

AN ISLAMIC PERSPECTIVE ON THE PROTECTION OF THE MIND AND ATTAINMENT OF HAPPINESS

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of the guidance sent by Allah through Prophets and Messengers (peace and blessings of Allah be upon them) is for human beings to achieve happiness in this world and the Hereafter. Happiness is the ultimate purpose of all human endeavours; the goal pursued by all human beings regardless of their religious and cultural differences. What is happiness? How is it achieved? Answers to these questions are crucial to the understanding of the different worldviews of life and man. The contention of this paper is the achievement of happiness in Islam through the protection of the mind, which is one of the higher objectives of Islamic Law – Maqasid al-Shari'ah. Others are protection of religion, life, progeny and wealth. The paper: firstly, describes the importance of the mind and happiness. Secondly, explains the merits of the mind. Thirdly, explicates the interconnectedness of the mind and happiness. Fourthly, describes how Islam preserves the mind and promotes happiness, and lastly, elucidates the limitations of the mind and the need for revelation. The goal of this paper is to show that happiness is unattainable without the protection of the mind from discontentment and kufr (disbelief in Allah). In other words, the paper shows a correlation between attainment of happiness and protection of the mind. It highlights the importance of mental health. It is hoped that this work will contribute to the understanding of happiness and personal worth on the basis of the Islamic worldview.

Keywords: Happiness, worldview, mental health, *maqasid al-Shari'ah*, personal worth

Introduction

Preservation of the mind and attainment of happiness are an essential part of Islam. One could not exist without the other. Mind and happiness have been defined in many different ways. The object of this study is not to delve into the different definitions and meanings of mind, but to: firstly, describe happiness and define the mind; secondly, explain the merits of the mind; thirdly, explicate the interconnectedness of the mind and happiness, fourthly, describe how Islam preserves the mind and promotes happiness, and lastly, elucidate the limitations of the mind and the need for revelation.

I. UNDERSTANDING HAPPINESS AND DEFINING THE MIND

Happiness is described as elusive and subjective concept or experience. This is because: firstly, it is a complex concept; i.e. the things that constitute it cannot be quantified. Many people talk about happiness but have no idea about what it.

Secondly, before defining or describing happiness, it is critical to find the right answers to the following fundamental questions of man and life:

- 1) What is man?
- 2) What is the meaning and aim of life?

There is no definite answer to these fundamental questions. Similarly, there is no definite answer to what happiness means and which road leads to it.

Thirdly, as an experience, the happiness of one person could differ from the happiness of another. Also the happiness of one person at one time could fundamentally differ from his or her happiness at another.¹

According to hedonic worldview happiness is the goal of life and is pursued by maximizing pleasure and minimizing or completely eliminating pain. Epicurus (341 – 270 B.C.E.), the ancient Greek philosopher to whom ethical hedonism is mostly associated wrote:

We recognize pleasure as the first good innate in us, and from pleasure we begin every act of choice and avoidance, and to pleasure we return again, using the feeling as the standard by which we judge every good. (Epicurus, "Letter to Menoeceus")ⁱⁱ

The materialistic perspective of happiness is that it is correlated with possessions or wealth. This means, the relationship between happiness and wealth is linear. The more wealth one has, the happier one is.

The kind of happiness described in the above two perspectives is momentary in contrast to the kind of happiness in the Judeo-Christian and Islamic perspectives which is long-lasting and holistic; that is, it relates to here and Hereafter life and to man's body and soul. In these religious perspectives material possessions or physical nourishment is not sufficient for a happy life:

"Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God." (Bible, Matthew 4:4 (King James Version))

“And he humbled thee, and suffered thee to hunger, and fed thee with manna, which thou knewest not, neither did thy fathers know; that he might make thee know that man doth not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the Lord doth man live.” (Bible, *Deuteronomy 8: 2-3* (King James Version))

Abu Huraira reported: The Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, said, “**Wealth is not in having many possessions. Rather, true wealth is the richness of the soul.**”ⁱⁱⁱ

With money a person is able to buy many things except happiness. It is evident from the above that happiness is contentment with what a person possesses. Therefore, one of the reasons for loss of happiness is discontentment. Babies are naturally happy because their hearts are free from worry and discontentment.

