

mercy of

ALLAH

(Glory be to Him, the Most High)

YAKUB AHMED PATEL

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the name of Allah, the Most Merciful, the Mercy Giving

MERCY
OF
ALLAH (ST)

YAKUB AHMED PATEL

*Published by the Grace of Allah (ST) in
Ramadan, 1431 AH (August 2010 CE)*



وَرَحْمَتِي وَسِعَتْ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ

*"My Mercy covers everything
in the universe."*

(Q: 7-156)



In the name of Allah, the Most Merciful, the Mercy Giving

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The objective of this publication is to inspire every soul to seek Mercy of its Sustainer with the deepest sincerity. Let every human being benefit from the infinite blessings of seeking Forgiveness, Grace and Mercy of Allah (ST) – the Owner and Giver of Everlasting Mercy. Let each soul turn to its Loving Lord – Allah (ST) - the Creator of the Cosmos - with the deepest reverence.

With the help of Allah (ST) and sincere efforts of all of us, let this knowledge reach to a large number of people to help all of us benefit from the infinite Mercy of Allah (ST):

“Invite (all) to the Way of your Sustainer with
Wisdom and Beautiful Preaching” (Q: 16-125)

The blessings of *Mercy of Allah (ST)* cannot be contained in just a single soul, but that soul must surge to reach out to the human souls on the farthest shore and convey the message. So, my dear reader, please convey to others the blessings of *Mercy of Allah (ST)* by making copies of this publication and distributing it free or at cost to others, or simply share this information in your daily talks. May Allah (ST) accept our efforts and may He guide us to the *Straight Way of Islam* – Ameen.

Humanity is one family. We need to *unite together and exhort one another in the mutual teachings of righteousness*. We are co-riders in a single space ship, moving forward each moment toward our ultimate destiny – the Home of the Hereafter. Our planet earth is a single ship swimming in the vast cosmos, rotating on its axis as well as revolving around the sun.

The human caravan is in the midst of a cosmic journey together toward its Sustainer. We need to awaken in every soul the consciousness of its Creator that gives it a vision for striving for its finest ultimate destiny – the Paradise – the Eternal Home of limitless *Love, Joy and Peace - through the Mercy and Grace of Allah (ST)*.

In the name of Allah, the Most Merciful, the Mercy Giving

AL-ASR (*THE TIME*)

By the Time

Verily Man is in a condition of utter loss -

Except such as have Faith,

And do righteous deeds,

And exhort one another to uphold the Truth,

And exhort one another to persevere in faith with patience.

(Q: 103)

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DEDICATION

This book is humbly dedicated to *Allah (ST), the Giver of Grace & Mercy, the Acceptor of Repentance* - for all the favors He bestowed on me, my family and the entire universe.

*With Deep Humility, I Acknowledge Your Help, O Allah!
In the True Spirit of Islam, I Appreciate Your Unbounded
Mercy, O Allah!*

With All My Heart, I Thank You, O Allah!

*O Allah! Please make this humble work
Worthy of Your Acceptance*

*And if it is Worth Dedicating to You,
Please Bless It with Your
Grace and Acceptance.*

*I humbly Dedicate this Book to You, O Allah -
The Most Merciful, the Mercy Giving.*

*O Allah (swt), please forgive me, my parents,
my wife, my children &
all believing men & women.*

*Please envelop us all in your unbounded
Peace, Grace and Mercy.*

(Ameen)

Yakub Ahmed Patel

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ
الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ
وَالصَّلَاةُ وَالسَّلَامُ عَلَى
خَاتَمِ الْأَنْبِيَاءِ وَالرُّسُلِ

*In the name of Allah,
the Most Merciful, the Mercy Giving,
Praise be to Allah, Lord of the Universe,
and Prayers and Peace be upon
His Final Prophet and Messenger.*

In the name of Allah, the Most Merciful, the Mercy Giving

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قُلْ يَا عِبَادِيَ الَّذِينَ أَسْرَفُوا عَلَىٰ أَنفُسِهِمْ
لَا تَقْنَطُوا مِن رَّحْمَةِ اللَّهِ
إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَغْفِرُ الذُّنُوبَ جَمِيعًا
إِنَّهُ هُوَ الْغَفُورُ الرَّحِيمُ

*“O My servants who have transgressed to
your own hurts!*

*Despair not of Allah’s Mercy: behold,
Allah forgives all sins - for, verily,
He alone is the Most-Forgiving,
the Most Merciful.”*

(Q: 39-53)

رَبَّنَا آتِنَا فِي الدُّنْيَا حَسَنَةً
وَفِي الآخِرَةِ حَسَنَةً
وَقِنَا عَذَابَ النَّارِ ﴿٢٠١﴾

O Our Sustainer!

Grant us happiness in this life and

Happiness in the life to come and

Protect us from the

punishment of fire. (Q: 2-201)

رَبَّنَا آتِنَا مِنْ لَدُنْكَ رَحْمَةً
وَهَيِّئْ لَنَا مِنْ أَمْرِنَا رَشَدًا ﴿١٠﴾

O Our Sustainer!

*Bestow on us Mercy from Yourself
and facilitate for us our affair
in the right way. (Q:18-10)*

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the name of Allah, the Most Merciful, the Mercy Giving

INTRODUCTION

Every day, hundreds of times, a Muslim begins his/her tasks with the beautiful expression: *bismillah hir-rahman nir rahim* (بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ) – meaning: “In the name of Allah, the Most Merciful, (ar-Rahman) the Mercy Giving (ar-Rahim).” For over 1.6 billion Muslims throughout the globe, *the words Rahman and Rahim are on every mind and every heart every hour of every day. Why? Because it is the Mercy of Allah (ST) that gives us all peace, happiness and a joy that have no end. It is the hope in the Mercy of Allah(ST) that motivates us all for repentance no matter how sinful we are. We all are, indeed, deeply dependent on the Mercy of Allah(ST). Each breath of life is an expression of Allah’s Mercy – for once it is gone, nothing can bring it back.*

So let us look in detail at various dimensions of Allah’s Mercy.

Every day, at the silvery dew of dawn, Muslims, with the deepest devotion to their sustainer, facing Ka’bah - the symbol of Allah’s greatness, hymn the praise of their Sustainer with this prayer:

*“In the name of Allah, the Most Merciful, the Mercy-Giving
All praise is for Allah, Sustainer of the Worlds,
The Most Merciful, the Mercy-Giving
Owner of the Day of Judgment
You (alone) we worship. And to You (alone) we ask
for help.
Guide us to the Straight Way
The way of those upon whom You have bestowed
grace, not those upon whom there is (Your) wrath,
nor those astray.
Ameen.” (Q:1)*

(Note: Translations of the Qur’anic verses are from References 1 to 10; Ahadiths – Sayings of Prophet Muhammad [S] are from References 11 to 14)

Again, everyday, in the midst of the busy hours of life, during the changing hues of the evening, at day’s closing and in the stillness of night, Muslims reaffirm their deepest faith in the Mercy of Allah(ST) through the recitation of the above prayer in each Salah (obligatory prayer – five times a day-everyday). So there is almost an endless rhyme of “Rahman” and “Rahim” in a Muslim’s life-music!

“Rahman” (رحمن) and “Rahim” (رحيم) are the two basic divine attributes. Both are derived from the noun “rahmah” which signifies “mercy”, “compassion”, “loving tenderness” and, more comprehensively, “grace”. From the very earliest times, Islamic

scholars have endeavored to define the exact shades of meaning which differentiate the two terms. The best of these explanations is perhaps the one advanced by Ibn al-Qayyim. This is as follows:

The term “rahman” denotes the quality of abounding grace inherent in, and inseparable from, the concept of Allah’s “Being”, whereas “rahim” expresses the manifestation of that grace in, and its effect upon, His creation - in other words, an aspect of His “activity”.

So “Ar-rahman” means the being who possesses “Rahmah”; and “Ar-rahim” means the being who not merely possesses “Rahmah” but gives perennial expression to it, and from whom everything in the universe derives mercy every moment. In short, Rahman is the source of Mercy and Rahim is its unlimited giving to all in the limitless universe of Allah.

The “Rahmah” of Allah envelops everything in the universe. So declares the Noble Book:

“And My “Rahmah” covers everything in the universe.”
(Q:7-155)

The expression “Allah has willed upon Himself as a law Rahmah” occurs twice in the Qur’an (Q:6-12 and Q:6-54). No other attribute of Allah is so deeply stressed as “rahmat”. It is as if a binding law to Allah. This exceptional quality of Allah’s grace and mercy is, indeed, the repetitive rhyme of the noble book. In the Qur’an, the word “Rahmah” (رحمة) occurs 79 times, the word Ar-Rahim (الرحيم) occurs 95 times and the word

Ar-Rahman (الرحمن) occurs 57 times. If we further add other attributes which in one form or other are connected to Allah's Mercy, such as forgiveness, protection, benevolence, providence etc. the number increases so greatly that *the Qur'an from cover to cover conveys only one single message - that of divine Mercy or Rahmah.*

What is the "Rahmah" of Allah? The Qur'an points out that whatever beauty or perfection there is in life, is but an expression of the divine "Rahmah". This is further explained by Maulana Azad (Ref. 7) as follows:

"When we reflect over the life of the universe, the most pointed reality that strikes us is the order that exists therein. It is through this order we are introduced to Nature; and when we get to know it a little closer, we realize that a greater reality than this order is at work everywhere and on which this very order depends."

"And what is the objective of this order? It is sustenance of life in the universe. But sustenance alone is not the whole objective. Something greater than this is in view. Sustenance is but a means to the development of beauty in everything. We notice that there is a design in the life of the universe, and that there is beauty in this design. There is in its disposition the sense of balance. Its actions display specific attributes. *In its visage there is beauty. In its voice there is music. In its smell there is perfume,* and there is nothing about it which does not contribute to the upkeep of its edifice. This aspect of life is greater in its reaches than the orderliness that dwells therein. And this reality the Qur'an designates as 'Rahmah', an attribute which displays the

qualities both of ‘ar-Rahman’ and ‘ar-Rahim’, the graciousness and mercifulness of Allah.”

Lane (Ref. 20) points out yet another explanation of the terms ar-Rahman and ar-Rahim as follows:

The words ar-Rahman and ar-Rahim are attributes of Allah(ST) and they are intensive forms derived from the same root r.h.m (م.ح.ر). The root r.h.m (م.ح.ر) means: “He had mercy, or pity, or compassion, on him; or he treated him, or regarded him, with mercy or pity or compassion. *Ar-Rahman* means the Compassionate and includes in its objects the believers and the unbelievers - the entire creation. However, *ar-Rahim* means the Merciful and has its peculiar object the believer.

Allah(ST) is Mercy Giving to all. However, He gives special Mercy to the believers. This is exemplified in the following beautiful verses:

“O you who believe! Remember Allah(ST) with unceasing remembrance. And glorify Him from morning to evening.

He it is Who sends His blessings upon you, as do His angels, so that He may bring you out from the depth of Darkness into the Light: and indeed *He is Full of Mercy to the Believers.*”

On the Day when they meet Him, they will be welcomed with the greeting: “Peace”, and *He has prepared for them the most excellent reward.*”

(Q:33-41,44)

1.0 INFINITE MERCY

“O My servants who have transgressed to your own hurts! Despair not of Allah’s Mercy: behold, Allah forgives all sins - for, verily, He alone is the Most-Forgiving, the Giver of Grace.”

Note that Allah’s grace is limitless. According to the above verse, Allah forgives “*all*” sins. “All” means none left out -big and small-without distinction. Truly the Mercy of Allah(ST) is infinite!

The prophet(A) said that Allah, the Glorious has said: “Son of Adam, as long as you supplicate Me and hope in Me, I will pardon you in spite of what you have done, and I do not care. Son of Adam, if your sins were so numerous as to reach the lofty regions of the sky, then you asked My forgiveness, I would forgive you, and I do not care. Son of Adam, if you were to meet Me with enough sins to fill the earth, then met Me not associating anything with Me, I would bring you as much pardon as would fill the earth.” (Tirmidhi)

The mercy of Allah is so vast, that He even grants much more than just forgiving sins. He even changes the evil deeds into good deeds! Who can be more merciful than our loving Sustainer!

