

Meaning and Overview of the Subject of Akhlaq

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Not for (idle) sport did We create the heavens and the earth and all that is between! 21:16
30:8 Do they not reflect in their own minds? Not but for just ends and for term appointed, did
God create the heavens and the earth, and all them: yet are there truly many among men who
deny the meeting with their Lord (at the Resurrection)!

38:27 Not without purpose did We create heaven and earth and all between! That were the
thought of Unbelievers! But woe to the Unbelievers because of the Fire (of Hell)!

"I have been sent to complete the nobility of character." - Prophet Muhammad (S)

A child is born. What does it have to look forward to in life? Anything, anything at all?
If life is just to live, to use and then we are no more, then what is the point of living? What is the
point of studying for 25 years of life, what is the point of working for a further 30 years of life,
of being in debt, of paying a mortgage, of marrying, of bringing up children. All this effort is
.pointless if there is no higher purpose to life

Conscience Will / Desire

If you look at animals, they can communicate, they can eat and drink. They are created for this
world only. The only thing they lack is a conscience will, a desire to do something.
An animal eats when it is hungry, and sleeps when it is tired. A human being has been given an
extra facet of intelligence. When we eat, we eat the food that we enjoy, we taste the food.
Sometimes, we eat when we are not hungry, we laugh, we joke, we have friends, we study we
learn, we have hobbies, we create. These are all characteristics that make us different from
.other animals

Emotions

We also have emotions which animals do not share. On the positive side, we have emotions
such as compassion, sympathy, consideration, loyalty, friendship. On the negative side, we
have jealousy, greed, hatred, enmity, deceitfulness. This shows us that man cannot be judged
or compared to other creatures on the planet. If he uses his emotions of compassion and
friendship than he can be the best of all the creatures, if he lets himself become mean and
greedy, selfish and jealous, than he becomes the worst creature on the planet, because even
.the animals do not have these emotions

Intelligence / Humour

Mankind has the ability to extrapolate and synthesize thought. This means to start off with a piece of information, and make conclusions, based on other pieces of information. Mankind has the ability to communicate in a social way, to interact and to laugh. Laughing is a very human characteristic, and according to many philosophers, is a fundamental difference between Man and Animal.

The result is that man is unlike the rest of creation. He has something extra that cannot be explained by science, can not be explained by evolution, can not be explained by any theory at all EXCEPT by religion and belief.

15:28 Behold! your Lord said to the angels: "I am about to create man, from clay, from mud molded into shape; 15:29 "When I have fashioned him (in due proportion) and breathed into him My spirit, fall down in obeisance unto him."

15:30 So the angels prostrated themselves all of them together:

Now that we have understood man is unique, the next point to ask is that why is he different? Allah explains us that man was made for a purpose. It is that purpose which we have to try and discover.

Allah is our creator, He made us from nothing. After having created us, he placed in us a portion of His spirit, His will, the electricity that keeps us ticking. Allah had created the world and the stars, all the fabulous things that you see in space, but He had a plan, His plan was to create the BEST CREATURE, something that would not just obey His command because He who commanded, something that would obey His command with free will. Something that would search for Him until it found Him. This creature was MAN.

3:59 This similitude of Jesus before God is as that of Adam: He created him dust, then said to him: "Be", and he was.

Man was created and taught all the names of the heavens and the earth. Then he was placed on earth to live his life. He was given the tools to find Allah and then it was left to wander, to find the path.

When we are lost in the forest, we use a compass to find something that we cannot see. The compass follows a magnetic field which cannot be sensed with our eyes, ears, touch, taste or smell. Even then we know the field exists, because the compass points to it. Well there is another force, a light which flows through every object, every stone, tree, leaf. That is the Light of Allah, the light that keeps everything existing. Allah wants us to discover this light and to realise how great it is.

The tools we have been given for this search is our soul, our heart. Our soul is receptive to this

light of Allah, the same way a compass can guide towards a magnetic field. We have to open our hearts to the world around us, and then follow the path which it takes us through. Whenever we do something, we get a feeling which is deep down inside us, which tells us whether that action is taking us towards Allah or away.

This feeling is provided by our conscience. If you do something Haraam, then stop for a second and think, you will feel a small tugging feeling that will try and pull you back toward the right path, the more you listen to this the stronger this sensation will become until your thoughts themselves become pure.

In the same way, the less you listen to this conscience, the weaker it will get, until a stage comes when you will not even hear it when it is trying to tell you something.

That is the day Shaitan will jump up and down with glee, because he will have gained a new follower. So Allah has set this task, this test, for every human being and to make it easier for us, He gave each of us the ability to pass this test, to reach the end of the journey.

One point about this Universe is that everything has been created in pairs, each has its opposite. There is black and white, strong and weak, good and bad, heaven and hell. Inside of man there are also these pairs. For every good emotion that takes man towards Allah, there is an evil emotion which will take him away.

Allah has given man the ability to judge between right and wrong. To make matters easier, to every single group of people Allah sent a Warner, to show the way towards him, so that on the day of Judgment people could not say, "We did not know, we were unaware". All we have to do is choose which way we want to follow.

10:47 To every people (was sent) an Apostle: when their Apostle comes before them), the matter will be judged between them with justice, they will not be wronged.

If the choice is so easy to see, why is this world so unjust?

There is one main reason why this simple choice between good and evil is made difficult. Man forgets easily. Man always thinks of the present and leaves the future to sort itself out. If you want to do something Haraam, the pleasure is immediate.

If you want to steal then you receive the goods immediately. If you obtain power, then you can control others at once. If you want to eat Haraam, then the pleasure of eating is there as soon as you swallow the food. If you have a sexual desire, then you can satisfy it as soon as you commit the act. However, when you want to do something good then the rewards are not immediate, they come later.

The same way when you study, the rewards come after you have finished your exams and you are shown the results. When you plant a seed, it will be many years before the tree matures,

and you taste the fruit. Well, the reward for the good deeds you perform are not only physical
such as the pleasure of the bad deeds.

You do not get money for helping someone, nor do you feed your hunger by fasting. So when a human being has a choice, if he is ignorant and cares nothing for the next life, then he will
make the choice that will benefit him immediately.

This is where the whole concept of Akhlaq comes in. Akhlaq is not just good and bad deeds, but learning to understand that good deeds actually help you in the long run, and learning to enjoy helping others, and most importantly knowing that good Akhlaq is a torch that will guide
you towards Allah amidst the darkness.

24:35 God is the Light of the heavens and the earth.

2:257 God is the Protector of those who have faith: from the depths of darkness He will lead them forth into light. Of those who reject faith the patrons are the Evil Ones: from light they will lead them forth into the depths of darkness. They will be companions of the fire, to dwell
therein (for ever).

So we have understood that man is different from other creation, that he has a purpose to his
life, and we now know what the purpose is and how to fulfill it.

The next point to understand is: Why should he follow that purpose?

When we accept that Man can be the greatest of creation, and can reflect the light of Allah, then we should realise that those who reach such a stage, where their purpose has been fulfilled, will be elevated to such a high level that they will be brought as close to Allah as it is
possible to be.

The reward for man, for his effort to find his Creator, to find the one who made him is the
closeness of Allah's mercy for eternity.

This reward is paradise or heaven, lasting forever and ever. This is not governed by time, because time is a creation just like the earth, and when this creation ceases, and a new one occurs, then time will also cease to exist, and man will be in a dimension without time, without
age.

So if man obeys Allah's commands then he will receive the promised reward, but if he fails,
then he has also been promised punishment.

People argue that punishment is unfair and unjust, and that only an uncaring god punishes his
creatures. Such people should try to understand the following.

if a person harms others then it is fair that he is punished
if there are two people, one who puts in effort to do good, and one who does not, is it fair that
both people are rewarded equally, or that both are punished equally?

if you are warned of a danger, and you do not heed the warning, fully aware of the consequences than it is your own fault that you have to bear the consequences. Allah has given the chance for us to repent, if we do so sincerely, but a person who disbelieves and commits acts which hurt others until his dying breath can not expect to be forgiven, especially when he did not even request forgiveness. So punishment will occur for those who deserve it, but those who try and perfect their Akhlaq will find it a shield from the fire of hell. 2:24 But if you cannot, and of a surety you cannot, then .fear the fire whose fuel is Men and Stones, which is prepared for those who reject Faith

GUNAH E KABIRA (THE MAJOR SINS)

4:111 And if anyone earns sin, he earns it against his own soul: for God is full of knowledge and wisdom.