According to the Qur’an, most people are never satisfied with what they have; they are ungrateful: “...For Allah is full of bounty to mankind, but Most of them are ungrateful – *la yashkurun*.” (Qur’an 2: 243). *Yashkurun* is a verb for *shukr* which means gratitude. Its opposite is *kufir* which means ungratefulness and disbelief. *Iman* (belief) is another opposite of *kufir*. This implies that a *kafir* (disbeliever) is ungrateful to Allah, the Provider of everything, whereas a *mu’min* (believer) is one who is grateful to Allah and content with what He gives him.

From the stand point of Islam happiness is seen as a reflection of the heart that remembers Allah. In other words, one has to be close to Allah to be happy here and forever. For happiness denotes *iman* and it is characterized by tranquility – *tama’ninah* and *qana’ah* (contentment): “Those who believe, and whose hearts find satisfaction in the remembrance of Allah. For without doubt in the remembrance of Allah do hearts find satisfaction – *tatma’innu al-Qulub*.” (Qur’an 13: 28). It is crystal clear in this verse that (true) peace of mind or tranquility can only be obtained from *zikiru’llah*. This verse can be taken as a formula for positive mind and attainment of happiness in this world and in the Hereafter.

According to Islam, worldly happiness is temporary and a means to the true and everlasting happiness in the Hereafter life: “O my people! This life of the present is nothing but (temporary) convenience: It is the Hereafter that is the Home that will last.” (Qur’an 40:39); “But seek, with the (wealth) which Allah has bestowed on thee, the Home of the Hereafter, nor forget thy portion in this world: but do thou good, as Allah has been good to thee, and seek not (occasions for) mischief in the land: for Allah loves not those who do mischief.” (Qur’an 28:77). Happiness in this world may require material possession but that of the Hereafter will solely depend on one’s *iman*.

It must be made quite plain that spending a few minutes on *zikiru’llah* – remembrance of Allah – every day leads to fruitful and beneficial results. It (frequent remembrance of Allah) enhances one’s concentration (clear thinking); helps a person gain a positive outlook on life; battles psychological problems such as depression, stress, worry, anxiety and helps a person maintain physical and mental health. The Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) also said:

“Whoever sits and does not mention the Name of Allah (before he rises) will find it a cause of sorrow from Allah. Whoever lies down to sleep and does not mention the name of Allah before rising, will find it a cause of sorrow from Allah.”^{iv}

“No people sit in an assembly without mentioning Allah, and without asking Allah for blessings on their Prophet, except that it will be a cause of sorrow upon them. Thus if He (Allah) wishes He will punish them, and if He wishes He will forgive them.”^v

Zikuru’llah is a spiritual need and the link with Allah. Neglect of this need is the cause of anxiety and constant restlessness: “And whoever turns away from My remembrance - indeed, he will have a depressed life, and We will gather him on the Day of Resurrection blind.” (Qur’an 20: 124-126).

Happiness is “a state of being – a state in which our mind’s habitual agitation is calmed.”^{vi} Here it is clear that happiness does not exist in sensual pleasures and materialistic desires^{vii}, but within oneself. Therefore, to enjoy happiness one should engage in the activities that calm the mind, develop positive thinking and attitude towards life – *husnu al-Zann* and be content or satisfied – *qana’ah* or *ridha* with Allah gives.

