

How the Greatest Motivates Us

Reflections

by

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A member of the Egyptian Writers Union

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In the name of Allah, Most Gracious, Most Merciful

Introduction

The most effective response to those who invite others to religion through intimidation is that the Islamic faith or Sharia, the same as the Torah and Gospel - all are different from the positive law under which people may be held accountable and punished but not rewarded for abiding by the law. Conversely, the divine law sets rules for the punishment of violators and promises rewards for obligors. Allah states it explicitly in the Quran: **“What would Allah do with your punishment if you are grateful and believe? And ever is Allah Appreciative and Knowing,”** (An-Nisa 4:147). So how come that some may claim that the call to faith should only be through intimidation?

The mainstay of this book is the call to a commitment to religion by motivation because a committed individual should be rewarded. The greatness of Allah’s Book lies in the fact that it considers commitment as a kind of trade with Allah, and not just avoidance of His punishment, as is the case with the positive law. Rather, it is an invitation to trade with Allah more and more and be more committed to receiving much more rewards.

If many have written about the punishments reserved for violators of God’s commands, I sensed a desire to write about what I call

“mechanisms of divine motivation”, in which the person is rewarded rather than questioned.

In the first volume of this book, I tried to state some methods of Allah’s motivation for His human creature in different places of the book.

In this volume, I tried to present other aspects of the divine motivation methods to urge people to be more committed and ‘trade’ with God.

If you have the passion to draw closer and trade with Allah and are interested in learning how God, Glory be to Him, motivates His servants, this book may inspire you how to motivate those around you, for it is entitled *How the Greatest Motivates Us* .

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A Good Deed is Worth Seven Billion Good Deeds

If people disagree about the price per square meter of apartments in a city, with each suggesting a different price, and if one of them tells them about an ad for an apartment for sale in the city, this will certainly be a reference price for the level of prices in that city.

I'll give an example, and for Allah is the highest attribute. Quran exegetes have given different accounts about how much the reward for a good deed (*hasana*) is. Some said the reward for a good deed is ten times the like of it. Others said 700 times. But I see the reward could be **seven billion times** of a good deed minimum. God Almighty says: **“If any one saved a life, it would be as if he saved the life of the whole people,”** (Al-Ma’ida 5:32).

In this verse, Allah teaches us that saving an individual is equal to the saving of all people.

To calculate all people, I can use recent statistics about the current population living on the planet - approximately seven billion people.

Of course, **“the whole people”** may far exceed this number if we understand it in a broader sense - that is, people from the beginning of creation and whoever might exist on another planet, if any, and so on.

“Saving the life” here has a clear meaning, i.e. to save one’s life from death. In my opinion, which may be right or wrong, it could have a broader meaning to include the paying of debts of someone in jail to alleviate their hardships and allow a source of income for them to feed their family. Is it not a kind of saving a life? Proving the innocence of someone who is jailed unjustly is a kind of saving a life. Supporting a helpless person by securing them a livelihood is a kind of saving a life in the broadest sense.

All of these examples and others are, in my opinion, a kind of saving lives.

I see that God, Glory be to Him, wanted to give a guideline value to the good deed (*hasana*) for people to contemplate. But it is not an exclusive value for a specific action only, and Allah is Most High and All-Knowing.

Based on this, helping a debtor or a helpless person for example is an act of **charity**. If this saves a life, then the reward for the charity will be equal to seven billion good deeds, and God multiplies for whomever He wills.

Allah’s sublimity encourages me to be fully convinced that this is the due veneration of the Giver, Glory be to Him, when He gives. The multiplication of rewards for good deeds, stated in several verses of the Holy Quran, means multiplication of those billions. This is the gift of the Greatest, Glory be to Him.

Will someone - after that - come on the Day of Judgment with their balance of good deeds is not heavy?

A God who rewards for a good deed billion times the like thereof does only want His servants to enter Paradise and to have their balance of good deeds tilts in their favor. So, everyone can now be among those who have billions of good deeds.

Let us multiply our good deeds and think about the good deeds that are close to saving a life, such as giving charity for treating critical cases, contributing to building hospitals, helping people get out of their crises, and so on.

I remind you and myself to donate to the 500 500 New National Cancer Institute. It is a vivid example of charities implying the value of saving lives. It was my good faith in God Almighty that motivated me to adopt this thought.

Indeed, what is with the Greatest is greater.

Motivation by Creating Competitiveness

The one who reads the Quran and reflects on its noble verses will find a divine approach for motivation that we can be discerned - calling on people to compete and hasten in doing good deeds. It is as if God Almighty teaches us that the divine mechanisms for motivation include the creation of a competitive environment. Competition creates an active atmosphere for winning, thus motivating people to exert more effort and perfect their work to win the competition. The following verses are just examples:

“The last of it is musk. So for this let the competitors compete,”
(Al-Mutaffifin 83:26).

“Race toward forgiveness from your Lord and a Garden whose width is like the width of the heavens and earth, prepared for those who believed in Allah and His messengers. That is the bounty of Allah which He gives to whom He wills, and Allah is the possessor of great bounty,” (Al-Hadid 57:21).

“It is those who hasten to good deeds, and they outstrip [others] therein,” (Al Mum’minun 23:61).

All of these verses confirm Allah’s call to His servants to race and hasten to forgiveness, obedience, piety, doing good deeds, supplication, and other good deeds.

Then Allah, Most High, explains to us the merit of those who compete, saying: **“And the forerunners, the forerunners. Those are the ones brought near [to Allah]. In the Gardens of Pleasure,”** (Al-Waqi’a 56:10-12)

God, Glory be to Him, praises the **forerunners** as they have become among those who will be brought near to Him and will be in the Gardens of Pleasures.

Some understood **“forerunners, the forerunners”** as the believers who had preceded us. But the most correct meaning is that they are those who compete and surpass others in acts of worship and obedience. So, they will be in gardens of bliss and will be the nearest to Allah, Exalted be He.

Through this God has created a kind of competition among His servants to motivate them to strive to do good deeds and give out, as a method of divine motivation to encourage humans and to let us learn from this a method to motivate those around us.

A father can motivate his children to excel in their classes by creating competition among them and rewarding those who obtain the highest grades.

A commander can create competition among his soldiers in terms of training, fitness, etc., and reward the distinguished among them in some way.

The state can create competition among companies in terms of the percentage of the annual growth in workers and exports, or by

improving the technical specifications of their products, and so on, and reward them for this. This will create an environment of competitiveness that will benefit society, because everybody will compete and, consequently, the domestic product and revenues will grow, thus providing job opportunities. The state will be the first beneficiary of creating this competitive climate in creativity and perfection.

Based on this, the creation of competitiveness is an incentive to motivate people, because they love to race and win, and competition motivates them. This is the desired motivation.

Let us create a state of competitiveness for those around us and invite them to compete. This will motivate them to accomplish what they are required to do. Let our management of those around us be based on the creation of a state of positive competitiveness, inspired by the divine approach in motivating mankind by competitiveness.

Why not?

Motivation by Good Parenting

God, Glory be to Him, sent Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) to perfect good character. It is very simple; a nation without morals has no stability, progress, or bright future. God sent His messages to us to learn morals and ordered us to educate and bring up our children on good manners. Reflect on verses of the Noble Quran to find that Allah, Glory be to Him, gives great priority to this matter, sometimes in a direct way by teaching us how to raise up our children, and at other times by stating parables that teach us the rules for a parenting process.

I view this as a divine motivation approach that can be achieved through good parenting because whoever has been upbrought in a good manner will have a much better chance of being a righteous servant of God. So, God Almighty wanted to motivate us to bring up our children well, so that they would be good and a source of pride for us.

Many verses of the Quran illustrate ways of good parenting to motivate us to raise our children in the best manner.

The first of these ways is **supplication** (*du'a*). A father can pray to God to make his son a comfort to his parents' eyes, i.e. to be pure, righteous, and dutiful to them. We can find this in the verses: **“And those who say, ‘Our Lord, grant us from among our wives and**

offspring comfort to our eyes and make us an example for the righteous,” (Al-Furqan 25:74) and: **“My Lord, grant me [a child] from among the righteous,”** (As-Saffat 37:100). Then we have to be role models. Some parents could miss the target, trying to raise their son to be what we call it in our society *fahlawi* (resourceful, crafty, or living by his wits), whereas God Almighty teaches us how His prophets taught their children. Allah says about Prophet Ishmael (Isma’il) (peace be upon him): **“And he used to enjoin on his people prayer and zakah and was to his Lord pleasing,”** (Maryam 19:55), and about Prophet Jacob (Ya’qub) (peace be upon him): **“Or were you witnesses when death approached Jacob, when he said to his sons, ‘What will you worship after me?’ They said, ‘We will worship your God and the God of your fathers, Abraham and Ishmael and Isaac - one God. And we are Muslims [in submission] to Him,”** (Al-Baqara 2:133).

Likewise, Luqman (peace be upon him) instructed his son to have faith in God. Allah says:

“And [mention, O Muhammad], when Luqman said to his son while he was instructing him, ‘O my son, do not associate [anything] with Allah. Indeed, association [with him] is great injustice,” (Luqman 31:13).

Luqman instructed his son to be dutiful to his parents:

“And We have enjoined upon man [care] for his parents. His mother carried him, [increasing her] in weakness upon weakness, and his weaning is in two years. Be grateful to Me and to your

parents; to Me is the [final] destination. But if they endeavor to make you associate with Me that of which you have no knowledge, do not obey them but accompany them in [this] world with appropriate kindness and follow the way of those who turn back to Me [in repentance]. Then to Me will be your return, and I will inform you about what you used to do,” (Luqman 31:14-15).

Luqman told his son that God is watchful of his deeds:

“[And Luqman said], ‘O my son, indeed if wrong should be the weight of a mustard seed and should be within a rock or [anywhere] in the heavens or in the earth, Allah will bring it forth. Indeed, Allah is Subtle and Acquainted,’” (Luqman 31:16).

Luqman ordered his son to perform prayers, enjoin what is right, and be patient in distress:

“O my son, establish prayer, enjoin what is right, forbid what is wrong, and be patient over what befalls you. Indeed, [all] that is of the matters [requiring] determination,” (Luqman 31:17).

Luqman taught his son modesty, self-confidence, avoidance of arrogance, and even styles of walking moderately and speaking in a lower voice:

“And be moderate in your pace and lower your voice; indeed, the most disagreeable of sounds is the voice of donkeys,” (Luqman 31:19).

Thus God Almighty wanted to set clear goals for parenting. If our approach to parenting fails to achieve these goals, it is our fault and

our approach and priorities that we have to change to attain the target of good parenting. This order addresses everyone. The family with its children, the school with its students, and even the state or the government should set examples to help good manners prevail and become a common characteristic of the people. By doing so, the role models will be examples for younger generations in terms of morals, good speech, modesty, and values of dialogue. This will create generations with good manners who are grateful to their homeland. Righteousness is not only about being dutiful to parents. Rather, what we call patriotism is a person's dutifulness and gratitude towards their country and the desire to return this favor, no matter whether it demanded that or not. Reversely, the nations that have disregarded these concepts will harvest the worst of what they cultivated.

Let us learn from this divine approach in clarifying, and not only encouraging, ways of good parenting and defining goals so that we can take the shortest or safest path to those goals.

From another angle, a thorough understanding of the Noble Quran reveals that the most important means of proper parenting is to be primarily fair with your children to expel jealousy, envy, and disobedience from the family.

In the Quranic parable of Prophet Joseph (Yusuf) (peace be upon him), our Lord taught us a lot. For example, look at the words of Jacob's children when they said: **“When they said, ‘Joseph and his brother are more beloved to our father than we, while we are a clan. Indeed, our father is in clear error,’”** (Yusuf 12:8). Their

words teach us the need for our children to feel that they are treated fairly. It is not enough to think that we are fair to them; they must have this feeling.

Then look at Joseph's words to his father: **“Indeed I have seen [in a dream] eleven stars and the sun and the moon; I saw them prostrating to me,”** (Yusuf 12:4), which reveal an open dialogue between the son and the father.

This is followed by Jacob's words to Joseph: **“O my son, do not relate your vision to your brothers or they will contrive against you a plan. Indeed Satan, to man, is a manifest enemy. And thus will your Lord choose you and teach you the interpretation of narratives and complete His favor upon you and upon the family of Jacob, as He completed it upon your fathers before, Abraham and Isaac. Indeed, your Lord is Knowing and Wise,”** (Yusuf 12:5-6). The verse reveals the father's sagacity and advice.

The last verse also teaches us that we have to discover and refine the children's talents: **“And thus will your Lord choose you and teach you the interpretation of narratives and complete His favor upon you and upon the family of Jacob, as He completed it upon your fathers before, Abraham and Isaac. Indeed, your Lord is Knowing and Wise,”** (Yusuf 12:6).

In the same Surah, the Holy Quran warns us not to leave our children without care, control, and follow-up while they are playing. Allah says: **“They said, ‘O our father, why do you not entrust us with Joseph while indeed, we are to him sincere counselors?”**

Send him with us tomorrow that he may eat well and play. And indeed, we will be his guardians,” (Yusuf 12:11-12).

The following verses tell us that the father, Prophet Jacob (peace be upon him), left the decision to someone else (i.e. his children), hence the mistake that exposed his son Joseph to danger. Allah says: **“Said a speaker among them, ‘Do not kill Joseph but throw him into the bottom of the well; some travelers will pick him up - if you would do [something],”** (Yusuf 12:10).

Finally, God Almighty instructs us how to teach our children acts of worship, saying: **“And enjoin prayer upon your family [and people] and be steadfast therein. We ask you not for provision; We provide for you, and the [best] outcome is for [those of] righteousness,”** (Taha 20:132).

Thus we come to know how to teach our children acts of worship, such as prayer, fasting, zakat (obligatory charity), pilgrimage, and others, and to be patient with them - that is, to do so in a way that makes them love these acts of worship and not to dislike them.

All these things emphasize that there is a divine motivation approach for good parenting by explaining its virtues. It illustrates how our Lord instructed us via His messengers who taught us good manners. So why do we fail to take them as an example? We have to understand that it is obligatory to draw up the goals in front of our eyes, be role models to our children, monitor, reward and hold them accountable to achieve these goals while seeking the help of all possible means.

Parenting is a process of educating and learning. Distinguished education must establish noble morals to create educated, well-mannered children who can delight and rejuvenate their nations.

Let us realize the divine motivation approach in good parenting, so that we can be distinguished among those around us. Let us learn from this approach and apply it.

Why not?

Motivation by Showing Love for Others

I have already stated, in Chapter One of this volume, about my view of the way to calculate the good deeds and explained my evidence that is based on the noble verse **“and if any one saved a life, it would be as if he saved the life of the whole people,”** (Al-Ma’ida 5:32).

Here I extracted a divine motivation method in which God makes clear to people that they are the most valuable for Him. Based on this, He regarded the one who kills a human as if they killed the whole people and the one who saves a human as if they saved the whole people.