4:112 But if anyone earns a fault or a sin and throws it on to one that is innocent, He carries (on himself) (both) a falsehood and a flagrant sin. 6:120 Shun all sin, open or secret: those who earn sin, will get due recompense for their "earnings."

11:116 Why were there not, among the generations before you, persons possessed of balanced good sense, prohibiting (men) from mischief in the earth--except a few among them whom We saved (from harm)? But the wrongdoers pursued the enjoyment of the good things of life which were given them, and persisted in sin.

34:28 We have not sent you but as a universal (Messenger) to men, giving them glad tidings, and warning them (against sin), but most men understand not.

83:29 Those in sin used to laugh at those who believed,

83:30 And whenever they passed by them, used to wink at each other (in mockery);

83:31 And when they returned to their own people, they would return jesting;

83:32 And whenever they saw them, they would say, "Behold! these are the people truly astray!"

83:33 But they had not been sent as Keepers over them!

83:34 But on this Day the Believers will laugh at the Unbelievers.

83:35 On Thrones (of Dignity) They will command (a sight) (of all things).

83:36 Will not the Unbelievers have been paid back for what they did?

Allah has given us Islam as a way of life. This way of life has rules which are to be obeyed. To live effectively, there are always rules which are to be followed so that no-one breaks or infringes the rights of others.

The question then arises, why can't we make our own rules. Why do we have to follow what someone else (i.e. Allah) says?

This question can be answered with the aid of the following examples, firstly, if you were

organising a party, or an occasion for a group of youngsters, would you tell them to organise, or would you prepare beforehand so that things occur smoothly. The answer to that is quite obvious.

Secondly, if you had a small child who was by the beach, he wants to go into the water, but you can see the red flag is up indicating that the water is unsafe. Would you allow him to enter the water?

Lastly, if you were an architect or an engineer, and designed a suspension bridge, crossing a river. If the wind starts to blow, and you feel the bridge is not safe for normal traffic flow, and you decided to shut the bridge, who should the officials listen to, you as the creator of the bridge, or the users, who just want to get across?

From this, we can understand, that for a society to function effectively, the rules it should follow should be from "someone" who is aware of how the individuals of that society behave. Who else knows the weakness and behaviour of a human being more than its Creator, He Who says that "I am closer to you than your Jugular vein"

50:16: It was We who created man and We know what dark suggestions his soul makes to him: for We are nearer to him than (his) jugular vein. Also, we should realise that Islamic Laws are there to protect oneself from dangerous or harmful effects, since every rule in Islam is to help you overcome the causes of such harm. The harm doesn't have to be to you only, it could also be to those around you.

If we deliberately reject the rules of Islam, we commit a sin, and we actually are harming ourselves in one way or another.

We should avoid committing forbidden acts, and worship Allah. This can be done for a number of reasons explained by the following words of the Prophet (S)

"There are people who worship Allah for the sake of (fulfilling their) desires and that is the worship of business people. And verily there are those who worship Allah out of fear of Him, this is the worship of slaves. But there are those who worship out of thanks giving to Him, this "being the worship of free minded people and is the best of worship

Below are a list of the prohibited acts (Gunahe Kabira) in Islam:

1. Polytheistic belief
2. To lose hope of receiving any mercy from Allah
3. To completely disregard God's punishment
4. To disrespect one's parents
5. To commit murder, adultery and fornication
6. To accuse a chaste woman of unchastity (fornication or adultery)

7. To take the property of orphans by force
8. To run away from the armed forces
9. To take illegal interest in trade
10. To have sexual relations beyond the limit of marriage, sexual enjoyment through homosexuality, masturbation or lesbianism
11. To use magic
12. To swear falsely by the names of Allah (God) or to use his names in vain
13. To ignore the payment of religious dues (Zakat, Khums)
14. To testify falsely against others
15. To drink intoxicating liquors
16. To give up daily prayers or any other religious obligations
17. To break one's promise
18. To disregard one's family (rejecting them , avoiding them, not showing enough love and affection towards them or not doing them the favours that one is supposed to do)
19. To become a resident of a place where one may lose his religion
20. To Steal
21. To ascribe false statement to Allah or to any of his apostles
22. To Lie
23. To deny or hide Allah's revelations or miracles
24. To eat the flesh of dead animals, blood, pork or an animal that is slaughtered without being consecrated with the name of Allah, or is not slaughtered according to the prescribed rules.
25. To Gamble
26. To make ones living from filthy and un-Islamic ways such as money obtained from the selling of wines or any other intoxicating liquors, the money from illegal interest in trade, accepting or giving money in bribery, receiving salary for witchcraft or magic, receiving money from an unjust government, the wages for singing, the sale of prohibited things as a means to earn one's living such as the instruments of games as chess, backgammon or other instruments used for gambling, making statues of animals or human beings.
27. To give less than due measure in business transactions
28. Not to pay one's debts when one has the means and the payment is due
29. To display haughtiness and pride.
30. To be a spend-thrift (Extravagant, spend lavishly)
31. To act proudly and boastfully.
32. To ignore a pilgrimage or abandoning it when it is due.

- 33. To fight a divine leader
- 34. To get involved in an un-Islamic business such as singing for fun, playing guitar, dancing just for enjoyment and other useless acts.
- 35. To persist in minor sins
- 36. To back-bite (to talk bad behind other's back about things which they dislike)
- 37. To accuse someone of fault or a defect
- 38. To abuse or hurt a believer
- 39. To be a slanderer, causing discord, schism among people
- 40. To become a pimp
- 41. To defraud the believers
- 42. To belittle one's sins
- 43. To be a hypocrite
- 44. To use picture, statues to represent Allah

HAPPY FAMILY LIFE

Charity begins at home. The most important part of charity is that time of yours which you give in aid of others. So before you rush off to make the world a better place, stop, think, and spend a bit more time at home.

The family is the unit, the building block of any society. If you have a pile of bricks on top of each other, and you damage the bottom one, the whole wall will come tumbling down. Similarly, if you start damaging the families in a society, it will not be long before the society begins to disintegrate around you. This is what we are witnessing in the modern era of the 21st century.

This topic can be discussed from so many angles, but I think what is necessary in today's society is simply understanding the natural feelings that should be present to make the family strong and secure so that those within it will be safe from the destructive influences outside. Friends have often said, that the west is too corrupt, our children have no chance being brought up in such a permissive, devalued, uncaring world. The argument against is that if a family can teach values and morals to its children, and show them how to recognise virtues and how to shun evil, then no evil however great can overcome them. That is why Islam has emphasised family unity and careful upbringing of the children.

Before we discuss the way to a happy family life, let us just mention some of the benefits of a family.

- It is a stable environment for the upbringing of a child.
- It teaches a child how to behave how to recognise the difference between right and wrong in

the first years of its life.

- It provides companionship for husband and wife, so that they can rely on each other and trust in each other.

- All members of the family can trust each other and share the same goals.

These are just some of the benefits of being in a family.

A sensible and well balanced family system is the very foundation of a happy life. The question is how do we make a family happy?

It all comes down to CONSIDERATION. This word is so easy to say, but means so much. With consideration and respect, then almost all those things which could cause unhappiness are avoided.

Think for a moment. In your family, the last time you were unhappy was it not because you felt that no one is trying to understand your feelings, or that you wished people would look at things from your point of view. There you are then!

If you think of the needs of others, brothers, sisters and parents, then the chances are that you will never be in their "bad books". Of course in any relationship there must be a two way flow.

Things will not work if one party does all the giving, and the other does all the taking. It is also important to be able to talk. A large percentage of family problems occur because people feel bad, and they hold it within. Then it builds up and then one day "B A N G ! !". It all comes out, and there goes the family. Anger and frustration all spilled out breaks a bond that took years to build. Therefore you must be able to talk with your parents and your brothers and sisters about any problems.

Only by identifying these problems and removing them can you move forward. It is not wealth which makes a family happy. Nor is it fame or fortune, or clothes or cars..... It is love.

The love that the family shares should be the glue that holds it together. The happy family is one where each brother/sister knows that the rest of the family is behind them and is there to .help whenever the need arises

WARNING!

Do not abuse the help. One of the best ways to turn any relationship sour, is to abuse the privileges. There is nothing worst then making a mess, and expecting others to pick up the pieces. Your family is there to be used by you, not ABUSED.

The final words in this topic, on which books after books have been written, are the words of Prophet Isa (A): If you want to GUARANTEE a happy family life as well as a healthy friendship, ""Treat others the way you yourself would like to be treated

JIHAD

The word Jihad means "to struggle or to strive". The most common mistake is to translate it to mean ONLY fighting or ONLY war. This could not be further from the truth. If you put effort into any action that gains Allah's pleasure, then that effort is counted as struggle in the way of Allah, as Jihad.

