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Nature of Development and Ways of Achieving it in Human Life

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ABSTRACT

Man is a complex creature that has always been studied from different aspects. Man is on the path of development in this world and his ultimate end is to achieve nearness to God. On this path, he uses body and soul as tools to develop and achieve capacities. Here, the only comprehensive guide and law is Islam, which is compatible with human nature; although various human development schools consider human development to depend on different affairs or regard him to be a single-dimension creature, Islam has paid attention to various human dimensions, considering the condition to achieve perfection for humans to have a developmental life in all micro-, and macro dimensions. In this connection, God Almighty sent down apostles with religious teachings to guide humanity towards a straight path. The way of development is the only way that helps flourish positive human talents and prevents the actualization of negative talents that may result in the spread of caprice. The study fell under descriptive-analytical research and collected data from library sources.

Keywords: development, growth, human, Islam

INTRODUCTION

According to the Qur'an, human value arises when he attains the end of the Creation, which is nearness to God, and this is human perfection; by perfection, it is the sensual and spiritual perfection, because the soul is the substance of human identity and character. To the Qur'an, a blissful man achieves this end.

The human development cycle never ceases in any stage of his life. In this world, man is on the path of development and whose ultimate end is to draw nearer to Good, as he uses the tools of body and soil in this regard. Therefore, humans are said to be on the course of development based on their nature. Once a man finds the necessary power to choose the right path from the wrong one, he can choose the path of development based on his choice and will. The development path is the only path that enables positive human talents, which prevents the actualization of negative human talents that may end in the rule of lust.

Development¹ literally denotes completed and finished to the level desired, as the difference between *complete* and *perfection* being that the former suggests a human not being imperfect, while the latter denotes one with decent traits. Thus, development denotes the completion of an object, called perfection, as used in God's names. Development denotes all features and aspects are perfected, with stages being completed.

¹ Also, Takamol in Arabic, denoting finished and completed



Since human nature tends to bond with God and naturally aspires for perfection, and on the other hand, because God considers development and perfection to be the end of human life and education and calls on human society to move toward it, it should be stated that stepping in this way is not certain, at all, because today, devils and evil forces seek to divert man from the right way and to lead him toward the abyss of destruction, thus deterring human society from achieving this holy end. Hence, man should realize the way of development. For this, the author seeks to investigate the importance of understanding perfection and ways to achieve it through the concept of development in the Qur'an. This will not only help better realize development and ways of achieving it but also paves the way for investigating the nature of development and its outcomes in human life.

Concept of Development

Development denotes the [process](#) in which someone or something [grows](#) or [changes](#) and [becomes](#) more [advanced](#) (Cambridge Dictionary). Figuratively, the word 'development' is widely used to refer to a specified state of advancement or growth. It could also be used to describe a new and advanced idea or product; or an event that constitutes a new stage under changing circumstances. Generally, the term development describes good change.

On the other hand, development denotes a completed and finished task to the level desired, as the difference between *complete* and *perfection* being that the former suggests a human not being imperfect, while the latter denotes one with decent traits. Thus, development denotes the completion of an object, called perfection, as used in God's names. Development denotes all features and aspects are perfected, with a stage being completed.

Human Development

Compared to all creatures, man has a developmental way to go; on the one hand, he can reach the highest ranks and even transcend angels, while, on the other hand, falls to the lowest ranks, thus getting inferior to animals, also. According to religious logic, human perfection depends on his worship of God, while his fall is associated with his disbelief and disobedience of God, which is interpreted as sins.

Man can develop using knowledge, faith, and righteous deeds, as the Qur'an considers human development to be faith, which originates from the human soul and heart. Man's heart rises from belief, and there is no doubt that unless knowledge and belief penetrate the human heart, that knowledge won't be useful. Dimensions of development are closely related with some special subtlety (Mutahhari, 1978:17).

