

Comprehensive Leadership Personality: A Reflection from the *Qur'anic* Perspective

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Abstract: The *Qur'an* is for the mankind (*Qur'an*, 2: 185), and also about the mankind (*Qur'an*, 21: 10). It simply denotes that the Last Book of Allah revealed to the Last Prophet (SAAS) deals with all that mankind is in need of from any angle, devotional, familial, social, political, military, economic, cultural, educational, intellectual, or moral. In the *Qur'anic* descriptions of man there are both appreciation of what is laudable and condemnation of what is reprehensible. The *Qur'an* seeks to establish an environment of social justice (*Qur'an*, 57: 25), the precursor of peace so that mankind might flourish with the desired form of both moral and material development. Social justice calls for the emergence of comprehensive leadership personality. The *Qur'an* highlights the nature of leadership personality from the angle of what it should not be (negative features) and what it should be (positively desirable traits). The *Qur'an* outlines in a crystal clear manner these two categories of characteristics through direct advices, by retelling stories of the previous Prophets and their people, by making comments on events such as in the battlefields, by condemning certain doings of individuals and groups, by admiring the excellent acts, and by declaring what is rewarding and what is disappointing in human life. The most salient features of leadership personality as admired in the *Qur'an* are sincerity, integrity, honesty, universality, generosity, piety, and justice; and the most unwanted traits of leadership personality as condemned in the *Qur'an* are insincerity, hypocrisy, hard-heartedness, impiety, sinfulness, dishonesty, and injustice. The methodology applied in this paper is analytical. The present paper focuses on the behavioral pattern of the most successful leadership based on the *Qur'anic* guidelines, reaching the conclusion that only the comprehensive leadership personality can deliver the good.

Keywords: Leadership, *Qur'an*, Hadith, Features and Negative & Positive.

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Introduction

The *Qur'an* seeks to establish on the earth human civilization based on highly desirable human values of life, including sincerity, honesty, and justice. Human civilization signifies organization of everyday human life, needs, and activities. This organization entails leadership at its helm. The nature of human civilization/organization is completely consequent upon the quality of leadership of those controlling it. Chaos and corruption prevailing in human settings indicates to the weak and inept leadership; peace and development in the society/nation speak volumes of the strong and just leadership. It might not be exaggeration if it is said that with the leadership the people experience either peace and development or chaos and downfall. In today's world the general scenario is quite horrifying. From the west to the east and from the north to the south individuals, societies, and nations are suffering; human life, property, and honor are at stake; governments and organizations are sponsoring and patronizing blood-shed; and people have become race-sensitive and biased. This explosive situation in the contemporary world calls for review of the nature of the leadership at the helm of national and international affairs. Only good leadership can arrest further decline of humanity at all levels, individual, societal, national, and international. This paper represents a humble attempt to study, explore, deliberate, highlight, and explain negative and positive attributes of leaders as available in the *Qur'an* and Prophetic traditions.

Significance of the *Qur'an* for the Leadership

The *Qur'an* is the Last Revealed Scripture of Allah for man. It stands as original today as during the time of its revelation almost fifteen centuries ago. At the turn of the twentieth century, Munich University, Munich, Germany embarked upon a research project to prove or disprove the originality of the *Qur'an*; for that matter the research personnel obtained thousands of copy of the *Qur'an* ever hand-written and ever printed, including the purportedly the oldest extant one; and the finding of the comparison and scrutiny of all the gathered material was that the *Qur'an* never underwent even in the minutest way any changes whatsoever [Khan, 2006]. Its origin is crystal clear from its words, sentences, statements, paragraphs, commands, prohibitions, worldly matters, and the facts about the life-hereafter. Its linguistic style, its scientific phrases, its historical narratives, and its manners of addressing—all speak volumes of the fact that its source is none but Allah the Creator, the Sustainer, the Provider, the Controller of the entire universe. Thus, the origin and the originality

of the *Qur'an* make it the most authentic source of the principles and values for human life.

