

**SLOTH, WRATH, ENVY AND PRIDE AS MORAL  
DISORDERS - REMEDIES BY THE QUR'ĀN  
AND WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE  
(A COMPARATIVE STUDY)**

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Man, by nature is weak and frail and cannot hold fast his ground against the strong and dominating temptation of evil. This is evident from his past history which teems with tales of greed and lust, of jealousy and sloth, indicating man's unambiguous propensity towards evil. How divine scriptures and worldly books present and treat human nature explain the real state of affairs. These divine and worldly works include the Holy *Qur'ān* and the works of William Shakespeare – a divine scripture and book of morality and works of art – which, in their own respective way and according to the purposes they serve, endeavour to pinpoint the evil side of human nature. Not only this, they recommend ways and means to help man restore his lost *fiṭrāh*. Both the Holy *Qur'ān* and the works of William Shakespeare, chiefly, his four great tragedies show that, apart from many other vices, human nature is, dominantly, in the strong grip of sloth, wrath, envy, and pride. However, at the same time, these works discuss and cure these illnesses with diligence, patience, compassion and humility. The present study, one of a kind, attempts first to highlight passages in both works which point out the vices, and second, those which offer them cure. The methodology adopted in this paper is qualitative in nature that exploits the content analysis technique for the exhaustive examination of the secondary data, painstakingly collected from both the works before arriving at any substantial findings.

**Keywords:** *Fiṭrāh*; Human Nature; Negative Human Nature; Nature; *Qur'ān*; Shakespeare; Tragedies; Verses; Lines.

**Introduction**

In man, divine creation has undoubtedly attained, so to speak, the heights of creative perfection. However, the same claim cannot be confidently made of man's physical build. Though, in flesh and strength, one confesses, man badly fails to compete other creations, yet, the unique combination of his para-physical characteristics, coupled with his mental capacities, hoist him on the highest position in the hierarchy of divine creation. Spoken that, emotions and desires, the predominant para-physical features, yet the arduous trial zones of man, are the real parameters of his moral strength. Man, in other terms, is the finest yet the most complicated creation God ever created. This complexity arises from the fact that, in him, both negativity as well as positivity overlap in such a delicate way that one cannot say one from the other. However, human nature, over a span of thousands of civilized years, has proved unmistakable propensity towards evil, represented by base desires and emotions. Man shirks goodness because it is the result of conscious effort<sup>1</sup> which man often avoids due to his inherent sloth inextricably embedded in his nature. In other words, his soul is more bent towards evil. In man, sloth, wrath, envy and pride reign supreme<sup>2</sup>, alongside lust, gluttony and greed. All the religious books like the Holy Bible and the Holy *Qur'ân* as well as non-religious texts i.e. literary works like the works of William Shakespeare<sup>3</sup>, therefore, focus on how to treat all these vices, especially sloth, wrath, envy and pride, proliferating in human nature. Concomitantly, they endeavor to mature diligence, patience, humility and compassion in human nature to reinstate man's lost *fitrah*<sup>4</sup>.

The study of *Qur'ân* reveals and maintains the same approach when it discusses vices before offering any solutions to them. This example would solidify the deduction: ... *Lo! Allâh loveth not such as are proud and boastful*<sup>5</sup>. This selection from the Holy Book, in categorical terms, reveals that *Allâh* (SWT) denies His love and blessings to those who are van and proud as they remain so immersed in themselves that they hardly think of others, even their close relations. This pick clearly shows that the Glorious *Qur'ân* chastises those who are sinful because it is well aware of the fact that man by nature is weak and that he possesses and shows propensity towards evil. To say that the Holy *Qur'ân* just lays bare the evil side of man and does not offer any cures to them, would be profane. There are passages in the same *surâhs* which, in the same breath, recount both the vices and their cures. Sometimes different technique is seen to have been used in the Holy

Scripture to discuss vices and their cures in different contexts. The proceeding example, though does not occur in the same context with the previous selection, yet it carries cure for pride: *The (faithful) slaves of the Beneficent are they who walk upon the earth modestly, and when the foolish ones address them answer: Peace; ...*<sup>6</sup>. This citation clearly indicates that those who are the true servants of *Allāh* (SWT) show humility and modesty and avoid bragging and assuming airs.

Certain non-divine works like works of literature, of course, follow the same method in discussing vices and neutralizing their effect by offering remedies to them. Most of literary works, at times, come closer to divine scriptures in taking up moralizing as their main purpose. Great writers like Dante Alighieri<sup>7</sup>, John Milton<sup>8</sup>, John Bunyan<sup>9</sup>, William Blake<sup>10</sup>, etc. of antiquity and of comparatively modern age alike confirm the same. Among these writers, William Shakespeare's approach, indeed, corresponds to the approach of the Holy *Qur'ān* by one way or another. All his works, especially his four great tragedies, i.e. *Hamlet*<sup>11</sup>, *King Lear*<sup>12</sup>, *Macbeth*<sup>13</sup> and *Othello*<sup>14</sup> take up human nature in its totality and reveal, with the same strength, its negative aspects and, at the same time, provide solid and practicable solutions to them. His plays are, therefore, replete with numerous examples where he comes down hard on these vices. The following example can be cited as a solid evidence where the Bard of Avon<sup>15</sup> chastises pride as one of the main disrupters of human relations: *But he, as loving his own pride and purposes, / Evades them with a bombast circumstances, / Horribly stuff'd with epithets of war; ...*<sup>16</sup>. As in the Holy *Qur'ān*, in William Shakespeare too, the vices and virtues find accommodation side by side or in different contexts. Their purpose is, however, the same, i.e. to make man morally upright and good. The following example enumerates the virtues, including humility, in a good king and, therefore, in a good human being: *But I have none: the king-becoming graces, / As justice, verity, temperance, stableness, / Bounty, perseverance, mercy, lowliness (humility), / Devotion, patience, courage, fortitude. / I have no relish of them, but about / In the division of each several crime, / Acting in many ways*<sup>17</sup>. Humility, one of the virtues, makes a meek man dear not only to his fellow humans but to God as well, thus, discouraging pride and arrogance in man.

This entire discussion, indispensably, gives rise to the question as to why these works, especially the Holy *Qur'ān* and the works of William Shakespeare<sup>18</sup> focus on man and his nature. The answer may logically be put thus: since the main theme of the afore-cited works is

human nature<sup>19</sup>, it is, therefore, natural that both of them not only discuss it exhaustively in their specific ways<sup>20</sup>, but they also come up with solutions to mitigate the effects of vices and suggestions to ripen virtues in human nature. Simultaneously, another question that comes to the mind of a vigilant reader, is “Why the works of William Shakespeare reflect the Holy *Qur’ân* in pinpointing and curing vices?”. One may deductively say that William Shakespeare, a well-read person of his day, might have read the Holy *Qur’ân* and have, therefore, borrowed ideas from it.<sup>21</sup>

In the light of the above discussion, this descriptive study, which has been unique in its intent and content, has set certain objectives which are recorded here. The present study, therefore, aims, first, at identifying the four vices i.e. sloth, wrath, envy and pride in *Qur’ân* and then at pinpointing their treatment offered therein. Next, the researchers have endeavored to highlight the four deadly vices in the four tragedies of William Shakespeare and the treatment he recommends therein to them. In the next phase, the treatments offered by both the Holy *Qur’ân* and William Shakespeare are compared. At the end of the study, the researchers prove the superiority of the Holy *Qur’ân* in terms of its identification of the vices and their treatment. It is not irrelevant to mention that various research studies, almost of the same nature, have so far been initiated on human nature by renowned research scholars every so often in the field; however, no keen study has ever been carried out, so to speak, on the four important vices i.e. sloth, wrath, envy and pride from the said perspective, taking it as baptism of fire. The study has been carried out mainly on the Holy *Qur’ân* and the four tragedies of William Shakespeare to belabor the point. It is to be noted that research work ought to be carried out on the three vices i.e. lust, gluttony and greed in similar paper in order to complete the list. Moreover, this ambitious study would have been an impossibility without the help of the *Qur’ânic* translations and exegeses by M. M. Pickthall’s<sup>22</sup>, Abdullah Yusâf Ali<sup>23</sup> and *Tafsîr-al-Jalâlayn*<sup>24</sup>. The eye of the storm of the present study is only the four tragedies of William Shakespeare due to the restricted canvas of the present work, thus, leaving out all his other literary achievements. Similarly, the main focus of this study is the Holy *Qur’ân* and not of any other religious books i.e. the Holy Bible, Torah, etc.