Such a statement alone contains all reasons for drawing close to Allah and being grateful and inclined to Him. Why not, as long as you have come to know that you are the dearest and most honorable creature for God? Allah has given us a characteristic that no other of His creatures has had. Why this does not urge us to respond to His love for us with love for Him and consider His satisfaction as the most valuable thing in our lives, to rejoice in the world and the Hereafter.

Shouldn’t we learn from this a lesson to tell our families - the wife, son, brother, father and mother - that they are the dearest to us in the world?

Shouldn't we understand from this divine approach a way to tell our employees, for example, that they are the most worthy of our care and that we protect them so that their loyalty to their company will be unconditional?

The thrust of this method of motivation lies in God explaining to us how dear man is for Him, to the extent that He set the utmost punishment for transgressors and promised those who protect a human with the highest reward. We learn from this method and lesson how to motivate those around us by explaining how dear they are to us. This will definitely increase the confidence, belongingness, and loyalty between us.

Thus, it is an expandable rule. It is the best motivation for loyalty, belongingness, sincerity, and dedication. Let each of us use this method to motivate those around us.

Why not?

Motivation by Courtesy and Finding Keys

is not always be as one wishes. Allah says: **“We have certainly created man into hardship,”** (Al-Balad 90:4). But God Almighty wants to give His servants some keys to open closed doors that they might encounter during their lifetime.

Fear and sadness may cause mental illness or psychological pressure. Here we find a divine magic key to dispel this fear and remove sadness. Allah says:

“Indeed, those who have said, ‘Our Lord is Allah’ and then remained on a right course - the angels will descend upon them, [saying], ‘Do not fear and do not grieve but receive good tidings of Paradise, which you were promised,” (Fussilat 41:30).

To overcome distress and anguish God has given us a key. The supplication uttered by Prophet Jonah (Yunus), was the response that God saved him of gloom. Allah says:

“And [mention] the man of the fish, when he went off in anger and thought that We would not decree [anything] upon him. And he called out within the darknesses, ‘There is no deity except You; exalted are You. Indeed, I have been of the wrongdoers.’ So We responded to him and saved him from the distress. And thus do We save the believers,” (Al-Anbiya 21:87-88).

As for the one whose breast is constrained and their heart aches, the key is *tasbih* (saying: “*Subhan Allah* [Glory be to Allah]”) and a lot of prostration and prayers. Allah, Exalted be He, revealed this divine key to Prophet Muhammed (peace be upon him) in the verses:

“And We already know that your breast is constrained by what they say. So exalt [Allah] with praise of your Lord and be of those who prostrate [to Him]. And worship your Lord until there comes to you the certainty (death),” (Al-Hijr 15:97-99).

For those whose livelihood is limited; those who want to have sons; those who want rain; and those who want gardens, farms and rivers, Allah has given us a key, saying:

“And said, ‘Ask forgiveness of your Lord. Indeed, He is ever a Perpetual Forgiver. He will send [rain from] the sky upon you in [continuing] showers And give you increase in wealth and children and provide for you gardens and provide for you rivers,” (Nuh 71:10-12).

For those whose living conditions are not good, we find that Allah, the Most Courteous and Kind to His slaves, has given us an effective key. Allah, Exalted be He, says:

“And whoever fears Allah - He will make for him a way out, And will provide for him from where he does not expect. And whoever relies upon Allah - then He is sufficient for him. Indeed, Allah will accomplish His purpose. Allah has already set for everything a [decreed] extent,” (At-Talaq 65:2-3); and:

“And whoever fears Allah - He will make for him of his matter ease,” (At-Talaq 65:4).

For those who fear to die and leave behind young, weak children, do not be afraid. God Almighty has given us a key in the verse:

“And let those [executors and guardians] fear [injustice] as if they [themselves] had left weak offspring behind and feared for them. So let them fear Allah and speak words of appropriate justice.,” (An-Nisa 4:9).

All these are divine keys. I think they denote motivation by divine courtesy. God Almighty knows that we will encounter difficulties and adversities in the world, so He has guided us to these keys to help us get out of these crises, for He is the Most Courteous and Kind, Well-Acquainted. Allah is Acquainted with what will befall us, and He is Most Courteous and Kind to us because He has given us the keys to getting out of the world’s trials, cruelty, and severity.

If we want to learn from that in motivating those around us, we should not close the doors. If we deal with people, we have to leave an open door between us and them as a gesture of courtesy to them to solve any crisis through it. We should not shut the doors to others to restrict them.

Motivation by courtesy and kindness in our world is to leave a way out for those we have power over them, even if we can use our tools in the dispute with them including the ability to destroy and end them. Rather, we have to motivate people to get out of the circle of

crisis that befalls them by leaving a door open for them and us to get out of the crisis.

Someone may wrong us and we have an enforceable right. We may be in a position where we can put pressure on someone, a situation that some may find amusing. But Allah, Glory be to Him, says:

“And who restrain anger and who pardon the people - and Allah loves the doers of good,” (Aal-i-Imran 3:134)

All this is an invitation to us to be courteous to people by exerting efforts to get them out of their crisis, if possible, as a kind of motivating them to repent or abandon the act they committed.

The government, for example, may introduce new a law on tax evasion or the like, and reconciliation with tax evaders can be an application of the approach of courtesy to avoid imprisonment as long as they have paid their taxes to the state. So, this approach brings its fruits in our daily lives and becomes an incentive for people to pay their taxes, comply with the law, and not return to this crime.

This is considered an application of the divine approach by being kind to people. This approach was revealed by God, Most Courteous and Kind, to motivate His slaves to cling and return to Him, repent, admit guilt, and be committed. In return, God relieves them of what has befallen them out of His courtesy and kindness to them.

It is a call to be kind to people, not to make final judgments about them, accept forgiveness, and forgive. Allah, Glory be to Him, sums

up this in a noble verse that addresses Prophet Muhammed (peace be upon him):

“So pardon them and ask forgiveness for them and consult them in the matter,” (Aal-i-Imran 3:159).

Are we ready to apply this divine approach together with those around us?

Why not?

Motivation to Create Value-Added

I paused while reflecting on the following verses from the Noble Quran:

“And the grazing livestock He has created for you; in them is warmth and [numerous] benefits, and from them you eat,” (An-Nahl 16:5).

“And from their wool, fur and hair is furnishing and enjoyment for a time,” (An-Nahl 16:80).

“Do they not see that We have created for them from what Our hands have made, grazing livestock, and [then] they are their owners? And We have tamed them for them, so some of them they ride, and some of them they eat. And for them therein are [other] benefits and drinks, so will they not be grateful?” (Ya-Sin 36:71-73).

“And indeed, for you in livestock is a lesson. We give you drink from that which is in their bellies, and for you in them are numerous benefits, and from them you eat,” (Al-Mu'minun 23:21).

“And not alike are the two bodies of water. One is fresh and sweet, palatable for drinking, and one is salty and bitter. And from each you eat tender meat and extract ornaments which you wear, and you see the ships plowing through [them] that you

might seek of His bounty; and perhaps you will be grateful,” (Fatir 35:12).

“And [We brought forth] a tree issuing from Mount Sinai which produces oil and food for those who eat,” (Al-Mu’minun 23:20).

“That they may eat of His fruit. And their hands have not produced it, so will they not be grateful?” (Ya-Sin 36:35).

The above verses show the greatness of the Creator Who created His servants, opened for them doors of sustenance, and gave them an example to learn from and expand its application to various aspects of their world.

I frankly found in these verses a kind of motivation for agro-processing.

We consider the livestock, for example, as a source of meat, from which we eat good meat. But God Almighty has encouraged us to expand our understanding to create job opportunities and increase the output through the same livestock, as follows:

- Use its wool in making clothes, furnishings, tents, and carpets, and the like at home.
- Use its fat and milk in making cheese, butter, and the like.
- Use its skins in various leather industries, such as shoes and others.
- Use its meat in other processing industries, such as making luncheon meat, corned beef, and the like.

It appears to be a divine invitation to reflect on Allah's creatures and to widen our understanding. We have to look at the same thing from different angles and all its triple and quadruple dimensions and ask ourselves: What we can benefit from this thing to create job opportunities and we benefit from it.

In our daily life, we often hear about crops that have been left unharvested due to the abundance of output and cheap prices vis-à-vis the cost of harvesting, packaging, distributing, and selling. The motivation for boosting agro-processing is the solution.

Egypt, for example, which God Almighty has gifted it the Nile River and various types of plants, contents itself with selling its agricultural produce in its original form. But the added value from the same output can maximize the benefit.

Despite being quickly perishable, we sell tomatoes fresh and deprive ourselves of a greater economic value. If we learn from the above-mentioned verses, we find that it is better to open industries related to this crop around the lands where it is grown. So the fruits can be transported at a lower cost to the processing areas where other products can be produced, such as sauce, ketchup, jam, dried tomatoes, and others. This provides many job opportunities for categories of workers who have only worked in agriculture, but they can be given other opportunities to work in the processing, packaging, transportation, distribution, etc. Farmers, whose crops are only sold to a limited number of wholesalers, will be allowed to expand the marketing of their product in its new final form after

being processed, and it can, therefore, be exported to the world for foreign currencies. This can make an unprecedented breakthrough for farmers and those around them.

The same applies to the rest of our crops. We must set up processing centers near lands, in the application of the divine approach in motivation by creating an added value.

God Almighty has motivated us to make something out of something else, thus motivating us to make an added value. All that we have to do is to look into the areas of agricultural production and others around us, and think how to localize such food processing industries to change our life, create new job opportunities, raise the standard of living, and increase the national product, boost our exports and change our conditions.

Examples are countless. We have to learn not to sell the product in its original form, but rather seek to transform it, through processing industries, into innovative shapes and final consumer forms that increase its value and maximize our benefit from it.

Why not?

Motivation by Saving from Fear

First of all, fear is a natural innate feeling that sometimes increases and sometimes subsides, affected by the daily-life experience and the acquired culture that may raise the level of fear to a pathological condition, which requires therapeutic, medical, or psychological intervention.

Ponder Allah's saying: **“Indeed, those who have said, ‘Our Lord is Allah’ and then remained on a right course - the angels will descend upon them, [saying], ‘Do not fear and do not grieve but receive good tidings of Paradise, which you were promised,’”** (Fussilat 41:30).

You will find that God Almighty shows us a way to get out of the cycle of fear and sadness, by saying **“our Lord is Allah”** and then remaining on the right course.

As we have previously discussed other forms of **insurance policies**, I see that the above verse offers another **insurance policy against fear and sadness**. It is as if Allah, the Courteous and Kind to His servants, motivates us by giving us the cure and the way out of fear and sorrow. God knows what we will encounter in our lives anxiety or sorrow, so He wanted to be kind to His servants and showed us a way to get out of fear and sadness, clarifying to us that

the true faith in God Almighty and remaining on the right course of obedience to Him help in treating fear or sadness.

Moreover, the Greatest, Glory be to Him, has given good tidings to those who say **“our Lord is Allah”** that angels will descend upon them to dispel any fear or grief because Allah has surrounded them with angels to relieve them of anxieties and bring them out of grief.

Is there any insurance policy, so to speak, greater than this one against fear and grief?

Is there any method to motivate someone to devote themselves to production greater than saving from fear and sadness? Allah says:

“Let them worship the Lord of this House, Who has fed them, [saving them] from hunger and made them safe, [saving them] from fear,” (Quraysh 106:3-4).

Feeling secure is the safety valve for motivation. Nothing good can be expected from a scared or sad person.

Countries should draw from this approach of motivation by paying due attention to sufficient deployment of security forces and having a swift response so that the one who seeks help can find immediately someone to protect them and ensure their security. This can help people get out of fear and devote themselves to production and work. It is an important part of the social contract between people and the government, which provides security and safety and people produce and be good citizens.

Likewise, a father provides his family with security, protects them from fear, and relieves them of any grief to motivate them to devote themselves to studying or working.

Thus, motivation by saving from fear is an important element to motivate humans. The Quran has taught us this. All that we have to do is to realize this value and apply it wherever we are to motivate those around us.

Motivation by Honoring

I paused a while to reflect on the following two Quranic verses:

“And We have certainly honored the children of Adam and carried them on the land and sea and provided for them of the good things and preferred them over much of what We have created, with [definite] preference,” (Al-Isra 17:70); and:

“O mankind, what has deceived you concerning your Lord, the Generous,” (Al-Infitar 82:6).

Here, I found that God Almighty has honored man above all other creatures, as He says: **“And preferred them over much of what We have created, with [definite] preference”**. Honoring is a great grace, for it includes all dignity and loftiness.

God’s honoring of man may be bounty, favor, and generosity from the Creator, as is in His saying: **“Indeed, the most noble of you in the sight of Allah is the most righteous of you. Indeed, Allah is Knowing and Acquainted,”** (Al-Hujurat 49:13). Here, honoring is a prize and gift from God; and winning because of piety, commitment and obedience to God, and the person’s faithfulness in this obedience.

Honoring of man may be also a trial, as in the verse: **“And as for man, when his Lord tries him and [thus] is generous to him and favors him, he says, ‘My Lord has honored me,’”** (Al-Fajr 89:15).

Here, generosity encompasses a trial that should not be a cause of corruption but should lead to more piety and obedience.

In a nutshell, honoring came with a blessing, i.e. honoring is a favor, sustenance, and gift from Allah. But for whom? For the pious. And who is the most honorable of people in the sight of Allah? The most righteous of them.

This appears like a race made available by God for people to compete, regardless of their different shapes and colors. Everyone can be the most honorable in the sight of Allah by their piety.

Thus, honoring is a divine motivation for man to fear God. We have to learn how to motivate those around us by honoring them. As the Creator knows the secrets and drives of His human creature, we have to learn this information and act accordingly in the application of God's words. Allah, the Greatest, has spoken the truth.

Let us fill our lives by honoring those around us. At home, let us honor the hardworking child, the good wife, and the committed daughter. At work, let us honor the hardworking personnel, the creative, those who perfect their jobs, and so on.

Let us make honoring one of our tools for motivating people. Glory be to the Creator Who has motivated man by honoring.

Motivation by Bestowing Favor

I reflected on Allah's saying: **"The path of those upon whom You have bestowed favor, not of those who have evoked [Your] anger or of those who are astray,"** (Al-Fatiha 1:7). I found that this noble verse illustrates a divine approach in motivation by bestowing favor, which is a divine gift by which God motivates His servants. This has prompted me to search for the acts that man is required to do to be worthy of receiving Allah's rewards. So I found this verse:

"And whoever obeys Allah and the Messenger - those will be with the ones upon whom Allah has bestowed favor of the prophets, the steadfast affirmers of truth, the martyrs and the righteous. And excellent are those as companions," (An-Nisa 4:69).