The significance of the *Qur'an* in human life lies in its messages. Allah declares that the *Qur'an* responds to all the queries and questions concerning human life, such as: who the man is; what is his origin; what is his position *vis-a-vis* other creations; what he needs to ensure success; what his problems are; how he can solve his problems; what actions and reactions are harmful; what is the purpose of his existence; and is the present life both beginning and the end: “*And We have indeed revealed to you a Book in which there is your DHIKR. Do you not then apply your reason?*” (*Qur'an*, 21: 10)

This is a very comprehensive but very brief statement about the subject matter of the *Qur'an*. The underlined original *Qur'anic* word as occurred in the verse has generally been translated by majority of Muslim scholars and commentators as “fame”. They mean to say that *Qur'an* is the Scripture whereby its adherents will achieve fame and name in the world. This translation and interpretation of the word DHIKR here in the verse may not withstand serious scrutiny. First of all the verse does not say that with the *Qur'an* is their Dhikr hence fame; it rather states that in the *Qur'an* is Dhikr hence description; thus the verse says that their description is available in the *Qur'an*. The description (Dhikr) is of what? It naturally refers to all that is related to man, that is, his origin, purpose, needs, problems and solutions. Undoubtedly, one could see that the *Qur'an* deals with emotional, psychological, individual, social, political, economic, cultural, moral, and devotional dimensions of human life. Historically, whenever the humanity refrained from the revealed messages, the earth witnessed chaos and corruption on its surface; and likewise, whenever it held fast to the revealed way of life, it experienced peace, development and blissful life.

In the contemporary world the humanity is suffering from too many afflictions, bloodshed, civil war, terrorism, and corruption. Majority of the human population does no longer represent humankind; they rather have turned animal. The *Qur'an* sketches this scenario in these words: “...*They have hearts but they think not; they have eyes but they see not; they have ears but they hear not; they are rather cattle; they are worse in error; and they are heedless ones*” (*Qur'an*, 7: 179). This verse explains that majority of the men have become intellectual slaves to their traditions, cultures, imaginations, low desires, and satanic forces. As a corollary the earth is steeped into corruption (*fasaad*). According to the *Qur'an*, men and women, young and old, blacks and whites, rich and poor, literate and illiterate are all totally incapable of developing the knowledge of the truth concerning their life and activities. People

can know about their reality only through the revelation from Allah, All-Knowing, All-Wise. The *Qur'an* is the final revelation from Allah. It is, therefore, the only source of true knowledge about man.

The *Qur'an* throughout its pages describes and addresses five categories of people on the earth, namely: believers (*mu'minun*), non-believers (*kafirun*), hypocrites (*munafiqun*), people of the Book (*ahl al-kitab: Jews and Christians*), and the people in general (*al-naas*). The main concern of the *Qur'an* is that people should submit totally to the will of Allah. For that matter man has been granted free-will to choose either submission to his Creator or rebellion against Him (*Qur'an*, 91: 7-8). Submission to the divine will signifies orientation of life in accordance with the rules and regulations revealed in the *Qur'an*; and rebellion denotes rejection of the divine principles for life as available in the Last Book. This situation of freedom confirms the fact that man ever since his age of consciousness until the last breath of life undertakes test. Whether he is in his individual and private moments or in his social and public affairs or in his political and economic undertakings or in his cultural and spiritual matters or in his moral and intellectual activities, he is invariably monitored by the Examiner the Almighty through His prescribed system to see whether the examinee is eligible for rewarding result or is doomed to perennial torment in the life hereafter. The *Qur'an* says: “*Surely, whatever We have made on the earth as its embellishment is to test men to see which of them is the best in deed*” (*Qur'an*, 18: 7). And: “*He it is who created death and life to test you to see which of you is best in deed; and He is the Mighty, the Most Forgiving*” (*Qur'an*, 67: 2).

This life-test entails availability of information about what is desirable and undesirable for man. The *Qur'an* is that source of information. There is misconception that application of the *Qur'anic* principles in life will lead to the good only in the life after death. The *Qur'an* has taught man to invoke Allah for the good in this life and the good in the hereafter: “*Our Lord! grant us good in this world and in the hereafter, and save us from the chastisement of the fire*” (*Qur'an*, 2: 201). The good in this world as spelled out in this verse is what is today referred to as peace of mind, contentment of heart, material as well as moral development, prevalence of justice, and safety of life, property and honor. The human history bears witness that the good in this world remained elusive as long as man ignored the divine instructions and relied on his own to develop principles for life.

