Chapter V
THE CONCEPT OF A PERFECT MAN

The concept of a perfect man embraces the ideal goal of moral perfection. Al-Ghazzali describes the perfect experience as a union, that when one abides with the Ultimate God. Interestingly, Mencius also depicts on a similar experience, suggesting that a unity with the Tian is the fundamentals of one’s moral exercises. On the practical dimension, Al-Ghazzali teaches on the importance of the Behavioral Knowledge while Mencius advocates on the basic concepts of moral cultivation related to the Tian and the Xin. The ends of moral perfection, namely happiness, is also discussed.

5.1 Al-Ghazzali on the Concept of a Perfect Man

Al-Ghazzali teaches that man comes to know God’s existence from his very own creation. This is coined in the saying of the Prophet, “He, who knows himself, knows God.”  

The essence of man, as Al-Ghazzali perceived, is similar to the essence of God for God created man in His own image. Man has a task to let the Divine, i.e., the true essence of man becomes more vital and to bring to ever closer realization this divine potential of his nature. It is therefore vital to educate and train the heart that a person may approach God through knowledge and will.

136 Refer to Obermann, J., Der Philosophische und religiöse Subjektivismus Ghazalis, Wien, 1021, p. 102 in Zolondek, p. 3.
In Al-Ghazzali’s writing, there is the idea of a “Perfect Man”. The goal of man is the fulfillment of whatever distinguishes him as human. The soul of man seeks to attain its highest fulfillment and free as much as possible from the sway of bodily needs and desires.

Al-Ghazzali therefore proposed a mystical union. The mystical union refers to a relation between man and God, in which union is the climax of the spiritual experience as well as effort of self-purification. Such idea suggests the ultimate experience of transcendence for a Perfect Man.

5.1.1 The Mystic Union

The mystic union refers to man’s final goal to achieve, firstly, the likeness of God (the Qurb), and secondly, the unification of truth (Tawhid). Acquiring the attributes of God is the goal of a mystic union. Man was created in the image of God and therefore the goal of his life is to live up to the likeness of God in every possible way.

The prophet said: “Acquire ye the character (akhlaq) of God.” The acquiring process is named as “Qurb” 142. In fact, the ‘union’ is a metaphor, not so much as

139 Fadiou Shehadi, Ghazzali’s Unique Unknowable God: A Philosophical Critical Analysis of Some of the Problems Raised by Ghazzali’s View of God as Utterly Unique and Unknowable (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1964) p. 29.
140 Ibid., p. 24.
141 Ibid., p. 29.
142 Ibid. “Qurb” literally means “nearness”.
man merges into the Divine and lives as "One" with the Divine. The notion of 'qurb' explains the idea in which the mystic becomes very much similar to God in character, with the person's will attuned to His will. In the union, man and God is so much alike and in harmony. Man's heart will be as pure as a mirror that reflects God's good purposes.

According to Fadlou Shehadi, Al-Ghazzali's writings touch on two levels of Tawhid or the unification of the truth, i.e. the subjective Tawhid and the objective Tawhid. The subjective Tawhid depicts of man's affiliation with the Divine in all aspects of self e.g. his concern, his love, his act of worshiping, his thought, etc. The objective Tawhid, however, will happen only when man ascends to the kingdom of the One-and-Only. In the subjective Tawhid, man acknowledges God's deity by utterance of the tongue and believing it in the heart. In the objective Tawhid, one has the illumination of truth and loses oneself in Tawhid. In the utmost stage of Tawhid, one forgets himself and sees nobody except God.