Jihad does also mean Holy War, but that is just one of its facets. Once the Holy Prophet (S), after returning to Madina from a battle, told his army that the Jihad-e-Saghira (the lesser struggle) had been completed, and now Jihad-e-Akbar (greater struggle) was awaiting them. The people having been tired by the battle looked around anxiously to find this new and even more mighty enemy, but the Prophet (S) explained to them "The restraining the soul (or self) from its appetite, is the greatest holy war."

This means that controlling the nafs from its desires takes greater effort than any other holy war. It is the greatest Jihad, and we know from our furu'udeen that Jihad is wajib. Every action which we do in a day, avoiding Haraam food, saying our Namaaz on time, keeping a beard, wearing Hijab, when others around us do not. Every action which requires some effort on our part, it is Jihad. Qur'an explains us that man was created for a test, and like any test, he must work hard to achieve the results. Al-Balad` The City'

Revealed at Mecca, 20 verses.

In the name of God, Most Gracious, Most Merciful.

90:1 » I do call to witness this City--

90:2 » And you are a freeman of this City--

90:3 » And (the mystic ties of) Parent and Child--

90:4 » Verily We have created Man into TOIL AND STRUGGLE.

90:5 » Does he think that none has power over him?

90:6 » He may say (boastfully): "Wealth have I squandered in abundance!"

90:7 » Does he think that none sees him?

90:8 » Have We not made for him a pair of eyes?--

90:9 » And a tongue, and a pair of lips?--

90:10 » And shown him the two highways?

90:11 » But he has made no haste on the path that is steep.

90:12 » And what will explain to you the path that is steep?--

90:13 » (It is:) freeing the bondsman;

90:14 » Or the giving of food in a day of privation

90:15 » To the orphan with claims of relationship,

90:16 » Or to the indigent (down) in the dust.

90:17 » Then will he be of those who believe, and enjoin patience, (constancy, and self-restraint), and enjoin deeds of kindness and compassion.

90:18 » Such are the Companions of the Right Hand.

90:19 » But those who reject Our Signs, they are the (unhappy) companions of the Left Hand.

90:20 » On them will be Fire Vaulted over (all round).

By this Allah explains us that a person has two choices, whether to live his life the easy way, i.e. go down hill, and lose out in the next life, or to take the steep slope in this life, and benefit on Qiyamat. It also shows us how to perform Jihad, how to climb the steep slope.

9:41: Go forth, (whether equipped) lightly or heavily, and STRIVE AND STRUGGLE, with your goods and your persons, in the cause of God. That is best for you, if you (but) knew.

This ayat tells us that whether we are rich or poor, able bodied or disabled, strong or weak, we should each strive towards Allah the best way that we can, to earn His pleasure. It also explains to us that we are making ourselves better people, and benefiting ourselves by struggling in the way of Allah.

2:148: To each is a goal to which God turns him; then STRIVE together (as in a race) toward all .that is good. Wherever you are, God will bring you together. For God hath power over all things

DOES THIS MEAN THAT WE SHOULD PRAY AND READ QUR'AN NON STOP?

Not at all! We should of course pray and recite Qur'an, but we should help those in need, we .should fight for the rights of others, and for ourselves

WHAT ABOUT THOSE WHO BELIEVE, BUT DO NOT STRUGGLE ?

4:95: Not equal are those believers who sit (at home) and receive no hurt, and those who strive and fight in the cause of God with their goods and their persons. God has granted a grade higher to those who strive and fight with their goods and persons than to those who sit (at home): unto all (in faith) has God promised good: but those who strive and fight has He distinguished above those who sit (at home) by a special reward.

This shows that for a person who struggles in the way of Allah, there is a reward waiting which is greater than that for ordinary people. A person who dies in the state of Jihad (struggle) is a martyr, and the status of a martyr is distinguished.

"Over every act of virtue, there is another one till a man is martyred in the way of Allah, then there is no other virtue over it".

It is this status, that a women is given in Islam, because the struggle to maintain a marriage and bear the wishes the husband is Jihad to a lady.

Every moment of effort to preserve the marriage and make it blossom is Jihad, to bring up the children and teach them is Jihad, to keep Islamic habits like Hijab so that the children will learn modesty is Jihad, and she is rewarded by Allah accordingly. It is not easy to keep the veil, it is a struggle, it is JIHAD.

"The first person to enter Paradise is a martyr".

Islam recognises the difficulty and hardship that a mother takes in bringing up her children. Since these actions are all a struggle to make the child into a good Muslim, someone who will guide and help others, then that struggle is one towards Allah, which is why there is a hadith .that explains, Heaven is under the mothers feet

SUICIDE

Suicide is defined as a conscious and deliberate taking of one's own life.

It is Haraam to commit suicide. Qur'an explains us this in Surah 4 ayat 29 "O you who believe! eat not up your property among yourselves in vanities: but let there be amongst you traffic and trade by mutual good-will: NOR KILL (OR DESTROY) YOURSELVES: for verily God has been to you Most Merciful."

Before we discuss why suicide is Haraam, we should look closer as to the causes and reasons (of suicide. People could commit suicide for the following reasons (among others

frustration insanity

lack of attention (feels neglected and unwanted) desperation (inability to cope with problems) All the reasons above are causes, but what is the result? Every person performs an action to obtain some sort of result. The result of suicide is escape, to escape from the problems of this life.

When a person commits suicide, he is taking his life. He may think that he will leave the problems of this world behind, but is he so confident of his good deeds, that he thinks he is ready to face the day of Judgement? He may have even more problems in the next life if his record of good deeds weighs lightly.

Suicide can take many forms, it can be drinking poison, slitting wrists or even taking substances which you know are lethal and will eventually kill you (drugs). Allah has given us life as a gift. The body is on "loan" to us, and will be returned to Allah after we have used it. The soul however can not be killed or destroyed (except by Allah's Will).

In Surah 2, ayat 28, we are informed "How can you reject the faith in God? Seeing that you were without life, and He gave you life; then will He cause you to die, and will again bring you to ".life; and again to Him will you return

WHY IS SUICIDE HARAAM ?

Suicide is Haraam in principle because the person who commits it

1. Loses his faith in God
2. Defeats the purpose of his existence
3. Destroys that which he has not right to destroy

These are explained below:

1. One of the Gunahe Kabira is to lose hope in receiving any mercy from Allah. When a person commits suicide due to frustration or desperation, he feels he can no longer cope with the pressures of life, then he is losing hope in Allah's mercy. Allah tells us in Qur'an in Surah 2 ayat

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"Be sure We shall TEST YOU with something of fear and hunger, some loss in goods or lives or the fruits (of your toil), but give glad tidings to those who patiently persevere."

Allah is explaining to us our faith will be tested with hardship in this life. Give glad tidings to those who patiently persevere means to give good news to those who try hard and are patient. Those on the other hand who are impatient and give up (i.e. commit suicide) lose faith in

Allah's mercy, because He has PROMISED us that after hardship He will give us relief. He has also promised us that He will not give us so much hardship that we can not bear it, it is only a test, like an examination.(Surah 2, ayat 286)

"On no soul does God place a burden greater than it can bear. It gets every good that it earns, and it suffers every ill that it earns." 2. The purpose of this life is to be tested. It does not mean that we can not enjoy this world, but it does mean that this world should be only part of our final aim. Think of an examination, it is hard work but if you study well and revise hard, than you will enjoy sitting the paper, and look forward to the results.

To commit suicide is like walking out of the exam half way. When you end your life, your book of deeds becomes shut. If you try your best in the exam, even if it is very difficult, THE MORE YOU ANSWER, THE MORE MARKS YOU WILL GAIN. However if you were to stop writing half way, any marks which you could have gained are now lost. Similarly any blessing or change of circumstance due to Allah's mercy is lost once you commit suicide, you've walked out of the biggest exam of your life. The results will not be too good on the day of Judgement either!!

3. Allah has given us the greatest gift "L I F E !"

To return it to HIM is to show ungratefulness and is like a son answering back to his father. Allah says in Qur'an, Surah 17 ayat 33 "Nor take life - which God has made sacred - except for just cause." The body and life have been given to us with the grace of Allah. By killing oneself, we are rejecting Allah's blessing and refusing it. Here we are, unable to thank Allah for life, and

.instead we destroy what we should be thankful for

ISLAMIC MANNERS

There are certain Islamic manners which are taught, which are often found trivial. These manners might be something that people think should be taught to children only, but it is important that they are reinforced at a more mature age so they can become part of the character.