Types of Development

- 1. Physical Development:** This type of development refers to children's growing control over their movements. This phenomenon includes fine and gross motor skills, as well as vision. As the child improves his vision, he gains more skills to see and pay attention to near and distant distances. As fine motor skills develop, the child can manipulate things, such as tying shoelaces. Meanwhile, gross motor skills enable the child to perform such activities as throwing and grabbing, which require high mobility.
- 2. Linguistic Development:** It refers to the ability to produce sounds, perceive, and learn numerous words for learning. Children learn how to use their speaking faculty in complicated manners such as expressing their thoughts.



3. **Cognitive Development:** It refers to gaining knowledge and skills required to purposefully process and use data; these skills include the faculty of imagination, creativity, abstract thoughts, rational reasoning, resolving capacity and serious measures, the knowledge of self, and individual character.
4. **Emotional and Social Development:** From early birth, when the child fully depends on his caregiver, he increasingly begins to become independent. He develops skills, self-assistance, and the perception of cultural and social dimensions in himself. The control of emotions develops with the perception of desirable ways to express opinions and feelings (Nejati, 2005:14).
5. **Spiritual and Moral Development:** It generally refers to perceiving such values as honesty, justice, respect, truthfulness, untruthfulness, a sense of responsibility and self-knowledge, and monotheism.

Human Development Stages

1. **Physical Development:** *It is He who created you from dust, then from a drop of [seminal] fluid, then from a clinging mass, then He brings you forth as infants, then [He nurtures you] so that you may come of age, and then that you may become aged—though some of you die earlier—and complete a specified term, and so that you may exercise your reason² (Ghafir/67).*

It is He who created you from dust..... By the creation of man from dust, it suggests that the father of humans, i.e., Adam was created of dust, because a non-human creation could finally lead to a human creation, which was from dust; as a consequence, their creation was principally based on dust. By the creation of man from dust, it may have also denoted that our father's formation of semen in Eve had been *developmental*; thus, it is true to say that man was created from dust, with some arguing that " *created you* ³" was based on the creation of " *created your fathers* ⁴ ", i.e., He [God] created your father, Adam (Peace Be Upon Him) from dust (Razi, 1997:36).

..... then from a drop of [seminal] fluid, then from a clinging mass, which semen takes that form after the passage of forty days. The word " *seminal fluid* "⁵ is introduced as indefinite to refers to its inferiority (Tabari, 1996:435).

He then created you from the semen of man and woman.... The indefinite usage of " *clinging mass* "⁶ means that " *We bring you forth from your mothers' wombs*". The words "dust"⁷, " *seminal fluid* ", " *clinging mass* ", introduced as indefinite words to refer to the dust from which " *seminal fluid* " appears, should be special dust with special quality; i.e., one that is



² هُوَ الَّذِي خَلَقَكُمْ مِنْ تُرَابٍ ثُمَّ مِنْ نُطْفَةٍ ثُمَّ عَلَّقَهُ ثُمَّ يُخْرِجُكُمْ طِفْلاً ثُمَّ لِتَبْلُغُوا أَشْدَادَ كُمْ ثُمَّ لِتَكُونُوا شِيخاً وَ مِنْكُمْ مَنْ يَتَوَقَّى مِنَ قَبْلِ وَ لِتَبْلُغُوا أَجْلاً مُّسَمًّى وَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَعْقِلُونَ.

³ "... created you"

⁴ "... created your father"

⁵ Semen

⁶ Clinging mass

⁷ Dust

intermingled with other elements, and the semen that becomes the substance of man must be a special one, separate and distinct from other semen.

So, He brings each of you forth from the mother's womb while you are infants... The infant's birth is either by the mechanism of the sex or is interpreted by an entire unit so that it may attain its full strength. " the first letter of the word⁸ in " *He nurtures you*"⁹ has as if his possessive removed, which is reasoned by "**completes you after infancy**", i.e., gives you life [survival] after infancy so that you reach the strongest form of your faculty, which is the youth age, as the most extreme puberty of man is when his bodily force achieves perfection. Some commentators consider the most extreme puberty to be completeness and maturity (Sultan Ali Shah, 1998:72).

