

S E L E C T E D

K H U T A B I I I

(SERMONS, SPEECHES & WRITINGS)

2005 – June, 2007

*

BY

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TRANSLITERATION SYSTEM

The English transliteration for Arabic names and terms followed in this booklet is as follows:

a. Consonants:

| | | | | |
|-------------------------|--------|--------|-------------------|-------|
| ا = a or ' ^ʾ | ب = b | ت = t | ث = th | ج = j |
| ح = ḥ | خ = kh | د = d | ذ = dh | ر = r |
| ز = z | س = s | ش = sh | ص = ṣ | ض = ḍ |
| ط = ṭ | ظ = ṭ̤ | ع = ʿ | غ = gh | ف = f |
| ق = q | ك = k | ل = l | م = m | ن = n |
| هـ = h | و = w | ي = y | ء = ' (like alif) | |

b. Vowels:

Short:

Fathah----- : = a

Kasrah----- : = i

Dammah----- : = u

Long:

اَ = ā

إِ = ī

أُ = ū

c. *Tā' marbūṭah*: ah, e.g., *sūrah* (سُورَة)

Tā' marbūṭah in *idāfah*: at, e.g., *sūrat al-Baqarah* (سُورَةُ الْبَقَرَة)

d. *Alif maqṣūrah*: á, e.g., *qadā* (قَضَى) and *shūrā* (شُورَى)

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

PREFACE

This booklet is the third part of my collection of speeches and writings from 2005 till the early 2007, entitled *Khutab III*. They were delivered at the ANUMA (Australian National University Muslim Association) as Friday sermons and as ordinary speeches on other occasions, at the Indonesian community gatherings at the *Kartini* hall at the Embassy of Indonesia in Canberra and other places on certain occasions. Some articles issued at *Assalam* bulletin published by the *Australia Indonesia Muslim Foundation (AIMF)* and sermons given at the Canberra Mosque on Friday 29 December 2006 and on the *'Id al-Adhā* on the next day (Saturday 30 December 2006), are also included in this booklet.

The abbreviations used in this booklet are: (1) *s.a.w.* (and ص.م.) for *ṣallāllāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* (and صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) meaning “may Allah bless him and grant him salvation”, sometimes translated as “peace be upon him” (p.b.u.h.), an eulogy after the name of Prophet Muhammad, (2) *a.s.* (and ع.س.) for *'alayhis salām* (and عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام) meaning “upon him be peace” usually used after the names of angels and prophets before Prophet Muhammad *s.a.w.*, (3) *r.a.* (and ر.ع.) for *radīyallāhu 'anhū* (and عَنْهُ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ) meaning “may Allah be please with him” usually used after the names of the *ṣaḥābah* (companions of the Prophet).

It has been like an accident that before leaving a certain place I left a booklet behind. The booklet *Khutab I* (the collection of speeches and sermons at the Canadian Islamic Centre, al-Rashid Mosque) before leaving Edmonton (Canada) for Australia; *Khutab II* (the collection of sermons at the Canberra Islamic Centre) at Monash, ACT, before leaving for overseas (the longest and happiest travel I have ever made), and now

the *Khutab III* before leaving for Indonesia and Malaysia in September 2007, *in shā' Allāh* (God willing). For those friends left behind and those who have contributed directly or indirectly to the completion of this booklet I sincerely appreciate their help, kindness and companionship; may Allah reward them for their kindness and compassion.

In this edition the Arabic texts have been vowelised to help the readers who are not very familiar with Arabic language.

This booklet, like the booklets written before, is far from perfect. However, this is another attempt to introduce some Islamic teachings to the public. May Allah accept this humble contribution to Islam, and may He forgive any mistake in this booklet. Amin!

Canberra, October, 2011

M.A.S.

A. INTRODUCTION FOR THE *KHUTBAH*

This is an example for the introduction to the *khutbah* as follows:

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ نَحْمَدُهُ وَنُسْتَعِينُهُ وَنَسْتَغْفِرُهُ وَنَسْتَهْدِيهِ وَنَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ مِنْ شُرُورِ أَنْفُسِنَا وَمِنْ سَيِّئَاتِ
أَعْمَالِنَا، مَنْ يَهْدِ اللَّهُ فَهُوَ الْمُهْتَدِ وَمَنْ يُضِلِّ فَلَنْ تَجِدَ لَهُ وَلِيًّا مُرْشِدًا ، وَ أَشْهَدُ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَحْدَهُ لَا
شَرِيكَ لَهُ، يُبْدِئُ وَ يُعِيدُ وَ هُوَ الْغَفُورُ الْوَدُودُ ذُو الْعَرْشِ الْمَجِيدِ، فَعَالٌ لِمَا يُرِيدُ، عَزَّ جَارُهُ وَتَبَارَكَ اسْمُهُ وَعَلا
شَأْنُهُ سُبْحَانَهُ وَ تَعَالَى عَمَّا يُفْتَرِي الْمُفْتَرُونَ وَ يَقُولُ الْمُشْرِكُونَ. وَ أَشْهَدُ أَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا عَبْدُهُ وَ رَسُولُهُ وَصَفِيُّهُ
وَ خَلِيلُهُ وَ كَلِيمُهُ ، سَلَّ الرِّسَالَةَ وَ أَدَّى الْأَمَانَةَ وَ نَصَحَ الْأُمَّةَ ، أَرْسَلَهُ اللَّهُ بَشِيرًا وَ نَذِيرًا وَ دَاعِيًا إِلَى اللَّهِ وَ
سِرَاجًا مُنِيرًا مَنْ يُطِيعِ اللَّهَ وَ رَسُولَهُ فَقَدْ رَشَدَ وَ مَنْ يَعْصِيهِمَا فَإِنَّهُ لَا يَضُرُّ إِلَّا نَفْسَهُ وَلَا يَضُرُّ اللَّهَ شَيْئًا. اَللَّهُمَّ
صَلِّ وَسَلِّمْ وَ بَارِكْ عَلَى عَبْدِكَ وَرَسُولِكَ سَيِّدِنَا مُحَمَّدٍ وَ عَلَى آلِهِ وَ صَحْبِهِ أَجْمَعِينَ. مَنْ اهْتَدَى بِهِدْيِهِ وَ
اسْتَمْسَكَ بِسُنَّتِهِ وَ سَلَّمَ تَسْلِيمًا كَثِيرًا.

أَمَّا بَعْدُ ، فَيَا أَيُّهَا الْمُؤْمِنُونَ، أَوْصِيكُمْ وَ إِيَّايَ بِتَقْوَى اللَّهِ فَقَدْ فَازَ الْمُتَّقُونَ. قَالَ تَعَالَى وَهُوَ أَصْدَقُ
الْقَائِلِينَ: ”يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ حَقَّ تَقَاتِهِ وَلَا تَمُوتُنَّ إِلَّا وَأَنْتُمْ مُسْلِمُونَ“ . صَدَقَ اللَّهُ الْعَظِيمُ.

**B. SOME EXAMPLES OF THE *DU‘Ā* (SUPPLICATION)
AT THE CONCLUSION OF THE
SECOND *KHUTBAH***

Some examples of *du‘ā*’s and its meaning in the second *khutbah*,
as follows:

اَللّٰهُمَّ اغْفِرْ لِلْمُسْلِمِيْنَ وَ الْمُسْلِمَاتِ وَالْمُؤْمِنِيْنَ وَ الْمُؤْمِنَاتِ الْاَحْيَاءِ مِنْهُمْ وَ الْاَمْوَاتِ،
اِنَّكَ يَا مَوْلَانَا سَمِيعٌ قَرِيْبٌ مُّجِيْبُ الدَّعَوَاتِ وَ قَاضِي الْحَاجَاتِ يَا رَبَّ الْعَالَمِيْنَ

O Allah! Forgive the Muslims, males and females, the believers, males and females, the living among them as well as the dead! Verily, You are, O our Lord, the All-Hearing and Near, Who answer (our) prayers, and fulfil (our) needs, O the Lord of all creatures.

اَللّٰهُمَّ نُوِّرْ عَلٰى اَهْلِ الْقُبُوْرِ قُبُوْرَهُمْ؛ اَللّٰهُمَّ اغْفِرْ لِنَا حَيَّاءٍ وَ يَسِّرْ لَهُمْ اُمُوْرَهُمْ.

“O Allah! Lighten the graves of the dead, O Allah, forgive the living and facilitate their affairs.”

اَللّٰهُمَّ ثَبِّ عَلَى التَّائِبِيْنَ وَ اغْفِرْ ذُنُوْبَ الْمُدْنِيْنَ وَ اشْفِ مَرْضٰى الْمُسْلِمِيْنَ وَ اَكْتُبِ
الصَّحَّةَ وَ الْعَافِيَةَ وَ التَّوْفِيْقَ وَ الْهُدٰىيَةَ لَنَا وَ لِكَاْفَةِ اُمَّةٍ مُحَمَّدٍ اَجْمَعِيْنَ.

“O Allah! Forgive the repentant, forgive the sins of the sinners, heal the Sick among the Muslims, prescribe well-being, vitality, prosperity and guidance for us and for the entire community of Muhammad.”

رَبَّنَا اغْفِرْ لَنَا وَلِوَالِدَيْنَا وَ ارْحَمْهُمَا كَمَا رَبَّيَانَا صِبَاْرًا

“O Lord! Forgive us as well as our parents and bestow on them Your mercy as they did bring us up when we were young.”

اَللّٰهُمَّ اَصْلِحْ لَنَا دِيْنَنَا الَّذِيْ هُوَ عِصْمَةُ اَمْرِنَا، وَ اَصْلِحْ لَنَا دُنْيَانَا الَّتِيْ فِيْهَا مَعَاشُنَا،
وَ اَصْلِحْ لَنَا اٰخِرَتَنَا الَّتِيْ اِلَيْهَا مَعَادُنَا، وَ اجْعَلِ الْحَيَاةَ زِيَادَةً لَّنَا فِيْ كُلِّ خَيْرٍ
وَ اجْعَلِ الْمَوْتَ رَاحَةً لَّنَا مِنْ كُلِّ شَرٍّ

O Allah! Bring prosperity to our affairs in this world that is the preservation of our lives, and in the next world to which we shall return, and increase our good deeds in our lives, and make our death repose from evil.

اللَّهُمَّ ارْزُقْنَا الْحَقَّ حَقًّا وَارْزُقْنَا اتِّبَاعَهُ وَارْزُقْنَا الْبَاطِلَ بَاطِلًا وَارْزُقْنَا اجْتِنَاءَهُ

O Allah! Show us the truth as truth, and guide to follow it, and show us the falsehood as falsehood, and guide us to avoid it.

رَبَّنَا هَبْ لَنَا مِنْ أَزْوَاجِنَا وَذُرِّيَّاتِنَا فُرَّةَ أَعْيُنٍ وَاجْعَلْنَا لِمُنْتَقِينَ إِمَامًا

Our Lord! Bestow on us, our spouses and our offspring the comfort of our eyes and make us leaders of the pious.

اللَّهُمَّ اجْعَلْنَا مُتَحَابِّينَ فِي جَلَالِكَ مُجْتَمِعِينَ عَلَى كَلَامِكَ وَ أَظِلَّنَا تَحْتَ ظِلِّ عَرْشِكَ يَوْمَ لَا ظِلَّ إِلَّا ظِلُّهُ وَ تَوَفَّنَا مُسْلِمِينَ وَ أَلْحِقْنَا بِالصَّالِحِينَ وَ اجْعَلْ خَيْرَ أَعْمَالِنَا خَوَاتِمَهَا وَ اجْعَلْ خَيْرَ أَيَّامِنَا يَوْمَ لِقَائِكَ.

O Allah! Make us love each other in Your Majesty and agree on Your sayings, and shade us with Your Throne on the day there will be no shade except its shade, and make us die as Muslims, and join us with pious people, and make our best deed its last one, and our best day the day we meet You.

رَبَّنَا لَا تُؤَاخِذْنَا إِنْ نَسِينَا أَوْ أَخْطَأْنَا رَبَّنَا وَلَا تَحْمِلْ عَلَيْنَا إِصْرًا كَمَا حَمَلْتَهُ عَلَى الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِنَا رَبَّنَا وَلَا تُحَمِّلْنَا مَا لَا طَاقَةَ لَنَا بِهِ وَاعْفُ عَنَّا وَاعْفِرْ لَنَا وَارْحَمْنَا أَنْتَ مَوْلَانَا فَانصُرْنَا عَلَى الْقَوْمِ الْكَافِرِينَ (البقرة : ٢٨٦)

Or Lord! Do not punish us if we forget or make a mistake. Our Lord! Do not lay on us such a burden as You placed on those before us. Our Lord! Do not lay on us a burden that which we have not the strength to bear! Forgive us, have mercy on us. You are our protector, help us against the unbelievers.(Q. 2:286)

(دعاء سيدنا إبراهيم ع.س. ٤. a.s. (The prayer of Prophet Abraham,

رَبَّنَا عَلَيْكَ تَوَكَّلْنَا وَإِلَيْكَ أَنَبْنَا وَإِلَيْكَ الْمَصِيرُ. رَبَّنَا لَا تَجْعَلْنَا فِتْنَةً لِلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا
وَاعْفُورَنَا رَبَّنَا إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ (المتنحة : ٤-٥)

Our Lord! In You we have placed our trust, to You we turn in repentance and to You is our final goal. Our Lord! Do not make us a prey for those who disbelieve, and forgive us our Lord!

You are the all-Mighty, the All-Wise. (Q. 60:4-5)

رَبَّنَا إِنَّا سَمِعْنَا مُنَادِيًا يُنَادِي لِلْإِيمَانِ أَنْ آمِنُوا بِرَبِّكُمْ فَآمَنَّا رَبَّنَا فَاغْفِرْ لَنَا
ذُنُوبَنَا وَكَفِّرْ عَنَّا سَيِّئَاتِنَا وَتَوَفَّنَا مَعَ الْأَبْرَارِ. رَبَّنَا وَآتِنَا مَا وَعَدْتَنَا عَلَى رُسُلِكَ
وَلَا تُخْزِنَا يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ إِنَّكَ لَا تُخْلِفُ الْمِيعَادَ (آل عمران : ١٩٣)

Our Lord! We have heard someone calling to the true faith saying 'Believe in your Lord!' So we believed. Our Lord! Forgive us our sins, remove from us evil deeds and make us die with the righteous. Our Lord! Give us what You have promised through Your messengers and save us from the shame on the Day of Resurrection; for You never break Your promise. (Q. 3:193)

اَللّٰهُمَّ وَحِّدْ صُفُوْفَ الْمُسْلِمِيْنَ وَوَحِّدْ كَلِمَتَهُمْ وَانصُرْهُمْ عَلٰى اَعْدَائِهِمْ

O Allah, unite the Muslims and assist them against their enemies.

رَبَّنَا آتِنَا فِي الدُّنْيَا حَسَنَةً وَفِي الْآخِرَةِ حَسَنَةً وَقِنَا عَذَابَ النَّارِ. اَللّٰهُمَّ آمِيْنَ يَا رَبَّ الْعَالَمِيْنَ

Our Lord! Give us the goodness, both in this world and in the Hereafter and save us from the torment of Hellfire. (Q. 2:201)

عِبَادَ اللَّهِ، إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَأْمُرُ بِالْعَدْلِ وَالْإِحْسَانِ وَإِيتَاءِ ذِي الْقُرْبَىٰ وَيَنْهَىٰ عَنِ الْفَحْشَاءِ وَالْمُنْكَرِ وَالْبَغْيِ
يَعْظُمُ لِعَلَّكُمْ تَذَكَّرُونَ. اذْكُرُوا اللَّهَ يَذْكُرْكُمْ وَاشْكُرُوهُ عَلَىٰ نِعَمِهِ يَزِدْكُمْ وَلَذِكْرُ اللَّهِ أَكْبَرُ وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ مَا
تَصْنَعُونَ. أَقِمِ الصَّلَاةَ!!!

1. JUM‘AH PRAYER (صَلَاةُ الْجُمُعَةِ)

Its Names and Origins

The word *Jum‘ah* is the name of the Friday where Muslims perform their congregational prayer. Al-Wāḥidī reported from the grammarian al-Farrā’ that it has many variant readings: (a) *jumu‘ah* (pl. *jumu‘āt*); (b) *jum‘ah* (pl. *juma‘*), and (c) *juma‘ah*, as it makes people gather together, in the pattern of *duḥakah* for a person who likes laughs, and *lu‘anah* for a person who likes to curse, a curser (*lu‘nah* is a person who is cursed too often, cursed). In the Qur’ān it is said وَيَلْ لِكُلِّ هُمَزَةٍ لُّمَزَةٍ (الْهُمَزَةُ : ١) (“Woe to every slanderer and backbiter” Q. 104:1) The verb *hamaza yahmuзу* or *yahmizu*, *hamzan*, meaning “to beat, to strike; to backbite, to slander; to provide with letter ء, and *lamaza yalмузу* or *yalmizu lamzan*, meaning “to speak ill (of s.o), to find fault (with s.o), to criticize, to blame, to backbite, to slander, to defame (s.o.)” The expression هُمَزٌ وَلُمَزٌ means “defamatory insinuations; taunts, gibes, sneers.” The name used in the Qur’ān is *jumu‘ah*, but also pronounced *jum‘ah* for easy pronunciation (لِلتَّخْفِيفِ).

The name of the Friday in the *jāhiliyyah* (pre-Islamic) period was called *al-‘Arūbah* (i.e., الْمُعَظَّمُ “the glorified day”). In a *ḥadīth* Prophet Muhammad *s.a.w.* asked Salmān *r.a.*:

“O Salmān, do you know what is the *Jum‘ah*?”

“Allah and His Messenger know,” said Salmān.

“It is the day when your forefather and foremother [*i.e.*, Adam and Eve], gathered together,” said the Prophet.

According to Ibn Sīrīn, it was the people of Medinah who gave this name of the day as *Jum‘ah*. He said that before the coming of the Prophet to Medinah, and before the injunction of the Friday congregational prayer, the *anṣār* (the people of Medinah) said that the Jews had a day in a week where they gathered together, and so did the Christians. They also wanted to have one day in a week where they

would remember, thank and worship Allah, and chose the ‘*Arūbah* day, which was later called *Jum‘ah*. It was said that As‘ad ibn Zurārah called people to pray in congregation, and Muṣ‘ab ibn ‘Umayr led the prayer.

Its Legal Judgment (حُكْم)

It is *فَرَضَ عَيْنَ* (an individual duty), but with some conditions, based on the Qur’ān, *ḥadīth*, and *ijmā‘* (consensus of Muslim scholars). Allah says in the Qur’ān,

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِذَا نُودِيَ لِلصَّلَاةِ مِنْ يَوْمِ الْجُمُعَةِ فَاسْعَوْا إِلَىٰ ذِكْرِ اللَّهِ
وَذَرُوا الْبَيْعَ ذَلِكُمْ خَيْرٌ لَكُمْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ (الجمعة : ٩)

“O you who believe! When the call is proclaimed for the prayer on Friday, come to the remembrance of Allah, and leave off business. That is better for you if you did but know.” (Q. 62:80)

Following this prohibition on business transactions, according to Ḥanbalī school, any business transaction becomes void and invalid when the call to prayer is being proclaimed, and therefore shops have to be closed immediately.

There are several *ḥadīths* (traditions of the Prophet) indicating the obligation of Friday prayer, such as

رَوَّاحُ الْجُمُعَةِ وَاجِبٌ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ مُحْتَلِمٍ (رواه النسائي)

Attending Friday prayer is obligatory for every mature male.

(Reported by al-Nasā’ī).

The prohibition of *zuhr* prayer on Friday emphasises the injunction of the Friday congregational prayer.

The Merits of the *Jum‘ah* Prayer

There are several *ḥadīths* indicating the merits of the *Jum‘ah* prayer, among which are as follows:

عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ قَالَ قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ

مَنْ تَوَضَّأَ فَأَحْسَنَ الْوُضُوءَ ثُمَّ أَتَى الْجُمُعَةَ فَاسْتَمَعَ وَأَنْصَتَ غُفِرَ لَهُ مَا بَيْنَ
الْجُمُعَةِ إِلَى الْجُمُعَةِ وَزِيَادَةُ ثَلَاثَةِ أَيَّامٍ وَمَنْ مَسَّ الْحَصَى فَقَدْ لَعَا
(رواه مسلم و أبو داء ود و الترمذي و ابن ماجه)

It was narrated by Abū Hurayrah, r.a.. that the Messenger of Allah s.a.w. said: "Whoever performs his ablution perfectly then comes to Friday prayer, listening to the khutbah and keeps silent, Allah will forgive his sins till next Friday with extra three days. Whoever touches pebbles his prayer becomes void (of reward)". (Reported by Muslim, Abū Dā'ūd, al-Tirmidhī and Ibn Mājah).

In another *ḥadīth* the Prophet said that Friday is the **سَيِّدُ الْأَيَّامِ** ("the master of the days"), greater than the two *'īds*, as it was the day Adam a.s. was created, entered heaven, was taken out from heaven, descended to the earth, died, and is the day when the Doomsday will take place. Furthermore, on Friday there is a particular moment where supplication is answered by Allah.

Conditions for Its Prescription

Scholars of Islamic jurisprudence put conditions for the obligation of *Jum'ah* prayer as follows:

1. **الإسلام** . Being a Muslim. A non-Muslim is definitely excluded from it. Allah says,

لَئِنْ أَشْرَكْتَ لَيَحْبَطَنَّ عَمَلُكَ وَلَتَكُونَنَّ مِنَ الْخَاسِرِينَ (الزمر: ٦٥)

If you ascribe a partner to Allah, all your deeds will become fruitless and you will surely be among the losers. (Q. 39:65).

2. **البُلُوغ** . Maturity. Children are not enjoined to do it, but their prayers are valid and acceptable. The Prophet orders children to start praying at the age of seven, and to enforce them, even to beat them, if necessary, at the age of ten to pray.

3. **العقل** . Intelligence (presence of sound judgement, consciousness, being sensible). Prophet Muhammad *s.a.w.* said,

رُفِعَ الْقَلَمُ عَنْ ثَلَاثَةٍ عَنْ النَّائِمِ حَتَّى يَسْتَيْقِظَ وَعَنْ الصَّبِيِّ حَتَّى يَشِبَّ وَعَنْ الْمَعْتُوهِ حَتَّى يَعْقِلَ (أخرجه أبو داود)

The script [i.e., prescription] is lifted upon three things: the sleeping person until he wakes up, the child until he matures, and insane until he becomes sane. (Reported by Abū Dā'ūd).

People who lose consciousness (because of medicine, accident, etc.) are exempt from making up (قضاء) missed prayer, unless there still remains time to do it when he becomes conscious. This is the view of Mālik and al-Shāfi'ī. According to Ḥanbalī school unconsciousness is like sleeping, and with it the prayer has to be made up. Abū Ḥanīfah's opinion is if a person is unconscious and misses five prayers, he has to make them up. If more than five prayers he does not have to make them up.

4. **الذكور** Being a male. Women can come to pray, so that they can listen to the *khutbah*, but attendance is not obligatory for women.
5. **الحرية** Being free (not slave). The Prophet said as narrated by Tāriq ibn Shihāb:

الْجُمُعَةُ حَقٌّ وَاجِبٌ عَلَى كُلِّ مُسْلِمٍ فِي جَمَاعَةٍ إِلَّا أَرْبَعَةً عَبْدٌ مَمْلُوكٌ
أَوْ امْرَأَةٌ أَوْ صَبِيٌّ أَوْ مَرِيضٌ (رواه أبو داود)

Friday prayer is an obligatory duty for every Muslim, except the slave

or the woman, the children and the sick. (Reported by Abū Dā'ūd)

Slavery has been abolished, but there is no guarantee that it will remain totally eradicated till the Doomsday. Hopefully this condition remains dormant forever, just a recorded distant history of man on this earth.

6. **الإِسْتِطَان** Being Resident (not travelling). A person in residence is not allowed to combine or shorten his prayers. The four schools of law (Ḥanafī, Mālikī, Shāfi‘ī and Ḥanbalī) as well as al-Thawrī and Ishāq say that travellers are not enjoined to attend *Jum‘ah* prayer, even following a short travel. They say that Prophet Muhammad *s.a.w.* himself did not pray *Jum‘ah* prayer while travelling. He did not pray *Jum‘ah* prayer in his farewell pilgrimage. Instead, he prayed *zuhr* and ‘*aṣr* combined and shortened in the *zuhr* time (جَمْعُ تَقْدِيمٍ). (Al-Zuhrī, al-Nakha‘ī and Ibn Ḥazm stick to the verse Q. 62:8 mentioned above in its general sense, that travellers are also Muslims have to come to *Jum‘ah* prayer upon hearing the call to prayer).
7. **الْخُلُوءُ مِنَ الْأَعْدَارِ** (Having no excuse to be absent), such as having difficulty in attending the prayer, fear of the increase of sickness or the decrease of speed recovery, being very old or unable to walk, or attending the sick where nobody could take his place.

Conditions of travelling

Muslim scholars mention some issues concerning travelling which exempts a traveller from shortening or combining his prayers as well as the *Jum‘ah* prayer, as follows:

If a traveller intends to stay for more than four days, knowing that he is unable to accomplish his need in less than that period (four days), he is not allowed to shorten or combine his prayers, and he has to attend the *Jum‘ah* prayer. If he has no intention to stay, and his stay is only because of his illness or of heavy rain, he is allowed to shorten and combine his prayers until he leaves the place, as Ibn ‘Umar stayed at Azerbaijan for six months shortening and combining his prayers. Similarly, if the traveller has no intention to stay, as he does not know when he will accomplish what he intends to do, he is also allowed to shorten and combine his prayers until he leaves. The Prophet stayed at Tabūk for twenty days shortening prayers (Reported by Ahmad and others).

Al-Shāfi‘ī has a slightly different view. According to him, if the traveller intends to stay for four days excluding the days of entering and leaving the area he is not allowed to combine his prayers.

Ibn al-Qayyim of the Ḥanbalī school does not limit the period of staying. He says that even if the traveller intends to stay longer than four days he is allowed to shorten and combine his prayers. He gives the example of the Muslims staying in Nihavend (Persia) for six months shortening and combining their prayers and they knew that they could not finish what they needed in four days. As long as a traveller remains a traveller he can shorten his prayers.

Conditions for Its Validity

There are conditions for its validity according to different schools, but they share in many conditions, such as follows:

It has to be performed on time (*ẓuhr* prayer time)

1. It has to be performed in a building, not in the desert (Shāfi‘ī); in a village even made of reeds or stalks (Ḥanbalī); in the town’s mosque or *muṣallā* (Ḥanafī)
2. It has to be attended by a group of people in congregation (Mālikī); forty people (Shāfi‘ī and Ḥanbalī).
3. It has to be preceded by two *khuṭbahs*
4. It is not preceded or performed with another *Jum‘ah* prayer (Shāfi‘ī). However, this condition is not followed in a *muṣallā* (a spacious room for prayer) in Calgary (Canada) where the *Jum‘ah* prayer is performed twice by very large congregation. The second prayer is performed about two hours after the starting of the first one with a different *imām*. This is to give facility for people who cannot afford to attend the earlier *Jum‘ah* prayer, and therefore they can attend the second one rather than missing it completely.

Number of People in Congregation

Al-Suyūṭī mentions 14 views concerning the minimum number of people who attend the congregation for the validity of the *Jum‘ah* prayer, as follows:

1. 2 persons (including the *imām*), according to al-Nakhā‘ī and Dā‘ūd (of the Zāhirī school).
2. 3 persons (including the *imām*), according to al-Awzā‘ī, Abū Thawr, Abū Yūsuf and Muḥammad al-Shaybānī (the two disciples of Abū Ḥanīfah)
3. 4 persons (including the *imām*), according to Abū Ḥanīfah, al-Shāfi‘ī in his earlier view (قَوْلٌ قَدِيمٌ). Al-Suyūṭī adopted this view.
4. 7 persons, as reported from ‘Ikrimah
5. 9 persons, as reported from Rabī‘ah
6. 12 persons, as also reported from Rabī‘ah, and al-Māwardī
7. 13 persons (including the *imām*), as reported from Ishāq ibn Rāhawayh
8. 20 persons, as reported by Ḥabīb from Mālik
9. 30 persons, as reported from Mālik
10. 40 persons (including the *imām*), according to ‘Umar ibn ‘Abd al-‘Azīz, Shāfi‘ī, Aḥmad and Ishāq.
11. 41 persons (including the *imām*), according to Shāfi‘ī in his later view (قَوْلٌ جَدِيدٌ)
12. 50 persons, according to ‘Umar ibn ‘Abd al-‘Azīz in another report, and Aḥmad also in another report.
13. 80 people, as reported by al-Māwardī.

14. Many people without specific number, according to Mālikī school. Ibn Ḥajar of the Shāfi'ī school states that this view might be the most acceptable view.

Conditions of the Two *Khuṭbahs* (شُرُوطُ الْخُطْبَتَيْنِ)

The performance of *two khuṭbahs* is one of the conditions for the validity of the *Jum'ah* prayer according to the great majority of Muslim scholars, with the exception of Dā'ūd, al-Shawkānī and 'Abd al-Malik of the Mālikī school. The conditions for the validity of these *khuṭbahs* are as follows:

1. دُخُولُ الْوَقْتِ On time. As these two *khuṭbahs* are parts of the *Jum'ah* prayer, and in turn it is the substitute of the *zuhr* prayer, they have to be performed within the *zuhr* prayer time
2. الْعَدَدُ الَّذِي تَنْعَقِدُ بِهِ الْجُمُعَةُ The number of attendants has to fulfil the requirement of the validity of the *Jum'ah* prayer.
3. الْقِيَامُ مَعَ الْقُدْرَةِ Standing if the *khaṭīb* is able to.
4. الْفَصْلُ بَيْنَهُمَا بِجَلْسَةٍ Sitting between the two *khuṭbahs*.
5. الطَّهَارَةُ عَنِ الْحَدَثِ الْأَصْغَرِ وَالْأَكْبَرِ The *khaṭīb* (the speaker who delivers the *khuṭbah* (Friday sermon) being free from minor and major impurity
6. الطَّهَارَةُ عَنِ نَجَاسَةِ الثَّوْبِ وَالْبَدَنِ وَالْمَكَانِ The *khaṭīb*'s body, clothes and place where the *khuṭbahs* are delivered.
7. سِتْرُ الْعَوْرَةِ The *khaṭīb*'s covering his 'awrah (private part's area)
8. أَنْ يَرْفَعَ صَوْتَهُ بِحَيْثُ يَسْمَعُ الْعَدَدُ الْمَعْتَبَرُ The *khaṭīb*'s sermon should be loud enough to be heard by the number of congregation required in the *Jum'ah* prayer.

The Basic Elements (Pillars) of the Two *Khuṭbahs* (أَرْكَانُ الْخُطْبَتَيْنِ)

Muslim scholars have different view as to the basic elements of the *khuṭbahs*, as follows:

1. Praising Allah, such as saying *al-ḥamdu lillāh* (الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ, praise be to Allah). It is only recommended according to the Mālikī school.
2. Citing the *ṣalawāt* to the Prophet, such as saying *allāhumma ṣalli ‘alā Muḥammad* (اللَّهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ), “O Allah, give blessing to Prophet Muhammad”). It is only recommended according to Mālikī school.
3. Giving advice (وَصِيَّةٌ) to the Muslim to fear Allah, such as saying اللَّهُ أَؤْصِيكُمْ وَ إِيَّايَ بِتَقْوَى اللَّهِ (“I advise you and myself to fear Allah”).
4. Citing a Qur’ānic verse in one of the *khuṭbahs*. Some say in both of the *khuṭbahs*, and yet others say that it is not obligatory in one of them, but recommended. To fulfil the requirement of advising the Muslims and citing one verse of the Qur’ān at the same time, the *khaṭīb* used to cite the verse,

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ حَقَّ تُقَاتِهِ وَلَا تَمُوتُنَّ إِلَّا وَأَنتُمْ مُسْلِمُونَ (آل عمران : ١٠٢)

O ye who believe! Fear Allah as He should be feared, and die not

except in a state of Islam. (Q. 3:102)

5. Making *du‘ā* (supplication) for the Muslims. Some say that it is not sufficient to say the *du‘ā* just for ourselves, for example, “O Allah, forgive us, have mercy on us,” etc., but we have to mention the word “Muslims” or “believers”, namely, the whole believers wherever they are, as one *ummah* (community, nation), irrespective of their race and gender, dead or alive. In this way, the Muslims everywhere on every Friday pray for each other, indicating the solidarity and the brotherhood among Muslims.

It is highly recommended for the *khaṭīb* to fulfil the five basic elements of the *khuṭbah* mentioned above, but the congregation, the *ma'mūm*, should be tolerant if the *khaṭīb* misses (some of) those items recommended by the school of law he is following. This is to avoid hot arguments which may lead to dissension and aversion, and eventually disunity and disintegration which are *ḥarām* in Islam.

Tahīyyat al-Masjid Prayer

The *tahīyyat al-masjid* prayer is the one performed upon entering the mosque as an act of respect for that place of worship. The expression *tahīyyat al-masjid* literally means, “greeting the mosque”. While the *khuṭbah* is being delivered is it still recommended to perform this *tahīyyat al-masjid* prayer? There are two different views:

- (a) Yes, according to al-Shāfi‘ī and Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal. Therefore, the followers of the Shāfi‘ī and Ḥanbalī schools keep performing this prayer while the *khuṭbah* is being delivered. Their argument is based on the *ḥadīth* that runs as follows: “Narrated by Jābir, *r.a.* that a man (called Sulayk al-Ghaṭafānī) entered the mosque and sat down while the Prophet was delivering the *khuṭbah*. The Prophet asked him, ‘Have you prayed (*tahīyyat al-masjid*)?’ He said, “No.” The Prophet said, “Stand up, and perform two *rak‘ah*.”
- (b) No, according to some scholars, including Imām Mālik, and apparently also Imām Abū Ḥanīfah. Their arguments are:

1. Allah says in the Qur’ān,

إِذَا قُرِئَ الْقُرْآنُ فَاسْتَمِعُوا لَهُ وَأَنْصِتُوا لَعَلَّكُمْ تُرْحَمُونَ (الأعراف : ٢٠٤)

And when the Qur’ān is recited, listen to it, and be silent that you may receive mercy. (Q. 7:204).

This is also valid when the *imām* is reciting the Qur’ān in prayer and while delivering the *khuṭbah*. The *khuṭbahs* of the Prophet mostly consist of Qur’ānic verses, and therefore people did not record them. Those who reject this view argue that this verse has general meaning, whereas the foregoing *ḥadīth* gives specification to this general meaning (تَخْصِصُ الْعَامِ).

2. Prophet Muhammad *s.a.w.* himself prohibited people from telling others to keep silent. To the rejectors, this is not contradictory to the recommendation of the *tahīyyat al-masjid* prayer.

There is possibility that those who reject the idea of recommending the performance of the *tahīyyat al-masjid* prayer while the *khuṭbah* is being delivered do not totally reject the foregoing *ḥadīth* but understood it differently. The Prophet might not have started the *khuṭbah* when he told the man to stand up and perform the *tahīyyat al-masjid* prayer, but he was on the point of doing it, and therefore, he had not cited any Qur’ānic verse. We, again, have to be tolerant with this different of opinion.

Jum‘ah Prayer on ‘Īd Day

If one of the ‘*īd* days (‘*īd al-fīṭr* or ‘*īd al-adḥā*) falls on Friday, should the *Jum‘ah* prayer be performed as well? There are two views:

- (a) Yes, according to Aū Ḥanīfah, Mālik, al-Shāfi‘ī and the majority of jurists. They say that the ‘*īd* prayer is recommended (*sunnah*), whereas the *Jum‘ah* prayer is obligatory (*fard*). An obligatory act cannot be replaced with a recommended one.
- (b) No, but it is permissible, according to Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal, ‘Umar, ‘Uthmān, and Ibn ‘Abbās. The Muslims at that time either perform

the *zuhr* or the *Jum‘ah* prayer. Their argument is that the Prophet said:

فَدِ اجْتَمَعَ فِي يَوْمِكُمْ هَذَا عِيدَانِ فَمَنْ شَاءَ أَجْزَأَهُ مِنْ الْجُمُعَةِ وَإِنَّا مُجَمِّعُونَ (رواه أبو داود)

Two celebration days today, and whoever prays Jum‘ah prayer will be rewarded, but we are combining our prayers (zuhr and ‘asr prayers). (Reported by Abū Dā’ūd).

(Apparently the Prophet was saying it when he was performing the pilgrimage at Mina). It is also reported that Mu‘āwiyah asked Zayd ibn al-Arqam: “Have you ever witnessed two ‘īds in one day with the Prophet?” When Zayd said “yes”, he asked further what the Prophet did on that day. Zayd ibn al-Arqam said that he prayed the ‘īd prayer, and then gave *rukḥṣah* (permission) to leave the *Jum‘ah* prayer and said,

مَنْ شَاءَ أَنْ يُصَلِّيَ فَلْيُصَلِّ (رواه أبو داود)

Whoever wants to pray, let him pray. (Reported by Abū Dā’ūd).

The Excuses from Attending the *Jum‘ah* prayer

Several excuses for not attending the *Jum‘ah* prayer mentioned by Muslim scholars, as follows: rain, heavy mud, severe cold or heat, hunger and thirst, the uncontrollable call of nature (fart, *i.e.*, break of wind, urine or stool), fear of one’s life (for being attacked), after eating food with strong odour that might disturb people in the congregation, attending a person on the point of death, although someone can take his place, and attending a patient where nobody else can take his place.

Reciting the *Fātiḥah*

Is it necessary to read the *Fātiḥah* in prayer by the *imām*? There are two views:

- (a) Yes, according to the masses of the ‘*ulamā*’ (Muslim scholars), based on the *ḥadīth* where the Prophet said,

لَا صَلَاةَ لِمَنْ لَمْ يَقْرَأْ بِفَاتِحَةِ الْكِتَابِ (رواه البخاري و مسلم و الترمذي)

*No prayer (is accepted) from a person who does not cite the **fātiḥah** (Opening Chapter) of the Book.*

(Reported by Bukhari, Muslim and Tirmidhi)

- (b) Not necessary, according to Abū Ḥanīfah. He bases his view on the Qur'ānic verse,

فَاقْرَءُوا مَا تَيَسَّرَ مِنَ الْقُرْآنِ (المزمل : ٢٠)

Therefore, read from the Qur'ān as much as you easily can. (Q. 73:20).

(For the rejectors, this verse indicates verses after reading the *fātiḥah*. Even if it is accepted in general sense, it has been abrogated by the foregoing *ḥadīth*). The Prophet was reported to have said to a person who could not pray properly,

اقْرَأْ مَا تَيَسَّرَ مَعَكَ مِنَ الْقُرْآنِ

Read whatever you easily can from the Qur'ān

meaning that reciting the *fātiḥah* is not necessary. (For the rejectors, the Prophet meant the person who cannot recite the *fātiḥah*, but can recite any other).

Is it also necessary for the *ma'mūm* to recite the *fātiḥah*? There are also two views:

- (a) Yes, according to al-Shāfi'ī, as he interpreted that the forgoing *ḥadīth* as applicable for any prayer, either performed in congregation or individually, either *imām* or *ma'mūm*, the *fātiḥah* has to be recited. According to *ḥadīth* scholars al-Shāfi'ī has a stronger argument, and it is said that Imām al-Bukhārī wrote an essay of it.
- (b) No, as the recitation of the *imām* includes that of the *ma'mūm*. According to Imām Aḥmad, the *ma'mūm* is recommended to recite

the *fātiḥah* secretly and privately, and stop reciting it when he hears the *imām* reciting it loudly. This is also the *madhhab* of Imām Mālik, whereas according to Imām Abū Ḥanīfah the *ma'mūm* should only listen to the recitation of the *imām*, and should keep silent.

Since many people in Southeast Asia, such as Malaysia Indonesia, as well as Egypt and Lebanon and are followers of the Shāfi'ī school, it is highly recommended that the *imām* after reciting the *fātiḥah* stops for a while before reciting other verses of the Qur'ān to give room for them to recite the *fātiḥah*. On the other hand, the *ma'mūm* who are following the Shāfi'ī school should tolerate if the *imām* does not give them chance to recite the *fātiḥah*. We have to appreciate our scholars in the past who came to various opinions in legal issues as the result of their *ijtihād* in general, as well as in the issue of the *Jum'ah* prayer in particular. Even if they are wrong in their *ijtihād* they still will get a reward for their effort.

One example of the difference of opinions is the result of doubting the genuineness of a *ḥadīth* by a jurist, such as the *ḥadīth* exempting women, slaves, children and sick people from attending the *Jum'ah* prayer mentioned above. Ibn Ḥazm states that the narrator Ṭāriq ibn Shihāb did see the Prophet, but did not hear the *ḥadīth* from him. The other chain of narrators, Ḥuraym ibn Sufyān al-Bijlī, was claimed to be unknown by Ibn Ḥazm. Therefore, he rejects this *ḥadīth*. But the jurists in the mass accept this *ḥadīth*. They say that Ṭāriq received this *ḥadīth* from the Prophet's companion Abū Mūsá, and traditionists agree to accept his account ((مَقْبُولٌ بِالْإِتِّفَاقِ)) and a *ḥadīth* of this kind is called مُرْسَلٌ صَحَابِيٌّ (incompletely transmitted authority of *ḥadīth* till the *ṣaḥābah*, companions of the Prophet). Ḥuraym was not unknown, but a reliable authority according to Ibn Ma'in and Abū Ḥātim, and was included by Ibn Ḥibbān among the reliable authorities. Moreover, his companionship

with the Prophet was proved to be true. Believing in the opinion of the majority of jurists, we also accept this *ḥadīth*.

This difference of opinions among the Muslim jurists is only in the field of understanding issues dealing with Islamic law, which is a branch of Islam, and does not touch the core of Islamic faith called '*aqīdah*'. Moreover, these different opinions should give us more options and room to manoeuvre to adopt that which scholars and effective investigators in the field of *fiqh* (Islamic jurisprudence) find and think closer to the true one. Allah knows best. May this short essay give some light on the position of the *Jum'ah* prayer among Muslims.

2. RECOMMENDED PRAYER (صَلَاةُ السُّنَّةِ)

There are many recommended prayers a Muslim can perform. Prophet *s.a.w.* says that it is better to perform them at home rather than in the mosque. Among his sayings are as follows:

صَلَاةُ الرَّجُلِ فِي بَيْتِهِ تَطَوُّعًا نُورٌ فَمَنْ شَاءَ نُورَ بَيْتِهِ (رواه أحمد)

The man's voluntary prayer in his house is light; whosoever wishes [to do it], he will lighten his house. (Reported by Aḥmad).

اجْعَلُوا مِنْ صَلَاتِكُمْ فِي بُيُوتِكُمْ وَلَا تَتَّخِذُوهَا قُبُورًا (رواه مسلم و أحمد)

Make some of your prayers [i.e., the recommended ones] at home, and do not treat it as a grave. (Reported by Muslim and Aḥmad).

صَلَاةُ الْمَرْءِ فِي بَيْتِهِ أَفْضَلُ مِنْ صَلَاتِهِ فِي مَسْجِدِي هَذَا إِلَّا الْمَكْتُوبَةَ (رواه أبو داود)

The prayer of a person in his house is more meritorious than his prayer in this mosque [i.e., the Prophet's Mosque in Madinah] except the prescribed ones. (Reported by Aḥmad).

One prayer, meaning the obligatory one, in this mosque of the Prophet in Madinah, as mentioned in one *ḥadīth*, is more meritorious than one thousand prayers in any other mosque, except in the *Masjid al-Ḥarām* (Sacred Mosque) in Makkah, where a prayer in it is more meritorious than one hundred thousand prayers in an ordinary mosque.

There are two categories of recommended prayers: a. *muṭlaq* (مُطْلَق, unrestricted), and b. *muqayyad* (مُقَيَّد, restricted) prayers.

A. Muṭlaq (مُطْلَق, Unrestricted) Prayer

Is sufficient the have intention to perform this kind of prayer without specifying the number of its *rak'ah* (bowing, i.e., unit). A person can perform it in one *rak'ah*, two, three, even one hundred thousand *rak'ahs*. Imām al-Nawawī said that if a person who prays this kind of prayer and does not mention (in his intention) the number of *rak'ah* he can end his prayer with one *rak'ah*, and his prayer is valid without any disagreement among the *'ulamā* (Muslim scholars). With regard to the merit of this prayer, Prophet Muhammad *s.a.w.* said,

مَا مِنْ عَبْدٍ يَسْجُدُ لِلَّهِ سَجْدَةً إِلَّا رَفَعَهُ اللَّهُ بِهَا دَرَجَةً وَحَطَّ عَنْهُ بِهَا خَطِيئَةٌ
(رواه الترمذي و النسائي و ابن ماجه و أحمد)

“Whenever a servant (of Allah) prostrates to Allah (in prayer) one prostration, Allah will elevate him with it one degree and reduce from him with it one mistake”

(Reported by Timidhī, Ibn Mājah and Aḥmad).

This kind of prayer can be performed any time, except at a time where prayer is not to be performed, namely, while the sun is rising or setting, and when it is on its zenith (the highest point in the sky), probably to indicate that one is not praying to the sun..

B. *Muqayyad* (مُقَيَّد , Restricted) Prayers

There are three kinds of restricted prayers: a. *mu'akkad* (مُؤَكَّد, confirmed, strongly recommended), b. *ghayr mu'akkad* (غَيْرُ مُؤَكَّد, not confirmed, not strongly recommended), and c. not performed with prescribed prayers.

a. *Mu'akkad* Prayer

It is also called *sunnah rawātib* and is performed together with prescribed prayer, as follows:

1. Two *rak'ahs* before *fajr* (dawn) prayer. There are many *hadīths* of the Prophet s.a.w. indicating the merit of this prayer, among which are as follows:

عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ لَا تَدَعُوا
رَكْعَتَيِ الْفَجْرِ وَإِنْ طَرَدَتْكُمُ الْخَيْلُ (رواه أحمد و البيهقي)

On the authority of Abū Hurayrah, the Messenger of Allah s.a.w. said, "Never miss the two rak'ahs of the dawn prayer, even if a cavalry is chasing you."
(Reported by Aḥmad, and al-Bayhaqī).

عَنْ عَائِشَةَ عَنِ النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ فِي الرُّكْعَتَيْنِ قَبْلَ
صَلَاةِ الْفَجْرِ قَالَ هُمَا أَحَبُّ إِلَيَّ مِنَ الدُّنْيَا جَمِيعًا (رواه أحمد)

On the authority of Ā'ishah, the Messenger of Allah said of the two rak'ah prayer before fajr prayer, "Both are dearer to me than the entire world."
(Reported by Aḥmad).'