Human life is complicatedly multi-dimensional. It is too difficult even for the most intelligent men to comprehend it. It is very simple to understand man's inability in

this respect. He is not his own originator and creator. Had he been his own maker, he would certainly have been fully aware of who he is, what his needs are, what his problems are, and how his problems could be solved. But to the Creator of man and the universe everything is like an open book; nothing is hidden from Him; that is why He knows what man needs and how he can achieve blissful life. This is also an erroneous idea that the *Qur'an* is a religious Scripture. The *Qur'an* addresses man from all angles, private, public, personal, social, economic, political, cultural, educational, intellectual, national, international, devotional, and moral. The *Qur'an* guides man everywhere and every moment. It is then most appropriate to call the *Qur'an* the Life-Book. In the modern sense of the word it is actually manual for human life.

Collectivity is embedded in man's nature. Family, local administration, political or cultural association, civic cooperation, state government, government and non-governmental agencies, schools, colleges, universities, markets, supply of commodities, and international organizations etc. are all representatives of man's collective approach in the life. Collectivity and organizational set-up require leadership which controls and runs the system under its purview. The able leadership takes the organization concerned to further higher level, whereas the unreliable leadership causes organization to experience decline. The able leadership means consciousness, sincerity, integrity, honesty, universality, generosity, piety, and justice in dealings. The *Qur'an* deals with these principles in various ways.

Comprehensive Leadership Personality

In the modern world the person in leadership position is required to divide his/her life into two main parts, personal and professional. According to this bifurcation, personal part should not affect professional one and vice versa. That is why the today's leader in general keeps two different faces, one in his office or while he is on duty and the other in his private life. Today's leadership can in no way be termed as comprehensive; it is rather partial and time-bound. Among the leaders of the world Machiavellian tricks and Chanakya niti are quite popular. Both Machiavelli and Chanakya advise the people at the helm of affairs to be cunning, deceitful, two-faced, and dishonest in their day to day dealings [Machiavelli, *The Prince*: 1515; Sharma, *Chanakya: His Life and Teachings*: 1998]. The *Qur'an* seeks to develop a comprehensively unified personality in those who are placed in charge of management and administration either at micro-level or macro-level. The *Qur'anic*

principles of leadership make the person concerned the most comprehensive leader who commands the respect of his subject and subordinates. Here are some significant features of that *Qur'anic* leadership personality.

Consciousness of the Position as Leader

Man by nature is forgetful. The *Qur'anic* word for man '*insaan*' originally signifies one who easily forgets. The first man, Adam was given this title due to him having overlooked the instruction of Allah: "*And We gave Adam commandment before, but he forgot; and We did not find in him any determination*" (*Qur'an*, 20: 115). The main constituents of man's personality are two, the body and the intellect. Both of them are so interrelated that as long as he is alive neither of them can ever exist in isolation of the other. The human body is made of earthly elements, water and soil; whereas the intellect represents highest order: "*And He began the creation of man from dust. Then He made his progeny out of the essence of a humble fluid (water). And then He formed him in accordance with that he is meant to be; and breathed into him of His spirit*" (*Qur'an*, 32: 7-9). These two sources, the lowest and the highest are intrinsic elements of man. The domination of the lowest (the low desires) over the highest results in man's forgetfulness, and control of man by the highest (the intellect) strengthens his consciousness.

Each and every act of man needs to be governed by his intellectual capability so as to maintain consciousness and avoid forgetfulness. Leadership is not an unconscious position. It begins with consciousness, continues with consciousness, and reaches the climax with consciousness. Leadership minus consciousness is identical with the attitude of sheep. Consciousness due to the intellectual power is the highest blessing of Allah to man. Had he been deprived of that blessing, he would certainly have fallen in the category of other creatures, including angle and animal. At six places the *Qur'an* emphasizes that man is an intellectual being (*Qur'an*, 16: 78; *Qur'an*, 17: 36; *Qur'an*, 23: 78; *Qur'an*, 32: 9; *Qur'an*, 46: 26; *Qur'an*, 67: 23). Reference to only one of these verses will suffice to bring the idea home: "*And He has endowed you with hearing, and sight and hearts so that you might have a cause to be grateful*" (*Qur'an*, 16: 78). The three faculties, hearing, seeing, and thinking are the constituents of human intellectual power, which make him different and distinct from others. In the above verse (*Qur'an*, 16: 78) the very purpose of this power granted to man is to demonstrate gratefulness to Allah. Expression of gratitude to Allah means submission to the will of Allah through his own divinely-gifted will (consciousness through

intellectual faculty). Man as intellectual being has been placed far above most of the creations: “*And We have indeed conferred dignity on the children of Adam, and borne them over the land and sea, and provided for them sustenance out of the good things, and favoured them far above most of Our creations*” (Qur’an, 17: 70).