True enjoyment comes from activity of the mind and exercise of the body; the two are ever united. – Wilhelm von Humboldt^{viii}

To enjoy good health, to bring true happiness to one’s family, to bring peace to all, one must first discipline and control one’s own mind. If a man can control his mind he can find the way to Enlightenment, and all wisdom and virtue will naturally come to him. – Buddha^{ix}

We are shaped by our thoughts; we become what we think. When the mind is pure, joy follows like a shadow that never leaves. – Buddha^x

Although beauty may be in the eye of the beholder, the feeling of being beautiful exists solely in the mind of the beheld. – Martha Beck^{xi}

There are two kinds of mind: healthy mind – *qalbun salim* and sick mind – *qalbun maridh*. A healthy or pure mind sees things in the right perspective, discriminates the correct from the wrong, judges rights and reasons precisely. On the contrary, a sick sees

things in the wrong perspective, fails to discriminate the correct from the wrong, judges wrongly and reasons imprecisely. To be happy one must get rid of the things that limit the mind's ability to reason and think clearly, make right and effective decisions, remember, etc. Depression, anxiety and addiction are some of the things that cause cognitive dysfunction.

II. MERITS OF THE MIND

A university is not a service station. Neither is it a political society, nor a meeting place for political societies. With all its limitations and failures, and they are invariably many, it is the best and most benign side of our society insofar as that society aims to cherish the human mind.

Richard Hofstadter^{xiii}

In this study, mind is described as the faculty within the human being where the following activities take place: thinking, perceiving, reflecting, believing or disbelieving, understanding, remembering, analyzing, planning, creating ideas, deciding, learning, storing knowledge, questioning, problem solving, processing and filtering of information gathered through various means, and shaping and determining how one feels and what one wants. It is "the complex of inner thoughts, feelings and desires."^{xiii}

The Arabic concept for mind is 'aql which appears in the Qur'an about forty nine times in the form of a verb 'aqala, ya'qilun, 'aqalu, ta'qilun, na'qilu and ya'qilu referring to the 'use of intellect'. Kocabas believes that the wisdom behind the occurrence of 'aql in the Qur'an in the verb form is because "it has a dynamic application."^{xiv} This means that if 'aql were to be used in the Qur'an as a noun it would simply mean 'intellect' but its occurrence in the verb form gives it the meaning of "using the intellect or activating the intellect."^{xv} Therefore, *kufir* – disbelief and engagement in wrong acts are the consequence of the misuse of mind.

"Did I not enjoin on you, O ye Children of Adam, that ye should not worship Satan; for that he was to you an enemy avowed? And that ye should worship Me, (for that) this was the Straight Way? But he did lead astray a great multitude of you. Did ye not, then, understand? This is the Hell of which ye were (repeatedly) warned!" (Qur'an 36: 60-63).

"When they are cast therein, they will hear the (terrible) drawing in of its breath even as it blazes forth, almost bursting with fury: Every time a group is cast therein, its Keepers will ask, "Did no Warner come to you?" They will say: "Yes indeed; a Warner did come to us, but we rejected him and said, '(Allah) never sent down any (Message): ye are nothing but an egregious delusion!" They will further say: "Had we but listened or used our intelligence, we should not (now) be among the Companions of the Blazing Fire!" (Qur'an 67: 7-10).

Intellect or sound reasoning is an indispensable attribute of human beings; it is what distinguishes them from other creatures. No creature is blessed with the type of mind human beings have. That is, the mind that engages in the above stated activities.

The main objective of endowing human beings with a distinct mind is to ascertain the truth – *al-Haqq* – from falsehood – *al-Batil* and to meditate the signs of nature (the natural world) – *ayat al-Kawniyyah*.

"Behold! in the creation of the heavens and the earth, and the alternation of night and day,- there are indeed Signs for men of understanding. 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, (With the thought): "Our Lord! Not for naught Hast Thou created (all) this! Glory to Thee! Give us salvation from the penalty of the Fire." (Qur'an 3: 190-191).