عَنْ عَائِشَةَ عَنِ النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ رَكْعَتَا الْفَجْرِ خَيْرٌ
مِنَ الدُّنْيَا وَمَا فِيهَا (رواه مسلم و الترمذي و النسائي و البيهقي)

*On the authority of Ā'ishah, the Messenger of Allah said:
"The two rak'ahs of the dawn is dearer (to me) than the*

world and what is in it.” (Reported by Muslim, al-Tirmidhī, and al-Nasā’ī).

This prayer was performed by the Prophet very lightly. His wife Ā’ishah said that his prayer was so short that she wondered whether he had completed reading the *Fātiḥah* or not. (Reported by Aḥmad and others). She also said that his prayer was as short as reading the *Fātiḥah* (Reported by Aḥmad, al-Nasā’ī, Bayhaqī, Mālik, and al-Ṭaḥāwī).

Note: What did the Prophet used to read in his *fajr* prayer after reading the *Fātiḥah*? He read قُلْ يَا أَيُّهَا الْكَافِرُونَ (*sūrat al-Kāfirūn*, namely, 109) in the first *rak‘ah*, and قُلْ هُوَ اللَّهُ أَحَدَ (*sūrat al-Ikhlāṣ*, namely, chapter 112) as stated by Ā’ishah. Ibn ‘Abbās *r.a.* said that the Prophet used to read in the first *rak‘ah* the following verse:

قُولُوا آمَنَّا بِاللَّهِ وَمَا أُنْزِلَ إِلَيْنَا وَمَا أُنْزِلَ إِلَىٰ إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَإِسْمَاعِيلَ
وَإِسْحَاقَ وَيَعْقُوبَ وَالْأَسْبَاطِ وَمَا أُوتِيَ مُوسَىٰ وَعِيسَىٰ وَمَا أُوتِيَ النَّبِيُّونَ
مِنْ رَبِّهِمْ لَا نُفَرِّقُ بَيْنَ أَحَدٍ مِنْهُمْ وَنَحْنُ لَهُ مُسْلِمُونَ (البقرة : ١٣٦)

Say ”We believe in Allah and that which has been sent down to us and that which has been sent down to Ibrahim (Abraham), Ismā‘īl (Ishamel), Ishāq (Isaac), Ya‘qūb (Jacob), and to al-Asbāt [the offspring of the twelve sons of Ya‘qūb], and that which has been given to Mūsá (Moses) and ‘Īsá (Jesus), and that which has been given to the Prophets from their Lord. We make no distinction between any of them, and to Him we have submitted (in Islam).” (Q. 2:136).

In the second *rak‘ah* the Prophet read:

قُلْ يَا أَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ تَعَالَوْا إِلَىٰ كَلِمَةٍ سَوَاءٍ بَيْنَنَا وَبَيْنَكُمْ أَلَّا نَعْبُدَ
إِلَّا اللَّهَ وَلَا نُشْرِكَ بِهِ شَيْئًا وَلَا يَتَّخِذَ بَعْضُنَا بَعْضًا أَرْبَابًا مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ فَإِنْ

تَوَلَّوْا فَقُولُوا اشْهَدُوا بِأَنَّا مُسْلِمُونَ (آل عمران : ٦٤)

Say, "O people of the Scripture (Jews and Christians)! Come to a word that is just between us and you, that we worship none but Allah (Alone), and that we associate no partners with Him, and that we shall take no others as lords besides Allah." Then, if they turn away, say, "Bear witness that we are Muslims." (Q. 3:64)

2. (a) Two *rak'ahs* before **ẓuhr** prayer and two *rak'ahs* after it, based on Ibn 'Umar report who said:

حَفِظْتُ مِنَ النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ عَشْرَ رَكَعَاتٍ رَكَعَتَيْنِ قَبْلَ الظُّهْرِ وَرَكَعَتَيْنِ بَعْدَهَا وَرَكَعَتَيْنِ بَعْدَ الْمَغْرِبِ فِي بَيْتِهِ وَرَكَعَتَيْنِ بَعْدَ الْعِشَاءِ فِي بَيْتِهِ وَرَكَعَتَيْنِ قَبْلَ صَلَاةِ الصُّبْحِ (رواه البخاري)

I remember from the Prophet (s.a.w.) ten rak'ahs: two rak'ahs before ẓuhr prayer and two rak'ahs after it, two

rak'ahs after maghrib prayer in his house, two rak'ahs after 'ishā' prayer in his house, and two rak'ah before fajr prayer. (Reported by Bukhārī).

- (b) Four *rak'ahs* before **ẓuhr** prayer and two after it, based on the following reports

عَنْ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ بْنِ شَقِيقٍ قَالَ سَأَلْتُ عَائِشَةَ عَنْ صَلَاةِ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ مِنَ الطَّوُوعِ فَقَالَتْ كَانَ يُصَلِّي قَبْلَ الظُّهْرِ أَرْبَعًا فِي بَيْتِي ثُمَّ يَخْرُجُ فَيُصَلِّي بِالنَّاسِ ثُمَّ يَرْجِعُ إِلَى بَيْتِي فَيُصَلِّي رَكَعَتَيْنِ... (رواه مسلم و أبو داود و الترمذي و أحمد و البيهقي)

'Abd Allāh ibn Shaqīq said: "I asked Ā'ishah [the Prophet's wife] about the voluntary prayer of the Messenger of Allah s.a.w., she said; 'He prayed four rak'ahs before ẓuhr

prayer, and two rak'ahs after it..'"

(Reported by Aḥmad, Muslim and others).

© Four *rak'ahs* before **zuhr** prayer, and four *rak'ahs* after it, based on the following report,

عَنْ أُمِّ حَبِيبَةَ عَنِ النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ مَنْ صَلَّى قَبْلَ الظُّهْرِ
أَرْبَعًا وَبَعْدَهَا أَرْبَعًا حَرَّمَهُ اللَّهُ عَلَى النَّارِ (رواه ابن ماجه و الترمذي)

*On the authority of Umm Ḥabībah the Messenger of Allah said: "Whoever prays four **rak'ahs** before **zuhr** prayer, and four **rak'ahs** after it, Allah will prohibit him from being in hell"*(Reported by Ibn Mājah and al-Tirmidhī).

Different views come from these reports:

- (1) Prophet Muhammad *s.a.w.* did both the two and the four *rak'ahs* before and after **zuhr** prayer, and this is the best view.
 - (2) The Prophet performed the two *rak'ahs* when he was in the mosque, and four *rak'ahs* when he was at home.
 - (3) It is possible that the Prophet performed two *rak'ahs* when he was at home, then two more *rak'ahs* when he was in the mosque. What Ibn 'Umar saw was the Prophet's prayer at home (two *rak'ahs*) , whereas 'Ā'ishah saw his prayer both at home and in the mosque (four *rak'ahs*)
 - (4) According to al-Ṭabarī, the Prophet usually performed the four *rak'ahs*, and rarely the two *rak'ahs* .
3. Two *rak'ahs* after *maghrib* prayer, as reported by Ibn 'Umar that the Prophet never missed two *rak'ahs* after *maghrib* prayer. The Prophet was reported to have prayed with the

people of Banī ‘Abd al-Ashhal and advised them to perform these two *rak’ahs* at home. (Reported by Aḥmad, Abū Dā’ūd, al-Tirmidhī and al-Nasā’ī).

4. Two *rak’ahs* after ‘*ishā*’ prayer, as mentioned above (2 a).
5. **Witr** prayer, (combined with the night prayers) consists of 13, 11, 9, 7, 5, 3 *rak’ahs*, or even one *rak’ah*.

How to perform the *witr* prayer? It is performed in any of the following ways:

- a. Two *rak’ahs*, then two *rak’ahs* ...until the last one *rak’ah*.
- b. All with one *tashahhud* and *taslīm*, then the last *rak’ah* with *tashahhud* and *taslīm*.
- c. All with one *tashahhud* and *taslīm* at the last *rak’ah*.

The time for *witr* prayer starts at the beginning of the night (after performing ‘*ishā*’ prayer), till dawn (i.e., before *fajr* prayer). It can be done with low voice or with high voice. The Prophet asked Abū Bakr and ‘Umar, when did they perform the *witr* prayer. Abū Bakr said, at the beginning of the night, whereas ‘Umar said at the end of night. The Prophet said to Abū Bakr that he had chosen the sure one, and to ‘Umar that he had chosen the strong one (i.e., that needs strong determination).

Can the *witr* prayer be made up (قضاء)? It is possible, based on the saying of the Prophet *s.a.w.* who said, on the authority of Anas, *r.a.*,

إِذَا صَبَحَ أَحَدُكُمْ وَلَمْ يُؤْتِرْ فَلْيُؤْتِرْ (رواه البيهقي و الحاكم على

شروط البخاري ومسلم)

If any of you have not done the witr till morning, let him do it. (Reported by al-Bayhaqī and al-Ḥākim on the conditions laid down by Bukhārī and Muslim).

When can the *witr* prayer be made up? There are three opinions:

- (a) Ḥanafī school: any time, except when prayer is prohibited (i.e., when the sun is rising, is setting, or at its zenith at noon).
- (b) Shāfi'ī school: any time at night or during the day.
- (c) Mālikī school and Aḥmad: after *fajr* prayer and before morning (*ḍuḥā*?) prayer.

b. *Ghayr Mu'akkadah* (Not Confirmed) Prayer

Sunnah (recommended) but not confirmed prayers accompanying the prescribed prayers are as follows:

1. Two or four *rak'ahs* before '*aṣr* prayer, based on the statement of the Prophet *s.a.w.*, that between two *ādhāns* (calls to prayer, namely, *ādhān* and *iqāmah* there is a *ṣalāh* (a recommended prayer that can be performed). Narrated by Ibn 'Umar he also said,

« رَحِمَ اللَّهُ أَمْرًا صَلَّى أَرْبَعًا قَبْلَ الْعَصْرِ »

(رواه أبو داود و الترمذي و أحمد و البيهقي و ابن خزيمة)

May Allah bless a person who prays four rak'ahs before performing 'aṣr prayer. (Reported by

Abū Dā'ūd, Tirmidhī, Aḥmad, Bayhaqī, and Ibn Khuzaymah).

2. Two *rak'ahs* before *maghrib* prayer, based on the following statement of Anas ibn Mālik as narrated by al-Mukhtār ibn Fulful. He said,

صَلَّيْتُ الرُّكْعَتَيْنِ قَبْلَ الْمَغْرِبِ عَلَى عَهْدِ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ

عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ قُلْتُ لِأَنَسٍ أَرَأَيْكُمْ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ

نَعَمْ رَأَيْنَا فَلَمْ يَأْمُرْنَا وَلَمْ يَنْهَنَا (رواه أبو داود و الدارقطني)

"I prayed two rak'ah in the time of the Messenger of Allah

s.a.w." He (al-Mukhtār) said, ' I told Anas, "Did the Messenger of Allah s.a.w. saw you (praying)?" He (Anas) said 'yes, he saw us without ordering us or preventing us (from doing it).
(Reported by Abū Dā'ūd and Dāraqutnī)

صَلُّوا قَبْلَ صَلَاةِ الْمَغْرِبِ قَالَ فِي الثَّلَاثَةِ لِمَنْ شَاءَ كَرَاهِيَةً أَنْ يَتَّخِذَهَا النَّاسُ سُنَّةً
(رواه البخاري و أحمد و الدارقطني و ابن حبان و البيهقي وغيرهم)

'Pray before Maghrib, pray before Maghrib,' then said in the third time, 'whoever wants to' as he did not want people to make it **sunnah** (i.e. not confirmed)."

(Reported by Bukhārī, Dāraqutnī, Ibn Hībbān, Bayhaqī, and others).

3. Two *rak'ahs* before '*ishā*', as the Prophet said that between two *ādhāns*, as mentioned earlier, there is a prayer, although not highly recommended. The other *ḥadīth* is as follows:

عَنْ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ بْنِ الزُّبَيْرِ، قَالَ: قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ:
"مَا مِنْ صَلَاةٍ مَفْرُوضَةٍ، إِلَّا وَبَيْنَ يَدَيْهَا رَكْعَتَانِ" (رواه ابن حبان و الطبراني)

On the authority of 'Abd Allāh ibn al-Zubayr who said, the Messenger of Allāh s.a.w. said, "None of any prescribed prayer except it is preceded with a two **rak'ah** prayer."

(Reported by Ibn Hībbān and Ṭabrānī).

c. not performed with prescribed prayers

These prayers, although legitimate, are independent of prescribed prayers. They are:

1. Night prayer with minimum one *rak'ah* to unlimited number of *rak'ahs*.

2. *Tarāwīḥ* prayer with minimum 8 *rak'ahs*.
3. *Duḥá* prayer. It is performed at midmorning before noon, at least two *rak'ahs*. Different opinions about its maximum *rak'ahs*. Some say 8 *rak'ahs* (which was the practice of the Prophet), 12 *rak'ahs*. According to Abū Ja'far al-Ṭabarī, al-Suyūfī, and the Shāfī'ī school there is no limit for its *rak'ahs*. On the authority of Ā'ishah the Prophet prayed *duḥá* with four *rak'ahs* and more than that (Reported by Aḥmad, Muslim and Ibn Mājah). On the authority of Umm Hānī' [the Prophet's cousin and foster sister] that the Prophet prayed *duḥá* with eight *rak'ahs* with *taslīm* in every two *rak'ahs*. (Reported by Abū Dā'ūd).
4. *Ṣalāt al-Ḥājah* (صَلَاةُ الْحَاجَةِ), two *rak'ahs*, based on the following *ḥadīth*:

عَنْ أَبِي الدَّرْدَاءِ قَالَ إِنِّي سَمِعْتُ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ يَقُولُ مَنْ تَوَضَّأَ فَأَسْبَغَ الْوُضُوءَ ثُمَّ صَلَّى رَكْعَتَيْنِ يَتِمُّهُمَا أَعْطَاهُ اللَّهُ مَا سَأَلَ مُعَجَّلًا أَوْ مُؤَخَّرًا (رواه أحمد)

On the authority of Abū al-Dardā', the Messenger of Allāh said, "Whoever makes wuḍū' perfectly then prays two rak'ahs both perfectly, Allah will grant him what he asks sooner or later." (Reported by Aḥmad).

5. *Ṣalāt al-Tawbah* (صَلَاةُ التَّوْبَةِ) "Repentance Prayer." The Prophet s.a.w. said:

مَنْ تَوَضَّأَ فَأَحْسَنَ الْوُضُوءَ ، ثُمَّ قَامَ فَصَلَّى رَكْعَتَيْنِ أَوْ أَرْبَعًا مَكْتُوبَةً أَوْ غَيْرَ مَكْتُوبَةٍ يُحْسِنُ فِيهِمَا الرُّكُوعَ وَالسُّجُودَ ، ثُمَّ اسْتَغْفَرَ اللَّهَ غَفْرًا لَهُ (رواه الطبراني)

Whoever makes ablution properly then prays two or four rak'ahs of prescribed or non prescribed prayer in which he bows and prostrates properly, then asks forgiveness, Allah will forgive him.
(Reported by al-Ṭabrānī)

مَنْ تَوَضَّأَ فَأَحْسَنَ الْوُضُوءَ ، ثُمَّ قَامَ فَصَلَّى رَكْعَتَيْنِ أَوْ أَرْبَعًا يُحْسِنُ فِيهِمَا الرُّكُوعَ
وَالْخُشُوعَ ، ثُمَّ اسْتَغْفَرَ اللَّهَ غُفْرًا لَهُ (رواه أحمد)

Whoever makes ablution properly then prays two or four rak'ahs of prescribed or non prescribed prayer in which he bows and humbles himself properly, then asks forgiveness, Allah will forgive him.
(Reported by Ahmad)

Abū Bakr r.a. heard the Messenger of Allah say:

مَا مِنْ رَجُلٍ يُذْنِبُ ذَنْبًا ، ثُمَّ يَقُومُ فَيَتَطَهَّرُ ، ثُمَّ يُصَلِّي رَكْعَتَيْنِ ، ثُمَّ يَسْتَغْفِرُ
اللَّهَ تَعَالَى إِلَّا غُفِرَ لَهُ ثُمَّ قَرَأَ "وَالَّذِينَ إِذَا فَعَلُوا فَاحِشَةً أَوْ ظَلَمُوا أَنْفُسَهُمْ ذَكَرُوا
اللَّهَ" إِلَى آخِرِهَا. (رواه أبو داود والنسائي وابن ماجه والبيهقي والترمذي)

Any person who commits a sin then cleanses himself (i.e., makes ablution), then performs prayer then asks Allah's forgiveness, Allah will forgive him. Then the Prophet cited the verse, "And those who, when the committed sin, or wronged themselves with evil, remember Allah..." till the end of the verse.¹ (Reported by Abū Dā'ūd, al-Nasā'ī, Ibn Mājah, al-Bayhaqī and al-Tirmidhī).

6. *Ṣalāt al-Khusūf* (صَلَاةُ الْخُسُوفِ, Lunar Eclipse Prayer). It is strongly recommended for men and women, either privately or in congregation. It is performed in congregation by saying الصَّلَاةُ جَامِعَةً (*al-ṣalātu jāmi'ah*) instead of making the *ādhān* in prescribed prayer. It consists of two rak'ahs with two bows in every rak'ah

¹ The continuation of the verse is as follows: "... and ask forgiveness for their sins—and none can forgive sins but Allah—and do not persist in what (wrong) they have done, while they know. For such, the reward is forgiveness from their Lord, and Gardens with rivers flowing underneath (Paradise), wherein they shall abide forever..." (Q. 3:135-136).

according to the vast majority of scholars. Whereas according to the Ḥanafī school it is performed like the *ʿīd* or *Jumʿah* prayer.]

7. *Ṣalāt al-Kusūf* (صَلَاةُ الْكُسُوفِ , Solar Eclipse Prayer) It is like any normal prayer of two *rakʿahs* with bows and prostrations.
8. *Ṣalāt al-Tasbīḥ* (صَلَاةُ التَّسْبِيحِ , *Tasbīḥ* Prayer). It is a four *rakʿah* prayer, each with 75 *tasbīḥs*. In a long tradition the Prophet *s.a.w.* advised his uncle al-ʿAbbās to perform this kind of prayer once everyday, every week, or every year, or even once in his lifetime. By doing it, Allah will forgive his sin, the first and the last, the old or the recent one, intentional or unintentional, minor or major, and either committed secretly or openly. Pray four *rakʿahs*, in every *rakʿah* recite the *Fātiḥah* followed by one surah. After this, say

سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ وَالْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ وَلَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَاللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ

“Glory to Allah, praise be to Allah, and there is no god but Allah, and Allah is Great”

- (1) fifteen times while you are still standing
- (2) ten times while you are bowing
- (3) ten times while you are standing from bowing (إِغْتِدَالِ)
- (4) ten times while you are prostrating
- (5) ten times while you are sitting from the first prostration
- (6) ten times while you are prostrating for the second time
- (7) ten times while you are standing from a prostration

This makes seventy-five times in one *rakʿah*. (In this four *rakʿah* prayer the *tasbīḥ* is cited three hundred times). (This *ḥadīth* is reported by Abū Dāʿūd, Ibn Mājah and Ibn Ḥuzaymah).

In conclusion, there are many types of prayers besides the obligatory five-daily prayers, so that one can perform any prayer

almost any time, with the exception of the immediate sunrise and sunset, and when the sun is at its zenith (its highest point at noon in the sky). However, the conditions before performing the prayers have to be fulfilled, such as the cleanness of body (having ablution) and place.

3. COMMENTARY OF THE QUR'ĀN (1)

Sūrat al-Fātiḥah (Chapter 1)

سُورَةُ الْفَاتِحَةِ

The word *al-fātiḥah* literally means "the Opening, namely, "the "introduction". *Sūrat al-Fātiḥah*, then, is an introductory chapter of the Qur'ān, and by it the recitation in prayer begins. This chapter was revealed in Makkah (Mecca) according to some scholars, such as 'Ibn 'Abbās, Qatādah, Abū 'l-'Āliyah al-Riyāḥī. Other scholars such as Abu Hurayrah, Mujāhid, 'Aṭā', and al-Zuhrī, say that it was revealed in Medinah. Accepting the two views some scholars say that it was revealed twice, once in Mecca and then in Medinah. It is said that some verses of the Qur'ān were revealed more than once, to remind the Prophet to recite them as the answer to similar questions asked by the idolaters in Mecca and the Jews in Medinah.

Sūrat al-Fātiḥah has many other names:

1. *Ummu 'l-Kitāb* (أُمُّ الْكِتَابِ "Mother of the Book") and *Ummu 'l-Qur'ān* (أُمُّ الْقُرْآنِ, "Mother of the Qur'ān"). It is said so, because it contains the summary of the contents of the Qur'ān. It is the summary of the Qur'ān. The Qur'ān teaches us the Oneness of God (*tawḥīd*). Verse 1, 2, and 3

of *al-Fātiḥah* contain this teaching. The belief in the Hereafter where good and bad deeds will be accounted for, is mentioned in verse 4. The acts of worship which should be performed by Muslims, such as prayer, fasting, paying zakāt, pilgrimage to Makkah *etc.* are the explanation of verse 5. Guidance, which is the fundamental requirement of human soul to gain salvation, is mentioned in verse 6. The Qur'ān itself is revealed as guidance to people. The last verse which is verse 7, contains moral teaching, the history of people in the past whom Allah gave blessings, whom Allah did not give His favour and those who went astray.

2. *Sab' al-Mathānī* (سَبْعُ الْمَثَانِي, Seven Oft-Repeated Verses). It contains seven verses that are repeated very often, especially in the prayer, even every rak'ah of it. In one tradition; the prophet said the prayer of a Muslim is not valid until he or she recites the *Fātiḥah*. This is for people who can recite it. With regard to new Muslims who are still unable to recite it, the Prophet allowed them to recite whatever they can, until they become able to recite it.
3. *Sūrat al-Ḥamd* (سُورَةُ الْحَمْد, Chapter of the Praise), as it contains or starts with praising Allah, the Creator. A *ḥadīth* (tradition of the Prophet) runs as follows:

عَنْ أَبِي سَعِيدٍ بْنِ الْمُعَلَّى قَالَ كُنْتُ أَصَلِّي فِي الْمَسْجِدِ فَدَعَانِي رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ فَلَمْ أَجِبْهُ فَقُلْتُ يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ إِنِّي كُنْتُ أَصَلِّي فَقَالَ أَلَمْ يَقُلِ اللَّهُ "اسْتَجِيبُوا لِلَّهِ وَلِلرَّسُولِ إِذَا دَعَاكُمْ لِمَا يُحْيِيكُمْ" ثُمَّ قَالَ لِي لِأَعْلَمَنَّكَ سُورَةً هِيَ أَعْظَمُ السُّورِ فِي الْقُرْآنِ قَبْلَ أَنْ تَخْرُجَ مِنَ الْمَسْجِدِ ثُمَّ أَخَذَ بِيَدِي فَلَمَّا أَرَادَ أَنْ يَخْرُجَ قُلْتُ لَهُ أَلَمْ تَقُلْ لِأَعْلَمَنَّكَ سُورَةً هِيَ أَعْظَمُ سُورَةٍ فِي الْقُرْآنِ قَالَ الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ هِيَ السَّبْعُ الْمَثَانِي وَالْقُرْآنُ الْعَظِيمُ الَّذِي أُوتِيْتُهُ (رواه البخاري و أحمد)

Abū Sa'īd ibn al-Mu'allā² said: "I was praying in the mosque

²Abu Sa'īd ibn al-Mu'allā was one of the *Anṣār* (lit. "helpers", *i.e.*, the companions of the Prophet among the people of Medinah). He was the first

when the Messenger of Allah, s.a.w., called me. I said to him, I was praying. Then he said, 'Did not Allah say, to answer the call of Allah and the Messenger if he calls you?'³ Then he said, 'Verily, I shall teach you a chapter which is the greatest one in the Qur'ān before you go out of the mosque.' Then he held my hand. When he was on the point of going out of the mosque I said to him, 'Did not you say to me that you would teach me the greatest chapter in the Qur'ān?' He said, '**Al-Ḥamdu lillāh rabbil 'ālamīn**, is the seven oft-repeated and the Great Qur'ān which have been brought to me.'"
(Reported by Bukhārī, and Aḥmad)

4. *Al-Shifā'* (الشِّفَاءُ , "the Healing"). In a tradition it is reported as follows:

عَنْ عَبْدِ الْمَلِكِ بْنِ عُمَيْرٍ قَالَ قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ -صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ- :
« فَاتِحَةُ الْكِتَابِ شِفَاءٌ مِنْ كُلِّ دَاءٍ » (رواه الدارمي).

'Abd al-Malik ibn 'Umayr said: "The Messenger of Allah s.a.w. said: 'There is in the **Fātiḥah** healing from every illness.'"

(Reported by al-Dārimī).

In fact, the Qur'ān in general has a healing power to those who read the Qur'ān with understanding and faith.

Is the *basmalah* (i.e. *Bismillāhir Raḥmānir Raḥīm*) part of the *Fātiḥah*? Scholars have different views on this issue.

- A. Yes, according to the *saḥābah* (companions of the Prophet, Abū Hurayrah, 'Alī, Ibn 'Abbās, Abdullah ibn 'Umar r.a., and among the

Muslim who prayed toward the Qiblah in Makkah after it had been turned from Jerusalem in Palestine. See *Tafsīr al-Qurṭubī*, vol. 1, pp. 108-9).

³ The Prophet is citing the Qur'anic verse which means, "O you who believe! Answer Allah (by obeying Him) and (His) Messenger when he calls you to that which will give you life..." (Q. 8:24)

tābi'īn (people of the following generation), such as Sa'īd ibn Jubayr, 'Aṭā', al-Zuhrī and Ibn Mubārak, the jurists of Makkah, Ibn Kathīr, 'Āṣim, al-Kisā'ī, the Shāfi'ī and Ḥanbalī schools. Among their arguments are as follows:

1. The following *ḥadīths*

عَنْ أَنَسِ بْنِ مَالِكٍ أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ إِنَّهُ نَزَلَ إِلَيَّ سُورَةٌ فَقَرَأْتُ

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ (رواه مسلم)

Anas ibn Mālik said that the Messenger of Allah, *s.a.w.* said that a sūrah (chapter of the Qur'ān) had been revealed to him, then cited *Bismillāhir Raḥmānir Raḥīm*.

(Reported by Muslim)

عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ قَالَ قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ إِذَا قَرَأْتُمْ (الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ) فَاقْرَءُوا (بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ) إِنَّهَا أُمُّ الْقُرْآنِ وَأُمُّ الْكِتَابِ وَالسَّبْعُ الْمَثَانِي وَ (بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ) إِحْدَاهَا «.

(رواه الدارقطني والبيهقي)

Abū Hurayrah said that the Messenger of Allah, s.a.w. said, "If you read al-Hamdu Lillāh recite first Bismillāhir Raḥmānir Raḥīm, because this chapter is the Mother of the Qur'ān, the Mother of the Book, the Seven oft Read, and the Basmalah is part of it."

(Reported by Dāraqutnī and Bayhaqī)

عَنْ ابْنِ عَبَّاسٍ أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ مَا عَرَفَ آخِرَ سُورَةٍ حَتَّى تَوَكَّلْتُ الْبِسْمَلَةَ (رواه أبو داود)

Ibn 'Abbās said that the Prophet did not know the end of a sūrah until the basmalah was revealed to him.

(Reported by Abu Dā'ūd).

2. The companions of the Prophet and people of later generation had agreed that the *basmalah* is with every chapter of the Qur'ān except

sūrat Barā'ah (al-Tawbah), and that *āmīn* would not be written with it because it is not part of the chapter.

3. The Muslims in general have agreed that nothing in the Qur'ān but are the words of Allah, and the *basmalah* is part of it.

B. No, it is not part of the *Fātiḥah*. This is the view of Imam Mālik and the scholars of Medinah, and some scholars in Syria. This is also the view of some followers of the Shāfi'ī school, the two Qur'ān reciters of Baṣrah, namely, Abū 'Amr and Ya'qūb. Abdullah ibn Mas'ūd says that the *basmalah* is not part of the Qur'ān and this view was adopted by the Ḥanafī School. They say that the *Basmalah* was revealed only to separate the chapters from each other, and not part of any chapter. Among their arguments is the *āḥādith*: reported by Anas ibn Mālik that he prayed behind the Prophet who was reciting the *Fātiḥah* without reciting the *basmalah*.

The recitation of the *basmalah* slowly or loudly before reciting the *Fātiḥah* is not recommended, (*makrūh*) according to the Mālikī school. The Ḥanafī school recommend the reciting of the *basmalah* in low voice or in their heart, and do not recite *āmīn* after reciting the *Fātiḥah*, because it is not part of the Qur'ān. Other schools of law, such as the Shāfi'ī recites *āmīn* loudly, basing their view on the *ḥadīth* where it is reported that the Prophet himself recited *āmīn* after reciting the *Fātiḥah*.

If the *basmalah* is not part of the *Fātiḥah*, does it not mean that one verse is missing? No, as the last verse consists of two verses, namely, *صِرَاطَ الَّذِينَ أَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيْهِمْ* (*sirāṭal ladhīna an'amta 'alayhim*) and *غَيْرِ الْمَغْضُوبِ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا الضَّالِّينَ* (*ghayril maghdūbi 'alayhim wa lā ḍḍāllīn*).

We do not go into the details of these different views since they are only a very small part of religion. We practice what we feel convenient in these matters whether we read the *basmalah* or not, loudly

or in a low voice, as according to some *ḥadīths* the Prophet practiced both.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

It is important to recite the *basmalah* before we start doing something. The Prophet says,

كُلُّ كَلَامٍ أَوْ أَمْرٍ ذِي بَالٍ لَا يُفْتَحُ بِذِكْرِ اللَّهِ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ فَهُوَ أَتَرُ أَوْ قَالَ أَقْطَعُ (رواه أحمد)

Every important matter that I not begun with the remembrance of Allah is deprived or cut of good. (Reported by Aḥmad)

By reciting the *basmalah* it is meant that the work is being done for the sake of Allah alone as an act of obedience to Him, not for our own sake

According to the Arabic grammarians, the word بِسْمِ اللَّهِ which is originally written with *alif*, namely, بِاسْمِ اللَّهِ the *alif* is dropped when it is written in the beginning of the sentence. But in the middle of the sentence it retains its *alif*, as in أَبْدَأُ بِاسْمِ اللَّهِ .

There are two views concerning the word *Allah*. It is the proper name of God among Muslims, according to one view. The other view is that the word is derived from *al-ilāh* (الإله) meaning “the god”. Therefore, the term “goddess” is translated as الإلهة in the feminine gender. The first view retains the word Allah in any language, whereas the second view translates the word according to the language used.

The words *al-Raḥmān* and *al-Raḥīm* are derived from *al-rahmah* meaning blessing. They have different meaning although each contains blessing. Muslim translators of the Qur’ān have different expression in translating these two words.

| Translator | al-Raḥmān (الرَّحْمَنُ) | al-Raḥīm (الرَّحِيمُ) |
|--------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Asad | <i>The Most Gracious</i> | <i>The Dispenser of Grace</i> |
| A. Yusuf Ali | <i>Most Gracious</i> | <i>Most Merciful</i> |

Pickthall

*The Beneficent**The Merciful*

Muslim scholars tried to make distinction between the two words. One interpretation is that the word *al-rahmān* implies Allah's blessing and mercy upon the whole creation in this world, animals as well as humans, believers as well as non-believers, whereas *al-rahīm* implies His blessings upon people in the Hereafter as rewards for their belief and good acts in this world. Another interpretation is that of Ibn al-Qayyim that *al-Rahmān* is the inherent attribute of Allah's grace and blessing, whereas *al-Rahīm* is the manifestation of that grace.

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ

“*Praise be to Allah*” Asad translates it with an explanation when he says: “All praise is due to God alone”. This expression implies thanks and gratitude. When we thank Allah we say *al-ḥamdu lillāh*. It is said that the expression of praise (*al-ḥamd*) is more general than that of thank (*al-shukr*). The Qur’ān commentator al-Qurṭubī, for example, says that the term *al-ḥamd* implies an expression of praise and thanks to those who are praised for being praiseworthy without any condition of prior favour. On the other hand, the expression of *shukr* (thank) is only used after giving the favour. In other words, we always praise Allah, no matter what happens, whether favourable or unfavourable, as He is the One who deserves perpetual praise. The term *al-ḥamd* implies total praise and is the opposite of “blame”. Allah is beyond any blame for His own creation.

Ibn ‘Abbās is reported to have said that the expression *الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ* is that of thankfulness by every grateful person, and that Prophet Adam (*a.s.*) said it when he sneezed. The Qur’ān which contains, among other things, historical and coming events as moral lessons, states that many prophets in the past used this formula in expressing their thankfulness. These are some examples:

a. Allah taught it to Prophet Noah *a.s.* when he said,

فَقُلِ الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي نَجَّانَا مِنَ الْقَوْمِ الظَّالِمِينَ (المؤمنون : ٢٨)

“...then say: Praise be to Allah Who hath saved us from the wrongdoing folk!” (Q. 23:28).

- b. When Prophet Abraham was blessed with two sons, he praised Allah, saying,

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي وَهَبَ لِي عَلَى الْكِبَرِ إِسْمَاعِيلَ وَإِسْحَاقَ (إبراهيم : ٣٩)

“Praise be to Allah Who hath given me, in my old age, Ishmael and Isaac!...” (Q. 14:39)

- c. Allah mentioned that Prophet-king David (Dā’ūd) a.s. and Solomon (Sulaymān) a.s., thanked Him for His favour on them’

وَقَالَا الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي فَضَّلَنَا عَلَى كَثِيرٍ مِنْ عِبَادِهِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ (النمل : ١٥)

“... and they said: Praise be to Allah, Who hath preferred us above many of His believing slaves!” (Q. 27:15)

- d. Allah taught it to Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w.).

وَقُلِ الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي لَمْ يَتَّخِذْ وَلَدًا (الإسراء : ١١١)

“And say: Praise be to Allah, Who hath not taken unto Himself a son...” (Q. 17:111)

- e. The people of Paradise will say it as an expression of thankfulness.

وَقَالُوا الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي أَذْهَبَ عَنَّا الْحَزْنَ... (فاطر : ٣٤)

“And they will say: Praise be to Allah Who hath put grief away from us!...” (Q. 35:34)

- f. It will be the conclusion of the prayer of the people of paradise,

وَأَخِرُ دَعْوَاهُمْ أَنِ الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ (يونس : ١٠)

“.... And the conclusion of their prayer will be: Praise be to Allah, Lord of the Worlds!” (Q. 10:10).

Since all of their prayer will be answered, they will express their thankfulness with praising Allah.

Al-Qurtubī says that the word “praise” could be interpreted as “content” (الرَّضَى), as in the verse (الإسراء : ٣٩) (lit. “a praised station”), translated as “a glorious station” (Asad), “a praised estate” (Pickthall), and “a station of praise and glory” (A.Y. Ali), namely, a station where Prophet Muhammad s.a.w. would be happy and content, after suffering the persecution of the Makkan people. This *sūrat al-Isrā*’ (chapter 17) was revealed in Makkah.

رَبُّ الْعَالَمِينَ

Asad: “the Sustainer of all the worlds”

Pickthall: “Lord of the worlds”

A. Yusuf Ali: “the Cherisher and Sustainer of the worlds”

The term *rabb* implies ownership. It means “master, lord”. The Arabic expression *rabb al-bayt* (رَبُّ الْبَيْتِ) means “the master (owner) of the house.” It is in this sense when it is used in the Qur’ānic verse and the *ḥadīth* as follows: Prophet Joseph (Yūsuf a.s.) said to his companion in prison اذْكُرْنِي عِنْدَ رَبِّكَ (يوسف : ٤٢) *Mention me in the presence of thy lord [i.e. master]*” (Q. 12:42). When the Prophet was asked by the archangel Jibrīl (Gabriel) who disguised as a man to the *saḥābah* (the Prophet’s companions) about the sign of the Hour, he answered, among others, وَأَنَّ تِلْدَ الْأَمَةِ رَبَّتَهَا “and that a slave-girl will give birth to her mistress”.⁴

⁴The term *rabbah* رَبَّة is the feminine of *rabb*. There are two interpretations of the above *ḥadīth* given by Muslim scholars. One is that of al-Nawawī in his commentary of this *ḥadīth*. He said that among the signs of the Hour (Doomsday) is that slave-girls will give birth to sons and daughters who will become free and masters to their mothers. The other interpretation is that the term “a slave-girl” means woman in general. Therefore, the meaning of the *ḥadīth* is that among the signs of the Hour is that children will no longer respect their parents and treat them like servants.

The commentators of the Qur’ān have different views of the root of the term *rabb*. One opinion says that it is derived from *rabbá* (رَبَّى) meaning “to raise, to teach and to educate” and *al-tarbiyyah* (التَرْبِيَّة) meaning “upbringing, teaching and education”. Allah is called *Rabb* of the worlds because He created, Sustained and Cherishes His creatures. The step-daughter is called *rabībah* (رَبِيبَة) because it is the duty of her step-father to raise her up and educate her. Allah says in the Qur’an that among those who are not allowed to marry are *وَرَبَائِكُمُ اللَّاتِي فِي حُجُورِكُمُ النِّسَاء* (٢٣: “...and your step-daughters--who are your foster-children—” (Asad), “... and your step-daughters who are under your protection...” (Pickthall), “...and your step-daughters who are under your guardianship” (A. Yusuf Ali) (Q. 4:23)

There are many interpretation of the term *al-‘ālamīn* (الْعَالَمِينَ) which is the plural of *al-‘ālam* (الْعَالَم) by *mufasssirīn* (Qur’ānic commentators), among which are as follows:

1. According to Qatādah, it means every existing thing other than Allah. It is a collective noun, like *al-qawm* (الْقَوْم , people), which has no singular.
2. According to Ibn ‘Abbās, it means the human race and the jinn (demons). He bases his view on the Qur’ānic verse in which the term means the human race and the jinn, as follows:

تَبَارَكَ الَّذِي نَزَّلَ الْفُرْقَانَ عَلَى عَبْدِهِ لِيَكُونَ لِلْعَالَمِينَ نَذِيرًا (الفرقان : ١)

“Blessed is He Who hath revealed unto His slave [i.e. Prophet Muhammad s.a.w.] the Criterion (of right and wrong [i.e., the Qur’ān]), that he may be a warner to the peoples” (Q. 25:1).

Ibn ‘Abbās contends that the term in this verse excludes animals, since no warner or prophet is sent to them.⁵

3. According to Abū ‘Ubaydah in his *Majāz al-Qur’ān* (مَجَازُ الْقُرْآن) and al-Farrā’ in his *Ma‘ānī ‘l-Qur’ān* (مَعَانِي الْقُرْآن) the term means the four categories of intelligent beings; they are: the human beings, the jinn, the angels and the devils, and it excludes the animals. In this sense the poet al-A‘mash says in his poem مَا إِن سَمِعْتُ مِثْلَهُمْ فِي الْعَالَمِينَ ... * “I have not heard like them among people”

The Qur’ānic commentator al-Qurṭubī, after explaining these different views, said that the most correct view is the first one. It is because it includes the whole creature. To support this view he gives us the following evidence:

- a. Qur’ānic verses as follows:

قَالَ فِرْعَوْنُ وَمَا رَبُّ الْعَالَمِينَ. قَالَ رَبُّ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَا ... (الشعراء : ٢٣-٢٤)
“Pharaoh said: ‘And what is the Lord of the Worlds?’ (Moses) said: ‘Lord of the heavens and the earth and all that is between them...’” (Q. 26:23-24).

- b. The term ‘ālam (عَالَم) is derived from ‘alam (عَلِم) which means, among others, “sign, mark”, ‘alāmah (عَلَامَة “sign, mark”), and ma‘lam (مَعْلَم, “mark, landmark, distinguishing mark, trace”), as the whole creature are signs of the existence of the Creator. The Arabic linguist al-Khalīl said that these terms indicate something, and the world (العَالَم) indicates the existence of its creator, ruler and dispenser.

⁵The term ‘ālam meaning people is common among the Arabs, such as the expression yā ‘ālam (يَا عَالَم) meaning “O people”. The French *tout le monde*, the Italian *tutto il mondo*, and the Spanish *todos el mundo*, (all literally mean “all the world”) are used to mean “all people” or “everybody”.

If we go back to the basic meaning of the term *‘ālam* (عَالَم) “world” is used to indicate kingdom, such as *عَالَمُ الْحَيَوَانَ* (the animal kingdom), *عَالَمُ النَّبَات* (the vegetable kingdom), and *عَالَمُ الْمَعَادِن* (the mineral kingdom).

According to Qur’ānic commentators, there are two other possible readings of the word *rabb* in the verse in question:

- a. *rabbul ‘ālamīn* (رَبُّ الْعَالَمِينَ) on condition that we read as we start a sentence, or stop a while before we start citing it, so that it means “He is the Lord of the worlds”.
- b. *Rabbal ‘ālamīn* (رَبَّ الْعَالَمِينَ) to indicate praise, so that it means “I praise the Lord of the world”.

الرَّحْمَنُ الرَّحِيمُ

This verse has been explained in the *basmalah* above. According to those who say that the *basmalah* is not part of the *Fātiḥah*, Allah would not repeat Himself by repeating *al-Raḥmān al-Raḥīm* in the same *sūrah*. However, repetition occurs in many places in the Qur’ān.

مَلِكُ يَوْمِ الدِّينِ

Asad: “*Lord of the Day of Judgment*”

Pickthall: “*Owner of the Day of Judgment*”

A. Yusuf Ali: “*Master of the Day of Judgment*”

There are two main readings of *ملك*. One is *māliki* (مَالِك) meaning “the owner”, and the other is *maliki* (مَلِك) meaning “the king”⁶ These two readings have been reported from the Prophet, Abū Bakr and ‘Umar. Which of these two readings is more profound and deeper in meaning:

⁶The other readings are: *malki* (مَلِك) which is the easing of the reading of *مَلِك*, and *malīki* (مَلِيك).

the owner of the Day of Judgment, or the King of the Day of Judgment? Muslim scholars have different views:

1. *Maliki* (“king”) is stronger, deeper and more general in meaning than *māliki* (“owner”). It is because every king is owner and not every owner is a king, Moreover, the order of the king has to be carried out by the owner with his possession, so that the owner will not have right of disposal over his possession except with the direction of the king. This is the view of the Qur’an commentators Abū ‘Ubaydah and the grammarian al-Mubarrad. A similar view is that of al-Rāghib al-Isafahānī that the term *malik* includes the sense that Allah designs the beings with His commands, prohibitions and punishments. Therefore, He calls Himself مَلِكِ النَّاسِ (الناس : ٢) “*The King of mankind*” (Q. 114:2), and not مَالِكِ النَّاسِ “*Owner of mankind*” or of any others. Moreover, many Qur’ānic verses use this term, such as follows:

يَوْمَ هُمْ بَارِزُونَ لَا يَخْفَىٰ عَلَى اللَّهِ مِنْهُمْ شَيْءٌ لِّمَنِ الْمُلْكُ الْيَوْمَ لِلَّهِ الْوَاحِدِ الْقَهَّارِ (غافر : ١٦)
“The day whereon they will (all) come forth: Not a single thing concerning them is hidden from Allah. Whose will be the domination that Day?”

That of Allah the One the Irresistible.” (Q. 40:16).

The term الْمُلْكُ (lit. “kingdom, domain”), is translated as “sovereignty” by both Asad and Pickthall.

2. *Māliki* is deeper in meaning than *maliki*. It is because the owner here (*i.e.*, Allah) owns people as well as others. At the other part of the Qur’ān, this ownership is also mentioned, as in the following verse:

يَوْمَ لَا تَمْلِكُ نَفْسٌ لِّنَفْسٍ شَيْئًا وَالْأَمْرُ يَوْمَئِذٍ لِلَّهِ (الإنفطار : ١٩)
“A day on which no soul hath power at all for any (other) soul. The (absolute) command on that day is Allah’s.” (Q. 82:19).

The key word here is تَمْلِكُ which literally means “to possess” in the sense that the one has power and control over one’s

possession. Apart of from the privilege of ownership, rules and religious regulations were originated from the owner. Moreover, *māliki* has four letters, and has one letter more than *maliki* which has three letters. Since reading the Qur’ān has tenfold merit, the one extra letter gives ten merits more for those who read *māliki* than those who read *maliki*.

In conclusion, both readings are good, acceptable, and taught by the Prophet. The term *maliki* (king) is the attribute of Allah’s essence, whereas *māliki* (owner) is the attribute of His deed.⁷

يَوْمَ

Yawm means “day”, “day time”, starting from dawn to sunset. In this verse, the use of the term “day” is to indicate the span of time between the beginning of the Doomsday till the settlement of people who are to enter Paradise and Hell in their respective places.

Yawn (day) is also used to indicate a specific time. For example, Allah says in the Qur’ān (المائدة : ٣) “الْيَوْمَ أَكْمَلْتُ لَكُمْ دِينَكُمْ” “*This day I have perfected your religion for you*” (Q. 5:3). “This day” here means “this time”, “now”.

الَّذِينَ

Al-Dīn means “recompense or requital of the deeds and the reckoning of them.” This is also the opinion of Ibn ‘Abbās, Ibn Mas‘ūd. Qatādah, Ibn Jurayḥ and others. The Prophet himself explains this term in the verses of the Qur’ān, as follows:

يَوْمَئِذٍ يُوفِّيهِمُ اللَّهُ دِينَهُمُ الْحَقَّ (النور: ٢٥)

“On that day Allah will pay them their due” (Q. 24:25),

⁷Al-Qurṭubī mentions a person named Muḥammad ibn al-Sumayqa‘ read *mālika yawmiddīn*, which means “O, owner of the Judgment Day”. Here, he starts addressing Allah directly in this verse instead of addressing Him in the next verse, namely, *iyyāka na‘budu* (“Thee alone we worship”)

namely, their reckoning.

أَنَذَا مَيِّتًا وَكُنَّا تُرَابًا وَعِظَامًا أَنِنَّا لَمَدِينُونَ (الصفات : ٥٣)

“[that] after we have died and become dust and bones we shall, forsooth, be brought to judgment?” (Q. 37:53, Asad).

In another verse Allah says,

الْيَوْمَ تُجْزَوْنَ مَا كُنتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ (الجاثية : ٢٨)

“This day ye are requited for what ye used to do” (Q. 45:28).

In this sense the pre-Islamic poet Labīd says in his poem as follows:

حَصَادُكَ يَوْمًا مَا زَرَعْتَ وَإِنَّمَا * يُدَانُ الْفَتَى يَوْمًا كَمَا هُوَ دَانٌ

What you grow you will reap one day; verily the young man will only be requited one day on what he requites

And again,

اعْلَمْ وَأَيِّقِنْ أَنَّ مُلْكَكَ زَائِلٌ * وَاعْلَمْ بِأَنَّ كَمَا تَدِينُ تُدَانُ

And be surely informed that your kingdom will disappear, and know that you will requite as you are requited.