... then after the youth age, it leaves you to turn old..." though there are some of you who die earlier" , i.e., some of you shall die before aging. Here, "your growth and development" is a reason for "he nurtures you", i.e., a transition from one age to another before the old age or before puberty, as a specific period is certain, which is no way alterable. This specific period is an end that includes all people, i.e., whoever of any age.

" *for you to act on your own mind*"¹⁰ denotes so that you may perceive the truth with the faculty of reasoning, which is your instinct, and this is the end of human creation in terms of his spiritual life, as reaching the so-called specific period is the end of his worldly and nominal life. This exhorts people that one who deserves to be worshipped is one who created you [humans] from dust and set out a transition to make you complete, by creating you from semen and a clinging mass, to come forth as an infant.

" *for you to act on your own mind*" suggests despite that you know all the stages of creation, we remind you to use your reasoning and intellect whether the one who created this amazing human creation that contains knowledge, power, and wisdom and made nothingness out of existence deserves to be prayed or the weak creature that lacks any perfection or has nothing of his own; of course, one with little perception never submits to a weak creature like himself or more than himself (Taleghani, 1982:340).

"We have certainly created man into hardship"¹¹

(Surah Balad/4)

Ibn Abbas and Saeid bin Jubair say: This verse implies that man is in hardship, agony, and suffering. He suffers from world agonies and the hardship of the Hereafter, as he shall face hardness and discomfort until he moves out of the world. Some have also argued that: This verse relates to the words of God; i.e., we tested him and when we put a burden on him, we clarified the reason by creating two eyes for him. " *We have certainly created man*" is an answer implying a swear that we created humans into hardship; i.e., he who was first surrounded by a womb, he who was chained by the school of knowledge, and he who suffered all agonies (Tabari, 1991:747).

⁸ ل as the first letter of the word

⁹ To reach puberty

¹⁰ so that you may exercise your reason

¹¹ لَقَدْ خَلَقْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ فِي كَبَدٍ



Concerning types of creation, Imam Sadiq (Peace Be Upon Him) says: Creations fall under three types; one is an innovative creation, as God Almighty says: *Indeed your Lord is Allah, who created the heavens and the earth in six days*¹² (Surah A'raf/54); second, there is a stage-by-stage creation, as God says: *He created you from one soul. Then He made from it its mate, and He produced for you from the grazing livestock eight mates. He creates you in the wombs of your mothers, creation after creation, within three darkness. That is Allah, your Lord; to Him belongs dominion. There is no deity except Him, so how are you averted*¹³ (Surah Zumar/6), and the third one is a predestined creation, as Prophet Jesus (Peace Be Upon Him) says: *When you create from dust*¹⁴ (Surah Ghafir/67).

Describing human creation, Imam Ali (Peace Be Upon Him) says: “Is this human, not the one whom God created in the darkness of the womb out of semen that later turned into a worthless clinging mass, one who became a fetus, then a newborn and an infant, and later an adolescent, and one whom God gave a memorizing heart and a telling tongue, and a seeing eye to understand and learn lessons and to stop from evil?”

In the Arafah prayer, Imam Hussein (Peace Be Upon Him) says: “You initiated my creation when I was nothing and created me from dust, then placed me in the backs [the back of father and mother]; I remained safe and secure from the vicissitudes of the time and the passing of days out of your compassion and kindness to me; for this, I was transitioning from the backs into a womb and you had mercy on me by not bringing me into life in the era of disbelievers, who broke your monotheistic covenant and rejected your apostles; rather, you brought me forth out of your compassion and nurtured me in the era of guidance, which you had already ordained for me; you then began my creation out of poured semen and placed me in the three periods of darkens of flesh, skin, and blood, while finally creating me as safe and healthy as a human being, by not postponing anything of creation to me”.

This alludes to the Qur’anic verse: *Certainly, We created you, then We formed you, then We said to the angels, ‘Prostrate before Adam.’ So, they [all] prostrated, but not Iblis: he was not among those who prostrated*¹⁵ (Surah A'raf/11).

