

Grant of a Supplication in the Quran - A Systems Thinking Perspective

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Abstract

The purpose of this article is to present, based on the verses from the Holy Quran, a systems thinking perspective for the grant of a supplication. Roadmap is outlined and system feedback loops are suggested, which in turn provide insights into factors such as time and conditions, based on which a supplication may be granted. It is shown that the topic of supplication, genuineness, and the level of self-growth are among the essential factors for the grant of a supplication. Supplication system is discussed to be a sub-system of prayer, which in turn is the sub-system of the holistic system of monotheism. Finally, some systems insight is offered regarding the concept of invocation.

Keywords: Supplication, Systems Thinking, Quran, Islam, Invocation

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

Introduction

Systems thinking paradigm focuses on the relations between the parts towards a shared purpose.¹ The systems perspective argues that a phenomenon cannot be fully comprehended simply by breaking it up into elementary parts and then reforming it; instead, a global vision is needed to be applied to underline its functioning. Although one may start from the analysis of the elementary components of a phenomenon, to fully comprehend the phenomenon in its entirety the system should also be observed from a higher level: a holistic perspective.²

The following ancient Sufi story is perhaps a great example showing that the behavior of a system cannot be known just by knowing the elements of which the system is made.

There was a city. All its inhabitants were blind. A king with his entourage arrived nearby; he brought his army and camped in the desert. He had a mighty elephant, which he used to increase the people's awe. The populace became anxious to see the elephant, and some sightless from among this blind community went to find it. As they did not even know the form or shape of the elephant, they groped sightlessly, gathering information by touching some part of it.

Each thought that he knew something, because he could feel a part. . . . The man whose hand had reached an ear . . . said: 'It is a large, rough thing, wide and broad, like a rug.' And the one who had felt the trunk said: 'I have the real facts about it. It is like a straight and hollow pipe, awful and destructive.' The one who had felt its feet and legs said: 'It is mighty and firm, like a pillar.' Each had felt one part out of many. Each had perceived it wrongly. ³

From the systems thinking perspective, different elements of the elephant, ear, trunk, legs, organs, etc., through elegant interconnections of regulatory chemical signals, flow of blood, flow of food, etc., achieve the purpose of being a healthy elephant. Systems may be nested within systems as well. Therefore, purposes may be within purposes. For example, each part of the elephant may be defined as a sub-system with its own elements, interconnections, and purpose. Systems do not have to be physical things.

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For example, values may be considered elements of a system. Flow of information or regulations may be interconnections of a system, and becoming a balanced person may be the purpose of a system.⁴ Any sub-purposes of a system could come into conflict with the overall purpose. For example, كبر or arrogance of Satan was a clear sub-system conflict with his overall worship purpose.⁵ Keeping sub-purposes and overall system purpose in harmony is an essential function of a successful system.

From the systems perspective, one may define Islam as a system; mankind as one of its elements, teachings of the Quran and Prophet Muhammad as its interconnections and worshipping Allah as the purpose. Islam as a system, has many sub-systems (سبل). The purpose of this article is to present a detailed description of a Quranic sub-system, the process, in which a supplication will be granted. A systematic perspective of a system is a model. A model tries to have a strong congruence with the system. Models fall far short of representing the real system. This is certainly true regarding any attempt to model the Quranic concepts. The hope is that this article provides some additional insights into the epic concept of supplication.

Process for Granting a Supplication

The system model in Figure 1 presents a supplication granting model.

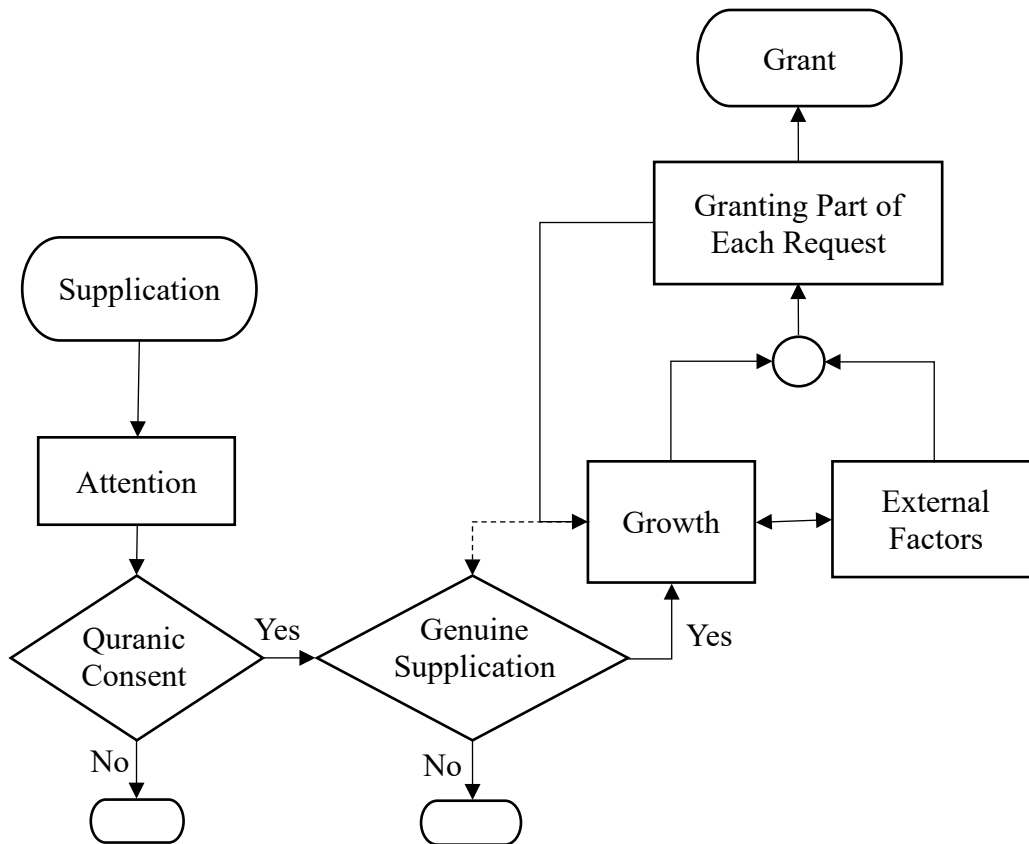


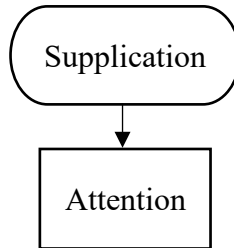
Figure 1 – A proposed model for granting a supplication.

Prayer (دعاء) in its general meaning is worshipping (عبادة) Allah.⁶⁻⁷ It is a system that relates mankind (as an element), to the purpose of creation, worshipping the creator. Supplication as a subset of prayer, is a specific request from Allah.⁸ As a sub-system of prayer, however, every part of it must be in complete harmony with

the purpose of prayer system, or worshipping Allah. In turn, system of worshipping should be in harmony with the highest level of system in Islam, the system of monotheism (توحيد) .

