TOWARDS UNDERSTANDING THE NATURE OF ALLAH AND HIS VISION FOR MAN IN THE LIGHT OF HIS NAMES AR-RAHMĀN AR-RAHĪM

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ABSTRACT

The paper reinforces the fact that Allah and His messenger have in different ways explained that Allah by nature is merciful, while His vision behind the creation of man is nothing but that of compassion. While acknowledging the above, the paper illustrates with relevant examples from the Glorious Qur’an and Sunnah on the overwhelming nature of the mercy of Allah and how His ninety nine (99) names inferentially depicts His Compassionate nature and His being Gracious. The paper upholds that the Qur’anic message hinges on two issues and nothing more. The first is that Allah is Compassionate to all His creations in this world and Has prepared a special way of expressing His benevolent nature to the believers only in the hereafter. Reward and punishment, recurrence of His appellations Ar-Rahman Ar-Rahim in the Glorious Quran, and the nature of acceptance of repentance and forgiveness of sins the paper posits, are affirmation of the merciful nature of Allah. In addition, all the above discourse strongly assures man that the vision behind his creation is nothing but out of mercy. Paths leading to the mercy of Allah and the reverse are lucidly explained while at the same time; it is recommended that people should reflect more on this in order to better appreciate the nature of Allah and His vision behind the creation of man.

Key words: Allah’s, nature, Vision Man, Mercy.

1. Introduction

One of the things that often baffle the mind of man is the nature of Allah and at-times His vision for man. An ignorant mind when posed with the above submission may quickly consent to such enquiry as no eye can see God so as ascertain His real essence and get clarification from Him regarding His mission for man. No doubt, the Qur’an says: No vision can grasp Him, but His grasp is over all vision: He is above all comprehension, yet is acquainted with all things. Q: (6:103). Fortunately, man is, through the divine message (Qur’an) and Sunnah, acquainted with the knowledge of the true nature of Allah and His vision for man. In more specific terms, the beautiful names of Allah further shed more light on this. The paper posits that although no eye can see Allah in this world, but the light of guidance provided by Him has made it easy for man to realise that Allah’s nature is nothing but inestimable Mercy as represented in His names Ar-Rahman Ar-Rahim. In addition, it argues that despite the hurdles faced by man in the bid to live on earth and attempt to worship Allah not minding the Hell-fire that awaits deviants among men, Allah’s vision for man is that of mercy, compassion and empathy. For better articulation and comprehension of the phenomenon of the true nature of Allah and His vision for man, it is of paramount importance to examine the meaning of some relevant terms.
2. Clarification of some terms

The words nature, Allah, vision, man, Ar-Rahman and Ar-Rahim are key to proper understanding of this discourse. The term, ‘nature’ is the intrinsic qualities of somebody or something. It also connotes the real appearance or aspect of a person, place, or thing. The nature of something explains its qualities, exhibition, ability and inability.

In the explanation of Al Kawlakhy (2001:43), the word Allah as commonly used in Arabic, refers to the Supreme Being who is independent of all but all depends on Him. The Arabs often interpret the term ‘Allah’ to simply mean the creator of the heavens and the earth. The Qur’an testifies to this as it says: If indeed thou ask them who it is that created the heavens and the earth, they would be sure to say, "Allah". Q: (39:38). Invariably, the expression “the nature of Allah” depicts the real essence of the creator of the heavens and the earth (Allah), the things He might likely do and the ones He could likely avoid. In addition, Allah is the one unto who worship is due.

Ar-Rahman and Ar-Rahim are the second and third in the list of the ninety nine names of Allah. Ar-Rahman simply means ‘the Most Compassionate’ while Ar-Rahim ‘the most Gracious’. These two names are derived from Ar-Rahmah (the Mercy). Ar-Rahman is richer in conveyance of the meaning of mercy than Ar-Rahim as it portrays that Allah’s Mercy is readily available to all creations. Ar-Rahim precisely refers to the mercy specifically reserved for the true believers. Al-Kawlakhy (2001:44).

Several verses of the Qur’an testify to this as Allah SWT says: He it is Who sends blessings on you, as do His angels, that He may bring you out from the depths of Darkness into Light: and He is Full of Mercy to the Believers. Q: (33:43), Now hath come unto you a Messenger from amongst yourselves: it grieves him that ye should perish: ardently anxious is he over you: to the Believers is he most kind and merciful.Q: (9:128).