Manners are not something that are worn on the surface, and then taken off when not required, like a hat or shoes. Manners are something that should be part of your nature, to be present at all times. It is this attitude which is becoming rarer, especially in today's society. The person who has manners and decency is a species on the verge of extinction.

Greeting (Salaam) and Shaking the hand (musafeha)

When one Muslim meets another, then to offer greeting is emphasised, and to return a greeting is wajib. An Islamic greeting is not "Hi" or "All right Mate". Salamun Alaykum is sincere and is meant as a wish that only the Peace of Allah should be on the other. The one who offers salaam is rewarded by Allah much more than the one who answers. Salaam makes us all equal, it is recommended that one who is higher gives salaam to one below, i.e. a man on a horse (or the modern day equivalent) should offer salaam to one who is walking, to combat his own pride.

The Muslim is the brother of another Muslim, when he meets him (Muslim) he greets him with peace and he returns him (greeting) that which is better and he does not refuse to give the necessities of life

Eating

This habit is like a mirror. You can see a person's manners reflected in the way that they eat. How many people look polite and knowledgeable, pious and respectable, but give them a plate of food, and you have created a frankenstein. They eat as if there was no tomorrow. There are two ways to defeat or make a man your slave. One through exploiting his desires, and the other through his appetite.

Begin your meal by remembering Allah. Eat when you are hungry, and not just for the sake of it. Do not overeat. When a guest comes to the house, you should begin eating first so that he may feel at home. You should eat in such a way as to respect food, not chewing with your mouth open, spilling it all over the table or floor. Just remember, there are people who do not know when their next meal will be, let alone what it will be; no one is asking you to go hungry, but .don't waste or abuse food

Drinking

Water is the nectar of life. Every living creature depends on it. When you drink water, do not gulp, but sip it. It is recommended to say "Oh Allah, send your blessings on Imam Husain (A), his family and his companions, and curse on those who refused him water." when drinking .water

Sleeping

When you sleep, you should do so on your right side preferably, or your back, or your left side. You should never sleep on your stomach. This is bad for your health. It is sunnat to perform wudhu before going to sleep, as each breath you take will be counted as prayer. Recite Qur'an .and du'a for a few minutes, who knows this may be our last chance to thank Allah

Dressing

We all know that to dress indecently is Haraam. This has been explained in previous notes. However very few people realise the importance of dressing in their own home, and with their own family. One should not walk around scantily clothed at any time, even if you live by yourself. Your body is precious and private. It has been lent to you from Allah is yours to look after. You should not abuse it, and you should not use it as a show for others. You see, if something is expensive and important, it will be guarded and kept away so that people don't use it and damage it, but if something is cheap, it will be left there for everybody to see and use, and no one will care about it. What is more precious than your body, to keep it well guard its respect you should make sure that you dress it well so that it is not expose more than necessary.

When you dress, you should make sure that the clothes you wear are not too tight so that the shape of your body is seen. Also you should be careful not to wear certain clothes to certain places. You would not wear jeans if you were invited to see the Queen, so why wear jeans when you go to the mosque, to be closer to Allah? You can wear jeans at home or when you go out, but you should try and avoid them in places like the mosque.

Even at home, you should make sure that you are dressed properly. It is bad Akhlaq to walk around the home without a shirt, or to walk around wearing only your underwear or boxer shorts. It may sound funny, but many people do this. There is nothing Haraam in wearing boxer-shorts by themselves or walking around in underwear in the house, but it is very poor Akhlaq, and not the character befitting to a Muslim. If you start to treat your own body as .cheap, then don't complain when others also treat you as if you were cheap and worthless

Talking/Conduct in Public

When you talk, you should not shout or speak so much that others cannot get a word in edgeways. More importantly, even if you talk with a soft voice and polite smile, you guard against backbiting or lying. Your actions in public are what people will judge you by. If you do not want any respect, and want people to think that you are still a child, that carry on shouting, but for those who want to maintain dignity and want people to respect them, then speak less .(and listen more. "Guard your words as you would your gold" said Imam Ali (A

BATHROOM MANNERS

There is no shame in religion. When it comes to what a Muslim should know and practise, in public or in private, Islam does not hide behind flowery language or frills. Islam is the religion meant for all human beings and therefore talks directly to them. People may ask, what sort of religion is it that has rules on going to the bathroom?

The reason why Islam explains topics which people often consider personal, is because Islam is a complete religion, and as such offers complete guidance on all aspects of life. If Islam was not to explain these points, no one else would and so there would be NO STANDARD for people to act by. Islam SETS THE STANDARD for the most complete codes of personal hygiene and highest moral standards anywhere in the world. In today's society we have the convenience of modern toilets, but these facilities will not be available everywhere you go, i.e. Haj, country side, woods etc..

In these situations (and all others), certain actions should be performed. Not all acts have been mentioned since the rules should be dealt with more fully in fiqh lessons.

The major reason why this topic is being discussed in this class, is that although all of you have been taught the concept of Taharat in younger classes, it is vital that this is emphasised since you will all be Baligh within the next 1-1½ years, and without Taharat prayers are not valid. In the majority of the places you visit, school, sports clubs, service stations, and other public areas you will be faced with toilets which do not contain water.

The most common facilities available will be those which are against Islamic codes such as "standing urinals" for boys. Since you are now responsible for your Ibadat, it cannot be emphasised strong enough that you MUST understand how Islam expects you to maintain your hygiene. The area where you choose to relieve yourself should be not belong to someone else, unless you have their permission. (wajib)

If there is a defined place, like a bathroom, you should enter with the left, and leave with the right foot. This has the effect that you are remembering rules, and therefore remembering Allah, and are not entering the bathroom absent minded. This means that you will be more

conscience about the other acts you are to perform. (sunnat)

It is sunnat to cover the head while in the toilet. This can be traced back to areas where hygiene is not very good, and covering the hair prevents infection from "little nasties". (sunnat)

You must not sit in a position where you are facing Qiblah or where your back is to Qiblah. This is respect for the Sajdah which we perform in the direction of Qiblah. (wajib)

It is Makruh to urinate in a standing position. This also applies to those places where there are special facilities to urinate while standing, i.e. school toilets etc..

it is Makruh to hold yourself from going to the toilet when the urge arises, as this is unhealthy.

it is sunnat to visit the toilet before prayers, any sexual relations and before going to bed.

it is Makruh to talk while in the toilet or to extend the "visit" for longer than is necessary, i.e.

listening to the radio or reading the newspaper etc..

it is also Makruh (in open areas) to sit where there is a strong wind, or where the wastage will be close to people (i.e. roads, side-walks, by the entrance of a house, by water (especially still water) or under a tree). to wash the private parts twice (wajib) three times (emphasised). This must be done otherwise Namaaz will not be acceptable since you will be in a state of Najasat.

What do you do if you are in a public toilet where there are no facilities for washing yourself? If possible, you should try and carry a collapsible cup which you can fill with water and use to clean yourself. If you do not have a cup, then you can use tissue to dry yourself. This will protect your clothes from becoming Najis, since your private parts are dry. You can then go somewhere else to wash yourself with water to make yourself Pak, since you cannot pray until you are Pak.

MANNERS OF TRAVELLING

When a person travels, he leaves the comforts of his own home, often to go and meet other people for either business or pleasure. One important thing to realise is that, once you leave familiar surroundings you become a stranger, and in a sense you are free to do what you want. There is no pressure from family or friends, because here, no one knows you, and no one can report back on your activities.

This means that your nafs will make suggestions to you, to go to places that you would not do in your own area, for fear that others may see you. It is consequently very important that when you leave your house, you should begin your journey with the name of Allah. You should recite Bismillah, ayatul Kursi and a few short du'as. In this way, you are asking Allah to protect you

FROM YOURSELF as well as from other dangers.

When Prophet Nuh (A) left for the greatest journey of his life, with all the animals on his ark, Allah told him 11:41: So he said: "Embark upon the Ark, in the name of God, whether it move or

be at rest! When you remember Allah, He will always remember you and watch over you. One way of remembering Allah is to take a few coins and put them in a box for sadqa (the poor).