Al-Ghazzali uses a metaphor of the glass and the wine to depict the experience of the subjective Tawhid. When a person is totally absorbed into the relationship with God with dimensions of affection, contemplation as well as adoration, he will

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143 Detailed argument may be found in Fadlou Shehadi, Ghazzali's Unique Unknowable God: A Philosophical Critical Analysis of Some of the Problems Raised by Ghazzali's View of God as Utterly Unique and Unknowable (Leiden: E.J.Brill, 1964) pp. 25-28.
144 Ibid., p. 33.
145 Ibid., p. 30.
146 Ibid., pp. 31-32.
experience a consciousness where God is the sole "content" of him. The person’s heart will be as transparent as the glass with God as the wine filling within.\footnote{Refer to the discussion in Fadiou Shehadi, \textit{Ghazzali’s Unique Unknowable God: A Philosophical Critical Analysis of Some of the Problems Raised by Ghazzali’s View of God as Utterly Unique and Unknowable} (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1964), p. 33. Refer also to \textit{Ihya Ulum-IDin}, Book 2, Chapter 2.}

On the other hand, the objective \textit{Tawhid} is where and when one is totally lifted to a state he is able to perceive things on earth from the viewpoint of God. When it is so, God will not be merely an ‘object’ of thoughts as the universe is. Rather, man will perceive from God’s agency a new relationship with the universe and other metaphysical truth.\footnote{Fadiou, p.33.}

Al-Ghazzali was not totally consistent in his teachings on the esoteric aspect of man. Parts of his writing maintained that only few could rise to the rank of the saints, prophets and angels. However, he also teaches that man is able to purify himself by will and effort.

5.1.2 The \textit{Ilm al-Muamala} and the \textit{Ilm al-Mukashafa}

In the process to become a perfect man, one has to acquire: firstly, the \textit{Ilm al-Muamala} (Behavioral or Relational Knowledge) or \textit{Ilm Ahwal al-Qalb} (the Knowledge of the State of the Heart); secondly, the \textit{Ilm al-Mukashafa} (Intuitive Knowledge). \textit{Ilm al-Muamala} consists of the cultivation of outer and inner virtues, and in the doing away of the outer and inner vices. \textit{Ilm al-Mukashafa} is the outcome
of *Ilm al-Muamala*. It is the ultimate goal of a perfect man leading to perfect love to
God and the realization of His Vision. 150

Al-Ghazzali states that he will only treat *Ilm al-Muamala* in the *Ihya*, like the
prophets who preceded him. Yet at the same time, Al-Ghazzali adds that the prophets
left behind hints of the *Ilm Al-Mukashafa* through inference, allegory and
generalization. 151 Therefore, his approach towards perfection has a dual aspect, that
of general application for all as well as that of esoteric application for the keen and
qualified only.

The *Ilm al-Muamala* is a lower knowledge as compared to the *Ilm al-
Mukashafa*. It complements on the latter as knowledge and action are necessary
means towards happiness. 152 It deals with the basic properties of the heart and the
uprooting of these properties from the heart. 153 The properties of the heart would
include fear of poverty, opposition to God’s decree, hatred, jealousy, ambition,
conceit, vanity, pride, miserliness, inconsideration and oppression of others,
worldliness, pursuance of worldly pleasure etc. Negatively, a person has to abstain
from the vices of the heart but positively, he may constantly acquire some desirable
qualities. Positively, one may strive to acquire the desirable qualities such as

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152 Quesem, Muhammad Abul, *The Ethics of Al-Ghazzali: A Composite Ethics in Islam* (Petaling
University, 1975) p. 359.

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endurance of suffering, gratitude, fear and devoutness, acceptance of the inevitable, abstinence and honesty and goodness in dealing with one’s fellowmen, etc.  

The *Ilm al-Muamala* includes the knowledge of *Ibadat* (worship, i.e man’s relation to God); *Adat* (modes, i.e. man’s relation to man) and the knowledge of the good and bad qualities of the soul. *Ibadat*, as in an ordinary man’s understanding, is restricted to devotional acts prescribed by the *Syariah* only. Al-Ghazzali, however, believes that the involvement of the person’s inward (*batin*) self should be emphasized over a person’s outward (*zahir*) good doings. He finds the traditional Muslim jurisprudence imposing rules and regulations on the acts of the outward but could not check on the person’s inward being. His emphasis on the *Ibadat* cherishes the Sufis way that keeps a balance of both the inner and outer aspects of a person.

