious education also deserve due respect. Although these institutions are not at par with the mosques or the gatherings of Zikr, yet these are custodians of a special grandeur. In the mosques Allah's Zikr must be practised morning and evening, which means around the clock, and His Praises and glorification must continue simultaneously.

Those who remember Allah are not diverted from His Zikr, worship and obedience and from spending in His Cause by their business, mundane benefits or other personal matters. Despite remembering Him constantly, they fear His Annoyance and keep in view the extremities of the Day when hearts of even the

most mighty shall overturn, and the eyes will stand petrified. But hoping that their good deeds shall be rewarded well on that Day they constantly strive in His Cause. They also expect that Allah will multiply their reward with His Munificence as it is typical of His Grace to bless whom He pleases in magnitude beyond measure.

Two Types of Infidels

And then there are those who lost their inherent light, and darkened their hearts by evil deeds and unlawful food to an extent that they could not even be rekindled by the light of Prophethood. They were thus lost into the darkness, and turned non believers. Of these some do believe in Allah, in Ākhirah and the Requital but in their own way. For instance, the contemporary Jews and the Christians, who practise their religion in accordance with the innovations they have concocted and still hope to be rewarded on the Day of Reckoning. They can best be compared to the person who traversing through a desert mistakes the shining sand to be an overflowing river and keeps on moving in its direction. But when he gets there he discovers that it was only a mirage of which he could avail naught. The deeds they assume to be meritorious would turn out to be the opposite and consequently wasted. They will have to account for their misconduct before Allah and will be punished accordingly, for Allah is Swift at Reckoning.

The second type of non believers are those who do not believe in the Ākhirah, Requital and Allah at all. They can best be compared to a person caught up in a deep ocean of darkness. Waves upon waves add to its darkness, while the darkness of the night is superimposed. Not only is it dark all around, but the hovering clouds overhead rule out any remote possibility of sighting a star even obscurely. So in such a multilayered darkness where one hand cannot locate the other, how can a person hope to be guided. He has indeed perished into the dungeons of denial because of his persistent disobedience to Allah. And remember that the Light of Guidance is only given by Him and whoever is not so blessed will not get even a ray from elsewhere.

Section 6

41. Do you not see that Allah; hallow Him whoever is in the heavens and the earth and the birds with wings out-spread? Surely everyone knows his prayer

الَّذِينَ يَسْمَعُونَ لَكَ فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ
وَالطَّيْرِ صَفَقَاتٍ كُلِّ قَدْ عَلِمَ صَلَاتَهُ وَتَسْبِيحَهُ وَاللَّهُ
عَلِيمٌ بِمَا يَفْعَلُونَ ﴿٤١﴾

and his hallowing; and Allah is the Knower of what they do.

42. Allah's is the Sovereignty of the heavens and the earth and to Allah is the return.

43. Do you not see that Allah drives a cloud along, then compresses it, and then makes it a mass, and you then see fine water come forth from between them. And He sends down from the sky mountains in which is hail; then smites with it whom He will and spares whom He will. The flash of His lightning almost takes away the sights.

44. Allah turns away the night and the day over and over; verily in this is a lesson for men of insight.

45. Every moving thing Allah has created of water; of them is one that walks upon its belly, and of them is one that walks upon its two feet, and of them is one that walks upon its four. Allah creates whatever He wishes; Allah is Potent over everything.

46. Assuredly We have sent down revelations illuminating. And Allah guides whom He wishes to a straight path.

47. And they say: We have believed in Allah and the Messenger, and we obeyed, then a party of them backslides thereafter, and believers they are not.