It seems as if bestowing favor motivates people to be religiously committed. I also found this verse: **"Allah does not intend to make difficulty for you, but He intends to purify you and complete His favor upon you that you may be grateful,"** (Al-Ma'ida 5:6). It seems as if Allah motivates us to win His favor through commitment and piety. God Almighty knows that His human creature can be motivated by bounty or by bestowing favor, and teaches that we have to associate our demands from others with prizes and rewards. In other words, there should be a reward for the response, another

for commitment, and that we should not say that commitment is unquestionable.

Humans had understood that in dealing with animals. Man frightens animals with sticks and stimulates them with carrots, or a piece of meat if the animal is a lion. A circus performer would reward lions with pieces of meat and so does a dolphin trainer who rewards dolphins with fish for their performance. Unfortunately, people are still unaware of this theory with understanding and awareness when dealing with the human beings around them.

God has taught us that the reward for commitment with bestowing favor implies motivations for commitment or response.

Let us learn how to benefit from this divine approach in our lives, and to reward those around us for every praiseworthy thing they have done, in the application of the divine approach in motivating by bestowing favor.

Motivation by Colors

Several Quranic verses mentioned a set of colors reflecting states of joy and pleasure that Allah used to delight His servants. After ages, experiments and scientific studies have proven that these colors have a positive effect on man. Look at Allah's saying: **“They said, ‘Call upon your Lord to show us what is her color.’ He said, ‘He says, ‘It is a yellow cow, bright in color - pleasing to the observers,’”** (Al-Baqara 2:69). It gives an impression that Allah, Exalted be He, is teaching us that the yellow color is pleasurable.

Allah also says: **“Upon the inhabitants will be green garments of fine silk and brocade,”** (Al-Insan 76:21). In this verse, Allah uses the green color to motivate His servants, knowing that green is one of the colors that make people feel happy and comfortable.

In our lives, we have to think about how we can use this methodology to motivate those around us.

Since the yellow color pleases observers, its use in packages of products, sports clothes, etc., prepared for sale in markets, for example, can bring pleasure or give inspiring pleasure to consumers or sports fans toward this particular product with its distinctive color that is used as a tool for motivation.

The same applies to the use of the green color in areas where we want to introduce psychological comfort to those in it, such as hospitals and clinics.

These colors imply positive stimulation that creates a desired psychological effect.

The use of colors in the Holy Quran is a manifestation of its miracles and artistic and aesthetic expression that characterize the Quranic style. This style offers psychological connotations that provoke feelings and emotions that arouse man's thoughts and contemplation. Allah says:

“Do you not see that Allah sends down rain from the sky, and We produce thereby fruits of varying colors? And in the mountains are tracts, white and red of varying shades and [some] extremely black,” (Fatir 35:27).

Varying colors provoke contemplating in this universe to find that the distribution of colors has never been absurd. Rather, the movement of the universe with its images and sounds have integrated and connected, with each having its distinctive color.

A color per se is one of Allah's signs. Allah says:

“And [He has subjected] whatever He multiplied for you on the earth of varying colors. Indeed in that is a sign for a people who remember,” (An-Nahl 16:13).

Among Allah's signs also is the varying colors and tongues of people. Allah says:

“And of His signs is the creation of the heavens and the earth and the diversity of your languages and your colors. Indeed in that are signs for those of knowledge,” (Ar-Rum 30:22).

The word “color” has been mentioned in noble verses that tackle the diversity of colors of people, animals, fruits and crops, and souls, offering an invitation to contemplate colors and to think about the greatness of the Creator, the accuracy of the Maker, and the beauty of this universe.

Here I present some connotations of colors, as I saw them in the Quran. For example, the white color connotes serenity, purity, guidance, love, goodness, truth, and arouses noble human feelings. We also find the significance of the white color in the Holy Quran in:

- Describing the believers: **“But as for those whose faces will turn white, [they will be] within the mercy of Allah. They will abide therein eternally,”** (Aal-i-Imran 4:107).
- Describing the hand of Prophet Moses (Musa) (peace be upon him) which was white without diseases, as if it was a bright light that shone at night. Allah says: **“And he drew out his hand; thereupon it was white for the observers,”** (Ash-Shu’ara 26:33); **“And put your hand into the opening of your garment [at the breast]; it will come out white without disease,”** (An-Naml 27:12); and: **“Insert your hand into the opening of your garment; it will come out white, without disease,”** (Al-Qasas 28:32).

- Describing the drinking vessels of the dwellers of Paradise. Allah says: **“There will be circulated among them a cup [of wine] from a flowing spring, White and delicious to the drinkers,”** (As-Saffat 37:45-46).
- Signifying the good end of man: **“On the Day [some] faces will turn white and [some] faces will turn black,”** (Aal-i-Imran 3:106).

The green color has also connotations in the Noble Quran. This particular color is mentioned several times in the Quran, for it is the secret of the life spirit; the secret of freshness and beauty; it is in trees, plants, and fruits; it is in the bedding, clothes, and rugs, and so on. Of these verses are the following:

- **“They will be adorned therein with bracelets of gold and will wear green garments of fine silk and brocade, reclining therein on adorned couches. Excellent is the reward, and good is the resting place,”** (Al-Kahf 18:31).
- **“[He said], ‘Joseph, O man of truth, explain to us about seven fat cows eaten by seven [that were] lean, and seven green spikes [of grain] and others [that were] dry,’”** (Yusuf 12:46).
- **“Reclining on green cushions and beautiful fine carpets,”** (Ar-Rahman 55:76).
- **“Upon the inhabitants will be green garments of fine silk and brocade. And they will be adorned with bracelets of silver, and their Lord will give them a purifying drink,”** (Al-Insan 76:21).

- **“Do you not see that Allah has sent down rain from the sky and the earth becomes green? Indeed, Allah is Subtle and Acquainted,”** (Al-Hajj 22:63).

Also, the yellow color, as explained above, as well as the blue, red, black, and others are mentioned in the Quran.

The point here is that mentioning and referring to colors is a divine method to motivate someone to accept something. Therefore, we must teach marketing professionals to use research findings that tackled the effect of colors. We should also be careful about choosing suitable colors for everything, including marketing for instance, based on what has come to our knowledge that God - Glory be to Him - has used colors in Quranic verses as a mechanism to make things attractive to people.

Let us choose the best colors and learn from the colors mentioned in the Quran a lesson in our lives to color things around us.

Why not?

Motivation by Providing Roles

I reflected on Allah's words to Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him): **“And consult them in the matter,”** (Aal-i-Imran 3:159).

The verse reveals a divine approach to motivating man by consultation. A decision that is based on consultation gets everybody motivated to put it into effect because they have participated in the decision-making.

Thus, we have to know that a human soul can be qualified to respond if it is given a role to carry out, and this will motivate it to be committed.

I do not view consultation as just a method only. My imagination and contemplation allow me to go further. Consultation means providing those around you with roles to motivate them to assure their presence, commitment, and positive participation.

I mention here a story from my life. When I was a student in Grade 10, some colleagues tempted me to stealthily exit the school and go to the cinema. I did and went with them. The next day, the school principal summoned me and she knew what I had done. Surprisingly, she decided to grant me the title of a discipline supervisor at the school, even though the role should have been held by Grade 12 students.

Since then, I became one of the most committed students in terms of dress, attendance, and ethics.

What the school principal, may God have mercy on her, did with me was that she provided me with a role, thus turning negatives into positives.

That is why I view the Quranic phrase “**and consult them**” in a broader sense that denotes the giving of roles to others. The one who has a role in doing something is a stakeholder in that matter and therefore becomes keen to preserve and perfect it. But the one who feels disregarded and neglected is expected to be resentful over the thing that they should do and they would neither care nor complete their work as it hopefully should be.

Let us learn from this divine approach to consult and provide roles to others because the human soul is honored by God (Glory be to Him) and whoever is honored by God does not accept anything other than honoring. The least of honoring is to listen, consult and enable others to perform roles.

I can go further in my reflection that consultation does not require the person to be in an encounter, meeting, or council. It could rather be by listening to the other opinion. In this way, we would give a role to the one who has an opinion. Freedom of opinion is a kind of human expression, which in turn is a kind of consultation. Allah’s words: “**And whose affair is [determined by] consultation among themselves,**” (Ash-Shura 42:38) give an impression that He, Glory be to Him, wanted to tell us that every person has their own opinion

and their expression of it gives them a feeling of assuming a role. Even if the person's opinion is not effective, they will be positive in committing themselves to what has been decided. This is because the person is not excluded from the opinion-sharing process, no matter how different the final decision might be from their own.

The freedom of opinion, in some verses, applies to the freedom of belief and the choice of religion, as in Allah's saying: **“For you is your religion, and for me is my religion,”** (Al-Kafirun 109:6). If this is the case with one's faith, so what about expressing an opinion on everyday life and social affairs in the form of expressions, voting, community dialogues, or listening or communication. It is primarily consultation among ourselves. It motivates people to think in the interest of their country and community and to be positive, and the positive person is the one who builds. But the negative one is resentful and destructive.

All of this is applicable among members of the family and community, company employees, and everyone who is involved in joint work or on any broader level. This is a method that God Almighty has informed us about it. It leads to motivating subordinates to respond to their boss because they have a role and are involved in the consultation that has led to success. It is sufficient for them to feel that they are partners in success. This is a drive for them to achieve their goal.

Motivation by Evoking Angels

I paused while reflecting on several Quranic verses in which Allah, Exalted be He, promised either to send down or provide some people with angels. I tried to collect some of these verses in an attempt to understand: How can I consider them as a kind of motivation by angelic support? How can we learn from this motivation and apply it to our lives?

In the beginning, I found this verse: **“Indeed, those who have said, ‘Our Lord is Allah’ and then remained on a right course - the angels will descend upon them, [saying], ‘Do not fear and do not grieve but receive good tidings of Paradise, which you were promised,’”** (Fussilat 41:30). In this verse, Allah has promised those who declared their worship of Allah and further stood straight and steadfast that angels would descend on them to remove their fear and grief and give them good tidings of Paradise.

I found the noble verse: **“[Remember] when you asked help of your Lord, and He answered you, ‘Indeed, I will reinforce you with a thousand from the angels, following one another,’”** (Al-Anfal 8:9), which teaches us that the believers in their war asked help of God Almighty, and He answered them and reinforced them with thousand angels.

Also the verses: **“And already had Allah given you victory at [the battle of] Badr while you were few in number. Then fear Allah; perhaps you will be grateful. [Remember] when you said to the believers, ‘Is it not sufficient for you that your Lord should reinforce you with three thousand angels sent down? Yes, if you remain patient and conscious of Allah and the enemy come upon you [attacking] in rage, your Lord will reinforce you with five thousand angels having marks [of distinction],”** (Aal-i-Imran 3:123-125) illustrate how God Almighty helped the believers and provided them with marked angels - that is, angels having clear signs - so that they should achieve victory.

Likewise, the following verses show how the angels’ reinforcement supported the believers:

“[Remember] when your Lord inspired to the angels, ‘I am with you, so strengthen those who have believed. I will cast terror into the hearts of those who disbelieved, so strike [them] upon the necks and strike from them every fingertip,” (Al-Anfal 8:12).

“Then Allah sent down His tranquillity upon His Messenger and upon the believers and sent down soldiers angels whom you did not see and punished those who disbelieved. And that is the recompense of the disbelievers,” (At-Tawba 9:26).

I saw in all of the above verses motivation for faith, steadfastness, uprightness, and adherence to commandments of God, Who motivates

His servants by sending down angels to help the believers. What a wonderful motivation.

In our lives, we can learn from this method of motivation. We may not have angels soldiers, but we may have human soldiers. For example, a country may motivate other countries to further cooperate, enter into alliance, and make integration among them. This motivation may take the form of military and defense support, if necessary.

The gist here is that there should be communication, involvement, and interaction with the event. If the angels have a role in dispelling the fear and grief of those who are afraid or sad, so we can keep in touch with those around us and share their feeling of pain, be with them, relieve their suffering, and try to alleviate their pain and distress.

We can also communicate with those around us to remedy victims of injustice and support them in the event they are exposed to crises or aggression from anyone. This is a motivation for them to establish a good, permanent relationship between them and us, based on fraternity, cooperation and empathy. What a beautiful relationship by which nations go in the right direction and human relations stabilize.

Let us learn how to be qualified to win the angelic support. Let us learn from the same approach how to follow this divine approach as much as we can, according to our human capabilities, to motivate those around us.

Motivation by Respecting the Word

I paused at the noble verse: **“O you who have believed, fulfill [all] contracts,”** (Al-Ma’ida 5:1) in which Allah asks us to fulfill contracts. I wondered whether the word “contracts” here has the literal meaning of the term or has a broader sense? Respecting one’s word is but a kind of fulfillment of a contract between the person who makes it and the one who is promised.

If God, Glory be to Him, has commanded His servants to respect contracts, I see that He has clarified the reward for that in the verses about the reward of the truthful. Here are some verses as examples:

“That Allah may reward the truthful for their truth,” (Al-Ahzab 33:24).

“Allah will say, ‘This is the Day when the truthful will benefit from their truthfulness.’ For them are gardens [in Paradise] beneath which rivers flow, wherein they will abide forever, Allah being pleased with them, and they with Him. That is the great attainment,” (Al-Ma’ida 5:119).

“Righteousness is not that you turn your faces toward the east or the west, but [true] righteousness is [in] one who believes in Allah, the Last Day, the angels, the Book, and the prophets and gives wealth, in spite of love for it, to relatives, orphans, the needy, the traveler, those who ask [for help], and for freeing slaves;

[and who] establishes prayer and gives zakah; [those who] fulfill their promise when they promise; and [those who] are patient in poverty and hardship and during battle. Those are the ones who have been true, and it is those who are the righteous,” (Al-Baqara 2:177).

Given that the contract is an offer and acceptance, similarly respecting the word comes from the promiser to the promised and is regarded as a contract from my point of view.

Allah’s motivation for us to respect contracts is meant to ensure the stability of life, encourage people to work and produce, and promote peace. By fulfilling contracts, transactions will be stable, issues and disputes will be settled, and life will be calmer.

Fulfillment of one’s contract motivates more work and production. The one who fulfills their contracts - be them a person, a company, or even a government - motivates people to deal with them, because their promise will be primarily respected and fulfilled. So the safety required for transactions and investment can be available with the fulfillment of contracts, and this will motivate people to deal with this person who fulfills the contracts.

With the fulfillment of contracts comes peace. How many wars have been waged due to breaching agreements and armistice between two parties? If each side had respected their word, no wars would have been waged and the world would have avoided destruction and victims.

Respecting one's word is also a principle that we must raise our children on at home and school. We must not allow them to lie or to break a promise. This is the beginning.

It is the duty of any official to respect their word and the state should present the official as a role model for society. Governments that are committed to their contracts and laws teach their people a lesson in respecting the word. The educational approach adopted by any state must be built on that principle so that the young can grow up on that value. The state should also highlight the examples and cases that are role models for people.