“Excepted, however, shall be they who repent and attain to faith and do righteous deeds: for it is they whose bad deeds Allah will transform into good ones - for Allah is Gracious, Merciful.” (Q:25-70)

2.0 FORGIVING WITH LOVE

“He (Allah) alone is truly-forgiving, all-embracing in His love.” (Q:85-14)

Allah’s mercy is mixed with love. In the Qur’an, Allah(ST) addresses the sinners by using the personal possessive pronoun “My”. This carries a touch of tenderness and love. It hits the right chords of human hearts with swift and penetrating strokes. It awakens the human heart and moves it away from sins - closer to the Creator.

“...was it you who led “My” servants astray?..(Q:25-17)

“O My servants who have transgressed to your own hurts! Despair not of Allah’s Mercy: behold, Allah forgives all sins - for, verily, He alone is much-forgiving, a dispenser of grace.” (Q:39-53)

This form of calling is similar in calling of a father to his son: “O my son!”. Commenting upon the above verse (Q:39-53), Imam Jafar Sadiq(R), the great-grandson of the Prophet(A) remarks: “Whenever we call our children, they run to us without the slightest fear; for, they feel certain that the parent could never be cruel to them. More than twenty times is the phrase ‘O my servants’ or ‘O my people’ used in the Qur’an. This style of address is used even in case of the worst sinners. Could there be a better proof than this of the essential mercy of Allah shown in his dealings with his creatures?” Truly Allah is more merciful to His servants than a mother to her child!

Abdallah bin Umar said: “When we were with the Prophet on

one of his expeditions, he came upon some people and asked who they were, to which they replied that they were Muslims. A woman who had a son of hers with her was kindling a fire under her pot, and when the heat increased she moved him away. She then went to the Prophet and asked, ‘Are you Allah’s messenger?’ On his replying that he was, she said, ‘O you for whom I would give my father and mother as ransom, tell me if Allah is not the most merciful of those who are merciful.’ He replied that He certainly is, and she asked, ‘Is Allah not more merciful to His servants than a mother to her child?’ and when he assured her that He certainly is, she replied that a mother does not cast her child into the fire. Allah’s messenger then bowed his head and wept, and afterwards raised it, looked at her and said, ‘Allah punishes only those of His servants who act audaciously towards Him and refuse to say that there is no deity but Allah.’” (Ref. 13)

It is interesting to note that this motherly mercy is even emphasized in naming the womb - the seat of tender love, mercy and sustenance for the really weak and dependent - the unborn infant! So much so that Allah(ST) names womb as “rahim”. In a Hadith-Qudasi, *Allah(ST) says*:

“I am ar-Rahman and have created the “rahim (womb)” and derived its name from My name. So, whosoever brings it close, I will be close to him; and whosoever severs it, I will sever him.” (Ahmad)

Allah is so loving to His servants, that He is always with the most deprived and suffering humans. He equates helping humans

as helping Allah personally! Note this moving tradition of the Prophet (A):

“On the day of Judgment Allah most high will say, ‘Son of Adam, I was sick and you did not visit me.’ He will reply, ‘My Lord, how could I visit Thee when Thou art the Lord of the universe?’ He (Allah) will say, ‘Did you not know that my servant so-and-so was sick and yet you did not visit him? Did you not know that if you had visited him you would have found Me with him?’ Son of Adam, I asked you for food but you gave me none.” He will reply, ‘My Lord, how could I feed Thee when Thou art the Lord of the universe?’ He will say, ‘Did you not know that My servant so-and-so asked you for food and yet you gave him none? Did you not know that if you had fed him you would have found that with Me? Son of Adam, I asked you for drink but you gave Me none. He will reply, ‘My Lord, how could I give Thee drink when Thou art the Lord of the universe? He will say, ‘My servant so-and-so asked you for drink but you gave him none. Did you not know that if you had given him something to drink, you would have found that with Me?’” (Ref. 11)

3.0 RESPITE TO SINNERS

It is the beauty of Allah’s Mercy that He does not punish the sinners soon. He allows them plenty of time to reflect, re-think and *repent*.

“And thy Sustainer is the Truly Forgiving - limitless in His grace. Were He to take them (at once) to task for whatever (wrong) they commit, He would indeed bring about their speedy punishment (then and there): but nay, they have a time-limit beyond which they shall find no redemption.”(Q:18-58)

This *time-limit* in most cases is *death* itself. Since the time of death is uncertain and irreversible, we should form a habit of seeking Allah’s Mercy continuously.

“Now if Allah were to take men (immediately) to task for all the evil that they do (on earth), He would not leave a single living creature upon its face. However, He grants them respite until a term set (by Him): but when the end of their term approaches, they can neither delay it by a single moment, nor can they hasten it.” (Q: 16-61)

4.0 DIVINE REVELATION: MERCY TO MANKIND

Repeatedly the Qur’an emphasizes that the revelation is an expression of divine mercy. Perhaps it is the greatest gift of Allah to man. According to the Qur’an, the revelation given to Moses - the Torah is “a mercy” (Q:11-17), the Qur’an is “a mercy” (Q:7-52), Jesus(P) is “a mercy” (Q:19-21) and Muhammad(P) is “a mercy” (Q:21-107). The Qur’an further says:

“Can then, (he who cares for no more than the life of this world be compared with) one who takes his stand on a clear evidence from his Sustainer, conveyed through (this)

testimony from Him, as was the revelation given to Moses aforetime - a guidance and mercy unto mankind?”

“O Mankind! There has now come unto you an admonition from your Sustainer, and a cure for all (the ill) that may be in men’s hearts, and guidance and mercy to believers. Say: “In (this) grace of Allah and in His Mercy - in this, then let them rejoice: it is better than all (the worldly wealth) that they may amass!” (Q:10-57,58)

“This (revelation) is a means of insight for mankind, and a guidance and mercy unto people who are endowed with inner certainty.” (Q:45-20)

5.0 MUHAMMAD (S): MERCY TO MANKIND

An important dimension of Allah’s Mercy is reflected in the life of all true Prophets and in particular in the life of Muhammad(S). So reminds the noble book:

“(O Prophet) We have sent thee as Mercy towards all the worlds.” (Q:21-107)

The life of Muhammad(S) was a life full of mercy towards the entire creation of Allah(ST). Through Muhammad(S), Allah(ST) rescued the entire human race which was at the point of complete collapse at the close of the 6th century (CE). It was the time when the human family was torn apart by the darkness of ignorance, immorality and crimes. Bloodshed was wide spread and the human family, as it appears in the pages

of history, had almost taken a pledge for suicide. The Qur'an captures that state of humanity in these touching terms:

“And remember with gratitude Allah’s favor on you: how, when you were enemies, He brought your hearts together, so that by His Grace you became brethren; and *you were on the brink of the Pit of Fire, and He saved you from it.*”

Muhammad(S), the Messenger of Mercy acted as a savior of mankind as described in this similitude by the Prophet(A):

“The mission and guidance I have been vouchsafed to deliver to this world is like this: A man made a bonfire and when it illuminated the surroundings, insects began to jump into it. You also want to plunge into the fire in a like manner but I am holding you by your waist to save you from falling into the eternal fire.”

Through his tireless efforts for twenty-three (23) long years, Muhammad(S) changed the Age of Ignorance to the Age of Knowledge. Man was indeed *reborn* when he realized the essence of Kalimah Tayyiba - *There is no deity except Allah and Muhammad is the messenger of Allah.*

The life of Muhammad(S) is a unique phenomenon of history. His life, through its deep touch of mercy for mankind, more than any other single phenomenon known to us, fundamentally improved the religious, social and political history of the world. Although Muhammad(S) was the best-ever ruler of the one million square miles of land in Arabia, on the eve of his death, his

wife Ayesha(R) had to borrow oil from her neighbor to lighten the earthen lamp in the humble hut of the Prophet where he breathed his last! Living as a poor person among the poorest of his time, Muhammad(S) left this world without material shackles, leaving behind no material inheritance. He left an immortal inheritance - *the Qur'an and his Sunnah*. Muhammad(S) left to this world the Noble Book of Allah, the Guidance and Mercy to mankind, while the memory of his own life gave the highest and the noblest example for man's emulation. Muhammad(S), the messenger of Mercy, left this world the inheritance of a great spiritual legacy whose light continues to illuminate the world and will continue to illuminate the world till the last day. May Allah's choicest blessings and peace be upon Muhammad(S) and his family.

6.0 DIVINE MERCY: A BASE FOR THE HEREAFTER

The Qur'an points to life after death through the presence in creation of the element of divine Grace and Mercy, the *Rahmah* of Allah. If the demand of *Rahmah* is to develop human life and the entire creation to perfection and beauty, how then is one to believe that this process of perfection will cease for him/her, at the end of a transient existence on earth? Even *death* for a believer is a *Mercy* of Allah, for he/she has firm faith that this life, which is perfected by Allah's *Rahmah*, cannot end in dust. He is even given concrete proof by the Qur'an to observe the nature around him and be convinced of life after death. So

points the Qur'an:

“Look then the foot prints of *Allah's Mercy* (in the creation), how He makes the dead earth alive. Verily! That (same Allah, Who revived the earth after its death) shall indeed raise the dead (on the Day of Resurrection), and He is able to do all things.” (Q:30-50)

“Do they not perceive that Allah, who created the heavens and the earth, is able to create their like (again after death)? And He has ordained a term for them; there is no doubt about it: but the wrong-doers reject everything except disbelief.” (Q:17-99)

7.0 THE MOST GRACIOUS

There is a whole chapter (surah) in the Qur'an with the title “Ar-Rahman” (Surah 55)-“the Most Gracious.” This is an extremely poetic and rhythmic surah. In a beautiful way, this surah describes the blessings and bounties of our Sustainer. It points to His Grace and Mercy in all aspects of creation. It asks us repeatedly to reflect: “*then which of the bounties of your Sustainer will you deny?*” This expression is repeated, like a drum-beat, thirty one (31) times in its musical melody of seventy eight (78) verses touching the finest chords of human heart. The language of the Qur'an is inimitable. No translation, however rich, can reproduce the beauty of the original. To fully feel and appreciate its beauty, we should therefore read this surah in the original Arabic text. Here is the beginning part of this surah:

In the name of Allah, the Most Merciful, the Mercy Giving

(Allah) The Most Gracious!

It is He Who has

Taught the Qur'an (unto man).

He has created man:

He has taught him speech

(And Intelligence).

The sun and the moon

Follow courses (exactly) computed;

And (before Him) bow in adoration,

The stars and the trees.

And the skies has He raised high,

And He has set up

The Balance (in all creation),

So that you (too, O man) never transgress

The Balance.

Weigh, therefore, (your deeds) with Justice

And fall not short in the balance.

And the earth has He spread out

For all living beings

With fruits, and palm trees

With sheathed clusters (of dates),

And grains growing tall on its stalks,

And sweet-smelling plants.
*Then which of the bounties
Of your Sustainer will you deny?*

He has created man out of
Sounding clay, like pottery
Whereas the Jinn, He has created
Out of a confusing flame of fire.
*Then which of the bounties
Of your Sustainer will you deny?*

(He) is the Sustainer of the
Two farthest points of the sunrise,
And the Sustainer of the two
Farthest points of the sunset.
*Then which of the bounties
Of your Sustainer will you deny?*

He has let free the two bodies
Of flowing water meeting together
(yet) Between them is an (invisible)
Barrier which they do not transgress.

*Then which of the bounties
Of your Sustainer will you deny?*

And His are the lofty ships that sail
Like (floating) mountains through the seas

*Then which of the bounties
Of your Sustainer will you deny?*

All that lives on earth or in the heavens
Is bound to pass away:
But forever will abide thy Sustainer's Self,

Full of majesty and glory
*Then which of the bounties
Of your Sustainer will you deny?*

On Him depend all creatures
In the heavens and on earth; (and)
Every day He manifests Himself
In (yet) another (wondrous) way.