### **Virtues Demand Efforts while Vices None**

There is no denying the fact that human nature is inclined towards evil because committing evil is far more easier than doing good as the

latter demands on man efforts for it. However, it does not confirm that there is no way back from evil ways to goodness. If one wills, with some conscious efforts, one can regain his virtue and position himself in the list of the blessed ones. In other words, if a man wants to redeem himself from the pitfalls of vices, he has to discover sources where he can find ways and means to restore his lost *fitrah*. The sources are not far to seek for those who endeavor for them. The Holy *Qur'an* and other works of didacticism<sup>25</sup> like the works of William Shakespeare, for instance, can prove treasure trove of divine and worldly wisdom to cure the ills of human nature. To such people, therefore, *Allah* (SWT) gives the good tidings of exalted positions both in this world and the Hereafter. These *ayâhs* reveal the divine promise of reward for those who put in conscious efforts for being good: *But as for him who feared to stand before his Lord and restrained his soul from lust, / Lo! The Garden will be his home*<sup>26</sup>. This selection shows that those who seek *Allah* (SWT)'s refuge against vices would surely entitle themselves to the Divine Grace and would, indeed, find eternal bliss at the end. The following discussion will clarify the above with more minute details.

### **Sloth is Spiritual Death: Diligence, Spiritual Revival**

This universe or even a tiny part of it, functioning since eternity, has never seen a moment of suspension since its inception, if it had ever had any. Or else, this grand mechanism with all its grandeur and splendor would have come to a permanent halt and perished before soon. In the same vein, man, a cosmos miniature in himself, will meet the same end if adopted the unadopted path. His survival depends, therefore, like that of this grand universe, on constant diligence and strife. In other words, both man and the universe, are in a state of constant flux, hardly leaving any room for laziness and sloth. It is an unchangeable law of this grand machine to excommunicate and exterminate anything, including human race, if it shows any sign of collective laziness and tardiness. Moreover, the lethargy, in individual capacity, not only disrupts the law of nature, it also enrages and disconcerts *Allah* (SWT), the Creator of the entire system. He, for the same reason, warns the lethargic with strong words of moral and spiritual annihilation and enunciates severe punishment for them, both in this and the Hereafter, for going against His laws of diligence and strife. In this regard, the Holy *Qur'an* says:

*“Lo! The hypocrites seek to beguile Allâh, but it is Allâh who beguileth them. When they stand up to worship they perform it languidly (lazily) and to be seen of men, and are mindful of Allâh but little”<sup>27</sup>.*

This set of verses strongly signifies that sloth is, no doubt, a moral and spiritual disease that affects, in return, the physical and moral performance of a man, including as important an obligation as worship. Sloth, like poison, permeates the personality of a man, thus, crippling his entire life. Johnson, a renowned scholar puts the notion in these telling terms: *“The roots of the sin of sloth are spiritual, not physical... It causes spiritual dejection and spiritual misery”<sup>28</sup>*. It can be deduced in the light of the above quotation that spiritual sloth causes physical laziness and it is also true of the reverse.

As was said earlier, however, there is not a single moral or spiritual disease to which *Allâh* (SWT) has not prescribed or suggested a cure. In this particular case, diligence is suggested as a cure that counteracts sloth in human nature and teaches man the value of time and his energies. It is, by now, quite clear that the Holy *Qur’ân* never discusses a vice for the sake of nothing, but never fails to offer a solution. As was said earlier, the entire universe is in a constant flux which is evident from the Holy *Qur’ân* where *Allâh* (SWT) says: *“And (He) maketh the sun and the moon, constant in their courses, to be of service unto you, and hath made of service unto you the night and the day”<sup>29</sup>*. This holy verse ascertains the fact that the universe is in constant movement and abhors sluggishness of any sort – also a very strong lesson for man. Man should be as diligent and active as this universe, otherwise, he will be extinct, first, spiritually and then physically.

William Shakespeare, one of the greatest writers of all times, in his plays, magnanimously takes human nature in its entirety, showing that it has potential both for good and evil. He loves man with all his bestiality and divinity. Similarly, he not only sheds light on the dark nooks of his nature but is also concerned with his divine virtues – the characteristics that bestow on him the title of the best of all *Allâh* (SWT)’s creations. The entire corpus of William Shakespeare consisting plays<sup>30</sup>, sonnets and some narrative poems, indicates that he himself was a diligent person who abhorred all those who showed laziness. The following selection, taken from *Othello*, hints at laziness, juxtaposed with diligence, leaving the inference to the discretion of his readers:

*“Virtue! a fig! ’tis in ourselves that we are thus  
or thus. Our bodies are our gardens, to the which  
our wills are gardeners: ...  
either to have it sterile with  
idleness, or manured with industry, why, the  
power and corrigible authority of this lies in our wills”<sup>31</sup>.*

This selection shows that although man is well aware of the repercussions preceding both sloth and diligence, even then, he shows strong tendency towards the former and, thus, avoids the latter. As said earlier, Shakespeare takes human nature in totality and is considerate towards man despite his frail nature. If there are numerous passages in his plays where Shakespeare poignantly criticizes sloth in human nature<sup>32</sup>, there are others where he praises diligence in man in order to counter sloth and convince man of physical as well as of spiritual diligence. The following pick from *Macbeth* eulogizes diligence in these words:

*“The king-becoming graces,  
As justice, verity, temperance, stableness,  
Bounty, perseverance (diligence), mercy, lowliness,  
Devotion, patience, courage, fortitude,  
I have no relish of them...”<sup>33</sup>.*

These lines show that diligence, one of the virtues in human nature, must be an attribute of all and sundry, down from the laborer up to the king. Though decontextualized, the lines affirm the negative side of Macbeth, the speaker, who shows indifference towards virtues, enlisted in the selection. No doubt, the audience finds him the king of Scotland at the end of the play not by dint of his diligence but as a result of his murdering King Duncan!<sup>34</sup>

It can be concluded safely that sloth is condemned, whether in physical form like laziness or spiritual, like procrastination, both by the Holy *Qur’ân* and William Shakespeare, terming it as a dismembering vice in human nature. Both the works, for one, admire diligence and pronounce it as an effective cure for laziness.

### **Wrath, the Destroyer: Patience, the Preserver:**

Wrath, the binary opposite of patience, is one of the deadliest sins that takes many shapes in human nature, from mild irritation to

revenge and murder. Though, there are moments when anger is legitimate<sup>35</sup>, yet, as a whole, it is a cardinal sin and, therefore, prohibited. *Merriam Webster Dictionary* defines wrath as “*a strong feeling of displeasure and usually of antagonism*”<sup>36</sup>; which clearly says that wrath is both a grave psychological and moral disorder that has troubled man since his inception. As a matter of fact, human relations are her soft target which have always received the brunt of it. The Holy *Qur’ân*, well aware of the fiery nature of man, is replete with relevant passages, such as this, showing Moses (A.S.), a prophet, wrathful and indignant:

*“And when Moses returned unto his people, angry and grieved, he said: Evil is that (course) which ye took after I had left. Would ye hasten on the judgment of your Lord? And he cast down the tablets, and he seized his brother by the head, dragging him toward him. He said: Son of my mother! Lo! the folk did judge me weak and almost killed me. Oh, make not mine enemies to triumph over me and place me not among the evil-doers!”*<sup>37</sup>.