In his explanation of Q: (4:40), Ibn Kathir (2003:vol. 2, p462) highlights a prophetic tradition that is of great relevance to this discourse and it says: Allah does not wrong the faithful even concerning one good action, for he will be rewarded for it by provision in this life and awarded for it in the Hereafter. As for the disbeliever, he will be provided provision in this life for his good action, and on the Day of Resurrection, he will not have any good deed.

In another report, Prophet SAW says: It is said that the day when Allah created mercy, He made it in one hundred parts. Ninety-nine parts He kept with Himself and one part sent to all His creatures, Bukhari (n.d.:Vol. 8, p316, No.476)

Going by the above submission, it therefore implies that the mercy of Allah is categorised into two, namely, the one that is overwhelmingly enjoined by both believers and the infidels in this world and the one reserved for the true believers in the hereafter.

a. Exposition of the nature of mercy of Allah and His vision for man.

Evidences are abound to buttress the nature of Allah and His vision for man The following subsections elaborate further on reasons why man need to comprehend the nature of his creator as The Beneficent and The Merciful God. In addition it also clarifies that the vision of Allah for man is that of mercy.

b. The overwhelming nature of His mercy

Among the irrefutable facts related to the knowledge of man regarding his creator is that of man’s inability to give an accurate account of the mercy of Allah being continuously showered on him. This is because the mercy of Allah is not abstruse but rather all encompassing and all embracing. Despite its obviousness, the Qur’an still clearly in many verses draws man’s attention to it as it says: And ordain for us that which is good, in this life and in the Hereafter: for we have turned unto Thee." He said: "With My punishment I visit whom I will; but My mercy extendeth to all things. Q: (7:156). In another verse it says: If ye would count up the favours of Allah, never would ye be able to number them: for Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful. Q.: (16:18.). Say: Say: To whom belongeth all that is in
the heavens and on earth?” Say: “To Allah. He hath inscribed for Himself [the rule of] Mercy. That He will gather you together for the Day of Judgment, there is no doubt whatever. It is they who have lost their own souls that will not believe.” Q: (6:12).

While corroborating on the overwhelming nature of the mercy of Allah, the Noble Prophet (S.A.W.) says: When Allah completed the creation, He wrote in His Book which is with Him on His Throne, My Mercy overpowers My Anger, Bukhari (n.d.: vol. 4, p279 no.416.)

If the overwhelming nature of Allah as established by Him (Allah) is mercy, it is logical to affirm that Allah by nature is the Merciful creator and has no any other mission behind the creation of man but the extension of this Mercy unto men.

The following prophetic tradition stresses further on the vast nature of Allah’s mercy. The hadith says: Narrated Abu Huraira: Allah's Apostle said, Do good deeds properly and moderately and rejoice for no one deeds will put him in paradise. They asked, Not even you, Oh messenger of Allah? He replied not even me unless Allah bestows His pardon and mercy on me. Bukhari (n.d.: vol. 8. p.313, no. 470)

The overwhelming nature of Allah’s mercy is equally appreciated in the above hadith as piusness and righteousness of a servant alone do not guarantee him the right to paradise except they are coupled with the mercy of Allah. This is because the mercy of Allah enjoyed by man outweighed the level of man’s piousness and righteousness, no matter how much they are. Even being able to do righteous deeds which could eventually lead man to paradise is also a special mercy of Allah. The service of a slave to his master is an unconditional duty that must be done and as is such not attached to any reward. Yet in spite of this, Allah in His infinite mercy does reward His servants for their good deeds. This obviously is a reflection of the merciful nature of Allah. Moreover all the acts leading to paradise are simplified for man because of His mercy, Sha’arawiy (2007:28).

There are some Qur’anic verses to validate the above statement. For example, Allah (S.W.T.) says...Were it not for the Grace and Mercy of Allah unto you, all but a few of you would have fallen into the clutches of Satan. Q:(4:83) ...were it not for the grace and mercy of Allah on you, not one of you would ever have been pure: but Allah doth purify whom He pleases: and Allah is One Who hears and knows [all things]. Q: (24:21), On no soul doth Allah Place a burden greater than it can bear. Q: (2:286) And strive in His cause as ye ought to strive, [with sincerity and under discipline]. He has chosen you, and has imposed no difficulties on you in religion; Q: (22:78). From these quotations, it is judiciously right to say that since the overwhelming nature of Allah is mercy, Allah is certainly by nature the Merciful Creator and His vision behind the creation of man is extension of this mercy unto them.

c. **Ar-Rahman Ar-Rahim**, the ultimate meaning of Allah’s beautiful names.

