

is but (a divine) inspiration with which he is being inspired (sent down to you)" ([al-Najm, 3-4](#)).

Moreover, Allah communicates with, and conveys various meanings to, man via incalculable signs (ayat) He had embedded in each and every aspect of His creation: from the grandest to the humblest and most ordinary. The signs permeate and dominate not only elements of the multitiered physical creation, but also the whole of man's existence, his society, civilization and history.

Allah says: "And how many signs in the heavens and the earth do they pass by? Yet they turn (their faces) away from them!" ([Yusuf, 105](#)).

The truth contained in revelation (wahy) is essentially the same truth as contained in the working of Allah's providence in human history and the history of individual souls, as well as in the physical and metaphysical signs scattered literally throughout creation.

Lastly, Allah communicates, to some extent, with man through his fitrah as well. The fitrah is the natural disposition, inclination and sound human nature that Allah instilled in mankind. According to a verse from the Qur'an ([al-A'raf, 172](#)), Allah took from the loins of Adam his progeny like tiny particles, and made them testify concerning themselves that He was their Creator and Master. Every newborn in this world is born with this covenant and affirmation.

That means that everyone is born with the natural inclination towards Islam as the ultimate truth and so, the only religion with Allah; the natural inclination -- or pure human nature -- which Allah instilled in all people on the day of the covenant. In their capacity as the creation and mere servants, all humans are born with the inclination towards their Creator, Master and Sustainer. Everyone is initially free of any false beliefs, and will always enjoy a disposition towards goodness and sound beliefs -- regardless of his adopted behavioural patterns -- while at the same time innately disliking evil, deceit and falsehood.

However, communication between man and Allah is not to be a one-way model.

Just like any other communication type, this type of communication, likewise, ought to be a two-way process, in order that it remains productive, meaningful and strong, insofar as man, the recipient of Allah's communicated Word and Message, is concerned.

Thus, Allah afforded man a number of opportunities to reciprocate both His direct and indirect communication initiatives. Man is asked to pray five times a day, supplicate, remember, praise, glorify and sing praises to Him, at certain appointed and recommended times, or whenever and wherever he feels disposed to do so.

Similarly, man can contemplate about Allah: His Holy Attributes and His creation, acknowledging the Master's infinite power, supremacy and greatness, as opposed to his own insignificance and smallness, prompting his restive soul to scream out: "Our Lord, not for naught have You created (all) this! Glory to You! Give us salvation from the penalty of the fire" ([Al-Imran, 191](#)). Certainly, it is no coincidence that these words are preceded by the following: "Men who celebrate the praises of Allah standing sitting and lying down

on their sides and contemplate the (wonders of) creation in the heavens and the earth..." ([Al-Imran, 191](#)).

Or, man can open up his heart at anytime and anywhere and simply talk to his Creator and Cherisher about any topic and in any language. Allah says: "And if My servants ask you about Me – behold, I am near; I respond to the call of him who calls, whenever he calls unto Me. Let them, then, respond unto Me, and believe in Me, so that they might follow the right way" ([al-Baqarah, 186](#)).
The significance of communication with Allah

All things considered, communication is the lifeblood of the relationship between man and Allah. The two are locked in a causal liaison, the former being the cause and the latter the effect. The stronger and more profound the communication, the stronger and more fruitful the relationship becomes. In the same vein, the weaker and more ineffectual the communication, the weaker and more deficient the relationship becomes.

Indeed, man needs special communication skills to make his relationship with Allah work. This is especially so because man is created but to worship (know and serve) Allah ([al-Dhariyat, 56](#)); that is to say, the innermost purpose of man's creation is to become cognizant of the existence of Allah and to consciously as well as willingly conform his own existence to Allah's will and plan.

For man, life is all about knowing, worshipping and serving. However, these, in actual fact, are but different names for man's incessant and pulsating communication with Allah, which comes to pass with various degrees of meaning and intensity, and at various levels of man's physical, rational and spiritual presence.

It is on account of this that it is said, for instance, that reading the Holy Qur'an means letting Allah speak to a person, a form of communication the content of which should be properly comprehended, reflected on and then, duly acted upon. In other words, a reader, or reciter, of the Qur'an should perceive himself as being instructed, directed and meticulously guided thereby.

Performing daily prayers, furthermore, is to be understood as talking to and conversing with Allah, in which case man plays the role of an active participant under the aegis of divine inspiration and guidance. While performing prayers, a person should understand that he in his capacity as mortal servant has the privilege to converse directly with his Eternal Creator, Lord and Master, praising, glorifying, thanking, supplicating, confessing, testifying, imploring, pleading, and seeking His unbounded forgiveness and mercy.