Surah 2 ayat 152 Then you do remember Me; I will remember you. Many journeys are undertaken for pleasure. If we really want to make Allah a part of our lives, then what better time to remember and praise Him when we are happy, and laughing? Journeys are often very enjoyable, but they can also be very dangerous. Its a wide, wide world, and no one can predict what can happen. It is recommended that when a large family travels to a destination, they should not all go together. They should try to split up among a number of groups so that if anything happens to one group, at least others are still safe. People tend to forget Allah when going on journeys. Once a man came to Imam (A) and asked him to do Istikhara as to whether he should go with a trading caravan. The Istikhara came out adverse, and Imam (A) advised against travelling. The man went anyway. He came back after the caravan returned and told Imam (A) that the journey had been the most successful he had ever been on, so the Istikhara was wrong. Imam (A) replied, do you remember than on this particular night you slept late, and in the morning you missed your Fajr prayers, it was because of this that the Istikhara came out bad.

This shows that no matter how important our journey, we must still perform our wajibaat. When you travel through the world, try and see Allah's handiwork. We are told in Qur'an so often that we should try and understand how Mighty and Supreme Allah is by looking at the world around us, the ayat from Qur'an to observe "look" at Allah's handiwork and the marvels which it holds. So do not be one track minded, open your eyes to appreciate the creation all around you and you will get even closer to Allah.

On arrival to your destination, thank Allah before any other action. It was through His will and guidance that no calamities befell you, so show Him that you appreciate this. If you stay with hosts, remember that you are a guest. Do not impose yourself on them and try and be as helpful as possible without disruption. You are representing your family and so have to maintain your self respect. If you are going on a fairly long journey where there is uncertainty of your return, it is important that you make a few provisions before you leave. You should write a will, and ensure that all your debts have been paid. Make sure you do not owe people money and that you have returned everything that is not yours. It is also recommended that on a journey you should carry your own burial shroud (kafan). This is not morbid or pessimistic, but realistic. Should anything happen, you want to be ready to meet Allah with all your "accounts in order".

On return from any journey, again thank Allah. This thanking may seem very little or

unnecessary but you do not realise how many accidents are avoided just by the words Bismillah and Alhamdulillah. When you recite these words, you are calling upon Allah to protect you, and Allah never forsakes those who have faith in Him. 17:110: Say: "Call upon God, or call upon Rahman: by whatever name you call upon Him, (it is well): for to Him belong the Most Beautiful Names

CONCEPT OF THE DAY OF JUDGEMENT

The Day of Judgement (Yawmul Qiyamat) is one of the pillars of the Islamic faith. In fact, if a person does not believe in the day of Judgement, then the whole concept of religion become nothing. It is also referred to as the day of resurrection. On this day, Allah will raise every human being from his grave, and they will all be brought forth to answer for their actions.

This is the day for which we are waiting. It is the day that our examination results are announced. The day when we find out whether we have passed the test of this life, or have failed. Either we wait in fear or with hope for our success. After all this, many people do not believe in it! It is a common human habit not to believe in something until you see it; but if we wait until we see the day of Judgement then it will be too late to do anything about it.

"The day of Judgement has been promised, but we do not care, why should we? It is far away, we are still young, we have a long way to go. When I get old, then I will start worrying." This is by far the most common attitude among people. They think that it won't happen to them, but if it does..... It is a terrible and frightening day. For those who do not care to obey Allah, there is plenty to be afraid of. We are taught that Allah is Merciful, that we should not fear Him out of dread or terror, but on that day if we have not tried to lead a meaningful life then we should be scared.

If we cannot raise enough self motivation to live Islam, then think of that day, and think of the consequences. Portions of Al-Infitar 'The Cleaving Asunder'

In the name of God, Most Gracious, Most Merciful.

When the Sky is cleft asunder;

When the Stars are scattered;

When the Oceans are suffered to burst forth;

And when the Graves are turned upside down--

(Then) shall each soul know what it has sent forward and (what it has) kept back.

O man! what has seduced you from your Lord Most Beneficent?- Him Who created you.

Fashioned you in due proportion, and gave you a just bias;

As for the Righteous, they will be in Bliss;

And the Wicked --they will be in the Fire,

Which they will enter on the Day of Judgement.

And they will not be Able to keep away therefrom.

And what will explain to you what the Day of Judgement is?

Again, what will explain to you what the Day of Judgement is?

(It will be) the Day when no soul shall have power (to do) anything for another: for the Command, that Day, will be (wholly) with God. Whenever we do something, we should ask ourselves whether it is right or wrong. If we are tempted to commit the action, knowing that it is wrong, just remember the wrath and chaos of the day of Judgement. We do not have to become Ma'sum (sinless), we do not have to give up school or sports or university or fun. All

we have to do is be aware of our actions, and use them to do something positive for others. This world is temporary and elusive. It does not mean that you should not enjoy it, but you find a hadith to describe this world as temporary,elusvieshould be careful that it does not deceive you. In Qunut, we ask Allah to help us in this world and the hereafter. The Akhira (next life) is determined by our actions here. We are in the world for only a short time, but we have been created to live forever. Ask yourself, where do you want to live, in heaven or hell for the rest of eternity?

The Prophet (S) said "You have not been created to perish but to remain for ever; only you transfer from one home to another and the souls are strangers on earth and are in the bodies like prisoners."

Imam Husain (A) said on the day of Ashura: "Patience O children of noble souls, because death for us is nothing but a bridge which takes you from difficulties and troubles to the vast Paradise and everlasting bliss."

Imams (A) were human beings. They could have committed sins if they wanted to. It was not that they were physically unable to do wrong, but they were AWARE of all the consequences of committing sins. Such consequences are the harm to yourself, the displeasure of Allah and His wrath. It was this knowledge that protected them from breaking Allah's rules.

If we were to have a picture of hell in front of our eyes all the time, then we would definitely think twice before every action we perform. The day of Judgement is not a joke, do not treat it !like one because the laugh will soon fall from your face....Think about it

INDECENT DRESSING

Indecent is defined as offending against recognised standards of decency (respectability). Indecent dressing means to have a form of dress which is disrespectful, i.e. which reveals the shape of the body in such a way as to attract attention from others. It doesn't matter whether the garment is loose, or tight, see-through or dark, or any other

combination. If the garment reveals part of or all of the shape of the body, than, according to Islamic standards, it is classified as indecent. If someone wears clothes which are revealing, it becomes necessary for those who are present to cast down their gaze, so they should not look directly at the person. (Surah 24 ayat 30-31)

"Say to the believing men that they should lower their gaze and guard their modesty: that will make for greater purity for them: and God is well acquainted with all that they do. And say to the believing women that they should lower their gaze and guard their modesty; that they should not display their beauty and ornaments except what (must ordinarily) appear thereof; that they should draw their veils over themselves and not display their beauty except to their husbands..."

Islam helps to secure a females modesty by preserving her beauty with Hijab. This way when a person talks with or looks at a lady, he sees her ideas and thoughts rather than just her attractiveness. A male should not wear tight or revealing clothing either, and should wear a beard so that he is easily distinguished from a female, so that they do not begin to dress like ladies and wear their clothes

WHY SHOULD PEOPLE CARE ABOUT THE WAY THAT THEY DRESS?

People wear clothes for many reasons besides just covering themselves. Some reasons are as follows :

- a) covering themselves
- b) for comfort
- c) protection against cold, wind, rain etc..
- d) to look and feel good

All of these reasons and many more are acceptable, even to look good, as long as it is not intended to show off to others. However some people wear clothes on purpose which are to attract the attention of others. This is wrong, since this is trying to show off to others. "If a person wear dresses and prides himself over others by means thereof, a flame of hell overtakes him, and he will swing in it till the day of Judgement." This means that he will be punished partly in this life (i.e. part of hell in this life). The punishment can be no friends, or no happiness, no satisfaction ...

When we wear clothes, other people see them. If we dress in ANYWAY such that other people can become aroused or affected, then those clothes are indecent

WHAT IS WRONG WITH EXPOSING YOUR BODY, EVERYBODY DOES IT?