Allah is called *al-Dayyān* (الـدَيَّان) meaning the One Who recompenses, “the Judge”. In one *hadīth* the Prophet says, الْكَفَّيْسُ مَنْ دَانَ نَفْسَهُ, “The good person is the one who accounts for himself”.

According to the grammarian Tha‘lab the term *dāna* (دَانَ) belongs to the category of الْأَصْنَادُ (a word which has opposite meanings). He says,

دَانَ الرَّجُلُ إِذَا أَطَاعَ، وَدَانَ إِذَا عَصَى، وَدَانَ إِذَا عَزَّ، وَدَانَ إِذَا ذَلَّ، وَدَانَ إِذَا قَهَرَ

“The man becomes *dāna* if he obeys, and becomes *dāna* if he disobeys, and he becomes *dāna* if he is glorious, becomes *dāna* if he is humiliated, and becomes *dāna* if he conquers.”

It is worthy to mention that the term *dīn* which is usually translated as “religion” originally means “habit” and “affair”.

إِيَّاكَ نَعْبُدُ وَإِيَّاكَ نَسْتَعِينُ

Asad: *“Thee alone do we worship; and unto Thee alone do we turn for aid.”*

Pickthall: *“Thee (alone) we worship; Thee alone we ask for help.”*

A. Yusuf Ali: *“Thee do we worship and Thine aid we seek.”*

There is *إِلْتِفَات* (transition of address) starting from this verse until the end of the *sūrah*. Previously, Allah is addressed in the third person singular, namely, “Him”, and now in the second person singular, “Thee”. This kind of style is peculiar to the Qur’ān. Another example for this *iltifāt* is as follows:

وَسَقَاهُمْ رَبُّهُمْ شَرَابًا طَهُورًا (الدھر : ٢١)

“...Their Lord will slake their thirst with a pure drink” (Q. 76:21).

Here Allah addressed the people blessed with Paradise in a third person plural “their”. In the next verse Allah addresses them in the second person plural “you” and “your”, as follows:

إِنَّ هَذَا كَانَ لَكُمْ جَزَاءً وَكَانَ سَعْيُكُمْ مَشْكُورًا (الدھر : ٢٢)

“(And it will be said unto them) Lo! This is a reward for you. Your S endeavour (upon earth) hath found acceptance.” (Q. 76:22).

One has to be careful in reading the Qur’ān with correct pronunciation in order to maintain its true meaning. Otherwise, wrong pronunciation will lead to wrong meaning. One example is reading *iyāka* (إِيَّاكَ) means “thy light” rather than *iiyāka* (إِيَّاكَ) meaning “thee (alone)”. The expression *إِيَّاهُ الشَّمْسُ* means “sunlight”, and it is said that *إِيَّاهُ لِلشَّمْسِ* كَالْهَالَةِ لِلْقَمَرِ “the light for the sun is like the halo for the moon”.

The expression *نَعْبُدُ* (“we worship”) implies obedience, worship, and humbleness. The way of worship is different from one religion to another, based on time, place and the condition of that religion. However, the purposes are the same: remembering the Creator, His

Greatness and Kingdom, as well as to perfect morality and to purify human souls. Prayer prevents us from doing bad things. Allah says,

إِنَّ الصَّلَاةَ تَنْهَى عَنِ الْفَحْشَاءِ وَالْمُنْكَرِ (العنكبوت : ٤٥)

“... for prayer refrains from shameful and unjust deeds” (Q. 29:45).

وَإِيَّاكَ نَسْتَعِينُ

Here Allah teaches us to ask His help to obtain the perfection of whatever we do in all the walks of life. His assistance can never be disregarded.

Instead of the usual reading نَسْتَعِينُ (*nasta‘īn*) some Arab tribes, namely, Tamīm, Asad, Qays and Rabī‘ah read *nista‘īn* (نَسْتَعِينُ) with *kasrah* to indicate that the word is derived from *ista‘āna* (إِسْتَعَانَ) where its *alif al-waṣl*, namely, اِ , is also *kasrah*. This is also the reading of Yahyá ibn Waththāb and al-A‘mash.

اهْدِنَا الصِّرَاطَ الْمُسْتَقِيمَ

Asad: “Guide us the straight way”.

Pickthall: “Show us the straight path”.

A. Yusuf Ali: “Show us the straight way”.

What is the straight path? According to Muḥammad al-Ḥanafiyyah, it is the religion of Islam, which is the only one accepted by Him. Why should we keep asking Allah to guide us the straight path when we have already been embracing Islam? There is no guarantee that any Muslim would remain so till the end of his life. He might change his religion, and his faith could decrease instead of increasing by the passing of time. He could go astray and follow the wrong way. Guidance is the only request and supplication from Allah. The next verse explains the nature of the straight path we keep asking Allah to give us.

Guidance is exclusively from Allah. Allah says:

إِنَّكَ لَا تَهْدِي مَنْ أَحْبَبْتَ وَلَكِنَّ اللَّهَ يَهْدِي مَنْ يَشَاءُ (القصص : ٥٦)

*“Lo! Thou (O Muhammad) guidest not whom thou lovest,
but Allah guideth whom He will.” (Q. 28:56).*

And again,

لَيْسَ عَلَيْكَ هُدَاهُمْ وَلَكِنَّ اللَّهَ يَهْدِي مَنْ يَشَاءُ (البقرة : ٢٧٢)

*“The guiding of them is not thy duty (O Muhammad), but
Allah guideth whom He will” (Q. 2:272)*

Guidance is divided into four categories: a) instinct, b) the five senses, c) the reason, as instinct and the five senses are not sufficient enough as guidance. We need reason to correct their misjudgment; and finally d) religion and its laws based on revelation.

صِرَاطَ الَّذِينَ أَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيْهِمْ

Asad: *“the way of those upon whom Thou hast bestowed Thy blessings”*

Pickthall: *“the path of those whom Thou hast favoured”*

A. Yusuf Ali: *“the way of those on whom Thou hast bestowed Thy grace”*

The commentators of the Qur’ān say that those whom Allah gives grace are those mentioned in the Qur’ān, chapter 4, verses 69, as follows:

وَمَنْ يُطِيعِ اللَّهَ وَالرَّسُولَ فَأُولَئِكَ مَعَ الَّذِينَ أَنْعَمَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِمْ مِنَ النَّبِيِّينَ وَالصَّدِّيقِينَ
وَالشُّهَدَاءِ وَالصَّالِحِينَ وَحَسُنَ أُولَئِكَ رَفِيقًا (النساء : ٦٩)

*All who obey Allah and the Apostle are in the company of those
on whom is the Grace of Allah of the prophets (who teach) the
sincere (lovers of truth), the witnesses (who testify) and the
righteous (who do good): ah! What a beautiful
fellowship. (Q. 4:69, A. Yusuf Ali).*

In this verse these people are divided into four categories, starting from the highest rank, as follows:

1. prophets

2. *al-ṣiddīqīn* (“the sincere lovers of truth”, Ali; “those who never deviated from the truth”, Asad; “the saints”, Pickthall; one example is given by commentators of the Qur’ān is Abū Bakr whose was called *al-Ṣiddīq* after his giving his statement that all that the Prophet said about his ascension to heaven was true;
3. *al-shuhadā’*, literally translated by Y. Ali as “the witnesses (who testify)” above, and “those who [with their lives] bore the witness to the truth” by Asad; “the martyrs”, Pickthall; the examples of martyrs are ‘Umar, ‘Uthmān and ‘Alī.
4. *al-ṣāliḥīn*, “the righteous”, “those who keep doing good deeds.”

These are the kind of people who are given grace by Allah, and whose path should be followed.

The relative pronoun plural *الَّذِينَ* in all cases is the language of the Qur’ān. The Hudhayl tribe used *الَّذُونَ* ; some others use *الَّذِي* both are singular and plural and in all cases.

There are ten variant readings of *عَلَيْهِمْ* , six of them are traced back to the leaders of the *qurrā’* (Qur’ān reciters). They are *عَلَيْهِمْ* , *عَلَيْهِمْ* , *عَلَيْهِمْ* , *عَلَيْهِمْ* , *عَلَيْهِمْ* , and *عَلَيْهِمْ* . The other four readings used by the Arabs but not reported to have been from the *qurrā’*, are: *عَلَيْهِمْ* , *عَلَيْهِمْ* , *عَلَيْهِمْ* , and *عَلَيْهِمْ* . All these variant readings, according to the linguist Ibn al-Anbārī, are correct.

غَيْرِ الْمَغْضُوبِ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا الضَّالِّينَ

Asad: “not of those who have been condemned [by Thee], nor of those who go astray”

Pickthall: “Not (the path) of those who earn Thy anger nor of those who go astray”

A. Yusuf Ali: *“Those whose (portion) is not wrath and who go not astray”*.

Who are those who earn Allah’s anger, and those who go astray? According to the commentator al-Qurtubī, it has been the opinion of the ‘ulamā’ (Muslim scholars) in the mass, that those who earn Allah’s anger are the Jews, whereas those who go astray are the Christians. They base their view on the Qur’ānic verses, among which as follows:

- a. *وَضُرِبَتْ عَلَيْهِمُ الذِّلَّةُ وَالْمَسْكَنَةُ وَبَاءُوا بِغَضَبٍ مِنَ اللَّهِ ذَلِكَ بَأْتُهُمْ كَانُوا يَكْفُرُونَ بِآيَاتِ اللَّهِ وَيَقْتُلُونَ النَّبِيِّينَ وَضُرِبَتْ عَلَيْهِمُ الذِّلَّةُ أَيْنَ مَا تَفْتَفُوا إِلَّا يَحِجِّلُ مِنَ اللَّهِ وَحِجْلٌ مِنَ النَّاسِ وَبَاءُوا بِغَضَبٍ مِنَ اللَّهِ وَضُرِبَتْ عَلَيْهِمُ الْمَسْكَنَةُ ذَلِكَ بَأْتُهُمْ كَانُوا يَكْفُرُونَ بِآيَاتِ اللَّهِ وَيَقْتُلُونَ الْأَنْبِيَاءَ بِغَيْرِ حَقِّ ذَلِكَ بِمَا عَصَوْا وَكَانُوا يَعْتَدُونَ (البقرة : ٦١)*
“And humiliation and wretchedness were stamped upon them and they were visited with wrath from Allah. That was because they disbelieved in Allah’s revelation and slew the prophets wrongfully. That was for their disobedience and transgression.” Q. 2:61).
- b. *ضُرِبَتْ عَلَيْهِمُ الذِّلَّةُ أَيْنَ مَا تَفْتَفُوا إِلَّا يَحِجِّلُ مِنَ اللَّهِ وَحِجْلٌ مِنَ النَّاسِ وَبَاءُوا بِغَضَبٍ مِنَ اللَّهِ وَضُرِبَتْ عَلَيْهِمُ الْمَسْكَنَةُ ذَلِكَ بَأْتُهُمْ كَانُوا يَكْفُرُونَ بِآيَاتِ اللَّهِ وَيَقْتُلُونَ الْأَنْبِيَاءَ بِغَيْرِ حَقِّ ذَلِكَ بِمَا عَصَوْا وَكَانُوا يَعْتَدُونَ (آل عمران : ١١٢)*

“Ignominy shall be their portion wheresoever they are found save (where they grasp) a rope from Allah and a rope from man. And they have incurred anger from their Lord, and wretchedness is laid upon them. That is because they used to disbelieve the revelation of Allah, and slew the Prophets wrongfully. That is because they were rebellious and used to transgress.” (Q. 3:112).

- c. *بِئْسَمَا اشْتَرَوْا بِهِ أَنْفُسَهُمْ أَنْ يَكْفُرُوا بِمَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ بَعِثْنَا أَنْ يُنْزَلَ اللَّهُ مِنْ فَضْلِهِ عَلَى مَنْ يَشَاءُ مِنْ عِبَادِهِ فَبَاءُوا بِغَضَبٍ عَلَى غَضَبٍ وَلِلْكَافِرِينَ عَذَابٌ مُهِينٌ (البقرة : ٩٠)*
“Evil is that for which they sell their souls: that they should disbelieve in that which Allah hath revealed, grudging that Allah should reveal of His bounty unto whom He will of

His bondmen. They have incurred anger upon anger. For disbelievers is a shameful doom.” (Q. 2:90).⁸

- d. أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَى الَّذِينَ تَوَلَّوْا قَوْمًا غَضِبَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِمْ مَا هُمْ مِنْكُمْ وَلَا مِنْهُمْ وَيَحْلِفُونَ عَلَى الْكَذِبِ وَهُمْ يَعْلَمُونَ (المجادلة : ١٤) *“Have you not seen the ones [i.e., hypocrites of Medinah] who have befriended those people who are under the wrath of Allah [i.e., the Jews of Medinah]? They are neither of you [i.e., Muslims] nor of them [i.e., the Jews], and they swear a false oath knowingly.”* (Q. 58:14).

With regard to the Christians Allah says in the Qur’ān,

قُلْ يَا أَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ لَا تَغْلُوا فِي دِينِكُمْ غَيْرَ الْحَقِّ وَلَا تَتَّبِعُوا أَهْوَاءَ قَوْمٍ قَدْ ضَلُّوا مِنْ قَبْلُ وَأَضَلُّوا كَثِيرًا وَضَلُّوا عَنْ سَوَاءِ السَّبِيلِ (المائدة : ٧٧)

“Say: ‘O followers of the Gospel! Do not overstep the bounds [of truth] in your religious belief; and do not follow the errant views of people who have gone astray aforetime, and have led many [others] astray, and still straying from the right path.’” (Q. 5:77; Asad).

Commenting on this verse, Muhammad Asad says:

This passage, like the preceding ones is obviously addressed to the Christians whose love for Jesus has caused them to ‘overstep the bounds of truth’ by elevating him to the rank of divinity; therefore, my rendering in this context, of ahl al-kitab as ‘followers of the Gospel’.

This term is usually translated as “People of the Book”, or “People of the Scripture”, meaning the Jews and the Christians.

⁸In order to further understand this verse, please read verses 87 till 91. Allah’s wrath was not only incurred upon the Jews who rejected the truth and killed many prophets, but also Muslims who deserted the battlefield during the holy war, as mentioned in Q. 8:16). Allah’s wrath is incurred also upon, among others, a person who kills a believer intentionally (see Q. 4:93), and hypocrites and idolaters who think an evil thought concerning Allah (see Q.48:6).

Asad states further that the literal translation of وَضَلُّوا عَنْ سَوَاءٍ is “have gone astray from the right path”. However, following the interpretation of the Qur’ānic commentator Fakhr al-Rāzī that the Christians are persisting in this condition until now, he gives his rendering as “and are still straying”. This is “an allusion to the many communities who, in the course of time, have come to attribute divinity to their spiritual leaders – a phenomenon frequently encountered in the history of religion.”

There are many other kinds of people who are considered astray, such as those who disbelieve and hinder others from the way of Allah (see Q.4:167) and the pagan Arabs who slew their infants (see Q. 6:140).

The term الضَّالِّينَ (*al-dāllīn*) is originally الضَّالِّينَ (*al-dālilīn*). Some Arabs read it differently according to their tribal language. The grammarian Ayyūb al-Sijistānī read it as الضَّالِّينَ (*al-ḍa'allīn*). Similarly, Abū Zayd heard ‘Amr ibn ‘Ubayd read : *فَيَوْمَئِذٍ لَا يُسْأَلُ عَنْ ذَنْبِهِ إِنْسٌ وَلَا جَانٌّ* (الرحمن : *ja’ann* instead of *jānn*) and thought that the man had made *إِنْسٌ وَلَا جَانٌّ* a grammatical mistake, until he heard the Arabs say *دَابَّةٌ* (*da’abbah*) instead of *دَابَّةٌ* (*dābbah*) and *شَابَّةٌ* (*sha’abbah*) instead of *شَابَّةٌ* (*shābbah*). The difference is only in repeating the short vowel *a* (*fatḥah*) instead of a long vowel (*māddah*).

After reciting *al-Fātiḥah* we say *āmīn* (آمِينَ) although it is not part of the Qur’ān. It means “accept (the prayer)”. It is mentioned in a *ḥadīth* that the Prophet said *لَقَنْتَنِي جِبْرِيلُ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ آمِينَ عِدَّ فَرَاغِي مِنْ قِرَاءَةِ فَاتِحَةِ الْكِتَابِ وَقَالَ إِنَّهُ كَأَنَّهُ خَتَمَ عَلَى الْكِتَابِ* “Gabriel dictated me *āmīn* after I have finished reading the *Fātiḥah* and said that it is like the seal of the book.”

Scholars have different opinions about the term *āmīn*. It means, according to al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī, is a kind of *du‘ā’* (supplication). According to al-Shāfi‘ī *āmīn* is recited clearly based on the report of

Wā'il ibn Ḥajar that the Prophet did so after reciting **وَلَا الضَّالِّينَ**. However, the well-known opinion is that of Abū Ḥanīfah who says that the *imām* recites it secretly based on the *ḥadīth* reported by Anas ibn Mālīk. According to Shaykh al-Marāghī (the former rector of al-Azhar) in his *tafsīr*, it is possible that the word *āmīn* is derived from the word “Amon”, the God of the ancient Egyptian, so that *āmīn* means “Allah”.

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4. COMMENTARY OF THE QUR'ĀN (2)

***Sūrat al-Ikhlāṣ* (Chapter 112)**

سُورَةُ الْإِخْلَاصِ

Introduction

Sūrat al-Ikhlāṣ was a Makkan according to Ibn Mas'ūd, al-Ḥasan, 'Aṭā', 'Ikrimah and Jābir; Medinian according to one of the statements of Ibn 'Abbās, Qatādah and al-Suddī. (al-Shawkānī, *Fath al-*

Qadīr; Ibn al-Jawzī, *Zād al-Masīr*). There are many reports about the occasion that led to the revelation of this verse, as follows:

- a. It is narrated by al-Ḍaḥḥāk that the Makkan idolaters sent ‘Āmir ibn Tufayl on their behalf to tell the Prophet the following: “You have made dissension among us, you have abused our gods, and you have defied the religion of your ancestors. If you feel you are poor and need of wealth we shall make you rich; if you are insane we shall cure you, and if you need a woman we shall marry you.” The Prophet replied: “I am not poor, I am not mad, and I am not in need of a woman. I am a Messenger of Allah, and I am calling you to abandon worshipping idols and to worship Allah” Then they sent ‘Āmir again to the Prophet to ask him about the idol he was worshipping, whether it was made of gold or silver. Then Allah revealed *sūrat al-Ikhlāṣ* to answer their question. (*Tafsīr al-Marāghī*). Similar report was also related by Ibn ‘Abbās.
- b. It is narrated by Ubayy ibn Ka‘b that the the idolaters came to the Prophet, saying, “Tell us about your Lord!” So, Allah revealed this *sūrah*. (Reported by al-Tirmidhī, al-Ḥākim, Aḥmad, and al-Bayhaqī). (Al-Nīsābūrī, *Asbāb al-Nuzūl*; al-Shawkānī, *Fath al-Qadīr*; Ibn al-Jawzī, *Zād al-Masīr*).
- c. It is narrated by Jābir that a Bedouin said to the Prophet: “Tell us about your Lord.” So, Allah revealed: “Say, Allah is One” till the end of the *sūrah* (Reported by al-Tabrānī and al-Bayhaqī). (Al-Nīsābūrī, *Asbāb al-Nuzūl*; al-Shawkānī, *Fath al-Qadīr*).
- d. It is narrated by al-Ḍaḥḥāk, Muqātil and Qatādah that a group of Jews came to the Prophet and said: “Tell us about your Lord, for Allah has explained about Himself in the Torah. So, tell us what is He, whether He is made of gold, silver or brass, whether He eats or drinks, and from whom He inherits the world, and to whom He will inherit it. So, Allah revealed this *sūrah*. (Al-Nīsābūrī, *Asbāb al-Nuzūl*; Ibn al-Jawzī, *Zād al-Masīr*).

- e. Ibn ‘Abbās said that a group of Jews, among them Ka‘b ibn al-Ashraf and Ḥuyay ibn Akḥṭab came to the Prophet and said: “ O Muhammad, tell us about your Lord Who has sent you”. Then Allah revealed, “Say, Allah is One,” till the end of the *sūrah*. (Reported by al-Bayhaqī, Ibn Abū Ḥātim and Ibn ‘Adī. (al-Shawkānī, *Fath al-Qadīr*).
- f. ‘Ikrimah said that when the Jews said that they worshiped ‘Uzayr (Ezra) son of God, the Christians said that they worshiped Jesus son of God, the Magians said that they worshiped the sun and the moon, and the pagan idolaters said that they worshiped idols, Allah revealed to His Messenger, “Say, Allah is One” (*Tafsīr Ibn Kathīr*)

The Text and Commentary

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful

قُلْ هُوَ اللَّهُ أَحَدٌ

Asad: “Say: *He is the One God.*”

Pickthall: “Say: *He is Allah the One!*”

A.Y. Ali: “Say: *He is Allah the One and Only*”

This verse teaches us the pure *tawḥīd*, the Oneness of God, Allah.

اللَّهُ الصَّمَدُ

Asad: “*God the Eternal, the Uncaused Cause of All Being*”

Pickthall: “*Allah, the eternally Besought of all!*”

A.Y. Ali: “*Allah the Eternal Absolute;*”

There are many interpretations of the meaning of the term *al-Ṣamad*, among which are as follows:

- a. It means “someone whom people rely on and to whom they ask for help in difficulty and distress.”, as in the following poem of Sabrah ibn ‘Amr al-Asadī (سَبْرَةُ بْنُ عَمْرِو الْأَسَدِيِّ)

أَلَا بَكَرَ النَّاعِي بِخَيْرِي بَنِي أَسَدٍ... بَعَثُوا بَنِي مَسْعُودٍ بِالسَّيِّدِ الصَّمَدِ

The distressed person came early to the best person among the Banī Asad tribe, namely, ‘Amr ibn Mas‘ūd, the leader whom people used to come to ask for help.

The Arabs called their nobles *al-Ṣamad*. The verse means that as Allah is the only true helper the Muslims should ask Allah’s help directly without any intermediary. (*Tafsīr al-Marāghī*; Ibn al-Jawzī, *Zād al-Masīr*). Ibn al-Anbārī says that there is not disagreement among the linguists that the term *al-Ṣamad* means the master who has no one above him whom people return to ask help. (Ibn al-Jawzī, *Zād al-Masīr*).

- b. It means “the Lord with full authority, the Noble with full nobility, Knowing with full knowledge, and the Wise with full wisdom.” This is the interpretation of Ibn ‘Abbās, apart from giving the same meaning of *al-Ṣamad* above. (*Tafsīr Ibn Kathīr*; al-Shawkānī, *Fath al-Qadīr*).
- c. It means “the Everlasting after the extinction of His creation”. According to al-Ḥasan and Qatādah. (*Tafsīr Ibn Kathīr*; Ibn al-Jawzī, *Zād al-Masīr*).
- d. It means “the one who is neither beget nor begotten”, so that the succeeding verse is the explanation of it. This is the view of al-Rabī’ ibn Anas. (*Tafsīr Ibn Kathīr*).
- e. It means “the one who has no *jawf* (opening, cavity, heart, abdomen), which is the interpretation of many *ṣaḥābah* and Qur’an commentators, such as Ibn Mas‘ūd, Ibn ‘Abbās (in one of his commentaries), Sa‘īd ibn al-Musayyib, Mujāhid, Sa‘īd ibn Jubayr, al-Ḥasan, ‘Ikrimah, ‘Aṭā’ ibn Rabāḥ, al-Ḍaḥḥāk and al-Suddī. (*Tafsīr*

Ibn Kathīr; al-Shawkānī, *Fatḥ al-Qadīr*; Ibn al-Jawzī, *Zād al-Masīr*).

- f. It means “the one who does neither eat nor drink”, which is the view of al-Sha‘bī. This interpretation is apparently the explanation of the previous one as (e). above.⁹ (*Tafsīr Ibn Kathīr*).
- g. The meaning of the term includes all the above interpretation. This is the view of Abū al-Qāsim al-Ṭabrānī in his book *Kitāb al-Sunnah*. (*Tafsīr Ibn Kathīr*)

لَمْ يَلِدْ وَلَمْ يُولَدْ

Asad: “*He begets not, and neither is He begotten*”

Pickthall: “*He begetteth not nor was begotten*”

A.Y. Ali: “*He begetteth not nor is He begotten*”

This verse لَمْ يَلِدْ “He begets not” means that unlike the belief of the pagan Arabs that the angels are Allah’s daughters, the Christian’s belief that ‘Īsā (Jesus) *a.s.* is the son of Allah, and the Jew’s belief that ‘Uzayr (Ezra) is Allah’s son.. Allah says in the Qur’ān: فَاسْتَفْتِهِمُ أَلِرَّبِّكَ بُنَاتٌ فَاسْتَفْتِهِمُ أَلِرَّبِّكَ بُنَاتٌ “Now ask them (O Muhammad): Hath thy Lord daughters whereas they have sons?” (Q. 37:149).

The verse وَلَمْ يُولَدْ and *He begetteth not*” means that He is unlike all creatures. In a *ḥadīth qudsī* narrated by Abū Hurayrah that the Prophet said:

⁹This interpretation reminds us of Ahmad Deedat’s booklet entitled *Atnatu*. He said that it is an Australian aborigine word meaning “the one who has no opening”, referring to God Who neither eats, drinks, nor relieves Himself. We do not know which of about 250 aboriginal languages as Mr.Deedat did not specify.

Allah said: "The son of Adam belies Me while it is not so, and abuses Me while it is not so. He belies Me and says 'Allah will never revive me as He Created me' whereas creating is not easier (less important) for Me than reviving, and abuses Me when he says that I have a son, whereas I am the One, the eternally Besought of all, I was neither beget nor nor was begotten, and there is none comparable to Me."

(Reported by Bukhari). (*Tafsīr Ibn Kathīr*)

وَلَمْ يَكُنْ لَهُ كُفُوًا أَحَدٌ

Asad: "And there is nothing that could be compared with Him."

Pickthall: "And there is none comparable to Him."

A.Y. Ali: "And there is none like unto Him."

This verse means that Allah has no associate, as the pagan Arabs believed that the angels were Allah's associates.

A.Y. Ali's commentary on this *sūrah* is as follows:

1. Allah is sublime and far beyond human conception.
2. Allah is One and the only One to Whom worship is due.
3. He is eternal without beginning or end, Absolute, not limited by time or place or circumstance.
4. We must not think of Him as having a son or a father, for that would be to import animal qualities into our conception of Him.
5. He is not like any other person or thing that we know or can imagine. His qualities and nature are unique.

Conclusion:

This *sūrah* teaches us that Allah is One, not as the Makkan idolaters' belief; Allah is in no need of His creatures; instead, it is His creatures that are in need of Him; Allah has neither beginning nor end and has nothing

comparable to Him. This verse, as the Prophet said, is one-third of the Qur'an, as one-third of the Qur'an contains *tawhīd*, the Oneness of Allah.

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5. COMMENTARY OF THE QUR'ĀN (3)

Sūrat al-Falaq (Chapter 113)

سُورَةُ الْفَلَقِ

Introduction

Sūrat al-Falaq was revealed in Makkah according to al-Ḥasan, 'Ikrimah, 'Aṭā', and Jābir, whereas according to Qatādah, and one of the opinions of Ibn 'Abbās, it was revealed in Medinah.

With regard to the merit of *sūrat al-Falaq*, and *sūrat al-Nās*, it is narrated by 'Uqbah ibn 'Āmir that Allah's Messenger (peace be upon him) said:

What wonderful verses have been sent down today, the like of which has never been seen! They are: "Say: I seek refuge with the Lord of the dawn," and "Say: I seek refuge with the Lord of men."

(Reported by Muslim, *ḥadīth* no. 403).

In another *ḥadīth* narrated by Uqbah ibn 'Āmir, when he asked Allah's Messenger (peace be upon him) whether he should recite *sūrat Hūd* or *sūrat Yūsuf*, he told him he could recite nothing more effective with Allah than "Say, I seek refuge in the Lord of the dawn." Aḥmad, Nasā'ī and Dārimī transmitted it.

The text

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful

قُلْ أَعُوذُ بِرَبِّ الْفَلَقِ

Asad: "Say: 'I seek refuge with the Sustainer of the rising dawn.'"

Pickthall: "Say: I seek refuge in the Lord of the Daybreak."

A.Y. Ali: "Say: I seek refuge with the Lord of the Dawn."

The word *falaq* means “crack, split” as well as “daybreak, dawn”. The verb *falaqa* means “to split, to tear asunder” as well as “to break or to spell the shadows of night”

There are six interpretations of the term *falaq*, as follows:

1. The dawn. This is the interpretation of Ibn ‘Abbās as reported by al-‘Awfā, al-Ḥasan, Sa‘īd ibn Jubayr, Mujāhid, Qatādah, al-Qurẓī, and Ibn Zayd. The philologist al-Zajjāj said that it is so called because the night breaks away from it. The Arabic expression هُوَ أَبْيَنُ مِنْ فَلَقِ الصُّبْحِ means “it is clearer than the dawn (daybreak)” to indicate something very clear. This is the interpretation of the Qur’ānic commentators in the mass (جُمْهُورُ الْمُفَسِّرِينَ). The poet Dhū ‘l-Rummah in his poems explaining the wild bull also indicates this meaning, as follows:

حَتَّى إِذَا مَا انْجَلَى عَنْ وَجْهِهِ فَلَقٌ * هَادِيَهُ فِي أُخْرِيَاتِ اللَّيْلِ مُتَنَصِّبٌ
...until dawn revealed its face its foreneck raised
at the end of the night.¹⁰

And also,

يَا لَيْلَةً لَمْ أَلْمَهَا بِتُ مُرْتَفِقًا * أَرَعَى النُّجُومَ إِلَى أَنْ نُورَ الْفَلَقِ
What a night where I was sleepless and remained awake resting
on my elbow and watching the stars until the dawn lighted.

2. The creatures, the interpretation of Ibn ‘Abbās as reported by al-Wālī, as well as al-Daḥḥāk who said that it is all creatures (see no. 6 below).
3. The name of a prison in Jahannam (Hell) as also reported to be the interpretation of Ibn ‘Abbās. A pit in Jahannam according to Wahb and al-Suddī, and a valley in Jahannam according to Ibn al-Sā’ib.
4. The name of a tree in Hell, according to ‘Abdullah ibn ‘Amr.

¹⁰ The metre of the poem is *al-basīt* (الْبَسِيطُ), and the poet used لَيْلٍ (instead of آخِرِ اللَّيْلِ as translated above) to suit the meter.

5. One of the names of Jahannam, according to Abū ‘Abd al-Rahmān ‘Abdullah ibn Yazīd al-Ḥanbalī.
6. Anything that splits from something, such as the mountains and the rocks (because they split with water) according to al-Ḥasan and al-Daḥḥāk. *Falaq* is a name given to anything split from the creature of Allah such as the animals, the dawn, the seed, the fruit-stone, the plant, and others. Al-Qurtubī cites the Qur’ānic verse where this original meaning of *falaq* (split, break) is used, as follows:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ فَالِقُ الْحَبِّ وَالنَّوَى (الأنعام : ٩٥)

Surely it is Allah Who causes the seed and the fruit-stone to split and sprout. (Q. 6:95, Asad);

فَالِقُ الْإِصْبَاحِ (الأنعام : ٩٦)

[He is] the One who causes the dawn to break. (Q. 6:96, Asad).

Mentioning the dawn in this verse gives a hint that as Allah is the Lord of the dawn, He is able to bring it back after the dark night where people are usually afraid. In the same way Allah is also able to remove and protect people from other things they are afraid of. The appearance of the dawn indicates the arrival of happiness and relief. As people at night are waiting for the appearance of the dawn, so people in distress and working are waiting for the dawn of relief and success.

Abdullah Yusuf Ali’s commentary on this verse is as follows:

Falaq is the Dawn or Daybreak, the cleaving of darkness and the manifestation

of light. This may be understood in the various senses: (1) Literally, when the darkness of the night is at its worst, rays of light pierce through and produce the dawn; (2) when the darkness of ignorance is at worst, the light of Allah pierces through the soul and gives enlightenment: xxiv:35; (3) non-existence is darkness

and life and activity may be typified by light. The author and source of all true light is Allah, and if we seek Him, we are free from ignorance, superstition, fear and every kind of evil.

مِنْ شَرِّ مَا خَلَقَ

Asad: “from the evil of aught that He has created”

Pickthall: “from the evil of that which He created”

A.Y. Ali: “From the mischief of created things”

Allah teaches us through Prophet Muhammad s.a.w. to ask protection from all evil things He created. It is also said that the intended person in this verse is Iblīs and his descendants. However, it is not likely to specify Iblīs and his descendants in this verse, because the evilness is general, and we are told by Allah to ask His protection from any evilness.

A variant reading of *khalaqa* (meaning “He created”) is *khuliqa* (meaning “was created”). It is the reading of Ibn al-Sumayfi‘ and Ibn Ya‘mar. This reminds us of a verse in the Qur’ān where the creation of harm is not referred to Allah by a group of jinn out of courtesy, whereas the guidance is referred to Him, as follows:

وَأَنَّا لَا نَدْرِي أَشَرُّ أَرِيدَ بَيْنَ فِي الْأَرْضِ أَمْ أَرَادَ بِهِمْ رَبُّهُمْ رَشَدًا (الجن : ١٠)

And we know not whether harm is boded unto all who are in the earth, or whether their Lord intendeth guidance of them. (Q. 72:10, Pickthall).

This variant reading has three interpretations, namely, Allah ordered us to ask protection from Him against: (a) anything created (b) Iblīs and his descendants according to al-Ḥasan, and (c) Jahannam, as reported by al-Māwardī.

وَمِنْ شَرِّ غَاسِقٍ إِذَا وَقَبَ

Asad: “and from the evil of the black darkness whenever it descends”

Pickthall: “From the evil of the darkness when it is intense”

A.Y. Ali: “From the mischief of Darkness as it overspreads”

The term غَاسِقٍ “something being dark, namely the night” whereas the verb غَسَقَ means “to become dark”. The expression غَسَقَ اللَّيْلُ or أَغْسَقَ اللَّيْلُ means “the night became dark”. In poetry Qays ibn al-Ruqayyāt says in his following poem:

إِنَّ هَذَا اللَّيْلَ قَدْ غَسَقَا * وَاشْتَكَيْتُ الْهَمَّ وَالْأَرْقَا

*Verily, this night has become dark, and I am still
complaining of sorrow and sleeplessness.*

This is the interpretation given by Ibn ‘Abbās, al-Ḥasan, Mujāhid, al-Qurẓī, al-Farrā’, Abū ‘Ubaydah, Ibn Qutaybah, and al-Zajjāj. Al-Zajjāj says that الْغَاسِقُ means “the cold one” referring to the night as it is colder than the day time. However, there are some other interpretations of the term غَاسِقٌ, as the moon, as reported by ‘Ā’ishah; the star as reported by Abū Hurayrah, both from the Prophet; and the group of stars called الثَّرِيَّا (the Pleiades). Despite these various interpretations, they are all included in the verse, as they are all the signs of night without which they would not appear.

The term وَقَبَ means “to enter”, “to get into”, and in the following poem of an unidentified poet:

وَقَبَ الْعَذَابُ عَلَيْهِمْ فَكَأَنَّهُمْ * لِحَقَّتْهُمْ نَارُ السَّمُومِ فَأَحْصَدُوا

*The punishment has come (lit. “entered into”) them , as if they
are afflicted by the heat of hot sandstorm, so that they become
rotten (lit. reap [like ripe fruit caused by heat]).*

وَمِنْ شَرِّ التَّفَاعَاتِ فِي الْعُقَدِ

Asad: “and from the evil of all human beings bent on occult endeavours”
Pickthall: “and from the evil of malignant witchcraft”
A.Y. Ali: “From mischief of those who practice Secret Arts”

The term نَفَّاثَات (lit. “female spitters”) means “female magicians” “sorceresses” or “witches”. In Arabia it is a form of witchcraft where a woman blew on a knot tied in a cord, with or without saliva. In this sense the poet Mutammim ibn Nuwayrah says in his poem,

نَفَثْتُ فِي الْخَيْطِ شَيْبَةَ الرُّقَى * مِنْ خَشْيَةِ الْجِنَّةِ وَالْحَاسِدِ

*I have blown the string like [doing] magic for
fear of jinn (demons) and envious person.*

Ibn al-Anbārī mentions the difference between the term *nafatha* and *tafula* according to the Arabic linguists, the former means “to blow without saliva, and the latter means “to blow with saliva”, namely to spit.

The term نَفَّاثَات is the plural of نَفَّاثَةٌ which is صَيَغَةٌ مُبَالَغَةٌ (hyperbole pattern) of نَافِثَةٌ (“a blower, a spitter, a puffer”). These sorceresses as put by the the Qur’ān commentator Abū ‘Ubaydah were the daughters of a Jew called Labīd (Lubayd) ibn al-A‘ṣam.

There are other readings of النَّفَّاثَات (which is the reading of the mass).

(a) النَّافِثَات (*al-nāfithāt*) which is the reading of Ya’qūb, ‘Abd al-Raḥmān ibn Sābiṭ, ‘Isā ibn ‘Umar as well as Ibn Abī Suray; (b) النُّفَّاثَات (*al-nuffāthāt*), the reading of al- Ḥasan; (c) النَّفَّات (without *alif*), the reading of Abū al-Rabī‘.

Asad’s commentary on this verse is as follows:

Literally “of those that blow [an-naffāthāt] upon knots” an idiomatic phrase current in pre-Islamic Arabia, and hence, employed in classical Arabic to designate all supposedly occult endeavours; it was probably derived from the practice of ‘witchcraft’ and ‘sorcerers’ who used to tie a string into a

*number of knots while blowing upon them and murmuring magic incantations. The feminine gender of **naffāthāt** does not, as Zamakhshari and Razi point out, necessarily indicate ‘women’, but may well relate to ‘human beings’ [**anfus**, sing. **nafs**, a noun that is grammatically feminine]. In his explanation of the above verse, Zamakhshari categorically rejects all belief in the reality and effectiveness of such practices, as well as the concept of ‘magic’ as such. Similar views have been expressed—albeit in a much more elaborate manner, on the basis of established psychological findings—by Muhammad ‘Abduh and Rashid Rida [see Manar 1, 398 ff]. The reason why the believer is enjoined to “seek refuge with God from such practices despite their probable irrationality is—according to Zamakhshari—to be found in the inherent sinfulness of such endeavours [see Surah 2, note 84] and in the mental danger in which they may involve their author.”*

وَمِنْ شَرِّ حَاسِدٍ إِذَا حَسَدَ

Asad: “and from the evil of the envious when he envies”

Pickthall: “And from the evil of the envier when he envieth”

A.Y. Ali: “And from the mischief of the envious one as he practices envy”

Envy is the worst character. Almost all of the Jews of Medinah did not accept the Prophet’s call out of envy. They were expecting a prophet to appear in Arabia among themselves instead of among the Arabs. They knew him well as they knew their own sons, but they rejected him and fought him.

The significant of the expression إِذَا حَسَدَ “when he envies” is that if the envier keeps his envy for himself, he would not do any harm to anybody except himself. The caliph ‘Umar ibn ‘Abd al-‘Azīz, as quoted by Zamakhsharī, said, “I cannot think of any wrongdoer who is more likely to be the wronged one than he who envies another.” In one *hadīth* the Prophet said that envy consumes goodness like fire consuming wood. Once the envier expresses his envy in words or action, then he would harm others, and Allah told us to ask His protection against such kind of person.

There is strong relationship between magicians, magic and the devils, as mentioned in the Qur’an as follows:

وَاتَّبِعُوا مَا تَتْلُو الشَّيَاطِينُ عَلَىٰ مُلْكِ سُلَيْمَانَ وَمَا كَفَرَ
سُلَيْمَانُ وَلَكِنَّ الشَّيَاطِينَ كَفَرُوا (البقرة : ١٠٢)

And [they] follow that which the devils falsely related against the kingdom of Solomon. Solomon disbelieved not; but the devils disbelieved, teaching mankind magic ... (Q. 2:102).

Conclusion:

This chapter ends with asking protection against envious people. Envy is the earliest sin ever committed, in heaven by Iblis and on earth by Qābīl (Cain). Because of Iblīs’s envy, he disobeyed Allah by using a misleading analogy; that Iblīs being created from fire, whereas Adam from dust, he should not bow in respect to Adam, thinking that fire is better than dust. A polluted analogy ends up with wrong conclusion. On earth, Qabīl’s envy led him to commit the first murder, killing his own brother Hābīl (Abel). After seeking Allah’s protection against all these evil things, we trust in Him and purify our heart. (1 Sept. 01)

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6. COMMENTARY OF THE QUR'ĀN (4)

Sūrat al-Nās (Chapter 114)

سُورَةُ النَّاسِ

The majority of Muslim scholars say that this *sūrah* was revealed in Makkah, but some say it was revealed in Medinah. Ibn Mardawayh reported from Ibn ‘Abbās that it was revealed in Makkah, while he reported from Ibn al-Zubayr that it was revealed in Medinah.

This *sūrah* together with *Sūrat al-Falaq* (called *الْمُعَوِّذَتَانِ* “the two protectors” against black magic) was revealed to protect the Prophet *s.a.w.* from black magic. According to *mufasssirīn* (commentators of the Qur’ān) a Jewish boy serving the Prophet was persuaded by the Jews to take the Prophet’s hair gathered in his comb and some teeth of the comb. He did and gave them to the Jews. Among them was Lubayd (Labīd) ibn

al-A‘ṣam who made magic through the comb against the Prophet, then put the comb in a well called Dharwān belonging to the Banī Zurayq tribe. The effect of the black magic was narrated by ‘Ā’ishah (the Prophet’s wife) as follows:

Magic was worked on the Prophet so that he began to fancy that he was doing a thing which he was not actually doing. One day he invoked (Allah) for a long period and then said, “I feel that Allah has inspired me as how to cure myself. Two persons [i.e., angels] came to me (in my dream) and sat, one by my head and the other by my feet. One of them asked the other, ‘What is the ailment of this man?’ The other replied, ‘He has been bewitched.’ The first asked, ‘Who has bewitched him?’ The other replied, ‘Lubaid bin al-A‘ṣam.’ The first one asked, “What material has he use?’. The other replied, ‘A comb, the hair gathered on it, and the outer skin of the pollen of the male date-palm.’ The first asked, ‘Where is that?’ The other replied, ‘It is in the well of Dharwān.’ So, the Prophet went out towards the well and then returned and said to me on his return, “Its date-palms (the date-palms near the well) are like the heads of the devils.” I asked, “Did you take out those things with which the magic was worked?” He said, “No, for I have been cured by Allah and I am afraid that this action may spread evil amongst the people.” Later on the well was filled up with earth.

(Reported by Bukhārī). *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, vol. 4, *ḥadīth* no. 490)

In another *ḥadīth* narrated by ‘Ā’ishah, as follows:

A man called Lubayd bin al-A‘ṣam from the tribe of Banī Zurayq worked magic on Allah's Apostle till Allah's Apostle started imagining that he had done a thing that he had not really done. One day or one night he was with us, he invoked Allah and invoked for a long period, and then said, “O 'Aishah! Do you know that Allah has instructed me concerning

the matter I have asked him about? Two men came to me and one of them sat near my head and the other near my feet. One of them said to his companion, 'What is the disease of this man?' The other replied, 'He is under the effect of magic.' The first one asked, 'Who has worked the magic on him?' The other replied, 'Labid bin Al-A'sam.' The first one asked, 'What material did he use?' The other replied, 'A comb and the hairs stuck to it and the skin of pollen of a male date palm.' The first one asked, 'Where is that?' The other replied, '(That is) in the well of Dharwan.' So Allah's Apostle along with some of his companions went there and came back saying, "O 'Aishah, the colour of its water is like the infusion of Henna leaves. The tops of the date-palm trees near it are like the heads of the devils." I asked, "O Allah's Apostle? Why did you not show it (to the people)?" He said, "Since Allah cured me, I disliked to let evil spread among the people." Then he ordered that the well be filled up with earth.

(Reported by Bukhārī) . (Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, vol. 4,
ḥadīth no. 7658)

Then the Prophet sent 'Ali, Zubayr, and 'Ammār ibn Yāsir to go and dry the well, then took the comb and the hair from the well. To cure him from the black magic Allah taught to recite *sūrat al-Falaq* and *Sūrat al-Nās*.

The Text and Commentary

قُلْ أَعُوذُ بِرَبِّ النَّاسِ

(1) Asad: "Say: 'I seek refuge with the Sustainer of men'"

Pickthall: "Say: I seek refuge in the Lord of mankind"

A.Y. Ali: "Say: I seek refuge with the Lord and Cherisher of Mankind"

The reading "*Qul a'ūdhu*" was also read "*qula'ūdhu*". Al-Kisā'ī read قُلْ النَّاسِ with *imālah*, whereas the *jumhūr* (the masses) did not. Allah

calls Himself the Lord (*Rabb*), as He is the One Who cherishes and takes care of people.

Why is mankind singled out in this verse, while Allah is the Lord of all of His creatures and of everything? There are two answers:

1. It is to indicate the high position of human kind.
2. When Allah ordered men to ask His protection from their wickedness, He told them that He was their Lord Who could protect them from their evilness.

مَلِكِ النَّاسِ

(2) Asad: *"The Sovereign of men"*

Pickthall: *"The King of mankind"*

A.Y. Ali: *"The King (or Ruler) of Mankind"*

Since some men are kings Allah wants to tell them that He is not like any ordinary king, but He is the real and most powerful Lord-King.

إِلَهِ النَّاسِ

(3) Asad: *"The God of men"*

Pickthall: *"The God of mankind"*

A.Y. Ali: *"The Allah (or Judge) of Mankind"*

Since some people worship other than Allah, He says that He is the only One to be worshiped, for He is the God of men. A king could be a god or not. Here Allah says that He is the God-King or King-God of men, and He is the only One to be worshiped.