It follows that the daily prayers are the most powerful and meaningful experience one can have in his life. They are the best heavenly gift to mankind. They alone are at once a life-changer and life-sustainer. They are also a life-purifier. Allah thus affirms: "...And establish regular prayer: for prayer restrains from shameful and unjust deeds; and remembrance of Allah is the greatest (thing in life) without doubt..." ([al-Ankabut, 45](#)).

Such is the case owing to the rational fact that he who experiences five times a day everything prayer entails, will in no way engage willingly and persistently in any serious

loathsome deeds or deeds that run counter to reason. The two prospects are absolutely incompatible in a person. It is unfathomable that a person who most directly communicates with Allah five times a day, will willingly and repeatedly commit a serious wrongdoing. If, however, a person who is constant in prayer does not shun lewdness and iniquity, that would mean that there is something seriously wrong with the former, whose complete state and effectiveness will need review and some drastic adjustment measures.

While performing all other religious injunctions, and while spurning the possibility of committing sins – both minor and major -- as much as possible, a person should know that he answers Allah's divine calls that target directly him and his consciousness. Such a realization lies at the centre of the concept of niyyah (the intention in one's heart to do an act for the sake of Allah alone), which, in turn, is a prerequisite for acceptance of religious acts. Prophet Muhammad (pbuh), therefore, is reported to have said that the reward of deeds depends upon the intentions and every person will get the reward according to what he has intended (Sahih al-Bukhari).

Based on the above, it is incumbent on each and every Muslim to comprehend the meaning of communication with Allah as means of connection between people and their Creator and Master, and as the process of conveying intended meanings and messages from one "side" to the other through the use of prescribed ways and means.

Such communication helps man elevate himself from the stifling confines of the body, matter and this world, to the ultimate freedom and endless potential of the soul and its transcendent realm. It sets man on a journey of self-actualization. It makes him genuine and real. It makes him realize that he is not alone in the maze of life where, without Allah's light and guidance, nothing makes sense, nor appears heartening and uplifting. It saves him from the dreadful prospect of living and dying as nothing and nobody, presenting him, instead, with a wonderful opportunity to become somebody at as high a plane of existential reality as the heavenly scheme of things, and to never really die.

Furthermore, such communication helps man come fully to terms with who exactly he is, what exactly life is, and, of course, who exactly Allah is. The most important knowledge from this three-pronged, or trifurcated, realization is that Allah is man's Lord, Guardian and Helper. He is near to him with His knowledge, power and compassion whenever he supplicates or calls upon Him. Allah even says that He is nearer to man than his jugular or neck-vein (Qaf, 16), which could mean that Allah knows the inmost desires and motives of man even better than man does himself, and that Allah knows more truly the innermost state of man's feeling and consciousness than does his own ego.

A believing man confidently knows that he has Allah in his life. It is Allah Who is on his side. He administers his life affairs, steering them to what is best for him in both worlds. Fully aware of Allah's constant presence, yet "nearness", such a man via relentless communication patterns relies on Allah and fully entrusts his soul, yet his total being, to Him and His Will. He then lives happily in peace.

In short, a person knows that when he is deserted by people, Allah is always there for him, listening to his cries and relieving his plights. He also knows that when nobody cares and listens, Allah is there doing exactly that and coming to his rescue. And that is all that matters; and that is all every individual should ever ask and yearn for.

Whenever a believing man reads the Qur'an, he knows that Allah speaks directly to him, and every "you", "he" or "they" mentioned therein denotes, one way or another, precisely him, following which a believing man cannot stay indifferent or unmoved. Behind every "you", "he" or "they", he imagines his own name being spoken.

By the same token, whenever he prays, thanks, supplicates, remembers, beseeches or implores Allah, a believing man knows the weight and profundity of "You" and "He", which he extensively articulates in his communication models. He knows that he talks to the One Who is "near", listens and responds; Who is nearer to a man than the man to himself. Communicating silently versus communicating loudly

It is in this context that Allah says in the Qur'an that supplications should be made humbly, silently and not loudly: "Invoke your Lord with humility and in secret" ([al-A'raf, 55](#)). About Prophet Zakariyya (Zechariah), Allah says: "When he called to his Lord a call in secret" (Maryam, 3).

The Prophet (pbuh) also admonished some people who raised their voices while supplicating: "Be merciful to yourselves (i.e., don't raise your voices), for you are not calling a deaf or an absent one, but One Who is All-Hearer, All-Seer. The One Whom you call is closer to one of you than the neck of his animal" (Sahih al-Bukhari).

It follows that if a person feels he has to pray or supplicate loudly, lest he might be unheard or misunderstood, he needs to examine his faith, for there are, surely, some serious flaws in it. Life is all about drawing closer to Allah and feeling how near He with His Knowledge, Might, Compassion and Munificence, is. The closer to Allah a person gets, the more overwhelmed, more benevolent, more tranquil and, at times, even more introvert he becomes. His total being becomes engrossed in enjoying and "feasting" on the boons generated by his spiritual triumph. He increasingly loses interest in frivolous and worthless things and pastimes, regarding them as serious distractions and deviations. They tend to rob a person of his most precious moments, experiences and opportunities.