وَلِلَّهِ مُلْكُ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَلِلَّهِ الْعِصْرُ ﴿٤٢﴾

الزَّيْرَ أَنَّ اللَّهَ يُسْرِجِي مَحَابَاثُكُمْ يُؤَلِّفُ بَيْنَهُ ثُمَّ يَجْعَلُهُ رُكَّامًا فَتَرَى الْوَدْقَ يَخْرُجُ مِنْ خِلَالِهِ وَيُنَزِّلُ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ مِنْ جِبَالٍ فِيهَا مِنْ بَرَدٍ فَيُصِيبُ بِهِ مَنْ يَشَاءُ وَيَصْرِفُهُ عَنْ مَنْ يَشَاءُ يَكَادُ سَنَابِرُهُ يَذْهَبُ بِالْأَبْصَرِ ﴿٤٣﴾

يُغَلِّبُ اللَّهُ اللَّيْلَ وَالنَّهَارَ إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَعِبْرَةً لِّأُولِي الْأَبْصَارِ ﴿٤٤﴾

وَاللَّهُ خَلَقَ كُلَّ دَابَّةٍ مِنْ مَّاءٍ فَمِنْهُمْ مَنْ يَمْشِي عَلَى بَطْنِهِ وَمِنْهُمْ مَنْ يَمْشِي عَلَى رِجْلَيْنِ وَمِنْهُمْ مَنْ يَمْشِي عَلَى أَرْبَعٍ يَخْلُقُ اللَّهُ مَا يَشَاءُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ﴿٤٥﴾

لَقَدْ أَنْزَلْنَا آيَاتٍ مُبِينَاتٍ وَاللَّهُ يَهْدِي مَنْ يَشَاءُ إِلَى صِرَاطٍ مُسْتَقِيمٍ ﴿٤٦﴾

وَيَقُولُونَ ءَامَنَّا بِاللَّهِ وَبِالرَّسُولِ وَأَطَعْنَا ثُمَّ تَوَلَّى فَرِيقٌ مِنْهُمْ مِنْ بَعْدِ ذَلِكَ وَمَا أُولَئِكَ بِالْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٤٧﴾

48. And when they are called to **Allah** and His Messenger that he may adjudge between them, lo! a party of them turns aside.
49. And if they had a just cause, they would have come to him readily.
50. Is in their hearts a disease? Or do they doubt? Or do they fear that **Allah** shall misjudge them, as also His Messenger? Aye! These are the very wrong-doers.

وَإِذَا دُعُوا إِلَى اللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ لِيَحْكُمَ بَيْنَهُمْ إِذَا فَرِيقٌ مِنْهُمْ مُعْرِضُونَ ﴿١٨﴾

وَإِنْ يَكُنْ لَهُمُ الْحَقُّ يَأْتُوا إِلَيْهِ مُذْعِنِينَ ﴿١٩﴾

أَفِي قُلُوبِهِمْ مَرَضٌ أَمْ أَرْفَأُوْا أَعْيُنَهُمْ بِخِطَائِهِمْ أَنْ يَحِيفَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِمْ وَرَسُولَهُ بَلْ أُولَئِكَ هُمُ الظَّالِمُونَ ﴿٢٠﴾

Secrets of Revelation

Everything Practises Allah's Zikr

How clear and manifest are the Signs of **Allah's** Greatness and Omnipotence! O' reader! Don't you see how everything and every being of the earth and the heavens praise and glorify **Him**! The flocks of birds extol **Him** in flight. According to the Commentators everything practises two types of Zikr. Whatever **Allah** has created in the universe and assigned it a task, does not waver in its duty to the slightest. Rather everything is serving the purpose assigned by **Him** to the utmost by virtue of its creation, without ever slackening in the performance of its duty. Apart from this practical remembrance, everything also practises **Allah's** Zikr verbally, in its own way. **Allah** reveals here that everything is acquainted with its mode of worship and Zikr.

It is proven by Qurān and the Sunnah that everything has a certain level of understanding as well as a mode of communicating. And **Allah** is well Aware of the works of each and every creation. Indeed the sovereignty over the earth and the heavens befits **Him** Alone, for everything will eventually return to **Him**. Just look at **His** Absolute Omnipotence, how **He** brings forth the clouds and gathers them where **He** wants, in layers and in volume, and there comes the downpour. Although human knowledge discusses the causes of this process yet the question is, **Who** creates these causes? **Whose** Omnipotence is manifested by the heat and light of the sun, and the scudding of the winds? We very often observe that the weather is clear and sunny when suddenly the clouds appear and it rains heavily.