Here in this verse, Moses (A.S.), a prophet, a morally strong human being, is shown enraged though over the godless practices of his people. Morally superior, even prophets have anger in them! There is, therefore, no contradiction over the issue that human nature is ingrained with the seed of wrath; and if the wrath in man goes on unhindered and unbridled, it ruins both the sufferer and the victim.

The Holy *Qur’ân*, however, does not forget to propound a solution to any moral ailment it discusses. If human nature is blighted with anger, as indicated above, at the same time, it has the capacity for patience. Mercy, compassion, sympathy, fellow-feelings and humanity, to mention but few, are the right and, hence, the effective cures for wrath. In her exhaustive work, Chodron explains the ethical effects of patience in these terms:

*“Patience has a quality of enormous honesty in it, but it also has a quality of not escalating things, allowing a lot of space for the other person to speak, for the other person to express themselves, while you don’t react, even though inside you are reacting. You let the words go and just be there”*<sup>38</sup>.

Here in this abstract, the writer, striking at the very roots of anger, gives an insight into the causes of wrath and recommends the

ways to control it. It suggests that if every person begins to give small spaces to others, the face of the earth will be different from the one today and will be a peaceful place. Similarly, the Holy *Qur'ân* teaches man, in generic terms, how to practise and observe patience at the face of anger, especially, in the times of hardships, as is said in these divine verses:

*“O ye who believe! Seek help in steadfastness and prayer. Lo! Allah is with the steadfast. / And surely We shall try you with something of fear and hunger, and loss of wealth and lives and crops; but give glad tidings to the steadfast, / Who say, when a misfortune striketh them: Lo! we are Allah’s and lo! unto Him we are returning. / Such are they on whom are blessings from their Lord, and mercy. Such are the rightly guided”*<sup>39</sup>.

Here in this set of holy verses, *Allâh* (SWT) promises His mercy to those who show patience<sup>40</sup> and steadfastness, particularly, in the times of hardships when people, normally, resort to complaining and lose control over their nerves. On another occasion, *Allâh* (SWT) says regarding who forgive and show patience in these terms: “*And those who shun the worst of sins and indecencies and, when they are wrath, forgive,...*”<sup>41</sup> win His favor because *Allâh* (SWT) does not like the wrong-doer. Thus, the Lord of the universe (SWT) motivates the believers to control their anger and entitle themselves to the divine kindness.

William Shakespeare, the perfect delineator of human nature, never failed to delve deep into the unexplored recesses of human psyche and to unearth from there the real components of man’s nature. As far as anger, Shakespeare realizes for sure that man is in the steely grip of evil and that good is an almost extinct stuff in this world. His plays, especially his tragedies, do not lack places and passages<sup>42</sup> where he shows his great distaste for anger. These lines, taken from *Othello*, testify to the fact that no matter how sophisticated man has become in terms of his appearance, he still nurtures a volcano of anger, ever ready to erupt without much effort, before reason claiming the man:

*Villain, be sure thou prove my love a whore,  
Be sure of it; give me the ocular proof:  
Or by the worth of man’s eternal soul,  
Thou hadst been better have been born a dog  
That answer my waked wrath”*<sup>43</sup>!

These lines exude uncontrollable anger aroused by revenge which makes man act blindly. Like other dramatists, Shakespeare too, based his plays, specifically his great tragedies, such as *Hamlet*, *Macbeth*, *Othello* and *King Lear*, on revenge, an offshoot of wrath. Being an artful playwright, he exploits anger for his renowned tragedies which were destined to be immortal in the ages to come.

It goes without saying that if a moral problem is hinted at, Shakespeare, in the same context, recommends a solution to it. It is a common observation that pinpointing a problem is far easier than offering it a cure. Though, drama is a different form and serves different aims, yet, it does offer a solution to a problem referenced in it. Anger is a common theme in Shakespeare's tragedies and has, therefore, received ample space and suggestions for its cure in them<sup>44</sup>. These lines, taken from *Hamlet*, have adopted direct moralizing technique and got the message home effectively: "*O gentle son,/Upon the heat and flame of thy distemper/Sprinkle cool patience*"<sup>45</sup>. William Shakespeare at times, like the Holy *Qur'ân*, adopts instruction method in educating the audience, evident from this example. It is relevant to mention that such passages are the rarest where the Elizabethan dramatist has resorted to direct moralizing because he knew the demarcation line between art and scriptures.

Both the Holy *Qurân* and William Shakespeare, possessing a thorough and deep knowledge of human nature, teach man to practise patience against the unappeasable and uncontrollable wrath in human nature in such a convincing and powerful manner that even the worse natured men cannot resist the message in there. That is why both the works, though varying in degree and influence, carry universal appeal, thus surpassing the barriers of time and space.

### **Envy is cured by Compassion**

*Allâh* (SWT) has created every individual of the entire human species different from the other, not only on the basis of appearance, but also on the bases of habits, attitudes, behaviours, likes and dislikes, talents, natures, and etc. Even two brothers, born of the same parents, are not alike in any respect. Every individual, therefore, has something special about them, exclusively conferred upon them. If one does not believe in this 'natural variety' and tries to be like the others by violating the diversity, it gives rise to two problems: first, that person is on the way

to kill his talents and, ultimately, his individuality; second, it shows that that person is suffering from envy, a sin. This point can further be illustrated thus: among the children of Jacob (A.S), Joseph (A.S) was more pleasing to their parents<sup>46</sup>. It was here that the feelings of envy began to strike roots in the hearts of Joseph (A.S)'s brothers and, as a result, he and his father had to suffer immensely for a major part of their lives. *The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Current English* defines envy in these terms: “a feeling of discontented or resentful longing aroused by another's better fortune etc.”<sup>47</sup>. This definition shows that envy engenders the feelings of ill-will which only produces resentment, hatred and antagonism in the heart of the envier. Explaining the sin of envy, Parott and Smith, in their renowned work, maintain that: “Envy is an unpleasant emotional experience that is said to occur when a person perceives that they lack another's superior quality, achievement or possession and either desires it or wishes the other lacked it”<sup>48</sup>. Envy, emotions of moral sickness, functions, as can be inferred from the above definition, at two levels. First, envy or jealousy does not allow a man to be contented with what he has. Second, he nurtures ill-feelings for another person which is disruptive for the overall peace of a society. When suffering from envy, the envier compares himself with others in social, financial or mental achievements. Both the selections show that envy is Satan's most effective weapon against man. The Holy *Qur'ân*, well aware of the ravages of envy, explains the point thus:

*“He said: What hindered thee that thou didst not fall prostrate when I bade thee?(Iblis) said: I am better than him. Thou createdst me of fire while him Thou didst create of mud”*<sup>49</sup>.

This pick from the Holy *Qur'ân* confirms that envy results from comparing oneself with others on social, financial or mental grounds. Even Satan, the fallen angel, suffered from envy when *Allâh* (SWT) awarded the highest rank to Adam (A.S) and ordered Satan to bow before him. A satanic attribute, envy destroys both the one who envies and the one envied.

Envy, just said, destroys both the envier and the envied and is instrumental for the peace of a society. Like all other evils, the Holy *Qur'ân*, therefore, treats envy as a chief sin and offers recommendation to alleviate it by promoting compassion, instead. Those having compassion prioritize others over themselves that foreshadows a world full of love

and compassion. The renowned theologian and writer, Karen Armstrong, in her work, explains compassion in these words:

*“Compassion impels us to work tirelessly to alleviate the sufferings of the fellow creatures, to dethrone ourselves from the centre of our world and put another there, and to honour the inviolable sanctity of every single human being, treating everybody, without exception, with absolute justice, equity and respect”<sup>50</sup>.*

This quotation, besides many other valuable points, tells that compassion promotes justice, equity and respect among the people and so establishes the fact that envy is only defeated by compassion and nothing else. Understanding the importance and its valuable role in building a peaceful and just society, the Holy *Qur’ân* teaches compassion and sympathy in these golden words:

*“And serve Allah. Ascribe no thing as partner unto Him. (Show) kindness unto parents, and unto near kindred, and orphans, and the needy, and unto the neighbours who is of kin (unto you) and the neighbours who is not of kin, and the fellow-traveller and the wayfarer and (the slaves) whom your hands possess. Lo! Allah loveth not such as are proud and boastful”<sup>51</sup>.*

This selection is so succinct yet comprehensive a document on love, kindness, compassion, respect, assistance and sympathy towards humanity as cure that the loathsome envy cannot hold her ground before these feelings. This holy verse and many others indicate how elevated status has been assigned to love, compassion and sympathy and to those who are endowed with these characteristics.