It is understood from the above verse that: firstly, there is wisdom behind the creation of heavens, the earth and all between them. Nothing is created for mere play: "We created not the heavens, the earth, and all between them, merely in (idle) sport. We created them not except for just ends: but most of them do not understand." (Qur'an 44: 38). Secondly, the attitude of the believers towards Allah's creation is "Our Lord! You have not created (all) this without (beneficial) purpose, glory to You! Give us salvation from the penalty of the Fire."

There are a lot of lessons human beings can learn from observation of nature and reflection on it such as obedience and submissiveness – *'ubudiyyah* – to Allah, and orderliness. The heaven, the earth and all between them have a natural instinct of submission and obedience to Allah and they are well ordered.

"Seest thou not that to Allah bow down in worship all things that are in the heavens and on earth,- the sun, the moon, the stars; the hills, the trees, the animals; and a great number among mankind? But a great number are (also) such as are fit for Punishment: and such as Allah shall disgrace,- None can raise to honour: for Allah carries out all that He wills." (Qur'an 22: 18).^{xvi}

Prophet Ibrahim is regarded as the father of believers (in *al-Tawhid* – the Oneness of Allah). His belief in Allah and submission to Him was a consequence of astronomical observation and mental reflection; he confirmed by reason that there must be a creator.

"So also did We show Abraham the power and the laws of the heavens and the earth, that he might (with understanding) have certitude. When the night covered him over, He saw a star: He said: "This is my Lord."

But when it set, He said: "I love not those that set." When he saw the moon rising in splendour, he said: "This is my Lord." But when the moon set, He said: "unless my Lord guide me, I shall surely be among those who go astray." When he saw the sun rising in splendour, he said: "This is my Lord; this is the greatest (of all)." But when the sun set, he said: "O my people! I am indeed free from your (guilt) of giving partners to Allah. For me, I have set my face, firmly and truly, towards Him Who created the heavens and the earth, and never shall I give partners to Allah." (Qur'an 6:76-79).

The above verse is taken as clear evidence that Allah's existence can be known through reason. However, the description of Allah requires revelation. Therefore, both reason and revelation are complimentary means to knowledge.

The Qur'an exhorts human beings to travel and observe nature due to several important benefits. Firstly, it is a clear proof for the existence of Allah: "On the earth are signs for those of assured Faith, as also in your own selves: Will ye not then see?" (Qur'an 51: 20-21). Despite living in a polytheistic community, Ibrahim reached the conclusion on the basis of observation and reflection that there is a creator. Secondly, it "spurs (human beings) towards the scientific method of induction."^{xvii} To induce means "to derive" or "to infer". Thus, induction is "attaining new knowledge by generalizing from particular events or objects."^{xviii} It is the key element of science. On the basis of this method the scientists form hypotheses and theories which are helpful in the creation of knowledge especially practical science. Before the use of this method science was mostly theoretical.

Additionally, with the mind (intellect) human beings are able to transform themselves, act morally and do things that set them apart from other species on earth, such as exploitation of nature in the name of development.

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

Allah likens those who do not use their intellect to animals and in some cases even lower than them.

"Many are the Jinns and men we have made for Hell: They have hearts wherewith they understand not, eyes wherewith they see not, and ears wherewith they hear not. They are like cattle, nay more misguided: for they are heedless (of warning)." (Qur'an 7: 179).

Animals can't understand the purpose of life and don't behave morally; they can neither discriminate the right from wrong nor think of the consequences of their actions. We can group people with regard to the use of intellect into three: (1) those who think clearly and correctly (2) those who "(succumb) to fanatic faith and belief without intellectual assessment and evaluation"^{xix} and (3) those who believe firmly "that they know what they really do not,"^{xx} they are unconscious of the limitations of the intellect because of their rejection of revelation and faith. This group is worse than the second one because it misleads innocent masses.

It is worth noting that in order to have a mind that thinks clearly and correctly, a person must offset egotism, self-conceit, pride, passion, emotion and self-interest and humble himself/herself to Allah, the Creator and the all-Knowing. Un-submissive mind lives in doubt and illusion. It is haunted by many unanswered questions about the fundamental aspects of reality. Consequently, it doesn't live in peace and tranquility.