A big portion of the *Ihya Ulum-Id-Din* deals with man’s relationship and accountability to God. In addition, there are also portions that teach on the appropriate manners of which man relates to the other man. Al-Ghazzali dedicated a big section on the other dimension of the *Ilm al-Muamala*, namely man’s relating to the other man. Being concerned of the application of good virtues, Al-Ghazzali views friendship with another person as the an expression of good conduct as well as enmity of bad conduct. He asserts that a perfect man should seek to relate with the others with love. Besides, a person has to fulfill his duties and obligations to another person who is a friend, relative, neighbor, other Muslim brethren or some less-privileged one.

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154 Ibid.
Quoting from the saying of the Prophet from Abû-Hurayrah, Al-Ghazzali teaches that “one should keep the tie of relationship with the other person who cuts it off, forgiving one who oppressed him and gives in charity to one who deprives him.” 158 Another saying of the Prophet runs as such: “that the more beloved of God is one who loves his friends more.” Al-Ghazzali elaborated on a number of rights and duties in the interpersonal relationship, e.g., sharing with each other in times of need, forgiving the faults of the friend, treating people with good words and in good manner, maintaining friendship with loyalty (wafā) and sincerity (ikhlas), praying for others, etc. 159

The knowledge of differentiating the good and bad qualities of the soul is very crucial for one to be fit for the knowledge of God. Al-Ghazzali believes that there are spiritual forces that help man to walk along the path to approach perfection, namely Tawfiq, the gift of God. 160 Tawfiq manifests itself in different forms. Firstly, the Hidaya (divine guidance). Hidaya consults a person on things to do and things not to do. No virtues is possible with Hidaya. Secondly, Rushd (divine direction). It guides man to realize his end. Thirdly, Tasdid (divine leadership). This spiritual force guides the body to submit to the will and behaves accordingly. Fourthly, Taid (divine strengthening). It makes internal and external circumstances align with the good purposes. Internally, the person will gain insight on his judgment and decision.

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158 Ibid., p. 110.
159 Ibid., pp. 126-144.
Meanwhile, the external conditions turn suitable for the person with the means to achieve his desired end. 161

The four forms of grace have not exhausted on God's gift to human. Al-Ghazzali perceives another grace, which surpasses the four. It illuminates man towards a higher knowledge, the *Ilm al-Mukashafa*. The *Ilm al-Mukashafa* is not acquirable by man's will or action. It deals with the true knowledge of God, God's attributes and deeds, cosmology, prophetic revelation, the nature of the angels and the devil, the concepts of paradise, hell, etc. Al-Ghazzali believed that this science is the result of prophetic revelation and inspiration granted by Divine Grace to man who is worthy of them only. 162

The *Ilm al-Mukashafa* is the seed of happiness in the hereafter or even happiness itself. 163 A man who toils along the way of the *Ilm al-Muamala* will have to set his mind upon *Ilm al-Mukashafa* as the final stage of his effort to perfection. Even though there is a doubt whether every single individual is worthy of such knowledge, Al-Ghazzali affirms his readers that the grace of God is irrevocably tied to human effort. 164 Hence, all must actively expose oneself to the learning of the things of the world as well as the acquiring of the knowledge of the hereafter. When one's effort is mature, he will be revealed to the reality of spiritual things. 165

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161 Ibid., p. 105.
162 Ibid., p. 360.
165 Ibid., pp. 114-119.
5.2 Mencius on the Concept of a Perfect Man

In the Confucius’ School of thought, the birth of capable man with high moral integrity is most significant for a generally illiterate agricultural society. Moreover, moral deterioration was the said phenomenon then. Thus, in the writing of Mencius, there are numerous discussions on the “Godly man”, “Sage-king”, “Sage”, “Great man”, “Complete man”, “Superior man”, “Scholar”, “Worthy”, “Virtuous” and “Talented”. The discussion here will use “Perfect Man” to sum up the totality of Mencius’ concept of perfect personality.