While at times we also see that the weather remains cloudy for many days but not a drop descends down. Whose Absolute Powers are manifested in all this? **He** makes mountain like clouds to pour hailstorms and destroys or saves the tilth of whoever **He** may choose. From this cluster of clouds thunder roars and lightning flashes as if it would blind the sight of every onlooker. And **He** alternates the nights and the days and maintains the entire system of life on a set pattern. Herein is ample evidence for those who enjoy insight.

These are all wonders of His Absolute Omnipotence, and it is **He Who** has created each and every living being from various forms of matter. **He** gathers the particles of clay, moulds them into matter and procreates the bodies from a watery fluid. Of these are reptiles that crawl on their bellies, or animals that walk on two feet or on four, and some even on more. It is **Allah Who** makes it easy for whoever **He** pleases to tread the straight path. Man has, however, been given the option to choose and if someone seeks the path of piety and guidance, **He** facilitates it for him. The same is true for other matters of natural life. It was for the guidance of mankind that **Allah** revealed clear Signs and deputed Prophets^{AS} with Scriptures. Yet if a person is devoid of any desire to seek guidance, how can he attain anything.

Hearts Devoid of Desire to Seek

Some people with hearts devoid of seeking, sometimes as a compromise or for some worldly gain or in copying others declare that they are Muslims who believe in **Allah** and His Prophet^{SAW} and also pledge to obey him. Yet when a situation demands obedience, inspite of all their claims and pledges, a group amongst them turns away. The poor do not find the courage to refuse, even if they want to, but the influential and the affluent step aside, like the so called wise pseudo intellectuals of today, who claim to be Muslims but find Islam outdated and impracticable.

Allah declares that such people are not believers at all. If they pick up a dispute with someone and are invited to come to settlement in accordance with Shari'ah, they do not opt for it. In case they have a rightful claim, however, they rush towards seeking **Allah** and His Prophet's^{SAW} verdict. In other words, their loyalty to Islam is contingent upon mundane gains. So O' reader! Have a look at the state of their ailing hearts and the intensity of their disease! Sometimes they even become sceptical over the Prophethood of the Holy Prophet^{SAW}, while at others they harbour suspicions that Shari'ah may deal with them unjustly. Indeed it is they who are transgressors and evil doers.

51. The only saying of the faithful, when they were called to Allah and His Messenger that he might judge between them was that they said: We hear and we obey. And these! They are the blissful.
52. And whoever obeys Allah and His Messenger, and is in awe of Allah and fears Him; These! They are the triumphant.
53. And they swear by Allah with their solemn oaths that if you command them they will surely go forth. Say you: Do not swear, your obedience is well-known. Verily Allah is Aware of what you do.
54. Say you: Obey Allah and obey the Messenger; then if you turn away, upon him is only that which has been laid upon him and upon you is that which has been laid upon you. If you obey him you will be guided, and nothing is upon the Prophet except the plain preaching.
55. Allah has promised those of you who believe and work the righteous deeds that He shall make them successors on the earth even as He made those who were before them successors, and that He shall certainly establish for them their religion which He has approved for them, and that
- إِنَّمَا كَانَ قَوْلَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ إِذَا دُعُوا إِلَى اللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ لِيَحْكُمَ بَيْنَهُمْ أَنْ يَقُولُوا سَمِعْنَا وَأَطَعْنَا وَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ ﴿٥١﴾
- وَمَنْ يُطِيعِ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ وَيَخْشَ اللَّهَ وَيَتَّقْهُ فَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْفَائِزُونَ ﴿٥٢﴾
- وَأَقْسَمُوا بِاللَّهِ جَهْدَ أُنْفُسِهِمْ لَإِنْ أَمَرْتَهُمْ لَيَخْرُجُنَّ قُلْ لَا تُقْسِمُوا طَاعَةٌ مَعْرُوفَةٌ إِنَّ اللَّهَ خَبِيرٌ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٥٣﴾
- قُلْ أَطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُوا الرَّسُولَ فَإِن تَوَلَّوْا فَإِنَّمَا عَلَيْهِ مَا حُمِّلَ وَعَلَيْكُمْ مَا حُمِّلْتُمْ وَإِنْ تُطِيعُوهُ تَهْتَدُوا وَمَا عَلَى الرَّسُولِ إِلَّا الْبَلَاغُ الْمُبِينُ ﴿٥٤﴾
- وَعَدَ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا مِنكُمْ وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ لَيَسْتَخْلِفَنَّهُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ كَمَا اسْتَخْلَفَ الَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِهِمْ وَلَيُمَكِّنَنَّ لَهُمْ دِينَهُمُ الَّذِي ارْتَضَى لَهُمْ وَلَيُبَدِّلَنَّهُم مِّن بَعْدِ خَوْفِهِمْ أَمْنًا يَعْبُدُونَنِي لَا يُشْرِكُونَ بِي شَيْئًا وَمَن كَفَرَ بَعْدَ ذَلِكَ فَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْفَاسِقُونَ ﴿٥٥﴾