*Then which of the bounties
Of your Sustainer will you deny?*

(Q:55-1,30)

Note that this fine surah points out first the most important of all blessings to mankind. This blessing is the guidance of revelation itself. Imparting man the knowledge of the Qur'an is the greatest grace of Allah. *Divine guidance is the perfection of Allah's creative activity.*

In surah *al-A'la* (Q:87), the Qur'an speaks of four important stages in the process of the creative activity of Allah. These are (Ref. 7):

- *Takhliq* (bringing into being)
- *Taswiya* (giving it a proper shape)
- *Taqdir* (assigning to it a specific role) and
- *Hidayah* (guidance).

Praise the name of thy Lord, the Most High.

Who creates (everything), and thereupon forms

it in accordance with what it is meant to be,

and who determines their destinies, and thereupon

guides it (through revelation).” (Q:87-1,4)

Each stage of creation marks a stage of divine Mercy. Divine guidance is the climax of the creativity of Allah, and of His Grace upon His creation.

8.0 NATURE SERVES US ALL

It is the mercy of Allah that he made nature serving us all in a wonderful way. So points out the Qur'an:

“(And remember that) it is Allah who has created the heavens and the earth, and who sends down water from the sky and thereby brings forth (all kinds) of fruits for your sustenance; and who has made ships subservient to you, so that they sail through the sea at His command; and He has made the rivers subservient (to His laws, so that they be of use) to you; and He has made the sun and the moon, both of them constant upon their courses, subservient (to His laws, so that they be of use) to you; and He has made the night and the day subservient (to His laws, so that they be of use) to you.

And (always) does He give you something out of what you may be asking of Him; and *should you try to count Allah's blessing, you will never be able to number it.*

(And yet,) behold, man is indeed most persistent in wrongdoing, unthankful!

(Q:14-32,34)

Note that in the above verse “*blessing*” [*نعمة*] is used in singular. What does this mean? It points to the depth and breadth of each and every blessing of Allah taken one at a time! If we truly reflect on just a single blessing of Allah, we cannot enumerate the advantages. For example take the blessing of sight. Ask a blind person the value of eyes. Imagine how many things we

are able to do because Allah gave us the blessing of eyes. The wonderful world around us would be a dark night if we were unable to see! All our daily work depends on this single blessing. As we get older, decay in our eyesight causes many problems. Then we slowly start realizing the value of vision. But in normal circumstances we hardly thank our Sustainer for this great gift! Similar is the case with all other blessings of Allah. Consider for a moment the value of legs. Observe the difficulty that a person in a wheel-chair undergoes. Note the limitations on his activities and the hardships he suffers - especially when he has to work for his daily living. Can we truly count the innumerable blessings that flow from the blessing of ability to walk? We hardly think of it. As we get older however, our body sends messages of decay of this blessing. We then begin realizing its importance.

Consider the breathing of the heart! Each breath is a jewel of immense value. Reflect on the condition of a heart patient. Consider the complexity of a heart transplant operation - the very cost of it is thousands of dollars! Imagine the difficulty of breathing for a heart patient. Consider the importance of normal breathing and the absolute need for it. Even few moments of breathing problems are unbearable! However we rarely think of this great blessing of our Sustainer until someday we start developing heart problems! Ask a dumb person the value of speech. Consider the communication process and the difficulty of being unable to speak! We then can realize the value of speech. Such is the case for each of the infinite blessings of Allah which we all enjoy each day of life. Air, sunlight, water, food and the shelter are among the precious blessings of our Sustainer. Life

itself is not possible without the blessings of Allah which we rarely reflect on or thank Him for. It is a sad fact that the very abundance of Allah's blessings makes us insensitive to them. Only when we start losing some of these blessings, do we begin to understand their values!

9.0 JOYS FOR ALL

However primitive a person's life may be, he still enjoys the blessings of the surroundings the Sustainer shaped for him. Consider an example of an illiterate hut dweller living in lonely woods! He certainly feels that everything around him contributes to his comfort! When it is too hot, he sits under the shade of nearby trees. He cools his eyes by looking at the green grass around him. When he gets sick, he eats the herbs nearby him to cure his sickness. When hungry, he eats the fruit of the trees around him. He cuts the wood from the trees to keep warmth in his humble hut and to cook his daily dinner. Nature serves equally well a humble hut dweller and a man in a multi-million dollar mansion!

10.0 SIMULTANEOUS SERVING

It is also interesting that the scheme of the Sustainer is such that the blessings in nature are served simultaneously to all living creatures. Even as a man living in a mansion may feel that the entire creation exists only for him, so also an ant can feel that the entire creation exists only for her! And who can deny this?

Does not the sun in reality exist to provide warmth to the ant? Does not the rain come down to provide moisture to the ant? Does not, in reality, air exist to provide the smell of sugar to the ant? Does not the earth exist to provide a well structured shelter to the ant in every changing season? *Surely the blessings of nature are of universal and simultaneous use to all that exists.*

“There is not an animal (that lives) on earth, nor a bird that flies on its wings but are communities like you. Nothing have We neglected in Our decree. And unto their Sustainer shall they (all) be gathered in the end.”
(Q:6-38)

11.0 EMERGENCY HELP

Allah(ST) is the sublime shelter from all dangers. It is interesting to note that from a linguistic point of view, the very word *Allah* itself originated from a root which signifies a source of shelter during danger. Before Islam, the word *Allah* was used by pre-Islamic Arabs to represent the Supreme Lord - who was above their 360 different idols inside the Ka'bah! In times of extreme danger, they used to call Allah(ST) alone and forget, at least momentarily, their man-made gods, the idols. Prior to this, since time immemorial, the ancient Arabs used to call a supreme power for help in danger using the word *alihal'ya'lahu*. This word was later transformed to *Allah* - much before the first Qur'anic revelation. So it seems that turning to Allah(ST) during danger is almost instinctive in all humans in all ages. It is a timeless trait of us all! This is the most powerful proof of the Mercy of our

Creator, for He is the only source from whom we are absolutely sure to receive help - whether we are good or bad; believers or unbelievers. So questions the Qur'an:

“Who is it that responds to the distressed when he calls out to Him, and who removes the ill (that caused the distress), and made you inherit the earth?”

“Could there be any divine power besides Allah(ST)? How seldom do you keep this in mind!” (Q:27-62)

In His utmost mercy, Allah(ST) helps all in danger. However it is a pity that most men forget Allah(ST) after He relieves them of danger. Look at this Qur'anic picture:

“Art thou not aware how the ships speed through the sea by Allah's favor, so that He might show you some of His wonders?”

Herein, behold, there are messages indeed for all who are wholly patient in adversity and deeply grateful (to Allah).

For (such is the case with most men that:) when the waves engulf them like shadows (of death), they call unto Allah(ST), sincere (at that moment) in their faith in Him alone: but as soon as He has brought them safe ashore, some of them stop half way (between belief and unbelief).

Yet, none can knowingly reject Our messages unless he be an utterly ungrateful traitor.

O men! Be conscious of your Sustainer, and stand in awe of the Day on which no parent will be of any avail to his child, nor a child will in the least avail his parent!

Verily, Allah's promise (of resurrection) is true indeed: let not, then, the life of this world delude you, and let not (your own) deceptive thoughts about Allah(ST) delude you." (Q:31-31,33)

12.0 WITH HARDSHIP COMES EASE

It is the mercy of Allah(ST) that with every hardship, ease follows as a natural law.

"And, behold, with every hardship comes ease:

Verily with every hardship comes ease!"

So when you are free (from distress),

remain steadfast and

Turn unto your Sustainer with love."

(Q:94-5,8)

Ease follows after hardship as surely as day after night. Happiness and sorrow are like smooth and rough passages that we pass through on the journey of life - till we meet our Sustainer. Change is inevitable in human life. It is a cosmic pattern carved by our Creator!

"But Nay! I call to witness the sunset's

(fleeting) afterglow,

*And the night, and what it (step by step)
unfolds,
And the moon, as it grows to its fullness:
(even so, O man,) are you bound to move
onwards from stage to stage.”
(Q:84-16,19)*

So Allah(ST) “calls to witness” the fact that nothing in His creation is ever the same, standstill or unchanging. Everything moves constantly from one state of being into another, at every moment changing its aspect and its condition - a phenomenon aptly described by the Greek philosopher Heraclitus by the phrase *“panta rhei* “(“everything is in flux”). From the minutest subatomic particle to the greatest galaxy, everything in Allah(ST)’s creation changes its condition continuously. So the human condition varies as well.

During every moment of our life, we experience change. No two conscious seconds are alike. Let us reflect upon the beating of our heart. Each heartbeat is a signal signifying a change. As we inhale air, its composition changes with every breath!

All conditions of life produce good for the believer as the Prophet(A) so beautifully puts it:

“It is remarkable that everything turns out well for a believer. If happiness befalls him, he gives thanks and it turns out well for him; and if misfortune befalls him, he shows endurance and it turns out well for him.” (Ref. 11)

13.0 TENDER CARE

After the word *Allah* (الله), which occurs 980 times in the Qur'an, the second most frequently occurring word of the Qur'an is *rabb* (رب) which, occurs 979 times. *Rabb* means Nourisher or Sustainer. It also means "Teacher" or "Master" who, in their own fields, are the nourishers or sustainers of their people.

Allah(ST) is the Nourisher(Rabb) of all. His nourishing is called "Rubibiyat" in Arabic. This is a divine providence with a touch of mercy. It is an expression of the Mercy of Allah(ST) to all creatures. According to the opinions of the leading lexicographers (Ref. 7), the term Rubibiyat means "to develop a thing from stage to stage in accordance with its inherent aptitudes, needs and its different aspects of existence, and also in a manner affording the requisite freedom to it to attain its full stature." If a person should feed the hungry or give alms to the poor, it will be an expression of kindness, benevolence or favor on his part. But this will not be "Rubibiyat". "Rubibiyat" is a process of tender or careful nourishment providing from moment to moment and from stage to stage all that one needs to gain the fullest possible development. And this process is always to be marked by the touch of tenderness; for, no activity which is not actuated by this can claim to be regarded as "Rubibiyat". Allah(ST) is *Rabb* of the entire universe - with its trillions and trillions of creatures all through the cosmos!

14.0 MERCY IN MARRIAGE

It is a great blessing of Allah (ST) that he made *Love and Mercy* as the foundation of spousal relations. This is a sublime base as opposed to materialistic bases like money, power, etc. Let us reflect on this sublime Qur'anic reminder for all of us to improve our family relationships in these trying times:

“And among His Signs is this, that He created for you mates from among yourselves, that you may dwell in tranquility with them, and He has put *Love and Mercy* between your (hearts): verily in that are Signs for those who reflect.”