The idea of a “Perfect Man” in Mencius’ writings has two broad dimensions. Firstly, it refers to moral cultivation as a relation to the Heaven, the Tian (天). Secondly, the moral cultivation with regards to the entire exercise of rectifying the heart and mind. Our discussion will focus on the unity of the Heaven (天, Tian) and man (人, Ren), as well as the cultivation of the Immense Passion-nature (浩然之气, Haoran Zhi Qi) in Mencius’ theory of moral exercise.

Mencius teaches that the world is built from a country, the country from a home, a home from a man.166 It is an elaboration of Confucius’ teaching that one should cultivate oneself in order to be capable of giving rest to the people.167 In self-

166 Mencius said, “People have this commom saying, — ‘The empire, the state, the family.’ The root of the empire is in the state. The root of the state is in the family. The root of the family is in the person of his head.” Refer to “Lizu, Part I, 5” in “The Works of Mencius” in Legge, James, The Chinese Classics, Vol.2 (Taipei: SMC Publishing Inc., 1994)

167 In answering to the question posed by Zihu regarding what constituted the superior man, Confucius said, “He who cultivate himself in reverential carefulness.” Confucius elaborated that a person of stature like this will cultivate himself so as to give rest to all the people. Refer to “Xianwen, Chapter 45” in The Confucian Analects” in Legge, James, The Chinese Classics, Vol.2 (Taipei: SMC Publishing Inc., 1994)
cultivation, the Confucius school proposed a very interesting concept of the unity of “Tian” and the “Ren”.

5.2.1 The Unity of Tian-Ren

Even though the theory of the unity of Tian-Ren was popularised by the Sung Learners, it was originated from Mencius’ detailed discussion of the relationship of Tian-Ren. Ever since the prehistoric era, the Chinese believed in a pseudo-god, namely, the “Tian”. During the period of Warring States, Mencius was among the many philosophers who gave “Tian” a clearer definition. In “Wanzhang, Part I,” there was a record of a dialogue between Mencius and his student Wan Zhang:

Wan Zhang said, “Was it the case that Yao gave the throne to Shun?”

Mencius said, “No. The sovereign cannot give the throne to another.”

“Yes, but Shun had the throne. Who gave it to him?”

“Heaven gave it to him,” was the answer.

“Heaven gave it to him? – did Heaven confer His appointment on him with specific injunctions?”

Mencius replied, “No. Heaven does not speak (on this specific matter). Heaven simply showed His will by his (Shun’s) personal conduct and his conduct of affairs.”

“Heaven showed His will by his (Shun’s) personal conduct and his conduct of affairs? How was this?”

Mencius’ answer was, “The sovereign can present a man to Heaven, but he cannot make Heaven give that man the throne. A prince can present a man to the sovereign, but he cannot cause the sovereign to make that man a prince. A great officer can present a man to his prince, but he cannot cause the prince to make that man a high-ranking officer. Yao presented Shun to Heaven, and Heaven accepted him. He presented him to the people, and the people accepted him. Therefore I say, Heaven does not speak. Heaven simply indicated His will by his (Shun’s) personal conduct and his conduct of affairs.”

Mencius concluded, “When things which you did not plan take its course, it is the act of Tian”. 
In Mencius’ understanding, there are three broad meanings for “Tian”.
Firstly, the natural “Tian”. Man’s appropriate attitude towards the natural “Tian” is obedience, i.e. “Shun Tian”. Secondly, the rational “Tian”. It refers to a supernatural governing power that man should be “Tian-fearing”. The third meaning is the moral “Tian”. The moral “Tian” is the basic ruling of the universe and man should attempt to understand the moral “Tian”. In short, obeying the natural “Tian”, being “Tian-fearing” and understanding the moral “Tian” are dimensions of the relations of Tian-Ren. Mencius has basically formed a concept of man relating to the “Tian” (天人相通, Tian-Ren Xiang Tong). [Refer to the Appendix IV for Chart (C).]