He shall certainly exchange unto them after fear a security, provided they worship Me, joining nothing with Me; and whoever will disbelieve thereafter, then those! They are the ungodly.

56. And establish the Ṣalāt, and pay the Zakāt and obey the Messenger, perhaps you may be shown Mercy.

وَأَقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَآتُوا الزَّكَاةَ وَأَطِيعُوا الرَّسُولَ
لَعَلَّكُمْ تُرْحَمُونَ ﴿٥٦﴾

57. Do not consider them who disbelieve able to frustrate His Purpose on the earth, and their abode shall be the Fire, an ill retreat!

لَا تَحْسَبَنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مُعْجِزِينَ فِي الْأَرْضِ
وَمَا لَهُمْ النَّارُ وَلَيْسَ الْمَصِيرُ ﴿٥٧﴾

Secrets of Revelation

Enforcement of Islam a Responsibility of Believers

The distinction of the believers is that when asked to accept a decision taken in accordance with Shari'ah, they do it whole heartedly and obey readily. In other words, it is only the hypocrisy of people that hinders the enforcement of Islam or its laws, while the true believers at once adopt the Islamic laws in their practical lives. It is they who emerge as victorious.

Four Conditions for Eternal Bliss

Eternal triumph depends on four conditions. (1) To obey Allah and fulfil all obligations towards Him; (2) To obey the Holy Prophet ^{SAW}, and adhere to his Sunnah (3) To fear Allah, repent over past errors and pledge to abstain in future and (4) To adopt Taqwa and become subservient to Him from the very core of heart. The quasi Muslims and the hypocrites do make tall claims and vow that if Allah's Prophet ^{SAW} orders them, they would sacrifice everything in the execution of his command. They must be told not to make hollow vows but prove their obedience through actions, for Allah is well Aware of what they do. The obedience in practical terms covers both beliefs and practices. If they refuse to do so, the responsibility of Allah's men is only to convey the message and leave the choice to

them. However, the Holy Prophet^{SAW} must inform them that if they opt for obedience they will certainly attain guidance. His duty was to convey the Message of Allah which he has rightfully done, and not to force anyone into obedience. It is a matter exclusively between Allah and His subjects.

It is Allah's Promise to the believers with sound beliefs and virtuous conduct that He would give them authority and rule over the entire world, as given to the virtuous and practical believers of the preceding nations. He would make His selected Dīn, prevail in such an overwhelming way that the believers will neither feel threatened by nor fear anyone. They will only worship and obey Allah with such devotion that they as well as their words and actions shall be matchless in the contemporary world. But if despite all these favours, some people still resort to ingratitude, they will be disowned by Islam.