Thus, Allah desires for us stability, calmness, living in peace, achievement, production and happiness, by motivating us to fulfill our contracts and respect our word.

How wonderful is the Greatest, Exalted be He, Who wants happiness for His servants, motivating them with certain mechanisms and all that we have to do is to pick up them and act accordingly. In this way, our lives will be on the right track and we will achieve happiness and stability for ourselves and those around us.

Why not?

Motivation by Showing Appreciation

The one who reflects on the Book of Allah, Glory be to Him, always pauses at the word *Shakur* (Appreciative), one of Allah's Noble Names. I view it as a divine approach for motivation. When Allah says: **“Allah is appreciative and Knowing,”** (Al-Baqara 2:158), this means that He follows, knows, and then appreciates everyone who does a good deed. Many verses came to this effect, including:

“Indeed, He is Forgiving and Appreciative,” (Fatir 35:30).

“Indeed, our Lord is Forgiving and Appreciative,” (Fatir 35:34).

“And ever is Allah Appreciative and Knowing,” (An-Nisa 4:147).

It is an indication that Allah motivates us ‘to do’, for He is **All-Knowing** and **Appreciative** of what we do. Whoever is appreciated by God wins this world and all that is in it.

Moreover, Allah teaches us the virtue of appreciation and enjoins us to be grateful, promising whoever is appreciative with great rewards. Allah says:

“Allah will reward the grateful,” (Aal-i-Imran 3:144); and:
“And we will reward the grateful,” (Aal-i-Imran 3:145).

Many other verses invite us to this value, including:

“Then eat of what Allah has provided for you [which is] lawful and good. And be grateful for the favor of Allah, if it is [indeed] Him that you worship,” (An-Nahl 16:114).

“So seek from Allah provision and worship Him and be grateful to Him. To Him you will be returned,” (Al-Ankabut 29:17).

“Work, O family of David, in gratitude,” (Saba 34:13).

“And whoever is grateful is grateful for [the benefit of] himself,” (Luqman 31:12).

God has even made the value of *shukr* (gratefulness, appreciation, thankfulness) a key to the continuation of His blessings for His Servants, as is in the verse:

“And it is He who subjected the sea for you to eat from it tender meat and to extract from it ornaments which you wear. And you see the ships plowing through it, and [He subjected it] that you may seek of His bounty; and perhaps you will be grateful,” (An-Nahl 16:14).

Allah has also made this value a cause for fending off suffering and torment: **“What would Allah do with your punishment if you are grateful and believe? And ever is Allah Appreciative and Knowing,”** (An-Nisa 4:147); and a cause for rescuing from lethal fates: **“Indeed, We sent upon them a storm of stones, except the family of Lot - We saved them before dawn, As favor from us. Thus do We reward he who is grateful,”** (Al-Qamar 54:34-35).

God Almighty knows that a few of His servants will be grateful, so He says: **“And few of My servants are grateful,”** (Saba 34:13). But unfortunately, most people are not grateful. Allah says: **“And Allah is full of bounty to the people, but most of the people do not show gratitude,”** (Al-Baqara 2:243).

This sums up the divine approach for motivation by being grateful and appreciative, i.e. by rewarding, appreciating and motivating others to be appreciative. This can be achieved when we learn how to be grateful.

Gratefulness is the way to be among the few who are grateful servants. This can make us among the distinguished on the Day of Account and be among the few whom God Almighty rewards. So, let us hasten to be among the distinguished few who are grateful.

Likewise, let us learn in our lives to thank God Almighty, people, every diligent person, everyone who does a good deed, and everyone who offers us something so that we motivate those around us with appreciation.

Gratitude is one of the highest levels of appreciation. When a boss thanks an employee, this means the boss invites the employee to exert more effort. When a father thanks his diligent son, this will motivate the son to do more effort and keep this success. Also, when the state appreciates its citizens for the achievements they have done, it motivates them to do more and more.

Gratitude is one of Allah's attributes. Do we not like to have an attribute of Allah?

Do we not like to be among the appreciative, who are grateful to the people and God? Do we not like to be among those whom God Almighty will reward?

Lord, register us among the grateful.

Lord, give us the reward of the grateful.

Lord, make me a grateful servant.

Motivation by Success

God, Glory be to Him, has fashioned man with three elements, mind, body, and soul. The noblest of these three elements is the **soul**, which is a breath from God. The *nafs* or *ruh* (soul, self, ego, psyche), according to some of its designations stated in the Holy Quran, has several cases:

1. ***An-Nafs al-Ammara* (the soul that incites evil)**, which enjoins man to do evil deeds. Allah says, reporting what the wife of Al-Aziz said in the Joseph (Yusuf) parable: **“And I do not acquit myself. Indeed, the soul is a persistent enjoiner of evil, except those upon which my Lord has mercy. Indeed, my Lord is Forgiving and Merciful,”** (Yusuf 12:53).
2. ***An-Nafs al-Lawwama* (the reproachful soul)**, which regrets doing sins and therefore reproaches itself. Allah says: **“And I swear by the reproaching soul [to the certainty of resurrection],”** (Al-Qiyama 75:2).
3. ***An-Nafs al-Mutma'inna* (the reassured soul)**, which feels secure and is not provoked by fear or grief and it reaches the level of reassurance, comfort and complete obedience to the commands of God. It is the soul that is cherished by divine providence. Allah says: **“[To the righteous it will be said], ‘O reassured soul,’”** (Al-Fajr 89:27).

4. *An-Nafs ar-Radiya* (the well-pleased soul), which is content with what has been given to it. Allah says: “[To the righteous it will be said], ‘O reassured soul, Return to your Lord, well-pleased and pleasing [to Him],’” (Al-Fajr 89:27, 28).
5. *An-Nafs al-Mardiya* (the pleasing soul), which God is pleased with. Allah says: “[To the righteous it will be said], ‘O reassured soul, Return to your Lord, well-pleased and pleasing [to Him],’” (Al-Fajr 89:27, 28).
6. *An-Nafs al-Mulhama* (the inspired soul), which Allah has inspired. Allah says: “And [by] the soul and He who proportioned it, And inspired it [with discernment of] its wickedness and its righteousness, He has succeeded who purifies it,” (Ash-Shams 91:7-9).

Tazkiya (the Arabic name for the verb “purifies”) means purification. In Arabic, it means an increase. The purification of the soul means to purify it from every unpleasant matter and increase it with good attributes.

In this sense, the Quranic verses enjoin the purification of the soul. In the Holy Quran, Allah has sworn on the success of the one who purifies their soul, and on the loss of the one who neglects it. Allah says:

“By the sun and its brightness (1) And [by] the moon when it follows it (2) And [by] the day when it displays it (3) And [by] the night when it covers it (4) And [by] the sky and He who

constructed it (5) And [by] the earth and He who spread it (6) And [by] the soul and He who proportioned it (7) And inspired it [with discernment of] its wickedness and its righteousness, (8) He has succeeded who purifies it, (9) And he has failed who instills it [with corruption], (10)” (Ash-Shams 91:1-10).

The phrase “**And he has failed who instills it [with corruption]**” means the one who lost their way by choosing misguidance and not guidance, opting for sin, and giving up disobedience to God Almighty. **Purification** is a way to Paradise. Allah says:

“But as for he who feared the position of his Lord and prevented the soul from [unlawful] inclination, Then indeed, Paradise will be [his] refuge,” (An-Nazi’at 79:40, 41).

As long as humans love the best, they should work on purifying and educating the soul. This is because the soul may show the same symptoms that affect the body. So, the soul needs constant special care and follow-up to increase its goodness the same as the body grows.

Man is a creature that is equally inclined to good and evil, guidance and misguidance and can distinguish between what is good and what is evil, and can direct the self to either of them. This potential is expressed in the Quran by the term *ilham* (inspiration), as in the verse: **“And [by] the soul and He who proportioned it, And inspired it [with discernment of] its wickedness and its righteousness,”** (Ash-Shams 91:7, 8), and *hidaya* (showing [guidance]) **“And have shown him the two ways?”** (Al-Balad 90:10).

Whoever uses this power to purify their soul and causes their good instincts to overpower the evil ones will succeed. But whoever dims, hides and weakens this power, will fail. Allah says: **“He has succeeded who purifies it, And he has failed who instills it [with corruption],”** (Ash-Shams 91: 9, 10).

Means of soul-purification:

1. Reflect on the Quran, for it is the purifier of hearts. If the heart has been purified, the soul will be purified too. Allah says: **“[This is] a blessed Book which We have revealed to you, [O Muhammad], that they might reflect upon its verses and that those of understanding would be reminded,”** (Sad 38:29).
2. Repent to God Almighty, Who says: **“And turn to Allah in repentance, all of you, O believers, that you might succeed,”** (An-Nur 24:31).
3. Bring oneself to account (personal accountability). The following verse indicates that personal accountability is compulsory: **“O you who have believed, fear Allah. And let every soul look to what it has put forth for tomorrow - and fear Allah. Indeed, Allah is Acquainted with what you do,”** (Al-Hashr 59:18).
4. Be patient and have *yaqin* (certainty) in your Lord. With patience, one can overcome the desires of their self, withhold these desires from what is forbidden and turn them into acts of obedience. Allah says: **“And We made from among them leaders guiding**

by Our command when they were patient and [when] they were certain of Our signs,” (As-Sajda 32:24).

In general, it is through obedience and good manners we purify ourselves. But through disobedience and the like, we move away from the purification of the soul. Based on this, the divine motivation encourages obedience and commitment by elucidating, teaching, making things understandable, and demonstrating man’s ability to direct themselves to good and to stay away from evil. This motivates the person to take care of themselves and be keen to work on preserving, reforming and directing their souls to good manners, i.e. purifying it.

We must learn from this approach, given that we live and deal in a diverse environment, i.e. with our families, at work, and with neighbors. We have to help them to purify their souls, and we purify our souls while we deal with them. Therefore, we can set an example for them.

It is a divine approach for motivating people to purify their souls. I see it as motivation for success. Here, success comes as a reward from God Almighty to encourage us to purify our souls. He who has succeeded will win the good of this world and the Hereafter. Let us purify our souls so that we will be among the successful, by Allah’s permission. Let us motivate those around us in the family, at work and in our community to purify their souls. How best is the sowing and how best is the harvest. Excellent is the seed and excellent is the harvest.

Motivation for Protecting Oneself from Enviars

Allah the Creator, Glory be to Him, knows that some humans envy, and some even have more powers than others in this to the extent that one may be envied by themselves.

Given that we are His creation and His servants, and He is the best guardian, Allah (Exalted be He) wanted to protect us from the evil of the envious and even from the evil of ourselves that we may envy ourselves. Allah says:

“And why did you, when you entered your garden, not say, ‘What Allah willed [has occurred]; there is no power except in Allah?’” (Al-Kahf 18:39).

This was a lesson from Allah to His servants as mentioned in a Quranic parable about a man who entered his garden, admired it, and envied himself. Then Allah’s command came to it and it became like wildfire. Allah says:

“And he entered his garden while he was unjust to himself. He said, ‘I do not think that this will perish – ever. And I do not think the Hour will occur. And even if I should be brought back to my Lord, I will surely find better than this as a return.’ His companion said to him while he was conversing with him, ‘Have you disbelieved in He who created you from

dust and then from a sperm-drop and then proportioned you [as] a man? But as for me, He is Allah, my Lord, and I do not associate with my Lord anyone. And why did you, when you entered your garden, not say, ‘What Allah willed [has occurred]; there is no power except in Allah’? Although you see me less than you in wealth and children, It may be that my Lord will give me [something] better than your garden and will send upon it a calamity from the sky, and it will become a smooth, dusty ground, Or its water will become sunken [into the earth], so you would never be able to seek it.’ And his fruits were encompassed [by ruin], so he began to turn his hands about [in dismay] over what he had spent on it, while it had collapsed upon its trellises, and said, ‘Oh, I wish I had not associated with my Lord anyone,’” (Al-Kahf 18:35-42).

The divine motivation here was by giving the example and the method of prevention, to motivate us to say **“What Allah willed [has occurred]; there is no power except in Allah”** whenever we look at something whether we own it or not, to protect this thing from our potential envy.

Allah, Most High, also equipped us with *Al-Mu’awwidhatan*, which translates as the Two Protectors or the Verses of Refuge, in reference to the last two short suras of the Quran, i.e. Al-Falaq and An-Nas (113, 114). Allah says:

“Say, ‘I seek refuge in the Lord of daybreak (1) From the evil of that which He created (2) And from the evil of darkness when

it settles (3) And from the evil of the blowers in knots (4) And from the evil of an envier when he envies,” (5) (Al-Falaq 113).

“Say, ‘I seek refuge in the Lord of mankind, (1) The Sovereign of mankind. (2) The God of mankind, (3) From the evil of the retreating whisperer - (4) Who whispers [evil] into the breasts of mankind - (5) From among the jinn and mankind,’” (6) (An-Nas 114).

It is as if God, Glory be to Him, is inviting us to become more and more cautious while we are dealing with others and to seek refuge in Him from the enviers, just as we seek refuge in Him from the devil - be he a human or a jinn.

Allah has also taught us in His Book not to narrate everything that happens to us, even to the closest of relatives, because if this will not a reason for their envy it might be a reason for their plotting. This is stated in the parable of Prophet Joseph (Yusuf), peace be upon him, when he saw a dream and narrated it to his father, Prophet Jacob (Ya’qub). Look at what Jacob said to Joseph: **“He said, ‘O my son, do not relate your vision to your brothers or they will contrive against you a plan. Indeed Satan, to man, is a manifest enemy,”** (Yusuf 12:5).

Such things show us the mechanisms of motivation to protect ourselves from envy. We must learn from this how to motivate our children and our loved ones to protect themselves from the plots of the plotters and the envy of the enviers.

We have to read the Quranic parables, and perhaps real-life stories. The Creator, Glory be to Him, knows that for a person to be motivated in such matters, they must be told about real stories; otherwise, they will not respond to your call on them to immunize themselves against envy. May Allah be sufficient for us all against the evil of an envier when he envies and the plot of a plotter. Say, Amen!

We learn from this, while we deal with those around us, how to motivate our children to protect themselves from envy and to seek refuge in Allah from the evil of every envier.

Likewise, we learn that a person may be a danger to themselves, as they may be a danger to others. We also learn that every person is obligated to discipline, restrain it, and purify their souls with *dhikr* (remembrance of Allah), charity, and so on.

We also learn that we have to teach our children to love good for others, and not to wish the disappearance of good from them and that they can wish the same for themselves. This is a basic education on which societies must be built to compete in goodness and development.

We also learn from this that we have to utilize the available means to achieve something and not just wish for it, and reflect on the Quran and consider the verses that have a secret. We are required to use these verses, such as *Al-Mu'awwadhatan* and many others that include secrets for man, to protect ourselves.