In this verse, God says He created man before forming him, and after an indefinite period, He brought him into this present form; after a while, He ordered angels to prostrate before Adam (Kolini, 1998:77).

Therefore, creation is the first genesis in his development from water and dust that constitutes life, as the verse infers that man has passed through special stages and courses.

- First: It is the post-creation stage before human form takes shape
- Second: After human form takes shape and before choosing Adam from among people of his species
- Third: Choosing Adam from among them and after that (Meshkini-Ardabili, 1991:70).

¹² اِنَّ رَبَّكُمْ اللهُ الَّذِي خَلَقَ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ سِتَّةَ أَيَّامٍ

¹³ يَخْلُقْكُمْ فِي بُطُونِ أُمَّهَاتِكُمْ خَلْقًا مِّنْ بَعْدَى خَلْقٍ فِي ظُلُمَاتٍ ثَلَاثٍ ذَلِكُمْ اللهُ رَبُّكُمْ لَهُ الْمُلْكُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ فَاتَى تُصْرَفُونَ

¹⁴ وَإِذْ تَخْلُقُ مِنَ الطِّينِ

¹⁵ وَلَقَدْ خَلَقْنَاكُمْ ثُمَّ صَوَّرْنَاكُمْ ثُمَّ قُلْنَا لِلْمَلَائِكَةِ اسْجُدُوا لِآدَمَ



2. Spiritual Development

One of the stages of development is faith in the Unseen. *Those who believe in the Unseen, maintain the prayer and spend out of what We have provided for them*¹⁶ (Baqarah/3).

This verse describes the attributes of the Godfearing who enjoy the light of guidance of the Qur'an. The first attribute of these people is their faith in the Unseen. For Mu'tazela, faith is obedience to God, performing obligatory acts, and forbidding great sins. Some believers also maintain that performing Mustahabb acts¹⁷ is credible, in addition to establishing obligatory acts.

Imam Ali bin Mousa Al-Reza (Peace Be Upon Him) is frequently quoted as saying: "Faith is confirmation by the heart and acknowledge by the tongue, and acting upon by members, adding that faith is belief in the speech and conducts of the Prophet (Peace Ben Upon Him)" (Qara'ati, 2006:50).

The Qur'an has mentioned faith in the Unseen before two bodily and financial obligations, then stating these two obligations by establishing prayers (they perform the prayer) and spending out (almsgiving) to the destitute (Tabrasi, 1970:62).

"*He has written faith into their hearts*¹⁸" (Surah Mujadeleh/22). Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him) points to his chest while referring to this verse, saying: "Faith is a mysterious and inward affair, and Islam is an outward manifestation, i.e., it is sometimes the expression of *Shahada*. If faith is not out of knowledge and certainty, it is an apparent and literal faith".

If God's mercy is said to cover the faithful, the Qur'an, thus, denotes mercy that solely belongs to the faithful, and it is the human life happiness with various manifestations, which God Almighty has only conferred upon the faithful, such as the knowledge of divine jurisprudence, decent morality, righteous deeds, and good life in the world and the Hereafter. For this, the Qur'an's description of mercy for the faithful denotes that only the faithful are immersed in blissfulness and felicity; felicity that God has laid within the Qur'an and made it a repository for anyone to delve into the truths and find the relevant meanings so that they would benefit from them (Tabatabaei, 1995:117).

What makes man draw nearer to God and gets his soul to approach Him are righteous deeds. A righteous deed is an act that renders in God's pleasure; the Qur'an suggests that a righteous deed refers to an act that is both substantively good per se and is performed by an individual to get nearer to God and gain His pleasure. This act is called worship in the Islamic and Qur'anic culture.

To go through the path of development, the first step for humans is to come out of ignorance and realize where they are, who has created them and for what, and what they should do. Now, contrary to ignorance is attention, which the Qur'an calls *Zikr*, i.e., the remembrance of God (Asadi, 2013:167).