His communication patterns with his beloved Creator and Master then becomes impeccably effective and high-yielding. Most of the time, such patterns do not exceed the softness of the whispers, even though the whole spiritual kingdom resonates with them. Such is the relationship between Allah and His true servants that sometimes the mere vibrations of their hearts, or the reflections of their minds, connote the most potent, most effective and most hearkened supplications. Outward silence is often the best communication mode. Indeed, a believer's heart is a place that effectively never sleeps, and is always connected with the highest spiritual order of things, meanings and experiences. The closer to Allah he gets, the quieter, more inaudible, more discreet and more tranquil in his worship activities he becomes.

This paradigm applies to any relationship with individuals who genuinely love and care for each other. They are often seen not talking much to one another, and when they do, they do so softly and quietly. They simply whisper, or speak in undertones, to each other. This is so because their hearts are together, and are one. And it is right in their hearts that most of their communication unfolds and mutual understanding takes place. Their united hearts talk, though the separated physical bodies appear still and silent. Regardless, they perfectly understand each other.

On the diametrically opposite side stand relationships with individuals who gravely misunderstand each other. They often, as a rule, quarrel, screaming and shouting at one another. They do so because, even though they are physically side by side, their hearts are worlds apart. They recognise that very well and so, feel they have to scream and shout. They know, no matter what, they will not be heard by the one(s) on the other side. Hence, such squabbles never solve anything. They are simply vain attempts to out-scream and out-shout one another. There is rarely any room for reason and sanity in such situations.

Prophets' calling to communication with Allah

Owing to this importance of communication with Allah, each and every prophet's mission paid special attention to it. Communicating with Allah was seen as a logical, plausible and natural process, for Allah is a Personality (Huwa or He) -- not a mere abstract conception of philosophy -- with a Nature of His so sublime that it is far beyond our limited conceptions; He exists, but in such a way that He is the Ever-Living, Self-Sustaining; He created and sustains the world; and He sent prophets to mend people's ways and create for them suitable communication patterns with their Creator and Master.

For example, when Prophet Ibrahim (Abraham) confronted his unbelieving and rebellious people, he among other things tried to bring home to them the inappropriateness and danger of polytheism. His focus was the delusion, futility, uselessness and unresponsiveness of their home-grown idols and deities. They simply could not communicate in any way, nor could they benefit or harm anybody. They were but a fragment of dead matter to which only mentally incapacitated and spiritually dead individuals could be devotedly attached: "Deaf, dumb and blind -- so they will not return (to the right path)" ([al-Baqarah, 18](#)).

Ibrahim said to his father, an idol-maker: "O my father! Why do you worship something that can neither hear, nor see, nor yet profit you in any way?" ([Maryam, 42](#)).

This is a segment of Ibrahim's discussion with his polytheistic people: "Ibrahim, are you he who has done this to our gods?" He answered: "Rather it was this supreme one who has done it. So ask them, if they can speak." Thereupon they turned to their (inner) selves and said (to themselves): "Surely it is you who are the wrong-doers." Then their minds were turned upside down, and they said: "You know well that they do not speak." Ibrahim said: "Do you, then, worship beside Allah a thing that can neither benefit you nor hurt you? Fie upon you and upon all that you worship beside Allah. Do you have no sense?" ([al-Anbiya', 62-67](#)).

Ibrahim also said to his people concerning their fraudulent gods and their inability to communicate: “Do they listen to you when you call (on them)? Or do they profit you or cause you harm?” ([al-Shu'ara', 72-73](#)).

And about Allah, his Almighty Creator and Lord -- with Whom Prophet Ibrahim enjoyed such a close relationship that Allah said that He took him for a friend (khalil) ([al-Nisa', 125](#)) – Ibrahim said that it was He: “Who created me, and it is He Who guides me; Who gives me food and drink, and when I am ill, it is He Who cures me; Who will cause me to die, and then will bring me back to life; and Who, I hope, will forgive me my faults on the Day of Judgment” ([al-Shu'ara', 78-82](#)).
Why can't we see Allah?

One may ask why we cannot see Allah, although we can communicate with Him so closely.

In a nutshell, we cannot see Allah because, first, there is nothing like Him ([al-Shura, 11](#)). Our eyes, and other senses and faculties, are things and thus, can only see other things belonging to the corresponding existential realms. They cannot see, hear or recognize beyond the orb of our everyday existential things and objects.

Second, nobody says that humans will not see Allah. Both the Holy Qur'an and the Prophet's sunnah are explicit that believers will see Him in Paradise (jannah). The vision will be as clear and certain as seeing “the moon on the night when it is full” and “the sun on a cloudless day” (Sahih al-Bukhari).