It is this reason that Allah (SWT) condemns man if he suspends his intellectual power, thus forgetting his position as the most honourable being: “*Verily, the vilest of all creatures in the sight Allah are those deaf and those dumb who do not use their reason*” (Qur’an, 8: 22). Using the reason here in this verse denotes all the acts of intellectual faculty, including consciousness. The leader has to remain all the time conscious of his positions as creation, as man, and as leader. This is the key to success of man in every walk of life, including leadership. Leader’s consciousness of his leadership signifies consciousness of who he is and what step he to take when and how when dealing with the people under his care. It means he has to try his best to make his reason prevail over the low desire, which always is on the watch to achieve its goal. It is to ensure that he does not forget himself as leader. Forgetfulness is sheer bane for human life.

The Qur’an puts total ban on alcoholic beverage. The reason is very simple. It paralyzes intellectual power, suspending its ability to discern what is what. The Qur’an prohibits wine drinking in these words: “*O you who have attained to faith! Intoxicants, and gambling, and idolatrous practices, and the divining of the future are but a loathsome evil of Satan’s doing: shun it, so that you might then attain to a happy state*” (Qur’an, 5: 90). The very purpose of this prohibition is to ensure blissful life which necessitates keeping away from alcohol. It is not befitting for the leader to drink wine as it will block his/her ability to think, choose and take right decisions.

It is argued that there is nothing wrong on the part of the leader to drink wine only when he/she is off-duty; and alcohol consumption may not be allowed during professional exercise. This is a lame argument based on the ignorance of human nature. A leader’s whole life, day in day out, public and private life constitute one single unit. No dimension of his life can ever be looked at in isolation of the other. If he is allowed to drink hot beverages in his private life, it will affect his intellectual ability, prolonging its impact on his professionalism. It is known fact wine drinking very easily becomes addiction which cannot be confined only to the timing other than the duty-hours. Chief of family, head of village, director of a company, vice-chancellor of a university, governor of a province, chairman of a committee, head of

state, and leader of international body are required to devote their time and energy without dividing their life into private and professional. Leadership is a full-time task, covering all the activities such as sitting, standing, talking, sleeping, walking, deliberating, eating, drinking, communicating, meeting, supervising, and worshipping. The successful leader is only the one who does not distribute his time into personal and professional.

Sincerity

Sincerity may be described as devotion, dedication, commitment, loyalty, accountability, transparency, and professionalism. Leader cannot afford to remain dubious and insincere. Sincerity leads to excellence and insincerity causes fall. Excellence as the goal of leadership calls for the leader to be devoted to his/her assigned task, dedicated to the development, committed to maintain higher values in the stewardship, loyal to the sovereign power or controlling authority, confident in the accountability, vowed to keep everything transparent, and self-reliant in his expertise of managing his responsibilities.

The *Qur'an* informs that the believers who possess the most desirable qualities are surely successful. One of these highly desirable traits is sincerity: “*And who are sincere to their trusts and to their pledges*” (*Qur'an*, 23: 8). Leader is entrusted to utilize his/her capability to the full extent to accomplish the task he/she has been assigned. Preference of personal interests to those of the organization or nation is to dynamite the very foundation of organization and nation. In a situation leader is overtaken by low desires, he/she becomes greedy. The *Qur'an* draws a real picture of man's greed: “*Alluring unto man is the enjoyment of worldly desires through women, and children, and treasures of gold and silver, and horses of high mark, and cattle and lands. All this may be enjoyed in the life of this world, but the most bounteous of all goals is with Allah*” (*Qur'an*, 3: 14). Surely, love for the enjoyment in the worldly life is at times too captivating to ignore. It is this compelling craving that whispers into the ears of leader to accept bribe and kickbacks. This is not sincerity but insincerity and selfishness.