(Q: 30-21)

Following noble sayings of Prophet Muhammad(S) give us more insight into the Islamic perspective of marriage:

“The whole world is to be enjoyed, but the best thing in the world is a good woman.” (Ref. 12)

“The best of you is he who is best to his family, and I am the best among you to my family.” (Ref. 13)

“When a woman observes the five times daily prayers, fasts during Ramadan, preserves her chastity and obeys her husband, she may enter by any gates of Paradise she wishes (a way of saying nothing will prevent her from entering Paradise).” (Ref. 13)

“A woman may be married for four reasons, for her property, her rank, her beauty and her religion; so get the

one who is religious and prosper. “

(Ref. 11)

15.0 DOORS OF MERCY ALWAYS OPEN

It is the beauty of Allah(ST)’s mercy that it is always available in abundance whenever a servant seeks it sincerely. No matter how sinful a person is, the doors of Allah(ST)’s mercy and forgiveness are never closed. The following story illustrates this aspect of Allah(ST)’s Mercy:

Abu Sa’eed Khudari (R) narrated that the Prophet(A) said: “A person from amongst a nation of the past, having slain ninety-nine persons, inquired as to who was the most learned person in the world. He was directed to a monk (who had given up the world). He (the self-confessing assassin) went to the monk and said: ‘I have killed ninety-nine persons. Is there any chance of repentance left for me?’. The monk answered: ‘No’. The man killed the monk also and completed his century of victims. The killer asked again: ‘Who is the most learned person in this world?’ He was directed to a learned man. Accordingly he went to him and said: ‘I have killed one hundred persons. Is there any hope for repentance left for me?’ The learned man said: ‘*Yes, nothing can stand between you and repentance.* Proceed to such and such land. In this land are (pious) people who worship Allah (ST). Join them in the worship of Allah and do not return to your home country because it is an evil place. The man started for

this land. He had covered only half of the distance when he met with his death. A dispute arose between the angel of mercy and the angel of torment as to who should take charge of his soul. The former pleaded that since he had come as a penitent turning towards Allah, and the latter contended that the deceased had never done a good deed. Then there arrived an angel disguised as human and the contending angels agreed that he should be the arbiter between them. He directed them to measure the distance between the two lands. To whichever he is nearer, to that one he belongs. So they carried out the measurement and found the land of pious persons to be closer. So the angel of mercy took charge of him.” (Ref. 14)

16.0 MOSQUE – (MASJID) – TREASURE OF ALLAH’S MERCY

A Mosque (Masjid – Muslim Prayer Place) is a treasure of Allah’s Mercy. On entering a mosque, a Muslim prays for the Mercy of Allah in these words: “O Allah, open for me the doors of Your Mercy” (اللَّهُمَّ افْتَحْ لِي أَبْوَابَ رَحْمَتِكَ). On leaving the mosque, he again prays, “O Allah, I ask You out of Your Grace and Mercy” (اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَسْأَلُكَ مِنْ فَضْلِكَ وَرَحْمَتِكَ).

Mosque is the House of Allah - and since Allah is the Most Merciful, His House is full of Mercy for all. So with this in mind, every moment in a mosque is a moment of acquiring Mercy of Allah. Mosques indeed are the Gardens of Paradise on

this planet as the following hadith reminds us:

Abu Huraira (R) reported Allah's Messenger as saying, "When you pass one of the Gardens of Paradise, feed there." When asked what the Gardens of Paradise were he replied that they were the mosques, and when asked what the feeding consisted of, he replied, "Glory be to Allah; Praise be to Allah; there is no deity except Allah; and Allah is the Most Great." (Ref. 13)

By visiting the mosques, we have an opportunity to enhance the beauty of our heavenly home. Abdullah bin Mas'ud (R) reported that the Holy Prophet (A) said:

On the night of my Ascension when I met Prophet Abraham (A) he told me: O Muhammad (S), please convey my Salam to your people (*Ummah*) and tell them that Paradise is a place of fine soil and sweet water, and a vast and spacious place; and that its blooming plants are: *sub-han Allah* (Holy is Allah), *Alhamdo Lillah* (All praise is due to Allah) *La-illaha Illal-laho* (there is no deity save Allah) and *Allaho Akbar* (Allah is the Greatest). (Ref. 14)

By remembering Allah(ST) during our visit in the mosque, we achieve tranquility, peace and mercy. The Prophet (A) said:

"People will not sit remembering Allah (ST) without the angels surrounding them, Mercy covering them, Peace – Divine Tranquility (as-sakina) descending on them and Allah (ST) mentioning them among those who are with Him." (Ref. 13)

17.0 MERCY OF ALLAH BRIGHTENS OUR DAY - EVERYDAY

One important characteristic of *hope in the Mercy of Allah* is that it gives us *optimistic outlook* in life. Stress is a major problem of our busy modern life. At times, when we are sad, stressed or depressed on realizing burden of our sins, hope in the Mercy of Allah gives us new lease on life. It brightens our day and gives us hope in the infinite, unconditional Grace of Allah. An inner voice from within tells us “don’t worry, future is still bright. The clouds of darkness will disappear soon. Return to Allah(ST), seek His Mercy and repent - all will be well again – since Allah(ST) is the Most Merciful of those who show mercy.”

How would a student feel when, depressed by several “F” grades is told by the teacher that all his/her “F’s” will be changed to “A’s”? Sounds too good to be true but such is the case with the Mercy of Allah - a divine blessing which transforms our evil deeds into good deeds! So reminds the noble book:

“Except those who repent and believe (in Allah) and do righteous deeds, for those, Allah will change their bad deeds into good deeds, and Allah is Oft Forgiving, Most Merciful?”
(Q:25-68,70)

Let us reflect on this important event narrated by Abu Huraira (R), a great companion of the Prophet(A):

“One day when I returned home after the *Isha* prayer (*Isha* is an obligatory night prayer) in the Prophet’s Mosque, I saw a woman standing at my door. I saluted her and

walked into my room, closed the door and busied myself with voluntary worship. After a while she knocked at the door. I opened the door and asked what she wanted. She said that she had come with a problem. She had committed adultery, had been pregnant, given birth to a child and then killed the child. She wanted to know if there was any chance of her sins being forgiven. I replied in the negative. She went back grief stricken, exclaiming, 'Ah! this beautiful body was created for the fire!' The next morning, after the prayer, when I related the night's incident to the Holy Prophet, he said, 'You gave a very wrong answer, Abu Hurairah: Haven't you read the Qur'anic verses (Q:25-70) which say:...*except those who repent and believe (in Allah) and do righteous deeds, for those, Allah will change their bad deeds into good deeds, and Allah is Oft Forgiving, Most Merciful?*' Hearing this from the Prophet(A), I went out in search of the woman, and could trace her at the Isha time. I gave her the good news and told her what the Prophet(A) had said in reply to her question. She immediately fell prostrate on the ground and thanked Allah, Who had opened a way for her forgiveness. Then she offered repentance and set a slave-girl along with her son, free." (Ref. 3)

So indeed *hope in the Mercy of Allah(ST)* gives us a new lease on life. It is a fresh start on the Siratal Mustaqim- the Straight Path of Islam. It surely is the re-birth of a human being - far more important than the first physical birth. Mercy of Allah(ST) is a way to Paradise and therefore we should ardently seek it each day – every day.

18.0 BE MERCIFUL TO ALL

One important dimension of seeking Mercy of Allah (ST) is to form a habit of being merciful to each other among us and helping each other. If we are merciful to others, Allah will be merciful to us. The Prophet(A) said: *“Allah(ST) will not show mercy to him who does not show mercy to others”*.

The Prophet (A) also said:

“Those who are merciful have mercy shown to them by the Compassionate One. If you show mercy to those who are in the earth, He who is in the heaven will show mercy to you.”

Anas(R) reported Allah’s messenger as saying: *“For him who aids one who is distressed, Allah(ST) will record seventy-three acts of pardon, one of them comprising his whole well-being and seventy-two being grades of rank for him on the day of resurrection.”*

“Repel evil with good - forgive wrongdoings by others” is the Qur’anic way of seeking Allah(ST)’s grace. It is the way of the pious - those who race towards Allah’s forgiveness and Jannah- the Paradise.

“Be quick in the race for forgiveness from your Lord and for a garden whose width is that (of the whole) of the heavens and of the earth prepared for the righteous.

Those who spend (freely) whether in prosperity or in adversity; who restrain anger and pardon (all) men; for Allah(ST) loves those who do good.” (Q:3-133,134)

Allah(ST) commands us to repel evil with good:

“The good deed and the evil deed cannot be equal. Repel the evil with good, then verily! He between whom and you there was enmity, will become as though he was a close friend”. (Q:41-34)

The noble Qur’an teaches us that all of us belong to one human family without any inherent superiority of one over another. We all are children of Adam & Eve as the Qur’an points out:

“O people! Behold, We have created you all out of a male and female (Adam & Eve) and have made you into nations and tribes, so that you come to know one another. Verily, the noblest of you in the sight of Allah is the one who is most deeply conscious of Him. Behold, Allah is all-knowing, all-aware.” (Q:49-13)

Human life is very sacred and we should all work together for the collective good of the whole mankind. The noble Qur’an teaches us that *whoever kills an innocent person, it is as if he has killed all mankind; and whoever saves a person, it is as if he has saved all mankind (Q: 5-32).*

The gracious Qur’an further teaches us sublime tolerance towards all creatures of Allah and that the existence of different religions among us should not divide us, rather it should make us compete for good deeds. So instructs the noble Qur’an:

“To each one (of the religious communities) have We given a (different) law (shari’ah) and a way of life (minhaj). If Allah had so willed, He could surely have made you all one

single community: but (He willed it otherwise) in order to test you by means of what He has given you. *So compete with one another in doing good deeds.* Unto Allah you all will return; and then He will make you truly understand all that in which you differed from each other.” (Q:5-48)

This text teaches us that Allah created in us different religions to test us in striving and excelling each other in doing good. Believers are told that they should stop hostilities towards each other due to differences in religions and cooperate for the good of all mankind together. They should concentrate on making their way toward Allah together *while engaged in only one kind of contest, out of which all will emerge winners, a sublime sort of striving for good deeds.* In a religiously plural world today, the repetitive Qur’anic reminder to “*compete with one another in good deeds*” transforms enmity among various religions into love and brotherhood of faith. The image of “*ying with one another in good deeds*” recurs several times in the Qur’an as a theme that transforms the mundane human motive of competition into a stimulus for the highest and best moral behavior (Ref.18). In particular, this is an excellent way to nourish the Judeo-Christian-Islamic tradition here in our American society.

A pure heart free of ill-will for others leads one to Paradise. Once, the Prophet (A) pointed to an ordinary person in Madinah and said to his companions, “*Behold a man of Paradise!*” On hearing this from the Prophet(A), one companion - Abdullah ibn Amr ibn al-As (R) became curious to discover the secret of this person’s worship. So he stayed with this man for three nights to observe him, thinking that this man must be performing some

special worship during the night. Abdullah(R) however did not find anything special in this man's worship to Allah(ST). So Abdullah(R) told the man that he wanted to follow him because of what the Prophet(A) said about him, but the man's worship was very ordinary - nothing special as such to follow. The man said to Abdullah(R): "I do nothing more in terms of worship other than what you saw. *However, I hold no grudge in my heart against any Muslim, nor do I deceive anyone, nor do I envy anyone for the bounty that Allah has bestowed upon him.*" Hearing this, Abdualah(R) said: "This is what has raised you to this rank."

Even during critical moments of severe personal hurt, Allah(ST) asked Abu Bakr(R)- the best of all the believers after the Prophets - to forgive and do good to the *slanderer of his own daughter!* Here is the Qur'anic command:

"Let not those among you who are endued with grace and amplitude of means resolve by oath against helping their kinsmen, those in want and those who have left their homes in Allah's cause: *let them forgive and overlook: do you not wish that Allah should forgive you? For Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.*" (Q:24-22)

In his commentary of this ayah, Yusuf Ali (Ref. 1) remarks that the immediate reference was to Hadhrat Abu Bakr(R), the father of Hadhrat 'Aisha(R). He was blessed both with spiritual grace from Allah and with ample means, which he always used in the service of Islam and of Muslims. One of the slanderers of Hadhrat 'Aisha turned out to be Mistah, a cousin of Hadhrat Abu Bakr, whom he had been in the habit of supporting. Naturally

Hadhrat Abu Bakr wished to stop that aid, but according to the highest standards of Muslim ethics he was asked *to forgive and forget, which he did, with the happiest results to the peace and unity of the Muslim community. But the general application holds good for all the time.* A generous patron should not, in personal anger, withdraw his support even for serious faults if the delinquent repents and mends his ways. *If Allah forgives us, who are we to refuse forgiveness to our fellows?*

The Prophet(A) by nature was full of mercy and forgiveness. *He even often prayed for pardon of his enemies!* He was doing such an extreme level of kindness to ardent sinners that divine revelation had to intervene in this regard!