Faith and righteous deeds are what God has demanded us to perform, and are thus considered to be the condition of achieving perfection and felicity. This concept has not been cited in

¹⁶ الَّذِينَ يُؤْمِنُونَ بِالْغَيْبِ وَيُقِيمُونَ الصَّلَاةَ وَمِمَّا رَزَقْنَاهُمْ يُنْفِقُونَ

¹⁷ Any of the religiously rewarding acts that are prescribed but are not obligatory

¹⁸ أُولَئِكَ كَتَبَ فِي قُلُوبِهِمُ الْإِيمَانَ



many cases alongside each other in the Qur'an, while relevant cases have been emphasized *“Those who have faith and do righteous deeds—happy are they and good is their [ultimate] destination¹⁹”* (Surah Ra'd/29).

The origin of faith in God Almighty, the origin of faith in the supernatural, and the degrees of faith and perfection are divine *esteem* in the human being; the same divine authority God has trusted man with, as God says: *I have breathed into him of My spirit.*

The origin of nature on the earth is divine authority. Thus, human nature means the servitude of God. If this light, which is within the human being, moves towards God and serves Him, it shall perfect faith. Man must get closer to God and raise his degrees. The entire world and all that is in the world are all divine signs; however, man does not pay attention to God and does not realize if there is a God.

On his path towards development, man, commensurate with his endeavor and obedience of God and through nearness to God, shall become a sign of divine attributes; in other words, he shall become a caliph of God and it is here where he is prostrated by angels and leads them, with his will, upon the will of God, shall take into effect in the world of being, thus achieving the summit of development, concerning his Creator (Makarem Shirazi, 1992:129).

Ways of Achieving Development

According to the Qur'an, the human's path towards development is clear and God has shown him this way. The Qur'an has interpreted this way as the “Straight Way” in Surah Yasin, verse 61 *“Worship Me. That is a straight path”*.

Humans are always going through the path of development and they should strive on this path not to go astray or fall in the abyss of destruction. Therefore, we can say that all humans are on the path of development based on their nature. When a man gains the intellectual capacity necessary to choose between the truth and the untruth, he should choose his development based on his will, as the way of development and ignorance has only been chosen by God, and it is a man who should decide and choose one.

The straight way or the way of development is the only path that flourishes human's positive talents and prevents the actualization of his negative talents that may engender in the spread of lust and caprice in humans.

According to the Qur'anic worldview, man is a creature who sees the way of development from two angles; one is the natural guidance (inward guidance) and the other is the external guidance (legislative guidance) (Amin, 1982:275).

To attain final perfection, the following are required:

1. **Monotheism:** This factor is the key to achieve the ultimate end of Ma'rafa Allah, i.e., the knowledge of God. Without the knowledge of God, nearness to Him is no way possible, and hence Imam Ali (Peace Be Upon Him) says: “The first stage of religion is the knowledge [of God]” (Nahj ul-Balagha, Sermon 1).
2. **Piety:** The Qur'an says that piety and righteousness are the keys to attain the position of thanksgiving and immense bounties, as well as dominance over issues with special insight and gaining success, with all these factors affecting the nearness of God.
3. **Abandoning sin:** The largest barrier to achieving perfection is sins or caprice, as Imam Sadiq (Peace Be Upon Him) says: Between the servant and God, there is no veil darker

¹⁹ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ طُوبَىٰ لَهُمْ وَحَسَنُ مَاٰبٍ



and more frightening than caprice, which can be eliminated by appealing to God and humility against Him, as well as tolerating hunger on days and nights (Qomi, 1995:603).