Mind (intellect) is what connects a human being to the truth. It also analyses, digests and interprets what comes from the physical senses. Therefore, to attain knowledge from cosmos there must be a complete unity of mind and senses. Those who do not use their intellect are those who deprive themselves of knowledge and guidance; they are unable to distinguish and choose the good from evil, truth from falsehood: "(When this message was delivered), (Pharaoh) said: "Who, then, O Moses, is the Lord of you two?" He said: "Our Lord is He Who gave to each (created) thing its form and nature, and further, gave (it) guidance." (Qur'an 20: 50).

Sound mental ability is the basis of responsibilities imposed upon human beings by Allah. They are assigned with the responsibility of developing the earth and taking care of everything on it, among others. The following are not accountable for their actions due to lack of sound mental ability: (1) an insane person until he recovers his senses (2) a child until he reaches the age of understanding (puberty) and (3) one who is asleep until he wakes up.

Intellect is also the store of knowledge and a means to its attainment. Human beings possess the cognitive abilities to understand, learn from experience, apply reason and make decisions. Knowledge that is based on the mind is called 'intellectual knowledge'. Other means and types of knowledge are: tangible knowledge, obtained by the five senses and divine knowledge, obtained through revelation.

Intellect is the basis of human beings' free will and accountability. They are able to choose freely between the right and wrong, truth and falsehood, belief and disbelief: "We showed him the Way: whether he be grateful or ungrateful (rests on his will)." (Qur'an 76:3). It is evident in this verse that Allah has guided human beings to know what is good and what is bad.

III. THE INTERCONNECTEDNESS OF THE MIND AND HAPPINESS

"Happy is he who purifies himself and invokes the Name of his Lord and prayeth"

(Qur'an 87:14 - 15)

One of the aims of revelation is to guide man in his actions of the body, speech and mind. Actions of the former two originate from the latter. In other words, mind is the pivot on which one's actions of body and speech turn. Revelation is the act of making

the unknown known to human beings. It is the only trustworthy knowledge. One of the aims of revelation is to purify and preserve the mind from assumptions, superstition, arrogance, ignorance and evil and negative thoughts which destroy the intellect such as hatred, jealousy, selfishness, etc.

Thinking is an activity of the mind through which one takes command of his/her actions. Thus, to change one's action one must begin by changing his/her mind; the way one thinks. A negative mind (negative thoughts) leads to a negative life or negative actions while a positive mind (positive thoughts) leads to a positive life or positive actions. Every action of the mind (internal action or characteristics) leads to similar external action or characteristic. For example, a negative mind does not lead to positive action. Similarly, positive mind does not lead to negative action. According to al-Ghazali, one's actions are a reflection of one's mind:

“Character means an established state [of the soul] from which actions proceed easily, without any need for reflection and deliberation. If this state is such that good actions – i.e. those which are praised by reason and the Shari‘ah – proceed from it, it is called good character. If the actions which proceed the state are evil, the state from which they derive, is called bad character.”^{xxi}

Here character is construed as an imprint that gives rise to the actions of body and speech (outer actions). It is a person's inner world or inner characteristic while the actions of body and speech are the person's external world or outer characteristics. To purify one's inner world is a difficult task. It is termed as *Jihad al-Akbar* – greater holy war. It is “the inward struggle against passions and ignorance,” evil whispers– *wasawis* – and negative and evil thoughts. All religions teach their followers to engage in those actions and thoughts that nurture good qualities.

IV. ISLAM AND PRESERVATION OF THE MIND

Mental purity is one of the objectives of Islam. Islam aims, among others, to free human mind from all obstacles to *iman* (belief in Allah and the hidden reality) and to guide people on how to purify and preserve the mind, among others. *Iman* signifies peace, safety and calmness while *kufir* (rejection of Allah) signifies restlessness.