As indicated in the above verse (*Qur'an*, 3: 14) women and children constitute the most effective factors for the change in the leadership personality. The *Qur'an* calls the women and children sources of trial and temptation for man: “*O you who have attained to faith! Behold, some of your spouses and children are enemies unto you: so beware of them*” (*Qur'an*, 64: 14). Spouses and children most of the time put so much

pressure on their husbands and fathers that they stand forced to do something by hook or by crook to fulfill their wards' demands. Anyone in the leadership position will certainly in such a charged environment try to exploit his/her position to aggrandize his/her own greed by putting aside the welfare of the organization or nation he/she is leading. Leadership in the *Qur'anic* sense of the term is a trial and test of the person concerned. He/she always faces a choice between his/her own gratification and sincerity to the trusts the people have given him/her. Leadership is a trust the leader has to keep. It is possible for the leader only by rising far above his/her own personal and private wellbeing.

Generosity

Generosity means kindness, cooperation, altruism, and large-heartedness. The *Qur'an* inspires its followers to be generous to all those around him/her: *"And be generous to your parents, and near of kin, and unto orphan, and the needy, and the neighbor from among your own people, and the neighbor who is a stranger, and the companion by your side, and the wayfarer, and those whom you rightfully possess. And Allah does not love any of those who, full of self-conceit, act in a boastful manner"* (*Qur'an*, 4: 36). In this verse almost all the categories of people in the society have been identified. They all deserve to be treated in a very generous manner. The original word for generosity as available in the verse is *ihsaan*, which literally means doing excellence. English version generosity therefore does not mean what appears as kindness but the act of kindness which is espoused by mercy, love and sacrifice. Any act of generosity devoid of these elements is not classified as generosity admired by the *Qur'an*.

Generosity begets generosity; it generates in the hearts love and compassion for others. And this what society means. Society is not merely the nomenclature for the togetherness of humans. Society is a human setting where everyone's heart beats for others. Leader of organization has to demonstrate at all levels therein generosity toward each and every member of organization, society in miniature. This generosity in turn will create an environment of trustworthiness in organization, a necessary component for continuous progress and development.

People under the charge and care of their leader vary in their ability, aptitude, attitude, needs, and disposition. The most successful leader is the one who keeps himself/herself aware of who is who among his people and demonstrates generosity toward them accordingly, some need little amount of generosity and some more and some others much more. The *Qur'an* commands the Prophet (SAAS), the leader of

the entire humanity: “Behold, Allah enjoins justice and generosity” (*Qur’an*, 16: 90). The other leaders are to act upon this command. In case a leader is not generous, it means he/she is hard-hearted and niggardly. A hard-hearted and niggardly leader always finds himself/herself look down upon the people with contempt. The *Qur’an* announces that those who are saved from niggardliness are destined for the real success (*falaah*) in life: “And whoever is saved from the niggardliness of his soul, such are the people who shall attain to a happy state” (*Qur’an*, 59: 9).

As a matter of fact generosity brings extreme joy and immense pleasure in the life of the generous. Joy and pleasure relieves tension and even hypertension. It is what has been referred to in the above verse—“they shall attain to a happy state (*fa ula’ika hum al-muflihun*)”. The leader targets success. He/she can achieve it through, among other things, his generous attitude toward others.

Justice

Justice leads to peace which in turn leads to development. It is hard to imagine about development without justice. Any setting beset with injustice is sure to experience decline in all walks of life. The main objective of all the Prophets raised in different places and times, one after another, was to invite the people to uphold justice in human dealings and interactions: “And we indeed sent forth Our Apostles with all evidence of truth, and through them We bestowed revelation from on high, and gave a balance, so that people might behave with equity (*qist*)” (*Qur’an*, 57: 25). The three things—*al-bayyinaat* (inclusive evidence of the truth), *al-kitab* (revelation), and *al-mizan* (balance)—given to all the Prophets were to convince the people on the authenticity of the Prophets, to rehearse to the people principles of justice, and to demonstrate the methodology of implementation of justice in life.

It is to be born in mind that the Prophets were all leaders; they were themselves well equipped with the quality of justice; they explained the meaning, significance, and true principles of justice; and they established justice in its true sense on the earth. Leadership is tantamount to the mission of justice; the leader needs to be zealous to comprehend justice, live with justice, preach justice, and implement justice in his jurisdiction.