Āyah Istikhlāf

This is also known as Āyah Istikhlāf, as it promises Khilāfat (governance) to the true believers. This was manifested in the illustrious era of the Holy Prophet^{SAW} when the vanity of the infidels and polytheists was trampled over. Makkah and Khyber were taken; rather the entire Arabian Peninsula and Yemen came under the sway of Islam. Mighty rulers across the globe paid tribute to and acknowledged the grandeur of Islamic State by sending gifts to the Holy Prophet^{SAW}. During the era of the first Caliph Ḥadhrat Abu Bakr Ṣiddiq^{RAU} the impostors claiming Prophethood and those who refused to pay Zakāt were dealt with an iron fist. Then the Muslim forces proceeded to Egypt and the areas from Basra to Damascus were also taken. And the second Caliph, Ḥadhrat 'Umar^{RAU} took the light of Islam from one end of the globe to the other. The spiritual zephyr of Islamic System spread in a way that astonished everyone under the sky, for it had never witnessed such a peaceful, just and courageous State, save in the eras of the Prophets^{AS}. Persia and the countries ruled by the Khosroes slipped into the fold of Islam. This grandeur was maintained during the eras of Ḥadhrat 'Uthman and 'Ali^{RAU}. Rather during the period of the former, Islam was the sole authority and system from East to West and no other Government or State worth the name was there to match it.

Therefore, the very first manifestation of this blessed Āyah is the Caliphate of the first four Righteous Caliphs. According to Qurān these Ḥalīfs were the exemplary Muslims as well as rulers. The learned Commentators assert that despite this greatness, the conspiring group comprises those ingrates who martyred Ḥadhrat 'Uthman^{RAU}. Plotting to hit the magnificence of Islam, they opted for

infidelity. Historical evidence proves that it was this group that martyred Hadhrāt 'Ali, Hasan^{RAU}, and finally the household of the Holy Prophet^{SAW} and beheaded his illustrious grandson Hadhrat Hussain^{RAU} at Karbala. They drifted away from the teachings of their pious precursors and established the basis of Shi'aism, which has damaged and distorted each and every Islamic precept and practice. Today, it is exerting all efforts to oppose Islamic beliefs, right from Unity of Allah to the Ākhirah. The commentary on this Āyah by the learned Shaikh Allah Yar Khan^{RIIA} must be studied, in his booklet titled *Tafsīr Āyāt-e-Arba'h*.

The believers are commanded to establish Allah's worship diligently and adopt the Islamic Economic System. The insistence to pay Zakāt indeed aims at this very objective. This will, in turn, invoke Allah's Mercy Who by removing all mundane hurdles shall honour the believers in this world, and by protecting them against evil pave the way for eternal bliss. And the infidels must never assume that they can hold sway over the land forever, or can maintain their oppressive control on Islam. This will not be so as they are themselves heading towards Hell, and are about to meet a tragic end, which they just cannot avert, while it is His unbeatable Promise that Islam will prevail. However, this Promise is for the true Muslims, in terms of both precepts and practices.

Section 8

58. O you who believe! Let those whom your right hands own and those of you who have not attained puberty ask leave of you three times before the morning Ṣalāt, and when you lay aside your garments at noon-day and after the night Ṣalāt; three times of privacy for you. No fault is there upon you and upon them beyond these times going round upon you, some of you upon some others. In this way does Allah expound His Commandments, and Allah is Knowing, Wise.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لِيَسْتَأْذِنَ الَّذِينَ مَلَكَتْ
أَيْمَانُكُمْ وَالَّذِينَ لَمْ يَبْلُغُوا الْحُلُمَ مِنْكُمْ ثَلَاثَ مَرَّاتٍ
مِنْ قَبْلِ صَلَاةِ الْفَجْرِ وَحِينَ تَضَعُونَ ثِيَابَكُمْ مِنَ الظَّهِيرَةِ
وَمِنْ بَعْدِ صَلَاةِ الْعِشَاءِ ثَلَاثُ عَوْرَاتٍ لَكُمْ
لِبَاسٌ عَلَيْكُمْ وَلَا عَلَيْهِمْ جُنَاحٌ بَعْدَ هُنَّ
طَوَافُوتٍ عَلَيْكُمْ بَعْضُكُمْ عَلَى بَعْضٍ كَذَلِكَ
يُبَيِّنُ اللَّهُ لَكُمُ الْآيَاتِ وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ حَكِيمٌ ﴿٥٨﴾

59. And when the children among you attain puberty then let them also

وَإِذَا بَلَغَ الْأَطْفَالُ مِنْكُمُ الْحُلُمَ فَلْيَسْتَأْذِنُوا

ask leave as those before them asked leave. In this way Allah expounds His Commandments; and Allah is Knowing, Wise.