مِنْ شَرِّ الْوَسْوَاسِ الْخَنَّاسِ

(4) Asad: *"from the evil of the whispering, elusive tempter"*

Pickthall: *"From the evil of the sneaking whisperer"*

A.Y. Ali: *"From the mischief of the Whisperer (of evil)"*

According to al-Zajjāj the reading الْوَسْوَاسِ means "the whisperer". This is also the view of al-Farrā' who says that the reading الْوَسْوَاسِ (*al-*

waswās) means “the whisperer”, whereas *الْوَسْوَاسِ* (*al-wiswās*) means “whisper” (*الْوَسْوَاسَةُ*). It is like the word *الزَّلْزَال* (*al-zilzāl*) meaning *الزُّلْزَلَة* (*al-zalzalah*, earthquake). Some others say that the *الْوَسْوَاسِ* (*al-waswās*) means “the whisper” itself which means the act of “talking to oneself in one’s heart”. But the whisperer in this verse is Satan himself according to al-Zajjāj. The word *الْخَنَّاسِ* literally means “the one who is often late”. Mujāhid among the *tābi‘in* (generation following that of the *sahābah*, companions of the Prophet) says that the whisperer sneaks away when Allah is mentioned or remembered, and comes again when Allah is not mentioned or forgotten.

الَّذِي يُوسَّسُ فِي صُدُورِ النَّاسِ

- (5) Asad: “*who whispers in the hearts of men*”
 Pickthall: “*Who whispereth in the hearts of mankind*”
 A.Y. Ali: “*(The same) who whispers into the heart of mankind*”

All of the translations mentioned above indicate that the above verse is the explanation of the “whisperer” in the previous verse. However, it can also be read as the beginning of the sentence, so that it means: “The one who whispers on the hearts of men is among the *jinn* and men as mentioned in the following verse.

مِنَ الْجِنَّةِ وَالنَّاسِ

- (6) Asad: “*from all temptation to evil by invisible forces as well as men.*”
 Pickthall: “*Of the jinn and of mankind*”
 A.Y. Ali: “*Among Jinns and among Man.*”

Here Allah explains that there are two kinds of whisperer: *jinn* and human kind. The satan among *jinn* whispers in the hearts of men. It is, according to Muqātil, by persuading men to obey him with words reaching their hearts without hearing any voice. The satan among men is the one who tempts them to do something bad but looks good to them.

Those whisperers are called by Allah in the Qur'ān (الأنعام) شَيَاطِينَ الْإِنْسِ وَالْجِنَّ (الأنعام : ١١٢) (*evil ones among men and jinns*) (Q. 6:112, Ali).

Another interpretation says that the word النَّاسِ is originally النَّاسِي (with the drop of ي), meaning “the person who is forgetful”. It is like the word الدَّاعِي in the verse (القمر : ٦) . يَوْمَ يَدْعُو الدَّاعِ

It is also possible that this verse is the explanation of the word النَّاس meaning “people”, namely, “people among jinn and human beings”. Satan (Iblīs) whispers in the hearts of men and of jinn alike.

The whole chapter could mean: “I ask Allah’s protection from both Satan the whisperer (who whispers in the heart of men), and from (the evilness of) all jinn and men.”

The existence of an evil force which keeps accompanying man as long as they live is mentioned in a ḥadīth as follow:

مَا مِنْكُمْ مِنْ أَحَدٍ إِلَّا وَقَدْ وَكَّلَ بِهِ قَرِينُهُ مِنَ الْجِنِّ قَالُوا وَإِيَّاكَ يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ
قَالَ وَإِيَّايَ إِلَّا أَنَّ اللَّهَ أَغَانَنِي عَلَيْهِ فَاسْتَلَمَ فَلَا يَأْمُرُنِي إِلَّا بِخَيْرٍ (رواه مسلم)

“To everyone of you (an evil spirit as) a companion has been put in charge of him” They asked: “Even you, O Messenger of Allah?” He said: “Yes, except that Allah has assisted me so that he converted to Islam, and does not whisper to me except with good things.”

(Reported by Muslim)

This kind of evil spirit (jinn) is called *qarīn*, “companion”.

It is reported by Anas ibn Mālīk that while the Prophet was doing *i’tikāf* in the mosque, Ṣaḥīyyah bint Ḥuḡay came and visited him. When he came out of the mosque with her at night, two of the *anṣār* saw them and hurried away. The Prophet called them and told them to walk slowly saying that it was his wife Ṣaḥīyyah bint Ḥuḡay whom he was accompanying. They said, “Glory to Allah”. Then the

Prophet said that Satan to man is like his blood (running in his whole body), and the Prophet feared that Satan might throw something (or evilness) in their hearts, namely, suspicion and doubt of his good behaviour.

If we notice the end of every verse we find the it ends with ناس . They are rhyming together like poetry. Scholars say that the structure of the Qur'ān is between prose and poetry, neither prose nor poetry.

This *sūrah* together with *sūrat al-Falaq* and *sūrat al-Ikhlās* are recommended to read very often, especially before going to sleep, as supplication for protection. (ANUMA, 17August, 01)

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7. SHUKR (GRATEFULNESS)

he Meaning of the term *shukr*

The root of *shukr* is *shakara*, meaning “to thank, to be thankful, to be grateful”. *Shukr* means “thankfulness, gratefulness and gratitude.” It is an expression of praise and acknowledgement to the favours given by someone spiritually, physically, or materially. The favour could be saving us from disaster or calamity spiritually, physically or materially, or by giving us these things.

The Unlimited Blessings of Allah

The blessings of Allah are so enormous that they are uncountable. Let us ponder the following verses:

اللَّهُ الَّذِي خَلَقَ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ وَأَنْزَلَ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ مَاءً فَأَخْرَجَ بِهِ
مِنَ الشَّجَرَاتِ رِزْقًا لَكُمْ وَسَخَّرَ لَكُمْ الْفُلُكَ لِتَجْرِيَ فِي الْبَحْرِ بِأَمْرِهِ وَسَخَّرَ
لَكُمْ الْأَنْهَارَ. وَسَخَّرَ لَكُمْ الشَّمْسَ وَالْقَمَرَ دَائِبَيْنِ وَسَخَّرَ لَكُمْ اللَّيْلَ وَالنَّهَارَ.
وَأَتَاكُمْ مِنْ كُلِّ مَا سَأَلْتُمُوهُ وَإِنْ تَعُدُّوا نِعْمَةَ اللَّهِ لَا تُحْصُوهَا
إِنَّ الْإِنْسَانَ لَظَلُومٌ كَفَّارٌ (إبراهيم : ٣٢-٣٤).

Allah is He who has created the heavens and the earth and sends down water from the sky, and thereby brought forth fruits as provision for you; and He has made the ships to be of service to you, that they may sail through the sea by His command; and He has made rivers (also) to be of service to you. And He has made the sun and the moon, both constantly pursuing their courses, to be of service to you; and He has made the night and the day, to be of service to you. And He gave you all that you asked for, and if you count the blessings (favours) of Allah, you will never be able to count them. Indeed, man is most persistent in wrongdoing, stubbornly thankless. (Q. 14:32-34)

These verses mention some of Allah's blessings: the creation of the heavens and the earth, the rain that brings forth different kinds of fruits, the ships are made to sail at sea, the rivers, the sun and the moon, the night and the day time, and gives us everything we need to survive on this earth, concluding that His favours to us cannot be counted, and yet, man is unjust and thankless.

Similar verses describing Allah's favours and blessings are as follows:

خَلَقَ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ بِالْحَقِّ تَعَالَى عَمَّا يُشْرِكُونَ. خَلَقَ الْإِنْسَانَ مِنْ نُطْفَةٍ فَإِذَا هُوَ خَصِيمٌ مُبِينٌ. وَالْأَنْعَامَ خَلَقَهَا لَكُمْ فِيهَا دِفْءٌ وَمَنَافِعُ وَمِنْهَا تَأْكُلُونَ. وَلَكُمْ فِيهَا جَمَالٌ حِينَ تُرْجَوْنَ وَحِينَ تَسْرَحُونَ. وَتَحْمِلُ أَوْقَالَكُمْ إِلَى بَلَدٍ لَمْ تَكُونُوا بِالْغَيْهِ إِلَّا يَشِيقُ الْأَنْفُسُ إِنَّ رَبَّكُمْ لَرءُوفٌ رَحِيمٌ. وَالْخَيْلَ وَالْبِغَالَ وَالْحَمِيرَ لِتَرْكَبُوهَا وَزِينَةً وَيَخْلُقُ مَا لَا تَعْلَمُونَ. وَعَلَى اللَّهِ قَصْدُ السَّبِيلِ وَمِنْهَا جَائِرٌ وَلَوْ شَاءَ لَهَدَاكُمْ أَجْمَعِينَ. هُوَ الَّذِي أَنْزَلَ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ مَاءً لَكُمْ مِنْهُ شَرَابٌ وَمِنْهُ شَجَرٌ فِيهِ تُسِيمُونَ. يُنْبِتُ لَكُمْ بِهِ الزَّرْعَ وَالزَّيْتُونَ وَالنَّخِيلَ وَالْأَعْنَابَ وَمِنْ كُلِّ الثَّمَرَاتِ إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَةً لِقَوْمٍ يَعْقِلُونَ. وَسَخَّرَ لَكُمْ اللَّيْلَ وَالنَّهَارَ وَالشَّمْسَ وَالْقَمَرَ وَالنُّجُومَ مُسَخَّرَاتٍ بِأَمْرِهِ إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَاتٍ لِقَوْمٍ يَعْقِلُونَ. وَمَا ذَرَأَ لَكُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ مُخْتَلِفًا أَلْوَانُهُ إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَةً لِقَوْمٍ يَذْكُرُونَ. وَهُوَ الَّذِي سَخَّرَ الْبَحْرَ لِتَأْكُلُوا مِنْهُ لَحْمًا طَرِيًّا وَتَسْتَخْرِجُوا مِنْهُ حَبْلَةً ثَلَبُوسُونَهَا وَتَرَى الْفُلْكَ مَوَازِيرَ فِيهِ وَلِتَبْتَغُوا مِنْ فَضْلِهِ وَلَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُونَ. وَأَلْقَى فِي الْأَرْضِ رَوَاسِيَ أَنْ تَمِيدَ بِكُمْ وَأَنْهَارًا وَسُبُلًا لَعَلَّكُمْ تَهْتَدُونَ. وَعَلَامَاتٍ وَبِالنَّجْمِ هُمْ يَهْتَدُونَ. أَفَمَنْ يَخْلُقُ كَمَنْ لَا يَخْلُقُ أَفَلَا تَذْكُرُونَ. وَإِنْ تَعْدُوا نِعْمَةَ اللَّهِ لَا تُحْصَوْهَا إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَغَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ. (النحل: ٣-١٨)

He has created the heavens and the earth to manifest the Truth. Exalted be He above all that they associate (with Him). He has created man from a drop of fluid, then behold, this same (man) becomes an open disputer. And He created cattle for you; in them there is warmth (warm clothing), and numerous benefits, and of them [i.e. their meat] you eat. How pleasant they look to you when you bring them home in the evening and drive them to pasture in the morning. And they carry heavy loads to far-off towns that you could not otherwise reach without painful toil. Truly,

your Lord is full of Kindness, Most Merciful. And (He has created) horses, mules and donkeys for you to ride and as an ornament. And He created (other) things of which you have no knowledge. It is up to Allah to show the Right Way, when there exist some crooked ways. If Allah wanted, He would have guided you all. He it is who sends down water from the sky, from it you drink and from it (grows) the vegetation on which you send you cattle to pasture. With it He grows for you crops, olives, date-palms, grapes, and every kind of fruit: surely there is a great sign in this for those who think. He has subjected to you the night and the day, and the sun and the moon; and the stars are subjected by His command. Surely, there are signs in this for people who use their common sense. And whatsoever He has created for you on the earth of varying colours. Surely, there is in these a sign for people who remember. And He it is Who has subjected the sea (for you), that you eat thereof fresh tender meat (i.e. fish), and that you may bring out of it ornaments to wear and you see the ships ploughing through it, that you may seek thus of His bounty, and that you may be grateful [to Him]. And He has placed firm mountains on earth, lest it sway with you; and rivers and roads, that you may guide yourselves. And landmarks (too) [during the day], and by the stars [during the night] they guide themselves. Is, then, He Who creates comparable to any [being] that cannot create? Will you not then remember? **And if you would count the favours of Allah, you will never be able to count them.** Truly, Allah is Forgiving, Most Merciful. (*Q. 16:3-18*).

The above verses mention, in addition, the sea with the wealth it can bring to mankind, and the stars to guide us at night. It is mentioned again that Allah's blessings and favours cannot be counted. Here Allah concluded that He is Forgiving and Most Merciful, whereas in the previous one, He said that man is most persistent in wrongdoing and stubbornly thankless, as if to balance the two opposite characters, of Allah and of man.

Three Ways of Thanking Allah

Muslims are required to be grateful to Allah. He said,

فَكُلُوا مِمَّا رَزَقَكُمُ اللَّهُ حَلَالًا طَيِّبًا وَاشْكُرُوا نِعْمَةَ اللَّهِ إِنَّ كُنتُمْ لِعِندِهِ تَعْبُدُونَ (النحل : ١١٤)

So eat the lawful and good food which Allah has provided for you. And be grateful for the favours of Allah, if it is He Whom you worship. (Q. 16:114).

There are three ways of thanking Allah: a. with our heart, b. with our tongue, and c. with our actions.

a. Thanking Allah with Our Heart

Thanking Allah with our heart is manifested through glorifying Him, appreciating His blessings and bounties, praising Him and remembering these blessings and bounties. It is by remembering His never-ending favours on us, being continually conscious of Him, His blessings, especially whenever we experience or witness one of His favours. We say in our heart, for example, “Thank You, O Allah, how Great You are, how Merciful You are,” and so on.

b. Thanking Allah with Our Tongue

It is by expressing of gratitude for these bounties of Allah we have in our heart. For example, we praise Him by saying الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ (*al-ḥamdu lillāh*, “praise be to Allah,”) glorify Him by saying سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ (*subḥānallāh*, “Glory to Allah”), thank Him by saying الشُّكْرُ لِلَّهِ (*al-shukru lillāh*, “gratefulness be to Allah.” Admiring Him when we see with amazement one of His beautiful creation by saying مَا شَاءَ اللَّهُ (*mā shā’ Allāh*, lit. “whatever Allah wills (happens”). Another expression is اللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ (*allāhu akbar*, lit. “Allah is Greater” which is translated as “Allah is Great” in the sense there is nothing great other than Him, or “Allah is the Greatest”). Before we start doing something, including eating and drinking, we say the *basmalah*, namely, *Bismillāhir Raḥmānir Raḥīm* (“In the name of Allah, Most Gracious, Most Merciful”), and after finishing it we say *al-ḥamdu lillāh*.

The expression *al-ḥamdu lillāh* is mentioned in the Qur’ān at least twenty-four times, five of them at the beginning of its *sūrahs* (chapters), namely, surah 1 (if the *basmalah* is excluded), 6, 18, 34, and 35, four of them at the end of the *sūrahs*, namely, surah 17 (*Isrā’*, verse 111), *sūrah* 27 (*al-Naml*, verse 93), *sūrah* 37 (*al-Ṣāffāt* verse 182), and *sūrah* 39 (*al-Zumar* verse 75), two of them said by the people intended to go to Paradise upon entering it (Q. 39:74 and 75), and two of them are the command of Allah to say it, by saying وَقُلِّ الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ (“and say, ‘praise be to Allah’”), namely Q. 17:111 and 27:93.

It is mentioned in the Qur’ān, that everything glorifies Allah in praise. Allah said,

تُسَبِّحُ لَهُ السَّمَوَاتُ السَّبْعُ وَالْأَرْضُ وَمَنْ فِيهِنَّ وَإِنْ مِنْ شَيْءٍ إِلَّا يُسَبِّحُ بِحَمْدِهِ
وَلَكِنْ لَا تَفْقَهُونَ تَسْبِيحَهُمْ إِنَّهُ كَانَ حَلِيمًا غَفُورًا (الإسراء : ٤٤)

The seven heavens and the earth and all that is therein glorify Him. And there is not a single thing but glorifies Him with His praise, but you do not understand their glorification. Truly, He is Ever Forbearing, Forgiving. (Q. 17:44).

c. Thanking Allah with Our Actions

There are many ways of showing our thankfulness through action, among which are as follows: (1) Taking care of this bounty. (2) Not wasting and misusing it. (3) Sharing it with others.

1. Taking care of this bounty is maintaining it and keeping it in “a good shape.” As everything belongs to Allah alone, anything we have is only entrusted to us to use it, to get benefit from it, and to take care of it. It has to be respected, appreciated and treated properly.
2. Not wasting and misusing it. In spending it, a Muslim should be neither a miser nor a spendthrift. Allah said,

وَلَا تُبَذِّرْ تَبْذِيرًا. إِنَّ الْمُبَذِّرِينَ كَانُوا إِخْوَانَ الشَّيَاطِينِ

وَكَانَ الشَّيْطَانُ لِرَبِّهِ كَفُورًا (الإسراء : ٢٦-٢٧)

You shall not be a spendthrift. As spendthrifts are brothers of satans (devils), and satan is ever ungrateful to his Lord. (Q. 17:26-27)

3. Sharing it with others. It is sharing His bounty with less fortunate people, disregarding their race, faith or backgrounds. He encourages Muslims to give charity called *ṣadaqah*. There are two kinds of charity:: the obligatory and the voluntary one. The obligatory charity called *zakāt* is one of the pillars of Islam, where a Muslim gives annually 2.5 % of his income to the poor or any charitable purpose, and feeding a poor or a needy person or giving him the amount one day's food. The voluntary charity is by sharing Allah's bounty with the needy and helping the poor. This is a temporary charity. There is another kind of charity called *صَدَقَةٌ جَارِيَةٌ* (perpetual charity), like building mosques, hospitals, schools, orphanages, bridges, etc. where the benefits of them to the community remain as long as they are still being used. The reward for this kind of charity continues beyond the grave of the builders.

True charity is not by giving away what one does not need any more, but instead, what one still needs. Allah says,

لَنْ تَنَالُوا الْبِرَّ حَتَّى تُنْفِقُوا مِمَّا تُحِبُّونَ وَمَا تُنْفِقُوا مِنْ شَيْءٍ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ بِهِ عَلِيمٌ (آل عمران : ٩٢)

You can never attain righteousness unless you spend in the cause of Allah that which you love; and whatever you spend, surely it is known to Allah. (Q. 3:92).

For people who cannot give charity due to their poverty still can have the reward by praising Allah with their *tasbīḥ* (glorification of Allah). When a companion complained to the Prophet that he could not give charity because he was poor, the Prophet told him to say the *tasbīḥ* after prayer, namely, *subḥānallāh* 33 times, then *al-ḥamdu lillāh* 33 times, then *allāhu akbar* also 33 times. If he did this he would get the reward of giving charity. Since there was no (and never will be) secrecy in the teachings of the Prophet the rich also learned to recite this *tasbīḥ*

and started doing it. The man came to the Prophet telling him that the rich also did the same so that they would get the reward of both giving charity and reciting the *tasbīh*. To this, the Prophet recited the Qur'ānic verse,

ذَٰلِكَ فَضْلُ اللَّهِ يُؤْتِيهِ مَن يَشَاءُ وَاللَّهُ ذُو الْفَضْلِ الْعَظِيمِ (الجمعة : ٤)

*That is the grace of Allah which He bestowed on whom He wills.
And Allah is the Owner of mighty grace. (Q. 62:4).*

This means that giving charity is preferable to citing *tasbīh*, as the community, especially the poor among them, will get benefit from the former, where the latter will benefit it citers only.

Kufr as the Opposite of Shukr

The opposite of *shukr* is *kufṛ*, “unthankfulness, ungratefulness” When the throne of the Queen Sheba was placed before the Prophet-King Solomon, he said that that this was Allah’s bounty to test him either he was grateful or ungrateful,

أَشْكُرُكُمْ أَمْ أَكْفُرُ (النمل : ٤٠)

...whether I am grateful or ungrateful (Q. 27:40).

Allah says,

فَاذْكُرُونِي أَذْكُرْكُمْ وَاشْكُرُوا لِي وَلَا تَكْفُرُونِ (البقرة : ١٣٢)

*Therefore, remember Me, I will remember you, be grateful
to Me and never deny Me. (Q. 2:132)*

The significance of *shukr* is to indicate one’s acknowledgement of one’s frailty and dependence on Allah as a servant and slave of Him. Many people forget this matter. After describing His favour to the Prophet-King Solomon (e.g. the jinn worked for him), Allah said in the Qur’ān,

اعْمَلُوا آلَ دَاوُدَ شُكْرًا وَقَلِيلٌ مِّنْ عِبَادِيَ الشَّاكِرِينَ (سبأ : ١٣)

*O Family of David, Work gratefully! Only a few of my
devotees are truly grateful. (Q. 34:13).*

Allah Himself in the Qur'an urges us to thank Him. He bestowed His favour to His servants so that they would thank Him. The expression لَعَلَّكُمْ “so that you might become grateful” are mentioned at least fourteen times in the Qur'an (e.g., Q 2: 52, 56, 185; 3:123; 5:6, 89; 8:26; 16:14, 78; 22:36; 28:73; 30:46 35:12; 45:12) to those who thank Him He promises to refrain from punishing them and even to increase His favour, and to those who deny His favour He threatens them with punishment. He says,

مَا يَفْعَلُ اللَّهُ بِعَذَابِكُمْ إِن شَكَرْتُمْ وَآمَنْتُمْ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ شَاكِرًا عَلِيمًا (النساء : ٤٧)

Why should Allah punish you if you are grateful and true believers? Allah knows the grateful. (Q. 4:147),

وَإِذْ تَأَذَّنَ رَبُّكُمْ لَئِنْ شَكَرْتُمْ لَأَزِيدَنَّكُمْ وَلَئِنْ كَفَرْتُمْ إِنَّ عَذَابِي لَشَدِيدٌ (ابراهيم : ٧)

And [remember] that your Lord had proclaimed that if you are grateful [to Me] I shall certainly give you more [than you deserve], but if you are ungrateful [you should know that] My punishment will be terrible indeed. (Q. 14:7).

Wise people are grateful to Allah, like Luqmān the sage. He was given by Allah wisdom to thank Him (Q.31:12). It is unwise to be ungrateful. The example of punishment due to ungratefulness is upon Qārūn (Korah). Allah told us about him in the Qur'an very briefly, in seven verses, but the story gives us a warning that we might end up with the same ill fate that befell him if we follow his step of ungratefulness and his arrogance. Allah said,

إِنَّ قَارُونَ كَانَ مِنْ قَوْمِ مُوسَى فَبَغَى عَلَيْهِمْ وَآتَيْنَاهُ مِنَ الْكُنُوزِ مَا إِنَّ مَفَاتِحَهُ لَتَنُوءَ بِالْمُصْبَةِ أُولِي الْقُوَّةِ إِذْ قَالَ لَهُ قَوْمُهُ لَا تَفْرَحْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ الْفَرِحِينَ . وَابْتَغَ فِيمَا آتَاكَ اللَّهُ الدَّارَ الْآخِرَةَ وَلَا تَنْسَ نَصيبَكَ مِنَ الدُّنْيَا وَأَحْسِنَ كَمَا أَحْسَنَ اللَّهُ إِلَيْكَ وَلَا تَبْغِ الْفُسَادَ فِي الْأَرْضِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ الْمُفْسِدِينَ . قَالَ إِنَّمَا أُوتِيْتُهُ عَلَى عِلْمٍ عِنْدِي أَوَلَمْ يَعْلَم أَنَّ اللَّهَ قَدْ أَهْلَكَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِ مِنَ الْقُرُونِ مَنْ هُوَ أَشَدُّ مِنْهُ قُوَّةً وَأَكْثَرُ جَمْعًا وَلَا يُسْأَلُ عَنْ ذُنُوبِهِمُ الْمُجْرِمُونَ .

فَخَرَجَ عَلَى قَوْمِهِ فِي زِينَتِهِ قَالَ الَّذِينَ يُرِيدُونَ الْحَيَاةَ الدُّنْيَا يَا لَيْتَ لَنَا مِثْلَ مَا أُوتِيَ قَارُونُ إِنَّهُ لَذُو حَظٍّ عَظِيمٍ . وَقَالَ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْعِلْمَ وَيَلَكُمْ ثَوَابُ اللَّهِ خَيْرٌ لِمَن آمَنَ وَعَمِلَ صَالِحًا وَلَا يُلَاقَاهَا إِلَّا الصَّابِرُونَ . فَخَسَفْنَا بِهِ وَبِدَارِهِ الْأَرْضَ فَمَا كَانَ لَهُ مِنْ فِئَةٍ يَنْصُرُوهُ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ وَمَا كَانَ مِنَ الْمُتَنَصِّرِينَ (القصص: ٧٦-٨١)

Verily, Qārūn was of Moses' people, but he behaved arrogantly towards them, and [as] We gave him such treasures [i.e. riches] that his treasure-chests would have been a too heavy burden to a band of strong men [عُصْبَةٌ, of ten to forty men]. Remember when his people said to him: 'Do not exult, for Allah does not love the exultant. But seek, with that (wealth) which Allah has bestowed on you, to attain the abode of the Hereafter, while not neglecting your share in this world. Be good to others as Allah has been good to you, and do not seek mischief in the land, for Allah does not love the mischief-makers. He said: 'This has been given to me only because of the knowledge I possess.' Did he not know that Allah had destroyed before him generations, men who were stronger than him in might and greater in the amount (of riches) they had collected? But the criminals will not be questioned of their sins. So he went forth before his people in his pomp. Those who were desirous of the life of the world, said: 'Ah, would that we had the like of what Qārūn (Korah) has been given! Verily he is the owner of a great fortune.' But those who had been given knowledge said: 'Woe to you! The reward of Allah (in the Hereafter) is better for him who believes and does good deeds, and none shall attain it except those are patient in adversity.' So We cause the earth to swallow him and his dwelling place. Then he had no group or party to help him against Allah, nor was he one of those who could save themselves. (Q. 28:76-81).

The word مَفَاتِيح (*mafātih*) is the plural form of *miftāh* (a key) as well as *muftāh* (that which under lock and key), namely, treasure chests. The former is the translation rendered by A.Y. Ali and Pickthall, whereas the second by M. Asad. The story of Korah in the Old Testament is found more elaborately at Numbers xvi, 1-35 where it is mentioned that he had 250 followers.

We Muslims are taught by Allah to talk about His bounty. He said,

وَأَمَّا بِنِعْمَةِ رَبِّكَ فَحَدِّثْ (الضحى : ١١)

And speak of the bounty of your Lord. (Q. 93:11)

A.Y. Ali's comment on this verse is as follows:

Besides the petitioners, who ask help, there is the case of those who do not ask but are nevertheless poor—poor but contented in the worldly goods, or poor in knowledge or resources and not even knowing that they are poor. If you are bountifully endowed by Allah, your duty is to make the bounty spread far and wide. Proclaim it and share it, as the holy Prophet always did. We all receive Allah's grace and guidance in some degree or other. We all owe it as our duty to our fellow-men to be kind and helpful to those less endowed in any respect than ourselves.

As Muslims we express our thanks to Allah in our daily lives. We are constantly conscious of Him, glorify and praise Him at least seventeen times a day in every *rak'ah* (unit) of our prayers, as well as outside our prayer. We say *bismillāh* before doing something, and say *alhamdu lillāh* when we finish it. We spend His bounty wisely, take care of it and share it with others.

8. LOVE TOWARDS MUHAMMAD S.A.W., THE MESSENGER OF ALLAH

حُبُّ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ ص.م.

Brothers in Islam,

Love is as old as history. The Latin proverb says, *Amor vincit omnia* meaning, “Love conquers all.” Among English proverbs about love are: “Love makes one fit for any work”, “Love will go through stone walls,” all indicating the power of love. One example is King Edward VIII (1894-1972), the eldest son of King George V and Queen Mary. He succeeded to the throne after his father’s death in January 20, 1936, but abdicated his throne on December 11, of the same year, 1936. Then he left England and settled at Enzesfeld in Austria where he lived and married an American woman whom he loved, Mrs. Wallis Simpson (1895 or 1896-1986) in June 1937.

In Islamic history we learn that Zayd bin Hārithah was taken captive in a tribal war before Islam, enslaved and finally became a servant of the Prophet who freed and treated him like a son. When his relative came to take him back to his tribe, he preferred to stay and serve the Prophet. In other words, he loved the Prophet more than his family and relatives.

‘Umar *r.a.* (may Allah be pleased with him), said one day to the Prophet Muhammad *s.aw.* that he loved the Prophet more than anybody else except himself. To this, the Prophet told him that he should love him (the Prophet) more than himself. Then Umar realised that to be a good Muslim one should love the Prophet more than any other human beings, even oneself. He told the Prophet that he loved him more than himself. The Prophet said, “By Allah in Whose Hand is my life, a servant is not truly and firmly a believer until he loves me more than himself, his parents, his wife, his son and the whole people.”

Love requires sacrifice. A mother would like to sacrifice her life to save her baby. Even animals become aggressive to protect their young.

No wonder if Muslims become offended whenever the Prophet's name is attacked, abused, vilified, or ridiculed. Such behaviour is taboo for Muslims, worse than attacking them and their families. No wonder that many Muslims retaliate spontaneously, and sometimes irrationally.

The Arab prover says, مَنْ أَحَبَّ شَيْئًا أَكْثَرَ مِنْ ذِكْرِهِ meaning, "Whoever loves something, he frequently remembers (mentions) it" People like to talk about their loved ones, their children, their spouses, their parents, and their pets for those who have pets. If someone loves himself too much, he might keep talking about himself. Many Muslims name their babies "Muhammad" or "Ahmad", even they themselves are called "Muhammad" or "Ahmad". So, they are the "Muhammad the Senior" or "Ahmad the Senior" and their sons are "Muhammad the Junior" or "Ahmad the Junior."

There are many different spellings of the name *Muhammad* in Latin script, among which are: *Mohammed*, *Mohammad*, *Mohamed*, and *Mehmed* (among the Turks). *Mahomet*, although misspelled, was used in the past.¹¹

¹¹It has been recently reported by one of the Australian newspapers in its brief article entitled *Baby Names: Mohammed on the Rise* that by the end of this year (2007) the name *Muhammad* and its different spellings - disregarding his other name *Ahmad* (*Ahmed*) and nicknames *Amin* (*Ameen*), *Mahmud* (*Mahmoud*), and *Mustafa* (*Mostafa*) - will become the most popular names for baby boys in Britain, as follows:

*London: Mohammed is likely to become the most popular name for baby boys in Britain by the end of the year, **The Thames** has reported, citing government data.*

Although records from the Office for National Statistics list Mohammed 23rd in its yearly analysis of names given to children, when all the different spellings of the name are taken into account it ranks second, behind Jack. There are various spellings of the name because when it is transliterated into English from Arabic, families spell it as closely to their own pronunciations as possible.

After performing the *hajj* pilgrimage, the first President of the Republic of Indonesia, Sukarno's name became "Ahmad Sukarno" with the addition of "Ahmad." The same with the second President Suharto, his name became "Muhammad Suharto" This addition is said to be given by Muslim rulers in the Middle-East. The present Vice President of Indonesia, Yusuf Kalla has his first name "Muhammad". Many Turkish people also call their sons "Mehmed" for "Muhammad", because they say that there is only one real "Muhammad", namely, the Messenger of Allah, *s.a.w.*

The name "Muhammad" is probably the most frequently mentioned name. The Muslims mention the Prophet's name, at least 33 times in 24 hours in their five-obligatory prayers, apart from the recommended prayers, *dhikr* and *ṣalawāt* to the Prophet.

Several stories show how the *ṣahābah* (the companions) of the Prophet loved him. Abū Bakr *r.a.*, said that while on their *hijrah* migration from Makkah to Medinah, he was very thirsty. He brought milk mixed with water, but instead of drinking it, he offered it to the Prophet. He said, "Drink it, O Messenger of Allah!" Abū Bakr said further, "So, he drank it until I became satisfied" (فَشَرِبَ حَتَّى رَضِيتُ). After the conquest of Makkah, Abū Bakr brought his old and blind father, Abū Quḥāfah, to the Prophet to proclaim his conversion to Islam. The Prophet told Abū Bakr that he should have left the old man at home, and let the Prophet come to him. Abū Bakr told him that people should come to him (the Prophet) rather than the Prophet come to them. There was a story

In total, 5991 boys were given some version of the name Mohammed; 6928 boys were named Jack.

Thomas was third, with 5921, and Joshua and Oliver rounded out the top five.

If the growth in the use of Mohammed continues—it rose by 12 per cent last year—the name will take the top spot by the end of this year.—AFP

(The Sydney Morning Herald, Thursday, June 7, 2007, p. 9)

that when Abū Quḥāfah became Muslim, Abū Bakr wept. People told him:

هَذَا يَوْمٌ فَرَحَ، فَأَبُوكَ أَسْلَمَ وَ نَجَا مِنَ النَّارِ فَمَا الَّذِي يُبْكِيكَ؟

This is a happy day, your father has become Muslim and becomes safe from Hellfire; what, then, makes you weep?

Abū Bakr answered,

لَأَنِّي كُنْتُ أَحَبُّ أَنَّ الَّذِي بَايَعَ النَّبِيَّ الْآنَ لَيْسَ أَبِي
وَلَكِنَّ أَبُ تَالِبٍ، لِأَنَّ ذَلِكَ سَيَسْعِدُ النَّبِيَّ أَكْثَرَ

Because I wished that the one who has paid allegiance to the Prophet now were not my father, but Abū Tālib [the Prophet's uncle], because this would make the Prophet happier.

In other words, Abū Bakr who loved the Prophet wished that the Prophet would be happier that day with the conversion of his uncle Abū Tālib rather than his own father Abū Quḥāfah.

Sawād ibn ‘Uzayyah was one of the *ṣaḥābah* who joined the battle of Uḥud in 4/262. He was standing in the midst of the Muslim army. When the Prophet gave the order to straighten up and be straight in line, he saw Sawād did not comply with the order. So, the Prophet told Sawād to straighten up, and Sawād said “Yes,” but still did not straighten up. The Prophet came to him and pricked his stomach with his *سِوَاك* (*siwāk*, a small stick used to cleaning and polishing the teeth), and said, “Straighten up, O Sawād!” But Sawād said, “You are hurting me, O Messenger of Allah” and wanted some kind of retaliation. When the Prophet disclosed his stomach, Sawād bent down and kissed it. He then said to him, “O Messenger of Allah, as I think that today will be the day of (my) martyrdom I would like that the last contact with you be, that my skin touches your skin.”

There are many other stories indicating how the companions of the Prophet loved him very much. Some of them felt lonely and grieved

with his absence. One of them was the Prophet's own *mawlá* (client, freed slave) Thawbān. The Prophet's absence the whole day made him distressed. When the Prophet came, Thawbān said to him, "You are making me lonely and I grieve with your absence O Messenger of Allah," and started weeping. The Prophet asked him whether his absence made him weep. Thawbān said he thought that in the Hereafter he would not see the Prophet again, as the Prophet would be in the high level of Paradise and he would not be in the same place in Paradise. To this, Allah revealed,

وَمَنْ يُطِيعِ اللَّهَ وَالرَّسُولَ فَأُولَئِكَ مَعَ الَّذِينَ أَنْعَمَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِمْ
 مِنَ النَّبِيِّينَ وَالصِّدِّيقِينَ وَالشُّهَدَاءِ وَالصَّالِحِينَ وَحَسُنَ أُولَئِكَ رَفِيقًا.
 ذَلِكَ الْفَضْلُ مِنَ اللَّهِ وَكَفَى بِاللَّهِ عَلِيمًا (النساء: ٦٩-٧٠)

And whoever obeys Allah and the Messenger – those will be with the ones upon whom Allah has bestowed favour of the prophets, the steadfast affirmers of truth, the martyrs and the righteous.

And excellent are those as companions. (Q. 4:69-70)

It means that despite of different places in Paradise, they still can see and visit each other, so that the companions should not worry that they would not see the Prophet again in Paradise.

Conclusion:

A good and true Muslim loves Muhammad, the Messenger of Allah who guided him and brought him from darkness into light, more than any other human being. (5 January, 07).

9. LIFE IN THIS WORLD

Brothers in Islam,

Allah mentions several times about man's life in this world, sometimes

- a. as deceiving enjoyment, or the **enjoyment of deception** (a deceiving enjoyment), *متاع الغرور* such as the following verses:

كُلُّ نَفْسٍ ذَائِقَةُ الْمَوْتِ وَإِنَّمَا تُوَفَّقُونَ أُجُورَكُمْ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ فَمَنْ زُحِرَ عَنِ النَّارِ
وَأُدْخِلَ الْجَنَّةَ فَقَدْ فَازَ وَمَا الْحَيَاةُ الدُّنْيَا إِلَّا مَتَاعُ الْغُرُورِ (آل عمران : ١٨٥)

*Everyone shall taste death. And only on the Day of Resurrection shall you be paid your wages in full. And whoever is removed away from the Fire and admitted to Paradise, he indeed is successful. The life of this world is only the **enjoyment of deception** (a deceiving enjoyment). (Q. 3:185)*

- b. as play and pastime (amusement), *لَهْوٌ* and *لَعِبٌ* as in the following verse:

إِنَّمَا الْحَيَاةُ الدُّنْيَا لَعِبٌ وَلَهْوٌ وَإِنْ تُؤْمِنُوا وَتَتَّقُوا يُؤْتِكُمْ
أُجُورَكُمْ وَلَا يَسْأَلْكُمْ أَمْوَالَكُمْ (محمد : ٣٦)

The life of this world is but play and pastime: but if you Believe and fear Allah, and avoid evil, Allah will grant your wages, and will not ask you your wealth. (Q. 47:36)

Allah gives more details on man's life on this earth as follows:

اعْلَمُوا أَنَّمَا الْحَيَاةُ الدُّنْيَا لَعِبٌ وَلَهْوٌ وَزِينَةٌ وَتَفَاخُرٌ بَيْنَكُمْ وَتَكَاثُرٌ فِي الْأَمْوَالِ وَالْأَوْلَادِ كَمَثَلِ
غَيْثٍ أَعْجَبَ الْكُفَّارَ نَبَاتُهُ ثُمَّ يَهِيجُ فَتَرَاهُ مُصْفَرًّا ثُمَّ يَكُونُ حُطَامًا وَفِي الْآخِرَةِ عَذَابٌ شَدِيدٌ
وَمَغْفِرَةٌ

مِنَ اللَّهِ وَرِضْوَانٌ وَمَا الْحَيَاةُ الدُّنْيَا إِلَّا مَتَاعُ الْغُرُورِ (الحديد : ٢٠)

Know that the life of this world is only play and amusement, pomp [splendid display] and mutual boasting among you, and

rivalry in respect of wealth and children. (It is) as the likeness of vegetation after rain, thereof the growth is pleasing to the tillers; afterwards it dries up and you see it turning yellow; then it becomes straw. But in the Hereafter (there is) a severe torment (for the disbelievers, evil doers), and (there is) forgiveness from Allah and (His) Good Pleasure (for the believers, good doers). And the life of this world is only a deceiving enjoyment. (Q.57:20)

This is life. Allah mentions six things we do in this life: (1) play (2) amusement, (3) showing off, (4) mutual boasting, (5) rivalry in respect of wealth and (6) rivalry in respect of children. These things could be done in stages. If the approximate age of man in this world is 60, then we play until the age of ten, we might still play but also amuse ourselves till the age of 20, then we tend to show off and display ourselves splendidly till the age of 30, then we become boastful among ourselves till the age of 40, then we become engaged in rivalry in respect of collecting wealth till the age of 50, and finally in having children till the age of 60. It is common among Indonesian people to ask you how many children you have, although they never ask you how much money you have in the bank. It is rude. You can display your children, but you cannot tell people how much money you have in the bank.

The above verse could also mean that the six things mentioned above could be done simultaneously. Life as a pastime, a play, boasting and rivalry among us are still going on. We still can boast with our wealth and tell people indirectly how much money we have by having an expensive car and house, wearing expensive clothes and diamonds, and so on, especially among women, so that they will admire us. Rivalry is a very strong motive especially among children for doing good things, and we should use it in a wise way. This is what we call "competition".

The more we become older the more we tend to play and enjoy ourselves rather than thinking of and preparing ourselves for the next life. People play golf, tennis, cards, and many kinds of entertainment to kill or waste time.

Allah told us that life is like a plant that grows, pleasing the farmers, then the plant becomes dry and turns yellow, then becomes straw. The word كَفَّار (kuffār) in the above verse is in its original meaning, the persons who cover something, namely, the seeds, and the persons who do things are the tillers and the farmers. They are happy to see the seeds grow. Sometimes they are proud of their plants, and think that they are expert in farming, and forget the Creator who makes the pants grows. So, Allah said to them:

أَفَرَأَيْتُمْ مَا تَحْرُثُونَ. أَأَنْتُمْ تَزْرَعُونَهُ أَمْ نَحْنُ الزَّارِعُونَ. لَوْ نَشَاءُ
لَجَعَلْنَاهُ حُطَامًا فَظَلْتُمْ تَفَكَّهُونَ (الواقعة : ٦٣-٦٥)

*Then tell Me about the seed that you sow in the ground.
Is it you that make it grow, or are We the Grower? Were it
Our will, We could crumble it into dry to pieces, and you
would be regretful. (Q. 56:63-65).*

So, do not be too proud of the sweet apples you grow. Remember Allah Who lets your apples grow and become sweet.

But finally the seeds that become plants will turn into straw. That is life. We are planted into womb of our mother. We grow. We are born and our parents are happy. Yet, one day we shall become old and die like straw. This is the circle of life. But after this, comes the Judgment Day. In the Hereafter, we shall be judged on what we have done in this world, and whether we shall go to Hell or Paradise, or both, to Hell first then to Paradise. In the Hereafter we shall get either severe punishment or forgiveness and His pleasure, and hopefully not His punishment. The conclusion: وَمَا الْحَيَاةُ الدُّنْيَا إِلَّا مَتَاعُ الْغُرُورِ “And the life of this world is only a deceiving enjoyment.”

Speaking about the circle of life, Allah mentions that when we grow old our condition will reverse, that we shall turn again like a child, even like a baby. Allah says:

وَمَنْ نُعَمِّرْهُ نُنَكِّسْهُ فِي الْخَلْقِ أَفَلَا يَعْقِلُونَ (يس : ٦٨)

And he whom We grant long life—We reverse him in

creation [weakness after strength]. Will they not then understand? (Q.36:68).

This is a Makkan *sūrah*, to tell people, observe the condition of your life.

People when they grow old, they start to be weak and finally behave like a baby. They cannot control their bowels any longer; their five senses become weak, and finally they have to be tended like babies in nursing homes until they die.

Speaking about dying, I remember a neighbour in Malaysia, when we talked about travelling, said that to me “It is not important where you die, but how you die”. How should we die? Allah said to us the believer,

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ حَقَّ تُقَاتِهِ وَلَا تَمُوتُنَّ إِلَّا وَأَنتُمْ مُسْلِمُونَ (آل عمران : ١٠٢)

O you who believe! Fear Allah as He should be feared [i.e. by obeying Him] and die not except in a state of Islam [namely, as Muslims]. (Q. 3: 102).

This was also the *waṣiyyah* of Prophet Ibrāhīm and Ya‘qūb to their children. Allah said:

وَوَصَّىٰ بِهَا إِبْرَاهِيمُ بَنِيهِ وَيَعْقُوبُ يَا بَنِيَّ إِنَّ اللَّهَ اصْطَفَىٰ لَكُمُ الدِّينَ فَلَا تَمُوتُنَّ إِلَّا وَأَنتُمْ مُسْلِمُونَ (البقرة : ١٣٢)

“And this (submission to Allah, Islam) was enjoined by Ibrāhīm (Abraham) upon his sons, and Ya‘qūb (Jacob) (saying) ‘O my sons! Allah has chosen for you the (true) religion, then die not except in the faith of Islam (Muslims).” (Q. 2:132).

10. THE IDEAL PROPHET (1)

Brothers in Islam

Al-Nadawī in his Biography of the Prophet, *Muhammad the Ideal Prophet*, says that man is in need of “a perfect and a universal exemplar who could place in his hands a guide-book of practical life, so that every wayfarer may reach his destination safely” and that man was Prophet Muhammad s.a.w. who brought unchanged teachings till the Last Day. He states further that the ideal or model for humanity must fulfil certain conditions in his character: (1) historicity, (2) comprehensiveness, and (3) practicality.

1. Historicity

What is meant with historicity is that the ideal prophet must have his genuine biography in detail. We have to know what he said and did in his life and the information must be perfectly genuine. It is not based on fable or a legendary tale, which cannot be followed.

There are 124 000 prophets according to tradition, but very little is known of the lives of many of them. Zoroaster, for example, is doubted by many Orientalists in Europe and America, if he had ever lived. Even those who accepted his existence gave contradictory accounts of him, his birth date, his family, nationality, religion and scripture the genuineness of which is all doubted. He was said to be born somewhere in Azerbaijan, preached around Balkh, converted King Vistaspa, performed some miracles, got married and had children.

The Hindus claimed to have the oldest civilization. They mentioned many sages and saints in their sacred writings, but they were only known by name. The names mentioned in the Mahabharata and Ramayana are in more detail, but their age and the century they lived are unknown. The majority of Western scholars doubted them to be genuine.

Siddharta Gautama (Buddha), the founder of Buddhism, was born about 2500 years ago in about 563 BC near Kapilavastu, South of Nepal in the foothills of the Himalaya. His mother was Maya or Mahamaya. It is said that she conceived him after having a dream that a white elephant entered her womb. Therefore, elephants are considered

sacred in Buddhism. His father, Suddhodama, was a prince. He wanted his son to become a great king, and kept him away from seeing “four signs”, namely, an old man, a diseased man, a dead man, and a monk. He married and had a child. At the age of 29 he saw them all, and realized their suffering. Then he left his wife and child for good, roaming in cities, mountains and forests, then he took refuge in the forest to discover the meaning of human destiny. Finally he reached Gaya, where he sat and mediated under a Bodhi tree in order to achieve “the highest immortality.” He spent seven weeks in meditation. Before sunset the army of Mara (Buddhist Satan) attacked him with arrows, and retreated after sunset. It is said that the arrows that reached Siddharta turned into flowers. In deep meditation the following night he claimed to have attained “enlightenment,” to become *Buddha*, “the enlightened one”, when the secrets of the universe were open to him. He kept teaching and preaching until he died at the age of over eighty years. It is said that at the time of his death “the earth quaked, firebrands fell from heaven, violent storms raged and the river boiled.”

With regard to Semitic prophets, there were hundreds prophets among them, but history knows hardly anything about them except their names. The Torah, the main source of information about the Prophet Moses that is extant today, was written hundreds of years after the death of Moses, according to the authors of Encyclopaedia Britannica. The Gospels recorded the life of Jesus, but the Christians accept four only, namely, Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, and reject others, such as that of Thomas and Barnabas as apocryphal, namely, of doubtful authority. None of the four writers of the so-called “authentic” gospels had ever seen Jesus.