This also motivates us to train ourselves in loving goodness for people. What a great manner that God (Glory be to Him) has called us to observe. Our religion teaches us that no one becomes a true believer until he likes for his brother what he likes for himself.

It is the sound foundation for the structure on which nations are built and rise. So, we must pay attention to it and take it as one of our goals in life and in educating our children.

Allah, Exalted be He, motivates us to reflect on the Quran, and not just to look at the literal meaning of its text, and to learn from it what can help us put our life on the right path.

Motivation by Preserving God's Favors

I paused at the noble verse: **“And if you should count the favors of Allah, you could not enumerate them,”** (An-Nahl 16:18). Truly, God Almighty has spoken the truth.

Look at yourselves to see the great favors that God has bestowed upon you in everything. You can relatively broaden your view to include those around your family to see more and more favors. Then compare yourself with the rest of the people who have been afflicted with diseases or disabilities and some of them might have been born as such. You will come to know more and more about the great favors that Allah has bestowed upon you.

I continued my reflection on this subject and I found another verse that, I think, is complementary to the first. I tackled that verse above. It is the Almighty's saying: **“And why did you, when you entered your garden, not say, ‘What Allah willed [has occurred]; there is no power except in Allah?’”** (Al-Kahf 18:39). The verse came in the context of one of the Quranic parables mentioned in the Sura of Al-Kahf, in which Allah tells us the story of a man who entered his garden and found it productive and in the best shape. It was a bounty bestowed by God upon him. But the man's attitude was ungrateful and he came out of it believing that it could never perish. But God's

command came to ruin it. Hence came the lesson learned from this verse - that is, we should not attribute a favor to ourselves, but rather to God Almighty, and that we must utter the noble verse on every favor that God has bestowed upon us. This is because the perishing of Allah's favors is possible. This is consistent with the verse: **“And We will surely test you with something of fear and hunger and a loss of wealth and lives and fruits, but give good tidings to the patient,”** (Al-Baqara 2:155). The phrase **“but give good tidings to the patient”** means those who may have one of Allah's favors on them declined. Allah also says: **“But Allah will reward the grateful,”** (Aal-i-Imran 3:144), i.e. those who are grateful to their Lord for the favors He had bestowed upon them before He later removed these favors. This is a level higher than that of patience.

Then a Prophetic Hadith confirms to us that God's favors may decline and that besides the supplication **“What Allah willed [has occurred]; there is no power except in Allah”**, Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) taught us this supplication: **“O Allah! I seek refuge in You from the withholding of Your favor, the decline of the good health You have given, the suddenness of Your vengeance and from all forms of Your wrath.”**

In a nutshell, the divine motivation that can be learned here is how to preserve the favors bestowed by Allah, Who has given us the antidote in the verse **“What Allah willed [has occurred]; there is no power except in Allah”**, as well as in the call to be grateful and to draw people's attention to God's favors in the application

of Allah's saying: **“If you are grateful, I will surely increase you [in favor]”** (Ibrahim 14:7). Gratefulness does not only preserve favors but increases them as well. Then God Almighty revealed to His Prophet (peace be upon him) who taught us the supplication of preserving Allah's favors. This is a kind of motivation for preserving such favors.

Let us teach everyone around us at home, work and community how to see and feel God's favors, train our tongues to say **“What Allah willed [has occurred]; there is no power except in Allah”**, and repeat the prophet's supplication in our prayers.

The state is required to educate its citizens on the preservation of God's favors, i.e. the state's assets and the like, to take care of them.

All favors of God require gratitude and should be attributed to Him. Whoever attributes to and thanks God for His favors will be preserving them. God Almighty has instructed us in the Quran, saying: **“Call upon Me; I will respond to you,”** (Ghafir 40:60), and our Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) has also taught us the answered supplications.

May God preserve what He has bestowed upon us all. And we say: **“What Allah willed [has occurred]; there is no power except in Allah.”**

Motivation by Authorization

Allah, Exalted be He, has designated Himself with countless attributes, such as *Khaliq* (Creator), *Raziq* (Provider, Sustainer), *Shafi* (Healer), *Sattar* (Concealing), and other infinite divine capabilities - Glory be to Him.

Rizq (provision or sustenance) is one of the things that everyone knows that it is only God Who provides to His creation. This has been affirmed in many Quranic verses, perhaps the clearest of them is Allah's saying: **“And in the heaven is your provision and whatever you are promised,”** (Adh-Dhariyat 51:22). Out of Allah's motivation of His servants, He has authorized - figuratively of course - man to spend out of what God has provided them. So, Allah grants man the designation of *raziq* (sustainer, provider) to motivate one to spend and give out. By giving a person the attribute of a sustainer/provider, God motivates them to spend and give. This grants divine powers to the person as a motivation to do good. This meaning is confirmed by the Quranic verses:

“But provide for them with it and clothe them and speak to them words of appropriate kindness,” (An-Nisa 4:5).

“Then provide for them [something] out of the estate and speak to them words of appropriate kindness,” (An-Nisa 4:8).

It is the first time for me to have realized that when a person spends from what Allah has provided for them, they will be in a state in which God has transferred them from a mere creature that receives sustenance to another who provides sustenance, which is one of Allah's powers. It is as if Allah, Glory be to Him, motivates us by making us understand that when we are in a state of spending, we exercise one of God's powers. This encompasses honoring for us and glorification of what we do. So, do we like to have the right to exercise some features of the powers of the Creator? For Allah is the highest attribute.

It is the method of divine motivation in which God Almighty gives some of His authority, like provision, to one of His servants. So, we have to learn from this motivation and rejoice for what God has given us.

Allah, Glory be to Him, was able to create us as creatures that wait for someone to spend on us and need someone to support us. But as Allah has created us and honored us with the attribute of being in the position of the spender (*raziq*), so to speak, does not this motivate us to be generous in spending and feeding while we are providers, and to provide from what we love to attain the good reward from Allah.

Given that God, Glory be to Him, has granted us the powers of sustenance as explicitly stated in a Quranic text, then I think that granting or authorizing powers to someone is a divine motivation method. Therefore, the matter is not limited to the power of provision. For examples, we take:

The power of the Ever-Pardoning (*al-afawwu*) when we forgive

The power of the Seeing (*al-basir*) when we look at those around us.

The power of the Appreciative (*ash-shakur*) when we thank those around us.

The power of the Bestower (*al-wahhab*) when we grant those around us, and so on.

The granting of authority by God to His creature, man, includes motivation by honoring to indicate the greatness of what a person could do of good deeds or comply with God's commands. It is as if Allah supports and tells people: Go ahead and enjoy the powers you have, thank God for making you in this position while being authorized to have these powers, and be sure to keep it up so as not to lose this authorization.

We have to learn from this approach a way to delegate powers to those around us. Let us teach our children from an early age how to give and shoulder responsibility. Let us learn that motivation comes with authorization. Giving functional powers to those around us makes them assume responsibility, build their character, and be able to make decisions. It is a necessary motivation that one has to know and act upon it.

Likewise, the son who does not know the value of the money he spends and demands his family to increase his pocket money; if his father gives him the authority to manage the financial affairs of their

family by allowing him to manage the family budget and asking him to fulfill the requirements of all family members, this could correct his behavior. This could motivate him to stop his negative practices.

Giving the employee who is accustomed to coming late the authority to supervise the timesheet could motivate him to be among the early birds.

The player who usually fails to join the team exercises; if the coach gives him the task of helping him in training the team, this could motivate the player to be one of the most committed players to training.

Thus, powers generate commitment and balance in action. This is a divine approach of motivation that we must strive to activate wherever we are in our daily lives.

In short, if we have to learn from this divine method of motivation by authorization, then we must not forget to exercise the authorized agent powers bestowed by God upon us. This could be a key to Paradise, God willing.

Motivation by Education

Many Quranic verses indicate how Allah, Exalted be He, has taught His servants, whether directly or through the prophets and messengers who, in turn, had taught their peoples. For example, Allah says:

“Taught man that which he knew not,” (Al-Alaq 96:5).

“And Allah has extracted you from the wombs of your mothers not knowing a thing, and He made for you hearing and vision and intellect that perhaps you would be grateful,” (An-Nahl 16:78).

“It is He who made the sun a shining light and the moon a derived light and determined for it phases - that you may know the number of years and account [of time]. Allah has not created this except in truth. He details the signs for a people who know,” (Yunus 10:5).

“And We have made the night and day two signs, and We erased the sign of the night and made the sign of the day visible that you may seek bounty from your Lord and may know the number of years and the account [of time]. And everything We have set out in detail,” (Al-Isra 17:12).

“Created man, [And] taught him eloquence,” (Ar-Rahman 55:3, 4).

We find that the teaching from Allah to His servants takes the form of informing them of the benefits of things to urge them to work with, innovate, and earn a living from this knowledge, as in several verses, including:

- Teaching them food industries: **“And from the fruits of the palm trees and grapevines you take intoxicant and good provision. Indeed in that is a sign for a people who reason,”** (An-Nahl 16:67).

- Clothing and furniture industry: **“And Allah has made for you from your homes a place of rest and made for you from the hides of the animals tents which you find light on your day of travel and your day of encampment; and from their wool, fur and hair is furnishing and enjoyment for a time,”** (An-Nahl 16:80).

- Cosmetics and adornment industries: **“He sends down from the sky, rain, and valleys flow according to their capacity, and the torrent carries a rising foam. And from that [ore] which they heat in the fire, desiring adornments and utensils, is a foam like it,”** (Ar-Ra’d 13:17).

- Military and heavy industry: **“We have already sent Our messengers with clear evidences and sent down with them the Scripture and the balance that the people may maintain [their affairs] in justice. And We sent down iron, wherein is great military might and benefits for the people, and so that Allah may make evident those who support Him and His messengers unseen. Indeed, Allah is Powerful and Exalted in Might,”** (Al-Hadid 57:25).

Returning to where we started, there was specific teaching that Allah taught His prophets and messengers to deliver it to their folks. Allah says:

“And He taught Adam the names - all of them,” (Al-Baqara 2:31).

Likewise, about Prophet Solomon (Sulayman) (peace be upon him), Allah says:

“And Solomon inherited David. He said, ‘O people, we have been taught the language of birds, and we have been given from all things. Indeed, this is evident bounty,’” (An-Naml 27:16).

Allah taught Prophet Noah (Nuh) (peace be upon him) the **shipbuilding industry**, saying:

“So We inspired to him, ‘Construct the ship under Our observation, and Our inspiration,’” (Al-Mu’minun 23:27).

Allah taught Prophet Abraham (Ibrahim) and his son Ishmael (Ismail) (peace be upon them) the construction industry, saying:

“And [mention] when Abraham was raising the foundations of the House and [with him] Ishmael, [saying], ‘Our Lord, accept [this] from us. Indeed You are the Hearing, the Knowing,’” (Al-Baqara 2:127).

Allah taught Dhul-Qarnayn the **dam building**, saying:

“Bring me sheets of iron” - until, when he had leveled [them] between the two mountain walls, he said, ‘Blow [with bellows],’

until when he had made it [like] fire, he said, ‘Bring me, that I may pour over it molten copper.’ So Gog and Magog were unable to pass over it, nor were they able [to effect] in it any penetration,” (Al-Kahf 18:96, 97).

Allah taught Prophet David (Dawood) (peace be upon him) the **iron formation industry**, saying:

“And We certainly gave David from Us bounty. [We said], ‘O mountains, repeat [Our] praises with him, and the birds [as well].’ And We made pliable for him iron, [Commanding him], ‘Make full coats of mail and calculate [precisely] the links, and work [all of you] righteousness. Indeed I, of what you do, am Seeing,” (Saba 34:10, 11).

Based on this, we see that God, Who is All-Knowing about the merits of knowledge, has taught us a lot to coexist, work and earn a living, and to know the Creator’s status and greatness.

God Almighty has urged us to increase our knowledge and compete in it so that we can be the best of nations. Allah confirmed in many verses the high status, in His sight, of those who know, saying:

“Allah will raise those who have believed among you and those who were given knowledge, by degrees. And Allah is Acquainted with what you do,” (Al-Mujadila 58:11).

“Say, ‘Are those who know equal to those who do not know?’ Only they will remember [who are] people of understanding,” (Az-Zumar 39:9).

“Only those fear Allah, from among His servants, who have knowledge. Indeed, Allah is Exalted in Might and Forgiving,” (Fatir 35:28).

“Allah witnesses that there is no deity except Him, and [so do] the angels and those of knowledge - [that He is] maintaining [creation] in justice. There is no deity except Him, the Exalted in Might, the Wise,” (Aal-i-Imran 3:18)

“And say, ‘My Lord, increase me in knowledge,’” (Taha 20:114)

“Rather, the Qur’an is distinct verses [preserved] within the breasts of those who have been given knowledge. And none reject Our verses except the wrongdoers,” (Al-Ankabut 29:49).

“And We had certainly given to David and Solomon knowledge, and they said, ‘Praise [is due] to Allah, who has favored us over many of His believing servants,’” (An-Naml 27:15).

Perhaps the message of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) is the best evidence of how God Almighty motivates us with knowledge and urges us to learn and teach those around us. Allah says:

“Recite in the name of your Lord who created - Created man from a clinging substance. Recite, and your Lord is the most Generous - Who taught by the pen - Taught man that which he knew not,” (Al-Alaq 96:1-5).

Allah started the Sura of Al-Alaq by motivating Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) to learn reading and informed him

that He “**taught man that which he knew not**”. So, Allah’s message to the prophet’s nation is one of teaching and learning. The parables stated in the Quran provide for this value.

Hence, God has motivated us by knowledge to keep learning, increase our knowledge, and compete in this, to be able to grow and excel. It is as if Allah, Exalted be He, wants to tell us that if we neglect knowledge, we will be losers while others will have the supremacy.

Perhaps Allah, Exalted be He, began His message to Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) with recitation and knowledge to motivate and make us understand that learning, and not anything else, should be the start. Allah has thus taught us one of the secrets of life, so that we should not think too much about where to start.

Contemporary history has proven that those who had acquired knowledge in the past established civilizations later, as our ancient Pharaohs did when they excelled in astronomy, horoscopes, construction, and so on.

The same is also true concerning the current world. The nations that are distinguished today militarily and economically, are those who have given due care to knowledge and science and educated their people. So, their excellence in scientific research has become the result that has led to excellence and leadership in industry, economy, medicine, and others.

Let us learn to motivate those around us to acquire knowledge and our children to learn how to excel in it so that they can be pioneers.

Let us arm them with knowledge. Let us teach our employees by training them and enhancing their skills so that they excel in their work. Let us teach athletes by training them and bringing modern technologies that can help them excel in their sports. Let us teach ourselves to read and increase our knowledge, thus drawing near to God Almighty to have a higher degree with Him, following the verses:

“Allah will raise those who have believed among you and those who were given knowledge, by degrees. And Allah is Acquainted with what you do,” (Al-Mujadila 58:11); and:

“Say, ‘Are those who know equal to those who do not know?’” (Az-Zumar 39:9).