60. And past child-bearing women who do not expect wed-lock; upon them it is no fault that they lay aside their outer garments not flaunting their adornment. And that they should restrain themselves is better for them; and Allah is Hearing, Knowing.

61. No restriction is there on the blind, nor is there a restriction on the lame, nor is there a restriction on the sick, nor on yourselves that you eat in your houses or the houses of your fathers or the houses of your mothers or the houses of your brothers or the houses of your sisters or the houses of your uncles or the houses of your paternal aunts or the houses of your maternal uncles or the houses of your maternal aunts or from that house of which you own the keys or from the house of a friend. No fault is there upon you whether you eat together or eat in separate groups. Then when you enter houses, salute each other with a greeting from Allah, blessed and good. Thus Allah expounds to you His Revelation, perhaps you may reflect.

كَمَا اسْتَفْتَدَ الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ كَذَلِكَ يُبَيِّنُ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ آيَاتِهِ وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ حَكِيمٌ ﴿٦٠﴾

وَالْقَوَاعِدُ مِنَ النِّسَاءِ الَّتِي لَا يَرْجُونَ نِكَاحًا فَلَيْسَ عَلَيْهِنَّ جُنَاحٌ أَنْ يَضَعْنَ
يَسَابِغَهُنَّ غَيْرَ مُتَّبِعَاتٍ بِزِينَةٍ
وَأَنْ يَسْتَعْفِفْنَ خَيْرٌ لَهُنَّ وَاللَّهُ
سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ ﴿٦١﴾

لَيْسَ عَلَى الْأَعْمَى حَرَجٌ وَلَا عَلَى الْأَعْرَجِ حَرَجٌ
وَلَا عَلَى الْمَرِيضِ حَرَجٌ وَلَا عَلَى أَنْفُسِكُمْ
أَنْ تَأْكُلُوا مِنْ بُيُوتِكُمْ أَوْ بُيُوتِ آبَائِكُمْ
أَوْ بُيُوتِ أُمَّهَاتِكُمْ أَوْ بُيُوتِ إِخْوَانِكُمْ
أَوْ بُيُوتِ أَخَوَاتِكُمْ أَوْ بُيُوتِ أَعْمَامِكُمْ
أَوْ بُيُوتِ عَمَّاتِكُمْ أَوْ بُيُوتِ أَخَوَاتِكُمْ
أَوْ بُيُوتِ خَالَاتِكُمْ أَوْ مِنْ مَلَائِكَةٍ
مَعَكُمْ وَلَا يَجُنَّ عَنْ تَبِيعَاتِكُمْ فِي بُيُوتِكُمْ
فَإِذَا أَكُلْتُمْ مِنْ بَيْتِكُمْ مَكْلَبًا فَالْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ
الَّذِي هَدَىٰكُمْ لِهَذِهِ الْأَيَّاتِ
الَّتِي لَا تَنفَعُكُمْ إِلَّا يَدُ اللَّهِ
كَذَلِكَ يُبَيِّنُ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ آيَاتِهِ
لَعَلَّكُمْ تَعْقِلُونَ ﴿٦٢﴾

Secrets of Revelation

The Islamic Society is a chaste society which cannot be subdued by the ungodly forces. However, upholding and maintaining the honour and strength of this society is the duty of Muslims. The etiquettes of visit and rules for seeking permission before entering a house have been laid down earlier. Now, the orders for the inmates are revealed. If the servants - male or female - and the minors in a house need to go into the room of any member of the family, they must seek permission to enter especially at three occasions. (1) Before morning Ṣalāt (2) During the afternoon hours when people often prefer to remove extra clothing for a siesta and (3) After night Ṣalāt. These are the three casual hours when people do not bother to cover themselves up properly, being within the privacy of their rooms. For instance the spouses maybe availing seclusion or an individual maybe resting in minimum clothes. Therefore, it is imperative that even the children of the family be educated to observe these restraints and not allowed to simply barge into bedrooms. At all other times the members of the house generally meet one another freely, and it is certainly not difficult to avoid disturbing one another during the hours of rest. Apart from these timings there is no restriction in moving to and fro in the house.