In a bid to acquaint man with the knowledge of His nature, Allah in His infinite mercy unveiled to man some of His names commonly referred to as the ninety-nine beautiful names of Allah. An in depth reflection on these names reveals that inferentially, all the names depicts the Compassionate nature of Allah (Ar-Rahman) and His Graciousness (Ar-Rahim). If we consider for example, His being al-Malik (the Sovereign Being), the one unto whom belong the sovereignty of the world and the heavens, we find an exposition of His being Compassionate and Gracious. This accounts for His incessant mercy on all in spite of the countless sins and evils that are being perpetrated by devilish minds in every nook and cranny of the world.

To appreciate this fact, consideration could be given to other attributes of Allah. Allah is Ar-Razaq ‘the Provider’ Who provides for the true believers and the infidels simply because He is Merciful to all. Allah is Al-Jabbar the Compeller, as well as Al-Qahar the Subduer Who has compelled and subdued everything for man simply because of His all encompassing Mercy. He is Al-Hasib the Reckoner which is an exposition of His name Ar-Rahim, for His eternal mercy is reserved for believers and apportioned to them in the hereafter, in accordance with their deeds and actions.
d. *Ar-Rahman, Ar-Rahim* the ultimate message of the Qur’an

Above and beyond, the one hundred and fourteen (114) chapters of the Glorious Qur’an as a whole is a complete message to mankind. Each of these chapters begins with the name of Allah who is *Ar-Rahman* and *Ar-Rahim* except chapter nine of the Glorious Qur’an. This makes the chapters containing basmala to be one hundred and thirteen (113). In the Glorious Qur’an, chapter thirty (30), verse twenty seven (27) is a verse containing basmala thereby making the *basmallah in the Qur’an* to equate the total number of chapters of the Qur’an (114). The essence of this repetition is to inform man that the Most Compassionate and Most Merciful is communicating a message full of compassion for the creatures in general, in this world and a specifically reserved mercy for the believers, in the hereafter.

Basically, the Qur’anic message when critically examined aim at aiding man towards realisation of the incalculable mercy of Allah that is being showered on him and the promise that awaits man in the hereafter if he judiciously utilised it. For example, all the verses buttressing the unity of Allah are meant to appeal to man’s hearth towards realisation of the unity of Allah and His Lordship. When this is attained, man stands the better chance of appreciating the bounties showered on him by Allah and inspires in man the need to strive hard to attain the eternal blessing and mercy of Allah.

Furthermore, the historical narrations in the Qur’an the concept of prophet hood and revelation, eschatological discuss in the Qur’an, Qur’anic verses on law and order, nature and cosmogony, and the rest are all meant to allure man towards realisation of the mercy of Allah in this world. In addition, they are inspirations for man to work hard so as to attain the eternal mercy specially reserved for the true servants of Allah in the hereafter.

e. Exposition of His Mercy in worship, and reward and punishment.

The entire life of man is full of responsibilities shouldered on him by his creator. Among them are, the five daily prayers, compulsory alms giving, going for pilgrimage, coming to the aid of the less privileged, upholding the lawful acts and abstaining from the forbidden deeds. In summary, man is obliged to offer servitude to Allah by following His laws and obeying His orders. Although an absurd mind could count this as a burden and restriction to man’s freedom, in the real sense, it is borne out of the need to appreciate the uncountable mercy of Allah on man. To refresh the memory on this, the Qur’an says: *Has there not been over Man a long period of Time, when he was nothing - [not even] mentioned? Verily We created Man from a drop of mingled sperm, in order to try him: So We gave him [the gifts], of Hearing and Sight. We showed him the Way: whether he be grateful or ungrateful [rests on his will].*) Q: (76:1-3)

*It is He Who brought you forth from the wombs of your mothers when ye knew nothing; and He gave you hearing and sight and intelligence and affections: that ye may give thanks [to Allah]Q: (16:78)*

*Do ye not see that Allah has subjected to your [use] all things in the heavens and on earth, and has made his bounties flow to you in exceeding measure, [both] seen and unseen? Yet there are among men those who dispute about Allah, without knowledge and without guidance, and without a Book to enlighten them!* Q: (31:20).