According to the Qur'an, human mind is housed in the heart: “Many are the Jinns and men we have made for Hell: They have hearts wherewith they understand not, eyes wherewith they see not, and ears wherewith they hear not. They are like cattle,- nay more misguided: for they are heedless (of warning).” (Qur'an 7:179). Therefore, the heart is the container of human conscience and consciousness. This does not mean that human brain is a dysfunctional organ. On the contrary, research has shown that there is a reciprocal connection between the human heart and brain. The former sends messages to the latter and the latter sends messages to the former. John and Beatrice Lacey are named as

“some of the first researchers in the field of psychophysiology to examine the interactions between the heart and brain....During 20 years of research throughout the 1960s and '70s, they observed that the heart communicates with the brain in ways that significantly affect how we perceive and react to the world.”^{xxii}

According to the Qur'an success on the Day of Judgement will depend on purity of the heart/mind: “By the Soul, and the proportion and order given to it; and its enlightenment as to its wrong and its right. Truly he succeeds that purifies it, and he fails that corrupts it!” (Qur'an 91: 9-10) “The Day whereon neither wealth nor sons will avail, but only he (will prosper) that brings to Allah a sound heart.” (Qur'an 26: 88-89). Every human being is duty-bound to clean and preserve his/her heart/mind from arrogance, polytheistic and mythological beliefs, doubt, greed, envy, hatred, ignorance and everything that impairs mind's sobriety such as intoxicants, to dispel evil whispers– *wasawis* – and negative and evil thoughts, and to adorn it with humility, monotheism, certainty, love, forgiveness, honesty, courage, etc.

Mental purity is critical to mental and physical health, productivity and efficiency. Hence it is a duty of every human being to work ceaselessly to preserve their mind (intellect). Reasons for preservation of the mind are made explicit in the following *hadith* and verses:

“Truly in the body there is a morsel of flesh which, if it be sound, all the body is sound and which, if it be diseased, all of it is diseased. Truly it is the heart.”^{xxiii}

“So have they not traveled through the earth and have hearts by which to reason and ears by which to hear? For indeed, it is not eyes that are blinded, but blinded are the hearts which are within the breasts.” (Quran 22: 46).

**“Surely the worst of beasts in God's sight are those that are deaf and dumb and do not reason.”
(Qur'an 8:22).**

The above verses indicate that mind is the driver of one's actions, the governor of the senses, the container of intellect and the vehicle for all knowledge that a human being acquires from cradle to the grave. It is the faculty by which Allah has honoured a human being and favoured him over other creatures (Qur'an 17:70). Every human being should use his mind for the greater good of everybody. This means, loss of rational capability does not only lead to the suffering of one individual but the society as a whole.

As already mentioned, mental health is one of the five basic necessities of human existence. One cannot lead an honourable life or live in peace and security without preserving his mind.

V. BOUNDARIES OF THE MIND AND THE NEED FOR REVELATION

With the exception of the creator – Allah – everything has boundaries. The same holds true with the human mind. Its boundaries are classified into two: those set upon it by its Creator, Allah and those set upon it by its possessor.

“They ask thee concerning the Spirit (of inspiration). Say: “The Spirit (cometh) by command of my Lord: of knowledge it is only a little that is communicated to you, (O men!)” (Qur’an 17: 85).

It is obvious from the above verse that human mind is a limited means to knowledge. Firstly, it is unable to recall every piece of information, carry out multiple tasks and process all information. Secondly, its perception is limited by what is perceived by the senses. Thirdly, Allah has given it a limited rational ability just as He has limited a human being’s existence in time and space. It is unable to comprehend most of the created things and to recall some of the past events. It is also unable to fully grasp the meaning of Allah’s attributes such as Allah’s being *al-Awwal wa al-Akhir*, meaning, the First without a beginning and the Last without an end.