The discussion here will focus on the Moral “Tian”. Mencius suggests that “Tian” is a moral existence. In “Lilou Part I”, he said, “sincerity is the way of Tian; man should imitate and walk in such a way too.” Aligning man’s way with the way of Tian is the proper application of man relating to the Tian.

Mencius teaches, “When one puts on one’s best attempt to develop the goodness in one’s nature, one will understand the original state of one’s nature. When one understands the nature, one will understand the mandate of the Tian. The appropriate manner to the mandate of the Tian is preserving one’s original heart and original nature. When it is so, long life would not be an issue. Mencius said, “He who has exhausted all his mental constitution knows his nature. Knowing his nature, he knows Heaven. To preserve one’s mental constitution, and nourish one’s nature, is

\[16\] This “Tian” literally means ‘heaven’. The term, however, does not have the connotation with ‘God’ as in Islam or Christianity.
the way to serve Heaven.” The Confucian way of living a meaningful life is thus coined in the phrase: “An Shen Li Ming (安身立命)” Dai Zheng, a scholar of the Ching dynasty, explaining on the developing of the goodness in one’s nature, said, “The heart of Ren and Yi, originates from the Moral Tian... And this is why the moral is clear and district within man. This is what it means to ‘put on one’s best attempt to develop the goodness in one’s nature’. 

A perfect man is one who is highly credited for his moral character. Even though it is almost impossible to “walk in the way of Tian, every ordinary man should model after the Moral Tian”. In “Jinxin Part 2, 2.15”, Mencius said, “A sage is the teacher of a hundred generations; this is true of Po Yi and Liu Xia Hui. Therefore when men now hear the character of Po Yi, the corrupt become pure, and the weak acquire determination, when they hear the character of Liu Xia Hui, the mean become generous, and the niggardly become liberal. The two made themselves distinguished a hundred generations ago, and after a hundred generations, those who hear of them, are all encouraged. It is only the caliber of the sage to bring about such life-transforming influence on the others. For those who are akin to the sage, how much more will they be changed!”

171 The commentary by Dai Zheng on “The Work of Mencius” “reads as such: “仁义之心，原于天地之德者也，天人道德，庸不质然子心，故日，尽其心！” (<<孟子字义疏证。原善卷上>>). Refer to Mao, Fuxian (trans. with commentary), Meng Zi Zhiyi Shuxing Quanyi (Chengdu: Bashu Shushe, 1992) p. 120.
5.2.2 The Immense Passion-nature

Mencius holds that a perfect man cultivates his personality and thus capable of bringing tranquility to the kingdom.\(^\text{173}\) He believes that one should expand the roots of good virtues i.e. the Ren, Yi Li and Zhi, into four cardinal virtues. The exhaustion of virtues will make possible a moral man with *immense passion-nature*. The necessary means to achieve the said condition are the preservation of the mind (*cun xin*), exhaustion of the mental constitution (*jinxin*), the control over one’s desire (*guayu*), the accumulation of passion-nature (*yang qi*) and regular self-examination (*fan qiu zhu ji*).\(^\text{174}\) [Refer to the Appendix V for Chart (D).]

The preservation of the mind refers to the preservation of human natural heart or mind, the *Xin* that is of empathy, sense of guilt, propriety and moral judgment. Mencius said, “the superior man is distinguished from the others for his ability to preserve benevolence and propriety in the heart”\(^\text{175}\) The purpose of preservation of the Xin is to preserve the goodness of nature and make it the basis of one’s moral standard. Contrary to the effort to preserve is “*yangxin*”, i.e. when one loses the goodness of the Xin. When it is so, man will be degraded to an amoral being. In “Gaozi, Part 1 Chap 8”, Mencius used the metaphor of the tree of the Nu mountain losing its original beauty to argue that the nature of the mountain is fertile and scenic as it is enjoying the nourishing of the rain and dew. However, it loses the natural appearance when it was not taken care of as well as exposing to the gazing of