*It is Allah Who has subjected the sea to you, that ships may sail through it by His command, that ye may seek of his Bounty, and that ye may be grateful. And He has subjected to you, as from Him, all that is in the heavens and on earth: Behold, in that are Signs indeed for those who reflect. Q: 45 :(12-13).*
All the above verses illustrate the fact that man is like a king on the earth as everything was created for him and the worship required from him is meant to remind man about the inestimable mercy of Allah. In view of the above, Allah says: *and perform Salah for My remembrance.* Q : (20:24).

Besides, the scenarios of life and death are meant to avail man the chance to realise a unit of the Mercy of Allah and utilise it in the best manner in this world within the given little period. of time The Qur’an says: *Blessed be He in Whose hands is Dominon; and He over all things hath Power; He Who created Death and Life, that He may try which of you is best in deed.* Q: (67:1-2). The Rahmaniyyah of Allah is a unit of His mercy which both the righteous and the evil minds enjoy for a while in this world while a special mercy which no doubt amount to 99 unit is reserved for the true believers in the hereafter, Bukhari (n.d.: vol. 8..p316, no.476.).

Moreover, the Qur’an which is the instruction manual for worshipers is not a curse for man but rather a mercy as Allah SWT says: *O mankind! there hath come to you a direction from your Lord and a healing for the [diseases] in your hearts,- and for those who believe, a guidance and a Mercy.* Q: (10:57)

The above quotation clearly indicates that the nature of Allah and His vision for man is nothing but Compassion and Mercy. In order to appreciate the nature of Allah in the light of His names *Ar-Rahman Ar-Rahim*, a glimpse could be given to the nature of reward and punishment in Islam. It is quite apt and certainly acceptable that reward strengthens moral values, promotes all forms of goodness and discourages all that is inappposite to these. Similarly, punishment is meant to ensure compliance with law and order so that man can live to enjoy the goodies of life. If this is acceptable by all, it implies that the institution of reward and punishment as provided in Islam is not an act of cruelty but rather mercy for mankind. To this effect the Qur’an says: *Whoever works righteousness, man or woman, and has Faith, verily, to him will We give a new Life, a life that is good and pure and We will bestow on such their reward according to the best of their actions.* Q: (16:97).

To further comprehend the mercy of Allah in His reward and punishment, the following Quranic verse and prophetic traditions are apt. Allah (S.W.T.) says: *So he watered [their flocks] for them; then he turned back to the shade, and said: “O my Lord! truly am I in [desperate] need of any good that Thou dost send me.* Q:( 28:84) *He that doeth good shall have ten times as much to his credit: He that doeth evil shall only be recompensed according to his evil: no wrong shall be done unto [any of] them.* Q: (6: 160).

In his own explanation, Prophet (S.A.W.) says: *The Great and the Glorious Lord said (to Angels): Whenever My bondsman intends to commit an evil, do not record it against him, but if he actually commits it, then write it as one evil. And when he intends to do good but does not do it, then take it down as one act of goodness, but if he does it, then write down ten good deeds (in his record),* Muslim (1972: vol. 1, p.75. no. 233).

The above is a demonstration of the benevolent nature of Allah and as well His vision of Mercy for man. This makes an intended act of sin that was not exhibited to be free from any penalty, but when carried out, fetches the doer just a single evil. On the other hand, an intended act of goodness though not exhibited carries a reward but when executed attracts at least ten rewards. Yet, another way of appreciating the boundless mercy of Allah is that small act of worship by a servant fetches him great reward. In an occasion, Prophet (S.A.W.) Whoever says one hundred times in a day: *La ilaha illallah wahdahu la sharika lahu, lahu -l-mulk wa lahu -l-hamd wa huwa ala kulli shai’in qadir.* (None has the right to be worshipped but Allah, the Alone Who has no partner, to Him belongs dominion and to Him belong all the praises, and He has power over all things one hundred times, he will get the same reward as given for manumitting ten slaves and hundred good deeds will be written in his accounts, and one...
hundred sins will be deducted from his accounts, and it (his saying) will be a shield for him from Satan on that day till night, and nobody will be able to do a better deed except the one who does more than he, Bukhari (n.d. : vol.8.p275, no.412).