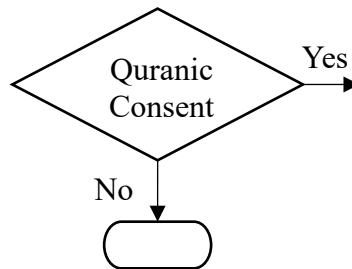
In the following sections, different segments of the model in Figure 1 will be discussed.

Section1



The first system ‘interconnection’ is the relationship between supplication and attention by Allah. The Quran, without putting any preconditions declares, وَقَالَ رَبُّكُمْ ادْعُونِي أَسْتَجِبْ لَكُمْ - And your Lord says, Call upon Me; I will give attention to you.⁹ This is an invariable relationship between man and Allah. The word ‘استجابت’ may be translated as to ‘Give Attention’ to a supplication, and the word ‘اجابت’ in the Quran may be translated as to ‘Grant’ a supplication.¹⁰ So, Allah affirms in the Quran that any supplication will be heard, and full attention will be given to it. However, such an affirmation is not given for granting a supplication. In fact, a set of specific criteria needs to be fulfilled before a supplication is being granted. In systems thinking approach, one may define ‘Supplication’ and ‘Attention’ as the elements of the system and the relationship between them as an interconnection or function that acts upon these elements in certain ways as described in the Quran. Only one aspect of استجابت is to give attention, which is discussed in the present work. Many other aspects of this amazing system element perhaps may be explored in other sub-systems of the Quran.

Section 2



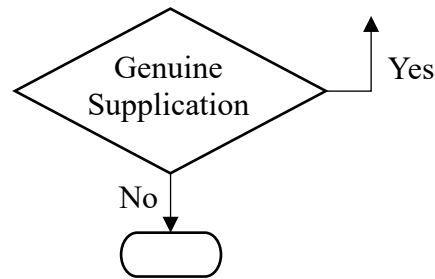
Qualifying a supplication based on guidelines in the Quran is another interconnection in the present system. Obviously, not all supplications will be replied favorably. The Quran itself explains what types of supplications may be accepted by Allah. If a supplication involves the assurances and promises that are specified in the Quran, then it is clearly a valid supplication.¹¹

Allah has also outlined in the Quran the types of supplications that will be declined and has guided mankind to stay clear of such supplications. For example, Allah warns against requesting things that one has no knowledge of and advises that such supplications may make one to be among the ignorant.¹²⁻¹⁴ In another verse, Allah declares such a person ‘to be hasty’.¹⁵ Still, in other verses Allah states that supplications of even the Prophet, believers or the parents may not be accepted towards some infidels or hypocrites.¹⁶⁻¹⁹

So, the first stage in the process is to supplicate properly according to the teaching of the Quran. If a supplication fails at this stage, it is either because the supplication is the type that the Quran has warned against

its possible acceptance; or it is a mixture of proper and improper supplications. In such a case, the proper segment of the supplication will move to the next stage of the system model and the improper part will be rejected.

Section 3



The next stage in the supplication system model is to make the supplication a Genuine Supplication, another fundamental interconnection that ensures resilience in the system.²⁰ Genuine Supplication places the supplication on a path toward being granted by Allah and moves it to the next stage. A Genuine Supplication has at least two characteristics, which will be explained in the following.

One characteristic of a Genuine Supplication is that it should be (قائم) standing and not short-lived. The Quran describes supplications that may be characterized as Genuine Supplications. For example, the Quran says, ‘And when affliction touches man, he calls upon Us, whether lying on his side or sitting or standing’.²¹

There is another example in the Quran that may be noted here as well. In the story of Joseph, when the brothers realized that they had sinned, they went to their father for help. They said, ‘O our father, ask for us forgiveness of our sins; indeed, we have been sinners’. He said, ‘I will ask forgiveness for you from my Lord. Indeed, it is He who is the Forgiving, the Merciful’.²²

The father then supplicated to Allah for the forgiveness of his sons. The act of forgiveness (استغفار) is a process. One needs to remove all traces of the sin from the soul before that particular sin can be forgiven. The above verse does not elaborate if Prophet Jacob supplicated only once for the forgiveness of his sons, or continued doing so until all his sons were forgiven, which is the authors’ understanding of the meaning of ‘Genuine Supplication’. However, it is documented that Prophet Jacob continued his supplications each Friday for twenty years until Allah forgave all his sons’ sin.²³

The Quran further considers refraining from supplication a sign of arrogance.^{7, 24-25} All the above are indications that supplications should be a regular part in every believer's life.

There are other relevant traits in the Quran that support the notion of standing supplication. The Quran teaches constant remembrance of Allah. For example, ‘O you who have believed, remember Allah with much remembrance’.²⁶⁻²⁹ Or ‘Call upon your Lord in humility and privately; indeed, He does not like transgressors’²⁸. The Quran also teaches to be steadfast in life challenges. For example, ‘...and be steadfast. Indeed, Allah is with the steadfast’.³⁰

Verses in the Quran suggest a second requirement for a Genuine Supplication as well; sincerity. Sincerity in supplication is to believe that it is Allah and only Allah who can grant a supplication.³¹⁻³³ For example, ‘He is the Ever-Living; there is no deity except Him, so call upon Him, [being] sincere to Him in religion. [All] praise

is [due] to Allah, Lord of the worlds'.³² So, the definition for a Genuine Supplication is an unabated, sincere request.

One may wonder if anyone would be able to accomplish the above two requirements in a supplication, or only the people with truly purified souls can do so. Verses from the Quran appear to suggest that the present status of one's soul is not a pre-requirement, and everyone can return to mankind's inherent nature of monotheism and perform a Genuine Supplication. For example, there are examples in the Quran of those whom when affliction touches them, they call upon Allah constantly and with sincerity, but when Allah removes their afflictions, they continue in disobedience as if they had never called upon Him.^{8,34} Obviously, such people have not reached the higher levels of piety in their souls, but still have been able to achieve the requirements of sincere supplication as the ability for sincere supplication is an inherent trait of every soul. They also were able to steadfast in their sincere supplication, at least for a short period of time when afflicted by hardship. In many other situations, however, this may not be the case. Stead-fastness (صبر) is a trait that requires purification and practice (تذكية) to acquire. Consequently, as the time required for the grant of supplication increases fewer people may remain steadfast.

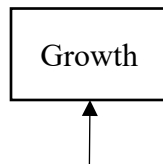
In summary, the subject of supplication should be proper, and supplication needs to be sincere and unabated until it is granted by Allah. After this stage, based on the evidence from the Quran, it appears that any supplication faces two major obstacles. Each of these two obstacles, which may be defined as a system element, need to achieve a 'passing' status that we may call it an 'Activation Energy' before supplication may be granted. Allah promises to help and guide the supplicant in overcoming both impediments. The first obstacle is the level of supplicant's growth of soul. The second obstacle is the existing barriers due to external factors. The above two obstacles are explained in the following paragraphs.