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the domestic flock and intensive axing. It is thus said that the mind \((\text{Xin})\) of any man is with benevolence and righteousness. However, a man may lose his proper goodness of mind like the way the trees are denuded by axes and bills. ^176 The proper way to treat the lost goodness of the mind is to reclaim them just as one will do to their lost fouls or pets! ^177

When one reclaims the lost mind \((\text{Xin})\), he could proceed with a series of process, which begins with the exhaustion of the mental constitution, followed by the discovery of one's nature and then the state where one knows the "\(\text{Tian}\)." ^178 Chinese scholar Fong Youlan, elaborating on the text, said that the \(\text{Tian}\) is a moral entity. Thus, when one exhausts the goodness of his mind, he not only discovers his nature but also understands the moral \(\text{Tian}\).

Mencius teaches that positively, a person is to preserve and exhaust the goodness of his mind but negatively, one has to control over his desire. ^179 The emphasis is not to do away with desire but to keep it few, lest it affects one's act of benevolence and righteousness. This is what Mencius called \(\text{Guayu}\).

Mencius' idea of a perfect man is most elaborated in "Gongsun Chou, Part 1, 2.11-15". He described a perfect man as one who owns some Immense Passion-nature, which is exceedingly great and strong. The Immense Passion-nature is harmless and nourished by rectitude. It fills up the void between heaven and earth. It is the mate and assistant of righteousness and reason. It is produced by the

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^176 Refer to "Gouzi, Part 1, 8.1" in "The Works of Mencius" in Legge.
^177 Refer to "Gouzi, Part 1, 11.2" in "The Works of Mencius" in Legge.
^178 Refer to "Jixun, Part 1, 1.1" in "The Works of Mencius" in Legge.
^179 Refer to "Jixun, Part 2, 35" in "The Works of Mencius" in Legge.
accumulation of righteous deeds. It is produced by the accumulation of righteous deeds. It can be enhanced by every single righteous act. Mencius said that its cultivating process is not easy as it is ruined every time the person commits an unethical act. The process cannot be hastened as one might attempt to the growing crops. A person who managed to cultivate the Immense Passion-nature is visibly glorious and self-fulfilled as a divine being.

James Legge, commenting on the text, said that the idea of perfect man expressed by Mencius is one who is complete in all the parts of his constitution. Zhu Xi, the Sung Scholar, explained that the Immense Passion-nature is born of accumulation of goodness and righteous deeds. It should be noted that the accumulation is of the within goodness and cannot be accomplished immediately by external elements. \(^{180}\) Therefore, a perfect man is one who gradually cultivating his moral self and gathering the immense energy. As the cultivation is progressing, his four cardinal virtues will also expand to its exhaustion. Lastly, in the cultivation process, Mencius teaches that one should be sincere in self-examination, i.e. "fan qiu zhu ji". \(^{181}\) He said that there are people who act without understanding and act habitually without self-examination. This is the way of multitudes and it cannot help to set one’s life in the knowledge of its true nature. \(^{182}\) As for a perfect man, all things are already complete in him. This ‘all things’ refers to the state when the mind (Xin) and the nature (Xing) of a person reconcile and unite with the Tian. The exercising of the Immense Passion-nature is complete in such a condition.

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\(^{181}\) Refer to "Jinxin, Part 1, 4.2" in "The Works of Mencius" in Legge.

\(^{182}\) Ibid.
Mencius said that the *Immense Passion-nature* is rather difficult to gather. Hence, he only requests the learned and not the peasants to cultivate it. It is interesting to note that Mencius was fairly satisfied with himself as far as the exercising of the *Immense Passion-nature* is concerned. When asked by his disciple Gongsun Chou whether he felt that he surpassed the others in moral discipline, Mencius said that he was skillful in nourishing his vast, flowing passion-nature! ¹⁸³

5.3 Moral Perfection and Happiness

Al-Ghazzali described the fruit of moral-perfection as "happiness". He said, "the happiness of anything lies in its perfection." ¹⁸⁴ This happiness does refer to the pleasure (*ladhdha*) and delight (*naim*) of this world, for it is sensual, temporal and still building on the basis that is imperfect. It refers to something obtainable in the life hereafter, i.e., the eternal. This is the goal of all Muslims and Sufis.