William Shakespeare, an honest-to-human nature writer, portrays human nature in all its baseness and grandeur, never missing its nuances. Envy, the cardinal sin, has always taken his fancy and has provided excellent stuff for his great tragedies. *Othello*, one of the four tragedies of William Shakespeare can be cited as an example. The name of Iago, playing the devil in the tragedy, has come down to the present age as an embodiment of jealousy and envy. William Shakespeare, the master artist, developed excellent plots round the evils of human nature including envy and manufactured literary masterpieces par excellence! The forthcoming

selection gives expression to the same blinding emotion which reeks of nothing but envy and malice:

*“For that I do suspect the lusty Moor  
Hath leap’d into my seat; the though where of  
Doth, like a poisonous mineral, gnaw my inwards;  
And nothing can or shall content my soul  
Till I am even’d with him, wife for wife  
Or failing so, yet that I put the Moor  
At least into a jealousy so strong  
That judgment cannot cure”<sup>52</sup>.*

The feelings, involved in the background, are really those of jealousy because it *gnaws* the *inwards* of the speaker, thus, making him miserable. As mentioned earlier, envy not only harms the victim but also the envier. It is proved that it is a grave moral disease that jeopardizes the peace and can literally undermine the strong foundations of a society. Envy is such a strong a moral issue that even the mighty like Beelzebub, fell to it and were thus *“for ever fallen”*<sup>53</sup>. *Othello* revolves round a thwarted love and the ensuing jealousy that eats up many great characters and leaves behind a litter of tragic waste<sup>54</sup> on the stage. Envy, one of the most lethal of all sins, is the main motif<sup>55</sup> present in Shakespearean drama as he is well aware of this side of human nature.

William Shakespeare, being a humanist, never rejoices in the folly and evil nature of man. He treats and discusses compassion as rigorously because he knows that envy, present in human nature, attacks the holiest and the vilest alike and with the same ease. Shakespeare, like other mighty writers of all ages, is the resonant voice of the pitiful, advocating compassion and, at the same time, censuring lack of compassion in human nature<sup>56</sup>, which is clear from these lines:

*“Death, nature! Nothing could have subdu’d nature  
To such a lowness but his unkind daughters.  
Is it the fashion that discarded fathers  
Should have thus little mercy (compassion) on their flesh?  
Judicious punishment! ’twas this flesh begot  
Those pelican daughters”<sup>57</sup>.*

These powerful lines, taken from *King Lear*, clearly indicate the ravages of unkindness and compassionlessness in human nature. This

callousness does not spare even the nearest of relations and upsets them without repair. These, along with many others lines<sup>58</sup>, recommend compassion against the devastation of envy.

The Holy *Qur'ân* and Shakespeare are hard on the sin of envy and suggest treating it with compassion and kindness. Both carry passages which testify to the fact that if envy damages the social and spiritual life of a man, compassion maintains and sustains the same. They seem to educate their audience in their unique ways with the objective to make humans better than they really are.

### **Pride changed angels into devils; humility makes men angelic<sup>59</sup>**

Pride, the deadliest of all sins, has, moreover, all other evils as its progeny and, always, at its disposal. Pride, deeply embedded in human nature, makes man brashly exaggerate his strengths and brazenly minimize his weaknesses; it is nothing but pride that makes and compels man hide his trivial weaknesses, glaring shortcomings and audacious sins and, in addition, makes man try to impress others by his face, race and grace. Again, it is pride that makes man self-centered and selfish, callously blind to his own blunders, and yet, suspicious and critical of others' forgivable slips. Above all this, it is the same pride that makes man's life discontented and dissatisfied yet more competitive<sup>60</sup>! As was said in the start, pride, the breeder and warden of all evils of the world, has caused destruction more than any other sin. Baruch Spinoza, the Medieval Jewish philosopher, defines it in these terms: "*Pride is thinking more highly of oneself than is just, out of love for oneself*"<sup>61</sup>. Aware of the pillages of pride, the deadliest of all moral ills, the Holy *Qur'ân*, in order to purge human nature of its noxious effects, puts bars on it in these words: "*Turn not thy cheek in scorn toward folk, nor walk with pertness in the land. Lo! Allâh loveth not each braggart boaster*"<sup>62</sup>. Allâh (SWT), here in this particular verse and others,<sup>63</sup> denies the proud His love as they are scornful towards His creation. All these selections, culled both from the Holy *Qur'ân* and Shakespeare and other Christian writers, illustrate that pride, so far the most dangerous sin, has curled up the world in its deadly and strong coils.

Pride is rampant in the world which is evident from the fact that the heart of man throbs and swells with it. That is why the divine scriptures, particularly the Holy *Qur'ân*, have offered, without fail, solutions and cures to the eradication of pride, snuggled in human nature. As always, the Holy Book first identifies the sin of pride and then offers

ways and means for its cure by following which, man can loosen himself from the uncompromising clutches of pride. Here too, the Divine Scripture offers solution to the evil of pride in these glorious and matchless terms:

*“And serve Allah. Ascribe no thing as partner unto Him. (Show) kindness unto parents, and unto near kindred, and orphans, and the needy, and unto the neighbours who is of kin (unto you) and the neighbours who is not of kin, and the fellow-traveller and the wayfarer and (the slaves) whom your hands possess. Lo! Allah loveth not such as are proud and boastful”<sup>64</sup>.*

These strong words, consisting of a message regarding compassion and sympathy towards those who are somehow below in worldly status, carry brilliant instructions of how to treat others in different situations. In other words, extending any sort of kindness and sympathy to others means trampling pride and ego under one’s feet; thus, restoring oneself to the grace of *Allâh* (SWT).

All the scriptures and literary masterpieces testify to the fact that man by nature is weak and is more inclined towards sins than virtues<sup>65</sup>. William Shakespeare, too, like other great writers from all ages, seems to be of the same opinion that man is more evil than virtuous. Owing to this, the plots of his great tragedies are either entirely based on sins like pride and jealousy or carry individual passages which provide an insight into his in-depth knowledge and understanding of human nature. Pride, in light of passages gathered from his four tragedies, is a moral and psychological disorder and, therefore, can be held responsible for the bad shape of the world. It was pride that deprived Beelzebub, the archangel, of the divine grace and marked his downfall. The upcoming selection from *Othello* sheds ample light on Shakespeare’s understanding of pride:

*“... He (King Stephen) was a wight of high renown,  
And thou (Othello) art but of low degree:  
Tis pride that pulls the country down;  
Then take thine auld cloak about thee”<sup>66</sup>.*

From this passage, it can be safely concluded that Shakespeare knows that pride in human nature dismembers the very fabric and upsets the mode of human society. Though never used as the sole driving force in any of his great tragedies, William Shakespeare certainly knows how

and where to exploit the vice of pride and other evils in human nature for his works<sup>67</sup>.