The Quran appears to suggest that grant of any endowment is paired with a level of growth (رشد) in the soul. Allah gives and takes. However, some are based on his wisdom, for the purpose of training and transcending souls.²¹ The endowment of a supplication perhaps is somewhat different and may be considered a specific case of giving. In the case of supplication, endowment is the reward for what is achieved, and a training to transcend the soul higher, as will be discussed in the following. Some supplications may have small 'Activation Energy' paired with them, and others may require overcoming high barriers. If the supplicant's present status of soul is such that it is not capable of overcoming the required barrier, then further transcending is required before Allah grants the supplication.

Besides this first requirement, to grant any supplication, numerous external factors may need to be modified, the exact extent of which is only apparent to Allah.

Some evidence is presented from the Quran regarding the above two factors and their intricate inter-relationships in the following sections.

Section 4



The Quran says, ‘

وَإِذَا سَأَلَكَ عِبَادِي عَنِّي فَإِنِّي قَرِيبٌ ۖ أُجِيبُ دَعْوَةَ الدَّاعِ إِذَا دَعَانِ ۗ فَلْيَسْتَجِيبُوا لِي وَلْيُؤْمِنُوا بِي لَعَلَّهُمْ يَرْشُدُونَ
- And when My worshipers ask you, [O Muhammad], concerning Me - indeed I am near. I grant the supplication of the supplicant when he genuinely calls upon Me. So, let them respond to Me [by obedience] and believe in Me that they may be [rightly] guided'.³⁵

In the above verse, Allah affirms that he will grant a supplication when the supplicant genuinely calls upon him. He then states two more criteria 1- *فَلْيَسْتَجِيبُوا لِي* and 2- *وَلْيُؤْمِنُوا بِي*. If one translates *فَلْيَسْتَجِيبُوا* as the obedience and *وَلْيُؤْمِنُوا* as believe in Allah, then Allah is asking his supplicants to worship him. The verse further elaborates that worshipping him may result in the growth in the soul (rightly guided). So, Allah appears to condition Growth as a criterion for granting his endowment.

In several verses, the Quran expresses that Allah accepts the prayers of pious worshippers or eases their matter. For example, the Quran says, 'And whoever is pious toward Allah - He will make for him of his matter ease'.³⁶

In this verse Allah makes piety a condition for the ease of matters. Therefore, one may conclude that the supplication of a pious person will be accepted easier.

In another verse the Quran says, 'he answers [the supplication of] those who have believed and done righteous deeds and increases for them from His bounty'.³⁷ So, not only does Allah place faith and righteous act as conditions for granting a supplication, but he even proclaims that he increases from His bounty for such supplicant. Obviously, the level of faith, and the quality of righteousness, like any other phenomena, vary in people. On one side of the spectrum there are prophets and truly righteous, and on the other end of the spectrum there are people whom Allah has set a seal upon their hearts. Consequently, according to the above verse, the level of Allah's bounty would vary based on one's position on this spectrum.

In several verses in the Quran, Allah accepts the supplications of prophets and states different aspects of their worship toward Him as the reason for the acceptance of their supplications. For example, Allah accepted Zechariah's supplication and gave him John, when his wife had reached old age and was infertile. The Quran states the reason for such a great blessing as, 'Indeed, they used to hasten to good deeds and supplicate Us in hope and fear, and they were to Us humbly submissive'.³⁸ Consequently, if Zechariah did not have the above traits, his supplication would not have been accepted. Obviously, there are many who, in relative terms, may possess all the traits stated in the above verse. However, they never experience Allah's grant of supplications in such an epic level. It was the quality of Zechariah's traits that qualified him for such a unique blessing.

In a different example, when Moses supplicated to Allah for his brother Aaron to become his minister, he supported his request by saying, 'Indeed, You have insight knowledge of us'.³⁹

Moses's justification for his request was the sincerity of himself and his brother in worshipping Allah. One may conclude from this verse that Allah accepted Moses's supplication so promptly because Aaron was a proper candidate. Moses's request would not have been accepted if Aaron did not possess the right qualifications for the position.

In another verse the Quran indicates piety as a precondition for added provision. It further explains that Allah places limits on his provisions because it may initiate arrogance and atrocity.⁴⁰ From this verse one may conclude that the grant of a supplication will not happen until the level of piety in the supplicant has risen to a level that is impervious to such behaviors. One may also conclude from this verse that Allah is all-encompassing giver. It is the individuals' rebellion that places a limit on Allah's giving.

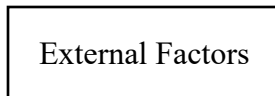
Imam Ali's saying in Doa Komail, 'الهم اغفر الذنوب التي تحبس الدعاء' - O Allah forgive among my sins, those which hold back supplication', also appears to be in support of the existence of an activation barrier. Committing sins may either descend soul or may prevent it from transcending.

For some cases of supplication, the righteousness of the supplicant may already be sufficient for the specific request. Supplication of prophets and truly righteous people may fall into this category. For example, Moses asks Allah, and Allah accepts his request quickly.³⁹

Some supplications may not have high activation barriers and the supplication of less pious will also be accepted. Example of this category in the Quran is when a person is in a harm way and genuinely supplicates to Allah for help. Allah may accept this supplication, even though the supplicant may lack high levels of growth.⁸

For some other cases, the supplicants may still need to transcend before their supplications are granted by Allah. An example is the story of Prophet Jonah. Based on the story from the Quran, he remained in the belly of the fish until he further purified himself from being impatient. He was then saved from the fish when he transcended to the higher level required of him for his next prophet-hood mission ⁴¹⁻⁴². The second example is the example of Prophet Joseph's sinner brothers who had to continue their supplications for over twenty years until they achieved the required growth for the forgiveness of their sins.²³

Section 5

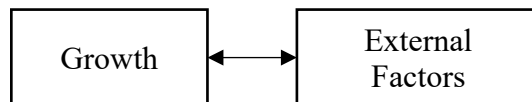


In addition to the personal growth factor, a second system element 'External Factors', may also affect the timing of the grant of a supplication. One commonly perceived meaning of supplication is to ask Allah to provide means or conditions that are outside the capabilities of the supplicant.⁴³ So, for a supplication to be granted, not only the supplicant may need to have further personal growth, but in addition, conditions of many related factors may need to be altered as well. Many present and future conditions of related factors may be affected by the grant of a supplicant and therefore need to be synchronized. In granting a supplication, all the above-mentioned factors are identified, and Allah guides the supplicant to self-growth and facilitates external factors toward the conditions necessary for the supplication to be granted.

A verse in the Quran explains how Allah interferes and facilitates external conditions in favor of the believers. The verse says, 'It is He who expelled the ones who disbelieved among the People of the Scripture from their homes at the first gathering. You did not think they would leave, and they thought that their fortresses would protect them from Allah; but [the decree of] Allah came upon them from where they had not expected, and He cast terror into their hearts [so] they destroyed their houses by their [own] hands and the hands of the believers'.⁴⁴

In another verse the Quran states, 'And will provide for him from where he does not expect'.⁴⁵ One may conclude from these verses that Allah very delicately creates favorable conditions for the fulfillment of each supplication.

Section 6



The two system elements, personal growth, and external factors, have intricate interrelationships or feedback. The exact extent of it is known only to Allah.