Allah has revealed these codes of conduct in the best interest of the believers, to help inculcate a high standard of moral values as He is the Knower, the Wisest. And when the children attain puberty, they must follow the rules already laid down for the adults so that the Islamic Society is exquisite, chaste and comfortable, which precisely is its strength. Allah expounds everything for the betterment and grace of the believers from every angle as He is Aware of their situation and needs, and suggests the most appropriate methods for the solution of every problem.

Similarly those women who have grown old, that is, gone past the marriageable age and have no attraction for the other gender can do without the additional dress required for *Pardah*. However, they are also not permitted to adorn and display their appearance in public. By virtue of old age if they carry themselves casually there is nothing wrong, but if they avoid even this exposure and remain covered it is far better and wholesome for them. Surely, Allah listens to everyone and is well Aware of everything.

And if the believers eat together in the company of their relatives or invite one another for this purpose, there is no harm in doing so. Or if people physically

handicapped because of weakness or disease are invited to join in for a meal, it is good, for in an Islamic society they must never be looked down upon.

Encouragement of the Invalids and Eating Together

It is indeed a pity that in present times once an evil of the infidel society of hating the handicapped and the invalids, has been adopted by the Muslims. On the other hand, cheering them up and occasionally inviting them to a meal, a virtue taught to the Muslims, has been adopted by the un-Islamic societies. At the time when Qurān was being revealed, the Arab society considered it abject even to speak to the handicapped and the invalids. It was amidst the ambience of this hatred that Qurān enjoined that the blind, the disabled or the chronically ill should be invited over so that they are consoled and feel good. The believers can eat at the residence of their parents, brothers, sisters, paternal uncles and aunts, maternal uncles and aunts, or at the residence of close friends, who can even entrust them with the keys of their houses. They may host a meal in such houses, or eat alone and may invite the disabled to join them wherever it is convenient. And a believer, on entering, must greet the members of his household with words that wish them piety and peace. This practice is indeed very auspicious and decent, and a part of the society's excellence. This is how Allah teaches the believers wisdom and understanding so that their lives become rational and sagacious.

Section 9

62. The faithful are those who have believed in **Allah** and His Messenger, and when they are with him on some affair collecting people together, they do not depart till they have begged his leave. Verily those who ask your leave, those are they who really believe in **Allah** and His Messenger. So if they ask your leave for some business of theirs, give you leave to whom you will, and implore you **Allah** for their forgiveness. Verily **Allah** is Forgiving, Merciful.

إِنَّمَا الْمُؤْمِنُونَ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا بِاللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ
وَإِذَا كَانُوا مَعَهُ عَلَى أَمْرٍ جَامِعٍ لَمْ يَذْهَبُوا
حَتَّى يَسْتَأْذِنُوهُ إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَسْتَأْذِنُونَكَ أُولَئِكَ
الَّذِينَ يُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ فَإِذَا أَسْتَأْذَنُوكَ
لِبَعْضِ شَأْنِهِمْ فَأَذَنْ لِمَنْ شِئْتَ مِنْهُمْ
وَأَسْتَغْفِرْ لَهُمْ اللَّهُ إِيَّاكَ اللَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ ﴿٦٢﴾

63 Do not place the Messenger's calling of you on the same footing as your calling of each other. Of a surety Allah knows them who slip away privately. Let, therefore, those who oppose His Commandment beware lest there befall them a trial or there befall them an afflictive torment.

لَا تَجْعَلُوا دُعَاءَ الرَّسُولِ بَيْنَكُمْ كَدُعَاءِ
بَعْضِكُمْ بَعْضًا قَدْ يَعْلَمُ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ
يَسْلُكُونَ مِنْكُمْ لِوَاذًا فَلْيَحْذَرِ الَّذِينَ يُخَالِفُونَ
عَنْ أَمْرِهِ أَنْ تُصِيبَهُمْ فِتْنَةٌ أَوْ يُصِيبَهُمْ
عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ ﴿١٦﴾

64 Lo! Verily Allah's is whatever is in the heavens and the earth. Surely He Knows what you are about, and the Day whereon they shall be made to return to Him; then He will declare to them what they worked. And Allah is the Knower of everything.