Like the Holy *Qur'ân*, the works of William Shakespeare endeavour to offer solution to an evil he chooses to portray in his plays. It rarely happens that a vice occurs in his plays without any solution offered to it by the great writer. As compassion counters pride in human nature, Shakespeare has penned down numerous passages where he encourages and praises sympathy and compassion in human nature against pride. This passage criticizes unkindness in order to inspire man to be compassionate especially in human relations:

*“Death, nature! Nothing could have subdu'd nature  
To such a lowness but his unkind daughters.  
Is it the fashion that discarded fathers  
Should have thus little mercy (compassion) on their flesh?  
Judicious punishment! 'twas this flesh begot  
Those pelican daughters”*<sup>68</sup>.

Shakespeare, in these lines, invokes God's wrath on those who cruelly treat others. Compassion, the binder of all relations, it is inferred, can work miracles. There are numerous examples<sup>69</sup> where he praises, directly or indirectly, compassion in glorious terms.

The passages and quotations here, painstakingly selected from both the works, affirm that pride is a moral disease that contaminates everything it touches. Both the texts condemn the cardinal sin of vanity in human nature and offers solution to it in the form of compassion, kindness and sympathy, thus, working diligently for the promotion of these feelings in the heart of man in order to counter the deep rooted pride in human nature and defeat it.

### **Social and Academic Implications of the Research**

Research is not a futile activity that aims, precisely, at blackening pages of paper and at being shelved for other researches for ready yet rare reference. It is, on the contrary, an academic activity that has both academic as well as social implications and are consulted where they are needed. Research, primarily, pinpoints gaps in the existing body of research work or explores new areas of investigation both at social and intellectual levels. The present work, as referred earlier, carries a broad spectrum of social as well as academic implications in the targeted spheres.

Human society, as a whole, suffers, off and on, at the hands of human actions, often engendered by the negativity of human nature. Now the permanent solution to these evil activities can be found in divine scriptures such as the Holy *Qur'ân* and worldly works like the works of William Shakespeare. These works make efforts to pinpoint these devastating evils and to offer cures to them in forms of divine virtues. With this aim in mind, the present study is conducted to collect passages on the evil sides of human nature and on their cure in such divine and worldly works i.e. the Holy *Qur'ân* and the four tragedies of William Shakespeare to guide the society towards the understanding of human nature. As hinted earlier, this study also carries implications of academic nature within its womb and offers the promise that it will prove helpful for the future and budding researchers in the related area.

A rare species, the present study takes, for its province, the evil of sloth, wrath, envy and pride with raised eyebrow and, also, their counterparts, like diligence, patience, compassion and humility as their cures. These omnipresent and omnipotent vices, in the first place, are innate in human nature and cannot be completely rooted out. However, with little will power and effort, one can, surely, mitigate their effects both from their individual and social life. All religious scriptures, especially the Glorious *Qur'ân*, in this regard, can be of immense help as they recommend ways how to rein them so that the society may go unharmed by their ravages. All the works and real life events show that these characteristics are permissible as long as they play as positive force in human life. They, therefore, prove beneficial for the well-being of the society. However, when these characteristics exceed their prescribed limits and pose threat to the well-being of the society. The teachings of the divine scriptures contain these vices in limits and if they exceed the prescribed limits, they recommend and suggest ways to rein them and channelize them. Moreover, if one is not religious and doesn't read scriptures yet eager to rescue themselves from the clutches of evil, they can also find solutions in great literary works like those of William Shakespeare, especially, his tragedies. These works not only cure evil in human nature but nurture and nourish the virtues there and, thus, make man better and virtuous. The only thing both the Holy *Qur'ân* and the works of William Shakespeare remand is a will to be good.

This study is unique in conception and execution because if, on the one hand, the Holy *Qur'ân* is the main source of guidance for human beings, particularly, the Muslims, on the other, William Shakespeare is

revered as a great figure and his works, therefore, enjoy great readership and reverence only after the Holy Bible in the Christian world, (in the view of some scholars). This character gives the present study a universal significance and implication. With such significance, the present study not only makes man better but also plays a substantial role in bridging the gap between east and west based on religions.

The academic implications of the present study cannot be underestimated and exercise as are as far reaching and permanent impressions as the social ones. The bulk of references of the work confirms and justifies the claim that efforts done are enormous because the mere collection and selection of data from the Holy *Qur'ân* and four tragedies of William Shakespeare was a herculean task let alone analyzing it. It is justly believed that the study will prove to be a repertoire of information on the topic and a foundation stone for new works in the area. Though limited in execution, the present study can lead to groundbreaking academic achievements in the future.

### **Future Study**

Human nature, in itself a broad term, demanding an exhaustive study, is discussed here from a relatively narrow perspective. This present study spotlights vices in human nature and their cures recommended by the Holy *Qur'ân* and the four tragedies of William Shakespeare. Delimiting the topic, the research takes into account only the four important aspects of human nature i.e. sloth, wrath, envy and pride and their counterpart virtues i.e. diligence, patience, compassion and humility<sup>70</sup>. This study may be replicated addressing the other aspects i.e. lust, gluttony and greed of human nature and their counterparts i.e. chastity, temperance and love. Also, a same academic endeavor be initiated on the diverse aspects of human nature present in both works. Human nature, as was said before, is a vast area of academic investigation and promises immense potential for research study. Similar comparative studies on human nature be commenced where the works of other writers like William Wordsworth<sup>71</sup>, Robert Browning<sup>72</sup>, Christopher Marlowe<sup>73</sup>, Fyodor Dostoevsky<sup>74</sup>, Gogol<sup>75</sup>, and etc. are needed to be compared and contrasted with the Holy *Qur'ân*. Likewise, human nature can be studied from *Qur'ânic* and Biblical perspectives which can surely lead to interesting insights on the topic. Last but not least, views of different psychologists on human nature be collected and structured as research study as it is basically a topic of psychology.

In the end, it can be suggested that new research tools, if applied, can bear positive fruits in the present case and can prove refreshing and rewarding in terms of findings. Doing so will surely work as a ground work for many an authentic research and act as an impetus for new academic undertakings.

### Conclusion

In the present day world, human nature is one of the most debated topics of discussion among scholars from every field of knowledge, included psychology, literature, religion and philosophy. The debate takes a serious yet interesting turn when it comes to the question whether human nature is good or bad. As always, here too, comes three opinions on the topic: it is good, it is bad, it is mixed. This variation is visible when discussed in all the above mentioned disciplines. However, an overwhelming majority maintains that despite his weakness, man has the potential to be good. And if read closely, every divine and worldly written endeavour testifies to this fact as their sole enterprise is to enlist ways and means and to tell man how to be good again. These works include the Holy *Qur'ân* and the four tragedies of William Shakespeare, the great Elizabethan playwright and uncontested delineator of human nature. These two works take human nature in totality and treat them as such. They, therefore, not only lay bare the evil in human nature, but they also offer solutions to his base nature by calling man back to *fiṭrâh*. If they expose the evils of lust, gluttony and greed, sloth, wrath, envy, and pride in man, they offer chastity, temperance, love, diligence, patience, compassion and humility as cures. However, the current paper discusses sloth, wrath, envy, and pride and their counterpart virtues i.e. diligence, patience, compassion and humility due to its restricted scope. The main part of the paper consists of detailed discussion on the vices and their counterpart virtues supported with relevant passages, painstakingly gathered from both the works. The paper endeavours to show that both works censure sloth and proposes diligence as its cure. Likewise, it condemns wrath in the strongest possible terms and offers patience as its cure. Also, they denounce envy as the worst of evils and, in the same breath, counters it with compassion. Equally, both the Holy *Qur'ân* and the Shakespearean tragedies speak ill of pride and suggest humility as its best solution.

The present study has universal implications as it not only pinpoints the vices but also their cures, thus, making it quite easy for the general

reader to know and note them. The reader finds substantial and tangible evidences regarding these vices and virtues in the Holy *Qur'ân* and the tragedies of William Shakespeare. The present work, therefore, carries impacts of social and academic nature. On the social level, it aims to educate the masses on vices and their remedies and to help them make better human beings. This, in turn, will make the world a better and more peaceful place. Moreover, the present study will help bridge the breach between Muslims and Christians and mitigate the resentment between the two communities. As for academic, the present study has been a groundbreaking work on the topic and contains potentials for proving a starting point in the academic and research field. It is confidently assumed that the present study has attained such academic heights that it will prove a cornerstone in the field of comparative studies on the topic.