Islam has the highest standard of morals existing in any society on the face of the earth. Islam

tries to make morals part of the individual, so that s/he will act correctly in any circumstance. It comes down to this. By dressing in such a way that you expose your body, you are inviting people to look at you. By looking at you they can see something that can arouse their desire. This desire can influence their thoughts and make them think about these pleasures. If every one, or even a large proportion of society were to be influenced by these thoughts (influenced by desire) society would break up with people going out with each other, loose and casual relationships, marriages breaking and generally society becoming permissive. Apart from that, women would be looked at as just objects of desire once again, rather than constructive members of society. A further reason, is that by exposing yourself, you are lowering your dignity. How can a person have so little self-respect so as to dress up just for other people to look at? It is like selling your self in a shop window. If desire is stopped from being fuelled by exposure, then people will have more respect. There will be less chance of crimes of passion (rape, adultery ...etc.) being committed, and the streets in general will be a safer place to be. No one is refusing us to wear good or fashionable clothes. Qur'an itself says in Surah 7 ayat 31/2 "O children of Adam! wear your beautiful apparel at every time and place of prayer: eat and drink: but waste not by excess, for God loves not the wasters. Say: Who has forbidden the beautiful (gifts) of God, which He has produced for his servants, and the things, clean and pure, (which He has provided) for sustenance

TYRANNY AND OPPRESSION

To be oppressed means to be treated with cruelty and injustice. A person who rules others with cruelty, and oppression is called a tyrant. The tyrant imposes his authority over others without their agreement, whether they like it or not. The word for this in Arabic is DHULM. If you were in charge of a group of people, and you made them do things which they did not want to, just because you had power over them, then you are oppressing them. If I have wealth, and someone else is in great need. If I then make that person do things for me which he does not want to, just to earn some money, then that is an example of oppressing the poor and the needy. It is HARAAM to oppress someone because you are taking away the rights which were given to them by Allah. To oppress a group of people is worse than slaughter, this shows how bad oppression can be. 2:217 » ..Tumult and OPPRESSION are worse than slaughter.

Allah has given everybody free will to do whatever they want, within Shari'a. How can we try and control the wishes of others, just because we have power over them, that is not fair nor just. In many countries you have people who are oppressed, they are afraid to ask for help because they will be killed. If they do anything against the oppressors, then their family will be

harm, so they cannot do anything to help themselves. Allah tells us that we should help the oppressed wherever they are, and fight for their rights. 4:75 » And why should you not fight in the cause of God and of those who, being weak, are ill-treated (and oppressed)? Men, women, and children whose cry is: "Our Lord! rescue us from this town, whose people are OPPRESSORS; and raise for us from Thee one who will protect; and raise for us from Thee

ONE WHO WILL HELP!."

8:39 » And fight them on until there is NO MORE TUMULT OR OPPRESSION, and there prevail justice and faith in God altogether and everywhere; The people who have been oppressed in this world have been treated unfairly, but they will be rewarded for their struggle on the day of Qiyamat, while the one who has oppressed will be punished for the way he treated his fellow human beings. Allah explains to us that those who have oppressed others, those who have acted like tyrants in this world will face a severe punishment in the next life.

42:42 » The blame is only against those who OPPRESS men with wrong-doing and insolently transgress beyond bounds through the land, defying right and justice: for such there will be a

PENALTY GRIEVOUS.

Not only is oppression haraam, but to help someone who oppresses is also not allowed. When a group of people oppress others, and go beyond all the limits set, then Allah Himself will intervene. Remember Fir'aun, the pharaoh in the time of Prophet Musa (A), he was a tyrant, and he suffered:

8:54 » "(Deeds) after the manner of the people of Pharaoh and those before them": they treated as false the signs of their Lord; so We destroyed them for their crimes, and We drowned the people of Pharaoh: for they were all oppressors and wrong-doers. Oppression does not only occur in the movies or in history books, it is also happening in the world today. Look at the oppression in South Africa, where people are suppressed because of the colour of their skin. Look at how Muslims are being oppressed world wide, the way Israel has taken over Palestine, the way Islam is being persecuted in the western world.

We have to fight for Islam. By following and practising Islam the way it should be, by not being afraid to say that we are Muslims. By using our knowledge and our expertise to spread Islam. That is how we can help Islam from oppression today. That is the message Imam Hussain (A)

left as he was dying, he asked "Is there any one who will help me ?" He was asking US, whether we will help him in his fight to save Islam, by standing for our principles and our rights. Imam said, "Whoever is faced with a ruler who is oppressive (a tyrant), who permits what is prohibited by Allah, who breaks the covenants of Allah, who contradicts the sunnah of the Prophet of Allah, and who acts with

wickedness and gross injustice towards people, if he then does not oppose either by actions or by words, it would be right for Allah to put him into such an abode that befits him (i.e. hell)" Are
? you ready to help

THE VALUE OF QUR'AN

When we are told about Qur'an and du'as, we think that this is just worship and prayers, something that we only perform on Thursday nights and on nights of amaal.

It is this narrow attitude which leads us to have less faith since we do not see the benefit connected with such habits. When we recite Qur'an and du'a, it is not Allah that benefits. With Qur'an, we are told over and over to read it and to memorise its pages, but we just leave it on the top shelf, and polish it now and again. What ayats tells us to memorise, and read its pages Qur'an is a Miracle, it is powerful. It is the spoken word of Allah. Can you imagine, the God that we cannot see, hear or feel, the God who created the whole universe, who has unlimited power. The God that spoke to Prophet Musa (A) is now speaking to us. This God, has given to us a book which contains His actual words! Can you not imagine the power such a book?

2:185 » Ramadhan is the (month) in which was sent down the Qur'an, as a guide to mankind, also clear (Signs) for guidance and judgement (between right and wrong).

27:1 » Ta Sin. These are verses of the Qur'an--a Book that makes (things) clear; This explains to us that it was during the blessed month of Ramadhan that Allah revealed the Qur'an to Prophet Muhammad (S), and that the purpose of the revelation was to provide signs to guide mankind between right and wrong. It is a book which makes things clear for us. 41:44 » Had We sent this as a Qur'an (in a language) other than Arabic, they would have said: "Why are not its verses explained in detail? What! (a Book) not in Arabic and (a Messenger) an Arab?" Say: "It is a guide and a healing to those who believe; and for those who believe not, there is a deafness in their ears, and it is blindness in their (eyes); they are (as it were) being called from a place far distant!"

This verse explains why the Qur'an was revealed in Arabic. Notice that to those who believe Qur'an is not only a guide, but a healing. It heals the hearts, makes stronger the faith, and brings a person close to Allah. This heals the person from any sorrow or distress. While those who choose to ignore its message are described as narrow minded, blind to the truth.

We are told to read the Qur'an often, but we do not. This Qur'an is so unique, that only Allah could have created it. It is such a miracle of language, that Allah challenges anyone else to try and reproduce even a fraction of it. 10:37 » This Qur'an is not such as can be produced by other than God; on the contrary it is a confirmation of (revelations) that went before it, and a fuller explanation of the Book--wherein there is no doubt--from the Lord of the Worlds. 17:88

» Say: "If the whole of mankind and Jinns were to gather together to produce the like of this Qur'an, they could not produce the like thereof, even if they backed up each other with help and support.

Finally, look at the power of the Qur'an. If we have faith in Allah and in Qur'an. There is nothing we cannot achieve. 59:21 » Had We sent down this Qur'an on a mountain verily, you would have seen it humble itself and cleave asunder for fear of God, such are the similitude's which We propound to men, that they may reflect. 13:31 » If there were a Qur'an with which mountains were moved, or the earth were cloven asunder, or the dead were made to speak, (this would be the one But, truly, the Command is with God in things!

This shows that if we ask sincerely, and recite Qur'an with faith, then no prayer of ours will be unanswered. No matter how great the problem, the reading of Qur'an and faith in Allah will protect us and help us. It is this book that will shield us on the day of judgement. the story of the man who wanted to cross the river for the lectures, but could not since the bridge was only opened at certain times. The aalim gave him a band upon which was written bismillahhirrahmanir raheem, and he crossed the water, one day, when he opened the arm band with curiosity, he sank. The power of Qur'an.

We have also been told to recite portions of the Qur'an and memorise them. If we do this our own memory will improve. If you spend time to memorise Ayatul Kursi (Surah 2, ayat 255 to 258), and recite it often, Allah will protect us and will improve our memory to such an extent, that people will think that we are magicians.

Allah is the source of ALL knowledge. If we read His word, we will also benefit by learning from Him, and understanding more. 6:59 » With Him are the keys of the Unseen, the treasures that none knows but He. He knows whatever there is on the earth and in the sea. Not a leaf does fall but with His knowledge: there is not a grain in the darkness (or depths) of the earth, nor anything fresh or dry (green or withered), but is (inscribed) in a Record Clear (to those who can read).

The message to you at the end of this note is "Read Qur'an, do not play with it". Do not just respect it, but read it, understand it, and memorise it. This will help you more than you can ever imagine, in both this world, and the next. Consider, wisdom, power, knowledge, memory and a guard all at our fingertips, and we don't even bother to use it!