With regard to the biography of Prophet Muhammad *s.a.w.* Islam preserved even more. We know that he was born on 9th of Rabī‘ al-Awwal, the first year of the Elephant (22 April 571 CE). His genealogy can be traced back to Prophet Ismā‘īl in about 40 generations. We know how he lived in his childhood. We learned that at the age of twenty-five he married the rich widow Khadījah who was forty years old. When

Ḥalīmah (the Prophet's wet nurse and foster mother who suckled him when he was a baby) visited them, Khadījah gave her a camel and forty sheep. In general, anything connected with him was recorded by narrators, traditionists and biographers among his companions, and people of later generations till the 4th century A.H. The Orientalist Sprenger who published al-Wāqidī's *Maghāzī* said in his work *Life of Muḥammad* as follows: "*If the biographical records of the Muhammadans [i.e. the Muslims] were collected, we should probably have accounts of the lives of half a million of distinguished persons...*" It is said that more than 1500 Muslims lived in Madinah shortly after the Prophet's migration to that city. It is also said that more than one hundred thousand people joined the Prophet in his farewell pilgrimage. There were about eleven thousands of his companions (*ṣaḥābah*) narrated from him. We are living at the beginning of the 21st century, the age of advanced technology, and this is the time to put all these records in a computer, so that we can have access to them easily.

After the Prophet's death, some of his companions were still alive over eighty years later in different parts of the Muslim land, such as: Abu Umāmah Bāhilī in Syria d. 86/705, Abdullah ibn Hārith ibn Ḥazr, in Egypt, 86/705, Abdullah ibn Abī Awfā in Kūfah, 87/705, Sā'ib ibn Yazīd in Medinah, 91/709, and Anas ibn Mālīk in Basrah 93/711. They were all teachers and preachers delivering the message of Islam from the Prophet to the following generation. (*tābi'īn*). They were all the students of the *ṣaḥābah* who reported what they knew and saw about him, following his order. He said, "*Disseminate whatever you hear from me. Inform those not present whatever you hear or see of me.*" Ibn Sa'd reported that there were 355 *tābi'īn* in Medinah, 131 in Makkah, 413 in Kūfah, and 164 in Basrah. The last *tābi'ī* was the student of 'Āmir ibn Wā'ilah called Khalaf ibn Khalīfah who died in 181/797.

Some of the *ṣaḥābah* who narrated *ḥadīths* from the Prophet are as follows:

1. Abū Hurayrah (d. 59/678)

5374 *ḥadīths*

- | | | |
|------------------------------------|------|---|
| 2. Abdullah ibn ‘Abbās (d. 68/687) | 2660 | “ |
| 3. ‘Ā’ishah (d. 58/677) | 2220 | “ |
| 4. Abdullah ibn ‘Umar (d. 73/692) | 1630 | “ |
| 5. Jābir ibn ‘Abdullah (d. 78/697) | 1560 | “ |
| 6. Anas ibn Mālīk (d. 93/711) | 1280 | “ |
| 7. Abū Sa‘īd al-Khudrī (d. 74/693) | 1170 | “ |

This is to indicate that the biography of the Prophet is genuinely recorded in history. It is the most complete one compared to that of prophets before him. With this, the first condition for an ideal prophet has been fulfilled by Prophet Muhammad *s.a.w.* We shall continue with the comprehensiveness of teachings as the second condition laid down for an ideal prophet. (ANUMA, 6 January 06).

11. THE IDEAL PROPHET (2)

The second condition for an ideal prophet put by al-Nadawī is that his biography and teaching have to be comprehensive. It means that any guidance needed by people in different walks of life is available in the life and teaching of the ideal prophet. He contends that the only biography and teaching that reached the standard of comprehensiveness were those of Prophet Muhammad *s.a.w.*

Religion as commonly understood in the Western concept is belief in the existence of a supreme power, the creator who controls the universe. It includes the system of faith and worship based on this belief. In other words, it is the relationship between the worshipper and his Creator. The term *religion* is usually made as the translation of the term *dīn* in Arabic, so that *dīn al-Islām* is commonly translated as “the religion

of Islam.” As a matter of fact, this term *dīn* in its broader sense is more than a religion; it is a way of life.

Religion in a broad sense is a *dīn* that unfolds the relationship between man and his Creator in the form of worship which is a duty for him. It is also the relationship between man and his other fellow creatures in the form of mutual rights and obligations, mutual respect, mutual care and the way to treat each other. The followers of the ideal prophet would find the answers to questions and solutions of problems they are facing in their daily lives in the examples and the teaching of the religion he brought to them.

Al-Nadawī mentions two kinds of religions: agnostic and theistic. Agnostics doubt the existence of God. Atheists deny the existence of God. The agnostic religion is one that doubts or is sceptical about the existence of God and maintains that nothing can be known or proved as to His existence, such as Buddhism and Jainism. With these religions it would be useless to find God’s nature, and how to worship Him. On the other hand, a theistic religion is the one that believes in the existence of God as Supreme Being, but it does not tell us much about how to worship Him, such as Judaism and Christianity.

In Buddhism, we are told that Siddharta Gautama left his family and severed all his connections with his community. He abandoned all his responsibility as a father, a husband and a leader of his country as a son of a prince in order to find peace in Nirvana (Buddhist paradise) by overcoming the desire arising from his desire to live. Therefore, he left no message or teaching for people as common men, rulers, the ruled, masters, servants, the rich, the poor. He left no obligations for people as fathers, sons, brothers, sisters, friends, etc. His teachings were never practised by the working class. Trades, industry and business in countries where predominantly Buddhists, such as Burma, Japan, Thailand and Tibet would have declined and the countries themselves would not have developed.

In Judaism Prophet Moses was a marvellous leader, especially in the battlefields and in delivering his people from the Pharaoh’s slavery.

He could be a model in fighting the oppression, but he left no rule regarding the relations between husband and wife, father and sons, brothers, friends, etc. As a prophet and a family person, he was married, had children, had a brother (Aaron, Hārūn *a.s.*), friends, and relatives, his behaviour towards them would have been exemplary and a model for his people, but unfortunately they were not found in the books of Scripture attributed to him. We do not know how he made peace with his adversaries, and how he spent his wealth for the sick, the poor, the orphans and the way-farers.

In Christianity, Jesus had his mother, and according to the Bible he had brothers and sisters, even his earthly father (Joseph the carpenter), although he was born by a virgin mother, Mary. As a prophet he must have some regulations dealing with people's relations with their relatives and community, but they are not found in the gospels of the Scripture. He himself was unmarried, and therefore, could only be a model for the minority of people who still remain unmarried, but not for the majority of people who are married. He could not be an ideal family man. He remained indifferent to his relatives, and had nothing to do with earning and spending. He had never been involved in war and in fighting in battlefields, and therefore he could not be a model for generals and warriors. He did not leave any rules regarding war and peace, friends and foes, and therefore he could not be the ideal guide for humanity. Were the Christians of Europe and America to follow the examples of Jesus in his indifference to this material world there would not have been any progress in the world in general and in the Western world in particular.

In Islam, Prophet Muhammad *s.a.w.* has been an example for Muslims in all walks of life. His comprehensive biography is recorded in history. He was a family man: a husband and a father. He left many examples of treating his family. He elevated the status of women. He had been persecuted for years by the Makkan pagans and gave us examples for his patience, perseverance and forbearance in carrying the message of Islam. When his uncle Abū Tālib told him about the complaint of the Makkans against his preaching Islam, he told his uncle the well-known statement: "O uncle, if they put the sun in my right hand and the moon in

my left hand I would never stop preaching (Islam) until it becomes victorious or I perish.” As an army commander in the battlefield he was a model in fighting, such as not harming non-combatants, avoiding torture, and treating captives well. The story of Zayd ibn Hārithah, the only contemporary of the Prophet mentioned by name in the Qur’ān and a former captive, preferred to remain with the Prophet rather than returning to his relatives and people. The Prophet conquered Makkah from which he was expelled 8 years earlier. He entered the city forgiving its people who had mistreated him. He gave an example in treating the conquered people.

In one Qur’ānic verse Allah said:

وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَاكَ إِلَّا رَحْمَةً لِّلْعَالَمِينَ (الأنبياء : ١٠٧)

And We have sent you (O Muhammad) not but as a mercy for the alamin (mankind, jinn and all that exists) (Q. 21:107).

His behaviour and conduct in treating others are the manifestation of this mercy towards the world. He taught us how to treat even animals. He said one day to a Bedouin that his beast of burden has complained to him for being over worked, (either through its body language, or as inspired by Allah), that the Bedouin should give enough rest for the animal.

The Prophet’s teachings encompass the whole community from very minute things such as entering the mosque starting with the right foot, and going out of it starting with the left foot, what to say when one is sneezing, when one is hearing the thunder, and when one heard someone has passed away, what to do in facing the calamity, and how to treat the enemy in disguise (the hypocrites). His teachings elevate the status of women, free his people from slavery, exploitation of fellow human beings, gambling, usury (interest), tribal vengeance, intoxicants, adultery and many other vices.

The Prophet’s teachings include man’s relation with himself, such as purifying himself from arrogance, envy, selfishness and stinginess, impatience and vengeance. It teaches personal hygiene, washing the areas of the body, which are subject to dirt, such as mouth, nostrils, earlobes,

face, arms and feet while performing the ablution. With regards to his relations with his fellow human beings and other creatures, it teaches tolerance, mercy, sincerity, and mutual respect. He encourages greetings with *salām* (peace) to whomever we meet, no matter whether we know him or not. He teaches us that the younger person should start the greeting, the person who is walking to the one who is standing, the riding person to non-riding. He teaches that a person who kills another person without any valid reason (based on Islamic law) is like killing his own race, the whole of mankind. He teaches us how to worship Allah and to express our gratitude to Him and how to repent and ask His forgiveness and mercy. (ANUMA, 13 Jan. 06)

12. THE IDEAL PROPHET (3)

The third condition laid down by the Muslim scholar al-Nadawī for an ideal prophet is the perfection and practicality of his teachings. It means that the ideal prophet, beside having clear biography based on fact and bringing to people comprehensive teachings which cover people from all walks of life, these teachings are also perfect and can be put into practice in our daily lives. The feasibility of his teachings should be demonstrated by his own actions.

Among the teachings of Jesus mentioned in the Bible is to love one's enemy. He said:

But I tell you who hear me: Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you. If someone strikes you on your cheek, turn to him the other also. If someone takes your cloak [Ind. Jubah], do not stop him from taking your tunic [Ind. baju]. Give to everyone who asks you,

and if anyone takes what belongs to you, do not demand it back.” (Luke 6:27-30)

This teaching can hardly be put into practice, especially turning the other cheek to the one who strikes on the cheek, and letting someone take one’s possessions without any attempt to prevent him from doing it. In other words, self-defence, which is the nature of every living thing, is not allowed. This could only be put into practice when the Christians were so weak due to the weakness of its followers, that self-defence and retaliation would mean self-destruction. But when the Christians become strong enough to defend themselves, they have to abandon this teaching of Jesus, as self-defence is the right of every living creature. The world has just witnessed two world wars where those who were involved mostly Christians. Even today most of war conflicts have been instigated mostly by Christians—in abandoning the teachings of Jesus—resulting with the influx of refugees, most of them are Muslims.

Dr. Michael H. Hart, a Ph.D. graduate in astronomy from Princeton University in 1972, wrote a book entitled *The 100 A Ranking of the Most Influential Persons in History* (Cheltenham, Victoria, Vantage House, 1981), quotes similar verses and gives his comment as follows:

Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy. But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you. (Matthew 5:43-4)

Dr. Michael Hart’s comment is as follows:

Now, these ideas—which were not a part of the Judaism of Jesus’s day, nor of most other religions—are surely among the most remarkable and original ethical ideas ever presented. If they were widely followed, I would have had no hesitation in placing Jesus first in this book. But the truth is that they are not widely followed. In fact, they are not even

*generally accepted. Most Christians consider the injunction to “Love your enemy” as—at most—an ideal which might be realized in some perfect world, but one which is **not** a reasonable guide to conduct in the actual world we live in.*

We do not normally practise it, do not expect other to practice it, and do not teach our children to practice it. Jesus’ most distinctive teaching, therefore, remains an intriguing but basically untried suggestion. (The 100., pp. 50-51).

It is also mentioned in the Bible the following teachings of Jesus about forgiveness.

Then Peter came to Jesus and asked, ‘Lord, how many times shall I forgive my brother when he sins against me? Up to seven times?’ Jesus answered, ‘I tell you, not seven times, but seventy-times seven.’” (Matthew 18:21-22)

Al-Nadawī said that how could a person forgive his enemies if he has not overpowered and subjugated them? Jesus himself had never had an opportunity to forgive anybody, and therefore he could not be a model for mercy and kindness, or of an ideal husband for being unmarried.

Rich people will have more difficulty to enter heaven than the poor, mentioned in the Bible as follows:

Then Jesus said to his disciples, ‘I tell you the truth, it is hard for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven. Again, I tell you, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God.

(Matthew 19:23-24).

Being poor and having nothing to spare a person cannot give charity and show his benevolence and philanthropy to others.

There are two kinds of virtue: negative and positive. Negative virtue is abstaining from harming others, whereas positive virtue is doing

good to others. The three year period, which was a short period of Jesus' ministry on this earth, and the limited record of his life—not more than fifty days according to Rev. Dr Charles Anderson Scott—would not give us sufficient example of his practising these two kinds of virtue, even the negative one.

If we read the biography of Prophet Muhammad s.a.w. we shall see that he had gone through with suffering and relief, poverty and prosperity, persecution and victory over enemies. Allah addressed the Prophet about this as follows:

*Did He not find you an orphan and gave [you] refuge?
And He found you lost and guided [you]?
And He found you poor and made [you] self-sufficient?
So as for the orphan do not oppress [him]
And as for the petitioner [i.e. anyone who seeks aid or
knowledge] do not repel [him]
But as for the favour of your Lord, report [it].*
(Q. 93:6-11).

In 1978 Dr. Michael H. Hart states that he has “ranked these 100 persons in order of importance: that is, according to the total amount of influence that each of them had on human history and on the everyday lives of other human beings.” (p. 26). In his book he ranked Prophet Muhammad s.a.w (570-632 CE) the most influential person in history, because “he was the only man in history who was supremely successful on both the religious and secular levels...” (p. 33). He states “Muhammad founded and promulgated one of the world’s great religions, and became an immensely effective political leader.” (*ibid.*). He put Isaac Newton (1642-1727 CE) no. 2, and Jesus Christ (c. 6 BC – c. 30 CE) no. 3.

Why was not Jesus the most influential person in history? Even less influential than Newton? He said that

Jesus formulated the basic ethical ideas of Christianity,

as well as its basic spiritual outlook and its main ideas concerning human conduct. Christian theology, however, was shaped principally by the work of St. Paul. Jesus presented a spiritual message; Paul added to that the worship of Christ. Furthermore St. Paul was the author of a considerable portion of the New Testament, and was the main proselytizing force for Christianity during the first century. (pp. 47-8)

Due to St. Paul's writing and activity in proselytising people, some people considered that it was St. Paul rather than Jesus Christ who should be considered the real founder of Christianity, and would place him higher on the list than Jesus. It is said that the present Christianity is "Pauline Christianity." Dr. Hart's argument is that without Paul, there would be no Christianity. (p. 48).

Dr. Hart acknowledges the uncertainty of the information about Jesus' life, including the year of his birth (6 BC a likely date), even his original name (probably the common Jewish name, Yehoshua, Joshua in English). He said,

Even the year of his death, which must have been well known to his followers, is not definitely known today. Jesus himself left no writings behind, and virtually all our information concerning his life comes from the accounts in the New Testament. Unfortunately, the Gospels contradict each other on various points. For example, Matthew and Luke give completely different versions of Jesus' last words; both of these versions, incidentally, are direct quotations from the Old Testament (p. 49)

In prophet, and that of Dr. Hart for the most influential person in history have been fulfilled by Prophet Muhammad s.a.w. (ANUMA, 20 January, 06)

13. ISLAM AND FREEDOM OF SPEECH

Freedom of speech or expression in Western media is protected by law. A journalist in the West is free to ridicule any authority including through cartoons. But common people apparently have no such freedom. You can be sued here in Australia if you insult someone, but you are free to insult someone through caricature. Even Jesus Christ has been mocked so often in Western media without any reaction among Christians. The last conviction of defamation of Jesus in Britain was in 1922 for a man who compared Jesus to a circus clown. Since then, we haven't heard any protest against any caricature insulting Jesus Christ.

In September 2005 twelve cartoons were first published in the Danish paper *Jylland-Posten* one of which depicting Prophet Muhammad *s.a.w.* wearing a turban which is looked like an explosive. As these caricatures are interesting in Western mind they were reprinted in a Norwegian magazine four months later, in January 2006. They were also reprinted in newspapers in France, Germany, Italy and Spain as solidarity for free expression. Apparently the *Dominion Post* newspaper in New Zealand also reprinted the cartoons. These caricatures of Prophet Muhammad *s.a.w.* sparked protests and boycott calls in the Muslim world, especially in the Middle East.

Such unrestricted freedom of speech and expression could lead to the infringement of the rights of Muslims and of other communities and could antagonize some of their religious beliefs and institutions. The freedom of speech could be more destructive than the freedom of thought. If someone is mistaken in exercising freedom of thought he himself may be at risk. But if he exercises his freedom of speech and makes a mistake the society could be at stake. A rumor could create confusion and disturbance in our community.

It is true that freedom of expression could be rendered through speaking, writing, and drawing, including caricature. Yet, this freedom should not be abused with defamation and insult. Caricatures often cross this boundary and become offensive to some people, especially the Muslims. Muslims are not allowed to express bad things, either verbally or through writing and picture, because it is a sinful act.

The tongue is sharper than the sword. A wound caused by a sword can be healed in a few days, but the wound caused by a tongue takes more time to heal, it may never heal. The bad thoughts and feelings expressed through cartoons are worse than through speech. What you hear you hear once only (unless you record it), but the caricatures you see in the cartoons remain there in the paper unless you destroy it. Moreover, a picture could explain the thought more clearly than words. If you want to explain the word “dragonfly” to a person who does not know the meaning of the word, it is not enough to say that “it is an insect with stick-like body and two pairs of large wings”, but if you show him the picture of the insect he will understand what you mean, even without saying a single word. A picture can translate a thousand thoughts. No wonder that the caricatures ridiculing Prophet Muhammad, the most respected and beloved person by Muslims, have been responded to with protests in the Muslim world.

There are restrictions in expressing one’s feelings and thoughts in Islam. We Muslims do not even have full freedom to do whatever we like with our body. We are not even allowed to abuse and harm our own body, let alone others, and therefore self-mutilation and suicide are prohibited in Islam. We are not allowed to ridicule others, as those whom we ridicule might be better than we are. Criticism could give us false sense of superiority over those whom we criticize. Allah says in the Qur’ān,

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا يَسْخَرْ قَوْمٌ مِّنْ قَوْمٍ عَسَىٰ أَن يَكُونُوا خَيْرًا مِنْهُمْ وَلَا نِسَاءٌ مِّنْ نِّسَاءٍ عَسَىٰ أَن يَكُنَّ خَيْرًا مِنْهُنَّ وَلَا تَلْمِزُوا أَنْفُسَكُمْ وَلَا تَنَابَزُوا بِالْأَلْقَابِ بِئْسَ الْأَسْمُ
الْفُسُوقُ بَعْدَ الْإِيمَانِ وَمَن لَّمْ يَتُبْ فَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الظَّالِمُونَ (الحجرات : ١١)

O you who have believed, let not as people ridicule [another] people; perhaps they may be better than them; nor let women ridicule [other] women; perhaps they may be better than them. And do not insult one another and do not call each other by [offensive] nicknames. Wretched is the name [i.e. mention] of disobedience after [one's] faith. And whoever does not repent—then it is those who are the wrongdoers. (Q. 49:11).

Muslims are not allowed to say bad things. The Prophet said, “Whoever believes in Allah and the Last Day should say good things or keep silent.” He also said, “A friendly word is charity”. Evil should not be broadcast in public unless injustice has been done. Allah says in the Qur’ān,

لَا يُحِبُّ اللَّهُ الْجَهْرَ بِالسُّوءِ مِنَ الْقَوْلِ إِلَّا مَنْ ظَلِمَ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ سَمِيعًا عَلِيمًا (النساء : ١٤٨)
Allah does not like the public mention of evil except by one who has been wronged. And ever is Allah Hearing and Knowing. (Q. 4:148).

However, observing patience is much better than uttering the evil in public. The early commentator of the Qur’ān, al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī said that one should not curse or invoke Allah against the one who wronged him, but rather pray to Allah to help him take his right from the wrong-doer. And he should not transgress the limit in his retaliation. Moreover, it is highly recommended to forgive an evil, as it will bring us closer to Allah and increase our reward with Him. Allah continued the above verse saying,

إِنْ تُبْدُوا خَيْرًا أَوْ تُخْفَوْهُ أَوْ تُعْفُوا عَنْ سُوءٍ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَفُوًّا قَدِيرًا (النساء : ١٤٩)
Whether you disclose a good deed, or conceal it, or pardon an evil; verily, Allah is Ever Pardoning, All-Powerful. (Q. 4:149)

Unrestricted freedom of speech could lead the speaker to sin, such as shouting (except when injustice has been done), cursing, backbiting, lying, and revealing one’s secret. The Arabic proverb says,

لِكُلِّ مَقَامٍ مَقَالٌ

“For every situation there is a proper expression.” It is improper, for example, to say something dirty even if it is true to people who are eating, such as, “The smell of feces is bad, rotten, putrid.” Such true expression could destroy his appetite. (ANUMA, 10 Feb. 06)

14. SHARĪ‘AH AND FIQH

Comparing Islam with the other two revealed religions, a common statement among scholars of religions is as follows: Judaism is a religion with a canonical law called *Mishnah*¹², but not a missionary one; Christianity is a missionary religion but without a canonical law; Islam is both a missionary religion and with a canonical law, the *Sharī‘ah*. People in the West who are majority Christians fail to understand why Muslims in this modern era should follow the law laid

¹²*Mishna* or *mishnah* (in Hebrew means “Repeated Study”) “is the oldest authoritative postbiblical collection and codification of Jewish oral laws, systematically compiled by numerous scholars (called *tannaim*) over a period of about two centuries.... The *mishna* supplements the written, or scriptural, laws found in the Pentateuch. It presents various interpretations of selective legal traditions that had been preserved orally since at least the time of Ezra (c. 450 BC).” The *mishna* consists of six major sections: (1) *Zera’im* (“Seeds”) containing laws involving agriculture; (2) *Mo‘ed* (“Festival”) dealing ceremonies, festivals, rituals, prohibition related to the Sabbath, fast days, etc.; (3) *Nashim* (“Women”), dealing with marriage, divorce, etc. (4) *Neziqin* (“Damages”), civil and criminal laws (theft, usury, idolatry, physical punishment including death; (5) *Qodashim* (“Holy Things”), dealing with laws regulating Temple sacrifices, other offerings and donations; (6) *Tohorot* (“Purifications”) dealing with ritual purity of vessels, dwellings, foods, etc. (see *Encyclopedia Britannica*, q v.. “Mishna”

down fourteen centuries ago. They wonder why Muslims have many different schools of law called *madhhabs*. This article tries to explain the position of Islamic law called the *Sharī‘ah* and the Islamic jurisprudence called the *Fiqh*.

Sharī‘ah literally means “water hole,” “drinking place”, and “the approach or the way to the water hole or the drinking place”. For the people living in the desert, finding the way to the drinking place is extremely important, it is a matter of life and death. Technically, *Sharī‘ah* means the canonical law of Islam. The Muslim jurist Imām Abū Ḥanīfah gives the definition of the *Sharī‘ah* as follows: “*Sharī‘ah* is what the Prophet taught through revelation from Allah.” Imām al-Shāfi‘ī elaborates it when he says that is clear or obscure rules for Muslims based on Allah’s revelation as well as those deduced from it. These laws arrange man’s relationship with his Creator, with other human beings, as well as other creatures, such as animals, plants and inanimate objects. The term *fiqh* literally means “understanding”, “comprehension,” “knowledge.” Technically, it means “Islamic jurisprudence.” An expert in the science of *fiqh* is called *faqīh* (pl. *fuqahā’*), such as Abū Ḥanīfah, Mīlik bin Anas, al-Shāfi‘ī, and Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal. Their followers compiled their respective teachings and later became schools of law (*madhhabs*). In order to reach the right conclusion the jurists have to be careful in approaching, studying and analysing the divine texts by applying the science of *fiqh*. The main differences between *Sharī‘ah* and *Fiqh* are as follows:

| <u><i>Sharī‘ah</i></u> | <u><i>Fiqh</i></u> |
|---|---|
| It is revelation, directly from understand- Allah, explained in the <i>Ḥadīth</i> | It is human ing, liable to change from time to time |
| It is fundamental in nature | It is instrumental |
| Its law is <i>qat‘ī</i> (definite, final) (hypothetical) | Its law is <i>ẓannī</i> |

It is universal, unique

Its main object is man's relation-
man's ship with Allah, the Creator

Its sanction is reward or punish-
ment from Allah in the Here -
sometimes in this world,
whether felt (e.g., penal law
by Muslim rulers) or not by the sinner

It is incidental, varied

Its main object is
relationship with
himself and other
creatures

Its sanction is praise or
blame from the com-
munity, or the rulers
(police, prosecutors,
judges) who apply this
sanction

Shari'ah contains injunctions and prohibitions through revelation from Allah dealing with the actions and behaviour of the *mukallaf*, namely, a Muslim (who is sound in mind and reaches adulthood) who is obliged to observe the precepts of religion. A good Muslim is law abiding, not a law breaker. The injunction to study *fiqh* is mentioned the Qur'an, as follows:

وَمَا كَانَ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ لِيَنفِرُوا كَافَّةً فَلَوْلَا نَفَرَ مِن كُلِّ فِرْقَةٍ مِّنْهُمْ طَائِفَةٌ لِّيَتَفَقَّهُوا
فِي الدِّينِ وَلِيُنذِرُوا قَوْمَهُمْ إِذَا رَجَعُوا إِلَيْهِمْ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَحْذَرُونَ (التوبة: ١٢٢)

And it is not (proper) for the believers to go out to fight (jihad) all together. Of every troop of them, a party only should go forth, that they (who are left behind) may get instruction in (Islamic) religion, and that they may warn their people when they return to them, so that they may beware (of evil). (Q. 9:122).

In a *hadith* it is reported that the Prophet s.a.w. prayed for his young cousin Abdullah ibn 'Abbās; he said,

اللَّهُمَّ فَقِّهْهُ فِي الدِّينِ وَعَلِّمْهُ التَّأْوِيلَ (رواه أحمد و الطبراني و البيهقي و ابن حبان)

Oh Allah, make him understand the religion (Islam) and teach him ta'wīl (interpretation, namely, the deep

meanings of the divine texts). (Reported by Aḥmad,
 □abrānī, Bayhaqī, and Ibn ʿabbān)

If we open the books of *fiqh* we shall see various topics such as belief (*i'tiqādāt*), cleanness or purity (*ṭahārah*), worship (*'ibādāt*), social transactions (*mu'āmalāt*), marriage and inheritance (*munākaḥāt*), criminal and penal laws (*al-jināyāt wa'l-'uqūbāt*), and holy war (*jihād*). It includes every aspect of life. No wonder that Islam is not a religion as understood in the West as a relationship between man and God, but a *dīn* (which is mistakenly translated as “religion”), a way of life. There is rule or law for everything; every person is responsible for his/her acts and will be accounted for in the Hereafter. Fortunately, the majority of rules belong to the category of *mubāh* (permitted). In matters of worship everything is prohibited except what it enjoined. Its basic rule is prohibited (*ḥarām*). In other matters, everything is permitted, except what is prohibited. Its basic rule is permitted (*mubāh*).

In order to find the legal judgment of a certain issue which is not mentioned in the Qur'ān or the *Ḥadīth* of the Prophet, or the *ijmā'* (consensus of Muslim scholars) especially the new emerging one, the jurists exercise their *ijtihād* (exertion to find their independent judgment in a legal or theological question) through various means, such as *qiyās* (analogy, analogous interpretation, comparing the judgment of a known matter with what is under investigation), and the jurist who exercises this *ijtihād* is called *mujtahid*. This new judgment of this *mujtahid* is called *fatwā* (formal legal opinion), and the jurist who exercises it is called *muftī*, officially appointed by the government, or those who are in authority in the Muslim community.

A simple example of *ijtihād* is the consumption of a kind of drug called ecstasy. What we had in the time of the Prophet is *khamr* (alcoholic drink) which is *ḥarām*, prohibited. It seizes human reason, clouds his mind. The verb of the word *khamr* is *khamara* and *khammara* meaning “to cover, to hide, to cause fermentation.” Having the same

effect of clouding the mind of the consumer and other side effects, Muslim jurists pass their judgement and verdict: ecstasy is *ḥarām*.

Ijtihād in the time of the Prophet was very rare and limited, because the *ṣaḥābah* (companions of the Prophet) could consult the Prophet about the judgment of an issue. One example of the *ijtihād* of the *ṣaḥābah* is this: ‘Umar and Mu‘ādh were on a journey when they had wet dreams. They became in the state of major impurity and had to take a bath. But there was no water. So, Mu‘ādh rubbed his body with dust as substitute for water, then performed the *zuhr* (early afternoon) prayer. ‘Umar waited until he found water, but it was too late; the time for *dhuhr* prayer had passed. The Prophet who heard about it said that they should have performed the *tayammum*, as mentioned in the Qur’ānic verse 6 of *sūrat al-Mā’idah* (chapter 5), as follows:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِذَا قُمْتُمْ إِلَى الصَّلَاةِ فَاغْسِلُوا وُجُوهَكُمْ وَأَيْدِيَكُمْ إِلَى الْمَرَافِقِ
وَامْسَحُوا بِرُءُوسِكُمْ وَأَرْجُلَكُمْ إِلَى الْكَعْبَيْنِ وَإِنْ كُنْتُمْ جُنُبًا فَاطَّهَّرُوا وَإِنْ كُنْتُمْ مَرْضَى
أَوْ عَلَى سَفَرٍ أَوْ جَاءَ أَحَدٌ مِنْكُمْ مِنَ الْغَائِطِ أَوْ لَامَسْتُمُ النِّسَاءَ فَلَمْ تَجِدُوا مَاءً
فَتَيَمَّمُوا صَعِيدًا طَيِّبًا فَامْسَحُوا بِوُجُوهِكُمْ وَأَيْدِيكُمْ مِنْهُ ... (المائدة : ٦)

*O you who believe! When you intend to offer the prayer, wash your faces and your hands (forearms) up to the elbows, rub (by passing wet hands) over your heads, and (wash) your feet up to the ankles. If you are in a state of janābah (major state of impurity), purify yourselves (bathe your whole body). But if you are ill or on a journey, or any of you comes after answering the call of nature, or you have been in contact with women, and you find no water, then perform **tayammum** with clean earth and rub therewith your faces and hands... ” (Q. 5:6).*

Another example of the *ijtihād* of the *ṣaḥābah* is when they were on a journey they did not find water, and therefore they performed *tayammum*, and then prayed their *zuhr* prayer. When they found water later, one of them performed ablution and prayed

again *zuhr* prayer, as the time for this prayer had not lapsed yet. The other one did not repeat his prayer. When the Prophet heard about it, he said that the person who did not repeat his prayer was correct, whereas the one who repeated the prayer got the merit of a *sunnah* (recommended) prayer.

Confusion is rampant among Muslims, as many of them pass their own legal judgment based solely on what is called “common sense”, and not on the divine texts, the Qur’ān and the *Sunnah* of the Prophet. The moment they enter the domain of jurists to which they do not belong, argument starts and sometimes violently. On one Friday, after the *imām* of the Preston mosque in Melbourne talked about this issue, an old man shouted in Arabic after the Friday prayer, saying, “If ‘Umar [the companion of the Prophet who was known for his piety and strict application of Islamic law when he became caliph] were among us, we would have killed him out of our ignorance.”

To sum up, the injunction of performing prayers is in the domain of *sharī‘ah*. It is based on revelation, it is fundamental in nature, definite and final (nobody can change it), universal and indicates unity. The prayer timetable in northern part of the United States or Canada, such as at the town of North Pole in Alaska or Yellowknife in the Northwest Territories by following the prayer timetable in Makkah or that of the Muslims at the nearest town, such as Ft. McMurray in Northern Alberta, Canada, is in the domain of *fiqh*. It is based on human understanding, based on assumption, and is the result of the *ijtihād* of the Muslim legists and jurists. A jurist could change his view from time to time based on the condition and circumstance. Sometimes people ask hypothetical questions. When a person asked Prof. Hamka, the Indonesian scholar, about praying on the moon, he answered, “Go first to the moon, then I shall give you the answer”

There was a story that a person sold a piece of land and later found that there was treasure in the land. To whom does it belong? To the seller? He did not sell the treasure. To the buyer? He did not buy the treasure. To the state? It did not own the land. But the seller, the buyer,

even the state could claim it. Who owned it? Allah. What to do with it? Ask the jurists! The honest seller and buyer went to a judge as they disclaimed the treasure. The wise jurist asked each of them if he had a son or a daughter suitable for marriage. When both of them replied “yes”, the wise judge told them, “Let them marry each other and have the treasure as the dowry.”

15. *HIKMAH* (WISDOM) (1)

Brothers in Islam,

“Wisdom,” which is usually the translation of the Arabic *ḥikmah*, as mentioned in my previous *khuṭbah* is “the power of seeing clearly what is right and just.” The term *ḥikmah*, according to some Muslim scholars is “a kind of knowledge which prevents a person from committing wrong doing.” According to Ibn Qutaybah (d. 276/889) it is knowledge with practice, as a man will not be *ḥakīm* unless he practices what he knows. We should not criticise someone who cannot practice what he knows. I was told that there was a pilot who could not find a job ending with becoming a truck driver. If you know martial arts or know how to shoot people, you should not use your knowledge unless you are attacked, not to find fault with people and attack them. The Japanese police “envy” police of other countries, because they almost never use their pistols. What they used to do is helping people, especially children and the elderly crossing the streets.

According to commentators of the Qur’ān as mentioned by Ibn al-Jawzī (d. 597/ 1201) the term *ḥikmah* has six meanings in the Qur’ān, such as the following verses:

1. حِكْمَةٌ بَالِغَةٌ فَمَا تُغْنِ التُّذْرُ (القمر: ٥) [lit.] *perfect wisdom [namely, المَوْعِظَةُ (advice)], but warners benefit them not.*” (Q. 54:5). It is about what has been mentioned before this verse, among which is that وَكُلُّ أَمْرٍ مُسْتَقَرٌّ (القمر: ٣) *“And everything will be settled”* (Q. 54:3), namely, on the Day of Resurrection, وَلَقَدْ جَاءَهُمْ مِنَ الْأَنْبَاءِ (القمر: ٤) *“And indeed there has come news (in this Qur’ān) wherein there is (enough warning) to check (them from evil)”* (Q. 54:4), such as idolatry.
2. السُّنَّةُ , (the *Sunnah* of the Prophet), his sayings, teachings and practice, such as, وَأَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْكَ الْكِتَابَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ وَعَلَّمَكَ مَا لَمْ تَكُنْ تَعْلَمُ (النساء: ١١٣) *“Allah has sent down to you the Book (the Qur’ān), and the Hikmah (namely, the Prophet’s Sunnah, knowledge of what is legal and what is illegal), and taught you that which you knew not...”* (Q.4:113). This is the kind of unrecited revelation (وَحْيٍ غَيْرِ مَقْلُوبٍ) .
3. وَلَقَدْ آتَيْنَا لُقْمَانَ الْحِكْمَةَ أَنْ اشْكُرْ لِلَّهِ (لقمان: ١٢) *“And indeed We bestowed upon Luqmān al-hikmah, (namely, understanding, knowledge and eloquence), saying ‘Give thanks to Allah...’* (Q. 31:12). Qur’ānic commentators said that he was a black man from Nubia (Southern Egypt). The Qur’ānic commentator Mujāhid and al-Hakam said that he was a righteous servant, but not a prophet. It was also said that he was an Ethiopian slave who was a carpenter. When his master told him to slaughter a sheep and bring the best two pieces of it he brought him its tongue and heart. Time passed, and that his master told him again to slaughter a sheep and bring the worst two pieces of it, and again, he brought him its tongue and heart. His master told him, “I told you to bring out the best two pieces, and you brought these, and I told you to bring out the worst two pieces, and you brought these.” Luqmān said, “There is nothing better than these if they are good, and there is

nothing worse than these if they are bad.” (Recorded by al-Ṭabarī from Khālīd al-Rabā‘ī).

4. وَقَتَلَ دَاوُدُ جَالُوتَ وَآتَاهُ اللَّهُ الْمُلْكَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ (Prophethood), as in the verse, وَعَلَّمَهُ مِمَّا يَشَاءُ (البقرة : ٢٥١) *“and Dā’ūd (David) killed Jālūt (Goliath) and Allah gave him (Dā’ūd) the kingdom and hikmah (prophethood) and taught him that which He willeth...”* (Q. 2:251). The story runs briefly as mentioned in previous verses that when the Children of Israel asked their prophet (according to Mujāhid, his name was Samuel), he appointed Ṭālūt (Saul), who was then a soldier, but he was not a descendant of the house of kings among them, but the descendant of Yahudhā (Judah). So, they said, أَلَيْسَ يَكُونُ لَهُ الْمُلْكُ عَلَيْنَا وَنَحْنُ *“how can he be a king over us”,* how can he be the king for us, أَحَقُّ بِالْمُلْكِ مِنْهُ وَلَمْ يُؤْتَ سَعَةً مِنَ الْمَالِ *“when we are fitter than him for the kingdom, and he has not been given enough wealth?”* He was poor, so he was not fit to be a king. Their prophet (Samuel) told them, إِنَّ اللَّهَ *“Verily, Allah has chosen him above you”* وَزَادَهُ بَسْطَةً فِي الْعِلْمِ *“and has increased him abundantly in knowledge and stature”,* meaning that Ṭālūt (Saul) is more knowledgeable and honourable than you, stronger and more patient during combat, and has more knowledge of warfare. Then their prophet (Samuel) told them further, وَاللَّهُ يُؤْتِي مُلْكَهُ مَنْ يَشَاءُ *“and Allah grants His kingdom to whom He wills,”* meaning Allah Alone is the Supreme Authority Who does what He wills, وَاللَّهُ وَاسِعٌ عَلِيمٌ (البقرة : ٢٤٨) *“and Allah is All-Sufficient for His creatures’ needs, All-Knower.”* (Q. 2:248). According to Israelite accounts, Ṭālūt (Saul) promised that whoever killed Jālūt (Goliath) would marry his daughter and would share his kingship. In the battle between Ṭālūt (Saul)’s small army and the big army of Jālūt (Goliath), Dā’ūd (David) killed Jālūt (Goliath). So, he

became king and prophet. Allah gave him *mulk* (kingdom) and *hikmah* (prophethood).

5. اذْعُ إِلَى سَبِيلِ رَبِّكَ بِالْحُكْمَةِ وَالْمَوْعِظَةِ الْحَسَنَةِ (the Qur'ān), as in the verse, (النحل : ١٢٥) *“Invite to the way of your Lord with hikmah [which is usually translated as ‘wisdom’, according to some Qur’ānic commentators mentioned by Ibn al-Jawzī is ‘the Qur’ān’] and fair preaching.”* (Q.16:125). Here, we are told to preach the Qur’ān to people. Further studies on this interpretation is necessary.
6. يُؤْتِي الْحِكْمَةَ مَنْ يَشَاءُ (البقرة), as in the verse, (٢٦٩ : *“He grants hikmah to whom He wills.”* (Q. 2:269). According to Ibn ‘Abbās as recorded by ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭalḥah, *hikmah* in this verse means “knowledge of the Qur’ān, such as what is abrogating and what is abrogated, what is plain and clear and what is not as plain and clear, what it allows and what it does not allow, and what is parable. Ibn Mas‘ūd heard that the Messenger of Allah said,

لَا حَسَدَ إِلَّا فِي اثْنَتَيْنِ رَجُلٌ آتَاهُ اللَّهُ مَالًا فَسَلَّطَهُ عَلَى هَلَكَةٍ
فِي الْحَقِّ وَرَجُلٌ آتَاهُ اللَّهُ حِكْمَةً فَهُوَ يَقْضِي بِهَا وَيُعَلِّمُهَا (رواه البخاري ومسلم
و النسائي وابن ماجه و البيهقي والطبراني و ابن حبان و أحمد)

There is no envy except in two instances: a person whom Allah has endowed with wealth and he spends it righteously, and a person whom Allah has given Hikmah and he judges by it and teaches it to others.
(Reported by Bukhārī, Muslim Nasā’ī, Ibn Mājah, Bayhaqī, Ṭabrānī, Ibn Hibbān, and Aḥmad).

Other Qur’ānic commentators said that *hikmah* in this verse is the Qur’ān itself (acc. to Ibn Mas‘ūd), prophethood (according to Ibn ‘Abbās in one report), *fiqh* (Islamic jurisprudence, according to Mujāhid) and there are some other interpretations. Allah knows best. (ANUMA 10 Febr. 07)

16. *HIKMAH* (WISDOM) (2)

Brothers in Islam,

What is “wisdom”? It is “the power of seeing clearly what is right and just”. A wise person possesses sound judgment concerning his highest interests, and in his own conduct choosing the best end and the best means in reaching that end. A wise man has good practical judgment, a person who has a high degree of knowledge and learning. In Arabic he is called *ḥakīm*, a person who possesses *ḥikmah* (wisdom). The Lebanese people call their physicians *ḥakīms*. One of the persons endowed with wisdom mentioned in the Qur’ān was Luqmān al-Ḥakīm, the Sage. Allah said, (لَقْمَانَ : ١٢) “*And indeed We bestowed upon Luqmān al-ḥikmah (wisdom)...*” (Q. 31:12).

Some examples of using sound judgment are as follows:

- (1) A man complained to the judge that a person had borrowed money from him, but the person denied it and refused to pay it back. The accused was summoned.

“Was there any witness at the time and place where you loaned your money to this person?” asked the judge.

“Nobody, sir,” said the lender, “except there was a stone at that place.”

The judge ordered his men to bring the stone as a witness. Being confident that the stone could not be witness against him, the borrower said,

“The stone cannot talk against me. Moreover, it is too big and too heavy to bring it here.”

At that moment, the judge realised that the borrower had been there where he borrowed money, as he knew the size of the stone. This is an indirect confession. Therefore, the judge asked him to pay back his debt.

- (2) A detective suspected a person of murder, but there was not enough evidence to arrest him. The detective came to him to ask him to help him in a very polite and indirect way to solve this crime. He suggested that the criminal might have used such-and-such weapon in such-and such a way, and asked the criminal’s opinion. Since the detective brought to him an unreasonable theory, on each visit, the criminal eventually “helped” him and told him precisely how the crime had been committed. The detective nodded admiring the smartness of the criminal in committing his crime. At the same time this was an indication that the criminal did the crime, as he knew how he did it. This was an indirect confession. The man was arrested.

“Well,” said the detective, “I am arresting you as a murder suspect.”

- (3) It happened in the Second World War, an American officer who captured a German officer, would like to know the secret of the new German weapon. Instead of torturing the German officer, he told him boastfully about the superiority of the American weapons and started deriding the German weapons. The German officer felt humiliated, and unconsciously explained and revealed the secret of the German new weapons.
- (4) An old Arab emigrant who lived close to New York City wanted to plant potatoes in his garden, but he was too old and too weak to do it. He sent an e-mail to his son who was studying in a college in Paris.

“Beloved son, I am very sad, because I cannot plant potatoes in my garden. I am sure if you were here you would help me dig up the garden.” (English version).

“My beloved son, Ahmad. I wish you were with me now, so that you could help me cultivating the garden to grow potatoes, as I have nobody who could help me.” [Arabic version]

The next day at 3.45 p.m. the father received the reply, as follows:

“Beloved father, please to not touch the garden. It’s there that I have hidden ‘the THING’. Love, Ahmad.” [English version]

“Dear father. Please, never cultivate the garden as I have hidden something in it. When I return home I shall tell you what it is. Your son, Ahmad.” [Arabic version]

At 4.02 p.m. [17 minutes later] the U.S. army, Mariners, Rangers, Police officers from the Department of Homeland Security, FBI, and CIA surrounded the house, took the whole garden apart, searching every inch, but could not find anything, then left.

A day later, the father received another e-mail, as follows:

“Beloved father. I hope the garden is dug up by now, and you can plant your potatoes. That’s all I could do for you from here. Love, Ahmad.” [English version].

“Dear father. I hope that the land has been well cultivated now. This is what I can do to help you while I am in Paris. If you need anything else, please tell me, and forgive me for my limitation. Your son, Ahmad.” [Arabic version].

Nowadays, in this 21st century, men’s lives become more complicated. They create more problems, and solving them requires more wisdom, due to their complexity. Even if we do not create our own problems, they are imposed on us. We cannot avoid them. The English

proverb says, “Shut your door and stay in your house, yet troubles will come from the sky.” But the wise saying also says, “A wise hand can pull an elephant with a thread.” We desperately need wisdom more than ever before, so that we can act properly in solving any problem we are facing. Any foolish act could stain our reputation as Muslims in our community. Let us keep praying, asking Allah for His guidance, and keep obeying and fearing Him, so that He would give us wisdom. It is said, رأس الحكمة مخافة الله “The head of wisdom is fearing Allah.” How? By obeying Him. (ANUMA, 26 January, 07).

17. THE UNRECTED REVELATION

There are two kinds of revelation:

- a. **الْوَحْيُ الْمَثْلُوعُ**, the recited revelation, namely, that can be recited in the prayers, *e.g.*, the verses of the Qur’ān
- b. **الْوَحْيُ غَيْرُ الْمَثْلُوعِ**, the unrecited revelation, namely, that which is received by the Prophet (*s.a.w.*) from time to time to let him know the pleasure of Allah in day-to-day affairs and details of the principles laid down in the Qur’ān with their correct interpretation.