### Notes and References

1. Burton Watson, trans., *Hsün Tzu: Basic Writings* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1963), 157.
2. The list of seven deadly sins has been adopted from Christian writings as the list is clear and focused. However, it is not claimed that it is an absolute list, excluding the possibility against the existence of any other vices in human nature. There are other vices which are not included here but do exist and carry far more reaching deadly effects. For instance, betrayal, ungratefulness, etc. are not listed here but have been playing strong roles in the life of man and can, therefore, serve a topic of a separate research work of the same or even greater magnitude.
3. William Shakespeare (1564 – 1616), the great Elizabethan playwright, was born at Stratford-on-Avon, a town in Warwickshire (Central England). He started his dramatic career as an actor. Later, he took to rewriting the existing plays, sometimes in collaboration with other dramatists like Giles Fletcher the Elder (1549?-1611). His 37 plays can be grouped as comedies, tragedies, tragicomedies and romances. Of these, *Hamlet*, *Macbeth*, *Othello* and *King Lear* are the best known tragedies. He also wrote 154 sonnets and narrative poems such as *The Rape of Lucrece* and *Venus and Adonis*. After an eventful life, starting as an obscure wretch in a county in Central England, he died on 23 April, 1616 as one of the greatest depictees of human nature. So far, William Shakespeare has been one of the greatest playwright who delineated human nature so precisely which is unsurpassed even today. (See for details: Dorothy Eagle, *The Concise Oxford Dictionary of English Literature*, 2nd ed. (Great Britain: Oxford University Press, 1985), 523-525).
4. *Abdullah Yusâf Ali*, in his authentic translation of the Holy *Qur'ân*, defines the term *fitrâh* as the divine pattern on which *Allâh* (SWT) has created man. It is divine and is, therefore, unchangeable (*Qur'ân*, 30: 30). In other words, this verse maintains that though the good nature in man is corruptible and fallible, yet its core remains unscathed, uncorrupt and unalterable.

5. *Qur'ân*, 4: 36
6. *Qur'ân*, 25: 63
7. Dante Alighieri (1265 – 1321), an Italian writer of the antiquity, is one of the most revered writers who exercised a mighty influence on the poets of later generations. His ambitious work, *Divina Comedia*, consisting of *Inferno*, a description of Hell, *Purgatorio*, a description of Purgatory, and *Paradiso*, a vision of a world of beauty, light, and song, is religiously inspired and inspiring ... . (See for more detailed: Dorothy Eagle, *The Concise Oxford Dictionary of English Literature*, 2nd ed. (Great Britain: Oxford University Press, 1985), 133. 147 – 148).
8. John Milton (1608 -74), one of the greatest English poets, wrote mostly on religious, social and political themes during the tumultuous times called Puritan Age (17th c.) that won him the admiration of the generations of writers. Besides many works, his famous works *Paradise Lost* (1667), *Paradise Regained* (1671) and *Samsom Agonistes* (1671), as is evident from their titles, are based on religious and classical events and figures. (See for more detailed: Dorothy Eagle, *The Concise Oxford Dictionary of English Literature*, 2nd ed. (Great Britain: Oxford University Press, 1985), 382 - 83).
9. John Bunyan (1628 – 88) was a tinsmith by profession. However, he raised himself to priesthood on the basis of sheer talent and won huge recognition during his life which has not waned. His most celebrated work is *The Pilgrim's Progress* (1684), an allegory is a dream of the author. His works are remarkable for his simplicity of language. (See for more detailed: Dorothy Eagle, *The Concise Oxford Dictionary of English Literature*, 2nd ed. (Great Britain: Oxford University Press, 1985), 68 – 69. 458).
10. William Blake (1757 – 1827), an engraver by profession, was the most independent and the most original poet of all the romantic poets of the eighteenth century. As a child he had visions of God and the angels looking in at his windows; and as a man he thought he received visits from the souls of the great dead, Moses, Virgil, Dante, Milton and all these go into the writing of his early poetry. His later and better known volumes are *Songs of Innocence* and *Songs of Experience* reflect two widely different views of the human soul. (See for further details: William James Long, *English Literature its History and its Significance for the Life of the English Speaking World*, (India: A.I.T.B.S Publishers, 2007), 328 - 332).
11. *Hamlet*, a tragedy by William Shakespeare, probably produced before 603-4, relates the story of young man named Hamlet who seeks vengeance on his uncle who has allegedly killed his father, the king, and married his mother, the queen. The drama ends with all the main characters killed. (See for more detailed: Dorothy Eagle, *The Concise Oxford Dictionary of English Literature*, 2nd ed. (Great Britain: Oxford University Press, 1985), 243).
12. *King Lear*, a tragedy by William Shakespeare performed in 1606, is the story of Lear, King of Britain, and his three daughters, Goneril, Regan and Cordelia. Lear, intending to divide his kingdom among his daughters according to their affection for him, therefore, bids them say which loves him most. Goneril and Regan make profession of extreme affection, and each receives one-third of the

kingdom. Cordelia, self-willed, and disgusted with their hollow flattery, says she loves him according to her duty, no more nor less. Infuriated with this reply, Lear divides her portion between his other daughters. ... The king of France accepts her without dowry. Soon after, Goneril and Regan reveal their heartless character by grudging their father the maintenance that he had stipulated for, and finally turning him out of doors in a storm. Later, Lear, whom rage and ill-treatment have deprived of his wits, is conveyed to Dover by the faithful Kent in disguise, where Cordelia receives him. At the end Lear dies of grief after all his daughters die of natural and unnatural deaths. (See for more detail: Dorothy Eagle, *The Concise Oxford Dictionary of English Literature*, 2nd ed. (Great Britain: Oxford University Press, 1985), 310).

13. *Macbeth*, a famous tragedy by William Shakespeare based on the story of treason and murder of one Thane (a feudal lord in Anglo Saxon England [prior to about 1100 AD]) Macbeth, the hero of the play, is obsessed so much with greed that he satisfied it with the blood of Duncan, the king of Scotland. Though became the king of the country, however, he had to pay dearly for it. (See for more detail: Dorothy Eagle, *The Concise Oxford Dictionary of English Literature*, 2nd ed. (Great Britain: Oxford University Press, 1985), 348).
14. *Othello, The Moor of Venice*, a tragedy by William Shakespeare, is a story of love, intrigues and jealousy that devours Othello, the Moor, Desdemona and others. (See for more detail: Dorothy Eagle, *The Concise Oxford Dictionary of English Literature*, 2nd ed. (Great Britain: Oxford University Press, 1985), 427-28).
15. The Longman Dictionary explains the epithet the Bard of Avon used for William Shakespeare, thus: “a poetic name for William Shakespeare, based on the name of the River Avon at Stratford, where he was born”. (Quirk, Randolph. “Longman dictionary of contemporary English.” *Essex: Longman Dictionaries* (1987).
16. William Shakespeare, *Othello*, 1968, 1.1.12-14
17. William Shakespeare, *Macbeth*, 1967, 4.3. 90 - 96
18. William Shakespeare has written some thir+ty seven or thirty eight plays including tragedies, comedies, tragicomedies, historical plays and romances of which four great tragedies i.e. *Hamlet*, *Macbeth*, *King Lear* and *Othello* are the most famous ones. Moreover, he was a poet par excellence and wrote some of the finest narrative poems like *A Lover's Complaint*, *The Rape of Lucrece* and *Venus and Adonis* and 154 sonnets. (See for more detail: Dorothy Eagle, *The Concise Oxford Dictionary of English Literature*, 2nd ed. (Great Britain: Oxford University Press, 1985), 523-25).
19. *Encyclopaedia Britannica* defines human nature as the fundamenta dispositions and traits of humans. Theories about the nature of humankind form a part of every culture. In the West, one traditional question centred on whether humans are naturally selfish and competitive (see Thomas Hobbes; John Locke) or social and altruistic (see Karl Marx; Émile Durkheim). A broader problem is that of determining which ostensibly fundamental human dispositions and traits are natural and which are the result of some form of learning or socialization. Recent research in genetics, evolutionary biology, and cultural anthropology suggests that there is a complex interaction between genetically inherited factors and

developmental and social factors. Basic drives shared with other primates are related to food, sex, security, play, and social status. Language use by humans is now generally recognized as genetically enabled, though the acquisition of any specific language also requires appropriate environmental stimuli. Some common behavioral differences between genders (e.g., regarding aggression) also appear to have a genetic basis, as does sexual orientation. (See for more details: Ward, James. "Encyclopaedia Britannica." (1886)).