“Whether you (O Muhammad) ask for their forgiveness or not, (their sins are unforgivable): If you ask seventy times for their forgiveness, Allah will not forgive them because they have rejected Allah and His Apostle; and Allah guides not those who are perversely rebellious.” (Q:9-80)

When the life-long opponent of the Prophet(A) and leader of the hypocrites of Madinah, Abdallah ibn Ubayy, was dying, he sent his son to the Prophet(A) with the request that the latter give him his (the Prophet's) shirt, so that he might be buried in it, and that the Prophet(A) should pray over him after his death. The Prophet(A) took this request as a sign of Ibn Ubayy's repentance, and gave him his shirt and later led the funeral prayers over his body. When Omar(R) vehemently protested against this clemency towards the man whom all the believers had regarded as “God's enemy”, the Prophet(A) answered, “God

has granted me a choice in this matter (referring to Qur'anic verse Q:9-80), *and so I shall pray (for him) more than seventy times.*" (Ref. 2)

Prophet Muhammad (S) was indeed the *Mercy to Mankind*. So reminds the noble book:

"We sent you [O Muhammad] nothing, but as the Mercy to the whole universe."

(Q:21-107)

The Merciful Prophet always forgave his enemies and made prayers to Allah for their guidance. Here are few of the many monumental examples from his noble life:

Example of Taif

In the wake of deep oppression and complete rejection by the Makkans, Prophet Muhammad (S), with renewed hope that a new tribe would listen to Allah's words, turned to Taif. Taif is a town 60 (sixty) miles east of Makkah. Accompanied by his companion Zaid (R), the Prophet addressed the Thakif tribe of Taif calling them to Allah (ST). The Thakif tribe severely rejected his message. They persecuted the Prophet and Zaid, drove them out of the city and severely stoned them. Wounded, bleeding and weary, this Prophet of Allah raised his hands toward the heavens for prayer under the shade of a palm tree.

It was a quiet evening. So deep was the intensity of the devotional spirit in the Prophet's prayer, that Allah(ST) answered him

instantly. An angel appeared and told Muhammad(S) that Allah has sent him to destroy the town of Taif. “If you order me,” said the angel, “I will close the two mountains on each side of this city and destroy it.”

The Prophet, who was a mercy to mankind, told the angel not to destroy the city. *“These people are not perceiving my message, leave them alone. Do not harm them. May be Allah will bring from their progeny people who will listen to His words”* said the Prophet to the angel. The merciful Prophet then prayed for the good of the Thakif tribe of Taif while his own body was bleeding due to injuries done to him by the very same people!

Another Example

Soon after the victory of Makkah, all the chiefs of the city assembled in the courtyard of Ka’bah. This was the place where in the past, the Prophet had been insulted, beaten and attempts had been made to kill him by the very same people who had now gathered there as criminal to be tried. They were the same persons who had made fun of him, pelted stones upon him, sown thorns in his way, tortured and killed the helpless believers and instigated the whole of Arabia to destroy the Prophet and his faith. On that day they all stood as criminals, conscious of their crimes, surrounded by ten thousand well-armed Muslim warriors ever willing to square the past account with them. At those critical moments, when even the criminals themselves would consider death penalty a fair judgment for them, the Prophet asked them: “O Quraish, what do you think that I am

about to do with you?” “Good, Muhammad”, they replied, “You are a noble brother, son of a noble brother.” The Forgiving, Merciful Prophet then gave his verdict: “Go your way, for you are the freed ones.”

This is how the enemy is loved and forgiven - a shining example of forgiveness to others. One has not to indulge in rhetoric and high sounding words to teach a lesson, but to wade through blood and tears for setting a noble example. (Refs. 15,16,17)

Seeking Forgiveness from others before Death

Recitation of the *Kalimah* (*lailaha illallaho - meaning - there is no deity except Allah*) is very precious for a dying person since it leads the soul - with Allah’s will - to Paradise. A thought-provoking story of a youth who was unable to recite *Kalimah* at the time of the death as describe in the next paragraph further reminds us of the importance of seeking timely forgiveness from people whom we have hurt deeply.

In the time of the Prophet(A), a youth on his death-bed was not able to recite the *Kalimah*. The Prophet(A) went to his bed side and inquired the matter. The youth told him that his heart seems as if locked. When the Prophet(A) investigated the matter, it came to light that the mother of the youth was angry with him and the youth has hurt her most. The Prophet(A) called his mother and told her if she would like to recommend that her son be saved from throwing into the fire (of hell). She said that she would. Then the Prophet(A) asked her to forgive

her son and she did accordingly. Now when the dying youth was asked to recite the Kalimah, he did it with ease.

So while we have to forgive others, we should also seek timely forgiveness from others for any wrong done to others as this hadith reminds us:

Abu Huraira(R) narrated that Allah's Apostle(A) said: "Whoever has oppressed another person concerning his reputation or anything else, he should beg him to forgive him before the Day of Resurrection when there will be no money (to compensate for wrong deeds), but if he has good deeds, those good deeds will be taken from him according to his oppression which he has done, and if he has no good deeds, the sins of the oppressed person will be loaded on him."

A Beautiful Story

The Qur'an presents a beautiful story of showing mercy and forgiving others in Surah Yusuf. In this surah, the stories of Yusuf (A) [Joseph] and Yakub (A) [Jacob] are monumental examples of showing Mercy to others.

Life and Wisdom are explained by Signs,
Symbols, Parables, and moving Stories,
In the Holy Qur'an. A beautiful story
Is that of Joseph, the best-beloved son
of Jacob. His future greatness

Was pre-figured in a vision, but his brothers
Were filled with envy and hate; they plotted
To get rid of him and threw him down
Into a well. Some merchants found him,
Bound for Egypt. The brothers sold him
Into slavery for a few silver coins,-
Him the noblest man of his age,
Marked out by God for a destiny
Of greatness, righteousness, and benevolence.
(Ref. 1)

Surah Yusuf - the finest of stories in the noble Qur'an - is a standing monument of showing mercy and forgiving others. Here is the young, beautiful, bright Joseph. For no sin of his, he suffers deeply at the hands of his brothers. Envy entices Joseph's brothers to take his life, and they cast him into the darkness of a well. A random caravan picks him up by chance and sells him into slavery in a strange land. Joseph suffers severe calamities which engulf him from all directions like tidal waves in a stormy sea. Yet this pure, pious and God-loving person survives and bears all hardship with patience and prayers. Finally Allah(ST) grants him relief, power and prestige and his sinful brothers come to him repenting. *At those moments, where he could have taken revenge from the criminal brothers, he fully and unconditionally forgives them without even a trace of scolding. Joseph is most forgiving. He does not dwell even a moment on their past evil conduct. Instead he instantly and warmly forgives them. Here is that immortal scene:*

Said Joseph's brothers to Joseph:

“By Allah(ST)! Most surely has Allah(ST) raised thee high above us, and we were indeed but sinners!”

Said he (Joseph): *“No reproach shall be uttered today against you. May Allah(ST) forgive you your sins: for He is the Most Merciful of the merciful.”*(Q: 12 - 91,92)

Equally beautiful is the forgiving attitude of Jacob to his sinning sons. Jacob was so deeply saddened for years, at the apparent loss of Joseph that he practically lost his sight due to painful weeping for those years! Yet, when his sons realized their sins and asked Jacob to pray for them, he immediately forgave them and prayed to Allah(ST) for their forgiveness! So describes the noble book:

On approaching Jacob, the brothers of Yusuf said: “O our father! Ask Allah(ST) to forgive us our sins, for, verily, we were sinners!” He (Jacob) said: *“I shall ask my Sustainer to forgive you: He alone is truly forgiving, a true dispenser of grace!”* (Q: 12-98)

Truly we have a beautiful example of forgiving others in Surah Yusuf.

A Contrast

There is a sharp contrast in the nature of man versus God when it comes to forgiving and being merciful. We humans are very

unforgiving. It is our common experience; at work or in social dealings, that if we do a fine job, it is considered normal but if we make one mistake or go wrong, we are remembered for that one error. If we do ninety-nine good things and one bad thing to a person, he or she will remember us by that one bad dealing - forgetting all the ninety-nine good dealings.

But with Allah(ST) it is just the opposite. If we commit sins lifelong and do one good deed, Allah(ST) remembers us by that one good deed and forgives all our sins because of that one good deed done for His pleasure. So much so that the Merciful Creator changes all our sins into good deeds because of that one good act that pleases Him! A superb bargain for us indeed! As if a great teacher grades a student who is getting “all F’s and one A” by giving the student “all A’s!” So says the noble book:

“Unless he repents, believes, and works righteous deeds, for Allah will change the evil of such persons into good, and Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.” (Q:25-70)

إِلَّا مَنْ تَابَ وَآمَنَ وَعَمِلَ عَمَلًا صَالِحًا فَأُولَئِكَ يُبَدِّلُ اللَّهُ
سَيِّئَاتِهِمْ حَسَنَاتٍ ۗ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ غَفُورًا رَحِيمًا

Small Sacrifice Saves

Small good deeds go a long way toward gaining us Allah's Mercy and forgiveness. A small kindness, even to animals can save us. Note these two important examples:

Abu Huraira (R) narrated that Allah's Apostle(A) said: "While a man was walking on a road, he became very thirsty. Then he came across a well, got down into it, drank (of its water) and then came out. Meanwhile he saw a dog panting and licking mud because of excessive thirst. The man said to himself: "This dog is suffering from the same state of thirst as I did." So he went down the well (again) and filled his shoe (with water) and held it in his mouth and watered the dog. Allah thanked him for that deed and forgave him." The people asked, "O Allah's Apostle! Is there a reward for us in serving the animals?" He said, "(Yes) There is a reward for serving any animate (living being)." (Ref. 11)

In another incident, Abu Huraira narrated that Allah's Apostle(A) said, "A prostitute was forgiven by Allah, because, passing by a panting dog near a well and seeing that the dog was about to die of thirst, she took off her shoe, and tying it with her head cover she drew out some water for it. So, Allah forgave her because of that."

If by saving just an animal's life we get so great a reward, how much more reward can we get by saving a human life? Indeed infinite! In fact, according to the divine decree, saving one human life is equivalent to saving the whole of mankind! So

reminds us the noble book:

“.....whosoever saves the life of one human being, it shall be as if he had saved the life of all mankind.” (Q:5-32).

In our modern times; hunger, poverty and oppression are widespread - in spite of technological advances. So by our small help, if we save even one human life from death due to hunger, poverty or oppression, we will Insha Allah get infinite Mercy and forgiveness for our sins from Allah - the Most Merciful, the Mercy Giving. Healing human hurts is, indeed, a way of gaining Mercy of Allah. We should help and love one another for the sake of Allah(ST) to gain eternal happiness.

Let us note these Prophetic Pearls of wisdom:

- *The people are the dependents of Allah(ST), and the most beloved of Him is he who is the most helpful to His dependents.*
- *Indeed, Allah(ST) created some of His slaves so that they should help people. He vowed not to punish them; on the Day of Resurrection they will be settled on pulpits made of light, and they will be talking to Allah (ST), while people are judged.*
- *Those who are merciful have mercy shown to them by the Compassionate One. If you show mercy to those who are in the earth, He who is in the heaven will show mercy to you.*
- *For him who aids one who is distressed, Allah(ST) will*

record seventy-three acts of pardon, one of them comprising his whole well-being and seventy-two being grades of rank for him on the day of resurrection.”

- *Abu Huraira said: When I was with Allah’s messenger he said, “In Paradise there are pillars of rubies on which there are rooms of emerald with open doors shining like a sparkling planet.” He was asked who would occupy them and he replied, “Those who love one another for Allah’s sake, those who sit together for Allah’s sake, and those who visit one another for Allah’s sake.”*

19.0 CONCLUDING REMARKS

Time flies fast. Years roll quickly by and we hardly notice them. This world is like a dream and we soon reach our ultimate destiny – the hereafter. The golden opportunity to seek the Mercy of Allah during our present life also ends soon like a fast-disappearing afterglow at sunset. So we should form a habit of praying for the Mercy of Allah repeatedly on a regular basis.