The *Qur’an* says: “Behold, Allah commands you to deliver all that you have been entrusted with unto those who are entitled thereto, and whenever you judge between people to judge with justice. Verily, most excellent is what Allah exhort you to do; Allah is indeed All-Hearing, All-Seeing” (*Qur’an*, 4: 58). This verse stresses the fact

justice is the most excellent principle for human life to prosper. The *Qur'an* further elaborates the manner of execution of justice: *“O you who have attained to faith! Be ever steadfast in upholding justice, bearing witness to the truth for the sake of Allah, even though it be against your own selves or your parents or kinsfolk. Whether the person concerned be rich or poor, Allah’s claim takes precedence over that of either of them. Do not then follow your own desires, lest you swerve from justice: for if you distort or turn aside, then Allah is indeed aware of all that you do”* (*Qur'an*, 4: 135).

This is the most comprehensive statement on justice ever made in the human history. As regards significance of justice in human life, no culture and society deny it. Yet, the form of its implementation does not command unanimity of the entire mankind. In this respect people and nations have their own system of executing justice. They have made it relative, instead. The above verse (*Qur'an*, 4: 135) explains that justice is absolute in nature; it can never change its form and meaning in any situation and time whatsoever. Indeed, justice in its relative usage is but injustice. That is why the *Qur'an* makes it crystal clear that justice will not change its meaning whether it goes against so and so, against parents, against relatives, against the rich or against the poor.

Significance of justice in the leadership arena could be assessed from the Prophetic examples as recorded in the sources. One single case might suffice to prove the fact the Prophet (SAAS) loved justice too much. Towards the end of his mission he once invited the people to come forward with their complaints against his own person if he ever, even though unknowingly, did anything wrong to them. Since the people never experienced any injustice at the hands of the Prophet (SAAS), they declared that he never harmed anyone of them. But one Companion came forward with his complaint against the Prophet (SAAS). He made claim that the Prophet (SAAS) on this or that particular occasion hit him on his back with his whip. The Prophet (SAAS) did not remember that but he presented himself for revenge and bared his back for the execution of justice. The people appealed to that particular companion to forgive the Prophet (SAAS) instead of exacting revenge. But the Companion refused and insisted on the revenge. At last he proceeded to the bare back of the Prophet (SAAS) apparently with the intention of hitting the Prophet with a whip. Everyone in the gathering was writhing with painful uneasiness on this unexpected happening. But they breathed sigh of relief when they saw that the Companion instead of hitting the Prophet’s back kissed the seal of the Prophethood thereon and declared that he forgave the Prophet (SAAS). When asked why he only kissed the Prophet’s (SAAS)

back, he explained that his main intention was to kiss the seal on the Prophet's (SAAS) back; since he did not find any way to fulfill his wish, he played that trick [Shibli, Seerat al-Nabi: 2014].

This is the real leadership. The Prophet did not consider himself above board. To him, justice was justice, which should be free from prejudice and any kind of bias. The leader today can find in the Prophet (SAAS) the best example of justice. The *Qur'an* has used two terms denoting justice, '*adl* and *qist*'. '*Adl* is translated into English as justice, and *qist* as equity. Many people do not see any difference between '*adl* and *qist* and use them both as synonymous with each other in the sense of justice. In general literary usage considering them both similar may not be a big problem. But the *Qur'an* as the source of highest kind of rhetoric (*balaaghah*) cannot be mistaken as having used the words, '*adl* and *qist* synonymously. This idea runs counter to the *Qur'anic* rhetoric which necessitates each and every single word in the *Qur'an* meaningful in its own place.

'*Adl* is wider in sense than *qist*. '*Adl* is the basic principle of justice; it is opposed to injustice and wrong-doing; it is mere concept with no particular form and shape of its doing; and it signifies middle path, avoiding two extremes, that is, too little and too much. But the word *qist* is practical form of justice; it refers to someone's particular known and specified share in anything; it is tangible and seen. Leaders need to keep the two *Qur'anic* concepts in view in their doing of justice.