أَلَا إِنَّ لِلَّهِ مَا فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ قَدْ يَعْلَمُ
مَا أَسْتَعْتَذِرُ عَلَيْهِ وَيَوْمَ يُرْجَعُونَ إِلَيْهِ فَيُنَبِّئُهُمْ
بِمَا عَمِلُوا وَاللَّهُ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمٌ ﴿١٧﴾

Secrets of Revelation

Certainly true believers are those who gather before the Holy Prophet^{SAW} on every momentous occasion for the execution of his command and despite compelling reasons they do not stay back. And they also do not leave or return from his presence without permission.

The Office of Amīr and Shaikh

The same holds good for the office of the Amīr of an Islamic State or a Shaikh as he too summons the believers in adherence to Sunnah and for practising Islam. A true believer never lags behind intentionally.

When the Holy Prophet^{SAW} summons the believers they respond quickly and in case of any compelling reasons they come to seek his permission personally. It is they who enjoy faith in Allah and His Prophet^{SAW}. They seek leave only due to some extremely constraining circumstances, for it is contrary to a believer's standing not to present himself to the Holy Prophet^{SAW} altogether. Although a believer has the right to express his constraints yet the authority to grant him leave, lies with the Holy Prophet^{SAW}, the execution of whose orders is far more

important than any other engagement. So if he grants someone leave, he must also pray to Allah for forgiveness of the excused, as the top priority was to execute the Holy Prophet's^{SAW} command. Why, after all should a believer let any constraints stand in his way? He should bear wholeheartedly any losses that may be met in compliance of the Holy Prophet's^{SAW} word. But if someone cannot take the burden and seeks his permission to be excused, which is accepted, the Holy Prophet^{SAW} must seek forgiveness for him from Allah, the Most Forgiving and Merciful.

The believers must not take the summoning by the Holy Prophet^{SAW} lightly as if they were calling one another, responding to or ignoring the call at their convenience. On the contrary, if he summons any believer it becomes obligatory for him to go, and returning without his permission is forbidden. According to Hadhrat Ibn 'Abbas^{RAU}, the Holy Prophet^{SAW} must never be called out in a manner as people call out one another in frankness. He must never be addressed as 'O' Muhammad!' Rather he is to be addressed politely, respectfully with such titles as 'O' Prophet^{SAW} of Allah' or 'O' Messenger of Allah!' and when he summons the believers, if someone tries to slip out of his presence without making it known; this covert disobedience cannot be concealed from Allah. This is typical of the hypocrites; so anyone doing so must realize that his action might invoke Allah's Wrath in the form of a trial or a tormenting chastisement.

Negligence of Contemporary Muslims towards the Holy Prophet's^{SAW} Obedience

Sadly enough the Muslim Society of today is not only blatantly violating the Holy Prophet's^{SAW} commands, but also declares the same as obsolete and impracticable. The so called intellectuals of today, who are ardent supporters of the Western culture, also constantly preach such ideas to the Muslims. The result is obvious. There are about two billion Muslims across the globe and there is not a single Muslim State where Islam is enforced as the law of the land. Obviously the Muslims are either under trial or under a Divine Punishment, for they are not only being humiliated by the infidels but are also subjected to genocide. The only remedy lies in reversion to the obedience of Allah's Prophet^{SAW} as all that lies within the universe is in His Absolute Control. And He has subjected the perfect running of the entire system to His obedience. So whenever any disobedience or violation takes place, it invokes some trial or calamity. Allah is well Aware of what people do and is also acquainted with their desires and aspirations. These trials and tribulations are only for this temporal world, while real doom will break loose once they arrive in His Presence on the Day of Reckoning, as nothing is concealed from Allah. May Allah protect us!