In the concept of systems thinking, a feedback loop is a closed connection from an element, through a set of decisions or rules or actions that are dependent on the level of the element, and back again through a flow to change the element. This kind of equilibrating, goal-seeking regulating loop is called a balancing feedback loop in systems.⁴ A balancing, goal-seeking regulating feedback loop clearly exists between the two elements of personal growth and external factors. The above verses indicate that Allah changes the direction of external factors in such ways that each becomes in harmony with the future direction that the outcome of the

supplication is destined for. In addition, some external factors may have direct or indirect interrelationships with the ability of the supplicant to go through the self-growth required for the specific supplication in question. The Quran suggests that in these cases too, Allah changes the direction of external factors in a way to provide the supplicant with the means needed for the growth process. The following verse appears to show an example of the inter-relationship between the external factors and the personal growth, and how Allah provides favorable environments for the supplicant's growth. The Quran says, 'For each one are successive [angels] before and behind him who protect him by the decree of Allah. Indeed, Allah will not change the condition of a people until they change what is in themselves'.⁴⁶

The verse declares that Allah protects from external factors which may hinder one's ability to grow. However, the verse leaves it up to each person to make the effort and change the soul for the better.

Still in a different verse Allah states the interrelationship between the external factors and the personal growth and declares some of the interconnections as a delicately planned relationship from himself to promote growth. The Quran says, 'Or do you think that you will enter Paradise while such [trial] has not yet come to you as came to those who passed on before you? They were touched by poverty and hardship and were shaken until [even their] messenger and those who believed with him said, "When is the help of Allah?"' Unquestionably, the help of Allah is near'.⁴⁷ Consequently, Allah creates hardships (and comforts) in a planned way to facilitate personal growth.

Exact interrelationships between personal growth and external factors are known only to Allah. However, the Quran provides general descriptions of such relationships. It appears that once the required personal growth is fulfilled, the supplication is then guaranteed to be granted. The actual grant of the supplication happens once the required external factors have also been synchronized accordingly.

An example from the Quran is when Moses supplicated the destruction of Pharaoh and his establishments⁴⁸. Allah replied, 'Your supplication has been granted. So, remain on the right course and follow not the way of those who do not know'.⁴⁹

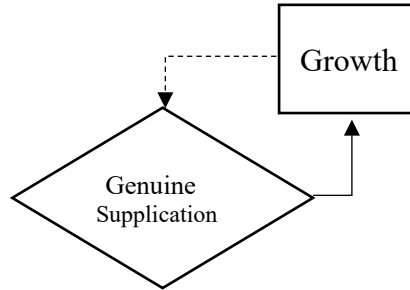
In the above verse, Allah guarantees to grant Moses's supplication, as he is a truly righteous person, and his supplication is based on clear knowledge. For Moses's supplication to be granted, Allah orders Moses to remain on the right course. This is so that the required pre-conditions (external factors) for the fulfillment of the supplication takes shape.

Either personal growth or the external factors may be the cause of the required 'length of time' in the grant of a supplication. For example, in the story of Moses, the external factors were probably the main cause of delay in the grant of the supplication. In the story of Jonah and his forgiveness while he was inside the fish, achieving his personal growth appears to be the main cause of delay in the acceptance of his supplication ⁴¹. In the example of forgiveness of Joseph's brothers, which took years,²³ perhaps both the time needed for their personal growth as well as the time needed for the supporting external factors were the causes of delay in the grant of the supplication.

The relationship between the invocation (توسل) to the prophets and the Imams for the purpose of getting a supplication granted from Allah makes a logical sense based on the above argument. For example, when Prophet Jacob started supplications for the forgiveness of his sons, in effect he was doing supplication for the acceptance of his sons' own supplications for forgiveness. Consequently, in his supplication, both his Personal Growth and External Factors would be considered. Prophet Jacob's strong piety would be the growth factor for his supplication. The external factor for his supplication would then be the combination of both the success of his children in achieving self-growth, as well as the provision of external factors needed to facilitate their growth. Based on what was discussed, clearly Allah's blessing toward people of high righteousness is stronger. Consequently, because of the purity of father's soul, Allah would speed up the process of his sons' supplications

for forgiveness. It should be noted, however, that if the children had not purified their souls through their own efforts, the acceptance of their supplications would not have happened.

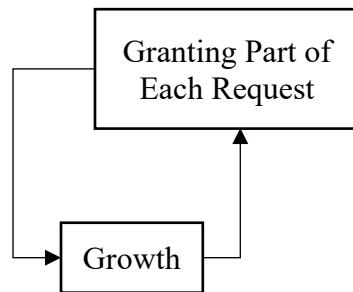
Section 7



Supplicants transcend toward the final targeted growth in a close connection with Genuine Supplication.

Since the process of genuine supplication is a continuous and not an intermittent one, there is a feedback loop from the Growth to the Genuine Supplication. This feedback represents the continuity in Genuine Supplication. At any stage of a supplication process, the supplicant is required to maintain the Genuine Supplication status. If the supplicant has been working on self-growth, then it is logical that the status of Genuine Supplication continuity could be preserved. However, if the supplicant commits sinful conducts before the supplication is granted, then two things may happen. Either the growth process may slowdown, or the supplicant may descent to a level that prevents the continuity of Genuine Supplication intension. In the former case supplication remains on course and requires further attempt to transcend to higher levels of growth. In the latter case, since the continuity of Genuine Supplication is disrupted, the process of supplication to grant comes to a halt. To summarize, the process of supplication grant may temporarily or permanently be disrupted due to sinful conducts by the supplicant. This again, may be another interpretation of 'الهم اغفر الذنوب التي تحبس الدعاء'.

Section 8



Allah in the Quran declares, 'And He gave you from all you asked of Him'.⁵⁰ In this verse Allah promises to grant part of any reasonable supplications. The question is, why only part of the supplication? The position of this verse in the supplication system model is clear. Transcending to the required level of growth is a stepwise process. With each step upward, Allah presents the supplicant with new blessings. Consequently, before Allah provides complete grant of one's supplication, he might have already provided his rewards in segments. For example, if a person supplicates to Allah to become amongst the most uncompromising, obviously, such a prodigious supplication needs preparation. The supplicant, as was discussed, needs to prepare soul for such a task. Allah in the Quran states that he will touch people with tests of hardships and abundant blessings so that mankind goes through soul purification⁵¹. Consequently, in the present example, Allah will guide the supplicant one step at a time to the ultimate objective of becoming amongst the 'most uncompromising. Each step that the supplicant transcends is in effect an interpretation of 'And He gave you from all you asked of Him'. The

supplicant will eventually become amongst the most uncompromising if continues transcending. If not, then Allah has rewarded as far as the supplicant had succeeded.

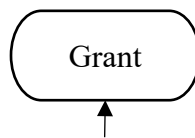
It is also possible that in some cases only part of the initial supplication was accepted. In such a case, again the above verse becomes meaningful in the context of the present discussion.