Honesty

Honesty is the product of the concept of justice. Individuals and societies subscribing to justice and fairness in dealings and interactions exhibit in their actions honesty but honesty, which encompasses truthfulness and trustworthiness. There is no denying the fact that honesty pays and dishonesty costs. But in the Machiavellian world today the slogan stands changed into "honesty costs and dishonesty pays". What a perjury of the truth! As a principle honesty stands included in the vocabulary of leadership, but it is mere piece of decoration. Practically, leaders appear to be in love with its opposite value.

All the Prophets were the most honest people on the earth. The *Qur'an* quotes several of these figures' address to their respective people in which they reiterate that they are sincere, well-wisher, and honest. This was not actually their self-admiration, but it was a reminder to their respective addressees that they themselves bear witness that they are sincere, well-wisher, and honest. In *Surah al-Shu'ara'* (26) verses 105-191

narrate brief history of five Prophets, Noah, Hud, Salih, Lut, and Shu‘ayb (May Allah be pleased with them all!). Each of them says to his people: “*I am for you a Prophet worthy of your trust*”. Even then majority of the people rejected their message. One can guess what will be the scenario if the leaders are but dishonest?

The Last Prophet (SAAS) was recognized by his people comprising both friends and foes as the most honest, the most truthful, and the most trustworthy. Besides them even the strangers appreciated his honesty. How? Sources have recorded an event. The Prophet (SAAS) once went outside Madinah and saw at a place a Bedouin camp around which there were horses, camels and goats. A red camel attracted the attention of the Prophet (SAAS) who, with an intention to buy it, talked to the Bedouin chief, bargained for the price, and took the camel back to the city with the promise that he would send back the price. After a little while, the owner of the camel felt sad with the idea that he might not get back the price of the sold out camel. He actually did not know the buyer was the Prophet (SAAS). It was his first interaction and transaction with him. Both were strangers to each other. While he was cutting a sad face, his wife assured him with her strong observation about the Prophet (SAAS): “I have seen the face of the buyer; it was so bright that it cannot be that of someone dishonest”. No sooner she bore witness to the honesty of the Prophet (SAAS) than the envoy of the Prophet (SAAS) brought the price as well as dinner for the family [Shibli, Seerat al-Nabi: 2014].

Psychologically, the maxim that face is the index of mind is true. Face really speaks. Its brightness indicates that the person is an honest one. But if the face is gloomy, it means the person may not be trustworthy. In the Last Prophet’s (SAAS) life there is an example for the today’s leader. It may be argued here that by applying various kinds of cream and face lotions, one may render his/her face bright, thus hiding the very nature of his/her disposition. It is not possible for anyone to conceal his/her dishonesty simply through temporary make-up.

Humility

Haughtiness, self-conceit, boastfulness, too much pride, arrogance, superiority complex, egotism, and overconfidence are negative traits of people in general as well as leaders. These characters produce an abnormal personality who can best be described as selfish. It is not an ideal situation for leadership. The ideal quality of able leadership is humility, in total contrast with arrogance. Humility and arrogance cannot go hand in hand. If a person is arrogant, he should not be expected to be humble.

Man has been advised in the *Qur'an* again and again to be wary of Satan who demonstrated arrogance before Allah and became ever condemned one. The *Qur'an* describes the arrogance of Satan in these words: “*When We told the angels, ‘Prostrate yourselves before Adam’, they all prostrated themselves, save Iblis, who refused and glorified in his arrogance: and thus he became one of those who deny the truth*” (*Qur'an*, 2: 34). The original word in the verse for the arrogance is “*istikbar*”, which literally signifies “to seek superiority” or “to consider oneself superior to others”. Those with arrogance indeed consider themselves greater than and superior to others. To claim greatness for oneself is to challenge Allah who taught us to glorify him with phrase “*Allah akbar*” (Allah is the greatest of all). The arrogant seems to claim through his attitude and manners: “*ana akbar*” (I am greater than others). And this is a false claim.

There are two orders in the universe, the Creator and the creation. Greatness is exclusively for the Creator, Allah. Creation can never claim for itself greatness. Man is creation hence no claim for greatness. It is true that some people might be stronger than others either in wealth, health, cast, knowledge, piety, beauty, or in power, but this strength does not form the basis for claiming superiority because the greatness he/she is claiming is a short-lived phenomenon which is the gift from Allah who can anytime and due to any reason revoke his blessings. Leadership is a blessing of Allah. Why should then the leader be arrogant before his subject?