4. **Soul purification:** By soul purification, it is meant self-refinement, i.e., understanding knowledge and performing conducts that produce known perfection for self. Our understanding of self-refinement denotes full dependence on soul purification, as self-refinement is the key to human felicity and happiness. In Islam, soul purification is the prelude to all other moral concepts, because it entails the development, happiness, and felicity of man in the world and the Hereafter. The philosophy of sending down prophets and infallible Imams has been to teach humans how to purify their souls, and for this, Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him) used to strive days and nights to teach humans soul-purification to get them to perfection; meanwhile, infallible Imam also sought to unchain the human society from sensual predicaments and get them to the truth, dynamism, and perfection (Navaei, 2005:64).
5. **Marriage:** Marriage is the first step to form a family, and is regarded as a worthy and valuable act due to its outcomes in society. Marriage creates comfort for men and women. *And among His Signs is this, that He created for you mates from among yourselves, that ye may dwell in tranquility with them, and He has put love and mercy between your (hearts): verily in that are Signs for those who reflect* (Surah Rum/21). Narratives have emphasized marriage, because man's comfort is the prelude to his movement towards development and perfection, as the comfort and moral health of society depends on his comfort and health. Man's mental tranquility and the moral security of society are provided through marriage. The encouragement to marriage and emphasis on it tell of its positive impacts on the human's developmental move while abandoning marriage could engender adverse effects. The main goal of marriage is to facilitate nearness to God. According to some narratives, abandoning marriage results in corruption on the earth. "Whenever you like the morality and religion of a suitor, marry him; otherwise, corruption and chaos will spread to the earth" (Abedini-Motlagh, 1985:24). Marriage is the best means to pave the way for human development and excellence. In a religious lifestyle, marriage is the only way for man's development, meaning that it is the path towards God's goal of creation, which is the subject of the human being as the caliph of God and his deification on the earth. For humans to achieve perfection in various stages of life, there are some mechanisms, without which lifestyle and religious discourse are impossible. One of the mechanisms is worship, without which man cannot attain the deification and development that God has considered for him. God has so created man to actualize the strong existential capacities of his humane and emotional structure in a context called marriage, by which man can maintain his peace of soul and attain the summit of development and excellence (Fathali-Khani, 2005:140).
6. **Patience:** The best reaction against hardships in life is patience. Patience against suffering and hardships enables man to attain a development he cannot even imagine. Patience is of several types:



- a) Patience and endurance in the field of sensual desires and perseverance in self-control to forsake sins and forbidden acts.
- b) Patience over the hardships of fulfilling divine duties and Sharia obligations, and
- c) Patience and tolerance against agonies and adversities
- 7. Obedience of God and the Prophet:** Man has been created to get to God, who is the absolute perfection, and this will not be possible unless through a way God has introduced; finding this way and successfully going through it hinges on obeying the orders of God Almighty and submission against His Sharia. *“O you who have faith! Obey Allah and obey the Apostle and those vested with authority among you. And if you dispute concerning anything, refer it to Allah and the Apostle, if you have faith in Allah and the Last Day. That is better and more favorable in the outcome.”* (Surah Nisa/59). Obeying the apostle is equivalent to obeying God because whatever the apostle says has come from God and he cannot and must not say things by himself and attribute them to God. God Almighty sent no apostles except that they are obeyed, because if an apostle were not followed, God would not be obeyed, either, and the disobedient who does not follow God and His messenger could be diverted from the path of the truth and justice, which underly the world.
- 8. Worship:** A Qodsi Hadith suggests: No servant of mine ever approaches me except for establishing the obligations, and thus he can approach me using the obligatory acts. For this, I shall like him and I become a hearing ear, a seeing eye, and a strong hand of him. If he calls on me, I shall respond and grant him if he demands from me” (Mahdavi-Kani, 2019:30).

The following is a list of cases proposed for this conduct:

Self-knowledge, awareness, reminding, thinking, the knowledge of rules, choosing a good friend, avoiding sins, repentance, fulfilling the obligatory acts, performing mustahabb acts, relinquishing abominations, contemplation, purity, Mujahida against the soul, order, seizing opportunities, serving people, trust in God, good treatment of others, asceticism, and frugality (Mahdavi-Kani, 2019:44).

Relationship between Worship and Development

Worship is not just humility against God Almighty; rather, submission and servitude require humility and modesty. Hence, the servant feels a kind of perfection and grandeur in His beloved and for this submits himself unconditionally in His servitude and prostrates in his sight; finally, becoming the lover of the Creator.

Worship and servitude before the Lord create asceticism and nearness of God, as the more human takes a step on the path of worship, the more he becomes valuable and lovable before God. *“I did not create the jinn and the humans except that they may worship Me.”* (Surah Zariyat/56).