Some examples of the existence of this type of revelation are as follows:

1. After the Prophet’s and his followers’ migration from Makkah to Medinah, the Prophet ordered them to pray in the direction of Bayt al-Maqdis in Jerusalem. As some non-believers criticized him for his shifting the *qiblah* from Makkah the revelation came as Allah’s response. Allah said,

وَمَا جَعَلْنَا الْقِبْلَةَ الَّتِي كُنْتَ عَلَيْهَا إِلَّا لِنَعْلَمَ مَنْ يَتَّبِعُ الرَّسُولَ
 مِمَّنْ يَنْقَلِبُ عَلَى عَقْبَيْهِ وَإِنْ كَانَتْ لَكَبِيرَةً إِلَّا عَلَى الَّذِينَ هَدَى
 اللَّهُ وَمَا كَانَ اللَّهُ لِيُضَيِّعَ إِيمَانَكُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ بِالنَّاسِ
 لَرُءُوفٌ رَحِيمٌ (البقرة : ١٤٣)

*And We made the **Qiblah** (prayer direction towards Jerusalem) which you used to face, only to test those who followed the Messenger (Muhammad s.a.w.) from those who would turn on their heels (i.e., disobey the Messenger). Indeed, it was great (heavy) except for those whom Allah guided. And Allah would never make your faith (prayers) to be lost (i.e., Your prayers offered towards Jerusalem). Truly, Allah is full of kindness, the Most Merciful towards mankind.” (Q. 2:143)*

Then the verse continued with

... فَوَلِّ وَجْهَكَ شَطْرَ الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ... (البقرة ، ١٤٤)
...So turn thy head towards the Holy Mosque (at Makkah)... (Q. 2:144)

Several interpretations of this expression among which are as follows: (1) turning the *qiblah* from the Ka‘bah in Makkah to Bayt al-Maqdis in Jerusalem is a *great* and hard thing to do (the view of Mujāhid, Qatādah, al-Ḥasan, among the Qur’ānic commentators). Some people became apostates after the revelation of this verse. (2) the Ka bah has a *great* position among them (Abū ‘l-‘Āliyah).. (3) Prayer is *great*, meaning it is not easy to establish (Abū Zayd); (4) There is *great wisdom* in shifting the *qibah* to Bayt al-Maqdis in Jerusalem.

Did the Prophet make Bayt al-Maqdis the *qiblah* for the early Muslims in Medinah as he wished it, or by Allah’s order? It was by Allah’s order, because in the above verse, He appointed it to be so, the command had to be executed by the Prophet and his followers. The order to turn the *qiblah* is clearly mentioned in the Qur’ān in the

above verse, but do we find any verse in the Qur'ān where Allah ordered the Prophet to turn the *qiblah* to Bayt al-Maqdis in Jerusalem? No, it was through unrecited revelation.

From this verse we learn that: (a) The Prophet used to receive revelations which are not contained in the Qur'ān; (b) These revelations were from Allah, that the orders based on such revelations were attributed to Allah (c) Like the verses of the Qur'ān, they are also binding. (d) These orders are sometimes given as tests whether or not the Muslims follow the Prophet irrespective of whether or not his orders are contained in the Qur'ān.

2. During the siege Banī 'l-Naḍīr¹³ in Medinah in 4 AH, some Muslims, by the Prophet's order, cut down the date-trees around the fort to

¹³Banī al-Naḍīr was the Jewish tribe who was a client of the Aws tribe against the Khazraj tribe in Medinah. Their fortress was half-day march from Medinah. Their most important chief was Ḥuḡayy ibn Akḥṭab, whose daughter Ṣafīyyah married later to the Prophet. Ḥuḡayy had good relations with Abū Sufyān before the battle of Uḥud, and was suspected of intending to kill the Prophet. In 4 A.H. the Prophet sent Muhammad ibn Maslamah al-Awsī to warn this tribe that they had to leave within ten days under penalty of death, allowing them to take with them all movable goods and to return each year to gather the produce of their palms half of which they gave to the Muslims. They expected help from another Jewish tribe Banī Qurayzah, as well as from Abdullah ibn Ubayy of Khazraj tribe, the leader of the hypocrites, who promised to send two thousand men to their aid. None of them came to help. The Banī 'l-Naḍīr surrendered after about a fortnight siege and within two days bargaining with very hard conditions: they can take with them all movable goods only what they could take away on camels except arms (50 armours and 340 swords). They departed with a caravan of six hundred fully loaded camels. Their immovable property was forfeited and given to the *muhājirīn*. Some of the Jewish of Banī 'l-Naḍīr tribe moved to Syria and others to Khaybar, about 15 km from Medinah.

compel the enemy to surrender. After the siege was over some Jews objected the cutting of their date trees. To this, Allah said

مَا قَطَعْتُمْ مِنْ لَيْتَةٍ أَوْ تَرَكْتُمُوهَا قَائِمَةً عَلَى أُصُولِهَا فَبِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ... (الحشر : ٥)

Whatever date-trees you cut down or left standing upon their roots, that was by the leave of Allah... (Q. 59:5).

That permission to cut down the date-trees was given by Allah through unrecited revelation. There was no mention of it in the Qur'ān.

3. Allah ordered the Muslims to establish prayers. In the state of war Allah gives them a special concession. He says,

حَافِظُوا عَلَى الصَّلَوَاتِ وَالصَّلَاةِ الْوُسْطَى وَقُومُوا لِلَّهِ قَانِتِينَ. فَإِنْ خِفْتُمْ فَرِجَالًا

أَوْ رُكْبَانًا فَإِذَا أَمِنتُمْ فَاذْكُرُوا اللَّهَ كَمَا عَلَّمَكُم... (البقرة : ٢٣٩-٢٤٠)

Take due care of all the prayers and the middle prayer, and stand before Allah in total devotion. But if you are in fear, then (pray) on

foot or riding, but when you are in peace, then recite the name of Allah in the way He taught you. (Q. 2: 239-240).

In this verse the exact number of obligatory prayers has not been given in the Qur'ān, but by the Prophet who said that they are five in number. The expression *recite the name of Allah* means “establish prayers”. In what way? In the way Allah taught the Prophet, not through recited revelation, as there is no comprehensive explanation in the Qur'ān how to pray; it was through unrecited revelation.

There are some interpretation of “the middle prayer” in this verse, as follows: (1) the *zuhur* (early afternoon) prayer, according to Zayd ibn Thābit, Abdullah ibn 'Umar, Abū Sa'īd al-Khudrī, 'Ā'ishah, and the view of Abū Ḥanīfah and his disciples, because it is the first prayer enjoined to the Muslims and it is performed in the

midst of the day; (2) *‘aṣr* (late afternoon) prayer, according to Ibn ‘Abbās, al-Ḥasan, ‘Alī, Ibn Mas‘ūd, Qatādah, and al-Daḥḥāk, because it is the time where people are busy with their work, and the Prophet said that whoever misses the *‘aṣr* prayer his deeds will become void; (3) the *maghrib* (evening) prayer, according to Qubayṣah ibn Dhuwayb, as the Prophet said that the best prayer according to Allah is the *maghrib* prayer which He does not reduce for either a traveller or a settler; (4) the *ishā’* (night) prayer, as it is between two unshortened prayers (*maghrib* and *fajr*) prayers; (5) the *fajr* (dawn) prayer, according Mu‘ādh, Ibn ‘Abbās (in another report from him), Jābir, ‘Atā’, Mujāhid, Ikrimah and al-Shāfi‘ī, because it is between two night prayers (*maghrib* and *ishā’* prayers) and two day prayers (*zuhr* and *aṣr* prayers), and because it is the only prayer which cannot be combined with any other prayer; and (6) any of the five daily prayers; it is kept secret like the secrecy of the *Laylat al-Qadr* (the Night of Power) in the month of Ramadan.

4. Allah says in the Qur’ān,

وَأَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْكَ الْكِتَابَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ وَعَلَّمَكَ مَا لَمْ تَكُنْ تَعْلَمُ
وَكَانَ فَضْلُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكَ عَظِيمًا (النساء : ١١٣)

“...and Allah has revealed upon you the Book and the wisdom, and has taught you what you did not know, and the grace of Allah upon you has been great.” (Q. 4:113)

In this verse Allah said that Allah revealed not only the Book but also the wisdom in addition to teaching him. The way of teaching is either through recited or unrecited revelation. According to Qur’ānic commentators, the word *ḥikmah* in the above verse means the *Sunnah* of the Prophet.¹⁴

¹⁴See Ibn al-Jawzī, *al-Wujūh wa ‘l-Nazā’ir* (Beirut: Mu’assasat al-Risālah, 1405/1958), p. 262.

5. Certain hypocrites who had not joined the Prophet in the expedition of Ḥudaybiyyah, wanted to join him in the campaign of Khaybar, as according to their anticipation Muslims would gain sizeable spoils which they wanted to share, but the Prophet did not allow them. He allowed only those who had joined in the expedition of Ḥudaybiyyah. Allah said,

سَيَقُولُ الْمُخَلَّفُونَ إِذَا انْطَلَقْتُمْ إِلَى مَغَانِمَ لِتَأْخُذُوهَا ذَرُونَا نَتَّبِعْكُمْ يُرِيدُونَ أَنْ
يُبَدِّلُوا كَلَامَ اللَّهِ قُلْ لَنْ تَتَّبِعُونَا كَذَلِكُمْ قَالَ اللَّهُ مِنْ قَبْلُ ... (الفتح : ١٥)

“Those remaining behind will say, when you set forth after Spoils to acquire them, ‘Let us follow you’ desiring to change to words of Allah. Say, ‘You shall not follow us’; so Allah has said earlier...” (Q. 48:15).

According to this verse Allah has said earlier that the hypocrites will not be allowed to join the Prophet in the campaign of Khaybar. Joining him would mean changing the words of Allah. There is no mention in the Qur’ān of barring the non-participants of the campaign of Ḥudaybiyyah from joining the campaign of Khaybar, but rather in the *hadīth* through unrecited revelation.

The wisdom behind these two kinds of revelations: (1) to protect the originality of the *sharī‘ah* (2) to make it easy for the Muslim to memorize. The originality and the purity of the Qur’ān has been maintained and preserved in a book throughout ages up to the present day, and memorized by many Muslims. The unrecited revelation in the form of traditions and sayings and practice of the prophet are also recorded in the books of Islamic knowledge.

When the Prophet suggested to defend Medinah from inside the city against the attack of the combined forces of the Quraysh tribe from Makkah in the battle of the Trench (5/627) Salmān al-Fārisī who came from Persia asked him whether this idea was from Allah or from his own. When the Prophet said that it was from his own, Salmān suggested to dig a trench around the city. Salmān apparently knew that Allah might

have revealed to the Prophet the unrecited revelation. When he knew that the idea came from the Prophet himself, he made the suggestion which was later successful in preventing the enemy from attacking Medinah.

Conclusion:

Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w.), besides the recited revelation, namely the Qur'ān, also received the unrecited revelation as direction, and explanation of the details of principles. This unrecited revelation came to the Prophet from time to time throughout his life. Muslims have to obey the Prophet in the *Sunnah* beside obeying Allah in the Qur'ān.

18. THA'LABAH

The birth of the Prophet Muhammad s.a.w. has been commemorated recently in some Muslim countries. His biography is worthy to learn, as he is the model and example of Muslims' behaviour. Allah says,

لَقَدْ كَانَ لَكُمْ فِي رَسُولِ اللَّهِ أُسْوَةٌ حَسَنَةٌ لِّمَن كَانَ يَرْجُو اللَّهَ
وَالْيَوْمَ الْآخِرَ وَذَكَرَ اللَّهَ كَثِيرًا (الأحزاب : ٢١)

Indeed in the Messenger of Allah you have a good example to follow for him who hopes for (the meeting with) Allah and the Last Day, and remembers Allah much. (Q. 33:21)

Prophet Muhammad s.a.w. is our example for modesty, patience, forbearance, compassion, and many other characters and behaviours. In facing our day-to-day's problems, we are supposed to think what the Prophet would do if he himself is facing the same problems. Let the following story give us a precious lesson.

In the history of Islam, there was a companion of the Prophet called Tha‘labah b. Hātib. He lived in Medinah, among the *anṣār* and came to the Prophet to ask help. As he was poor he asked the Prophet to pray to Allah for him to become rich. The Prophet said to him:

“O Tha‘labah, what is the matter with you!? A little wealth with *shukr* (gratefulness, thanks to Allah) is better than much richness without *shukr*.”

Tha‘labah fell silent upon hearing the Prophet’s statement, but was not satisfied with it. He came again to him, so that he would pray for him to become rich. Again the Prophet said to him:

“O Tha‘labah, it would be better for you to be like myself as an example. If I wished that the hills around me to become gold and silver, Allah would grant my wish. Therefore, it would be better to live a simple life.”

Tha‘labah was still unsatisfied with the Prophet’s answer. He came again to the Prophet and said:

“O Messenger of Allah, pray for me that I would become rich! By Allah Who sent you with truth, if Allah grants me richness, I would give the right of those who have right to it.”

On hearing Tha‘labah’s promise and covenant, the Prophet prayed for him. O, Allah, O my Lord, give wealth to Tha‘labah.”

Day after day Tha‘labah’s wealth kept increasing. His sheep kept breeding rapidly, that the streets of Medinah were full of them. In order to tend these sheep, he took them outside Medinah. What happened now? He could pray with the Prophet in the mosque on *zuhr* and *‘asr* prayers only. Before, he had prayed with him the five-daily prayers; now, he did not attend the *maghrib*, *‘ishā*, and *fajr* congregational prayers in the mosque any longer. As his sheep kept breeding very quickly he decided to move and live outside Medinah. Since then, he had time to come to Medinah once a week only to attend the *Jum‘ah* prayer with the Prophet. His sheep kept breeding, so that he decided to move further away from

Medinah, that he could not even attend the *Jum‘ah* prayer. He only waited for any news from people who returned from the *Jum‘ah* prayer. He became too busy with his sheep, that he had no time to leave them.

One day the Prophet remembered Tha‘labah who had been absent from the mosque for a long time. He asked his companions,

“Where is Tha‘labah now? Why he does not appear any longer?”

When they told him that Tha‘labah was being busy tending his sheep around the valley, he complained and sighed heavily, saying: “Why has it become like this, Tha‘labah, why has it become like this?”

When the order to pay *zakāh* was revealed by Allah, the Prophet sent his men to collect it from people who were liable to it. He sent two people, one from Sulaym tribe and another from Juhaynah tribe to collect *zakāh* from Tha‘labah and the Sulaym tribe. The two men came to Tha‘labah reading a mandate and instruction from the Prophet. But Tha‘labah was reluctant to pay the *zakāh*. He said, “What kind of *zakāh*? This is like *jizyah* (tax levied on non-Muslims). Go first to the Sulaym tribe to collect *zakāh* from them, then come to me.” He kept postponing to avoid paying the *zakāh*.

The two *zakāh* collectors came to the Sulaym tribe who welcomed and treated them well. They chose their best camels for the *zakāh*. Then the *zakāh* collectors came again to Tha‘labah who had promised to pay the *zakāh* for his sheep. He asked them again to read the Prophet’s mandate. After the reading, he said again: “This is not different from *jizyah*. Go first, and give me time to think it over.” Apparently, he wanted to avoid paying *zakāh*.

The two *zakāh* collectors returned to Medinah with the camels as the *zakāh* of the Sulaym tribe. The Prophet prayed for the Sulaym tribe who paid *zakāh*. When he learned that Tha‘labah had not paid *zakāh*, he said, “Why has it become like this, Tha‘labah?” Shortly afterwards, revelation came as follows:

وَمِنْهُمْ مَنْ عَاهَدَ اللَّهَ لَئِنْ آتَانَا مِنْ فَضْلِهِ لَنَصَّدَّقَنَّ وَلَنَكُونَنَّ مِنَ الصَّالِحِينَ. فَلَمَّا
 آتَاهُمْ مِنْ فَضْلِهِ بَخِلُوا بِهِ وَتَوَلَّوْا وَهُمْ مُعْرِضُونَ. فَأَعْقَبَهُمْ نِفَاقًا فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ إِلَى
 يَوْمٍ يَلْقَوْنَهُ بِمَا أَخْلَفُوا اللَّهَ مَا وَعَدُوهُ وَبِمَا كَانُوا يَكْذِبُونَ (التوبة: ٧٥-٧٧)

*And of them are some who made a covenant with Allah (saying): "If He bestowed on us of His bounty, we will verily give **sadaqah** (**zakāh** and voluntary charity) and will be certainly among those who are righteous." Then when He gave them of His bounty, they became niggardly [refused to pay **sadaqah**], and turned away, averse. So, He punished them by putting hypocrisy into their hearts till the Day whereon they shall meet Him and because they used to tell lies. (Q. 9:75-77).*

As usual, the Prophet cited every revelation he just received to his companions. When these verses were cited by the Prophet to his companions one of them who heard them was a relative of Tha‘labah. He came to Tha‘labah and said, “Woe unto you, O Tha‘labah! Allah has sent revelation concerning you.” He was astonished and realized his carelessness. Immediately he came to the Prophet to pay his *zakāh*, but it was too late. The Prophet could not accept it any longer, as Allah had prohibited him from accepting it. He reminded him that he had advised him before, but he disregarded his advice. So, Tha‘labah returned home full of remorse and sadness.

After the death of the Prophet, Abu Bakr became caliph. Tha‘labah came to Abu Bakr to offer him his *zakāh*, but Abu Bakr refused to accept it, saying, “How could I accept your *zakāh*, when the Messenger of Allah himself rejected it?”

After the death of Abu Bakr he was succeeded by ‘Umar, Tha‘labah came to him persuading him to accept his *zakāh*, but ‘Umar also rejected it, saying, “How could I accept your *zakāh*, whereas the Messenger of Allah and Abu Bakr themselves have rejected it?”

After the death of ‘Umar he was succeeded by ‘Uthman *r.a.* Tha‘labah came and persuaded ‘Uthman to accept his *zakāh*, but he also

declined. So, Tha‘labah died in the time of the caliphate of ‘Uthman taking with him his major sin, namely, breaking his promise with Allah and His Messenger.

This was the end of accumulated wealth that became the enemy of its owner. Wealth which is usually regarded as a means to obtain one’s ambition including power and authority can turn against its owner (Ind. “*senjata makan tuan*”). Many people promise that when they become rich they will do something good with it, to give charity and help the poor, but when they become rich they forget their promise, and would say, for example, “you are poor because you are lazy,” but Allah never forgets their promises. Wealth could make people forget themselves, become arrogant with their wealth, whereas it is all from Allah and belongs to Him, and is only *amānah*, a trust, something entrusted to them to spend in His way. Like a double-edged knife, it could be a useful or a dangerous tool, depending on the intention of the one who uses it.

Muslims are enjoined to eradicate poverty which is a grave enemy to Islam, as it could lead to infidelity. One might say, for example, “If there is God Who is Merciful and Compassionate, then why am I living in misery?” Muslims are enjoined seek wealth in order to pay *zakāh* as a means to fight poverty, to help the poor and the needy, to build and create prosperity in Muslim communities, and to defend Islam from its enemy. May Allah protect us from being ungrateful to Him. (ANUMA, 14 April, 06).

19. ‘UMAR AND ABDULLAH IBN KHUDHĀFAH

Brothers in Islam,

One of the companions of the Prophet who was promised Paradise was ‘Umar ibn al-Khattāb. Allah made Islam stronger through his conversion to Islam. The angel Jibrīl (Gabriel *a.s.*) told the Prophet,

يَا مُحَمَّدُ لَقَدْ اسْتَبَشَرَ أَهْلُ السَّمَاءِ بِإِسْلَامِ عُمَرَ

(رواه الطبراني و ابن ماجه و ابن حبان)

“O, Muhammad, the inhabitants of heaven have rejoiced with the conversion of ‘Umar to Islam.”

(Reported by Ṭabrānī, Ibn Mājah, and Ibn ʿAbbān)

When ‘Umar converted to Islam, he asked the Prophet:

“O Messenger of Allah, are not we on the right way (عَلَى الْحَقِّ) whether we die or live?”

“Yes, we are,” said the Prophet.

“Then, why should we hide ourselves?” asked ‘Umar.

So, for the first time the Muslims came out marching in two rows entering the Mosque, *al-Masjid al-Harām*, distressing the Makkan idolaters who opposed Islam and the Prophet. Since then, the Prophet called him as his epithet الْفَارُوقُ “he who distinguishes truth from falsehood.”

The Prophet said about him that Satan was afraid of him. He said to him,

وَالَّذِي نَفْسِي بِيَدِهِ مَا لَقِيَكَ الشَّيْطَانُ قَطُّ سَالِكًا فَجَاءَ إِلَّا سَلَّكَ فَجَاءَ

غَيْرَ فَجَّكَ (رواه البخاري و مسلم والنسائي والطبراني و أحمد)

By Allah Who has my soul in His hand, whenever Satan meets you taking one way he will take another way.

(Reported by Bukhārī, Muslim, Nasā’ī, and Ṭabrānī)

It was ‘Umar who used the Hijrah calendar. He prayed to die as martyr; he said:

اللَّهُمَّ ارْزُقْنِي شَهَادَةً فِي سَبِيلِكَ وَاجْعَلْ مَوْتِي فِي بَلَدٍ

رَسُولُكَ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ (رواه البخاري)

O Allah, grant me martyrdom for Your path,

*and make me die in the town (country) of Your Messenger,
peace be upon him. (Reported by Bukhārī)*

He was stabbed to death by Abū Lu'lu'ah the Magian, the slave of al-Mughīrah ibn Shu'bah while he was performing the *fajr* prayer, and passed away on Tuesday night in 23 A.H. and was buried beside the grave of Abū Bakr who had been buried beside the grave of the Prophet inside the *Masjid Nabawī* in Medinah.

When 'Umr ibn al-Khaṭṭāb sent an army to fight the army of Akhmawī, some of the Muslims were captured and taken prisoners, among them was Abdullah ibn Khudhāfah, and was brought to the king. When the king knew that he was one of the companions of the Prophet, he tempted him, saying:

“Would you become Christian? If you do, I will give you half of my kingdom.”

“If you give me your whole kingdom as well as the whole wealth given to the Arabs, I would never abandon the religion brought by Prophet Muhammad *s.a.w.*,” said Ibn Khudhāfah.

“If so, I have to kill you, then”, said the king.

“Do whatever you like,” said Ibn Khudhāfah.

So, Abdullah ibn Khudhāfah was crucified. His hands and legs were shot with arrows to scare him. He was still offered to become Christian and still firmly rejected.

The king was annoyed and became fed up. He ordered his men to bring Ibn Khudhāfah down and away from the cross, and to take him near a big bathtub containing boiling water. Two Muslim prisoners were brought and the king threatened to kill them with the boiled water if he did not accept Christianity. As he refused, the two Muslim prisoners were killed.

Abdullah ibn Khudhāfah started weeping. Thinking that he was scared and regretting for refusing to become Christian, the king offered him again to become Christian. When he rejected, the king asked him:

“What makes you weep?”

“I am weeping because both of my companions attained martyrdom, thrown into the boiling tub,” said Abdullah ibn Khudhāfah, “and I wish to be like them, but you do not give me chance to become martyr like them.”

The king became amazed and admired ibn Khudhāfah’s firm belief. Yet, he insisted to conquer his heart. He said:

“If you kiss my head I will release you.”

Abdullah ibn Khudhāfah thought for a while and said to himself: “It is alright to kiss the head of this enemy of Allah as long as he releases the whole Muslim prisoners.” So, he said:

“I’ll kiss your head if you will also release the remaining Muslim prisoners.”

Unexpectedly, the king agreed to this condition. Abdullah ibn Khudhāfah kissed the king’s head, and the Muslim prisoners were released.

When ‘Umar ibn al- Khattāb heard this news, he said: “I’ll order every Muslim to kiss Abdullah ibn Khudhāfah’s head, and I’ll be the first one to do it.”

When the Muslim army arrived at Medinah, ‘Umar kissed ‘Abdullah ibn Khudhāfah’s head, followed by the Muslims in Medinah.

This is one example of the strong faith and steadfastness of the noble companion. However, one day the prophet asked his companions,

“Who are, in your opinion, the people who have the strongest faith who will have the greatest reward?”

“The angels, O Messenger of Allah,” said his companions.

The Prophet shook his head, saying, “How wouldn’t they have strong faith when they are with their Lord?”

“If so, then the prophets,” said his companions.

Again the Prophet shook his head, saying: “How wouldn’t they have strong faith when they themselves received revelation from Him?”

The companions started to be confused, and gave the answer: “If so, then we are, O Messenger of Allah”

This was also not the right answer, as they were with the Prophet and witnessed the revelation. They could not give any more answers and wished to get the proper one. So, the Prophet said: “They are a group of people after me. They believe in the Qur’ān and practice its contents, although they have not seen me. They have the strongest faith and will receive the greatest reward.”

In a *hadīth* the Prophet said:

*Whoever sticks to my **Sunnah** in the time my **ummah** becomes corrupted, he will receive the reward of one hundred martyrs.* (Reported by al-Bayhaqī)

May Allah include us among them, Āmīn. (ANUMA, 9 June, 06)

20. THUMĀMAH BIN UTHĀL

One of the *sahābah* (companions of the Prophet) who had hated the Prophet Muhammad (*s.a.w.*) before he became Muslim was Thumāmah bin Uthāl. He lived in Central Arabia, one of the leaders of

Banī Hanīfah tribe and one of the kings of Yamāmah region. When the Prophet invited him to Islam in 6/629 as he did to seven other rulers, he was disappointed and felt humiliated. He intended to kill the Prophet. Before carrying out his intention he was prevented by his uncles; instead, he killed some of the *sahābah*. Consequently, the Prophet permitted his companions to kill him.

It has been the tradition of the Arabs before Islam to perform *‘umrah* (minor pilgrimage) to Makkah. They performed their *ṭawāf* (circumambulation) around the Ka‘bah and sacrificed to their idols. Thumāmah who intended to perform *‘umrah* was passing the outskirts of Medinah on his way to Makkah. Unfortunately for him, he was arrested by a Muslim military detachment guarding the city of Medinah. He was sent to the city and tied up at one of the columns of the city. While the Prophet was on his way to the mosque he saw Thumāmah being tied. He called his companions and said,

“Do you know that man?”

“No, Messenger of Allah,” they said.

“He is Thumāmah bin Uthāl of the Banī Ḥanīfah tribe; so, treat him well,” said the Prophet.

The Prophet entered his house and asked his household to prepare food and to milk the camel and to bring the food and drink to Thumāmah in the morning and in the evening. The Prophet did this before he met and talked to Thumāmah. Then the Prophet met him.

“What do you think, Thumāmah,” asked the Prophet.

“Well, Muhammad,” said Thumāmah, “if you want to kill (me), you will kill a person who has spilt blood [meaning the Prophet’s companions], and if you forgive, you will forgive a person who will thank you. If you want wealth, ask, and you will get what you want.”

The Prophet left him for two days, and kept giving him food and milk everyday. On the third day the Prophet came to Thumāmah again:

“What do you think, Thumāmah?” asked the Prophet.

“I have nothing to say except what I have told you before,” said Thumāmah. “If you want to kill (me), you will kill a person who has spilt blood [meaning the Prophet’s companions], and if you forgive, you will forgive a person who will thank you. If you want wealth, ask, and you will get what you want.”

The Prophet left him again, and came to him the next day.

“What do you think, Thumāmah?” asked the Prophet.

“I have nothing to say except what I have told you before,” said Thumāmah. “If you want to kill (me), you will kill a person who has spilt blood [meaning the Prophet’s companions], and if you forgive, you will forgive a person who will thank you. If you want wealth, ask, and you will get what you want.”

On hearing this reply of Thumāmah, the Prophet turned to his companions and told them to release him, which they did.

Thumāmah left the Prophet’s mosque until he reached a palm garden near al-Baqi‘ (now a graveyard), cleansed himself, returned to the mosque and stood in front of a group of Muslims, and said,

أَشْهَدُ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَأَشْهَدُ أَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا عَبْدُهُ وَرَسُولُهُ

*I bear witness that there is no god but Allah and Muhammad is
His servant and messenger*

Then he turned to the Prophet, saying,

“O Muhammad, by Allah, there was no face I hated before on this earth more than yours, but your face has become the one I like most; by Allah, there was no religion I hated before more than yours, but now your religion has become the religion I like most; and by Allah, there was no land I hated before more than yours, but now, it has become the one I like most.”

Then he continued,

“I have spilt the blood of your companions; what, then, do you have to do to me?”

“There is no blame on you, O Thumāmah, for (accepting) Islam erases the previous sin,” answered the Prophet.

“By Allah, verily, I will cause losses to the idolaters [who were enemies to the Prophet and the Muslims] the double of the losses I have caused to your companions. Verily, I will put my soul, my sword, and my people to helping you and your religion,” said Thumāmah. Then he added, “Your horsemen brought me here while I was on my way for ‘*umrah*. What then should I do?”, asked Thumāmah.

“Proceed with your ‘*umrah*, but in the way prescribed by Allah and His messenger,” said the Prophet. Then the Prophet taught him then right ritual, such as sacrificing for Allah rather than for idols.

Thumāmah continued his journey to Makkah. When he reach the interior of the city he stood citing the *talbiyyah* (the expression indicating the acceptance of a call or an invitation for pilgrimage) with his loud voice,

لَبَّيْكَ اللَّهُمَّ لَبَّيْكَ، لَبَّيْكَ لَا شَرِيكَ لَكَ لَبَّيْكَ، إِنَّ الْحَمْدَ
وَالنُّعْمَةَ لَكَ وَالْمُلْكَ، لَا شَرِيكَ لَكَ

*Here I am, responding to Your call, O Allah, here I am;
there is no partner with You, here I am, responding to Your
call; verily, all praise and blessing belong to You, and so is
the supreme authority, there is no partner with You.*

He was the first Muslim who had ever entered Mecca citing the *talbiyyah*. It was a response to Allah’s order to Prophet Abraham (Ibrāhīm according to the majority of commentators, whereas according to others, among whom was al-Ḥasan al-Basrī, to Prophet Muhammad; perhaps both are correct, originally to Prophet Abraham, then repeated to Prophet Muhammad) to proclaim to people the pilgrimage to the Ka‘bah in Makkah. Allah said (to Prophet Abraham and Prophet Muhammad),

وَأَذِّنْ فِي النَّاسِ بِالْحَجِّ يَأْتُوكَ رِجَالًا وَعَلَى كُلِّ ضَامِرٍ يَأْتِينَ مِنْ كُلِّ فَجٍّ عَمِيقٍ (الحج : ٢٧)

And proclaim to mankind the hajj (pilgrimage). They will come to you on foot and on every lean camel, they will come from every deep and distant (wide) mountain highway (to perform the hajj). (Q. 22:27)

The idolaters among the Quraysh tribe heard the *talbiyyah* and came to the source of the voice with their swords unsheathed. Instead of being scared, Thumāmah looked at them and proudly raised his voice with his *talbiyyah*. A young man among them tried to shoot him with his arrow, but was stopped by them.

“What is the matter with you?”, they said, “do you know this man? He is Thumāmah son of Uthāl, the king of Yamāmah. By Allah, if you ever do him any harm, his people will revenge and stop sending us food, and we shall die of starvation.”

So, they sheathed their swords and approached Thumāmah.

“What happens to you?,” they asked, “have you become Sabeen (*i.e.*, changed your religion) and abandoned the religion of your forefathers?”

“No, I do not, but I am following the best religion; I have followed the religion of Muhammad,” answered Thumāmah, and added, “I swear by the Lord of this House (*i.e.*, the Ka‘bah), upon my return to Yamāmah, I will not let any seed of grain or any of Yamāmah’s wealth reach you until you, all of you, follow the religion of Muhammad.”

Then Thumāmah performed his *‘umrah*, sacrificed to Allah, rather than to idols, and went home. He ordered his people to boycott the Quraysh tribe economically. This economic blockade was felt little by little by the Quraysh: the price of goods was increasing, and they started suffering lack of food. All they could do was to plead to the Prophet to persuade Thumāmah to stop his economic blockade. They wrote to the Prophet as follows:

Our pledge with you has been that you should establish kinship with us, and we urge you to keep it. But now, you have severed

your kinship relationship with us and killed our fathers with swords, and our children with hunger. Thumamah is cutting his food supply for us and is harming us. If you would like to write to him so that he would send us what we need, please do so!

The Prophet wrote to Thumāmah and the economic blockade was lifted.

Thumāmah did more for Islam. When a man called Musaylimah who claimed himself to be a prophet, appeared in his area, Thumāmah warned his people against this false prophet. He told them that no two prophets would appear at the same time, no prophet would share Muhammad in his prophethood, and moreover, no prophet would come after him.

Thumāmah, after accepting Islam, had done many more good deeds than bad deeds for Islam before he embraced this religion. Had the Prophet retaliated for the assassination of his companions by killing Thumāmah, this would not have won him and his people to his side. The people of Yamāmah might have turned against him for the murder of their king. This is one of many examples from the biography of Prophet Muhammad *s.a.w.* who was sent by Allah as mercy to the world, in which enemies were turned into allies. (21 April, 06)

21. SIR JAMES JEANS (1877-1946)

Brothers in Islam,

Long time ago, approximately in the 1920s, before the partition of the Indian sub-continent into India and Pakistan, there lived in Delhi a British scholar called Sir James Hopwood Jeans. He was born in London in 1877 and died in 1946. He was a mathematician, physicist, and

astronomer. He was graduated from the University of Cambridge. From 1910 till 1912 he was professor of applied mathematics at Princeton University. He was well-known for his successful application of mathematics to problems in physics and astronomy. His original contribution in physics is on the kinetic theory of gases and forms of energy radiation; in astronomy, on giant and dwarf stars, the nature of spiral nebulae, and the origin of the cosmos. Among his writings for laymen are *The Universe around Us* (1929), *The Stars in their Courses* (1931), and *Through Space and Time* (1934).

On a Sunday morning, and Indian Muslim scholar Inayatullah Khan met him on the street on his way to the church, carrying his umbrella, although it was raining. When Inayatullah asked him why he did not open his umbrella, despite of the rain, he opened it. When he asked him, why such a great scholar like him, would like to go to church, he invited him to visit him in his house in the evening.

In the evening, ‘Inayatullah came to visit him. His wife led him to his study room. There the great astronomer explained the wonder of the universe to him: the planets, the stars and their locations, orbits and so on. Then he said that when he was observing this planets and stars and their wonderful systems he trembled with fear, amazed with this wonderful creation of God, and said, “Oh God, how great You are!” Then he said to ‘Inayatullah,

“Now, you understand, O ‘Inayatullah, why I go to church.”

“Your explanation is amazing, and it reminds me of one verse in the Qur’ān. I would like to cite it, if you like,” said ‘Inayatullah.

“With pleasure,” said Sir James Jeans.

Then ‘Inayatullah cited the following Qur’ānic verse,

أَلَمْ تَرَ أَنَّ اللَّهَ أَنزَلَ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ مَاءً فَأَخْرَجْنَا بِهِ ثَمَرَاتٍ مُّخْتَلِفًا أَلْوَانُهَا وَمِنَ الْجِبَالِ
جُدَدٌ بَيضٌ وَحُمْرٌ مُّخْتَلِفٌ أَلْوَانُهَا وَغَرَابِيبُ سُودَ. وَمِنَ النَّاسِ وَالدَّوَابِّ وَأَلْأَنْعَامِ مُّخْتَلِفٌ أَلْوَانُهُ
كَذَلِكَ إِنَّمَا يَخْشَى اللَّهَ مِنْ عِبَادِهِ الْعُلَمَاءُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَزِيزٌ غَفُورٌ (فاطر : ٢٧-٢٨)

*See you not that Allah sends down water from the sky, and We produce therewith fruits of various colours, and among the mountains are **judad** [streaks] white and red, of varying colours and (others) raven [**gharābīb**]-black. And likewise, men and moving creatures and cattle are of various colours. It is only those among His servants who have knowledge that fear Allah. Verily, Allah is All-Mighty, Oft-Forgiving. (Q. 35:27-28).*

These two verses tell us of Allah's complete and perfect power of creation, namely, He created different kinds of things (human beings, animals, vegetation and mountains) with various colours, from one thing: water from the sky sent by Allah. With the same water Allah creates also fruits with various colours and tastes.

A similar verse dealing with this wonder of Allah's perfect creation is as follows:

وَفِي الْأَرْضِ قِطْعٌ مُتَجَاوِرَاتٍ وَجَنَّاتٍ مِنْ أَغْنَابٍ وَزَرْعٌ وَنَخِيلٌ صِنْوَانٌ وَغَيْرُ صِنْوَانٍ يُسْقَى بِمَاءٍ وَاحِدٍ وَنُفِضْلُ بَعْضُهَا عَلَى بَعْضٍ فِي الْأَكْلِ إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَاتٍ لِقَوْمٍ يَعْقِلُونَ (الرعد : ٤)

*And in the earth are neighbouring tracts, and gardens of vines, and green crops, and date palms, growing into two or three from a single stem root, or otherwise, watered with the same water; yet some of them We make more excellent than others to eat. Verily, in these things there are **āyāt** for the people who understand. (Q. 13:4).*

Besides plants and fruit of different colours Allah mentions that these various colours are also found in the mountains. He said,

وَمِنَ الْجِبَالِ جُدَدٌ بَيَضٌ وَحُمْرٌ مُخْتَلِفٌ أَلْوَانُهَا وَغَرَابِيبُ سُودٌ

*And among the mountains are **judad** [streaks] white and red, of varying colours and (others) raven [**غَرَابِيب**]-black.*

There are white and red mountains; there are also streaks [*i.e.*, thin and irregular lines] in some of these mountains with different colours. There are also very black mountains. The term جُدَدَ (*judad*) means, according to Ibn ‘Abbās, “pathways”. This is also the view of Abū Mālik, al-Ḥasan, Qatādah, and al-Suddī. The term غَرَابٍ (*gharābīb*) according to ‘Ikrimah means high and black mountains. This is also the view of Abū Mālik, ‘Aṭā’ and Qatādah.

If you have ever seen the Ayers Rock near Mt. Olga, located 450 km Southeast of Alice Spring, that monolith (a single upright block of stone) is the largest one in the world. It is 348 metres high, and 9 kms in circumference. As the sun shines on this rock during the day it changes colours: red, blue, pink, and brown. Tens of thousands of people visit it each year. No wonder, most of the people of Alice Spring earn their living in tourist industry, Allah’s blessing through this mighty rock.

Then Allah says that various colours are also found among living things, such as human beings, moving creatures and cattle. He said,

وَمِنَ النَّاسِ وَالْدَّوَابِّ وَالْأَنْعَامِ مُخْتَلِفٌ أَلْوَانُهُ ذَلِكَ

*And likewise, men and moving creatures
and cattle are of various colours.*

This various colours of man are mentioned also in another verse of the Qur’ān,

وَمِنْ آيَاتِهِ خَلْقُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَاخْتِلَافُ أَلْوَانِكُمْ

وَأَلْوَانِكُمْ إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَاتٍ لِّلْعَالَمِينَ (الروم : ٢٢)

*And among His Signs is the creation of the heavens and the earth,
and the difference of your languages and colours. Verily, in that
are indeed signs for men of sound knowledge. (Q. 30: 22)*

Even the human beings, who are created of the same species, have various colours, races and languages. We have different colours, races and language, and no one is better than the other in the sight of Allah. What matters is our *taqwá*, faith and deeds. There are about three

thousand languages spoken by people. The aborigines themselves have about 250 languages.

The verse ends with

إِنَّمَا يَخْشَى اللَّهَ مِنْ عِبَادِهِ الْعُلَمَاءُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَزِيزٌ غَفُورٌ

It is only those among His servants who have knowledge that fear Allah. Verily, Allah is All-Mighty, Oft-Forgiving.

He is so powerful that He could punish us any time, but He is also Oft-Forgiving, and keeps the door of repentance open while we are still alive.

What happened when Sir James Jeans heard this verse? He was amazed, and exclaimed,

What did you say? That only people who have knowledge that fear God? Amazing! Is it really mentioned in the Qur'ān? Muhammad was illiterate. Who told him the thing that took me over forty years of study to come to know it? [He had studied astronomy over forty years]. It must be from God Himself.

This was the confession of the great scholar, Sir James Jeans. There are many other Qur'ānic verses which we shall deal with in due course. (ANUMA, 26 May, 06)

22. PROF. ARTHUR (ABDULLAH) ALLISON

On the 16th of March 1979, (to be precise, 27 years and 3 months ago), a dialogue was being conducted between the Muslim scholar K.H. Bahaudin Mudhary and Antonius Widuri at Sumenep, the capital of the island of Madura in Indonesia. It was the 8th evening of the dialogue which lasted for 9 evenings, resulting in the conversion of Antonius Widuri to Islam. On that night Anonius Widuri stated that there were

many Indonesian Muslims who converted to Christianity, but K.H. Bahaudin Mudhary said that they were not scholars who converted as the result of study and research; but poor people who were in a miserable condition. Antonius Widuri could not name any Muslim scholar who converted to Christianity. Two days later Antonius Widuri declared his conversion to Islam in an evening ceremony. Sadly, that year 1979 K.H. Bahaudin Mudhary passed away at the age of 58.

One of many scholars who found and embraced Islam through research was Prof. Arthur Allison. He was Head of the Department of Electrical and Electronic Engineering at the University of London. He was also President of British Society for Psychological and Spiritual Studies. In September 1985 he was invited to attend the First International Conference on Medical Inimitability in the Qur'ān held in Cairo, Egypt. In this conference he presented two papers: (1) on psychological and spiritual methods of therapy in the light of the Qur'ān; (2) on sleep and death in the light of the Qur'ānic verse *sūrat al-Zumar* 39:42, in collaboration with Dr. Muhammad Yahyá Sharaf. The verse runs as follows:

اللَّهُ يَتَوَفَّى الْأَنْفُسَ حِينَ مَوْتِهَا وَالَّتِي لَمْ تَمُتْ فِي مَنَامِهَا فَيُمْسِكُ الَّتِي قَضَىٰ عَلَيْهَا الْمَوْتَ
وَيُرْسِلُ الْأُخْرَىٰ إِلَىٰ أَجَلٍ مُّسَمًّى إِنَّ فِي ذَٰلِكَ لَآيَاتٍ لِّقَوْمٍ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ (الزمر: ٤٢)

It is Allah that takes the souls (of men) at death; and those that die not (He takes) during their sleep; those on whom He has passed the decree of death, He keeps back (from returning to life), but the rest He sends (to their bodies) for a term appointed. Verily in this are signs for those who reflect. (Q. 39:42, A.Y. Ali's translation).

Abdullah Yusuf Ali's explanation of this verse is as follows:

“اللَّهُ يَتَوَفَّى الْأَنْفُسَ حِينَ مَوْتِهَا” *“Allah takes the souls (of men) at death” means that “in death we surrender our physical life, but our soul does not die; it goes back to a plane of existence in which it is more conscious of the realities of the spiritual*

world. What is sleep? As far as animal life is concerned it is the cessation of the working of the nervous system, though other animal functions, such as digestion, growth and the circulation of the blood continue, possibly at a different pace. It is the response of the nervous system, and in this respect it is common to man and animals, and perhaps even to plants, if, as is probable, plants have a nervous system. The mental process (and certainly volition) are also suspended in sleep, except that in ordinary dreams there is a medley of recollections, which often present vividly to our consciousness things that do not or cannot happen in nature as we know it in our coordinated minds. But there is another kind of dream which is rarer-one in which the dreamer sees things as they actually happen, backward or forwards in time, or in which gifted individuals see spiritual truths otherwise imperceptible to them. How can we explain this? It is suggested that our soul or personality,- that something which is above our animal life – is then in a plane of spiritual existence akin to physical death when we are nearer to Allah. In poetic imagery, Sleep is the “twin brother to Death.”

Sleep being twin-brother to Death, our souls are for the time being released from the bondage of the flesh. Allah takes them for the time being. If, as some do, we are to die peacefully in sleep, our soul does not come back to the physical body, and the latter decays and dies. If we have still some period of life to fulfill according to Allah’s decree, our soul comes back to the body, and we resume our functions in this life.

If we contemplate these things, we can see clearly many spiritual truths, e.g. (1) that our bodily life and death are not the whole story of our existence; (2) that in our bodily life we may be dead to the spiritual world, and in our bodily death, may be our awakening to the spiritual world; (3) that our nightly sleep, besides performing the function or rest to our physical life, gives us a fore-taste of what we call death, which

does not end our personality; and (4) that the Resurrection is not more wonderful than our daily rising from Sleep, the “twin-brother of Death”.

Another verse dealing with life, sleep and death is as follows:

هُوَ الَّذِي يَتَوَفَّاكُم بِاللَّيْلِ وَيَعْلَمُ مَا جَرَحْتُم بِالنَّهَارِ ثُمَّ يَبْعَثُكُمْ فِيهِ لِيُقْضَىٰ أَجَلٌ مُّسَمًّى ثُمَّ إِلَيْهِ مَرْجِعُكُمْ ثُمَّ يُنَبِّئُكُم بِمَا كُنتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ (الأنعام: ٦٠)

It is He Who takes your souls by night (when you are asleep), and has knowledge of all that you have done by day, then He raises (wakes) you up again that a term appointed (your life period) be fulfilled, then (in the end) to Him will be your return. Then He will inform you of that which you used to do. (Q. 6:60).

Ali's comment on this verse is this:

As the rest of His Creation is subject to His Law and Plan, so is man's life in every particular and at every moment, awake or asleep. The mystery of Sleep – “the twin brother to death” – is called the taking of our soul by Him, with the record of all we have done in our waking moments, and this record sometimes appears to us in confused glimpses in dreams. By day we awaken again to our activities, and so it goes on until we fulfill the term of our life appointed for this earth. Then comes the other Sleep (death) with the longer record of our Day (Life); and then in the end comes the Resurrection and Judgment, at which we see everything clearly and not as in dream, for that is the final Reality.

Prof. Allison as an expert in psychology and spiritual studies explained this verse and said that there is similarity between dreaming and death as well as the return of the soul to the physical body when one is waking up. The idea of the separation of the soul from the body in sleep and death is in line with the study of parapsychology. This verse convinced him of the truth of Islam that this verse must have been from Allah to Prophet Muhammad. At the end of the conference Prof. Allison proclaimed his conversion to Islam before the Rector of al-Azhar,

Shaykh Jād al-Ḥaqq, the Ministry of Awqāf, and changed his name from “Arthur” to “Abdullah” Allison.

In an interview with the Arabic weekly *al-Muslimūn* Prof. Allison said that as President of British Society for Psychological and Spiritual Studies he studied Hinduism, then Buddhism, and Islam. He found the great difference among world religions, and finally chose Islam.

Besides citing *āyat al-kursī* the Prophet taught us to say the *du‘ā*’ (supplication) before going to sleep *بِسْمِكَ اللَّهُمَّ أَمُوتُ وَأَحْيَا In Your name, O Allah, I die and live*” and when we wake up to thank Him saying, *الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ* “Praise be to Allah Who has revived us after our death (namely, sleep), and to Him we shall return (on the Resurrection Day).” (Reported by Bukhārī and Aḥmad) indicating that “sleep is the twin-brother of death.” It happened that people died in their sleep. (ANUMA, 16 June, 06)

23. MUHAMMAD ASAD AND SAMYA WADI

It is mentioned in the Qur’ān that Allah guides whom He wishes. When the Prophet failed to convince his beloved uncle Abū Ṭālib to embrace Islam so that he would be safe in the Hereafter, Allah revealed to him:

إِنَّكَ لَا تَهْدِي مَنْ أَحْبَبْتَ وَلَكِنَّ اللَّهَ يَهْدِي مَنْ
يَشَاءُ وَهُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِالْمُهْتَدِينَ (القصص : ٥٦)

*Verily, you cannot guide whom you love, but
it is really Allah Who guides whom He will. And He knows*

best those Who are the guided. (Q. 28:56).