The story of Adam and Iblis as briefly mentioned in the *Qur'an* (i.e. 2: 30-39) serves as a mirror for the leaders in which reflect faces of angels and that of Iblis. The story invites leaders to identify themselves with either of the two categories of attitudes, that of angels or that of Iblis. The Prophet (SAAS) is reported to have said that whoever claims greatness for himself is doomed [Muslim, Sahih].

Remembering, counting, and looking at the blessings of Allah help man feel grateful to Him. And this gratitude toward Allah, the ultimate of everything, develops sense of humility in man. The Prophet (SAAS) was advised by Allah to identify and count His blessings to him: “*As for the blessings of your Lord, you have to speak about them*” (*Qur'an*, 93: 11). Instead of feeling proud and walk in haughtily exultation, expressing gratitude to Allah is highly rewarding; and having the attitude of ingrate is seriously afflicting. The *Qur'an* says: “*And remember the time when your Lord made this known: If you are grateful, I shall most certainly give you more and more; but if you are ungrateful, my chastisement is severe indeed*” (*Qur'an*, 14: 7). The feeling and consciousness that whatever favors one is enjoying in this world in the form of

health, wealth, position, honor, knowledge, beauty, piety, and power prevents him/her from being boastful of his life and from looking down upon others, including the less fortunate, with contempt.

Piety

Piety, generally translated into English as consciousness of Allah, is the state of mind reflecting itself in attitude and behavior. The *Qur'an* in its entirety serves as the last and the only authentic source of values of life for those who are pious:

“Alif Lam Mim. This Divine Writ—let there be no doubt about it—is a guidance for all those who are pious, who believe in the existence which is beyond the reach of human perception, and are constant in prayer, and spend on others out of what We provide for them as sustenance; and who believe in that which has been bestowed upon you from on high, as well as in that which was bestowed before your time, and they are sure about the hereafter. It is they who follow the guidance from their Lord; and it is they who shall attain to a happy state” (Qur’an, 2: 1-5).

These opening verses of the second chapter of the *Qur'an* shed ample light on the meaning, form, and direction of piety. The foundation stone of piety is unflinching faith in the realities that lie beyond the perception of man (i.e. Allah and the unseen world), in the authenticity of revelations right from the first Messenger to the Last one (i.e. previous Books as well as the *Qur'an*), and in the occurrence of the Day of Judgment (life hereafter). These articles of faith manifest themselves in the life of the pious in the form of total devotion to Allah through regular prayers, and through spending on those who deserve out of the sustenance Allah has provided for them. Loyalty and accountability to Allah and taking care of the less fortunate are the two main components of piety.

Leadership is not a bed of roses; it is rather a heavy task demanding full devotion of time and energy. If the leader equips himself/herself with the tool of piety, he/she can easily and successfully accomplish the task. Piety is an immense strength wherewith the pious becomes strong in his/her leadership position. According to a Hadith, man through his constant devotion to and remembrance of Allah becomes so close to Allah that whatever he/she wishes, Allah grants [Muslim, Sahih]. A leader may at times face challenges and difficult situations, which he/she can definitely overcome with his/her piety. Leadership minus piety is not authentic.

Conclusion

Leadership personality in the modern times and in accordance with the dominant culture in the world stands divided into personal and professional, with no relationship between them. In his/her private life a leader is allowed to think, choose, and act as he/she wishes independently, but in his/her professional life he/she is required to be different from his/her personal and private life. This bifurcation of leadership personality has rendered it weak, unreliable, and unsuccessful. Professionalism is not merely specialization in a particular field, and expertise in technological know-how; it is also behavioral pattern and human interaction based on certain particular highly authentic principles. Leadership personality needs to be unified. There is to be complete consonance between the leader's personal and professional life. Alongside with his/her professional expertise, the leader is, from Islamic perspective, someone who is conscious of his delicate position, deals with all the matters honestly and justly, demonstrates humility everywhere, and strengthens his/her position through sincerity and piety. The *Qur'an* serves as the only reliable manual for leadership. The leaders are advised to take inspiration and guidance from the Last Book of Allah, instead of from Machiavelli and Chanakya who teach and propagate only dishonesty and dualism.

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