Worship and perfection are complementary, and in other words, they affect each other. Thus, the human who takes a step on the path of development engages in worshipping God; the more the worship, the faster the development will be, and the more humans become perfect, and the more the worship and servitude. If a man keeps doing so on this path, he shall enjoy deification.

Outcomes of Worship in the Realization of Development



All phenomena require connecting with the Creator of the world to keep living and receive more grace. The channel through which man connects with God is worship, as the more and the better the worship, the more man enjoys divine grace, and the more he approaches God. Worshipping and serving God have effects in both the world and in the Hereafter. The outcomes of worship are as follows:

1. **Peace in the grave:** The grave's cavity is the first house for the journey to the afterlife, and is the place where the first outcomes of human conduct appear. If the conducts are good, the grave promises freedom like a green light; otherwise, it is a warning that augurs a dark future.
2. **Safety in the Doomsday:** The second outcome of servitude appears on the day of Judgment, where the Qur'an says: "*Whoever brings virtue shall receive [a reward] better than it, and on that day they will be secure from terror*" (Surah Naml/89).
3. **Divine Mercy and Forgiveness:** Enjoying divine mercy and forgiveness is yet another outcome of worshipping God, which is achieved by righteous conduct. The Qur'an says: "*As for those who have faith in Allah and hold fast to Him, He will admit them to His mercy and grace, and He will guide them on a straight path to Him.*" (Surah Nisa/175) (Boroujerdi, 1984:144).
4. **Arrival in Paradise:** The good servants of God, who were believers in the world, worshiped God and were not deceived by worldly riches, will deserve the heavens. Imam Ali (Peace Be Upon Him) says: "The more and the better the servant worships, the more he enjoys divine bounties, and the more he approaches God.
5. **Tranquility:** Another great impact of worship is peace of mind and a healthy body and soul. It should be borne in mind that one of the factors contributing to physical and mental diseases are, for Islam and psychologists, apprehension and grief. Apprehension is caused by turning away from God and spirituality.
6. **Fear of God:** The more the worshipper prostrates before God and submits in servitude, the more he approaches Him and the more he conceives of His grandeur. As a result, he has a heart full of fear of God, which makes him engage in religious tasks and refrain from unlawful acts. The spirit of broad-mindedness is also associated with fear of God, which liberates the worshipper from the shackles of freedom-killing factors, such as wealth, prestige, greed, etc. For this, nothing is more liberating than the worship of God.
7. **Attention to God:** Any factor that turns away the heart from the remembrance of God and diverts it from His sight is a means for keeping away from God; conversely, any factor that makes the heart familiar with God and directs its attention to His sight is a means for perfection. Thus, authentic worship is the attention of the heart to God, and all the conducts performed with the intention of the nearness of God and His servitude depend on the heart's fortuity towards the sight of God.
8. **Keeping safe from sins:** Another effect of worship is protection against sins. Because the more man approaches God, the more he turns away from sins and deviation, and the less satanic obsessions influence him (Kashani, 1829:191).
9. **Happiness and felicity:** Felicity and happiness are bounties, which humans do their best to acquire. For Islam, a felicitous man has acted upon prophetic teachings and divine



rules and one who strives to acquire spirituality in life. Imam Ali (Peace Be Upon Him) says: “Happiness and felicity come from man’s religiosity and practice for the Hereafter” (Tamimi-Amadi, 1998:25).

10. Tolerating hardships: A worshipper’s power of resistance against problems and adversities is another advantage of worship. In other words, prayer, which is a spiritual relationship between an individual and the Higher World, creates a capacity in humans by which they become invincible against hardships. Hence, the Qur’an orders the faithful: *“O you who have faith! Take recourse in patience and prayer; indeed Allah is with the patient.”* (Surah Baqara/153).