In other words, guidance is from Allah alone, our duty is to convey the message, the result is from Allah.

There are many ways to convey the message, through speech, and through examples, through actions and even through stories. A great scholar was asked one day to deliver a religious speech at a mosque. He gave the audience the biography of the Prophet. After finishing the speech the *imām* of the mosque told him that he should have given *fiqh*, Islamic law, what is *ḥalāl* and what is *ḥarām*. He responded and said that the biography of the Prophet was included as one of religious teachings. This is because the Prophet put the teachings of Islam into practice. We know every story in the Qur'an gives us moral lessons. The story of Prophet Joseph (Yūsuf a.s.) mentioned in *sūrat Yūsuf* (chapter 12), for example, gives us so many moral lessons: such as how to behave with our brothers who wrong us. He reminded them how they treated him very badly. Yet, he did not retaliate; he did not even blame them. He simply said that it was Satan who misguided them to do what they did. Before preaching religion, he had become friends with his fellow mate in the prison. His father, Prophet Jacob (Ya'qūb) told his sons to search for Joseph and Benjamin without losing hope, because he said, as mentioned in the Qur'an,

يَا بَنِيَّ اذْهَبُوا فَتَحَسَّسُوا مِنْ يُوسُفَ وَأَخِيهِ وَلَا تَيْسَرُوا مِنْ رَوْحِ اللَّهِ
إِنَّهُ لَا يَيْسَسُ مِنْ رَوْحِ اللَّهِ إِلَّا الْقَوْمَ الْكَافِرُونَ (يوسف : ٨٧)

O my sons! Go ye and enquire about Joseph and his brother, and never give up hope of Allah's soothing mercy; truly, no one despairs of Allah's soothing mercy except those who have no faith. (Q. 12:87).

There are also many ways how Allah guides a person. I shall give two examples here: (a) Muḥamad Asad and (b) Samya Wadi, as follows:

a. **Muhammad Asad**

Muhammad Asad was an Austrian Jew, formerly called Leopold Weiss, who was born in Livow, Austria (later became part of Poland) in 1900. At the age of 22 he visited the Middle East, and later became a foreign correspondence of the well-known journal, *Frankfurter Zeitung*, and then travelled through Africa and Asia. He studied Islam and compared it with the conditions of the Muslims, and found that the Muslims were far away from practising their religious teachings. He said: "The more I understood how concrete and how immensely practical the teachings of Islam are, the more eager became my questioning as to why the Muslims had abandoned their full application to real life." He talked about Islam to Muslims as if he were to defend Islam from their negligence. In autumn 1925, in the mountains of Afghanistan, a young governor said to him: "But you are a Muslim, only you do not know it yourself." When he went back to Europe he found that the only consequence of his attitude was to become a Muslim.

Since then, people asked him why he became a Muslim? He said that no particular aspect appealed to him more than any other. He said: "Islam appears to me like a perfect work of architecture. All its parts are harmoniously conceived to complement and support each other; nothing is superfluous and nothing is lacking, with the result of an absolute balance and solid composure."

Leopold Weiss changed his name with Muhammad Asad and devoted himself to studying Islam, lecturing and writing. He studied Arabic and spent over five years in Hejaz and Najd, mostly in Medinah. He enjoyed the friendship of King Ibn Saud. He wrote *Islam at the Crossroads*, *Road to Mecca*, and the English translation of the meanings of the Qur'ān. Then he travelled to India where he met the poet and philosopher Muhammad Iqbal who persuaded him not to continue his journey to Eastern Turkistan, China and Indonesia. When Pakistan was established in 1947 he was called upon to organize and direct a Department of Islamic Reconstruction. After two years he was transferred to Pakistan Foreign Office, and later to Pakistan's mission to the U.N. at New York. He became Pakistan Alternative Representative at

the United Nations. He resided in Libya and moved between Tripoli and his native country Austria.

b. Samya Wadi

It is mentioned in the Qur'ān that certain creatures had been in this world before man called *jinn* (demons). There is a chapter in the Qur'ān called *sūrat al-Jinn* (chapter 72) in which Allah states that a number of *jinn* listened to the Qur'ān from the Prophet, believed in it and called their people to embrace Islam. It is also mentioned in the Qur'ān that a number of *jinn* worked for Prophet-King Solomon (Sulaymān). Some of them were soldiers. Allah said:

وَحُشِرَ لِسُلَيْمَانَ جُنُودُهُ مِنَ الْجِنِّ وَالْإِنسِ وَالطَّيْرِ فَهُمْ يُوزَعُونَ (النمل : ١٧)

And before Solomon were marshaled his hosts,--of jinn and men and birds, and they were all kept in order and ranks. (Q. 27:17).

Others dived at sea, and brought its treasure to him. Some others were builders and even bound together in fetters. Allah said:

فَسَخَّرْنَا لَهُ الرِّيحَ تَجْرِي بِأَمْرِهِ رُخَاءً حَيْثُ أَصَابَ. وَالشَّيَاطِينَ كُلَّ بَنَّاءٍ وَغَوَّاصٍ. وَآخَرِينَ مُقَرَّنِينَ فِي الْأَصْفَادِ (ص : ٣٦-٣٨)

Then We subjected the wind to his power, to flow gently to his order, whithersoever he willed,-- as also the devils (including) every kind of builder, and divers,--as also others bound together in fetters. (Q. 38:36-38)

We believe that behind this material world there is a spiritual world, or an unknown world, the world of the *jinn*. Among them some are believers, others are non-believers. For every one of us there is one who accompanies us, and if we are lucky enough we have a good Muslim *jinni*; if not, we have a bad non-believer *jinni* who likes to inspire us to do bad things. Prophet Muhammad *s.a.w.* himself admitted that a *jinni* had accompanied him, and the *jinni* was a Muslim. Here is another example how Allah guides people to Islam.

We know that about 90% of the population of Egypt are Muslims, and the rest are mainly Christians. They all speak and understand Arabic, the language of the Qur'ān. We also know that Allah has many ways in guiding a person to Islam. One example is the following story:

The Kuwait daily newspaper *al-Qabas* in its supplement published on Monday 26, March 1979, states that a woman of a Coptic Christian family suffered from cancer for five years. She lived in Manial (المنيل) at the outskirts of Cairo. Her name was Mrs. Samya Wadi, age 57. She suddenly suffered strong headaches as a result of pain in her stomach. Her husband, Mr. Safwat Jiryes took her to the hospital. The doctor told her that she suffered from cancer and he could not make the operation as the cancer hid inside a tiny vein in her stomach. She was brought home. One month later she fell into a coma for one month, and the doctors fed her through glucose injection and by giving her pure blood. When she awoke, she found herself paralysed. Her husband called a priest who ordered him to practise certain religious rites, but they could not help her. During this period the cancer reached her liver, and the doctors said that she could live only for a few days, and she would die. A neighbouring Muslim woman who had just returned from pilgrimage advised her to recite certain verses of the Qur'ān. She did and felt better. She could sleep after months of staying awake. Her husband brought her some Qur'ānic tapes for her to listen to.

One night in November 1978 Mrs. Samya Wadi asked her husband to bring her a bottle of the best perfume he could get, *eau de cologne* ("water from Koeln"), and to wash her whole body with it. Then she begged him to turn off the light and leave her alone, because she wanted to enjoy complete darkness that night. The husband thought that this might be her end, that she would die. Therefore, he prayed to God to relieve her from her pain.

In the morning, he knocked at the door, no answer. He knocked again, and again no answer. He opened the door by force and found his wife in a very strange condition. He was shocked to see her. Her upper part was covered with a medical bandage, and her lower part was covered

with a white sheet. She was unconscious. He called his children to see their mother. Neighbours also came to see her. Then he called the doctors. They came and made some medical tests. They said that she had been under a highly delicate operation, and recommended to bring her to the hospital. She was still unconscious. In the hospital the doctors declared that the cancer had been completely uprooted from her stomach and her liver, the operation was very successful, and she was cured..

What did really happen to her? After her recovery a reporter of *al-Qabas* met her in Cairo and asked her to tell him the true story. While trying to stop her tears, she said that at night, after her husband left, she fell asleep while reciting some verses of the Qur'ān. At about one o'clock in the morning, she felt she was completely naked, and some persons whose faces she could not see were around her bed. She was half-conscious, and yet she felt what was happening around her. She thought that she saw her belly was being opened without pain, and the hands of the

unknown visitors started to deal with her sick parts and uprooted the illness. She felt bandages and a piece of cotton was put into her mouth. She went into a coma for three days. Her neighbour Ummu Aḥmad told her that believing jinn made operations for people of pure hearts. The end of the story is that the whole family converted to Islam.

What kind of moral lessons we can get from this woman's experience? It is the duty of Muslims to propagate and to inform people about Islam, but guidance belongs to Allah. Secondly, as Muslims we should never lose hope, never become pessimistic in life, as Allah can do whatever He wants. We should keep trying and working hard, and never abandon hope. (ANUMA, 7 April, 06)

24. EMMANUEL (RAIS) MANOPPO

Brothers in Islam

I would like to take you back to the activity of Christian missionaries in Indonesia during Suharto's rule about thirty years ago, namely, in the seventies and eighties. The Muslim party Masjumi had been banned by the earlier president Sukarno. The activities of Muslim students were oppressed by the ruler who considered them a threat to his authority, and Christian missionaries from abroad were given more opportunity to propagate their religion among Muslims, especially when they got protection and facility from some high ranking Christian officials. In West Irian, now called West Papua, they had access to remoted areas by means of their own air transportation, including planes and helicopters. (We do not know who called the area West IRIAN for the first time. I was told that it was the abbreviation of "*Ikut Republik Indonesia Anti Nederland*" meaning "*Joining the Republic of Indonesia and Anti Netherlands*", but Gus Dur, - Abdurrahman Wahid, the former President of Indonesia - who suggested to change the name said that it was from the Arabic word '*aryān* meaning "naked").

For this missionary purpose they spent a huge amount of money. The fund designated for 1986 alone, twenty years ago, for example, was \$70 million. They had a plan to Chrstianize Indonesia in 50 (fifty) years, and the island of Java (with more than 60 million inhabitants at that time) in 20 (twenty) years. Although they denied this plan, they had succeeded in Chrstianizing 4 % of the total population, especially the poor. It was frustrating according to them, because it was below their expectation, compared to the efforts and the money spent on it.

In this poor and helpless condition of the Indonesian Muslims, Allah made His "divine intervention". The only son of Mr. Samuel Manoppo, the Head of the Indonesian Council of Churches (*Kepala Dewan Gereja Indonesia*), whom he had expected to take over his missionary activity, converted to Islam in 1990. He has two elder

daughters, and his son Emmanuel Manoppo, the youngest, had a dream. He said:

In my dream I was dead and buried. In the grave I saw someone wearing completely white clothes and a turban. He said to me: "You have to convert to Islam no matter how hard the obstacles and the trial you are going to face. Face your father, even though he is a minister or a pastor. What is important is that you have to be resolute and place your trust in Allah.." I asked him: "Who are you actually, what is your name and where do you come from?"' He answered: "You do not have to know my name. Just ask the Muslims; on the night of the 27th of Ramadan, my duty is to come to give inspiration to people who like to follow the right path, including you."

Emmanuel asked his friend Muhammad Tawfiq the meaning of his dream. Tawfiq took him to Bandung to meet his brother who later told him that it happened in *Laylatul Qadr* ("the Night of Power") the merit of which is more than one thousand nights. He also told him that he would be lucky if he became Muslim. So, he studied Islam and became Muslim.

In 1990 he was circumcised in Bandung in the house of Muhammad Taufiq's brother by H. Nawawi SH, the Head of the State Court in Mataram, Lombok. He gave him a Muslim name, from Emmanuel (meaning "God with us") to Effendi Hadi Rais.

One month later H. Nawawi wanted to return to Lombok. He told him to come to Lombok if his parents mistreated him and promised to protect him legally, and would adopt him and take him to one of the Muslim religious boarding schools at Situbondo, East Java. This is what he said:

After undergoing the circumcision I went home. At home I felt that I had to perform the obligatory prayers, as Muslims should do. I did it secretly. How? Every morning, if I woke up late, wearing my shorts and putting my sport shoes on, I told my

father, 'I am going for sport.' With regard to the mid-morning (duha) prayer, early afternoon prayer (dhuhr) or late afternoon prayer (asr) I was free, as my father was in his office and my mother was shopping. I stayed at home alone. With regard to the early evening prayer (maghrib) I prayed quickly, and while at home, I never said my supplication (du'ā), and never said my dhikr (glorification of Allah). I was afraid that my father might have suddenly come home. For the later evening prayer ('ishā') my father had given me a timetable where I could go out at night from 7.00 p.m. till 11.30 pm. After that, the door would be locked. Therefore, I performed my prayer at Muhammad Taufiq's house. After prayer

I read the Qur'ān, till 10.30 p.m., and then went home."

What he did (with prayer) he did the same with his food, until 11 November 1990. What happened at that time was that coincidentally his mother went to Manado, so he stayed at home with his father. While he was preparing to go to the mosque to pray (Friday prayer) it rained. Therefore, he decided to pray in his room. At that time—it might have been Allah's decree—he forgot to lock the door of his room. His first thought was it was safe; the second, his father might have already come home and looked for him in the guest room and elsewhere, and finally at his room. When his father opened the door he was prostrating to come to the last *rak'ah* (unit of prayer).

"Emmanuel! What are you doing upside down?", asked his father. As he was praying, although he had already lost his concentration, he did not want to cancel it. He kept praying. In his prostration it came to his mind that, if he kept his becoming Muslim secret like this, when could he increase his knowledge, and when could he uphold Islam. He felt that he had to seek knowledge. He became defiant and continued his prayer. He said *Allāhu Akbar* then bowed. While he was bowing his father saw the prayer rug. He knew that prayer rugs belonged to the Muslims. At the last prostration his father kicked his buttock, pulled his ear and asked, "Emmanuel, what is your religion?"

Then he admitted, “It is true, dad, I am having now a new religion, Islam. Now, whatever you want to do to me, I am ready.” His father wept, and said,

Emmanuel, if you convert to Islam, it is like throwing feces at my face. I am the greatest pastor in Indonesia, especially in the [Seventh Day] Adventist denomination. I have become the Head of the Indonesian Council of Churches, and you are my only son, whom I expect to become a pastor. If my generation and my students know that you have converted to Islam, where shall I hide my face?

His father continued:

Let us put it this way now, Emmanuel. If you love me and you still acknowledge me as your father, return to your previous religion, and I promise, if you do, I shall give you everything I have, and I shall go to Manado with your mother, and settle there.

This meant that Emmnuel would get three cinemas, two jewelry stores, and one restaurant if he returned to Christianity. But he said he could not accept it even if he gave him the world with its contents.

His father became furious. He burned all his clothing, his residency card, even his Senior High School certificate. He was still unsatisfied. He took a *kasti* (a kind of game similar to baseball) beater and hit him about ten times. His left ear membrane was broken, and pus came out of it.

“Emmanuel,” said his father, “this very night, this very second, this very day, you may go out of this house. But remember, I give you this permission to go once only. This is the only time I give you permission to go. Remember, you will not escape from my surveillance. I shall keep looking for you; I shall order my men to look for you, including your elder sister who is a policewoman. Once you are caught in the street or anywhere, I shall send you right away to Manado where I shall take you to a special Christian hostel for mischievous youth.”

He went to Muhammad Tawfiq's house who advised him to go to his elder brother in Bandung, who, in turn, advised him to go to H. Nawawi in Lombok later after he got his residence card. So, he stayed there in Bandung for several months, until on the 7th of March [1991], at 5 o'clock in the evening two district employees came hurriedly and said, "Rais, Rais, go away quickly."

"What is the matter?" he asked.

"Your elder sister is in the district office and she is coming here," said they.

So he ran away to Semarang, then to Kudus and arrived at about 6 o'clock in the morning. It was Friday. He was just about to enter the mosque when he saw the car of his sister parked in front of the mosque. He ran away to Jepara, where he stopped and told his story to a group of people. His speech was recorded and later distributed to people.

Emmanuel (Rais) said in the recording that the objective of the Christians in Indonesia had been discussed at a meeting in 1973 among four priests of the four denominations: the Catholic, the Protestant, the Advent and the Pantecostal. They held a meeting to discuss how and by what means Indonesia would become majority Christians by any means, legal or illegal. They were targeting poor people. If they found posters of Qur'ānic verses in the houses of Muslims, they did not try to convert them. They received financial assistance nationally as well as from abroad, especially from Italy, Rome, Australia, the United States and Germany. The funds were sent to the office of Emmanuel's father, because he was the Head of the Indonesian Council of Churches. Then he distributed it to various posts in Central Jawa, East Jawa, and all over Indonesia. He bought a 13-hectare piece of land in Jogja region, and Jogja-Semarang regions where they were planning to build a complex for rural Christianization. There were supporters among the government officials, especially non-Muslims ministers. There were also supporters among business owners, such as *Djarum* Cigarette Company, as one cigarette from every pack was donated for Christianization activity. Moreover, the word *Djarum* itself is the abbreviation of *Demi Jesus Aku*

Rela Untuk Mati (“For the sake of Jesus I am ready to die”). The *Hai* Magazine is also said to be the abbreviation of *Hancurkan Agama Islam* (“Destroy the Religion of Islam”), and the name of the newspaper *Kompas* is the abbreviation of *Komando Pastur* (“Pastor’s Command”). .

Their youth were instructed to have influence upon Muslim girls, especially those with weak faith. In order to marry these Muslim girls, they often pretended to be Muslims. After having children they forced their wives to follow them to become Christians. Otherwise, they would divorce them. Being weak, they automatically followed their husbands. Emmanuel mentioned the licence plate number of his sister’s car and the address of his father in Jakarta and of H. Nawawi in Lombok.

We should not be pessimistic of what is happening in the Muslim world today. There are always high tides and lower tides in the history of man and of a nation. These are the vicissitude of life. Sooner or later, نَصْرُ اللهِ, Allah’s help will come. (ANUMA, 10 March, 06)

25. THE CLASH OF CIVILIZATION

The English poet and fiction-writer, Rudyard Kipling (1865-1936) was born in Bombay (now Mumbai), India on 30 Dec. 1865. Among his writing were two *Jungle Books*. Being raised as an English man in the Indian subcontinent he noticed the gap between the Eastern civilization in general and the Indian one in particular and the Western civilization. He put it in his poem, as follows:

*East is East and West is West
And never the twain shall meet.*

People used to cite these lines to indicate the enormous difference between the two civilizations and cultures, that they cannot meet and accommodate each other. For example, in Indonesia it is a taboo to touch an adult's head, and for the Arabs to touch someone's buttock as this is interpreted as a homosexual advance.

People used to stop here with these two lines. However, if we continue reading the next lines of the poem, it indicates that there is exception. The continuation of the lines is:

*But when two strong men face-to-face
There will be neither East nor West*

What the poet means here is that if two men strong enough to understand and tolerate each other, the barrier between the two cultures will vanish. However, there are sacred things in every religion which have to be observed by its followers, that it is a taboo to violate them, such as the sanctity of the Ka'bah, the Qur'ān and the Prophet in Islam, to mention a few.

In 1993 Dr. Samuel P. Huntington published his book *The Clash of Civilization and the Remarking of the World Order*. He said that at the end of the cold war between the United States and the Soviet Union, and after the fall of the Soviet Union, the world is entering a phase of clashes between civilizations. He mentions eight of them, namely, Western, Confucian, Japanese, Islamic, Hindu, Slavic-Orthodox, Latin American, and probably African. These civilizations are differentiated from each other by history, language, culture, tradition and especially religion. He states that Western civilization is the most powerful, and it can be said that the clash is between Western civilization and the rest. He also says that Islamic and Confucian civilizations are the most dangerous to the West (p. 10).

Islam is being followed by approximately one-fifth of the world population. The Confucian civilization is also being followed by approximately one-fifth of the world population, especially among Chinese people, each with more than one billion people. However, Islamic civilization is being singled out as "a potential threat" to the West. It is an irony that the West had colonised and occupied the Muslim

world (for example: Algeria and Western Sahara by France, Libya by Italy, Indian sub-continent and Malaysia by the British, and Indonesia by the Dutch) and had interfered with their internal affairs. After losing their grip of these areas, Western powers suddenly claimed that their inhabitants were posing a threat to their system of life. They fear that Islam will penetrate their way of life and freedom.

Who is interfering who's business? When the late President Sukarno of Indonesia was asked by a Western journalist in an interview what he would like to say to America (*i.e.*, U.S.A.), he simply said, "Leave us alone, leave us alone!" When a Muslim country is using a nuclear reactor for peaceful purposes, such as to generate electricity, they suspect that this country will produce "an Islamic nuclear bomb", posing a threat to the West, whereas Israel, India and South Africa that already possess nuclear bombs are acceptable to them.

The collapse of Socialism in the Soviet Union is simply because the system cannot give both spiritual and material prosperity to its people. Capitalism was victorious over Socialism without firing a single shot. It succeeds, to some extent, in giving material prosperity to its people at the expense of spiritual happiness, resulting in moral degradation. Homosexuality, drunkenness, gambling, rape, living together out of matrimony, sex industry, the use of illegal drugs and other social evils and diseases are rampant among people in their big cities. This is the *Jāhiliyyah* (the era of ignorance) of the 21th century era. Islam, and only Islam, that can cure these ills as it had done with the *Jāhiliyyah* of the 6th century.

The people of the *Jāhiliyyah* of the 6th century fought the Prophet and his followers, because they could not produce a system better than that of the Qur'an in order to challenge it. What would happen if the clash between Western and Islamic civilization does really take place, and which of the two will be victorious? What we know is the West is confusing the world by creating fear with different labels to describe various phenomena in the Muslim world which are foreign to the Muslims themselves, such as "*Islamic fundamentalism*," "*Islamic Resurgence*," "*Militant Islam*," and "*Political Islam*." Earlier in the

last century until now the Orientalists are still using the misleading terms “Classical Islam,” “Medieval Islam,” and “Modern Islam” as if this religion is divided into three categories, when they meant “Islam in Classical Period,” “Islam in Medieval Period,” and “Islam in Modern Period” respectively. A bolder statement was given by Prof. Dr. Charles J. Adams, the Head of the Institute of Islamic Studies of McGill University in Montreal in late 1973 in one of his lectures when he said about “Islam according to God,” “Islam according to the angel Gabriel,” “Islam according to Muhammad,” and “Islam according to the *Sahabah*” as if the message of Islam had not been presented in its original and true sense.

The clash between Islamic and Western civilizations is apparently inevitable, directly or indirectly, peacefully through integration or forcefully through confrontation. The winner will be the better one, although embraced by weak followers. A system or an idea cannot be defeated by defeating its followers, but by challenging it with a better system or idea. This reminds us of the expression “*The ink of the writer is worthier (stronger) than the blood of the martyr.*” The martyr kills the enemy, but it is the writer who can kill the idea which the enemy is fighting for. Fukuyama in his work *The End of History and the Last Man* (1993) has predicted the victory of Islam over other systems. For the Muslims, they have been promised by Allah with the final victory. Allah says in the Qur’ān,

هُوَ الَّذِي أَرْسَلَ رَسُولَهُ بِالْهُدَىٰ وَدِينِ الْحَقِّ لِيُظْهِرَهُ عَلَى
الدِّينِ كُلِّهِ وَلَوْ كَرِهَ الْمُشْرِكُونَ (الصف : ٩)

He it is Who has sent his Messenger [Muhammad] with guidance and the religion of truth [Islamic Monotheism] to make victorious over all (other) religions even though the polytheists hate it (Q. 61:9).

وَلَا تَهِنُوا وَلَا تَحْزَنُوا وَأَنْتُمُ الْأَعْلَوْنَ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ (آل عمران : ١٣٩)

So, do not become weak (against your enemy), nor be sad, and you will be superior (in victory) if you are indeed (true) believers. (Q. 3:139)

كَتَبَ اللَّهُ لَأَغْلِبَنَّ أَنَا وَرُسُلِي إِنَّ اللَّهَ قَوِيٌّ عَزِيزٌ (المجادلة : ٢١)

Allah has decreed: 'Verily, it is I and My Messengers who shall be victorious.' Verily, Allah is All-Powerful, All-Mighty.

(Q. 58:21)

These are some verses indicating the final victory of Islam over other religions and systems of life. However, this victory of Islam is conditional, namely, with Allah's help. He says:

إِنْ يَنْصُرْكُمُ اللَّهُ فَلَا غَالِبَ لَكُمْ وَإِنْ يَخْذُلْكُمْ فَمَنْ ذَا الَّذِي يَنْصُرُكُمْ مِنْ بَعْدِهِ

وَعَلَى اللَّهِ فَلْيَتَوَكَّلِ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ (آل عمران : ١٦٠)

If Allah helps you, none can overcome you; and if He forsakes you, who is there after Him that can help you. And in Allah (Alone) let believers put their trust. (Q. 3:160)

Conclusion:

Islam will be victorious in the conflict of civilization with the condition that its followers stick to its principles and teachings. (ANUMA, 24 Febr., 07)

26. MASĀ'IL KHILĀFIYYAH

What is meant by this term, *masā'il khilāfiyyah*, is controversial issues in Islamic jurisprudence. It deals with *furū'* (secondary minor and non-essential issues) in which no clear explanation found in the Qur'ān or the *Sunnah* (i.e. *Ḥadīth*, including the statements, deeds and tacit approvals) of the Prophet. It does not touch the roots or fundamentals of the religious injunctions. It emerges from the various interpretations of Muslim jurists on the divine texts (Qur'ān and the *Sunnah*).

However, many people cannot make clear distinction between the roots and the branches, so that they think that the branches are the fundamentals, or become fanatical with the habitual practice of branches,

so that they think or consider them roots. The examples commonly known in Indonesia are the issue of *uṣallī*, namely, the pronunciation of the intention before reciting the *takbīrat al-iḥrām*, and the citation of *qunūt* supplication at the *fajr* prayer, which are both non-fundamentals. In fact, not a single Muslim scholar in this world says that performing a prayer without *uṣallī* or *qunūt* supplication in the *fajr* prayer will make it void. On the other hand, not a single Muslim scholar says that performing a prayer with *uṣallī* or *qunūt* supplication in the *fajr* prayer will make it void

But there are many controversial issues in Islam. These kind of minor issues will never end, but keep emerging with the emergence of new issues to be solved according to Islamic law. *Masā'il khilāfiyyah* cannot be eliminated. Even inside one *madhhab* (school of jurisprudence) there are many different opinions among the jurists of this school. Imām al-Shāfi'ī himself, the founder of the Shāfi'ī school, had given different *fatwā* (legal opinion) on the same issue: his view when he was in Baghdad, was called *qawl qadīm* (the old view) and his view when he was in Egypt was called *qawl jadīd* (the new view).

Controversial issues and difference of opinions had been existing since the time of the *ṣaḥābah* (companions of the Prophet), even in the time of the Prophet. As the Prophet was still among them their differences could be solved by asking him. His answer was either through revelation (al-Qur'ān) or from himself (*Hadīth*).

As these *masā'il khilāfiyyah* exist only in *furū'* matters they should not create any enmity or dissension in the Muslim community. If any person exaggerates and exacerbates them, he is either a very ignorant person or has an intention to sow discord among Muslims. The difference of opinions among the Muslim jurists in these matters is so small, that Muslims everywhere pray behind their imams in the mosque disregarding what school he is following. In the *Masjid al-Ḥarām* people from different and various *madhhabs* pray behind one *imām* in one mosque. In

Christianity we have Catholic and Protestant, apart from many other sects and denominations with their own churches and languages.

The late co-founder of Pondok Modern religious institution at Gontor, Ponorogo, Indonesia, Kyai H. Imam Zarkashi, in his lecture about this issue of *masā'il khilāfiyyah* gave some examples of solidarity among Muslims towards it, as follows:

1. In about the year 1930, the controversy on the possibility of using local or Indonesian language for the translation of the *khutbah* of the *Jum'ah* prayer was still very serious, and some people exaggerated it. This is understandable, as it was still the time of the Dutch occupation. Now, this is no longer an issue, and people no longer speak about it. Not long ago, a conference was held in the Mosque of Makkah (Mecca) attended by 'ulamā' from various Muslim lands where it was decided it was permitted to use local or national languages in the *khutbah* of the *Jum'ah*, as long as its conditions and fundamentals are cited in Arabic.
2. The whole people who pray *tarāwīḥ* in the Prophet Mosque in Medinah follow their *imam* till 8 (eight) *rak'ahs* (units). Then those who stick to 8 (eight) *rak'ahs* retreat and continue with their *witr* prayers individually. The *imām* keeps leading the prayers until 20 (twenty) *rak'ahs*. Those who stick to 20 (twenty) *rak'ahs* retreat and continue their *witr* prayers individually. The *imām* keeps leading the prayers until 36 (thirty-six) *rak'ahs*, without any problem.
3. During the pilgrimage season Muslims from different parts of the world pray in the *Masjid al-Harām* led by one *imām* in spite of different *madhhabs* they are following without any problem.
4. *Imām al-Shāfi'ī* showed his tolerance when he visited Baghdad after he had lived in Egypt. He was warmly welcomed by his followers in Baghdad and was asked to lead the *fajr* prayer. He did it without citing the *qunūt*. His followers asked him the reason for not citing the

qunūt. His answer was simple but very meaningful, *ta'adduban* (courteousness). He did not want to offend those who disagreed with him in the matter of *qunūt* while they were praying behind him.

5. Similar to this incident occurred with the late Prof. Hamka, former General Chairman of the *Majlis Ulama Indonesia* (Indonesian Council of Muslim scholars) when he visited and gave his *da'wah* at Blitar. When he was asked to lead the *fajr* prayer he asked whether the *imām* of the mosque used to cite the *qunūt*. When he was told that the *imām* did, then he also cited the *qunūt* perfectly while leading the prayer. As a leader of Muhammadiyah educational and social institution he usually did not cite the *qunūt*, but he knew that the *qunūt* is not a fundamental issue, and he wanted to give an example of toleration in such matter.
6. It happened that a group of guests consisting of nine people visited the Pondok Modern institution, among them were the alumni of this institution. The dialogue ran smoothly at first, until one of them said: "It is a pity, *pak*, that the alumni of Pondok Modern are less enthusiastic, or show weakness when they are urged to struggle." "What kind of struggle?" asked K.H. Zarkashi. "The struggle to purify Islam", they said. At that time, K.H. Zarkashi asked: "What do you mean with the struggle to purify the teachings of Islam?". They said, "...To eradicate *bid'ahs* (innovations) and conservatism." As K.H. Zarkashi understood their intention to struggle in the field of *masā'il khilāfiyyah* he said: "If that is what you mean, we prohibit our students from struggling that way. In what way are you going to purify the teachings of Islam? In Nahdatul Ulama's way, or PERSIS (Persatuan Islam)'s way, or Muhammadiyah's way? Those who defend the use and citation of *uṣallī* before prayer are also doing it to purify Islamic teachings, and the PERSIS who want to eradicate the *uṣ allī* are also doing it to purify the teachings of Islam."

7. When a person suggested not to aggravate the *masā'il khilāfiyyah* in the conference of the 'ulamā' in entire Java, K.H Ahmad Siddiq, the prominent figure of the Nahdatul Ulama of Eastern Java from Jember said: "*Sudahlah!* (i.e., Forget about it!) This issue should not be discussed any longer. The *masā'il khilāfiyyah* had existed since long ago, and there is no benefit from touching on it."
8. Imām al-Sha'rānī in his book *al-Mizān al-Kubrā* said that rubbing a part of the head (with wet hand in performing the ablution) is correct by following the injunction of Allah when He said اتقوا الله ("fear Allah"); and rubbing the whole head is also correct by following Allah's injunction حق تقاته ("with true or appropriate fear"). Therefore, the *masā'il khilāfiyyah* should not be aggravated.

In the conclusion of his lecture K.H. Imam Zarkashi said that we Muslims have to be tolerant and compassionate with our Muslim brothers and sisters who hold different views in matters of *masā'il khilāfiyyah*. The government and Islam both require us to be tolerant with people of different religion, let alone with our coreligionists. However, with those non-Muslims who want to subject and conquer us, it will be proper to have a strong stand based on the Qur'ānic verse,

مُحَمَّدٌ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ وَالَّذِينَ مَعَهُ أَشِدَّاءُ عَلَى الْكُفَّارِ رُحَمَاءُ بَيْنَهُمْ ... (الفتح ، ٢٩)

Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah. And those who are with him are severe against disbelievers, and merciful among themselves... (Q. 48:29)

K.H. Imam Zarkashi states further that we should not take the opposite stand obeying the incitement of Dajjāl (Antichrist) and the enemy, by showing more hostility towards Muslims rather than non-Muslims. People who have started praying, although not exactly the same with the way we pray should not be ridiculed, reprimanded, or shown hostility. The Qur'ān teaches us to be wise in calling people to Islam. He cites the Qur'ānic verse,

ادْعُ إِلَى سَبِيلِ رَبِّكَ بِالْحُكْمَةِ وَالْمَوْعِظَةِ الْحَسَنَةِ وَجَادِلْهُمْ بِالَّتِي هِيَ أَحْسَنُ
 إِنَّ رَبَّكَ هُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِمَنْ ضَلَّ عَنْ سَبِيلِهِ وَهُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِالْمُنْتَهِدِينَ (النحل : ٢٥)

Invite (mankind, O Muhammad) to the way of your Lord (i.e., Islam) with wisdom and fair preaching, and argue with them in a way that is better.

Truly, your Lord knows best who has gone astray from His path, and He is the Best Knower of those who are guided. (Q. 16:125).

In teaching children how to perform the prayer, K.H. Imam Zarkashi contends that according to pedagogy, it is not allowed to tell them about the *masā'il khilāfiyyah*. They should not even be told about what *wājib* (obligatory) is and what *sunnah* (recommended) is in the prayer. What is important is to teach them how to pray in the best possible way. When the children grow up, then we can teach them what is *wājib*, *sunnah*, *makrūh* (reprehensible) and things that invalidate the prayer. This is the reason when it is mentioned in the Book of *Fiqh* vol. 1 that the teachers are not allowed to explain *masā'il khilāfiyyah*. When the students grow up and read themselves the opinions of the '*ulamā'*' (Muslim scholars) and their arguments upon which they base their view, they will understand themselves the position of the *masā'il khilāfiyyah*. (Assalam, No. 1, Agust, 2006).

27. THE ORIGIN OF THE ARABS

The Arabs were one of the branches of the Semitic people. Semitic people were the descendants of Sām (سَام) son of Noah. The Arabs were divided by the historians into two groups: الْعَرَبُ الْبَائِدَةُ (the extinct Arabs, the lost Arabs, the Arabs who have disappeared), and الْعَرَبُ الْبَاقِيَةُ (the surviving Arabs). The extinct Arabs were those who did not survive any longer because they were punished by Allah for their disobedience or because of war among themselves. Among those mentioned in the Qur'an were: عَادٌ ('Ād), ثَمُودُ (Thamūd), إِرَامُ (Iram) and

أَصْحَابُ الْأَيْكَةِ (Aṣḥāb al-Aykah). Others were mentioned in history and literature; they were Jurhum (جُرْهُمُ), Tasm (طَسْم) and Jadīs (جَدِيس). The surviving Arabs are the Qaḥṭānīs (القَحْطَانِيُّونَ) and the ‘Adnānīs (الْعَدْنَانِيُّونَ).

The ‘Ād people were the fourth generation from Noah. They occupied a large area in Southern Arabia, extending from Oman to Hadramaut and Yemen, and between Hadramaut and the Empty Quarter. They were tall in stature and were the first people who disobeyed their prophet after Prophet Noah. They were strong, proud and militant people and idol worshipers. When they disobeyed Prophet Hūd (Heber), who called them to worship Allah and behave properly, Allah sent punishment to them with a terrible blast of wind destroying them and their land. The tomb of Prophet Hūd was said to be in Hadramaut, 90 km north of Mukalla. (A.Y. Ali, *The Holy Qur’an*, p. 417, n. 1040). In the Qur’ān Allah said:

وَأَمَّا عَادُ فَاهْلَكُوهَا بِرِيحٍ صَرْصَرٍ عَاتِيَةٍ . سَخَّرَهَا عَلَيْهِمْ سَبْعَ لَيَالٍ وَثَمَانِيَةَ أَيَّامٍ
حُسُومًا فَتَرَى الْقَوْمَ فِيهَا صَرْعَى كَأَنَّهُمْ أُغِجَرُوا نَخْلًا خَاوِيَةً (الحاقة : ٦-٧)

And the ‘Ad, they were destroyed by a furious wind, exceedingly violent. He made it rage against them seven nights and eight days in succession: so that thou couldst see the (whole) people lying overthrown in its (paths), as if They had been roots of hollow palm-trees tumbled down. (Q. 69:6-7).

Prophet Hūd and his followers were saved from this calamity.

Thamūd people lived in the area known today as *Madā’in Ṣāliḥ*, located near the town of al-‘Alā in the north of Hijaz. Allah destroyed them with an earthquake accompanied with a terrible thunderstorm. Allah said:

وَالِى ثَمُودَ أَخَاهُمْ صَالِحًا قَالَ يَا قَوْمِ اعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ مَا لَكُمْ مِنْ إِلَهٍ غَيْرُهُ قَدْ جَاءَكُمْ
بَيِّنَةٌ مِنْ رَبِّكُمْ هَذِهِ نَاقَةُ اللَّهِ لَكُمْ آيَةٌ فَذَرُوهَا تَأْكُلْ فِي أَرْضِ اللَّهِ وَلَا تَمَسُّوهَا بِسُوءٍ فَيَأْخُذَكُمْ
عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ . وَادْكُرُوا إِذْ جَعَلَكُمْ خُلَفَاءَ مِنْ بَعْدِ عَادٍ وَبَوَّأَكُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ تَتَّخِذُونَ مِنْ سُهُولِهَا
قُصُورًا وَتَنْحِتُونَ الْجِبَالَ بُيُوتًا فَادْكُرُوا آلَاءَ اللَّهِ وَلَا تَعْتُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ مُفْسِدِينَ . قَالَ الْمَلَأُ الَّذِينَ

اسْتَكْبَرُوا مِنْ قَوْمِهِ لِلَّذِينَ اسْتُضْعِفُوا لِمَنْ آمَنَ مِنْهُمْ أَتَعْلَمُونَ أَنَّ صَالِحًا مُرْسَلٌ مِنْ رَبِّهِ قَالُوا
 إِنَّا بِمَا أُرْسِلَ بِهِ مُؤْمِنُونَ . قَالَ الَّذِينَ اسْتَكْبَرُوا إِنَّا بِالَّذِي آمَنْتُمْ بِهِ كَافِرُونَ . فَعَقَرُوا النَّاقَةَ
 وَعَتَوْا عَنْ أَمْرِ رَبِّهِمْ وَقَالُوا يَا صَالِحُ ائْتِنَا بِمَا تَعِدُنَا إِنْ كُنْتَ مِنَ الْمُرْسَلِينَ . فَأَخَذْنَاهُمْ
 الرِّجْفَ فَأَصْبَحُوا فِي دَارِهِمْ جَائِمِينَ . فَتَوَلَّى عَنْهُمْ وَقَالَ يَا قَوْمِ لَقَدْ أَبْلَغْتُكُمْ رَسُولًا
 رَبِّي وَنَصَحْتُ لَكُمْ وَلَكِنْ لَا تُحِبُّونَ النَّاصِحِينَ (الأعراف : ٧٣-٧٩)

To the Thamud people (We sent) Salih, one of their own brethren: He said: "O my people! Worship Allah, you have no other God but Him. Now hath come to you a clear (sign) from your Lord. This she-camel of Allah is a sign unto you: so leave her to graze in Allah's earth, and let her come to no harm, or ye shall be seized with a grievous punishment. And remember how He made you inheritors after the 'Ad people and gave you habitations in the land: ye built for yourselves palaces and castles in (open) plains, and carve out homes in the mountains; so bring to remembrance the benefits (ye have received) from Allah and refrain from evil and mischief on the earth". The leaders of the arrogant party among his people said to those who were reckoned powerless—those among them who believed; "Know ye indeed that Salih is a messenger from his Lord?" They said: "We do indeed believe in the revelation which hath been sent through him".

The arrogant party said: "For our part, we reject what ye believe him". Then they killed the she-camel, and insolently defied the commandment of their Lord, saying: "O Salih, bring about thy threats, if thou art a messenger (of Allah)." So the earthquake seized them, and they lay (dead), prostrate in their homes. Then he (Salih) turned from them, and said: "O my people! I have indeed conveyed on to you the Message of my Lord, and have given you good advice but you like not good advisers". (Q. 7:73-79).

In another verse it is said:

فَأَمَّا تَمُودُ فَأَهْلِكُوا بِطَاغِيَةِ (الحاقة : ٥)

*But the Thamud, they were destroyed by a terrible storm of
thunder
and lightning. (Q. 69:5).*

The *Aṣḥāb al-Aykah* (lit. "the owners of the *Aykah* tree) lived in Madyan, not far from the Thamūd area, close to the present Gulf of 'Aqabah. They were called so, because there was a big tree called *Aykah* near their town Madyan. They worshiped idols, lived prosperously as traders, but cheated in buying and selling. So, Allah sent Prophet Shu'ayb (Jethro) to them, but many of them did not want to listen to him. As punishment Allah sent a mighty blast.

.. وَأَخَذَتِ الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا الصَّيْحَةَ فَأَصْبَحُوا فِي دِيَارِهِمْ جَاثِمِينَ. (هود ، ٩٤)

*... but the (mighty) blast did seize the wrong-doers, and they lay
prostrate in their homes by the morning. (Q. 11:94).*

The Ṭasm people lived in the area now called Riyadh, whereas the Jadīs tribe lived in the south of that area. These areas belonged to the area called Yamāmah which was cultivated and made its people prosperous. The Ṭasm tribe became strong militarily and threatened its neighbours. Its raid on Yemen caused its own destruction and the destruction of Jadīs.

With regard to the surviving Arabs, they are: *al-'Arab al-Āribah* (العَرَبُ الْعَارِبَةُ) or العرب العرباء, the indigenous Arabs, the true Arabs, and *al-'Arab al-Musta'ribah* (العَرَبُ الْمُسْتَعْرِبَةُ), the Arabicised Arabs. *Al-'Arab al-Āribah* (العَرَبُ الْعَارِبَةُ), the indigenous Arabs, the true Arabs, are the Qaḥṭānīs (الْقَحْطَانِيُّونَ) or the Arabs of the South, for they lived in Southern Arabia. *Al-'Arab al-Musta'ribah* (العَرَبُ الْمُسْتَعْرِبَةُ), the Arabicised Arabs are the 'Adnānīs (الْعَدْنَانِيُّونَ) or the Arabs of the North, for they lived in the Northern and Central part of Arabia. Qaḥṭān, the ancestor of the Qaḥṭānīs, was the first forefather of the Arabs, whereas 'Adnān was the forefather of the 'Adnānīs. 'Adnān was one of the descendants of Prophet Ismā'īl (Ishmael) a.s. son of Prophet Ibrāhīm (Abraham) a.s. Ismā'īl's

descendants were not among the pure Arabs, because they had intermarried with their neighbours and adopted the Arabic language, so that they were called Arabs through assimilation. The majority of the Qaḥṭānīs who lived in the South were town dwellers and earned their living by trading and farming, and others lived in the desert as nomads tending sheep and camels. Many of the Adnānīs were nomads, but some of them were traders and farmers, living in areas where water was available, such as Wādī Ḥanīfah, al-Aflaj and al-Aḥsā' (al-Iḥsā'). Among the Adnānīs well known for their trade was the Quraysh tribe.

The descendants of Prophet Ibrāhīm (Abraham) are the Arabs and the Jews; the Arabs through Prophet Ismā'īl (Ishmael), and the Jews through Prophet Ishāq (Isaac). They were also the descendants of Sam, son of Prophet Noah. His name in the Bible was Shem, the eldest son of the Biblical patriarch Noah (Genesis 10:21-32). Therefore, they are all Semitic people. It is wrong to say that it is only the Jews who were Semitic, and, therefore, it is also wrong to say that the Arabs are anti-Semitic in its original meaning. However, the term "Semites" was first used towards the end of the 18th century. Since then the term "anti-Semitism" appeared and applied to "political, social, and economic agitation and activities directed against Jews" (Funk & Wagnalls New Encyclopedia, s.v. "anti-Semitism")

So far, I have explained briefly the origin of the Arabs and some prophets sent to them, as well as the consequence of disobeying them. Prophet Muhammad *s.a.w.* was the last prophet to them as well as to all mankind.

28. ISMĀ'ĪL (ISHMAEL) AND ISHĀQ (ISAAC)

Regarding the present situation in the Middle-east I would like to talk about the two children of Prophet Abraham (Ibrāhīm), namely,

Ishmael (Ismāʿīl), the ancestor of the Arabs, and Isaac (Ishāq), the ancestor of the Jews. Ishmael's mother was Hagar (Hajar), an Egyptian servant, and Isaac's mother was Sarah. As Sarah was barren she allowed her husband Abraham to marry Hagar. Both Hagar and Sarah were blessed with a son. According to the Bible, "Abraham was eighty-six years old when Hagar bore him Ishmael." (Genesis 16:16), and "Abraham was a hundred years old when his son Isaac was born to him." (Genesis 21:5). Therefore, Isaac was born when Ishmael was fourteen years old.

The Bible said that Sarah said to Abraham, "Get rid of the slave woman and her son, for that slave woman's son will never share in the inheritance with my son Isaac." (Genesis 21:10). Abraham did, but God promised him that He would make Ishmael's descendants a nation (Genesis 21:13). The same promise was given to Hagar, that He would "make him into a great nation." (Genesis 21:18).

The main characteristic of Ishmael, as mentioned in the Qur'ān, is his forbearance. When Prophet Abraham wished to have a son, he prayed to Allah,

رَبِّ هَبْ لِي مِنَ الصَّالِحِينَ. فَبَشَّرْنَاهُ بِغُلَامٍ حَلِيمٍ. (الصافات : ١٠٠-١٠١)

O my Lord! Grant me a righteous (son). So We gave him the good news of a forbearing son. (Q. 37:100-101).

The son meant here was the righteous and forbearing son Ishmael. We learned that when Prophet Abraham told him that Allah ordered him to sacrifice him, he asked his opinion.