If we realize that the degrees in the sight of God Almighty are partly acquired by learning, should this not be a motivation for us to increase knowledge and motivate those we love?

Motivation by education is a divine method of motivation for man. It is even a leading mechanism for motivation. We have to put it as a top priority for us, for it is the way to a better future if we want to be better than we are. Will we give it a priority?

Why not?

Motivation by Marriage

God, Glory be to Him, has called on His servants to preserve their private parts. Knowing that marriage is a human instinct and an essential drive for their life, Allah made it lawful from the very beginning of human life.

For Adam Allah created Eve. There is no evidence for the lawfulness of marriage other than this. Then Allah says:

“And of His signs is that He created for you from yourselves mates that you may find tranquility in them; and He placed between you affection and mercy. Indeed in that are signs for a people who give thought,” (Ar-Rum 30:21).

This noble verse indicates that the motivation here is not only a kind of instinctive satisfaction. Rather, it is for the sake of affection, mercy and tranquility, so that the person may settle down and be happy in their life.

Given that God knows that instinct will be a primary urge, He wanted to put forward a method for regulating it in His book, the Quran, which I metaphorically call “the human manual”. Therefore, God has permitted polygamy in the verse: **“Then marry those that please you of [other] women, two or three or four,”** (An-Nisa 4:3), so that no one will have an excuse to take a path contrary to that drawn by God’s law, and so that immorality may not spread

in society. The result is that this human need becomes a practice of obedience that a person is rewarded for, instead of turning it into an immoral act that may lead man astray.

Then Allah, Glory be to Him, has permitted divorce to open the door more and more to the number of marriages, so that no one will have any excuse.

Of course, this is not a motivation for anyone to have wives. It is a permissible way that is made available to prevent anyone from sliding into forbidden practices, for God motivates His servants to abide by this approach and protect their private parts. Is there any excuse left for whoever wants to commit adultery after that?

It is very strange to find a man who is afraid of his wife and has a forbidden relationship with another woman and refuses to marry her lawfully. Allah has more right than he fears Him.

It is also strange that some wives prefer that their husbands commit fornication with other women, in forbidden relationships, instead of getting married lawfully.

All these are signs indicating that those people are far from faith. Such a wife and husband, who may do the above, forget that God Almighty is more worthy of being pleased and feared.

In line with the verse stating that **“whoever saves one [soul] - it is as if he had saved mankind entirely”**, it is possible here to say that whoever helps a person in obedience, it is as if they had helped all people.

It is also strange that we still do not understand that Allah's reward for the people who help those who want to marry and guard their private parts but cannot afford its costs. Allah, Glory be to Him, will multiply their good deeds exponentially.

Also, let us raise our children in this obedience, help them in that regard, and motivate them to marry when they reach the marriageable age and become capable of getting married.

When the concepts of marriage, including affection, mercy and tranquility, are attained, the meaning of true marriage will be realized. At that point, it will be true to call the woman a **wife** and the man a **husband**. This confirms the concept of the marital relationship in Islam in a sense that it is not just a relationship between a male and a female, but rather one that is based on sublime meanings to achieve noble goals in life to ensure the continuity of humans and the fulfillment of their psychological and physical needs.

The verse **“He created for you from yourselves mates that you may find tranquility in them”** expresses the fact that there is a chemistry between the two spouses in their lifestyle, thought and interests. If this exists, each one of them can be called *zawj* (mate, spouse), a term that is mentioned in several verses of the Noble Quran. Whenever the term *zawj* is used in the Quran to refer to the wife, this always comes in the context of righteousness and compatibility between the two spouses.

The Quran used the term *zawj* to refer to the wife when she is on good terms with her husband in terms of religion and belief or terms

of psychological harmony. And used the term *imra'a* (woman) to refer to the wife who is not in agreement with her husband in terms of faith and psychological harmony, even though she is still a wife. We find this in the verses that stated: **“the wife of Noah”**, **“the wife of Lot”** and **“the wife of Pharaoh”** (At-Tahrim 66:10, 11), in which the term *imra'a* (woman) is used in the three places.

The wife of Pharaoh believed in Prophet Moses (peace be upon him) and so she departed from her husband's faith when she knew the path of guidance. The same had also happened with the wife of Noah and the wife of Lot who did not choose the faith of their husbands (peace be upon them). Therefore, the Quran did not use the term *zawj* with either of the two wives and used the word *imra'a* with both women.

Therefore, God Almighty motivates one to search for a mate, because He has created this mate for him/her, and not for a partner, even if the person loves this partner since their relationship will not be in the form that leads to tranquility which God has made available to His servants.

There are many examples in our life that begins with admiration between the two parties. But it is an unthoughtful, superficial, hurry and causal admiration that results, if marriage is consummated, in divorce and family breakup.

Therefore, in a country like Egypt where divorce rates have recently increased, there must be a role by media and educational bodies to raise public awareness. This can include radio and television

programs, sermons at mosques and churches, and school curricula. Children must be taught from their early age criteria for choosing the other mate and how and on what basis their choice should be built?

The choice that lasts is the one that is built on a sound foundation and allows the structure to rise. As for the choice that is built on a fragile foundation, based on temporary admiration or the like, its end is inevitable.

Returning to what we started with, God Almighty delights the one who strives to guard their private parts with a spouse that He has created for him/her and he/she will enjoy that mate who will be a source of tranquility, affection and mercy in their life. This spouse will also motivate the other party to obey God.

Here is the method of motivation by making available what people need lawfully, in order not to obtain it unlawfully.

As we know the virtue of encouraging marriage, let us motivate those around us who cannot afford the cost of marriage by helping them to marry and guard their chastity.

In a broader sense, it is a motivation to achieve something by a lawful and not forbidden means. It is a motivation to make good choices and be obedient to God.

Many lessons can be learned from this divine approach. All that we have to do is to realize it and apply it in our lives.

Motivation by Explanation and Comparison to Facilitate Selection

God, Glory be to Him, has created and honored man above the rest of the creatures by giving humans a mind to think and implement what they see and hear to reach the right choice and decision.

There are dozens of verses in the Glorious Quran that place different methods before man to choose, after comparing and studying them, and bear the consequences of this choice whether good or bad.

I have pondered over some verses of the Noble Quran and found that God Almighty makes things clear to us by striking comparisons between them and others. When it becomes clear, the person can choose. Allah says:

“And not equal are the good deed and the bad. Repel [evil] by that [deed] which is better,” (Fussilat 41:34).

“Allah presents an example: a slave [who is] owned and unable to do a thing and he to whom We have provided from Us good provision, so he spends from it secretly and publicly. Can they be equal? Praise to Allah! But most of them do not know,” (An-Nahl 16:75).

“Then is one who was a believer like one who was defiantly disobedient? They are not equal,” (As-Sajda 32:18).

“Not equal among you are those who spent before the conquest [of Makkah] and fought [and those who did so after it]. Those are greater in degree than they who spent afterwards and fought. But to all Allah has promised the best [reward]. And Allah, with what you do, is Acquainted,” (Al-Hadid 57:10).

“Not equal are the companions of the Fire and the companions of Paradise. The companions of Paradise - they are the attainers [of success],” (Al-Hashr 59:20).

“Have you not considered how Allah presents an example, [making] a good word like a good tree, whose root is firmly fixed and its branches [high] in the sky? It produces its fruit all the time, by permission of its Lord. And Allah presents examples for the people that perhaps they will be reminded. And the example of a bad word is like a bad tree, uprooted from the surface of the earth, not having any stability,” (Ibrahim 14:24-26).

The last verses (Ibrahim 14:24-26) illustrate that a good word is like a good tree, whose root is firmly fixed in the land and its branches extend towards the sky. It produces its fruits by God’s leave. Whereas a bad word is like a bad tree (**colocynth**) uprooted from its roots, so there is no good in it. A wise person thinks carefully and calculates everything, and does only what can make them enter Paradise and keep them away from Hellfire.

These are examples of comparison as a divine method for understanding and explanation. Allah has completed this approach with another method of motivation for the freedom of choice after

He explained and clarified things to us so that the decision we make will be informed and clear.

This is a divine approach by showing the beauty and grandeur of things by comparing them to others. All that we have to do is to choose and follow this divine approach in dealing with those around us. Who does not like to be allowed to understand and compare in a way that helps us make a good choice?

We must learn, while motivating those around us, how to take the right path after we give them the freedom of choice, to teach them to make comparisons to distinguish between what is right and what is not, and what pleases or displeases us.

The father must explain to his children that he loves the diligent and the successful among them and that he is not satisfied with the failed son - for example - to motivate him to choose the path of success and study his lessons.

The boss, while speaking with his employees, can make comparisons between the distinguished and the non-committed staff, the creative and the non-creative, and so on, and then leave them to choose their path freely. This can be done, for example, after they know what satisfies their boss and their company and after educating them and striking comparisons for them.

Thus, this approach is valid and effective in all aspects of life to motivate people to make a clear and informed choice. Let us take it as an approach to motivate those around us.

Why not?

Motivation by Follow-up

The one who reflects on the Quran will find the Almighty's saying in many verses: **“And Allah is Seeing of whatever they do”** (Aal-i-Imran 3:163); **“Allah is Seeing of [His] servants”** (Ghafir 40:44); **“He is the Hearing, the Seeing”** (Ash-Shura 42:11); and **“Allah is ever Hearing and Seeing”** (An-Nisa 4:58).

I found that the word *Basir* (the Seeing, All-Seeing) is a mechanism of divine motivation for man. Allah knows that someone becomes motivated to perform what they are asked if we tell them that we are following and watching them to see what they can do.

Allah, the All-Seeing, Glory be to Him, is Just, Appreciative, and All-Knowing, so His reward for the committed people is inarguable. The All-Seeing is sufficient for motivating us in our lives. We can motivate those around us by following them in the implementation of this divine approach.

The father who attends a sport exercise for his son, for example, has to look into his eyes, while the son looks at his father every minute to make sure that he is following him with his eyes. This indeed motivates and delights the son to perfect his exercise.

The factory manager, while inspecting the sewing machines hall, for example, has to look into the eyes of the workers who in turn are following his looks to them to make sure that he pays attention to the

hardworking and skillful among them. This is the best motivation for them.

Let a project manager remember the eyes of the construction workers while inspecting their work so that they make sure that he is overseeing the achievement of each of them because that is the best motivation for them to innovate. This is because their work is carefully overseen by their boss.

The presence of surveillance cameras at the entrance gates of an airport or any other facility motivates the security guards to perfect their work because the administration monitors them and sees the diligent among them.

Let us understand this divine motivation approach and act accordingly. Let us repeat it to our employees and those around us that we are overseeing what they are doing. The follow-up here denotes that we notice who perfects their work and who does not and that the reward of the one who perfects their work will not be disregarded. Therefore, the follow-up here means appreciation and that everyone will take their right and that no one will be wronged.

Let us work in accordance with this divine methodology in motivating those around us to be creative and to perfect and achieve their work.

Why not?

Motivation by Forgiveness

I am certain that God Almighty does not want to torment any of His creation. That is why He sent messengers and prophets to teach people good morals and faith in God and show them the way to Paradise.

The one who reflects on the Quran will find that God Almighty has named Himself the *Ghafur* (the Forgiving) in numerous verses, including:

“And whoever does a wrong or wrongs himself but then seeks forgiveness of Allah will find Allah Forgiving and Merciful,” (An-Nisa 4:110).

“But Allah would not punish them while you, [O Muhammad], are among them, and Allah would not punish them while they seek forgiveness,” (Al-Anfal 8:33).

I feel in this verse that Allah, Exalted be He, clarifies to His servants that the bottom line is to seek forgiveness, which is the key to removing sins and entering Paradise.

Allah, Glory be to Him, explains through several verses that *Istighfar* (seeking forgiveness from Allah) is the way to Paradise, beginning with the angels' *Istighfar* for the believers. Allah says:

“Those [angels] who carry the Throne and those around it exalt [Allah] with praise of their Lord and believe in Him and ask forgiveness for those who have believed, [saying], ‘Our Lord, You have encompassed all things in mercy and knowledge, so forgive those who have repented and followed Your way and protect them from the punishment of Hellfire,’” (Ghafir 40:7).

“The heavens almost break from above them, and the angels exalt [Allah] with praise of their Lord and ask forgiveness for those on earth. Unquestionably, it is Allah who is the Forgiving, the Merciful,” (Ash-Shura 42:5).

Then Allah explains to us how He showed Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) the merit and secret of seeking forgiveness, saying:

“So by mercy from Allah, [O Muhammad], you were lenient with them. And if you had been rude [in speech] and harsh in heart, they would have disbanded from about you. So pardon them and ask forgiveness for them and consult them in the matter. And when you have decided, then rely upon Allah. Indeed, Allah loves those who rely [upon Him],” (Aal-i-Imran 3:159).

“And We did not send any messenger except to be obeyed by permission of Allah. And if, when they wronged themselves, they had come to you, [O Muhammad], and asked forgiveness of Allah and the Messenger had asked forgiveness for them, they would have found Allah Accepting of repentance and Merciful,” (An-Nisa 4:64).

“The believers are only those who believe in Allah and His Messenger and, when they are [meeting] with him for a matter of common interest, do not depart until they have asked his permission. Indeed, those who ask your permission, [O Muhammad] - those are the ones who believe in Allah and His Messenger. So when they ask your permission for something of their affairs, then give permission to whom you will among them and ask forgiveness for them of Allah. Indeed, Allah is Forgiving and Merciful,” (An-Nur 24:62).

“So know, [O Muhammad], that there is no deity except Allah and ask forgiveness for your sin and for the believing men and believing women. And Allah knows of your movement and your resting place,” (Muhammad 47:19).

“O Prophet, when the believing women come to you pledging to you that they will not associate anything with Allah, nor will they steal, nor will they commit unlawful sexual intercourse, nor will they kill their children, nor will they bring forth a slander they have invented between their arms and legs, nor will they disobey you in what is right - then accept their pledge and ask forgiveness for them of Allah. Indeed, Allah is Forgiving and Merciful,” (Al-Mumtahana 60:12).

Then I felt as if Allah, Glory be to Him, wanted the matter to be clearer and easier in how to seek accepted forgiveness. So He explained to us many situations where prophets and messengers (peace be upon them), who received divine revelations, sought

forgiveness. It is as if these are the **words of accepted forgiveness** with Allah. It is Allah who has taught to us the formula to be uttered for asking forgiveness. Allah has even shown us the **model answer**, I mean the best method and formula for seeking forgiveness.

Allah tells us about the supplication of Prophet Hud (peace be upon him), who said: **“And O my people, ask forgiveness of your Lord and then repent to Him. He will send [rain from] the sky upon you in showers and increase you in strength [added] to your strength. And do not turn away, [being] criminals,”** (Hud 11:52).