From the verses of the Quran, it may be deduced that one of the outcomes of any grant from Allah should be additional growth. The Quran criticizes those who do not use this opportunity to grow their souls.⁸ The Quran says, 'I accept the supplication of the supplicant when he truly calls upon Me. So, let them respond to Me [by obedience] and believe in Me that they may be [rightly] guided'.³⁵

The grant of a supplication not only requires some level of personal growth, but the grant itself can provide additional perspective in Allah, which should result in further growth.^{35, 52} This may be interpreted as a reinforcing feedback loop in systems thinking.⁵³ Reinforcing feedback loops are self-enhancing, amplifying loops leading to exponential growth (or collapse) over time. These loops are found whenever an element has the capacity to reinforce or reproduce itself. So, it appears that Allah may provide grant of a supplication in steps. At each step the supplicant would have the opportunity to observe the incremental grants and use that as a forwarding trust to further become guided toward the targeted level for growth. Although no attempt is made in the present article to elaborate on the exponential nature of reinforcing feedback loop in personal growth, it is a fascinating concept worthy of further research.

The information delivered by feedback loops – either a reinforcing or balancing feedback— contain time lapses and can only affect future behavior. It is well known that a system may go through oscillations and instabilities if reacted to its changes hastily.⁵⁴ The concept of صبر or persistence in the Quran has multidimensional meanings. However, its relevance to the stabilization of feedback loops from the systems thinking point of view is obvious. As was discussed, there are many factors that should become in harmony before a supplication would be granted by Allah. Premature expectations and discouragement will derail the acceptance of supplication. Things are achieved in time. The time phenomenon dictates delay. Delay happens in any accomplishment. It should be noted that even in personal growth, behavioral changes take not only cognitive awareness, but also repetitive practice to acquire a desired trait and consequently personal growth.⁵⁵ This adaptation by neuron pathways to acquire a habit is a source of delay in any personal growth.

Section 9



No doubt, the accurate description of how a supplication may be granted is known to Allah and only him. However, the suggested system in this article seems to give some insight and a general description of this process.

General Systems Theory² argues that similarities exist among systems in many different disciplines. On this note, interesting similarities may be noted between the systems of supplication and that of an educational institute. To summarize, as the authors understand it, in the process of granting a supplication, the supplicant needs to make sure the topic of supplication is according to what is prescribed in the Quran. This important interconnection is like the 'standard of admission' stage in an academic system. If the supplicant can sincerely and continually supplicate to Allah, then the supplication process will move forward. One may perceive this critical interconnection in this model as like the 'intention for completion of requirements' stage in an academic system. There are two major barriers for each supplication after this stage. Each supplication appears to require some level of personal growth. If the supplicant does not have the required level of growth, then Allah provides opportunities for the supplicant to purify. The second barrier is the external barriers. These are external factors

that need to be tailored in harmony with the outcome of the supplication which Allah implements through his wisdom. One may correlate the former barrier to the curriculum requirements, and the latter to the administrative supports in an academic system. The reason for the delay between a supplication and its grant is the time needed to overcome the above two barriers.

Supplication is a special meaning of Prayer (دعا), which in its general meaning in the Quran is worshipping (عبادة) of Allah.⁶⁻⁷ The presented supplication system model is a sub-system of the worshipping system. As a sub-system, it must be in complete harmony with its highest-level system, the worship of Allah. It is very entrancing to realize that in the presented supplication system model one may substitute 'Supplication' with 'Prayer' or 'Worshipping Allah' and still the system model holds completely true. Worshipping Allah at even the lowest level will have His Attention (استجابت). If this worship is Pure, and Persistent, Allah will show his Standards to the worshiper (صراط مستقيم) and through his wisdom eliminates External Barriers such that the worshiper can Transcend and eventually achieve the status of True Monogamy (توحيد) in his/her heart if intentions are kept pure and remain persistent.

References

- 1- Cristina Mele, Jacqueline Pels, Francesco Polese, 'Brief Review of Systems Theories and Their Managerial Applications', In *Journal of Service Science*, vol. 2 (1/2), 126 - 135.
- 2- von Bertalanffy, *General System theory: Foundations, Development, Applications*, (New York: George Braziller. Von Foerster, 1968).
- 3- Diana Wright (ed.), *Thinking in Systems - A Primer* by Donella H. Meadows (London, Earthscan 2008) P.7.
- 4- ibid, Part One: System Structures and Behavior.
- 5- Holy Quran 2:34

وَإِذْ قُلْنَا لِلْمَلَائِكَةِ اسْجُدُوا لِآدَمَ فَسَجَدُوا إِلَّا إِبْلِيسَ أَبَىٰ وَاسْتَكْبَرَ وَكَانَ مِنَ الْكَافِرِينَ

And [mention] when We said to the angels, 'Prostrate before Adam'; so they prostrated, except for Iblees. He refused and was arrogant and became of the disbelievers.

- 6- Holy Quran 25:77

قُلْ مَا يَعْزُبُ عَنْ رَبِّي لَوْلَا دُعَاؤُكُمْ لَضَحَّكَتُمْ فَقَدْ كَذَّبْتُمْ فَسَوْفَ يَكُونُ لِزَامًا

Say, 'What would my Lord care for you if not for your prayer (worship)?' For you [disbelievers] have denied, so your denial is going to be adherent.

- 7- Holy Quran 40:60

وَقَالَ رَبُّكُمْ ادْعُونِي أَسْتَجِبْ لَكُمْ إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَسْتَكْبِرُونَ عَنْ عِبَادَتِي سَيَدْخُلُونَ جَهَنَّمَ دَاخِرِينَ

And your Lord says, 'Call upon Me; I will give attention to you.' Indeed, those who disdain My prayer (worship) will enter Hell [rendered] contemptible.

- 8- Holy Quran 39:49

فَإِذَا مَسَّ الْإِنْسَانَ ضُرٌّ دَعَانَا ثُمَّ إِذَا خَوَّلْنَاهُ نِعْمَةً مِنَّا قَالَ إِنَّمَا أُوتِيتُهُ عَلَىٰ عِلْمٍ ۗ بَلْ هِيَ فِتْنَةٌ وَلَكِنَّ أَكْثَرَهُمْ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ

And when adversity touches man, he calls upon Us; then when We bestow on him a favor from Us, he says, 'have only been given it because of [my] knowledge.' Rather, it is a trial, but most of them do not know.

- 9- Holy Quran 40:60

وَقَالَ رَبُّكُمْ ادْعُونِي أَسْتَجِبْ لَكُمْ إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَسْتَكْبِرُونَ عَنْ عِبَادَتِي سَيَدْخُلُونَ جَهَنَّمَ دَاخِرِينَ

And your Lord says, 'Call upon Me; I will give attention to you.' Indeed, those who disdain My worship will enter Hell [rendered] contemptible.

- 10- Ansari, Mohammad Ali, *Bayan 2*, chapter Aal-e-Imran Verse 173

- 11- Holy Quran 2:40

يَا بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ اذْكُرُوا نِعْمَتِيَ الَّتِي أَنْعَمْتُ عَلَيْكُمْ وَأَوْفُوا بِعَهْدِي وَأوفِ بِعَهْدِكُمْ وَإِيَّايَ فَارْهَبُونِ

O Children of Israel, remember My favor which I have bestowed upon you and fulfill My covenant [upon you] that I will fulfill your covenant [from Me], and be afraid of [only] Me.