Prophet Muhammad (S) reminded us in these words about our ultimate destiny:

“Be in the world as though you were a stranger or a wayfarer, and reckon yourself to be among the inhabitants of the graves.” (Ref. 11)

Grave is a very difficult abode and we should seek forgiveness from Allah (ST) in this life seeking His Mercy, Grace and

Protection in our graves. The grave is the first stop to the life hereafter! Whenever Othman(R) stood by a grave, he used to weep to such an extent that his beard would be wet with tears. Let us reflect and think for a moment who was Othman(R)? He was the pious Caliph who spent all his life in the sublime service of Allah and his Messenger. Then what about us? A person asked Othman(R) why he wept more at the mention of the grave than at the mention of the Heaven and the Hell? Othman(R) replied: "I have heard the Prophet (A) say that the grave is the first halting place towards the Hereafter. Whoever is saved from its punishment, the subsequent events become easy. And whoever is not saved from its punishment, the coming events will be harsher still. And I have also heard that no scene is more horrible than that of the grave."

When we die, we leave this world alone and enter in a grave that is indeed very difficult abode. We leave behind everything – our loving family, our wealth and all the comforts of our homes. Nothing really helps us in the grave except our good deeds through the Mercy of Allah. The Prophet (A) said:

"After a man dies, his relations are severed from everything save three: Charity that continues in his name, knowledge with which people benefit, and his progeny that pray for him." (Ref. 13)

We should also have utmost conviction – in the deepest recesses of our hearts – in the infinite Mercy of Allah all through the journey of this life and in the hereafter - especially during the critical moments of our death while we enter life eternal. Death

indeed is a very difficult thing. So to ease the pain of death, we should always hope and pray for the Mercy of Allah all the times - and especially near our death. The Prophet (A) said:

“None of you should die except with a strong hope in the Mercy of Allah.”

When the great scholar Imam Ahmad-ibn-Hambal (R) was on his death bed, he called his son and asked him to read to him the sayings of the Prophet(A) that promote hope in Allah (ST) and His unbounded Mercy.

With the Infinite Mercy of Allah covering us in this life and the hereafter, we all should hope for the Paradise of Allah – the finest home of happiness in eternity – an everlasting abode of peace, joy and happiness.

Hurry for the race for forgiveness from your Sustainer and for a garden (paradise) whose width is that (of the whole) of the heavens and of the earth prepared for the righteous. [Q:3-133]

One very important final point we should keep in mind is that, although good deeds are needed – yet, our good deeds alone cannot save us. Surely, at all times, as much as possible, we all should do good deeds pleasing Allah (ST) – *however we must put our trust only in the Grace and Mercy of Allah(ST) for our ultimate Salvation in the hereafter; since we do not know how good our so-called good deeds are!* Note this very important hadith in this regard:

Prophet Muhammad (S) said: “The deeds of anyone of you

will not save you (from Hell fire).” The companions then asked, “Even you (will not be saved by your deeds), O Apostle of Allah? He said, “Yes, even I (will not be saved) unless and until Allah bestows His Mercy on me. Therefore, do good deeds properly, sincerely and moderately, and worship Allah in the forenoon and in the afternoon and during a part of the night, and always adopt a middle, moderate, regular course whereby you will reach your target (the Paradise).” (Ref. 11)

So, let us *turn to Allah (ST) with the deepest sincerity – putting our trust in His Unbounded Mercy – seeking our own forgiveness and the forgiveness of all believers – seeking Mercy and Grace of Allah - now and always.*

Insha Allah, by the Infinite Mercy of Allah(ST), we will achieve inner peace and tranquility - returning in the end to the Heavenly Home of Happiness – the Paradise - with love, peace and a joy that have no end.

“O peaceful soul! Return you unto your Sustainer, well-pleased [and] well pleasing [Him]: Enter, then, together with My [other true] servants -Yes, enter you My Paradise!”

(Q: 89-27-30)

يَا أَيَّتُهَا النَّفْسُ الْمُطْمَئِنَّةُ ﴿٢٧﴾ ارْجِعِي إِلَىٰ رَبِّكِ رَاضِيَةً
مَّرْضِيَةً ﴿٢٨﴾ فَادْخُلِي فِي عِبَادِي ﴿٢٩﴾ وَادْخُلِي جَنَّاتِي ﴿٣٠﴾

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وَقُلْ رَبِّ اغْفِرْ وَارْحَمْ وَأَنْتَ خَيْرُ الرَّاحِمِينَ

“O my Sustainer! Grant me forgiveness and bestow
Your Mercy (upon me), for You are the Best
Bestower of Mercy!” (Q: 23-118)

Appendix 1

Mercy in the Light of the Qur'an

Following are a few of the many verses of the Gracious Qur'an on the Mercy of Allah(ST) (Refs. 1 to 9):

- ◆ *My Mercy covers everything in the universe. (Q:7-155)*



- ◆ *O My servants who have transgressed to your own hurts! Despair not of Allah's Mercy: behold, Allah forgives all sins - for, verily, He alone is the Most-Forgiving, the Giver of Grace.” (Q: Q:39-53)*



- ◆ *The heavens are almost rent asunder from above them (by Allah's limitless Glory): and the angels celebrate the Praises of their Sustainer and pray for forgiveness for (all) beings on earth: Behold! Verily Allah is He the Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful. (Q: 42-5)*



- ◆ *O you who believe! Remember Allah(ST) with unceasing remembrance. And glorify Him from morning to evening.*

He it is Who sends His blessings upon you, as do His angels, so that He may bring you out from the depth of Darkness into the Light: and indeed He is Full of Mercy to the Believers.

On the Day when they meet Him, they will be welcomed with the greeting: "Peace", and He has prepared for them the Most Excellent Reward. (Q:33-41,44)



- ◆ *(O Prophet) We have sent thee as Mercy towards all the worlds. (Q:21-107)*



- ◆ *Except those who repent and believe (in Allah) and do righteous deeds, for those, Allah will change their bad deeds into good deeds, and Allah is Oft Forgiving, Most Merciful. (Q:25-68,70)*



- ◆ *(And remember that) it is Allah who has created the heavens and the earth, and who sends down water from the sky and thereby brings forth (all kinds) of fruits for your sustenance; and who has made ships subservient to you, so that they sail through the sea at His command; and He has made the rivers subservient (to His laws, so that they be of use) to you; and He*

has made the sun and the moon, both of them constant upon their courses, subservient (to His laws, so that they be of use) to you; and He has made the night and the day subservient (to His laws, so that they be of use) to you.

And (always) does He give you something out of what you may be asking of Him; and should you try to count Allah's blessing, you will never be able to number it.

(And yet,) behold, man is indeed most persistent in wrongdoing, unthankful! (Q:14-32,34)



- ◆ *Who is it that responds to the distressed when he calls out to Him, and who removes the ill (that caused the distress), and made you inherit the earth?*

Could there be any divine power besides Allah(ST)? How seldom do you keep this in mind!" (Q:27-62)



- ◆ *And among His Signs is this, that He created for you mates from among yourselves, that you may dwell in tranquility with them, and He has put Love and Mercy between your (hearts): verily in that are Signs for those who reflect. (Q: 30-21)*



- ◆ *Those (angels) who bear the Throne (of Allah) and those around*

it sing Glory and Praise to their Sustainer; believe in Him; and implore forgiveness for those who believe [saying]: “Our Sustainer! You envelop all things in Mercy and Knowledge. Forgive, then, those who turn in Repentance and follow Your Path: and preserve them from the Penalty of the Blazing Fire!”

And grant our Sustainer! That they enter the Gardens of Eternity which You have promised to them and to the righteous among their fathers, their wives, and their posterity! For You are the Exalted in Might Full of Wisdom.”

“And preserve them from (all) ills; and any whom You do preserve from ills that Day on them will You have bestowed Mercy indeed: and that will be truly (for them) the Highest Achievement. (Q: 40-7,8,9)



- ◆ *Be quick in the race for forgiveness from your Sustainer and for a garden whose width is that (of the whole) of the heavens and of the earth prepared for the righteous.*

Those who spend (in the path of Allah) whether in prosperity or in adversity; who restrain anger and pardon (all) men; for Allah loves those who do good.

And those who, having done something to be ashamed of (committed sins) or wronged their own souls, earnestly bring Allah to mind and ask for forgiveness for their sins,

for who can forgive sins except Allah? And are never obstinate in persisting knowingly in (the wrong) they have done.

For such the reward is forgiveness from their Sustainer and gardens with rivers flowing underneath, an eternal dwelling; how excellent a recompense for those who work (and strive for good)!.. (Q:3-133,136)



- ◆ *O peaceful soul! Return you unto your Sustainer, well-pleased [and] well pleasing [Him]: Enter, then, together with My [other true] servants -Yes, enter you My Paradise! (Q: 89-27 to 30)*



- ◆ *Say: "In the bounty of Allah. And in His Mercy,- in that let them rejoice": that is better than the (wealth) they hoard (Q: 10-58)*



- ◆ *Tell My servants that I-I alone- am Truly forgiving-The True Giver of Grace (Q: 15-49)*



Appendix 2

Mercy in the Light of the Hadith

Following are a few of the many *Prophetic Pearls of Wisdom on the Mercy of Allah(ST)* (Refs. 11, 12,13,14):

- ◆ *When Allah(ST) decreed the Creation He pledged Himself by writing in His book which is laid down with Him: “My Mercy prevails over My wrath.”*



- ◆ *Just when Allah(ST) created the heavens and the earth, He created on the same day one hundred Mercies and each of them is as large as everything is between the earth and the heavens. Then out of those one hundred Mercies, He kept one Mercy on the earth and it is on account of this that the mother is merciful to her child and the animals and the birds live in amity. Then on the Day of Judgment the other ninety nine Mercies will be joined to this one and Allah(ST) will complete the hundred Mercies.*



- ◆ *O son of Adam, so long as you call upon Me and ask of Me, I shall forgive you for what you have done, and I shall not mind. O son of Adam, were your sins to reach the clouds of the sky and were you then to ask forgiveness of Me, I would forgive you. O son of Adam, were you to come to Me with sins nearly as great as the earth and were you then to face Me, ascribing no partner to Me, I would bring you forgiveness nearly as great as it.*



- ◆ *If the son of Adam had a valley full of gold, he would desire two of them. Nothing can fill his mouth [greediness] except the earth of the grave [i.e. when he dies]. Allah, the Merciful accepts repentance [and turns in His Mercy] to everyone who offers repentance to Him.*



- ◆ *Your Lord delights at a shepherd who, on the peak of a mountain crag, gives the call to prayer and prays. Then Allah(ST) (glorified and exalted be He) says: “Look at this servant of Mine, he gives the call to prayer and performs the prayers; he is in awe of Me. I have forgiven My servant [his sins] and have admitted him to Paradise.”*



- ◆ *A man from among those who were before you was called to account. Nothing in the way of good was found for him*

except that he used to have dealings with people and, being well-to-do, he would order his servants to let off the man in straitened circumstances [from repaying his debt]. He (the Prophet [A]) said that Allah(ST) said: "We are worthier than you of that (of being so generous). Let him off."