The supplication of Prophet Shuaib (peace be upon him), who said: **“And ask forgiveness of your Lord and then repent to Him. Indeed, my Lord is Merciful and Affectionate,”** (Hud 11:90).

The supplication of Adam and Eve (peace be upon them): **“They said, “Our Lord, we have wronged ourselves, and if You do not forgive us and have mercy upon us, we will surely be among the losers.”,”** (Al-A’raf 7:23). This is one of the greatest formulas of *Istighfar*, because Allah accepted the repentance of Adam and Eve by these words which Adam (peace be upon him) received from his Lord.

There is also the *Istighfar* of Prophet Noah (peace be upon him) when he said: **“[Noah] said, ‘My Lord, I seek refuge in You from asking that of which I have no knowledge. And unless You forgive me and have mercy upon me, I will be among the losers,’”** (Hud 11:47) and: **“My Lord, forgive me and my parents and whoever enters my house a believer and the believing men and**

believing women. And do not increase the wrongdoers except in destruction,” (Nuh 71:28).

There is also the *Istighfar* of Prophet Abraham (Ibrahim) (peace be upon him) when he said: **“Our Lord, forgive me and my parents and the believers the Day the account is established,”** (Ibrahim 14:41); and: **“Our Lord, make us not [objects of] torment for the disbelievers and forgive us, our Lord. Indeed, it is You who is the Exalted in Might, the Wise,”** (Al-Mumtahana 60:5).

Allah also informed us about the *Istighfar* of Prophet Moses (peace be upon him) when he said: **“[Moses] said, ‘My Lord, forgive me and my brother and admit us into Your mercy, for You are the most merciful of the merciful,’”** (Al-A’raf 7:151); **“You are our Protector, so forgive us and have mercy upon us; and You are the best of forgivers,”** (Al-A’raf 7:155); and: **“He said, ‘My Lord, indeed I have wronged myself, so forgive me,’ and He forgave him. Indeed, He is the Forgiving, the Merciful,”** (Al-Qasas 28:16).

Prophet Solomon (peace be upon him) asked for forgiveness: **“He said, ‘My Lord, forgive me,’”** (Sad 38:35).

Prophet Jonah (Yunus) (peace be upon him) also asked for forgiveness: **“There is no deity except You; exalted are You. Indeed, I have been of the wrongdoers,”** (Al-Anbiya 21:87).

Allah, Glory be to Him, also explained to us other general formulas for *Istighfar*, such as:

“[We seek] Your forgiveness, our Lord,” (Al-Baqara 2:285).

“And pardon us; and forgive us; and have mercy upon us,”
(Al-Baqara 2:286).

“Our Lord, indeed we have believed, so forgive us our sins,”
(Aal-i-Imran 3:16).

“Our Lord, indeed we have believed, so forgive us our sins,”
(Aal-i-Imran 3:147).

“Our Lord, so forgive us our sins and remove from us our misdeeds,” (Aal-i-Imran 3:193).

“If our Lord does not have mercy upon us and forgive us, we will surely be among the losers,” (Al-A’raf 7:149).

“Our Lord, we have believed, so forgive us and have mercy upon us, and You are the best of the merciful,” (Al-Mu’minun 23:109).

“My Lord, forgive and have mercy, and You are the best of the merciful,” (Al-Mu’minun 23:118).

“Our Lord, forgive us and our brothers who preceded us in faith,” (Al-Hashr 59:10).

“Our Lord, perfect for us our light and forgive us. Indeed, You are over all things competent,” (At-Tahrim 66:8).

All of the above are formulas for *Istighfar*. They are mentioned in the Quran to teach the believers ways of seeking accepted forgiveness out of Allah’s mercy to admit them into His Paradise

with His permission and to have mercy on them from Hellfire. How great the Greatest, the Forgiving, is.

After Allah has asserted that He would not punish us as long as we are asking forgiveness, should we not make *Istighfar* a cornerstone in our lives and a frequent utterance. By God, **whoever does not understand and implement this should only blame themselves**. God has mercy on us by providing us with the model answer to salvation. Is it reasonable that we neglect this answer and do not act upon it?

In our daily lives, we have to learn from this divine approach to motivate people to seek forgiveness. By doing so, we show our good intention to those around us and that we do not wish them failure. We have to teach our children, raise them on the etiquette of apologizing, and inform them about formulas for an accepted apology to us, to make it easy for them and motivate them not to go further on error. Consequently, we can maintain a coherent relationship between us.

A teacher should teach the students the apology etiquette, for this is the education method that protects the young people from giving up the desired learning path in all aspects of life. The philosophy of opening the door for returning and giving room for an apology, and even encouraging people to do this by providing the best formulas for this, is indeed desirable and required. This is an application of the Greatest Creator's approach to His creation. It is the summary of understanding and awareness.

Thus, motivation for seeking forgiveness (*Istighfar*) is a divine motivation method by which Allah helps His servants to find a way out of the sins they have committed and open the gates of Paradise for them.

Let us understand this approach, ask God's forgiveness a lot, and forgive those around us a lot, so that God may forgive us.

Motivation by Giving the Freedom of Choice

Allah, Glory be to Him, has honored and created mankind who love to hold their own opinion, and provided them with the ability to choose. When Allah, Exalted be He, addresses mankind in the Holy Quran and asks them to do something, I noticed that in most cases He gives them the freedom of choice. The following verses are examples:

“Indeed, this is a reminder, so whoever wills may take to his Lord a way,” (Al-Muzammil 73:19).

“To whoever wills among you to proceed or stay behind,” (Al-Muddathir 74:37).

“Indeed, this is a reminder, so he who wills may take to his Lord a way,” (Al-Insan 76:29).

“That is the True Day; so he who wills may take to his Lord a [way of] return,” (An-Naba 78:39).

“For whoever wills among you to take a right course,” (At-Takwir 81:28)

God, Glory be to Him, knew that His creature does not like to be under compulsion, because this discourages them. So God has motivated people to have the choice in their affairs, addressing

them with what motivates them, to the extent that when it comes to religion itself, Allah says to them: **“There shall be no compulsion in [acceptance of] the religion,”** (Al-Baqara 2:256); and: **“For you is your religion, and for me is my religion,”** (Al-Kafirun 109:6). These verses show us this divine approach of motivation by giving people the freedom of choice.

We have to learn from this approach when dealing with our children and wives and in our work. So why do not we promote our policies inside and outside our family by pointing out the negatives and positives, giving advice, and then giving others the freedom of choice?

Raising children in this way builds their personality and their ability to analyze, understand, choose, learn from mistakes, and shoulder responsibility.

Let us look at how God Almighty is merciful to His servants; He wanted to honor them, so He created them as free people. He could create them in a way that they accept and implement anything, but He honored mankind. This appears like a call to honor and respect those around us, consult them in the matter, and not impose anything upon them. We have to give them the freedom to choose and decide.

Why not?

Motivation by Defense

God, Glory be to Him, knew that His creatures, mankind, ultimately seek safety and a place where they feel safe from fear.

Therefore, I see that Allah has taken the approach of reassurance as a kind of motivation for mankind. Allah knows that people may be exposed to deception from those around them, so He motivated those who draw nearer to Him, saying: **“But they plan, and Allah plans. And Allah is the best of planners,”** (Al-Anfal 8:30). It is a clear motivation approach as if it is a message - that is, if they can plan, Allah is the best of planners and whoever Allah is with them will be victorious by His permission.

Likewise, Allah says: **“Indeed, Allah defends those who have believed,”** (Al-Hajj 22:38). The verse encompasses the best motivation way for people to believe by asserting that God defends them. Allah asked them to believe in Him and motivated them by ensuring them that He will be their defender.

Allah also says:

“But sufficient is your Lord as a guide and a helper,” (Al-Furqan 25:31).

“And Allah will surely support those who support Him. Indeed, Allah is Powerful and Exalted in Might,” (Al-Hajj 22:40).

“So Allah protected him from the evils they plotted, and the people of Pharaoh were enveloped by the worst of punishment,” (Ghafir 40:45).

All these verses confirm that whoever supports God, God will support them; and whoever believes in God, God will be his defender and He can turn away from them the plots of planners. This concept is also reflected in the verse: **“Allah will be sufficient for you against them. And He is the Hearing, the Knowing,”** (Al-Baqara 2:137).

The point here is that Allah, the Greatest, has used defense as motivation to move mankind. We have to learn from this while we motivate those around us.

The school principal, who asks the teachers to order their students to be disciplined and to be firm in performing their affairs, must pledge to them that he or she will defend them if any one of them faces troubles.

The official in charge of keeping order in a workplace must pledge to the staff that he or she protects them and defends them while performing their job. The point here is that they must feel secure and protected to undertake the duties and responsibilities of their jobs as they should be.

The **conclusion** is that our pledge to protect and defend those around us contains an incentive for them to devote themselves to their tasks and be loyal to those who protect and take care of them. This is an effective motivation. Glory be to God Who unveiled it to us.

Motivation by Seizing Opportunities for Goodness and Giving

I paused at the noble verse: “**Should we feed one whom, if Allah had willed, He would have fed?**” (Ya-Sin 36:47), and wondered how did God Almighty not approve of what He heard from these people? This is because they did not do good first, thinking that if Allah had willed to provide for them, He would have done it. It seems as if God, Glory be to Him, motivates us to make us assume the responsible by extending a helping hand to those who appear on the “**human radar screens**”. But we should not avoid feeding them, believing that God Almighty can provide for them. The mere appearance of the poor people in front of us is a message that may be a test for us: **What we should do?**

So, Allah motivates us to take the initiative and give alms and not to delay it, for perhaps the target person disappears from our sight and, hence, we may fail the test. But the failure here will be in a serious matter, for the money we give to this poor person falls into the hands of God Almighty first. So why we may decline to give this needy person, while we are certain that the alms fall into God’s hands first.

All that I can add here is that each person has to think as if they have a firearm loaded with ammunition and they have in their pocket

the money they could give to the questioner who appears on the radar screen. So the giver can imagine that they are on a hunting trip and the questioner appears in front of them as a bird and a target. If the giver thinks a lot, or hesitates to make a decision, the hunter may miss this precious bird. So all that the hunter has to do is to take the initiative to hunt the target before missing the opportunity.

Let each of us be prepared with his or her ammunition (**money to give in charity**), seize from the good things what they could, and not miss an opportunity that passes before them, no matter how small the alms might be. They will be rewarded by God. No one should argue that they are not sure whether the stories related by the petitioner are true. **You will be lucky** if you are fooled by someone who causes you to enter Paradise.

God Almighty will hold you accountable for your intention and reward you for your sensitive heart and your sympathy with His needy servants. The reward for this is great.

The divine motivation method here is to show us the extent to which Allah hates the statement uttered by some people: **“Should we feed one whom, if Allah had willed, He would have fed?”** (Ya-Sin 36:47) as if He is telling us: Yes, feed them. Yes, this is your role. Those people have a known and obligatory right that you must fulfill.

The motivation method here is to show God’s dissatisfaction about an action done by some people, thus motivating us not to follow in their footsteps so that He will be satisfied with us.

So let our approach be to hunt, and our life be a hunting trip on which we strive to catch the largest amount of good deeds to be in front of our Lord, Glory be to Him, on the Day of Account.

We also have to learn from this approach how to motivate our children to give charity. We have to set an example for them. It is a kind of reverse motivation, by showing dissatisfaction towards a negative behavior to motivate them to do a positive action.

While motivating those around us, we can express disapproval of a negative behavior so that the addressee understands that we like the positive behavior and that they will be rewarded for it. So, they will do it.

When a father expresses his dissatisfaction with his son in front of his children because the son has come late, this can urge the rest to respect deadlines. When a merchant expresses his dissatisfaction with the lack of commitment of another merchant, this can motivate others to abide by their pledges, and so on.

It is a method that many of us can use by urging those who deal with them to comply with it in certain matters.

Motivation by Entrusting Your Affairs to Allah

Imagine that you have direct contact with a renowned lawyer you have ever known or he is well-known among lawyers. And because of his relations with you, he tells you that he is always ready to represent you in any matter and you know his abilities to do something. Indeed, this lawyer will do his best to represent you and to restore or preserve your rights.

Allah, Exalted be He, Who is the Greatest, has motivated us not to be afraid or grieve. To reassure our hearts, He has motivated us to entrust him with the matters that are difficult for us to solve or to find a way out. How beautiful that free entrustment is. It is entrustment to the One Who is Able, the One in whose hand is the realm of all things. This entrustment is carried out without any procedures or stamps in the notary public. Just say: **“I entrust my affair to Allah”** (Ghafir 40:44). How beautiful that we have a renowned person. But how great that we are with the Greatest. If you can entrust the Greatest, what can concern you?

Allah, the Greatest, is able to lift what has afflicted you. Here comes the intelligent benefit of entrustment when you do not wait for a result - that is, the result you wish may be bad for you. Therefore, intelligent behavior is to entrust God Almighty to do what is beneficial

for you and manage your affairs. Remember when you have a result, even if it is not to your liking, that you have asked Him goodness and He has chosen that result for you. This could be the good you asked but you are not aware of it. God knows it. So, entrust your affairs to God Almighty and enjoy having this direct relationship with Allah, the Greatest.

In our daily lives, we can follow such a divine approach of motivation by announcing to those around us that we are ready, if they wish, to serve them or exert efforts to resolve their troubles at any time. Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) said: **“Whoever removes a worldly grief from a believer, Allah will remove from him one of the griefs of the Day of Resurrection. And whoever alleviates the need of a needy person, Allah will alleviate his needs in this world and the Hereafter. Whoever shields [or hides the misdeeds of] a Muslim, Allah will shield him in this world and the Hereafter. And Allah will aid His slave so long as he aids his brother,”** (related by Muslim).

Giving your subordinates the feeling that you are ready and will waste no time in serving them whenever they need motivates them to be loyal and to perfect their work. In turn, they will meet your gentle attitude with work, perfection and love for you.

When you tell your family that you are with them and happy to assume responsibility and will waste no time to stand by them, this gives them the feeling that you are an ideal father. They will do their best to satisfy you and be dutiful to you in return for your noble attitudes in their lives.

Motivation by Guardianship

God, Glory be to Him, motivates His servants for obedience and belongingness. In return, He provides for them all that they need of food and security from fear. Allah says:

“Let them worship the Lord of this House, Who has fed them, [saving them] from hunger and made them safe, [saving them] from fear;” (Al-Kafirun 106:3, 4).

Here, I observe a divine motivation method by guardianship. The above verse, and others, explain to us that there is an incentive to worship God Almighty, and in return, God has guaranteed to feed and protect His servants.

If guardianship is biological within the family between the father and his children whom he supports, it is symbolic when it comes to the relationship between someone and those whom he deals with. Anyone can extend this spirit and relationship with their subordinates to include those around them. Thus, their guardianship for them will be in the form of providing protection and sufficiency for them. Let this be the best motivation for them to have a feeling of belongingness and commitment.