- 12- Holy Quran 11:45

وَنَادَىٰ نُوحٌ رَبَّهُ فَقَالَ رَبِّ إِنَّ ابْنِي مِنْ أَهْلِي وَإِنَّ وَعْدَكَ الْحَقُّ وَأَنْتَ أَحْكَمُ الْحَاكِمِينَ

And Noah called to his Lord and said, 'My Lord, indeed my son is of my family; and indeed, Your promise is true; and You are the most just of judges!'

- 13- Holy Quran 11:46

قَالَ يَا نُوحُ إِنَّهُ لَيْسَ مِنْ أَهْلِكَ ۗ إِنَّهُ عَمَلٌ غَيْرُ صَالِحٍ ۗ فَلَا تَسْأَلَنِي مَا لَيْسَ لَكَ بِهِ عِلْمٌ ۗ إِنِّي أَعْطِكُ مِنَ الْجَاهِلِينَ

He said, ‘O Noah, indeed he is not of your family; indeed, he is [one whose] work was other than righteous, so ask Me not for that about which you have no knowledge. Indeed, I advise you, lest you be among the ignorant.’

14- Holy Quran 11:47

قَالَ رَبِّ إِنِّي أَعُوذُ بِكَ أَنْ أَسْأَلَكَ مَا لَيْسَ لِي بِهِ عِلْمٌ وَإِلَّا تَغْفِرْ لِي وَتَرْحَمْنِي أَكُن مِّنَ الْخَاسِرِينَ
[Noah] said, ‘My Lord, I seek refuge in You from asking that of which I have no knowledge. And unless You forgive me and have mercy upon me, I will be among the losers.’

15- Holy Quran 17:11

وَيَدْعُ الْإِنْسَانُ بِالشَّرِّ دُعَاءَهُ بِالْخَيْرِ وَكَانَ الْإِنْسَانُ عَجُولًا
And man supplicates for evil as he supplicates for good, and man is ever hasty.

16- Holy Quran 9:113

مَا كَانَ لِلنَّبِيِّ وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا أَنْ يَسْتَغْفِرُوا لِلْمُشْرِكِينَ وَلَوْ كَانُوا أُولَىٰ قُرْبَىٰ مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا تَبَيَّنَ لَهُمْ أَنَّهُمْ أَصْحَابُ الْحَجِيمِ
It is not for the Prophet and those who have believed to ask forgiveness for the polytheists, even if they were relatives, after it has become clear to them that they are companions of Hellfire.

17- Holy Quran 9:114

وَمَا كَانَ اسْتِغْفَارُ إِبْرَاهِيمَ لِأَبِيهِ إِلَّا عَن مَّوَدَّةٍ وَعَدَّهَا بِئْسَ لِلْمُتَّوِّبِينَ لَهٗ أَنَّهُ عَدُوٌّ لِلَّهِ تَبَرَّأَ مِنْهُ إِنَّ إِبْرَاهِيمَ لَأَوَّاهٌ حَلِيمٌ
And the request of forgiveness of Abraham for his father was only because of a promise he had made to him. But when it became apparent to Abraham that his father was an enemy to Allah, he disassociated himself from him. Indeed, was Abraham compassionate and patient.

18- Holy Quran 46:17

وَالَّذِي قَالَ لَوْ لَدَيْهِ أَفٍّ لَّكُمَا أَنْتَعِدَانِنِي أَنْ أُخْرَجَ وَقَدْ خَلَّتِ الْقُرُونُ مِن قَبْلِي وَهُمَا يَسْتَنْبِئَانِ اللَّهَ وَبَلَكَ آمِينَ وَإِنِّي وَعَدَّ اللَّهُ حَقًّا فَيَقُولُ مَا هَذَا إِلَّا سَاطِرُ الْأَوَّلِينَ
But one who says to his parents, ‘Uff to you; do you promise me that I will be brought forth [from the earth] when generations before me have already passed on [into oblivion]?’ while they call to Allah for help [and to their son], ‘Woe to you! Believe! Indeed, the promise of Allah is truth.’ But he says, ‘This is not but legends of the former people.’

19- Holy Quran 63:6

سَوَاءٌ عَلَيْهِمْ أَسْتَغْفَرْتَ لَهُمْ أَمْ لَمْ تَسْتَغْفِرْ لَهُمْ لَن يَغْفِرَ اللَّهُ لَهُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الْفَاسِقِينَ
It is all the same for them whether you ask forgiveness for them or do not ask forgiveness for them; never will Allah forgive them. Indeed, Allah does not guide the defiantly disobedient people.

20- Diana Wright (ed.), *Thinking in Systems - A Primer* by Donella H. Meadows (London, Earthscan 2008) P.78.

21- Holy Quran 10:12

وَإِذَا مَسَّ الْإِنْسَانَ الضُّرُّ دَعَانَا لِجَنبِهِ أَوْ قَاعِدًا أَوْ قَائِمًا فَلَمَّا كَشَفْنَا عَنْهُ ضُرَّهُ مَرَّ كَأَن لَّمْ يَدْعُنَا إِلَىٰ ضُرِّ مَسَّهُ كَذَلِكَ زُيِّنَ لِلْمُسْرِفِينَ مَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ
And when affliction touches man, he calls upon Us, whether lying on his side or sitting or standing; but when We remove from him his affliction, he continues [in disobedience] as if he had never called upon Us to [remove] an affliction that touched him. Thus, is made pleasing to the transgressors that which they have been doing.

22- Holy Quran 12:98

قَالَ سَوْفَ أَسْتَغْفِرُ لَكُمْ رَبِّي إِنَّهُ هُوَ الْغَفُورُ الرَّحِيمُ
He said, ‘I will ask forgiveness for you from my Lord. Indeed, it is He who is the Forgiving, the Merciful.’

23- Molla Fath-o-Allah Kashani, *Quran Interpretation*.

24- Holy Quran 7:55

ادْعُوا رَبَّكُمْ تَضَرُّعًا وَخُفْيَةً إِنَّهُ لَا يُحِبُّ الْمُعْتَدِينَ

Call upon your Lord in humility and privately; indeed, He does not like transgressors.

25- Holy Quran 7:56

وَلَا تُفْسِدُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ بَعْدَ إِصْلَاحِهَا وَادْعُوهُ خَوْفًا وَطَمَعًا إِنَّ رَحْمَتَ اللَّهِ قَرِيبٌ مِّنَ الْمُحْسِنِينَ

And cause not corruption upon the earth after its reformation. And invoke Him in fear and aspiration. Indeed, the mercy of Allah is near to the doers of good.

26- Holy Quran 7:205

وَاذْكُرْ رَبَّكَ فِي نَفْسِكَ تَضَرُّعًا وَخِيفَةً وَدُونَ الْجَهْرِ مِنَ الْقَوْلِ بِالْغُدُوِّ وَالْآصَالِ وَلَا تَكُن مِّنَ الْغَافِلِينَ

And remember your Lord within yourself in humility and in fear without being apparent in speech - in the mornings and the evenings. And do not be among the heedless

27- Holy Quran 33:41

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اذْكُرُوا اللَّهَ ذِكْرًا كَثِيرًا

O you who have believed, remember Allah with much remembrance

28- Holy Quran 7:55

ادْعُوا رَبَّكُمْ تَضَرُّعًا وَخُفْيَةً إِنَّهُ لَا يُحِبُّ الْمُعْتَدِينَ

Call upon your Lord in humility and privately; indeed, He does not like transgressors.