Similarly, Prophet (S.A.W.) says: Whoever says: Subhan Allahi Wa bihamdi,(Allah is free from imperfection and His is the praise) one hundred times a day will be forgiven all his sins even if they were as much as foam of the sea, Bukhari (n.d. : vol.8.p277, no.414).

f. Recurrence of His Appellation Ar-Rahman and Ar-Rahim in the Glorious Qur’an

Replication of certain thing by Allah (S.W.T.) in the Qur’an is an attempt to focus man’s attention on it so that he could understand its meaning and comprehend the lesson therein. Among frequently mentioned things in the Glorious Qur’an are Allah’s attributes Ar-Rahman and Ar-Rahim. In more than fifty places in the Qur’an, Allah addresses himself as Ar-Rahman. For example, the Qur’an says: Call upon Allah, or call upon Rahman: by whatever name ye call upon Him, [it is well]: for to Him belong the Most Beautiful Names. Neither speak thy Prayer aloud, nor speak it in a low tone, but seek a middle course between. Q: (20:5).

And all voices will be humbled for the Most Gracious, Q: 20:109. Other places include, Q:(2:163), Q:(13:30), Q:(17:110), Q:(19:18, 26, 44 - 45, 58, 61, 69, 75, 87, 88, 91, 93, & 96.),Q: (21:26, 36), 42, & 112), Q: (25:26, 59, 60, & 63), Q: (27:30), Q: (36:11,15,23, & 52) Q: (43:17,19,20,33,46 & 81) Q:(50:33), Q: (55:1), (67:3,19,20 &,29), Q: (78:38), Q: (2:163).

As to His appellation Ar-Rahim, (The Most Compassionate), several verses illustrate that Allah is the Most Gracious. Few among them is Q:(2:37). Q:2:54, 128, 143, 160, 173, 182, 192, 199, 218, & 226) Q: (3:31, 89, & 129), Q:((4:25,) Q: (5:3, 34 39 ,74, 98,) Q: (6:54, 145 & 165) Q:7:153,) Q:(7:167) Q:(8:69 -7) , Q: (9:5,27, 91,99,102,104,117, & 128), Q: (10:107), Q: (11:41, 90), Q: (12:53, & 98), Q: (14:36) , Q: (15:49), Q:(16:17-18, 47, 110, 115, 119, Q: (22:65), Q: (24:20, 22, 33, & 62), Q: (26:9 & 30). These attributes (Ar-Rahman and Ar-Rahim), are jointly repeated in some places in the Qur’an like Q:41:2, Q:59:22, Q:59:22 and many others. The rationale behind this persistent repetition is to stress that Allah is the Most Merciful and intends nothing for man except mercy.

g. The nature of acceptance of repentance and forgiveness of sins.

There is in the nature and extent of how He forgives man a further elucidation of His Mercy. Additionally it attests to the fact that the vision of Allah behind His creation of man is extension of this mercy to man. In the sight of Allah, so much as a servant does not associate partner with Him, He out of His Mercy forgives all the sins. In the Glorious Qur’an Allah SWT says: My slaves (humankind) who have been prodigal to their own hurt! Despair not of the mercy of Allah Who forgives all sins. Lo! He is the Forgiving, the Merciful. Q: (39:53). A practical example of the above verse is seen in the scenario of a man who killed a hundred (100) people but after being remorseful, gained the forgiveness of Allah, Bukhari (nd. :vol.4. p450, no. 676). Furthermore, to express His benevolent nature, during the last third part of the night, Allah do descend to the last part of the heavens of the world enquiring for those who have committed sins but yearns for His forgivness, Bukhari (nd. :vol.8, p.225, no.333,)

h. The degree of his affinity to man.