20. Since the purposes of divine scriptures like the *Qur'ân* and literary works are substantially different, their techniques are, therefore, accordingly varied. The former adopts techniques of allusions, narratives, direct moralizing, analogies and comparison and contrast, etc., while the latter, especially drama, on the other hand, exploits irony, narrative, plot, soliloquys, asides, etc., explained in the proceeding pages. (See for further detail: Martin Grey. *A Dictionary of Literary Terms* (Singapore: Longman, 1994).
21. The researchers, in their profound work, maintain that William Shakespeare must have borrowed ideas for his romance play *The Tempest* from the Holy *Qur'ân* and the *Arabian Nights*. They, to this end, provide evidences from all the works, thus showing close and striking affinities regarding characters and events in all the three books... (A. S Al-Garrallah & Talal, A. H. B. *Oriental Echoes: William Shakespeare's The Tempest, The Quran and The Arabian Nights*. (2009). *AngloGermanica online: Revista electrónica periódica de filología alemana e inglesa*, (7), 1-13).
22. Mohammad Marmaduke Pickthall (1875 - 1936), the British Muslim novelist and Koranic translator, lived an eventful life before he eventually converted to Islam. Not yet eighteen, Pickthall had sailed for Port Said, hoping to learn enough Arabic to earn him a consular job in Palestine, with introductions in Jerusalem. The Orient came as a revelation. There he was mesmerized by its mystery. Later in life he wrote: '... What struck me, even in its decay and poverty, was the joyousness of that life compared with anything that I had seen in Europe. The people seemed quite independent of our cares of life, our anxious clutching after wealth, our fear of death'. And then, on 29 November 1914, during a lecture on 'Islam and Progress', he took the plunge, joining countless others of his kind. From now on, his life would be lived in the light of the One God of Islam. However, it was not all ideal. He had to suffer because of his conversion and, therefore, lost his current job, and rejecting other lucrative jobs, he accepted the headmastership of a boy's school in the domains of the Nizam of Hyderabad, outside the authority of British India. He fight the odds as his life was now led by one thought: the Koranic translation in English. From 1929 until 1931 the Nizam gave him leave-of-absence to enable him to complete his Koranic translation. He travelled to Germany to consult with leading Orientalists, and studied the groundbreaking work of Nöldeke and Schwally, the *Geschichte des Qorans*, to which his notes frequently refer. Eventually, approved by Al-Azhar, the translation duly appeared, in 1930, and was hailed by the *Times Literary Supplement* as 'a great literary achievement.' In 1935 Pickthall left Hyderabad. His school was flourishing, and he had forever to deny that he was the Fielding of E.M. Forster's novel *A Passage to India*. (He knew Forster well, and the charge may not be

- without foundation.) He handed over *Islamic Culture* to the new editor, the Galician convert Muhammad Asad. He then returned to England, where he set up a new society for Islamic work, and delivered a series of lectures. Despite this new activity, however, his health was failing. He died in a cottage in the West Country on May 19 1936, of coronary thrombosis, and was laid to rest in the Muslim cemetery at Brookwood. (See for more details: Murad, Aabdul Hakim. "Marmaduke Pickthall: A brief biography." *British Muslim Heritage* (2012).
23. "Abdullah Yusuf Ali was born on 4th April 1872 in Surat, Gujrat in Western India. He was the second and younger son of Yusuf Ali Allahbuksh, an official in Surat's police force. He was educated in Bombay and England. Abdullah Yusuf Ali is best known for his English translation of the Quran which is widely circulated and used in the English-speaking Muslim world. He strongly desired to bridge the gap between the East and the West. This led him to marry a British woman, Teresa Mary Shelder, symbolizing his desire. Later, this desire, coupled with his debt to the West and his strong faith in Islam, took a more serious turn that resulted in the acclaimed translation of the Holy *Qur'ân* into English. His *Interpretation of the Qur'ân* was finished between the years 1934 and 1937. According to Sherif, two forces worked on the core of his personality: his devotion to Islam and his troubled family life. Sherif, Mohammad A. *Searching for Solace: A Biography of Abdullah Yusuf Ali, Interpreter of the Qur'an*. No. 165. Searching for Solace, 1994.
  24. *Tafsîr-al-Jalâlayn* ("Tafsîr of the two Jalals") is a classical Sunni *Tafsîr* of the *Qur'ân*, composed first by Jalal ad-Din al-Maḥalli in 1459 and then completed by his student Jalal ad-Din as-Suyuti in 1505, thus its name, which means "Tafsîr of the two Jalals". It is recognized as one of the most popular exegeses of the *Qur'ân* today, due to its simple style and its conciseness: It being only one volume in length. *Tafsîr-al-Jalâlayn* has been translated into many languages including English, French, Bengali, Urdu, Persian, Malay/Indonesian, Turkish and Japanese. There are two English translations. (See for further details: <http://main.altafsir.com/Al-Jalalayn.asp> *Tafsîr-al-Jalâlayn*", Altafsir.com, accessed 16 June 2017.
  25. (Gr. 'teaching') Didactic literature is designed to instruct or to persuade. Its purpose is not purely or primarily imaginative, though many didactic works are prodigious works of the imagination, in which the imaginative material is ordered to illustrate a particular doctrine. ... Milton's *Paradise Lost* and John Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress* are examples of didactic literary works, based on or inspired by the scriptures. (See for further detail: Martin Grey. *A Dictionary of Literary Terms* (Singapore: Longman, 1994), 89).
  26. *Qur'ân*, 79: 40, 41
  27. *Qur'ân*, 4:142
  28. D Johnson. *The Hard-to-Define Deadly Sin of Sloth*.
  29. *Qur'ân*, 14:33
  30. Certain writers record them as 38 plays in total. However, majority of Shakespearean scholars is of the view that the number of his plays is 37 and not 38. One group even claims the number to be 39.