Anything that is beyond the comprehension of the mind; i.e. a reality beyond empirical investigation, is conveyed to human beings by means of revelation. Therefore, revelation transcends the limitations of human mind. Reason and revelation must go hand in hand; they are complementary to each other. Nabulsi describes the relationship between revelation and reason as follows: “revelation is the source (of knowledge) and the mind is the mean to comprehend it (revelation) and to authenticate the text (the revealed Book)...mind comes before reporting (revelation) to authenticate the text and after reporting to comprehend it.”^{xxiv} He argues that no matter how sharp sighted a person is, without light his/her sharp sightedness is meaningless. Light is a connector between the sense of sight and the visible objects. To illustrate, he writes, “when a blind man sits with a sharp-sighted man in a dark room, both of them become equal. As the eye is useless without a light that intermediates between it and the visible objects, so is the mind. It is useless without a leading revelation. So light to the eye is like revelation to the mind.”^{xxv} Here it is clear that revelation is the guiding framework within which the intellect works; it is the regulator of intellect. As a means to knowledge, intellect is limited just like senses. It is not able to know the purpose of life and to find solutions for all problems humans are faced with. It is also not able to conceive infinity.

Therefore, it is necessary for a person to know the limitations set upon the intellect so that it does not veil him/her from seeing/knowing/exploring the reality especially that which lies beyond the visible spectrum – *al-Ghaib*; one must ensure that intellect does not separate him/her from the creator – Allah.

When intellect becomes an obstruction to reality, it becomes a veil instead of a means or tool to knowledge/reality; a curse instead of a blessing. Pride, egoism and emotion are the diseases of the mind that operates outside the boundaries of revelation.

CONCLUSION

We are living in a world full of many problems without solutions because of the belief in the superiority of intellect to revelation. Unguided mind is the biggest enemy to inner peace, happiness and tranquility. The object of this study was to explain the merits of the mind, its interconnectedness with happiness, to describe how Islam preserves the mind and promotes happiness and to elucidate the limitations of the mind and describe the need for revelation. It is evident from the foregone that: firstly, one of the distinctive characteristics of human beings is the mind. Allah created human beings and endowed them with mind to think before making any decision, to reflect on nature (the world around them) so as to believe in the Creator, to acquire and store knowledge, and to solve problems among others; secondly, human actions are a reflection of their inner world. They are the mirror of their character. From a purified and guided character emanate praiseworthy actions while blameworthy actions emanate from impure and unguided character; thirdly, happiness is correlated with being in a state of calmness and tranquillity and realizing the goal of life; that is, knowing the meaning and purpose of life. A person is happy when he or she engages in actions that bring him or her closer to Allah; fourthly, the mind is the seat of *iman*, contentment and calmness. It is where happiness is generated; fifthly, preservation of the mind from impurities such as disbelief, intoxication, conjecture, etc. is one of the objectives of the *Shari’ah*; it is one of its goals. Islam preserves the purity of the mind through commands and prohibitions. For example, it commands every human being to seek true knowledge and prohibits intoxicants. Lastly, it has been argued that real happiness emerges from remembrance of Allah and therefore, it is experienced by people who have *iman*.

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ⁱ See Nicholas White, *A Brief history of happiness*. Oxford: Blackwell publishing, 2006, p.16.

ⁱⁱ New World Encyclopedia, Hedonism. Retrieved from <http://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Hedonism> on February 28, 2017.

ⁱⁱⁱ Muslim, Sahih, The book of Zakat (Kitab al-Zakat), Chapter: The virtue of contentment and encouragement thereof (Bab laysa al-Ghina 'an kathrat al-'Aradh).

^{iv} Abu Dawud 4/264 and Al-Albani, *Sahih al-Jami' al-Saghir* 5/342.

^v Al-Albani, *Sahih Al-Tirmidhi* 3/140.

^{vi} Michael James, *Happiness and the Art of Being: An introduction to the philosophy and practice of the spiritual teachings of Bhagavan Sri Ramana*, Michael D A James, 2012, p. 1.

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