The truth of worship is that the human being submits all that he has against the true Creator. The biggest barrier to our development relates to the fact that any of us have a divinity and authority nature against God. We think we are someone, possess intelligence and talents, and own some property and wealth, especially if we have some social position, we feel secure and independence. Many of us are busy worshipping ourselves instead of worshipping God and giving in to our lust and caprice instead of submission to God. For Islam, the more man climbs the ladder of the nearness of God, the more his soul becomes complete. The only way of achieving the nearness of God is servitude and worship, i.e., man should only consider one single way in his life and that should be performing the obligatory acts and nearness of God.

Most outcomes of worship appear in the Hereafter, and its results in the Hereafter are greater than this world, with a clear example being the establishment of prayer. The prophet (Peace Be Upon Him) says: “When a faithful establish prayers until he finishes them, mercy spreads from above his head up until the horizon of the skies, with angels encircling him to the horizon of the sky”.

Prayer is a passing certificate in the hands of the establisher that raises him to the peak of perfection and the heavens. The prophet (Peace Be Upon Him) says: “When a faithful establish prayers, the doors of the heavens open for him and the veil between God and the servant is removed, with paradise wives coming to him”.

The Role of Invocation in the Realization of Development

The factors that affect soul purification are inward purity and the fulfillment of the nearness of God, as well as supplication and invocation of the Lord Almighty. Invocation establishes the human’s link with the One God and results in the flight of the soul towards the heavens and the fragrant mystical and spiritual realm. Invocation leaves great impacts on human life and fate, and is highly important in religious knowledge, especially in Islamic mysticism, to the extent that mystics believe it to be the gateway to exploring the truths.

The first effects of invocation and supplication are familiarity with Islamic knowledge. Concerning invocation, Imams have taught us to remember the names of God and His attributes and invoke blessing and peace on the Prophet and his household, while admitting to our weakness, negligence, and sins in observing divine rules, to eventually ask from God what we have wanted. Therefore, the first effect of invocation is helping to better understand the glory of God, familiarize with Islamic knowledge, and strengthen one’s beliefs (Javadi, 1999:224).

Invocation gives man self-confidence and deters him from hopelessness and despair while inviting him to more endeavors. Invocation gets him out of worry and gives him peace of mind. For this, by the time of difficult situations, invocation gives man power, hopefulness, and



comfort, thus resulting in his development. Faithful individuals can open the doors of divine bounties by invocation and supplication and seize more opportunities by using them. For this, in Surah Nisa (Verse 32), God says: “*And do not wish for that by which Allah has made some of you exceed others. For men is a share of what they have earned, and for women is a share of what they have earned. And ask Allah of his bounty. Indeed Allah is ever, of all things, Knowing*”.

Supplication and invocation help achieve value, and position in the sight of Allah., as He says: *Say: My Lord (Allah) would not care for you were it not for your prayer (when you are in adversity, which He then removes)* (Surah Forghan/77).

Conclusion

Man is on the path of development in this world and his ultimate end is to achieve *nearness to God*. On this path, he uses body and soul as tools to develop and achieve capacities. Therefore, all humans are on the path of development based on their nature, and when they find the necessary power to choose between the truth and the untruth, they should use their free will and choice to go through the path of development. Development in any field and any direction is inherently and naturally desirable for mankind. With its superior worldview for guiding human beings, Islam as the most comprehensive program for life has presented a definition for development, as expounded in Qur’anic verses. In other words, by development, it is meant the development of both body and soul, which is referred to in Qur’anic verses. Meanwhile, faith in God is a means that helps man to take steps in his developmental journey towards his ultimate perfection, i.e., the nearness of God.

Faith is the essence of all decent conduct, without which man cannot move toward perfection; it should be reminded that faith has ranks and the attainment of higher ranks may raise human’s existential capacity. The straight-way for the development way is the only path that actualizes positive human talents and prevents negative talents. Human’s developmental movement starts from himself, i.e., from his natural and heavenly, as well as mental and instinctual self, and ends with self or meeting with God. It is notable to suggest that movement and transformation from self towards God is truly the achievement of a superior and developmental self, and a developed man is a perfect one. This man is a blissful human who should work out all developmental effects in life to reach the peak of happiness and felicity.

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