- ◆ *I am as My servant thinks I am. I am with him when he makes mention of Me. If he makes mention of Me to himself, I make mention of him to Myself; and if he makes mention of Me in an assembly, I make mention of him in an assembly better than it. And if he draws near to Me an arm's length, I draw near to him a fathom's length. And if he comes to Me walking, I go to him running.*



- ◆ *Allah(ST) has written down the good deeds and the bad ones. Then He explained it [by saying that] he who has intended a good deed and has not done it, Allah(ST) writes it down with Himself as a full good deed, but if he has intended it and has done it, Allah(ST) writes it down with Himself as from ten good deeds to seven hundred times, or many times over. But if he has intended a bad deed and has not done it, Allah(ST) writes it down with Himself as a full good deed, but if he has intended it and has done it, Allah(ST) writes it down as one bad deed.*



- ◆ *O My servants, I have forbidden oppression for Myself and have made it forbidden amongst you, so do not oppress one another. O My servants, all of you are astray except for those I have guided, so seek guidance of Me and I shall guide you, O My servants, all of you are hungry except for those I have fed, so seek food of Me and I shall feed you. O My servants, all of you are naked except for those I have clothed, so seek clothing of Me and I shall clothe you. O My servants, you sin by night and by day, and I forgive all sins, so seek forgiveness of Me and I shall forgive you. O My servants, you will not attain harming Me so as to harm Me, and will not attain benefitting Me so as to benefit Me. O My servants, were the first of you and the last of you, the human of you and the jinn of you to be as pious as the most pious heart of any one man of you, that would not increase My kingdom in anything. O My servants, were the first of you and the last of you, the human of you and the jinn of you to be as wicked as the most wicked heart of any one man of you, that would not decrease My kingdom in anything. O My servants, were the first of you and the last of you, the human of you and the jinn of you to rise up in one place and make a request of Me, and were I to give everyone what he requested, that would not decrease what I have, any more that a needle decreases the sea if put into it. O My servants, it is but your deeds that I reckon up for you and then recompense you for, so let him who finds good praise Allah(ST) and let him who finds other than that blame no one but himself.*



- ◆ *The gates of Paradise will be opened on Mondays and on Thursdays, and every servant [of Allah(ST)] who associates nothing with Allah(ST) will be forgiven, except for the man who has a grudge against his brother. [About them] it will be said: “Delay these two until they are reconciled; delay these two until they are reconciled.”*



- ◆ *Whosoever shows enmity to someone devoted to Me, I shall be at war with him. My servant draws not near to Me with anything more loved by Me than the religious duties I have enjoined upon him, and My servant continues to draw near to Me with supererogatory works so that I shall love him. When I love him I am his hearing with which he hears, his seeing with which he sees, his hand with which he strikes and his foot with which he walks. Were he to ask [something] of Me, I would surely give it to him, and were he to ask Me for refuge, I would surely grant him it. I do not hesitate about anything as much as I hesitate about [seizing] the soul of My faithful servant: he hates death and I hate hurting him.*



- ◆ *A servant [of Allah(ST)] committed a sin and said: “O Allah(ST), forgive me my sin.” And He (glorified and exalted be He) said: “My servant has committed a sin and has known that he has a Lord who forgives sins and punishes for them.” Then he sinned again and said: “O Lord, forgive me my sin.” And He (glorified and exalted be He) said: “My servant has*

committed a sin and has known that he has a Lord who forgives sins and punishes for them.” Then he sinned again and said: “O Lord, forgive me my sin.” And He (glorified and exalted be He) said: “My servant has committed a sin and has known that he has a Lord who forgives sins and punishes for sins. Do what you wish, for I have forgiven you.”



- ◆ *Our Lord (glorified and exalted be He) descends each night to the earth’s sky when there remains the final third of the night, and He says: “Who is saying a prayer to Me that I may answer it? Who is asking something of Me that I may give it to him? Who is asking forgiveness of Me that I may forgive him?” And thus He continues till [the light of] dawn shines.*



- ◆ *Allah(ST) will say to the inhabitant of Paradise: “O inhabitants of Paradise!” They will say: “O our Lord, we present ourselves and are at Your pleasure, and goodness rests in Your hands.” Then He will say: “Are you contented?” And they will say: “And how should we not be contented, O Lord, when You have given to us that which You have given to no one else of Your creation?” Then He will say: “Would you not like Me to give you something better than that?” And they will say: “O Lord and what thing is better than that?” And He will say: “I shall cause My favor to descend upon you and thereafter shall never be displeased with you.”*



- ◆ *It is sufficient (for salvation) for one to recites the last two Verses of Surat-al-Baqara [Q: 2] at night.*



- ◆ *Whoever will recite the Kalimah 'lailaha illallah' with sincerity will enter into Paradise. Someone inquired as to what was meant of sincerity in reciting the Kalimah to which the Prophet (A) replied that "it would stop him from doing forbidden acts."*



- ◆ *Ramadan is a month whose beginning is Mercy, whose middle is Forgiveness, and whose end is Freedom from Hell."*



- ◆ *He who fasts during Ramadan with faith and seeking his reward from Allah(ST) will have his past sins forgiven; he who prays during the night of Ramadan with faith and seeking his reward from Allah(ST) will have his past sins forgiven; and he who passes Lalilat al-qadr in prayer with faith and seeking his reward from Allah(ST) will have his past sins forgiven.*



- ◆ *There is a gate to Paradise that is called ar-Rayyan. On the Day of Resurrection it will say: 'Where are those who fasted?' When the last [one] has passed through the gate, it will be locked.*



- ◆ *If anyone performs Hajj for Allah(ST)'s sake, without talking immodestly or acting wickedly, he will return (free from sins) as on the day his mother bore him.*



- ◆ *An 'Umra' is an expiation for sins committed between it and the next, but a 'hajj' which is accepted will receive no less a reward than paradise."*



- ◆ *No fatigue, nor disease, nor sorrow, nor sadness, nor hurt, nor distress befalls a Muslim, even if it were the prick he receives from a thorn, but that Allah(ST) expiates some of his sins for that.*



- ◆ *Prophet Muhammad (S) said: "For every Prophet there is one invocation which is definitely fulfilled by Allah(ST), and I wish, if Allah will, to keep my (that special) invocation as to be the intercession for my followers on the Day of Resurrection."*



- ◆ *None of you should say: 'O Allah(ST)! Forgive me if You wish,' or 'Bestow Your Mercy on me if You wish,' or 'Provide me with means of subsistence if You wish,' but he should be firm*

in his request, for Allah(ST) does what He will and nobody can force Him (to do anything).



- ◆ *Verily Allah created Mercy. The day He created it, He made it into one hundred parts. He withheld with Him ninety-nine parts, and sent its one part to all His creatures. Had the non-believer known of all the Mercy which is in the Hands of Allah, he would not lose hope of entering Paradise, and had the believer known of all the punishment which is present with Allah, he would not consider himself safe from the Hellfire.*



- ◆ *When a servant acknowledges his sin and repents, Allah forgives him.*



- ◆ *He who asks pardon is not a confirmed sinner, even if he returns to his sin seventy times a day.*



- ◆ *Allah the Most High, has placed in the west for repentance a gate with a breadth of seventy years' journey, and it will not be locked as long as the sun does not rise in its direction.*



- ◆ *On the day of Judgment, a call would be heard saying: Where are those who used to forgive other people? Come forward towards your Sustainer and receive your rewards. It is a truth that any Muslim who forgave others is indeed going to enter the Paradise.*



- ◆ *Ibn Mas'ud (R) said: I can see myself looking at Allah's messenger when he was telling of a prophet who, when his people beat him and covered him with blood, was wiping the blood from his face and saying, "O Allah, forgive my people, for they do not know."*



- ◆ *All the people of my Ummah would get pardon for their sins except those who publicize them. And (it means) that a servant should do a deed during the night and tell the people in the morning that he has done so and so, whereas Allah has concealed it. And he does a deed during the day and when it is night he tells the people, whereas Allah has concealed it.*



- ◆ *If anyone continually asks pardon, Allah will appoint for him a way out of every distress and a relief from every anxiety, and will provide for him from where he did not reckon.*



- ◆ *If anyone repents before the sun rises in the west, Allah will forgive him” (Muslim)*

[note that sun rises in the west on the day of Judgment - the end of time.]



- ◆ *Allah, the Exalted, stretches out His hand in the day time that those who have done evil during the day, may repent until the sun rises in the West.*



- ◆ *Allah accepts a servant’s repentance till he gives up his spirit in death.*



- ◆ *Abu Sa’id reported Allah’s messenger as saying “that the devil said, ‘By Your might, my Lord, I shall continue to lead Your servants astray as long as their spirits are in their bodies.’ The Lord who is great and glorious replied, ‘By My Might, Glory and Exalted Station, I shall continue to pardon them as long as they ask My Forgiveness.’”*



- ◆ *Abu Dharr said that the Prophet(A) went out in winter time when the leaves were falling, and he took two branches of a tree whose leaves began to fall. He then addressed Abu*

Dharr who replied, "At your service, messenger of Allah." The Prophet(A) said: " A Muslim observes Salah for Allah's sake and his sins fall from him as these leaves fall from this tree."



- ◆ *Almsgiving extinguishes sin as water extinguishes fire, and a man's prayer in the middle of the night (has the same effect).*



- ◆ *Whoever reads Surah Yasin (Q:36) for the pleasure of Allah(ST) only, all his earlier sins are forgiven. Therefore, make a practice of reading this chapter over your dead.*



- ◆ *Anyone who, after having heard the Azan (the call to prayer) says: "I bear witness that there is none worthy of worship save Allah, the One, without any associate and that Muhammad (S) is his servant and Messenger; I am pleased with Allah as my Sustainer, Islam as my religion and Muhammad(S) as my Prophet" - will have his sins forgiven.*



- ◆ *Allah commands you [O Prophet] to forgive those who harm you, forgive those who deny you and visit those who sever their relations with you.*



- ◆ *Whoever is happy to have good housing and to have more rewards, let him forgive those who harmed him, forgive those who denied him and visit those who severed their relations with him.*



- ◆ *I swear for three things: Wealth never decreases by giving charity, Allah increases the dignity of a person through forgiveness, and any person who is humble, Allah will raise his rank.*



- ◆ *The people are the dependents of Allah(ST), and the most beloved of Him is he who is the most helpful to His dependents.*



- ◆ *Indeed, Allah(ST) created some of His slaves so that they should help people. He vowed not to punish them; on the Day of Resurrection they will be settled on pulpits made of light, and they will be talking to Allah(ST), while people are judged.*



- ◆ *He who alleviates the worldly suffering of a believer, Allah(ST) will alleviate his suffering on the Day of Resurrection. And he who conceals (the faults) of a Muslim, Allah(ST) will conceal*

his (faults) in this world and the Hereafter. Allah(ST) comes to the aid of a person so long as that person comes to the aid his fellow man.



- ◆ *None of you has truly believed until you love for your brother what you love for yourself.*



- ◆ *Do not envy one another; do not deceive one another; do not abhor one another; do not turn away from one another; and do not undercut the transactions of one another. But be, O Servants of Allah, as brothers. A Muslim is the brother of a Muslim; he neither wrongs him, nor holds him in contempt, nor fails him. The taqwa (Consciousness of Allah) is here [and the Prophet pointed to his chest three times]. It is evil enough for a person to hold his brother Muslim in contempt. The whole of a Muslim is inviolable to another Muslim - his blood, his property and his honor.*



- ◆ *A man from among those who were before you was called to account. Nothing in the way of good was found for him except that he used to have dealings with people and, being well-to-do, he would order his servants to let off the man in straitened circumstances [from repaying his debt]. He (the Prophet [A]) said that Allah(ST) said: “We are worthier than*

you of that (of being so generous). Let him off.