31. Shakespeare, *Othello*, 1968: Act 1, Scene 3. Lines 316 – 2332 Shakespeare, *King Lear*, 1952: Act 3, Scene 4. Line 94
33. William Shakespeare, *Macbeth*, 1967: Acts 4. Scene 3. Lines 91 – 95.
34. Since dramas are dissimilar from books of morality and manipulate different dramatic techniques and devices like suspense and poetic justice, their ultimate outcome (moral) demands patience and deep thinking on the part of the audience.
35. Lars Wilhelmsson, *The Seven Deadly Sins*, 17
36. Merriam Webster Dictionary
37. *Qur'ân*, 7:150
38. P. Chödrön, *The Answer to Anger & Aggression is Patience*, (2005).
39. *Qur'ân*, 2:153, 155, 156, 157
40. *Qur'ân*, 3: 134
41. *Qur'ân*, 42: 37
42. Shakespeare, *Othello*, 1968: Act 4, Scene 2. Lines 31 -32, *Hamlet*, 1971: Act 2, Scene 2. Lines 585 – 90, *Hamlet*, 1971: Act 3, Scene 2. Lines 253 – 54, *Hamlet*, 1971: Act 3, Scene 4. Lines 88 – 96, *Hamlet* 1971: Act 4, Scene 3. Lines 65 – 66, *Hamlet*, 1971: Act 4, Scene 7. Line 127, *King Lear*, 1952: Act 4, Scene 6. Lines 184 – 89, *King Lear*, 1952: Act 2, Scene 4. Lines 281 - 84, *Macbeth*, 1967: Act 4, Scene 3. Lines 227 – 228
43. Shakespeare, *Othello*, 1968: Act 3, Scene 3. Lines 356-360
44. Shakespeare, *Othello*, 1968: Act 1, Scene 3. Lines 204, 205, *Hamlet*, 1971: Act 3, Scene 1. Lines 73 – 76, *Macbeth*, 1967: Act 4, Scene 3. Lines 91 – 97, *King Lear*, 1952: Act 2, Scene 4. Lines 273.
45. Shakespeare, 1971: 3.4. 22 – 24
46. Lang, Jennifer. "Encyclopedia of World Biography." *Reference & User Services Quarterly* 37, no. 4 (1998): 377-378.
47. Della Thompson, *The Concise Oxford Dictionary*, 9th ed. (US: Oxford, 1995), 453.
48. WG Parrott, RH Smith, *Distinguishing the Experiences of Envy and Jealousy* (1993).
49. *Qur'ân*, 7:12
50. Karen Armstrong. *Charter for Compassion*, (2009).
51. *Qur'ân*, 4:36
52. William Shakespeare, *Othello*, 1968: Act 2, Scene 1. Lines 286 – 93
53. J. C. Suffolk, *Paradise Lost: Books I & II*. (UK: University Tutorial Press, 1965), 29.
54. The good being destroyed along with the bad at the resolution of the play. Often played out with the unnecessary loss of life, especially of "good guy" characters. (See for more details: McEachern, Claire, ed. *The Cambridge Companion to Shakespearean Tragedy*. Cambridge University Press, 2013. 19-20).
55. Motif (O. Fr., from Lat. 'moving') A motif is some aspect of literature (a type of character, theme or image) which recurs frequently. Encountering with tramps in lonely places is a 'motif' common in Wordsworth's poetry. The chasm and dome of Coleridge's 'Kubla Khan' (1816) are motifs common to many other nineteenth-century poets. (See for further detail: Martin Grey. *A Dictionary of Literary Terms* (Singapore: Longman, 1994), 186).

56. Shakespeare, *Hamlet*, 1971: Act 2, Scene 1. Lines 107 -115, *Hamlet*, 1971: Act 4, Scene 5. Lines 17 – 20, *Othello*, 1968: Act 3, Scene 3. Lines 145 – 50, *Othello*, 1968: Act 3, Scene 3. Lines 164 – 169, *King Lear*, 1952: Act 5, Scene 2. Lines 55 – 57.
57. Shakespeare, 1952: 3. 4. 70 – 75
58. Shakespeare, *Othello*, 1968: Act 4, Scene 1. Lines 194, 95, *Macbeth*, 2014: Act 3, Scene 4. Lines 39 – 42, *Hamlet*, 1971: Act 3, Scene 3. Lines 43 –47
59. Worthington, Everett L. *Humility: The quiet virtue*. Templeton Foundation Press, 2007. Modified the quotation according to purpose.
60. Wilhelmsson, Lars. “The Seven Deadly Sins.” *Notes* 79: 80.
61. J. Neu, (1999). *Pride and Identity*. IN R.C. Solomon (Ed. Wicked Pleasures: Meditations on the Seven “Deadly” Sins (51-79).
62. *Qur’ân*, 31:18
63. *Qur’ân*, 4:36
64. *Qur’ân*, 4:36
65. Though man was created with *fitrâh* no doubt, yet the entire body of work, both divine and worldly, shows that his nature is weak and frail as is alluded to by the Holy *Qur’ân* thus: *Allah would make the burden light for you, for man was created weak (Qur’ân, 4:28)*. Similarly, William Shakespeare absolutely agrees with what the Holy Book says regarding the issue. He, too, proves from the entire collection of his work that he takes man a fallible creature with multiple spiritual and moral weaknesses. His famous pungent remark on Gertrude, the mother of Hamlet, confirms the same, though in specific terms, when he says: *Frailty, thy name is woman* (Shakespeare, 1971: 1.2.146)! Both these selections, therefore, firmly confirms the notion that man by nature is weak and is inclined towards evil and vice.
66. Shakespeare, *Othello*, 1968: Act 2, Scene 3. Lines 88 – 91
67. Shakespeare, *Othello*, 1968: Act 1, Scene 1. Lines 12 – 16, *King Lear*, 1952: Act 3, Scene 4. Lines 85 – 86, *Othello*, 1968: Act 1, Scene 3. Lines 386 – 88.
68. Shakespeare, *King Lear*, 1952: Act 3, Scene 4. Lines 70 – 75
69. Shakespeare, *Othello*, 968: Act 4, Scene 1. Lines 194, 95, *Macbeth*, 2014: Act 3, Scene 4. Lines 39 – 42, *Hamlet*, 1971: Act 3, Scene 3. Lines 43 – 47
70. Like the list of deadly sins, the list of divine virtues adopted here, is also borrowed from Christian texts only for the sake of convenience and not for implying that it is the only or final list of virtues. There are virtues like charity, etc. though not included in the list yet exists.
71. William Wordsworth (1770 – 1850), one of the elder poets of the Romantic Age, other being Samuel Taylor Coleridge and Robert Southey. Together with Coleridge, he published in 1798 *Lyrical Ballads*. His well-known works are *The Prelude*, *Intimations of Immortality*, etc. (See for more detail: Dorothy Eagle, *The Concise Oxford Dictionary of English Literature*, 2nd ed. (Great Britain: Oxford University Press, 1985), 620-21).
72. Robert Browning (1812 – 89), a Victorian poet, the perfect practitioner of dramatic monologue, is famous for ambiguity in his poetry. His famous works are: *Sordello*, *Bell and Pomegranates*, *Dramatis Personae*, etc. The characteristics of his poems were a strong psychological interest in human emotions and motives

and a tendency to obscure or deliberately torturous language. His lyrics, however, are delightfully simple and musical. (See for more detail: Dorothy Eagle, *The Concise Oxford Dictionary of English Literature*, 2nd ed. (Great Britain: Oxford University Press, 1985), 66).

73. Christopher Marlowe (1564 – 93) a playwright and one of the University Wits, was a predecessor of William Shakespeare. The writer of ‘mighty lines’ was killed young in a street brawl, most probably for his atheistical opinions. However, he left behind a valuable body of works that includes, *Tamburlaine*, *Tragedy of Dr Faustus*, *The Jew of Malta*, *Edward II*, and others. He also wrote splendid poems. (See for more detail: Dorothy Eagle, *The Concise Oxford Dictionary of English Literature*, 2nd ed. (Great Britain: Oxford University Press, 1985), 360).
74. Feodor Mikhailovich Dostoevsky (1821 – 81), Russian novelist. His major novels are *Crime and Punishment*, *The Idiot*, *The Devils*, and *The Brothers Karamzov*. His novels are notable for their depth of character analysis, preoccupation with abnormal psychology, and the humor of the absurd. (See for more detail: Dorothy Eagle, *The Concise Oxford Dictionary of English Literature*, 2nd ed. (Great Britain: Oxford University Press, 1985), 154).
75. Nikolai Vasilevich Gogol (1809 – 52), Russian writer. His masterpiece is the novel *Dead Souls* (first part). It was never finished and Gogol destroyed most of the second part. His other works are *Evenings on a Farm near Dikanka*, *The Nose*, *The Inspector General* (play). (See for more detail: Dorothy Eagle, *The Concise Oxford Dictionary of English Literature*, 2nd ed. (Great Britain: Oxford University Press, 1985), 225).