The degree of affinity of parents to their offspring prompts the natural love mercy and affection that transpire between them. Similarly, the feelings of amity and empathy that ensue between couples are borne out of their closeness. By implication, the degree of affinity of a man to another being, explains the compassionate relationship that often transpired between them. This is the trend in a normal situation and drift under normal circumstances.
Furthermore, consciously or obliviously, man relates with His Lord though he cannot see the creator as no eyes can grasp Him. Although man occupies the position of servitude in the sight of his Lord (Allah), the Creator in many unequivocal and non-controversial statements clearly affirms the degree of his closeness to man and his readiness to always attend to his demands. This declaration is contained in the following verses where Allah (SWT) says: *It was We Who created man, and We know what dark suggestions his soul makes to him: for We are nearer to him than [his] jugular vein.*

Q.: (50:16)

Seest thou not that Allah doth know [all] that is in the heavens and on earth? There is not a secret consultation between three, but He makes the fourth among them, - Nor between five but He makes the sixth, - nor between fewer nor more, but He is in their midst, wheresoever they be: In the end will He tell them the truth of their conduct, on the Day of Judgment. For Allah has full knowledge of all things. Q: (58:7)

When the prophet and his closest companion (Abubakar) were in the cave of Thawr in their attempt to escape from the idolaters of Makkah, Abu Bakr was afraid that the pagans might discover them and possibly harm the prophet (S.A.W.). The Prophet reassured him of their safety as recorded by Imam Ahmad from Anas: *Abu Bakr said to him, "I said to the Prophet when we were in the cave, 'if any of them looks down at his feet, he will see us.' He said, (O Abu Bakr What do you think about two with Allah as their third). This is why Allah said, If you help him (Muhammad ) not (it does not matter), for Allah did indeed help him when the disbelievers drove him out, the second of the two; when they were both in the cave, he said to his companion: "Be not sad (or afraid), surely, Allah is with us." Then Allah sent down His Sakinah (calmness, tranquillity, peace) upon him, and strengthened him with forces (angels) which you saw not, and made the word of those who disbelieved the lowermost, while the Word of Allah that became the uppermost; and Allah is All-Mighty, All-Wise.*) Q:(9:40)

A similar example buttressing the affinity of Allah to man as a sign of His compassionate nature is discernible in the story of Prophet Yunus (A.S.) when he was swallowed by a large fish in an ocean. At a certain point in the history of his life, prophet Yunus was in a state which no one knew except the creator (in the darkness of the fish, in the belly of the fish, in the bottom of the sea which translates to darkness upon darkness).

In recognition of the closeness of Allah to his servant and his readiness to attend to his demand at all time, Prophet Yunus called unto his Lord saying: *There is no God but You, Glorified be You! Truly, I have been of the wrongdoers.* In response to his plight, Allah (S.W.T.) says: *So We answered his call, and delivered him from the distress. And thus We do deliver the believers.* This however is not a privilege given to Prophet Yunus alone but an honour to man in general as the Qur’an says:

When My servants ask thee concerning Me, I am indeed close [to them]: I listen to the prayer of every suppliant when he calleth on Me: Let them also, with a will, Listen to My call, and believe in Me: That they may walk in the right way.  Q:(2:186).

However, the concept of affinity of Allah to man here should not be misconstrue to mean physical presence but rather conceived as the knowledge of Allah which encompasses everything or the closeness of Angels to man. These Angels respond to accomplish the will of Allah on man accordingly. His acquaintance with the knowledge of man’s situation at all time and readiness to come to his aid further depicts His being most compassionate Creator and most Merciful God.

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i. **Paths towards acquisition of Allah’s mercy.**

Having proved beyond reasonable doubt that Allah by nature is full of mercy and intends man to enjoy this mercy and as such created man, the question remains how can we acquire this mercy? There are countless ways through which a servant could attain the mercy of his creator. Generally, all forms of good conduct fetches the servant the mercy of Allah. The Qur’an says: **He that works evil will not be requited but by the like thereof: and he that works a righteous deed - whether man or woman - and is a Believer such will enter the Garden [of Bliss]: Therein will they have abundance without measure.** Q: (4:40)

Among these virtuous conducts include, obedience to Allah and His Prophet Q: (4:69) showing gratitude to Allah Q: (4:147), Q: (14:7), supplication to Allah and having consciousness of Allah Q: (25:77), Q: (2:152), Q: (65:2), and exercising patience in adversity Q: (2:155-157).