17:89 » And We have explained to man, in this Qur'an, every kind of similitude: yet the greater !part of men refuse (to receive it) except with ingratitude

THE IMPORTANCE OF DU'A

Du'a is a prayer, a supplication. A frequently repeated notion is that du'as are only for mullahs,

or for the old people who now want thawaab or have nothing better to do. This is limited thinking, and is at the very least untrue. Du'a is when you ask Allah for something. If we realise the Allah created us, and that we are His creatures, then we have a right to ask him for our needs. Allah wants to give us so many things, He wants to help us, and to make us benefit; but

He also wants us to realise that He is there, so we must ask from Him. You do not have to wait until you need something before you ask. You should make a habit of talking with Allah every single day. Thanking him for what you have, asking his protection against performance of wrong, asking for help to make the day successful and happy. If you do this you will notice something. You will notice that you feel good inside, that things are going well at school or work. That everything is looking suddenly brighter. You will also find yourself thinking of Allah more, and thanking Him for the favours Has given you. The more you thank Him, the more He gives you.

17:110 » Say: "Call upon God, or call upon Rahman: by whatever name you call upon Him, (it is well): for to Him belong the Most Beautiful Names." This shows that Allah wants us to call Him, to ask Him when we are in need. You should go to Allah first, since He created you, He should also help you when you require it. If you remember Allah, then He will also remember you. 2:152 » Then you do remember Me; I will remember you.

In Du'a e Kumail, we ask Allah, and we are told that Allah has promised to answer us. For You have decreed Your worship for your creatures, You commanded them to pray to You and You have assured them that they would be answered. Imam Ali-Zainul Abedeen (A) has given us a collection of du'as known as Sahifa e Kamila. This collection contains many du'as for all occasions which is one of the treasures left behind by the Ahlul bayt (A). He has also given us short du'as to be recited on each day of the week. These du'as will help and guide you. There is a guarantee of success to anyone who makes a habit of reciting these regularly, every morning .after fajr, or before going to school or work. They are reproduced below

SUNDAY

With the name of Allah, besides whose mercy, I hope for nothing; I fear nothing except His justice and trust nothing but His word, and do not cling to anything but His rope. To You do I beg for shelter, O Lord of forgiveness and acceptance, from tyranny and oppression, from the changes of time and succession of grief, and from a life ended without preparation. And to You do I beg for guidance in which there can be reformation and improvement. And to You alone do I pray for help in granting me success and satisfaction. And I seek Your protection O Lord, from the suggestions of Shaytan, and with Your power I guard myself from the tyranny of kings. Therefore accept whatever be of my prayers and fasts and let my morrow

and thereafter be better than my present hour and day and make me respected amongst my
kindred and community;

And guard me in my waking and my sleep; for You are Allah the best preserver, and You are the most Merciful. O Lord, in this my day and on Sundays to follow I clear myself in Your presence of ascribing partners to You and of disloyalty and pray to You sincerely to obtain Your answer and am obedient to You hoping for Your reward. Therefore, bless Muhammad, the best of Your servants, the preacher of Your truth; and honour me with Your dignity which cannot be diminished and watch me with Your eye which does not sleep; and finish my affair so as to make me independent of others and rely on You alone and terminate my life in forgiveness.

.Verily, You are the Forgiving, Merciful

MONDAY

Praise be to Allah who called none to witness when He created the heavens and the earth, and took no assistant when He created the spirits. Never had He any partner in His Godhead nor was He ever helped in His Oneness. Tongues are unable to praise Him to the fullest extent, reason incapable of knowing His essence, the mighty humble themselves before His Majesty their faces bent downward on account of His dread and all the great submit to His Glory.

Therefore, to You belongs all praise in increasing succession and unbroken continuance. And may His favour be on His messenger eternally and peace perpetually, forever. O Lord, let the first part of this my day consist in amendment the middle of it in prosperity and the last of it in success. And through You I seek refuge from a day which begins in fear, the middle of which causes distress and which ends in pain. O Lord, verily I ask Your pardon for every vow I vowed every promise I promised and every covenant I made with You and then failed to
discharge them.

And I pray to You concerning wrongs done to Your creatures; therefore whichever servant of Yours or hand-maid of Yours has suffered from me any wrong which I may have done to his person or reputation or property or kith or offspring; or any slander whereby I may have spoken ill of him; or anything I may have imposed on him on account of inclination or passion or force or jealousy or hypocrisy or prejudice; he being absent or present, alive or dead; and thereafter my hand become too short and my means too narrow to make amends to him or obtain his forgiveness; in that case, I bet You O You who are the Lord of requests (and they are obedient to Your will and ready to conform to Your wish), to confer favour on Muhammad and his family and reconcile him to me by whatever means You choose, and let me have mercy from You;
verily pardon causes You no loss nor does bounty injure You O most merciful.
O Lord, grant me on every Monday, two gifts from You, good luck to obey You at the beginning

of the day and the blessing of Your pardon at the end of it. O You who are the only object of
.worship and except whom none can forgive sins

TUESDAY

Praise be to Allah - and praise is His due, as He deserves it - abundant praise! I hurry to Him for refuge from the mischief of Shaytan who adds sin to my sin; and I guard myself through Him from every wicked tyrant, oppressive king and overpowering enemy. O Lord, let me be of Your force; for verily Your forces - they are victorious and let me be of Your band for verily Your band - they are happy; and make me one of Your friends, for surely - Your friends have no fear, nor shall they be sorry.

O Lord, reform my faith for me, for verily it is a safeguard for my affairs and make easy for me my hereafter for certainly it will be my place of rest and to it will I retire from the company of the wicked. And let my life be an enhancement of every good to me, and my death a comfort to me from every evil. O Lord, bless Muhammad, the last of the Prophets, the one who concluded the number of sent ones, and his family, the pure, the holy and his chosen companions; and in this third day of the week, grant me three things; leave me no sin un-forgiven, no sorrow un-removed and no enemy un-vanquished by You.

With the name of Allah, the best of names; with the name of Allah, the Lord of the earth and the heaven, I drive away every evil, the first of which is His displeasure; and desire to achieve every good, the foremost of which is His approval. Therefore let my existence end in Your pardon, O
!lord of benevolence

WEDNESDAY

Praise be to Allah who ordained night to be a cover and sleep to be a mode of rest; and made the day to be the time of dispersion. All praise to You for raising me from my sleep, for if You had wished, You could have made it everlasting; a praise perpetual, unceasing and which the whole of creation would be unable to count.

Praise be to You, O lord, for, You did create, and did so with symmetry. and You did measure and dispose, and cause to die, and to live, and make sick and restore to health, and give safety and does afflict, and You are exalted above the Throne and are in full possession of Sovereignty. I pray to You like him whose cause is weak and whose resource is cut off, and whose death is fast approaching and whose worldly hope has shrunk and whose need for Your mercy has become pressing, and whose regret for his default has grown intense, and whose guilt and error has been too frequent and whose repentance to You is sincere. Therefore, bless Muhammad the last of the Prophets and the members of his house, the pure,

the holy, and let me have the intercession of Muhammad, may Your favour be on him and his family and do not deprive me of his company; verily, You are most merciful! O Lord, in the fourth day of the week grant me four things: employ my strength in Your service; let my delight consist in Your worship, make me love Your reward; and cause me to abstain from that which .would make me deserving of punishment from You. Verily, You are kind to whoever Your wish

THURSDAY

All praise be to Allah who removed the dark night with his power and brought the bright day with His mercy; and clothed me with His light and gave me His blessing. Therefore, O Lord since You have kept me alive for this day, be pleased to spare me for other days similar to it; and bless Muhammad and his family and do not afflict me in other nights and days for my having done things forbidden and for my having committed guilt; and confer on me its benefit and the benefit of what is in it and the benefit of what follows; and turn away the mischief of what is in it, and the mischief of what comes after it.

O Lord, verily I seek adherence to You through the guarantee of Islam; and rely on You through the honour of the Qur'an; and seek intercession with You through Muhammad, the chosen. May God bless him and his family, therefore O Lord recognise my guarantee, whereby I hope for this satisfaction of my need, O most merciful.

O Lord, in the fifth day of the week, grant me five things, which none has power to vouchsafe except with Your generosity, and which none can afford without Your bounty: a soundness whereby I may gain strength to serve You, and a devotion whereby I may deserve Your magnificent reward: and an immediate prosperity by means of fair earnings: and guard me on occasions of danger with Your protection and place me under Your defence against future sorrows and anxieties. O Lord, bless Muhammad and his family and let my adherence to him .be effectual intercession at the day of Judgement, verily You are the most Merciful

FRIDAY

Praise be to Allah, who existed before creation and the giving of life, and who shall continue to exist after all things have perished. The knower, who does not forgets the one who remembers Him, Who does not diminish the one who gives Him thanks who does not disappoint the one who prays to Him: and does not frustrate the hope of the one who places hope in Him.