What is more, seeing Allah will be the best reward in Paradise; whereas not seeing Him will be the worst and most painful chastisement for the inhabitants of Hell. Seeing Allah is the greatest blessing and joy, so it is withheld for the place of ultimate blessing and joy, namely Paradise, and it is reserved exclusively for believers. This, in addition, serves to believers as a strong motive to continue doing good in this world and never get bored or give up.

It goes without saying that not seeing Allah is only a temporary decree for Allah's true servants, who are closest to Him in this world. Seeing Allah in Paradise could also imply the pinnacle, or culmination, of their incessant drawing closer to Him.

Third, we cannot see Allah now and here because we are trapped in time and space, while He is beyond them. Time and space are Allah's creation. He is not fettered by them; we are. Consequently, man cannot think except along the lines of time, space and matter. Once the hindrances posed by the time and space factors of this world are eliminated in the Hereafter -- or modulated, together with man himself and his various faculties, so as to make them suitable and fitting for the conditions of the Hereafter -- seeing Allah will appear utterly viable and sensible, especially for those who will be Paradise-bound.

Even in this world, man can see instantly and directly very little and a very few things. Man is myopic or short-sighted, so to speak. He cannot see more because of a myriad of time and space factors and influences standing between him and things, incapacitating him from seeing more. To see more, man must overcome, or eliminate, those factors and

influences. The problem, therefore, is not with things and objects, but with man and his limited abilities.

For example, a person sitting in a windowless room can only see the room's interior. To see outside, he must leave the room; that is to say, he must overcome the room as a hindrance to seeing outside. Moreover, to see a friend in a nearby town, 50 km away, the man must travel that much; that is, he must overcome the hindrance of the necessary distance and time that separate him from seeing the friend. The same principle applies to seeing everything else that lies outside the parameters of the windowless room.

Similarly, for a person to see his friend who passed away two years ago, he will have to travel back in time two years or more; that is to say, he will have to deal with the unsurmountable time hurdle, or barrier, in order to see his friend. Also, for a person to see his future grandchildren, he will have to travel into the future as much as necessary; that is, he will again have to contend with the unassailable time difficulty.

At any rate, to see and experience things, man must free himself from the physical milieu and situations wherein he, as substantially a physical being himself, is confined or imprisoned.

The whole issue is about man and his weaknesses, exacerbated by the spatial and temporal parameters and constraints within which he operates. Yet, there are many other things right inside man, or everywhere around him, which man cannot see, but which undeniably exist. Some of those things are radio waves as a type of electronic wave used to transmit data for satellites, computer networks and radio, atoms as the smallest building blocks of matter, air or oxygen, ultraviolet light, gravity, the mind, the soul, emotions, quantum particles, the actual size of the universe, etc.

Anyway, it makes sense to wish, yet ask, to see existing things and objects. But a code of ethics, as well as a dose of pragmatism and common sense, are needed. Man must realize that, just like in everything else, there are certain physical, rational, ethical and spiritual rules, regulations and procedures that preside over the prospect of seeing things. For man – insignificant, weak and vulnerable as he is – to insist on seeing Almighty Allah, Who is the only truly Transcendent Being, the Exalted, Sublime, Ever-Living and Self-Sustaining, while he is imprisoned and stuck in the yokes of matter, is at once an ignorant, arrogant and preposterous pretence.

When Allah spoke to Prophet Musa (Moses) on Mount Sinai, Musa at one point said: "O my Lord! Show (Yourself) to me that I may look upon You."

Musa asked to see Allah because, as a prophet, he knew that seeing Allah is not impossible, nor that wishing, or even humbly asking, to see Him in extraordinary situations such as the one in which Musa had found himself, is blasphemous.

When Allah replied that Musa neither will, nor could, see Him, He meant that in the context of this world only – as is the view of all mainstream exegesis (mufassir).

And when Allah said to Musa after that: "Behold this mountain: if it remains firm in its place, then -- only then -- will you see Me", Allah wanted to bring home to Musa his existing

human weaknesses, as well as the impediments and hurdles of time and space, which will need to be overcome, or liquidated, if he was to see Almighty Allah. Allah wanted to communicate to Musa that he was not ready to see Him, nor had the time come for such an event to take place.

At last: "When his Lord manifested His glory on the mount, He made it as dust and Musa fell down in a swoon. When he recovered his senses, he said: 'Glory be to You! To You I turn in repentance and I am the first to believe'" ([al-A'raf, 143](#)).

When Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) was asked if he had seen Allah on the night of Mi'raj (ascension into heaven), he replied: "(He is veiled by) Light, how could I see Him?" (Sahih Muslim).

Finally, Allah declares: "No vision can grasp Him, but His grasp is over all vision. He is above all comprehension yet is acquainted with all things" ([al-An'am, 103](#)).