- ◆ *He who has fulfilled his brother's need is like the one who has worshiped Allah, the Almighty, the Exalted, all his life.*



- ◆ *Abu Huraira (R) reported Allah's messenger as saying: "He who strives on behalf of a widow and a poor person is like one who strives in Allah's path." He said he thought that he added. "Like the one who prays during the night without growing slack and like one who fasts without breaking his fast. "*



- ◆ *Anas(R) reported Allah's messenger as saying: "If anyone cares for two girls till they grow up, he and I will come on the day of resurrection thus," and he joined his fingers.*



- ◆ *For him who aids one who is distressed, Allah(ST) will record seventy-three acts of pardon, one of them comprising his whole well-being and seventy-two being grades of rank for him on the day of resurrection."*



- ◆ *You see the believers in their mutual pity, love and affection like one body. When one member has a complaint, the rest of the body is united with it in wakefulness and fever.*



- ◆ *Anas (R) told that a man asked Allah's messenger when the last hour would come, and he said, "Woe to you! What preparation have you made for it? On his replying that his only preparation was that he loved Allah and His messenger, he (the Prophet) said, "You will be with those you love." Anas (R) said he had never seen the Muslims so happy about anything, after their acceptance of Islam as they were over this.*



- ◆ *Abu Razin (R) told that Allah's messenger said to him, "Shall I not guide you to the means of supporting this affair by which you will obtain the best in this world and the next? You must frequent the gathering of those who make mention of Allah, when you are alone cause your tongue to mention of Allah as much as you can, love for Allah's sake and hate for Allah's sake. Are you aware, Abu Razin, that when a man goes out of his house to visit his brother he is accompanied by seventy thousand angels, all of them invoking blessings on him and saying, 'O our Lord, he has united ties of friendship for Thy sake, so bring him near to Thyself.' If you can employ your body in that way, do so."*



- ◆ *Abu Huraira said: When I was with Allah's messenger he said, "In Paradise there are pillars of rubies on which there are rooms of emerald with open doors shining like a sparkling planet." He was asked who would occupy them and he replied, "Those who love one another for Allah's sake, those who sit together for Allah's sake, and those who visit one another for Allah's sake."*



- ◆ *"Those who are merciful have mercy shown to them by the Compassionate One. If you show mercy to those who are in the earth, He who is in the heaven will show mercy to you."*



- ◆ *Allah(ST) (glorified and exalted be He) has supernumerary angels who rove about seeking out gatherings in which Allah(ST)'s name is being invoked: they sit with them and fold their wings round each other, filling that which is between them and between the lowest heaven. When [the people in the gathering] depart, [the angels] ascend and rise up to heaven. He (the Prophet [A]) said: Then Allah(ST) (mighty and sublime is He) asks them - [though] He is most knowing about them: "From where have you come?" And they say: "We have come from some servants of Yours on Earth: they were glorifying You (Subha nallah), exalting you (Allahu akbar), witnessing that there is no deity but You (La ilaha illa llah), praising You (Al-Hamdu lillah), and asking [favours] of You." He says: "And what do they ask of Me?" They say:*

“They ask of You Your Paradise.” He says: “And have they seen My Paradise?” They say: “No, O Lord.” He says: “And how would it be were they to have seen My Paradise!” They say: “And they ask protection of You.” He says: “From what do they ask protection of Me?” They say: “From Your Hell-fire, O Lord.” He says: “And have they seen My Hell-fire?” They say: “No.” He says: “And how would it be were they to have seen My Hell-fire?” They say: “And they ask for Your forgiveness.” He (the Prophet [A]) said: “Then He (Allah [ST]) says: ‘I have forgiven them and I have bestowed upon them what they have asked for, and I have granted them sanctuary from that from which they asked protection.’” He (the Prophet [A]) said: “They say: ‘O Lord, among them is so-and-so, a much sinning servant, who was merely passing by and sat down with them.’” He (the Prophet [A]) said: “And He (Allah[ST]) says: ‘And to him [too] I have given forgiveness: he who sits with such people shall not suffer.’”



Appendix 3

Supplications (Du'a) in the Light of the Qur'an & Ahadith

Following are a few of the many supplications for seeking Allah (ST)'s Mercy based on the Gracious Qur'an and the Prayers of Prophet Muhammad (S) (Refs. 1 to 9, 11 to 14, 19):

- ◆ *O Our Sustainer! Let not our hearts swerve from the truth after You have guided us; and bestow upon us the gift of Your Mercy; verily, You are the (best) Giver of Gifts. (Q: 3-8)*



- ◆ *O My Sustainer! Grant me forgiveness and bestow Your Mercy upon me; for You are The Best Bestower of Mercy. (Q: 23-118)*



- ◆ *O My Sustainer! Bestow Your Mercy upon my parents, even as they cherished and reared me when I was a child. (Q: 17-24)*



- ◆ *O Our Sustainer! Bestow on us Mercy from Yourself and facilitate for us our affair in the right way. (Q:18-10)*



- ◆ *O Our Sustainer, take us not to task if we forget, or make mistakes.*

O Our Sustainer, lay not upon us a load such as You did lay upon those before us.

O Our Sustainer, do not burden us beyond what we have the strength to bear.

And pardon us and forgive us and have Mercy on us;

You are our Protector. So help us against the people who stand against the Truth. (Q:2-286)



- ◆ *O Our Sustainer! Accept You this from us; for, verily, You alone are all-hearing, all-knowing! And (O our Sustainer!) accept our repentance; for, verily, You alone are the Acceptor of Repentance, the Mercy Giving! (Q:2-127,128)*



- ◆ *O Allah, I ask You to bless for me my whole self - my hearing, my sight, my spirit, my physical being, my character, my family, my life, my death and my deeds. So accept my good*

deeds. And I ask You [O Allah] for the highest station in the Paradise.



- ◆ *O Allah, I have done great wrong to myself - there is none to forgive the sins but You only. Grant me forgiveness from Yourself, have Mercy upon me for You are The Most Merciful, the Mercy Giving.*



- ◆ *O Allah, incline my heart towards You. Grant me contentment and add Your blessings to the sustenance You provided me and accept my good deeds as You are indeed my Sustainer. O You Who has revealed unto others my good aspects and concealed the bad ones; O You Who does not penalize me for every fault and does not break the curtain [over my faults]; O You, the Giver of Limitless Forgiveness, Best Tolerant of sins, Exceedingly Clement with both hands stretched out for dispensing Mercy; O You, Who are aware of even a whisper, Who are the last resort for every complaint and are extremely generous in forgiving sins, unsurpassed in Your benignity, Who imparts His Grace even before it is merited; O our Sustainer, and O our Patron and O our Master and O the Sole Object of the yearnings of our hearts, I beg of You, O Allah, that You do not consign my body to the Fire.*



- ◆ *O Allah, save me from the Fire of Hell, and grant me Your forgiveness by day and night, and grant me a happy abode in the Paradise.*



- ◆ *O Allah, I ask You for the best of requests, the best of prayers, the best of success, the best of deeds, the best of rewards, the best in life, and the best in death. And [O Allah You] make me steadfast, make my good deeds weighty in my balance; make my faith true; exalt my rank; accept my Prayer and forgive my misdeeds. And I ask You [O Allah] for the highest station in the Paradise.*



- ◆ *O Allah(ST), grant me pardon, have Mercy on me, direct me to the path of righteousness and provide me sustenance.*



- ◆ *O Allah, I ask you to enhance my good reputation, free my neck of the burden of sins, set aright my affairs, purify my heart, guard my chastity, illuminate my grave for me and forgive my sins. And I ask You [O Allah] for the highest station in the Paradise.*



◆ *O Allah, open for me the doors of Your Mercy.*



◆ *O Allah, we ask from You every good thing that Your Prophet Muhammad (S) asked from You and we seek Your protection from every evil thing that Your Prophet Muhammad (S) asked protection from You.*



ABBREVIATIONS

<i>(pbuh):</i>	(Peace be upon him/her)
<i>(A):</i>	(Peace be upon him/her)
<i>(swt) or (ST):</i>	(Glory be to Him – the Most High)
<i>(R):</i>	May Allah be pleased with him/her
<i>(S):</i>	Peace and Blessings of Allah be upon him



رَبَّنَا لَا تُرِغْ قُلُوبَنَا بَعْدَ إِذْ هَدَيْتَنَا
وَهَبْ لَنَا مِنْ لَدُنْكَ رَحْمَةً
إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ الْوَهَّابُ ﴿٨﴾

*O Our Sustainer! Let not our hearts
swerve from the truth after You have
guided us; and give us Mercy from Your
own bounty. Indeed, it is You who are
the All-Giving.*

(Q: 3-8)



إِنَّ الَّذِينَ قَالُوا رَبُّنَا اللَّهُ ثُمَّ اسْتَقَامُوا تَتَنَزَّلُ عَلَيْهِمُ
 الْمَلَائِكَةُ أَلَّا تَخَافُوا وَلَا تَحْزَنُوا وَأَبْشِرُوا بِالْجَنَّةِ
 الَّتِي كُنتُمْ تُوعَدُونَ ﴿٣٠﴾ نَحْنُ أَوْلِيَائُكُمْ فِي
 الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَفِي الْآخِرَةِ ۗ وَلَكُمْ فِيهَا مَا تَشْتَهِي
 أَنْفُسُكُمْ وَلَكُمْ فِيهَا مَا تَدْعُونَ ﴿٣١﴾
 نَزَلًا مِّنْ غَفُورٍ رَّحِيمٍ ﴿٣٢﴾

Verily, those who say: "Our Lord is Allah," and continue upon the straight way, on them the angels will descend (at the time of their death) (saying): "Fear not, nor grieve! But receive the glad tidings of the Paradise which you have been promised.




*We have been your friends in the life
of this world and are (also) in the
Hereafter.*

*And for you therein is whatever your
souls desire, and for you therein is
whatever you ask for -
a hospitality from (Allah),
the All-Forgiving, Mercy-Giving.
(Q: 41-30,32)*



الَّذِينَ يَحْمِلُونَ الْعَرْشَ وَمَنْ حَوْلَهُ يُسَبِّحُونَ بِحَمْدِ رَبِّهِمْ وَيُؤْمِنُونَ بِهِ وَيَسْتَغْفِرُونَ لِلَّذِينَ آمَنُوا رَبَّنَا وَسِعْتَ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ رَحْمَةً وَعِلْمًا فَاغْفِرْ لِلَّذِينَ تَابُوا وَاتَّبَعُوا سَبِيلَكَ وَقِهِمْ عَذَابَ الْجَحِيمِ ﴿٧﴾
 رَبَّنَا وَأَدْخِلْهُمْ جَنَّاتِ عَدْنٍ الَّتِي وَعَدْتَهُمْ وَمَنْ صَلَحَ مِنْ آبَائِهِمْ وَأَزْوَاجِهِمْ وَذُرِّيَّاتِهِمْ إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ ﴿٨﴾ وَقِهِمُ السَّيِّئَاتِ وَمَنْ تَقِ السَّيِّئَاتِ يَوْمَئِذٍ فَقَدْ رَحِمْتَهُ وَذَلِكَ هُوَ الْفَوْزُ الْعَظِيمُ ﴿٩﴾

Those (angels) who bear the Throne (of Allah) and those around it Sing Glory and Praise to their Sustainer; believe in Him; and implore Forgiveness for those who believe[saying]: “Our Sustainer!




You envelop all things in Mercy and Knowledge. Forgive, then, those who turn in Repentance, and follow Your Path; and preserve them from the Penalty of the Blazing Fire!

“And grant, our Sustainer! that they enter the Gardens of Eternity, which You have promised to them, and to the righteous among their fathers, their wives, and their posterity! For You are the Exalted in Might, Full of Wisdom.

And preserve them from (all) ills; and any whom You do preserve from ills that Day, on them will You have bestowed Mercy indeed: and that will be truly (for them) the highest Achievement

(Q: 40-7, 8, 9)



قُلْ بِفَضْلِ اللَّهِ وَبِرَحْمَتِهِ فَبِذَلِكَ فَلْيَفْرَحُوا
هُوَ خَيْرٌ مِّمَّا يَجْمَعُونَ ﴿٥٨﴾

*Say: "In the bounty of Allah, And in His
Mercy- therein let them rejoice":
That is better than what (the wealth)
that they amass.*

(Q: 10-58)



نَبِيِّ عِبَادِي أَنِّي أَنَا الْغَفُورُ الرَّحِيمُ ﴿٤٩﴾

*Tell My servants that I-I alone- am
Truly forgiving-The True Giver of Grace*

(Q: 15-49)

يَا أَيَّتُهَا النَّفْسُ الْمُطْمَئِنَّةُ ﴿٢٧﴾

ارْجِعِي إِلَىٰ رَبِّكِ رَاضِيَةً مَّرْضِيَّةً ﴿٢٨﴾

فَادْخُلِي فِي عِبَادِي ﴿٢٩﴾

وَادْخُلِي جَنَّاتِي ﴿٣٠﴾

*“O peaceful soul! Return you unto
your Sustainer, well-pleased [and] well
pleasing [Him]: Enter, then, together
with My [other true] servants -Yes,
enter you My Paradise!*

(Q: 89-27 to 30)

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