Thus in our life, if guardianship means care, protection and attention, then we can simply call it safety. Therefore each of us can motivate those around us by saying: If you implement what you

should do, you will be under my care and protection. This can be between workers and their boss, soldiers with their commander, a wife with her husband, and so on.

Some people may joke with others by saying: Can you adopt me (i.e. consider me your son)? In this joke, the person asks others to provide care and attention for the benefit of his young children.

Undoubtedly, guardianship is the best motivation, because man is naturally concerned with security and safety and seeks help from those who can provide them, starting from the father. When someone grows up, they seek security and safety from those around them, such as friends, places, the company they work for, and the state where they live. This is only preceded by someone's interest in providing food to meet their natural need.

So let each of us look at how they can work by this methodology in their life. Let each one be responsible for those around, provide them with security against fear and ensure a decent life for them to motivate them to do all that is praiseworthy of acts of obedience, belonging and commitment.

Motivation by Giving Glad Tidings of Answering

Allah, Glory be to Him, has revealed one of the secrets of dealing with Him through what I call the “human manual”, the Noble Quran. He has explained to us that the relationship with Him begins with an initiative from ourselves. This is because we need Him. So, if we want to work by the “human manual”, we have to take the initiative in our relationship with God, starting with supplication to Him. Allah says: **“And your Lord says, “Call upon Me; I will respond to you,”** (Ghafir 40:60). Allah has also reassured us that He is near us. Allah says:

“And when My servants ask you, [O Muhammad], concerning Me - indeed I am near. I respond to the invocation of the supplicant when he calls upon Me. So let them respond to Me [by obedience] and believe in Me that they may be [rightly] guided,” (Al-Baqara 2:186).

“So his Lord responded to him and averted from him their plan. Indeed, He is the Hearing, the Knowing,” (Yusuf 12:34).

“Indeed, [O Muhammad], you do not guide whom you like, but Allah guides whom He wills. And He is most knowing of the [rightly] guided,” (Al-Qasas 28:56), i.e. He knows whoever asks Him for guidance.

This indicates a methodology. God, Glory be to Him, knows that His human creature needs reassurance in his dealings and to be very

confident that his request will be given due care and attention. This makes people take the right path to be worthy of Allah's answer.

Allah, Exalted be He, has given us secrets to formulating this request, to be answered by Him. This has come in several verses that tell us that the supplications made by Allah's prophets and messengers, who had received revelation from their Lord, are always accepted. It is as if God wants to teach us the best formula while asking Him. For example, the following are supplications stated in the Quran were made by three prophets:

Regarding the supplication of Prophet Job (Ayyub) (peace be upon him), Allah says: **“And [mention] Job, when he called to his Lord, ‘Indeed, adversity has touched me, and you are the Most Merciful of the merciful.’ So We responded to him and removed what afflicted him of adversity. And We gave him [back] his family and the like thereof with them as mercy from Us and a reminder for the worshippers [of Allah],”** (Al-Anbiya 21:83-84).

Regarding the supplication of Prophet John (Yunus) (peace be upon him), Allah says: **“And [mention] the man of the fish, when he went off in anger and thought that We would not decree [anything] upon him. And he called out within the darknesses, ‘There is no deity except You; exalted are You. Indeed, I have been of the wrongdoers.’ So We responded to him and saved him from the distress. And thus do We save the believers,”** (Al-Anbiya 21:87-88).

Regarding the supplication of Prophet Zechariah (Zakariya) (peace be upon him), Allah says: **“And [mention] Zechariah, when he called to his Lord, ‘My Lord, do not leave me alone [with no heir], while you are the best of inheritors.’ So We responded to him, and We gave to him John, and amended for him his wife. Indeed, they used to hasten to good deeds and supplicate Us in hope and fear, and they were to Us humbly submissive,”** (Al-Anbiya 21:89-90).

Many other supplications are mentioned in several verses. We knew prophets whose supplications were ended with Allah’s saying: **“So We responded to him”**. The matter is not limited to the prophets and messengers only, as some may misunderstand. Allah, the Mighty and Sublime, accepts the supplication of a caller even in situations of distress and war. Allah says:

“[Remember] when you asked help of your Lord, and He answered you, ‘Indeed, I will reinforce you with a thousand from the angels, following one another,’” (Al-Anfal 8:9).

“Is He [not best] who responds to the desperate one when he calls upon Him and removes evil and makes you inheritors of the earth? Is there a deity with Allah? Little do you remember,” (An-Naml 27:62).

“And your Lord says, ‘Call upon Me; I will respond to you,’” (Ghafir 40:60). This verse does not address prophets and messengers. Rather, it is a general call, the same as the following verses:

“And when My servants ask you, [O Muhammad], concerning Me - indeed I am near. I respond to the invocation of the supplicant when he calls upon Me. So let them respond to Me [by obedience] and believe in Me that they may be [rightly] guided,” (Al-Baqara 2:186).

“Our Lord, and grant us what You promised us through Your messengers and do not disgrace us on the Day of Resurrection. Indeed, You do not fail in [Your] promise. And their Lord responded to them, ‘Never will I allow to be lost the work of [any] worker among you, whether male or female; you are of one another...’” (Aal-i-Imran 3:194-195).

When we look at the above verses, we will recognize a divine motivation approach by supplicating and drawing near to God.

We learn from this that we have to be understanding of those around us, flexible in dealing with them and containing them, thus pushing them to the path we wish.

We have also to teach them that we are fully prepared for the common good and for what is best for them. As it makes sense that we should not pray to Allah with that which He has not made lawful for us, our response to those around us shall also be within what pleases Allah.

I mentioned in a previous chapter how God, Glory be to Him, teaches His servants different types of supplications that are followed by His answer.

Here, I present to another angle - confirmation of response. Allah primarily answers the supplications made by His servants. This response is not confined to the prophets and messengers. It is available to all.

It is a divine motivation method by simplifying things and facilitating the way to draw nearer to Allah and that nothing is greater than forgiveness. It is a correct approach that no one except the Lord of the Worlds is able to do because it requires capabilities that are far greater than the ability of humans in tolerance and forgiveness. We have to realize this approach and try to keep this spirit in our social interaction with those around us by drawing near to them, understanding them, and promising them to always respond to what is possible or permitted.

Any boss, who follows this with his subordinates, will be great in their sight. They will regard him a role model who can motivate them towards belonging, loyalty and creativity, providing reassurance and security, without which no one can be creative.

Likewise, the father should be near to his children, listen to them, and respond to what is in their best interest and is possible. This strengthens social bonds, affection, and security among family members, thus promoting a productive spirit devoted to working and creativity. Let us teach our children the etiquette of requesting so that they will be accepted among the family and community.

Why not?

Motivation by Inspiring

Think about the biography of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) carefully to find that he experienced the highest levels of psychological pressure after the disbelievers had intensified their harm against him, physically and mentally.

The verse: **“Exalted is He who took His Servant by night from al-Masjid al-Haram to al-Masjid al-Aqsa, whose surroundings We have blessed, to show him of Our signs. Indeed, He is the Hearing, the Seeing,”** (Al-Isra 17:1) tackles the prophet’s Night Journey (*Al-Isra*) and his Ascension into heaven (*Al-Mi’raj*) and how God Almighty took His Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) by night to show him some of His signs. This would alleviate the prophet and get him out of the distress that had befallen him because of the disbelievers’ conflict with him, and their lurking and harassment with him during his call.

Before the *Al-Isra* and *Al-Miraj* journey, sadness and pain had befallen the prophet (peace be upon him) after the death of two of his supporters - his beloved wife Khadija (may Allah be pleased with her) and his uncle Abu Talib. Moreover, the people of Quraysh exacerbated their harm against him, and then came the incident of his trip to Al-Taif, where its people gathered to beat and abuse him. At this moment, the prophet (peace be upon him) turned to his Lord in submission, raising his hands to the sky, praying to his Lord,

with a sincere supplication coming from the depths of his sad heart, saying: **“O Allah! I complain to You of my weakness, my scarcity of resources and the humiliation I have been subjected to by the people. O Most Merciful of those who are merciful. O Lord of the weak and my Lord too. To whom have you entrusted me? To a distant person who receives me with hostility? Or to an enemy to whom you have granted authority over my affair? So long as You are not angry with me, I do not care. Your favor is of a more expansive relief to me. I seek refuge in the light of Your Face by which all darkness is dispelled and every affair of this world and the next is set right, lest Your anger or Your displeasure descends upon me. I desire Your pleasure and satisfaction until You are pleased. There is no power and no might except by You.”**

So God wanted to relieve the pain of His servant, the prophet, and honored him with this divine journey - the Night Journey and the Ascension - as if He wanted to say to him: If this is the treatment of the people of the earth for you, come to heaven to see how its dwellers welcome you, and how they receive you with warmth and joy.

The journey was intended by God Almighty to get the prophet out of his distress by seeing signs of his Lord in His realm, to know that what Allah has is much greater and bigger than what he lives in. This was a way out of the crisis. The Prophet (peace be upon him) realized, from my point of view, that this journey was a way out of his crisis and the psychological pressure he sustained.

From my point of view, God Almighty motivated the prophet (peace be upon him) to get out of his crisis by taking him on the

Night Journey. So if we want to imitate this, that when our chest is narrow, we have to get out of this narrow circle in which we live to a far place where we can glorify God and see the wonders of His creation and His ability. This will strengthen our relations with Allah and, therefore, we will distance ourselves from troubles. By drawing near to God, a servant becomes away from the drowning circle and from the problems that surround him.

Perhaps the mechanism of going out of crises, traveling, and avoiding problems, which is associated with drawing near to God Almighty and contemplating His creatures, is the best methodology to get someone out of their distress.

Add to all of the above the fact that prayer (Salah), which relieved the prophet's distress, was ordered by Allah during the Ascension journey. Perhaps this could include a kind of divine inspirational method that prayer is a way out for immediate relief. This is because anyone who rushes to prayer while being under life pressures will feel comfort, tranquility, and calm. Prayer is a kind of drawing near to God Almighty. This is a way to piety. Allah says:

“And whoever fears Allah - He will make for him a way out,” (At-Talaq 65:2). **“Unquestionably, by the remembrance of Allah hearts are assured,”** (Ar-Ra'd 13:28).

Given that Ascension is an act of going up, why we do not advise whoever is tired of the problems and the people around them to imagine that they are flying in a helicopter. In this way, they will watch themselves getting out of the crisis circle instead of being

inside it. They will watch the events from a distance and see things in their actual sizes, and not in the large form they have seen before. They will discover that there are other matters more important. Then the thing that disturbed them will appear smaller in their eyes. They may find it unjustifiable to continue in a disagreement, if any, or keep depressed, and so on.

Likewise, prayer is our plane by which we ascend to approach God Almighty and complain to Him, to strengthen our relationship with Him. So any problems become easier and smaller in our sight when we get to know that we have a kind, generous God whom we meet in our prayers five times a day and to whom we supplicate to ask for mercy, forgiveness, guidance and acceptance. Here, anyone who sought to annoy or pressurize us will seem to be nothing in our sight, because our relationship is connected to Allah the Greatest, who can get us out of the plots of plotters and the narrowness of the world and all people; for it is He who says: **“And He is the subjugator over His servants. And He is the Wise, the Acquainted [with all],”** (Al-An’am 6:18).

The point here is that the Night Journey and the Ascension are a fact mentioned in the Holy Quran. They inspire us and include a divine methodology in motivating people to get out of their crises, by rising above to view them smaller and by communicating with God Almighty through prayer. This contact with Allah, the Greatest, makes it easier for us if we encounter anything. It would even better if we complain to Allah, who is the subjugator over His servants.

Let us accustom ourselves to imagining flying in via a helicopter to rise above our problems and to be more able to see things in their actual size. Let us communicate with and put our trust in Allah, the Greatest, and not in anything besides Him. Glory be to Him.

Motivation by Feeding

I paused while reading the Quranic verse: **“Let them worship the Lord of this House, Who has fed them, [saving them] from hunger and made them safe, [saving them] from fear,”** (Quraish 106:3-4).

I felt that as if God Almighty teaches us that feeding is the priority for motivation. Many verses stated Allah’s bounties from which we eat.

It is as if Allah, Exalted be He, calls His servants to enjoy His favors. Allah says: **“And eat and drink, but be not excessive. Indeed, He likes not those who commit excess,”** (Al-A’raf 7:31). Allah, Glory be to Him, knows the importance of food and that it is a human instinct. As God has created for man a mate to dwell in security, He has also created food for humans to fulfill their basic instinct and urged us to feed the needy, saying: **“And they give food in spite of love for it to the needy, the orphan, and the captive, [Saying], ‘We feed you only for the countenance of Allah. We wish not from you reward or gratitude,’”** (Al-Insan 76:8-9). Many other verses explain to us the power of feeding as a motivation for mankind.

So let us learn to give out food and have the motivation by feeding, providing and securing food as a method for motivating those around

us by removing their concerns about securing food for their children and families.

Securing food is sufficient to guarantee full loyalty, belonging and commitment, to ensure that food is always secured.

It is a divine motivation approach that deserves our reflection despite its simplicity. It is so related to our lives. What a great motivation for people to live with.

If we look around, we find that the ration card and subsidized bread, for example, are nothing but the motivation for feeding, even though there is a need for rationalization, because perhaps not everyone today needs someone to secure food for them. But for some people, feeding may denote guaranteeing their investment or opening areas of business that can provide livelihoods for people, and so on.

We have to know the value of feeding in a broader sense. It has to be a major tool for motivating those around us, for it is a guaranteed method.

Conclusion

God, Glory be to Him, has the secrets of human beings, whom He has created, and knows that man cannot lead an upright life or follow the religion He revealed to His Messengers without motivation. So He has motivated His servants. This motivation takes the means of inviting people to His religion, and not by intimidation as a few some people tried to teach us.

I hope that I have succeeded in presenting some of the features of the divine motivation mechanisms, as I have understood from my reflection upon the Holy Quran. I hope that this book will be a new key to our relationship with God Almighty through which each one of us enjoys trading with Him. Of course, this trade is profitable. Let each one of us be inspired by the motivation that has moved them to come near to Allah and draw from these mechanisms what they can help them in their lives in general. By doing so, we will be understanding some keys to dealing with the human soul. Of course, this will help people achieve better success in their lives.

Let us all apply the “*divine motivation mechanisms*” and see how Allah, the Greatest, has motivated us.

Let each of us reflect on Allah’s verses and add to this small book a new book on the divine motivation mechanisms and how God, Glory be to Him, has motivated His servants to worship Him and believe in Him so that He would not bring them to accountability on the Day of Account.

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This small book is offered as an endowment for Allah’s sake.

In this book, I tried to understand the divine motivation method for humans through reflections on Allah’s Book, the Quran, which I think is a “manual for the human soul”. I pray to God to accept it and to be a good start for more love, ‘trade’, and goodness between people and God Almighty.

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