There are, of course, some this-worldly joy and rewards that serve as means to otherworldly happiness. Al-Ghazzali, however, treated them as temporal forms of happiness (*saadar*). According to him, such happiness can be cherished but of no significance as that of the otherworldly, ultimate happiness.

He described the otherworldly happiness as the "joy without sorrow"; "a continuity without end", "knowledge without ignorance" and "sufficiency

¹⁸³ Refer to "Gongsun Chou, Part 1, 2.11 in "The Works of Mencius"; in Legge.
(ghina)”, after which nothing more is needed for perfect satisfaction. This happiness is both physical and spiritual as the idea co-relates with the promises from the Quran and Sunnah.

Al-Ghazzali said that one who is seeking such happiness should attempt to purify himself from lust, conquering the body and free himself from the slavery of evils. Even though it is rather certain that one could not uproot the entire bad nature by human will alone, one should carry out these ‘spiritual exercises’ (riyadah) in order to be fit to receive the grace of God.

In the spiritual exercises, man’s honorable aim is to ‘unveil’ (kashf) the divine matters through the divine inspiration (ilham). The metaphor of the ‘mirror’ and ‘picture’ explained what happens when man takes the spiritual exercises seriously. Human soul is said to resemble a ‘mirror’. After a person is given birth, he is connected to the world and the ‘mirror’ starts accumulating ‘dirt’, the worldly desires. When it is so, the ‘mirror’ is not likely to reflect the image of the ‘picture’ (the divine knowledge) accurately. This distorted reflection of the ‘mirror’ upsets man’s dignity, for the essence of man should reflects the essence of God. Man has a task to let the Divine shine through him!

Mencius shared a same notion like that Al-Ghazzali’s, that “the soul uses the body as its vehicle to acquire provision for its happiness.” In “Jinxin, Part I,

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Mencius said, "The bodily organs with their functions belong to the Heaven-conferred nature – But a man must be a Sage before he can satisfy the design of his bodily organization." For Mencius, the acquisition of perfection brings upon a person happiness. He said: "Honour virtue and delight in righteousness, and so you will always be perfectly satisfied". 188

According to him, a perfect man is definitely fulfilled and composed. It is said so because his happiness relies on the calmness and firmness within and not of the without. When one determines to cultivate good virtues and act righteously, he becomes the changing factor to improve on his own's well-being as well as the well-being of others. With the inner resources, a perfect man edifies many and in returns meets everything with great ease. Mencius describes that a man of such moral standing will meet with open doors everywhere. "There will also be fountains flowing from everything that the man comes in touch with!" 189

It is to be taken note that Mencius did not count the power and fame as the source of happiness. In "Jinxin, Part 1, 20:1-5", an account of three happiness was given and it was emphasized that "to be a ruler over the empire is not one of them (the three happiness)". 190 The first happiness is attained when the parents of the man are both alive, and that the siblings do not bring sorrow to the family. The second happiness is when one has no blame before the Heaven and not having any hick-ups with men. The third happiness is acquired when the man becomes one who edifies many, for example, being able to gather the most talented individuals from the entire empire under his lectureship and nourishment. Hence, for Mencius, the happiness of a

189 Ibid.
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perfect man is defined as one's being able to keep a clear conscience, enjoy a good family tie, have a good rapport with the fellow men and get to establish a career that nurtures and edifies others.

Mencius' ethics contains a clear concern for humanity. He is concerned about the social implication that one will bring upon the others within one's moral influence. Nevertheless, just as the intended goal in Al-Ghazzali's spiritual exercises, the goal of Mencius' moral exercises is the acquisition of a surpassing happiness that the world cannot give.