Other means through which man acquires Allah’s mercy is when he suppresses his anger and put aside his rage, Abu-Dāwūd, (2008 : vol.4. p.248, no.477). Good leadership also promotes perpetration of Allah’s mercy in the life of the good leader and accord him the eternal mercy in the hereafter, Tirmidhi (nd.: vol.2. p.394, no. 1344). Truthfulness in the acts of buying and selling brings nothing except more blessings to the trade, Muslim (1972: vol 3.pp.804-805, no.3661.). There is a natural law that stipulates that whatever one sows definitely shall one reap. This inspires the principle which affirms that whoever is merciful to mankind the Merciful Creator shall shower on him His mercy, Bukhari (nd.: vol. 9. p.351, no 473). The mercy of Allah is so universal that for one to obtain it, he must not only be merciful to man but extend his kind-heartedness to other creatures such as animal, Bukhari (nd.: vol 4. p338, no. 538.). Furthermore, the Merciful Creator Has inscribed that whoever comes to the aid of his brother, shall be showered His mercy, Ibn-Mājah ( nd: vol. 2, p.808, no.2419.) Seeking forgiveness of Allah Q: (71:10-12) and overlooking the mistakes of people equally attracts the blessings of Allah. Sincere submission to Allah, consciousness of Him in prayer, abstinence from ill speech or vulgar words, observance of Zakat, sexual discipline, and truthfulness and trustworthiness are all acts that could enhance man’s ability to obtain the mercy of Allah. Q: (23:1-10)

j. **Paths leading to the wrath of Allah**

Notwithstanding the bountiful nature of Allah’s mercy and the countless ways of getting hold of it, man often derail from the right path thereby attracting to destruction and consequently the wrath of Allah instead of His mercy. The root cause of this is when man exhibits a laissez-faire attitude towards the path of Allah in one way or the other. The Qur’an says: **But whosoever turns away from My Message, verily for him is a life narrowed down, and We shall raise him up blind on the Day of Judgment. He will say: “O my Lord! why hast Thou raised me up blind, while I had sight [before].[Allah] will say: “Thus didst Thou, when Our Signs came unto thee, disregard them: so wilt thou, this day, be disregarded.** Q: (20:124-126)

Examples of acts of disobedience include associating partner with Allah Q: (4:116), Q: (5:72), engaging in the act of murder Q: (3:93), Q : (5:32), Bukhari (nd: vol.3 p.355, no.540), Bukhari (nd. :vol. 4. p259, no.391, Bukhari (nd. : vol.7. pp450-451, no.670), negligence of the daily prayers Q : (19:59-60,) and declining to give Zakat in spite of the ability Q: (41:6-7).

Likewise the act of envy fetches the doer the wrath of Allah, Ibn Majah (nd: Vol.2: 1408) while arrogance and cruelty denies one Allah’s blessings, Qur’an: (57:23). Also prominent among the acts leading to Allah’s wrath include the act of sodomy Q: (11:77-83), illicit sexual relationship Q: (17:32), accepting usurious gain Q: (3:130), usurping the property of orphans Q: (3:10), and lying against Allah and His Prophet. Q: (39:60), and exhibiting an act of wickedness to animals, Bukhari (vol.4. p.337, no.535). All these and many others no doubt are evil paths as they curdle man from the path of mercy and lead him to the wrath of his creator.

3. Conclusion
Understanding the nature of Allah and His vision on man is of great importance as man has been charged with the sole responsibility of knowing God before worshipping Him. This would help man to realise that Allah is the merciful creator and Has created man purposely for man to this inestimable mercy. When this is achieved, it helps man appreciate God better and strengthens his commitments to Allah thereby enabling him to offer due submission to Him.

The paper rekindles hope in the heart of a servant in state of difficulty, Q: (6:17, & 40-41), Q: (94:5-6), and cautions him against trailing the path of destruction Q: (16:112). Knowledge of the merciful nature of Allah paves way for reformation of the evil mind greatly engrossed in sins. This is because he has been reassured of the overwhelming nature of Allah’s mercy if he feels remorseful Q: (39:53). In addition, the knowledge of the bountiful mercy of Allah awaiting true believers in the hereafter motivates man to live a righteous life so as to enjoy the eternal mercy prepared for him in the eternal world.

4. Recommendations.

- Muslim scholars should encourage people to ponder and reflect more extensively on the nature of Mercy of Allah so as to appreciate the fact that Allah created man purposely to avail him with His mercy.
- People should appreciate the blessings of Allah by offering total submission to Him so that they could receive more of it in this world and be granted the pick of it in the eternal world.
- People should embrace the paths leading to the mercy of the merciful creature (Allah) and refrain from trailing the tracks that could lead them to His wrath.
References