29- Holy Quran 13:28

الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَتَطْمَئِنُّ قُلُوبُهُمْ بِذِكْرِ اللَّهِ أَلَا بِذِكْرِ اللَّهِ تَطْمَئِنُّ الْقُلُوبُ

Those who have believed and whose hearts are assured by the remembrance of Allah. Unquestionably, by the remembrance of Allah hearts are assured.

30- Holy Quran 8:46

وَاطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ وَلَا تَنَازَعُوا فَتَفْشَلُوا وَتَذْهَبَ رِيحُكُمْ وَاصْبِرُوا إِنَّ اللَّهَ مَعَ الصَّابِرِينَ

And obey Allah and His Messenger, and do not dispute and [thus] lose courage and [then] your strength would depart; and be steadfast. Indeed, Allah is with the steadfast.

31- Holy Quran 7:29

قُلْ أَمَرَ رَبِّي بِالْقِسْطِ وَأَقِيمُوا وُجُوهَكُمْ عِندَ كُلِّ مَسْجِدٍ وَادْعُوهُ مُخْلِصِينَ لَهُ الدِّينَ كَمَا بَدَأَكُمْ تَعُودُونَ

Say, [O Muhammad], 'My Lord has ordered justice and that you maintain yourselves [in worship of Him] at every place [or time] of prostration, and invoke Him, sincere to Him in religion.' Just as He originated you, you will return [to life] -

32- Holy Quran 40:65

هُوَ الْحَيُّ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ فَادْعُوهُ مُخْلِصِينَ لَهُ الدِّينَ الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ

He is the Ever-Living; there is no deity except Him, so call upon Him, [being] sincere to Him in religion. [All] praise is [due] to Allah, Lord of the worlds.

33- Holy Quran 7:194

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ تَدْعُونَ مِن دُونِ اللَّهِ عِبَادٌ أَمْثَلُكُمْ فَادْعُوهُمْ فَأَنصِتْ جِيبُوا لَكُمْ إِن كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ

Indeed, those you [polytheists] call upon besides Allah are servants like you. So call upon them and let them respond to you, if you should be truthful.

34- Holy Quran 17:67

وَإِذَا مَسَّكُمُ الضُّرُّ فِي الْبَحْرِ ضَلَّ مَنْ تَدْعُونَ إِلَّا إِلَٰهًا فَلَمَّا نَجَّيْنَاكُمْ إِلَى الْبَرِّ أَعْرَضْتُمْ وَكَانَ الْإِنسَانُ كَفُورًا

And when adversity touches you at sea, lost are [all] those you invoke except for Him. But when He delivers you to the land, you turn away [from Him]. And ever is man ungrateful.

35- Holy Quran 2:186

وَإِذَا سَأَلَكَ عِبَادِي عَنِّي فَإِنِّي قَرِيبٌ ۖ دَعْوَةُ الدَّاعِ إِذَا دَعَانِ ۖ فَلْيَسْتَجِيبُوا لِي وَلْيُؤْمِنُوا بِي لَعَلَّهُمْ يَرْشُدُونَ

And when My worshipers ask you, [O Muhammad], concerning Me - indeed I am near. I grant the supplication of the supplicant when he truly calls upon Me. So let them respond to Me [by obedience] and believe in Me that they may be [rightly] guided.

36- Holy Quran 65:4

وَاللَّائِي يَنتَسِنَ مِنَ المَحِيضِ مِن نِّسَائِكُمْ إِنِ ارْتَبْتُمْ فَعِدَّتُهُنَّ ثَلَاثَةُ أَشْهُرٍ وَاللَّائِي لَمْ يَحْضُنَّ ۖ وَأُولَاتُ الأَحْمَالِ أَجَلُهُنَّ أَن يَضَعْنَ حَمْلَهُنَّ ۚ وَمَن يَتَّقِ اللهَ يَجْعَلْ لَهُ مِّنْ أَمْرِهِ يُسْرًا

And those who no longer expect menstruation among your women - if you doubt, then their period is three months, and [also for] those who have not menstruated. And for those who are pregnant, their term is until they give birth. And whoever is pious toward Allah - He will make for him of his matter ease.

37- Holy Quran 42:26

وَيَسْتَجِيبُ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ وَيَزِيدُهُم مِّن فَضْلِهِ ۗ وَالْكَافِرُونَ لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ شَدِيدٌ

And He answers [the supplication of] those who have believed and done righteous deeds and increases [for] them from His bounty. But the disbelievers will have a severe punishment.

38- Holy Quran 21:90

فَاسْتَجَبْنَا لَهُ وَوَهَبْنَا لَهُ يَحْيَىٰ وَأَصْلَحْنَا لَهُ زَوْجَهُ ۚ إِنَّهُمْ كَانُوا يُسَارِعُونَ فِي الْخَيْرَاتِ وَيَدْعُونَنَا رَغَبًا وَرَهَبًا ۚ وَكَانُوا لَنَا خَاشِعِينَ

So, We responded to him, and We gave to him John, and amended for him his wife. Indeed, they used to hasten to good deeds and supplicate Us in hope and fear, and they were to Us humbly submissive.

39- Holy Quran 20:35

إِنَّكَ كُنْتَ بِنَا بَصِيرًا

Indeed, You are of us ever Seeing.

40- Holy Quran 42:27

وَلَوْ بَسَطَ اللهُ الرِّزْقَ لِعِبَادِهِ لَبَغَوْا فِي الأَرْضِ وَلَٰكِن يُنزِّلُ بَقْدَرٍ مَّا يَشَاءُ ۚ إِنَّهُ بِعِبَادِهِ خَبِيرٌ بَصِيرٌ

And if Allah had extended [excessively] provision for His servants, they would have committed tyranny throughout the earth. But He sends [it] down in an amount which He wills. Indeed He is, of His servants, Acquainted and Seeing.

41- Holy Quran 21:87

وَذَا النُّونِ إِذ ذَّهَبَ مُغَاصِبًا فَظَنَّ أَن لَّن نَّقْدِرَ عَلَيْهِ فَنَادَىٰ فِي الظُّلُمَاتِ أَن لَّا إِلَهَ إِلَّا أَنْتَ سُبْحَانَكَ إِنِّي كُنْتُ مِنَ الظَّالِمِينَ

And [mention] the man of the fish, when he went off in anger and thought that We would not decree [anything] upon him. And he called out within the darknesses, 'There is no deity except You; exalted are You. Indeed, I have been of the wrongdoers.'

42- Holy Quran 21:88

فَاسْتَجَبْنَا لَهُ وَنَجَّيْنَاهُ مِنَ الغَمِّ ۚ وَكَذَٰلِكَ نُنجِي الْمُؤْمِنِينَ

So, We responded to him and saved him from the distress. And thus, do We save the believers.