O Lord, I call You to witness - and You are sufficient as a witness: and I call Your angels and the inhabitants of Your heavens and bearers of Your throne and Your prophets and Your messengers whom You did entrust with Your mission and the various creatures that You have created; to witness that You and You alone are Allah, there being no god but You; You are

alone there being no associate with You no peer and there is no untruth in Your word, nor
change.

And that verily Muhammad - may Your blessing be on him and his family - is Your servant and Your messenger; he delivered to Your servants the message with which You did entrust him and exerted himself in the Your cause, as it deserved; and he gave happy tidings of a reward which was certain and threatened with punishment which was true. O Lord keep me firm in Your religion as long as You keep me alive; and let not my heart deviate after You has guided me, and let me have mercy from You; verily, You and You alone are the Giver. Bless Muhammad and his family and make us of the number of his followers and his adherents and raise me (on the last day) among his band and give me the grace to be regular in my performance of the Friday prayer and to win such of Your bounty as You will assign to the deserving observers of Fridays, on the day of recompense. Verily, You and You alone are
.the Mighty, the Wise

SATURDAY

Bismillah which is the creed of those who seek protection and the motto of those who want refuge. I hurry to the exalted Lord for shelter from oppression of tyrants, from the devices of the envious and from the treachery of the wicked and praise Him above the praise of all those
who praise.

O Lord, You are the One without associate and the King without being made a king. Your
command is unopposed and Your sovereignty undisputed.

I beg You to favour Muhammad Your servant and Your apostle, and to inspire me with such gratitude for Your favours as would enable me to deserve the utmost extend of Your approval; and with Your loving kindness help me to serve You and worship You regularly and deserve Your reward. And favour me by restraining me from acts of disobedience to You as long as You keep me alive; and give me the grace to do that which would benefit me as long as You spare me; and enlighten my mind with Your book, and remove from me the burden of sin because of my reading it: and favour me by keeping my faith and my life safe, and let not those that love me be frightened from me; and continue Your goodness to me during the rest of my
.life as You have done during the past, O most Merciful

LIES VS HONESTY

To lie means to say something that you know is wrong on purpose. We all know that lying is a great sin. The unfortunate point is that we do not realise how often we are doing it. Our Sixth Imam (A) said that it is more difficult to repent for many small sins than for one big sin.

Remember the story of the two men who came to Imam (A) to repent for their sins.

Prophet Muhammad (S) has said:

"Leave falsehood and make speaking the truth a habit."

"If a person has a habit of speaking lies, he is a hypocrite until he rids himself of the habit."

"A person who is not honest cannot have a perfect and strong faith".

To lie is haraam since you are deceiving others. There are many reasons why people lie, some of them are,

- a. as an excuse to get yourself out of trouble,
- b. to cheat somebody out of something you want,
- c. to get someone else into trouble.

As you can see, all the above reasons are sinister. If you have done something which will to trouble, then you should face it, and not lie your way out of it because that is being very irresponsible.

Qur'an also tells us not to lie,

2:42 » And cover not Truth with falsehood, nor conceal the Truth when you know (what it is).

Prophet Muhammad (S) has also said:

"Beware of association with the liar for he is like a mirage which draws the far one nearer to you and the nearer far from you." If someone entrusts something to you, you should be truthful and return it back to him when it is asked for. It does not matter what the value of the item is, it

does not even matter if the person is your enemy. Imam Ja'far as Sadiq (A) says:

"Whenever a person entrusts anything to you do not commit breach of trust, although that person may be (the worst person on earth like) the murder of Imam Hussein (A).

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

What does this show. If you accept something into your trust, you must preserve your honour by holding true to your word. If you do not like the person, or feel something wrong will result, then do not accept the trust, but once you have given your word, you are bound by it. And on another occasion he says to one of his companions:

"I recommend two things to you: one of them is truthfulness and the other is honesty, for these two are the key to sustenance." If you make the habit of lying, then you will lie very often without realising. You will lie to your family, your friends and everybody you meet. Then one day you will be caught out because you will have trapped yourself in a corner, and there will be no escape. Also if you make a habit of lying you will start doing other things which are even .worse. One evil leads you to another

MASTURBATION

Masturbation is the artificial stimulation of the genital organs. Before we discuss this topic further, it should be clearly stated that masturbation is a HARAAM act to do. In the west, at school, we are taught that it is natural, and that there is nothing wrong with it. On the contrary, we are taught that it is of benefit.

Why? Why is there such a difference in opinion between Islam, and the west? This is because the western world looks at everything in terms of the PHYSICAL BODY only.

Islam on the other hand knows that a man is made of BOTH MIND and BODY. That mind is called the soul, the self, the nafs, the spirit. When a person masturbates, his desire creates images in the mind to make him/her reach a peak of excitement. For boys, this culminates in ejaculation of semen, after which desire soon vanishes. For girls, there is no definite end, and the surge of emotion can arise a number of times. This stage known as an orgasm. These images are made by the imagination, they are fantasised.

This has one major consequence. The person is visualising something that is unreal. They have total control over what actions are performed in their mind. This may start off with curious thoughts of sexual intimacy, but if masturbation continues, the imagination will fabricate more and more until the person has to resort to thinking of unnatural, perverse thoughts to fulfil the level of sexual lust.

One of the results is when the person reaches a stage where they can engage in a lawful sexual relationship (eg marriage), then their lust will not be satisfied within this relationship, and may seek fulfilment elsewhere, either prostitution, homosexuality etc.

There is no argument that one can masturbate a little, since the action is addictive. Once a person is into the habit of masturbation, they will find it very difficult, if not impossible to break. In a certain documentary people were asked about masturbation. They replied that initially they would fantasise normal acts between a man and a woman. However, after a while, that was not enough to arouse them. They would start fantasising things which were indecent and perverse, until they started thinking of homosexuality and other crimes which are unnatural.

This is what masturbation results in. It causes you to imagine unreal situations, and unnatural actions. It is ADDICTIVE, since once you start, you will find it very difficult to stop.

Sexual desire is one emotion which is different from the rest. With the desires of hunger or thirst, you will reach a limit when you are full that you can not eat or drink any more. With sexual desire, there is no limit, you will want more and more. The more you have, the more you will want until you burn yourself up. That is why sexual desire is so dangerous, and needs to be CONTROLLED.

Another harm caused by masturbation is that it is an escape from reality. Sex is a natural part of a human being, but it is something that should be private and personal. When a person masturbates, he is living with his imagination, where he has total control. As a result, when he is ready to marry, and is with his wife, he will be at a loss. He will be so used to his imagination,

that when the time comes to be with a real person, he will not know how to react.

The western world says that masturbation is necessary to relieve sexual tension, but this is nonsense! If a person is tense, then the body will relieve that tension naturally. When the person sleeps, he might have a wet dream; this releases the tension in the body if necessary. It is important to realise, that a person MUST perform Ghusl of Janaabat after semen is released.

The way to avoid masturbation is not to watch or read those things which arouse your desire. You should not sleep without clothes on, nor should you remain naked at any time, even by yourself, because Shaytan is always there to put suggestions in your mind. If you feel tense for some reason, and the desire to masturbate occurs, then just go to the toilet, and urinate in the normal way. Any extra sperm which is produced, will be released with the urine, and you will feel less tense.

Only a person with weak will power will masturbate. When you masturbate, you allow your mind to be taken over by your desire. Why do people start to masturbate?

The sexual awareness at adolescence is a natural process, and is part of reaching maturity. Curiosity will cause a person to wonder why certain changes are happening in their body, why on occasions thoughts enter their mind. Without someone to explain or talk to, the adolescent will want to experiment, will wonder why certain actions will arouse him/her, and will wonder why certain actions provide physical pleasure, and will continue with those actions, unless there is a reason not to do so. Some people may stumble across masturbation quite innocently, while bathing or taking a shower.

The important point to understand is this. Islam does not say that sexual activity is evil. It merely confines it within lawful boundaries. What is damaging is self stimulation since that can cause the lust to imagine and fantasise. What Islam is guiding you towards, is the natural fulfilment of sexual desire when you are married, not the animalistic satisfaction of lust with yourself, or other partners which has no other purpose. You should NEVER let your MIND be a .SLAVE to anything, not food, not music, not alcohol, not drugs, and not desire