43- Ayatollah Makarem Shirazi, *Tafsir Nemooneh*, Vol. 1, p. 624.

44- Holy Quran 59:2

هُوَ الَّذِي أَخْرَجَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِنْ أَهْلِ الْكِتَابِ مِنْ دِيَارِهِمْ لِأَوَّلِ الْحَشْرِ ۚ مَا ظَنَنْتُمْ أَن يَخْرُجُوا ۖ وَظَنُّوا أَنَّهُمْ مَانِعَتُهُمْ حُصُونُهُمْ مِنَ اللهِ فَأَتَاهُمُ اللهُ مِنْ حَيْثُ لَمْ يَحْتَسِبُوا ۖ وَقَذَفَ فِي قُلُوبِهِمُ الرُّعْبَ ۚ يُخْرِبُونَ بُيُوتَهُمْ بِأَيْدِيهِمْ وَأَيْدِي الْمُؤْمِنِينَ فَاعْتَبِرُوا يَا أُولِي الأَبْصَارِ

It is He who expelled the ones who disbelieved among the People of the Scripture from their homes at the first gathering. You did not think they would leave, and they thought that their fortresses would protect them from Allah; but [the decree of] Allah came upon them from where they had not expected, and He cast terror into their hearts [so] they destroyed their houses by their [own] hands and the hands of the believers. So take warning, O people of vision.

45- Holy Quran 65:3

وَيَرْزُقُهُ مِنْ حَيْثُ لَا يَحْتَسِبُ ۚ وَمَنْ يَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى اللَّهِ فَهُوَ حَسْبُهُ ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ بَالِغُ أَمْرِهِ ۗ قَدْ جَعَلَ اللَّهُ لِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدْرًا

And will provide for him from where he does not expect. And whoever relies upon Allah - then He is sufficient for him. Indeed, Allah will accomplish His purpose. Allah has already set for everything a [decreed] extent.

46- Holy Quran 13:11

لَهُ مُعَقِّبَاتٌ مِّن بَيْنِ يَدَيْهِ وَمِنْ خَلْفِهِ يَحْفَظُونَهُ مِنْ أَمْرِ اللَّهِ ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُغَيِّرُ مَا بِقَوْمٍ حَتَّىٰ يُغَيِّرُوا مَا بِأَنْفُسِهِمْ ۗ وَإِذَا أَرَادَ اللَّهُ بِقَوْمٍ سُوءًا فَلَا مَرَدَ لَهُ ۗ وَمَا لَهُمْ مِنْ دُونِهِ مِنْ وَالٍ

For each one are successive [angels] before and behind him who protect him by the decree of Allah. Indeed, Allah will not change the condition of a people until they change what is in themselves. And when Allah intends for a people ill, there is no repelling it. And there is not for them besides Him any patron.

47- Holy Quran 2:214

أَمْ حَسِبْتُمْ أَنْ تُدْخَلُوا الْجَنَّةَ وَلَمَّا يَأْتِكُم مَّثَلُ الَّذِينَ خَلَوْا مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ مَسَّتْهُمُ الْبَأْسَاءُ وَالضَّرَاءُ وَزُلْزَلُوا حَتَّىٰ يَقُولَ الرَّسُولُ وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا مَعَهُ مَتَىٰ نَصُرُ اللَّهُ ۗ أَلَا إِنَّ نَصْرَ اللَّهِ قَرِيبٌ

Or do you think that you will enter Paradise while such [trial] has not yet come to you as came to those who passed on before you? They were touched by poverty and hardship and were shaken until [even their] messenger and those who believed with him said, ‘When is the help of Allah?’ Unquestionably, the help of Allah is near.

48- Holy Quran 10:88

وَقَالَ مُوسَىٰ رَبَّنَا إِنَّكَ آتَيْتَ فِرْعَوْنَ وَمَلَأَهُ زِينَةً وَأَمْوَالًا فِي الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا رَبَّنَا لِيُضِلَّوْنَا عَنْ سَبِيلِكَ ۗ رَبَّنَا اطْمِسْ عَلَيْنَا أَمْوَالَهُمْ وَاشْدُدْ عَلَيْنَا قُلُوبَهُمْ فَلَا يُؤْمِنُوا حَتَّىٰ يَرَوْا الْعَذَابَ الْأَلِيمَ

And Moses said, ‘Our Lord, indeed You have given Pharaoh and his establishment splendor and wealth in the worldly life, our Lord, that they may lead [men] astray from Your way. Our Lord, obliterate their wealth and harden their hearts so that they will not believe until they see the painful punishment.’

49- Holy Quran 10:89

قَالَ قَدْ أُجِيبَت دَعْوَتُكُمَا فَاسْتَقِيمَا وَلَا تَتَّبِعَانِ سَبِيلَ الَّذِينَ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ

[Allah] said, ‘Your supplication has been answered.’ So remain on a right course and follow not the way of those who do not know.’

50- Holy Quran 14:34

وَأَتَاكُمْ مِنْ كُلِّ مَا سَأَلْتُمُوهُ ۚ وَإِنْ تَعَدُّوا نِعْمَتَ اللَّهِ لَا تَحْصُوهَا ۗ إِنَّ الْإِنْسَانَ لَطَلُومٌ كَفَّارٌ

And He gave you from all you asked of Him. And if you should count the favor of Allah, you could not enumerate them. Indeed, mankind is [generally] most unjust and ungrateful.

51- Holy Quran 7:168

وَقَطَعْنَا لَهُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ أُمَّمًا مِمَّنْهُمْ الصَّالِحُونَ وَمِنْهُمْ دُونَ ذَلِكَ ۗ وَبَلَوْنَاهُمْ بِالْحَسَنَاتِ وَالسَّيِّئَاتِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَرْجِعُونَ

And We divided them throughout the earth into nations. Of them some were righteous, and of them some were otherwise. And We tested them with good [times] and bad that perhaps they would return [to obedience].

52- Holy Quran 7:179

وَلَقَدْ ذَرَأْنَا لِجَهَنَّمَ كَثِيرًا مِّنَ الْجِنِّ وَالإِنسِ لَهُمْ قُلُوبٌ لَّا يَفْقَهُونَ بِهَا وَلَهُمْ أَعْيُنٌ لَّا يُبْصِرُونَ بِهَا وَلَهُمْ آذَانٌ لَّا يَسْمَعُونَ بِهَا ؕ أُولَئِكَ كَالْأَنْعَامِ بَلَّ
هُمُ أَصْلُ ؕ أُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْعَاقِلُونَ

And We have certainly created for Hell many of the jinn and mankind. They have hearts with which they do not understand, they have eyes with which they do not see, and they have ears with which they do not hear. Those are like livestock; rather, they are more astray. It is they who are the heedless.

53- Diana Wright (ed.), *Thinking in Systems - A Primer* by Donella H. Meadows (London, Earthscan 2008) 30-34.

54- ibid 54-57

55- Kahneman, Daniel, *Thinking Fast and Slow*, (Farras, Straus and Giroux 2011).