فَلَمَّا بَلَغَ مَعَهُ السَّعْيَ قَالَ يَا بُنَيَّ إِنِّي أَرَى فِي الْمَنَامِ أَنِّي أَذْبَحُكَ فَانْظُرْ مَاذَا تَرَى
قَالَ يَا أَبَتِ افْعَلْ مَا تُؤْمَرُ سَتَجِدُنِي إِن شَاءَ اللَّهُ مِنَ الصَّابِرِينَ (الصافات : ١٠٢)

"O my son! I have seen in a dream that I offer thee in sacrifice: now see what

is thy view!" (The son) said: "O my father! Do as thou art commanded: Thou will find me, if Allah so wills one of the steadfast." (Q. 37:102).

Ubayy ibn ‘Umar said that the dreams of the prophets were divine inspirations, and then recited the above verse. (Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ, ḥadīth* vol. 1, no. 140 and 818). The vision of Prophet Abraham sacrificing Ishmael occurred not in one night, but in three nights, as to emphasis this command of Allah. For this reason Ishmael was called أَبُوالْفِدَاءِ (lit. "Father of Ransom", i.e., "the ransomed person"). In the Genesis 22, it was Isaac who was sacrificed instead of Ishmael. When the Caliph ‘Umar ibn ‘Abd al-‘Azīz asked about it to a converted Jew, he said, "The Jewish know also that Ishmael was the one to be sacrificed, but as they are jealous of you, they say it was Isaac."

This forbearing character of Ishmael was inherited from his father who was also forbearing. Allah said,

إِنَّ إِبْرَاهِيمَ لَحَلِيمٌ أَوَّاهٌ مُنِيبٌ (هود: ٧٥)

*Verily, Abraham was without doubt forbearing,
tender hearted, and was repentant (to Allah
all the time, again and again). (Q. 11:75).*

This character of forbearance, is mentioned again by Allah when He said of him,

إِنَّ إِبْرَاهِيمَ لَأَوَّاهٌ لَّحَلِيمٌ (التوبة: ١١٤)

Verily, Abraham was tender hearted, forbearing. (Q. 9:114).

Prophet Abraham prayed for his father, but Allah told him not to pray for his disbelieving father. This character of *ḥilm* is also inherited by Ishmael's descendants, the Arabs. The word *ḥilm* (الْحِلْمُ) has many meanings, not only forbearance and patience, but also gentleness, clemency, insight, intelligence, and reason. The Arabs used to say كُنْ حَلِيمًا "Be gentle, be forbearing, be patient, be intelligent, be reasonable", meaning "do not follow your emotion and passion." This is very difficult for emotional Arabs and for us in general, as it is very difficult to control our passion and emotion, and may be to most difficult thing to control. Therefore the Arabs used to say اَحْلِمُ سَيِّدُ الْأَخْلَاقِ "The *ḥilm*, forbearance,

patience, being sensible and controlling one's emotion, is the master of all good characters (morals)." Nowadays, people say to calm down a furious person, صَلُّوا عَلَى النَّبِيِّ "ask blessing for the Prophet" by saying اللَّهُمَّ 'Oh Allah, give blessing to Prophet Muhammad.'

The main characteristic of Isaac, as mentioned in the Qur'ān, was being endowed with knowledge. The angels who were sent by Allah to punish the people of Prophet Lot who disobeyed him and practiced homosexuality appeared as human beings and visited Abraham and told him that Allah would give him a son endowed with knowledge. It was said that there were three angels, Gabriel along with another two. Allah says,

وَنَبِّئُهُمْ عَنْ ضَيْفِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ . إِذْ دَخَلُوا عَلَيْهِ فَقَالُوا سَلَامًا قَالَ إِنَّا مِنْكُمْ وَجِلُونَ . قَالُوا لَا تَوْجَلْ إِنَّا نُبَشِّرُكَ بِغُلَامٍ عَلِيمٍ . قَالَ أَبَشِرْتُمُونِي عَلَى أَنْ مَسَّنِيَ الْكِبَرُ فِيمَ يُبَشِّرُون . قَالُوا بِشَرِّنَاكَ بِالْحَقِّ فَلَا تَكُن مِنَ الْقَانِطِينَ . قَالَ وَمَنْ يَقْنَطُ مِنْ رَحْمَةِ رَبِّهِ إِلَّا الضَّالُّونَ . (الحجر : ٥١-٥٦)

And tell them about the guests (the angels) of Abraham. When they entered to him, and said, "Peace!" [Abraham] said, "Indeed! We are afraid of you." They (the angels) said, "Do not be afraid! We give you glad tidings of a boy (son) possessing much knowledge and wisdom [meaning Isaac]". (Abraham) said, "Do you give me glad tidings (of a son) when old age has overtaken me? Of what then is your news?" They (the angels) said, "We give you glad tidings in truth. So, be not of the despairing." (Abraham) said, "And who despairs of the Mercy of his Lord except those who are astray?"

(Q. 15:51-56)

This glad tiding of the birth of Isaac was repeated in the Qur'ān as follows:

هَلْ أَتَاكَ حَدِيثُ ضَيْفِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ الْمُكْرَمِينَ . إِذْ دَخَلُوا عَلَيْهِ فَقَالُوا سَلَامًا قَالَ سَلَامٌ قَوْمٌ مُنْكَرُونَ . فَرَاغَ إِلَى أَهْلِهِ فَجَاءَ بِعِجْلٍ سَمِينٍ . فَقَرَّبَهُ إِلَيْهِمْ قَالَ أَلَا تَأْكُلُونَ . فَأَوْجَسَ مِنْهُمْ خِيفَةً قَالُوا لَا تَخَفْ وَبَشِّرُوهُ بِغُلَامٍ عَلِيمٍ . (الذاريات : ٢٤-٣٨)

Has the story reached you, of the honoured guests of Abraham When they can in to him and said "Peace (be upon you)." He answered, "Peace (be upon you)," and said, "You are people unknown to me." Then he turned to his household, and brought out a roasted calf [as the property of Abraham was mainly cows]. And placed it before them (saying), "Will you not eat?" Then he conceived fear of them (when they ate not). They said, "Fear not." And they gave glad tidings of a son having knowledge [meaning Isaac]. (Q. 51:24-28).

From these Qur'ānic accounts we notice that:

1. Allah mentioned twice that Prophet Abraham was a forbearing person.
2. Although Allah mentioned once only that Ishmael would be a forbearing son, He informed Prophet Abraham *a.s.* directly that He had answered to his prayer for a son.
3. Although the glad tidings of the birth of Isaac was mentioned twice in the Qur'ān, it was not directly from Allah, but through the angels. It was not an answer to Prophet Abraham's prayer, but a surprise for him to have another son from Sarah, despite of their old age.

The descendants of Isaac through his son Jacob (Ya'qūb) apparently inherited also this gene and character of endowment with knowledge and wisdom. Jacob who was also called Israel had twelve children. They, their descendants and the Jews in general are called in the Qur'ān *Banī Isrā'īl* ("the children of Israel"). According to the Old Testament Jacob wrestled with God in the form of a man and won; therefore God called him Israel. The word *Israel* means in Hebrew "he who struggled with God, contender with God" At one night Jacob took his wives, children, maidservants, and all his possessions across the stream of Jabbok (Genesis 32: 22-23). Then the Bible continued:

So Jacob was left alone, and a man wrestled with him till daybreak. When the man saw that he could not overpower him, he touched the socket of Jacob's hip so that his hip was wrenched as he wrestled with the man. Then the man said,

"Let me go, for it is daybreak." But Jacob replied, "I will not let you go unless you bless me." The man asked him, "What is your name?" "Jacob," he answered. Then the man said, "Your name will be no longer Jacob, but Israel, because you have struggled with God and with man and have overcome" Jacob said, "Please tell me your name." But he replied, "Why do you ask my name?" then he blessed him there. So Jacob called the place Peniel [Peniel means 'face of God'], saying "It is because I saw God face to face, and yet my life was spared." The sun rose above him as he passed Peniel [in Hebrew Penuel, a variant of Peniel] and he was limping because of his hip. Therefore, to this day the Israelites do not eat the tendon attached to the socket of the hip, because the socket of Jacob's hip was touched near the tendon. (Genesis 32:24-32).

In other verses of the Bible it is said,

After Jacob returned from Paddan Aram, God appeared to him again and blessed him. God said to him, "Your name is Jacob, but you will no longer be called Jacob; your name will be Israel." So he named him Israel.

(Genesis 35:9-10)

It is also said that the name *Israel* is from the expression *يَسْرِي فِي* or *اللَّيْلِ* meaning "he travels at night." The word *isrā'* means "a night journey." This might be the Muslims' interpretation, but I lean more to the first view, as the word *el, ill* or *īl*, means "Allah", such as *Emmanuel* or *Immanuel* means in Hebrew "God with us." *Gabriel* means in Hebrew "hero of God"; *Michael* means in Hebrew "who is like God"; *Raphael* in Hebrew means "God hath healed". Jacob traveled at night fleeing from his elder brother Esau, and took refuge to his maternal uncle Laban (the brother of his mother Ribka) in Haran. Jacob had deceived his elder brother Esau twice by taking his birthright and his blessing. (Genesis 27:1-46; 28:1-9). The word *Jacob* literally means "he

grasps the heel”, and figuratively means “he deceived, a supplanter, a person who takes the place of another.”

To conclude, let us remember Allah's warning to all of us and to the People of the Book in general, as follows:

وَمِنْهُمْ أُمِّيُونَ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ الْكِتَابَ إِلَّا أَمَانِيٍّ وَإِنْ هُمْ إِلَّا يَظُنُّونَ. فَوَيْلٌ لِلَّذِينَ يَكْتُبُونَ الْكِتَابَ بِأَيْدِيهِمْ ثُمَّ يَقُولُونَ هَذَا مِنْ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ لِيَشْتَرُوا بِهِ ثَمَنًا قَلِيلًا فَوَيْلٌ لَهُمْ مِمَّا كَتَبَتْ أَيْدِيهِمْ وَوَيْلٌ لَهُمْ مِمَّا يَكْسِبُونَ. (البقرة ، ٧٨-٧٩)

And there are among them (Jews) unlettered people, who know not the Book but they trust upon false desires and they but guess. Then woe to those who write the book with their own hands and then say, “This is from Allah,” to purchase with it a little price! Woe to them for what their hands have written and woe to them for that they earn (thereby).

Q. 2: 78-79)

(ANUMA, 11August, 06)

29. DISASTER

At 5.54 a.m. on Saturday morning, 27 May, 06 the earthquake (6.3 on the Richter scale) that destroyed a large area of the city of Yogyakarta in Central Java resulted in more than 6,200 dead, over 40,000 injured, over 35,000 houses and buildings reduced to rubble, and over 130,000 people were made homeless, about 40 % of them were children. Twenty-two countries pledged aid, so far, among them Australia with A\$7.5 million, Japan with A\$13 million, European Union with US\$3.8 million, the USA with US\$5 million, the Netherlands with US\$1.5 million, and South Korea with \$100 thousand. The total is about \$30 million. The Vice President of Indonesia, Yusuf Kalla, estimates the relief funds to rebuild the destroyed area to be about \$142 million.

Apart from the tsunami and the earthquake in December 2004 that claimed over 30,000 lives in Sri Lanka the disaster that killed 230,000 Indonesians is still fresh in our minds, followed by the Yogyakarta earthquake. The area devastated by the tsunami is still in the process of rehabilitation, of healing the wound. Now, after the recent earth quake in Yogyakarta, is it going to be followed by the eruption of Mt. Merapi in the same area of Central Java?

These are natural disasters that humans have no power to stop, but can minimise the casualties by early warning. Yet, there are disasters caused by human hands. There have been over thirty major wars waged by man recorded in history, starting from the Greco-Persian Wars between Greek states and Persia that took place from 499 to 478 BC, the Hundred Years' War between England and France from 1338 to 1453, the Thirty Years' War between Catholics and Protestans from 1618 to 1648, World War I between the Allies and Central Powers from 1914 to 1918, World War II between the Allies and Axis Forces from 1939 to 1945 and later to include Japan from 1941 to 1945, then the Korean War between the United Nations and North Korea in the period 1950 to 1952, then the Vietnam War between North Vietnam and the United States, then followed with the war between Iraq and Iran, the invasion of Kuwait by Iraq, then the War on Terror with the invasion of Afghanistan and Iraq by the United States and its allies.

With the advance of technology man can reduce the number of victims of natural disasters through early warning and early evacuation. But advances in technology help to increase the number of casualties in war. With the invention of modern and sophisticated weapons, man can kill his enemies by pulling a trigger and pushing a button, and the bullets, the rockets, the guided missiles, or the bombs will hit the targets. A cluster bomb, or even a nuclear bomb will destroy not only the enemy combatants, but also any living creature near the target, polluting the air and the land. The first atomic bomb dropped on Hiroshima on 6 August 1945, obliterated more than ten square kilometres and caused heavy damage outside that area --136,989 people of a population of 343,000 died. The second atomic bomb was dropped on Nagasaki on 9 August,

1945; of its population of 212,000, 73,884 were killed, and 76,796 were injured. The injured would die later from the effect of radiation. A total of 150,680 deaths, over two-thirds of the population of the city. In the First World War, about 18 million people killed; in the Second World War, about 32 million people killed. The total toll of both world wars: 50 million people perished.

It is said that the total number of people who were killed in the Vietnam War from 1954 till 1975 between the Communist North Vietnam and the U.S. backed South Vietnam is about two million, and some say, between three and five million people, including civilians. The number of casualty among the American soldiers in Iraq since the United States' invasion and its allies in the so-called "War on Terror" till 25 June 2006 is over 3,600 soldiers dead, whereas among civilians is over tenfold, namely,

over 38 000 (some say over half a million) people, not to mention the wounded. The number keeps increasing, as the war is still continuing, where the conditions are close to civil war. Over four million Iraqis have become refugees.

After the fall of Communism we witnessed two Gulf wars, between Iraq and the UN forces led by USA from 15 January till 28 February 1991, and between Iraq and Iran from 1980 till 1988, besides the invasion of Afghanistan and Iraq by USA and its allies, and the recent invasion of Israel against Hizbullah in South Lebanon, all resulted with casualties on both sides, especially and mostly innocent civilians. War (accompanied with a scene of carnage) is countinually going on somewhere on the globe, presently in Darfour, Sudan which has claimed 200, 000 lives and Sri Lanka which has claimed over 60,000 lives in two decade-all-civil war.

It is true that, with the invention of pennicillin by Sir Alexander Fleming in 1928, the antibiotic could reduce fatality among woulded soldiers so that soldiers who hade recovered could be sent back to the battlefields, if required.

The human casualty from man-made disasters and wars is more by far compared with those from natural disasters. The flood in the time

of Prophet Noah caused his people to drown, including his son, but there were not too many people at that time. Moreover, we do not know whether this flood was local or global; no record has been found in distant places, like Egypt.

The most devastating natural disaster was probably 65 million years ago, which eliminated the dinosaurs from this earth. The word *dinosaur* means “terrible lizard,” but actually not lizards although they were reptiles. Dinosaurs had dominated the earth for more than 160 million years, from 225 million years to 65 million years ago. The biggest among them was *Ultrasaurus* from North America, weighed in at 140 tonnes. *Seismosaurus* (‘earth-shaker lizard’) was about ten times the size of an elephant. Four million years after the catastrophic disappearance of the dinosaurs and the catastrophe, human beings appeared. It is Allah’s decree and blessing that He had destroyed the dinosaurs before He put man on earth, because dinosaurs and man could not mix. They would have destroyed us, or even eaten us because some of them were carnivorous (flesh-eating animals, predators). We could not domesticate or tame them, as they were too big. The only solution was to destroy them before they destroyed us, and Allah did it for us.

How did the dinosaurs become extinct? There are many theories: one suggests that a huge meteor or comet crashed into the earth, heating up the atmosphere and the oceans by several degrees, killing many creatures. It would also have sent a lot of dust and smoke into the atmosphere, probably also with volcanic activity, which would have prevented the sun’s rays reaching the earth, and so the earth became cool. Other theories are prehistoric plagues, bombardment by cosmic rays from an exploding star, and the eating of dinosaur eggs by rat-sized mammals.

Mankind has been on this earth less than one million years. Can we survive on this earth for 160 million years like the dinosaurs, or even just one million years? We are slowly destroying the earth, destroying ourselves, killing each other. For the victims of disasters, especially the natural one, Allah says,

وَلَنَبْلُوَكُمْ بَشْيَاءٍ مِّنَ الْخَوْفِ وَالْجُوعِ وَنَقْصٍ مِّنَ الْأَمْوَالِ وَالْأَنْفُسِ وَالثَّمَرَاتِ وَبَشِّرِ الصَّابِرِينَ
الَّذِينَ إِذَا أَصَابَتْهُمْ مُصِيبَةٌ قَالُوا إِنَّا لِلَّهِ وَإِنَّا إِلَيْهِ رَاجِعُونَ. أُولَئِكَ عَلَيْهِمْ صَلَوَاتٌ مِّن رَّبِّهِمْ
وَرَحْمَةٌ وَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْمُهْتَدُونَ. (البقرة : ١٥٥-١٥٧)

*Be sure We shall test you with something of fear and hunger,
some
loss in goods, or lives and the fruits (of your toil), but give glad
tidings to those who patiently preserve,--who say, when
afflicted with calamity: 'to Allah we belong, and to Him is our
return.'-- They are those of whom (descend) blessings from
their Lord, and mercy, and they are the ones that receive
guidance.
(Qur'an, 2:155-157).*

We have to be patient, and help each other. This is also a test for the rich, to see whether they are ready to help others through their wealth. Those who died are included among *minor martyrs*. For the victims of man-made disaster they are also among the *minor martyrs* if they are not involved in fighting. If there is fighting, the combatants, become *major martyrs* if they die in defending Islam.

For the disaster caused by man, Allah said,

ظَهَرَ الْفَسَادُ فِي الْبَرِّ وَالْبَحْرِ بِمَا كَسَبَتْ أَيْدِي النَّاسِ
لِيَذِيقَهُمْ بَعْضَ الَّذِي عَمِلُوا لَعَلَّهُمْ يَرْجِعُونَ (الروم : ٤١)

*Evil has appeared on land and sea because of what the hands
of men have earned (by oppression and evil deeds) that He
(Allah) may make them taste a part of that which they have
done, in order that they may return (by repenting to Allah,
and begging His Pardon. (Q. 30:41)*

Evil committed on the land includes the killing of human beings, and at sea includes piracy.

The act of an evil man could cause terrible havoc and terror in the community and the environment. Bush fire in Australia is said to be mostly caused by arson. The immediate cause of war between Austria-

Hungary and Serbia that eventually turned into a global war involving thirty-two nations known as World War I was the assassination of the Archduke Francis Ferdinand (the heir-presumptive to the throne of Austria-Hungary) by a Serb nationalist Gavrilo Princip on 28 June, 1914 at Sarajevo (capital of the Austro-Hungarian province of Bosnia). The notorious Ned Kelly (1854-1880), who was captured and hanged in 1890 had carried out bank robberies on Victoria, and NSW border (Australia), and Al(phonse) Capone (1898-1947) whose nickname was Scarface built up a criminal organization in Chicago, USA.

Commenting the above verse, the Qur'anic commentator Abū 'l-Āliyah (d. 80/708-9 or 96/714) said, "Whoever disobeys Allah in the earth has corrupted it, because the condition of the earth and the heavens depends on obedience to Allah." In a *ḥadīth* recorded by Abū Dā'ūd, the Prophet *s.a.w.* said,

عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ قَالَ قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ
حَدُّ يُعْمَلُ بِهِ فِي الْأَرْضِ خَيْرٌ لِأَهْلِ الْأَرْضِ مِنْ أَنْ يُمَطَّرُوا أَرْبَعِينَ صَبَاحًا
(سنن ابن ماجه، ج ٧، ص ٤٣١)

Any prescribed punishment which is carried out in the land is better for its people than if it were to rain for forty days. (Sunan Ibn Majah, vol. 7, p. 431)

Therefore, justice has to be established, and evil deeds have to be prevented in the world in order to live in peace and prosperity. In a *ḥadīth* recorded by al-Tirmidhī, the Prophet *s.a.w.* said,

إِنَّ الْفَاجِرَ إِذَا مَاتَ تَسْتَرِيحُ مِنْهُ الْعِبَادُ وَالْبِلَادُ وَالِدَوَابُّ
(رواه الترمذي، حديث رقم ٢٠١٣)

When the evildoer dies, it is a relief for the people, the land, the trees and the animals. (Tirmidhī, ḥadīth no. 2013)

Pure natural disasters such as earthquakes, floods, and tsunamis cannot be prevented, but the damage caused by them can be minimised. Man-made disasters can be prevented. Let us be wise enough and follow

many aspects of Islam, *i.e.*, enjoining good and preventing evil (الأمر بالمعروف والنهي عن المنكر), including preventing people and ourselves from causing disasters, and by minimising the damages caused by natural disasters. (ANUMA, 02 June, 06; *Assalam*, No. 1, August, 2006).

30. THE ARABIC LANGUAGE AND ITS UNIQUENESS

Arabic language belongs to the Semitic languages. Philologists divided the Semitic languages into East Semitic and West Semitic.

1. East Semitic (known as Akkadian) was the language used in Assyria, Babylonia, and Chaldea.
2. West Semitic is divided into
 - (a) North (Northwest) Semitic, the ancient languages of Mesopotamia, Syria and Palestine of which
 - (i) Canaanite dialects (of Hebrew, Phoenician and Ugaritic) belonged
 - (ii) Aramaic including Syriac (also called eastern Aramaic), Nabataean, Palmyrene, Judean Aramaic and Christian Aramaic dialect of Palestine which was the mother-tongue of Prophet Jesus (‘Isa, *a.s.*); Neo-Aramaic is used in few communities in Syria, Mesopotamia and Armenia.
 - (b) South (Southwest) Semitic, including ancient dialects of South Arabia (such as Sabaeen) and modern South Arabic.

The Semitic languages spoken today are Modern Hebrew and Arabic.

The last revelation sent to mankind from Allah the Almighty was the Qur’ān in Arabic. (See Q. 12:2, 13:37, 16:103, 20:113, 26:195, 39:28, 41:3, 42:7, 43:3, and 46:12). It was in classical Arabic which emerged in Central Arabia in the 6th century CE, out of many dialects spoken throughout the Arabian Peninsula. It has become now the literary language of Islam. Classical Arabic is almost as old as Old English, also called Anglo-Saxon (c. 500-1050 CE) the root of which was from the

dialects of invading settlers (Jutes, Saxons, Angles, and later, then Danish). People do not understand, even the language used by Chaucer, the Middle English (*ca.* 1050-1550 CE), which was influenced by Norman French after the Norman Conquest in 1066 and the ecclesiastical Latin (Latin used by priests in the church), let alone the Old English. Yet, as the Qur'ān and the *ḥadīth* of the Prophet are in classical Arabic, if ever the Prophet or any of his companions came to us we would still be able to understand them. There are now 21 Arab countries which are members of the Arab League formed in Cairo on 22 March 1945, including Mauritania and Somalia, as they use Arabic and hold Arabic culture. Malta in the Mediterranean was ruled by the Arabs for almost 2 centuries (from 870 till 1090) and its people speak Arabic dialect, a mixture of Egyptian and Lebanese slangs and Italian language, but not included in the Arab League, may be because the Maltese use Latin scripts instead of Arabic and adopt Western culture. The majority of the population is Christian, only a few people are Muslims, mostly the Arabs from North Africa; and their second language is English. One example was the writing on a wall of a building *Klein tejjob u helu. Gesu Kristu Huwa l'Iben Alla* ("Everything is alright and fine. Jesus Christ is the Son of God"). It was written *Alla* (without letter *h*), whereas in Arabic script there is letter *h* in the word *Allah*.

Languages, like individuals, tribes and nations, have their own peculiarity and characteristics, but there must be something special with Arabic. Allah did not tell us why, but He said,

إِنَّا أَنْزَلْنَاهُ قُرْآنًا عَرَبِيًّا لَعَلَّكُمْ تَعْقِلُونَ. (يوسف : ٢)

Verily, We have sent it down as an Arabic Qur'an in order that you may understand. (Q. 12:2).

In another verse,

إِنَّا جَعَلْنَاهُ قُرْآنًا عَرَبِيًّا لَعَلَّكُمْ تَعْقِلُونَ (الزخرف : ٣)

Verily, We have made it a Qur'an in Arabic so that you may be able to understand. (Q. 43:3).

As the people of ancient Arabia spoke Arabic, the revelation was in Arabic, not in any other language, so that they may understand the content of the revelation. There must be something unique in this language. Among the characteristics of Arabic are as follows:

1. Unlike many languages using Latin scripts, Arabic is written from left to right.
2. It has no capital letters to identify the proper nouns. When Allah says in the Qur'ān,

إِنَّهُ عَلِيُّ حَكِيمٌ . (الشورى : ٥١)

Verily He (Allah) is Most High, Most Wise. (Q. 42:51)

it never means "He is Ali, Hakim", but if you do not cite this verse, but pointing at a person called 'Alī, for example, then you can say إِنَّهُ عَلِيٌّ meaning, "Verily, he is Ali." Therefore, the verse never means that Allah incarnates as 'Alī, or considers 'Alī having divinity, God forbid. Allah says in the Qur'ān ,

إِنَّ الدِّينَ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ الْإِسْلَامُ (آل عمران : ١٩)

Truly, the religion with Allah is Islam (Q. 3:19),

and

وَمَنْ يَبْتَغِ غَيْرَ الْإِسْلَامِ دِينًا فَلَنْ يُقْبَلَ مِنْهُ وَهُوَ فِي الْآخِرَةِ مِنَ الْخَاسِرِينَ (آل عمران ٨٥:٣)

*And whoever seeks a religion other than Islam, **it will never be accepted***

of him, and in the Hereafter he will be one of the losers. (Q. 3:85)

Here the word *Islam* is a proper name, should be written in capital I, shall not be translated as "surrendering oneself to Allah," as it includes non-Muslims who claim to surrender themselves to Allah, such as the Christians and the Jews. *Islam* here with capital I, the name of the religion followed by Muslims. All Qur'ānic commentators hold such opinion, translating الإسلام as the religion of Islam. The Prophet himself explained the verse, as narrated by Abū Hurayrah, as follows:

By Him (Allah) in Whose Hand Muhammad's soul is, there is none from amongst the Jews and the Christians (of these present nation) who hears about me and then dies without believing in the Message with which I have been sent (i.e. Islamic Monotheism), but he will be from the dwellers of the (Hell) Fire.

(Reported by Muslim in his *Ṣaḥīḥ*, *ḥadīth* no. 240).

Long time ago in mid 80s, a friend, a former Libyan jet fighter pilot who emigrated to Canada told me this story: "A young officer was handed a piece of paper containing an expression of thank and appreciation to a teacher. The note read *نَشْكُرُ الْأُسْتَاذَ عَلَى حُسْنِ سُلُوكِهِ* meaning 'We thank the teacher for his good behaviour'. The young officer, because of the absence of capital letter in Arabic, mistakenly read *نَشْكُرُ الْأُسْتَاذَ عَلِيَّ حَسَنَ سُلُوكِهِ* meaning 'We thank Mr. 'Alī Ḥasan Sallūkah.'"

3. Classical Arabic scripts have no dots for its consonants, so that we cannot make distinctions between the letters ن and ث , ب , ت or between the letters ز and ر , or between the letters ج , ح and خ , or between the letters س and ش , or between the letters ض and ص , or between the letters ط and ظ , or between the letters ذ and د . What is left is only what we call "the consonantal skeleton", like a tree in winter with no leaves remaining except its trunk. There was a story that a caliph sent a letter to his general summoning one of his soldiers. As the name of the summoned soldier had no consonantal dot, the general became confused, and sent several soldiers fixed to that name. Let us say, for example: *Ḥusnī, Ḥasabī, Khashabī* all were written the same, i.e., *حسلى*.
4. Classical Arabic (even modern Arabic) scripts are without vowel sign. Therefore we cannot make a distinction between *رجل* (*rajul*) meaning "a man" from *رجل* (*rijl*) meaning "a leg" except in the sentence. It happened in a small town in Indonesia in the early fifties

a teacher conducting a study circle in a mosque read a book to his students. When he came to the word ثُنْ he read it *thumun* meaning "one-eighth" and he became confused. A student suggested that it might be *thaman* meaning "price" and the teacher was very happy that one of his students had solved the problem.

5. Unlike the Western languages, the Arabic has dual besides singular and plural. So, if you have two cars, you still do not have many cars, you need to have at least three cars to have many cars in Arabic.
6. The plural in Arabic is mostly broken one. In English, it is simply by putting letter s, like books, letters etc. In Arabic, it is like ox-oxen, woman-women, foot-feet. It is like having two names for everything, its name in singular and its name in plural. For the new words which did not exist before, such as *bank* the Arabs invented its plural, *bunūk* in the pattern of بُيُوتَ (*buyūt*) for the plural of بَيْتَ (*bayt*, a house), whereas in Morocco, it is *abnāk* in the pattern of أَبْيَاتَ (*abyāt*), the plural of بَيْتَ (*bayt*, a line of poetry).
7. A slight change of vowel in Arabic changes the meaning, such as:

مَطَرٌ (*maṭar*) is "rain", مَطَارٌ (*maṭār*) is "airport"

هَذَا قَاتِلُ أَخِي (*hādhā qātilun akhī*), meaning "This is **a** killer, my brother,"

هَذَا قَاتِلُ أَخِي (*hādhā qātilu akhī*), meaning "This is the killer **of** my brother"

رَجُلٌ لُعْنَةٌ، سُبَّةٌ، مُخَدَّعَةٌ (*rajulun lu'nah, subbah, khud'ah*), means "a man who is cursed, is insulted, cheated (by people)"

رَجُلٌ لُعْنَةٌ، سُبِّيَّةٌ، مُخَدَّعَةٌ (*rajulun lu'anah, subabah, khuda'ah*), "a man who curses, insults, cheats (people)"

We have the pattern in the Qur'an (الهمزة ١٠٤:١) وَيَلْ لِكُلِّ هُمَزَةٍ لُّمَزَةٍ (*waylun likulli humazatin lumazah*) "Woe to every slanderer and backbiter." (Q. 104:1)

A Bedouin was asked by a caliph, مَنْ خَتَنَكَ؟ (*man khatanak*) meaning "Who circumcised you?" When the Bedouin mentioned the name of a

very old person, the caliph's assistant told him to correct the question and ask مَنْ خَتْنُكَ؟ (*man khatanuk*) meaning "Who is your son-in-law?"

8. The meaning of a word could be specified by changing one of its consonants, such as: غَلَطَ (*ghalat*) is any mistake in general, whereas غَلَّتْ (*ghalat*) is mistake in counting. If you say that the moon is closer to us than China, because you can see the moon, but not China, this is غَلَطَ (*ghalat*), with letter ط. The Indonesian language misspells this word and says *ralat* meaning *the correction of mistake*, which is in Arabic إِصْلَاحُ الْغَلَطِ or تَصْحيحُ الْغَلَطِ. If you say two plus three equals six, this is غَلَّتْ (*ghalat*) with letter ت. In order to distinguish between the two words, we pronounce letter ط more strongly and clearly. Another word, قَبَضَ (*qabḍ*) means holding with the palm and fingers, whereas قَبِضَ (*qabṣ*) means holding with the tips of the fingers.
9. It uses different levels of emphasis, such as, the a person who does not know that Muhammad is the messenger of Allah, we say مُحَمَّدٌ. To the doubter we emphasize by saying إِنَّ مُحَمَّدًا رَّسُولُ اللَّهِ with the additional إِنَّ (verily). If he is still in doubt, we emphasize more by saying لَ إِنَّ مُحَمَّدًا لَرَّسُولُ اللَّهِ with the additional لَ. For the final emphasis we swear by Allah, saying وَاللَّهِ (*wallāh*), or بِاللَّهِ (*billāh*), or تَاللَّهِ (*tallāh*). Unfortunately, nowadays some people swear by Allah without being asked to make you believe them.
10. Some Arabic words are rich with synonyms, sometimes to indicate the slight difference in meaning of something, such as lions (claimed to have hundreds of names, among which are: الْأَسَدُ and اللَّيْثُ), snakes (claimed to have hundreds of names, among which are: الْحَيَّةُ، الثَّعْبَانُ، الأَفْعَى، الحَنْشُ), honey (claimed to have about eighty names), rain (from light, moderate, and heavy rain), and sleep (from light to heavy sleepiness to light and sound sleep). Love is one of important words

in classical Arabic. It has ten words depending on its level, from (1) العَلَقُ (*al-‘alaq*, attachment), (2) المَيْلُ (*al-mayl*, inclination), (3) الْمَوَدَّةُ (*al-mawaddah*, likeness, love), (4) الْحُبُّ (*al-hubb*, love), (5) الصَّبَابَةُ (*al-ṣabābah*, ardent love), (6) الْهَوَىٰ (*al-hawá*, passion, desire, craving), (7) الْعِشْقُ (*al-‘ishq*, passionate love), (8) التَّيِّمُ (*al-tatayyum*, being enslaved or infatuated by love); a person who is enslaved by love is called مُتَيِّمٌ and cannot control his passion any longer, when a young man said to a girl أَمُوتُ فِيكَ (“I am ready to die for your sake”); hopefully, when he marries her it would not end with divorce, as one of three marriages in the West ends with divorce. A tour guide at Troy, after telling the Greek legend of the Trojan War that lasted for ten years, asked the tourists: “Are you ready to wage war for ten years for the sake of a girl like Helen of Troy?” One of the tourists said, “[Even] for twenty years.” Since it was not a serious question, I said, “I would also say the same answer.” The guide said: “I have asked the same question before at a previous tour, and one of the wives of the tourists took it seriously and said, ‘Stop this silly question!’” This is an example of uncontrollable love. (9) الْخُلَّةُ (*al-khullah*), now translated as “friendship” whereas it is close to madness; the word تَخَلَّلَ (*takhallala*) also means “to permeate”, and the word خَلِيلَةٌ (*khalīlah*) means “a sweetheart”, and (10) الْجُنُونُ (madness), an example is the story of Qays called مَجْنُونُ لَيْلَى who was madly in love of Layla who married another person. Qays went to the desert to find her. When he was asked why he searched for her in the desert, he said that this was the only place where he did no search for her.

For the word *sitting down* the word قَعَدَ – قُعُودٌ is used to indicate standing before sitting down, and جَلَسَ – جُلُوسًا to indicate lying down before sitting down. In the Qur’ān, it is used قَعَدَ – قُعُودًا and its derivatives, such as in Q. 9:90, 3:168, 7:16, 6:68, 17:22, 29, 4:140, 7:68, 72:9, 9:5, 46, 83, 85:6, 3:191, 4:103, 10:12, 4:95, 5:24, 4:95,

جَلَسَ – 9:46, 86. The Qur'an mentions only one of the derivatives of جَلَسَ namely, مَجَالِس (assemblies) in تَفَسَّحُوا فِي الْمَجَالِسِ “make a room in the assemblies” Q. 58:11. At present, the two words are almost identical.

So far, I have mentioned ten of the unique features of Arabic. There are many more, among which is its being called لغة الأضداد (“the language of opposite meanings”) which shall be dealt with in due course. (ANUMA 15 September, 2006).

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31. PROBLEMS IN TRANSLATING THE QUR'ĀN

One of the problems of translating from one language to another, especially the classical ones is the transition of meanings of words and expressions in that language. With regard to the Qur'ān, it was revealed more than fifteen centuries ago in Arabic, which is supposed to be difficult to understand, compared to other languages, such as the Old and Middle English. However, as the Qur'ān has been preserved, its Arabic language, has also been preserved, and will remain so. If the Prophet or any of his companions were still alive, we would still be able to understand him. Unlike William Shakespeare (d.1616), who lived in the 16th century, we have problems in understanding him. Let alone the Old English poet, Chaucer (d. 1400), his language is almost totally different. The word “done”, for example, in Old English is *gedone* similar to the German *getan*.

The examples of the transition of meanings of words, with the lapse of time, either from one language to another, or in the same language, namely, English, are as follows

- a. The word *candidate* is originally from the Latin word *candidatus* meaning “robed in white”. In Roman times a person who sought election to any office or appointment wore a white toga to indicate his good character, sincerity and honesty, probably like the Arabic expression طَاهِرُ الدِّينِ meaning “honest, innocent, upright, blameless.” The Latin word for “white” is *candidus*, and for “whiteness” is *candour*. The same word is used in English (the same spelling in American English, but added with a letter “u” like the spelling of the word *color* and *colour*) meaning “saying freely what one thinks” (Ind. *keterus-terangan*), such as, “He spoke with *candour*” [lit. “with whiteness”]. “Candour after affection is the basis of successful married life.”
- b. The word *idiot* meaning “a very weak-minded person that unable to conduct rationally, a fool” is derived from the Latin word *idiota*, “an uneducated person”, and the Greek word, *idiots*, “a private person”. It means “a private person who held no public office or had no professional knowledge”. Then it gradually means a person who is unfit for these posts because of lack of education. Even in the 17th century this word was still commonly used to mean “a private person who holds no public office.” Now, a person who is doing a stupid thing like leaving his suitcase in the rain is an idiot, a weak-minded person.
- c. The word *meticulous* [in the pattern of *ridiculous*] means “giving or showing great attention to detail, being careful and exact.” The original meaning of the word is “fearful” or “timid” (easily frightened, shy) which is no longer in use. It is from Latin *metus* meaning “fear”. A *meticulous* (lit. “fearful”) person is the one, being “fearful” of making mistakes, examines with excessive care every little detail of something, and becomes over-careful.
- d. The word *slave* meaning *servant* originally means “noble and glorious in the language of the *Slavonians*, a tribe in Southeast

Europe, as they called themselves a “noble and glorious” race. When the Romans conquered their land and hold them in bondage they used their names, *Slavi* or *Sclavi*, to mean “servants” and became *slaves*.

- e. The word *villain* meaning “an evil-doer”, “a wicked person” originally means “a serf or agricultural labourer working for the owner of the *villa*”. The Roman *villa* was a country house, then adopted into English in the 12th century to mean a farmhouse and its annexed buildings. Even in Shakespeare’s time, the word still meant “a servant”, but degenerated to mean “an evil-doer.”

One example of the transition of meanings in Arabic words, from a dominant and original meaning to a non-dominant one, is as follows:

The word الرَّجَاء (*al-rajā*) means “hope, expectation, anticipation.” These are its meanings in modern Arabic dictionaries. However, in classical Arabic, the word also means “fear”. When they say مَا رَجَوْتُ فَلَانًا -- now translated “I did not hope (or expect) So-and-so” -- what he really means is مَا خَفَيْتُهُ “I did not fear him, I was not afraid of him.” Some classical Arabic linguists say that the expression مَا أَرْجُو to mean مَا أَبَالِي “I do not care”. For example, the classical Arab poet and a younger contemporary of the Prophet, Abū Dhu’ayb al-Hudhalī (أَبُو ذُؤَيْبٍ d. ca. 28/649), said in his poem,

إِذَا لَسَعَتْهُ النَّحْلُ لَمْ يَرْجُ لَسَعَهَا * وَخَالَفَهَا فِي بَيْتِ نُوْبٍ عَوَاسِلِ

*If the bees sting him he will not care, as it will be compensated
with honey in the place of misfortune (i.e., the bee hive).*

It means, according to Ibn al-Jawzī (d. 597/ 1193) لَمْ يَكْتَرِثْ لَهُ “he does not care for it, he does not bear it in mind, he does not take an interest in it” We cannot translate it as “he will not expect the sting of the bees” when he takes their honey in their hive.

According to classical Arabic linguists the two meanings are still used in the verses of the Qur’ān. In dealing with something expected like blessing, the term means “hope, expectation”, but if it deals with something feared, such as the Last day, the Day of Reckoning and

meeting our Creator with sins, the term means “fear”. Ibn al-Jawzī mentions the following examples:

1. The term الرَّجَاءُ meaning الْأَمَلُ “hope” which is the more common meaning used in the Qur’ān, as in the following verse:

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَالَّذِينَ هَاجَرُوا وَجَاهَدُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ أُولَٰئِكَ
يَرْجُونَ رَحْمَةَ اللَّهِ وَاللَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ (البقرة : ٢١٨)

Verily, those who have believed, and those who have emigrated (to escape persecution), and strive in the way of Allah these hope of Allah’s mercy Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful. (Q. 2: 218)

Pickthall and A. Yusuf Ali both translate the term as “hope”, whereas Muhammad Asad translates it as “look forward to”.

The other verse is, as follows:

أُولَٰئِكَ الَّذِينَ يَدْعُونَ يَبْتَغُونَ إِلَىٰ رَبِّهِمُ الْوَسِيلَةَ أَيُّهُمْ أَقْرَبُ وَيَرْجُونَ رَحْمَتَهُ
وَيَخَافُونَ عَذَابَهُ إِنَّ عَذَابَ رَبِّكَ كَانَ مَحْذُورًا (الإسراء : ٥٧)

Those [saintly beings] they call upon desire (for themselves) the way of approach to their Lord, which of them shall be the nearest; they hope for His Mercy and fear His Torment. Verily, the Torment of your Lord is (something) to be afraid of. (Q. 17:57).

What the verse means is that those whom people invoke as mediators between them and Allah, such as ‘Isá (Jesus), ‘Uzayr (Ezra), angels, or saints, they themselves strive to be close to Him, hope His Mercy and fear his Torment. Therefore, one should ask and pray to Him directly, instead of asking through intermediaries.

2. The second meaning of الرَّجَاءُ which is no longer in use now is الْخَوْفُ “fear” as in the following verses:

- a. إِنَّ الَّذِينَ لَا يَرْجُونَ لِقَاءَنَا وَرَضُوا بِالْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَاطْمَأَنَّنُوا بِهَا وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ عَنْ آيَاتِنَا غَافِلُونَ . أُولَٰئِكَ
مَأْوَاهُمْ النَّارُ بِمَا كَانُوا يَكْسِبُونَ (يونس : ٧-٨)

*Verily, those who do not **fear** to meet Us [on the Judgment day], but [lit. “and”] are pleased [and satisfied] with the life of the present world, and those who are heedless of Our ayat [signs, revelations], those their abode will be the Fire, because of what they used to earn.” (Q. 10:7-8).*

- b. قُلْ إِنَّمَا أَنَا بَشَرٌ مِّثْلُكُمْ يُوحَىٰ إِلَيَّ أَنَّمَا إِلَهُكُمُ إِلَهٌ وَاحِدٌ فَمَنْ كَانَ يَرْجُوا لِقَاءَ رَبِّهِ فَلْيَعْمَلْ عَمَلًا صَالِحًا وَلَا يُشْرِكْ بِعِبَادَةِ رَبِّهِ أَحَدًا (الكهف : ١١٠)

*Say (O Muhammad), ‘I am only a human being like you. It has been revealed unto me that your God is only One God. So, whoever **fears** for the meeting with his Lord, let him work righteousness and associate none as a partner in the worship of his Lord.’” (Q. 18:110).*

- c. وَقَالَ الَّذِينَ لَا يَرْجُونَ لِقَاءَنَا لَوْلَا أُنْزِلَ عَلَيْنَا الْمَلَائِكَةُ أَوْ نَرَىٰ رَبَّنَا لَقَدِ اسْتَكْبَرُوا فِي أَنفُسِهِمْ وَعَتَوْا عُتُوًّا كَبِيرًا (الفرقان : ٢١)

*And those who **fear** not the meeting with Us said, “Why are not the angels sent down to us, or (why) do we not see our Lord?” Indeed they are far too proud of themselves, and are scornful with great pride. (Q. 25:21).*

In this verse, A. Yusuf Ali alone who translates لَا يَرْجُونَ as “fear not”. Pickthall translates it “look not for”. Asad translates it “do not believe that they are destined to”.

- d. مَنْ كَانَ يَرْجُوا لِقَاءَ اللَّهِ فَإِنَّ أَجَلَ اللَّهِ لَآتٍ وَهُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ (العنكبوت : ٥)

*Whoever **fears** the meeting with Allah, then Allah’s Term is Surely coming, and He is the All-Hearer, the All-knower. (Q. 29:5)*

- e. وَإِلَىٰ مَدْيَنَ أَخَاهُمْ شُعَيْبًا فَقَالَ يَا قَوْمِ اعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ وَارْجُوا الْيَوْمَ الْآخِرَ وَلَا تَعْتَوْا فِي الْأَرْضِ مُفْسِدِينَ (العنكبوت : ٣٦)

*And to Madyan (people) (We sent) their brother Shu‘ayb. Then he said, ‘O my people! serve Allah and **fear** the Last Day. (Q. 29:36; A. Yusuf Ali’s translation).*

Here only A. Yusuf Ali who translates the term as **fear**. Others, still use the meaning “hope and expectation.”

- f. مَا لَكُمْ لَا تَرْجُونَ لِلَّهِ وَقَارًا (نوح : ١٣)

*What is the matter with you that you do not **fear** Allah's majesty. (Q. 71:13).*

- g. إِنَّهُمْ كَانُوا لَا يَرْجُونَ حِسَابًا (النبي : ٢٧)

*For that they used not to **fear** any account (for their deeds).
(Q. 78:27; A. Yusuf Ali's translation).*

Again, only A. Yusuf Ali who translates the term لَا يَرْجُونَ “not to **fear**”, whereas Pickthall, Dr. M. Taqiuddin al-Hilaly and Asad translate it, “they looked not for”, “they used not to look for” and “they were not expecting” respectively. In general, if you believe something good is going to happen to you, you expect it, but if you believe something terrible is going to happen, you fear it. Again, if you do not believe something terrible is going to happen to you, you do not fear it, you disregard it, and the term used for all these is رَجَاء .

In the above verses Muhammad Asad, Pickthall, al-Hilali and A. Yusuf Ali all translate the term رَجَاء in its modern and contemporary meaning, “hope and expectation” instead of its classical meaning “fear.” But when it is in negative, namely, followed by “not”, then only A. Yusuf Ali who translates it as “fear not”. This is probably because: (1) They have not consulted the classical Arabic expression and poetry, especially the pre-Islamic one; (2) They referred to the *ḥadīth* of the Prophet, on the authority of Abū Mūsá,

*Whoever **loves** the meeting with Allah, Allah too, **loves** the meeting with him; and whoever hates the meeting with Allah, Allah too, hates the meeting with him.*

(Reported by Bukhārī in his *Ṣaḥīḥ*, vol. 8, *ḥ adīth* no. 515).

But we have to remember that the word رَجَاء is not used here, but rather أَحَبَّ “love”. مِنْ أَحَبَّ لِقَاءَ اللَّهِ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ لِقَاءَهُ.... Therefore, there is no contradiction here. Pious people do really love to meet Allah after his death, like Abū Hurayrah, who said in his death bed while people around him were praying for his recovery, “O Allah, I love to meet You, so love to meet me, too”. There are people who love Allah and whom Allah loves; they are people who follow the Prophet. Allah says,

قُلْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تُحِبُّونَ اللَّهَ فَاتَّبِعُونِي يُحْبِبْكُمُ اللَّهُ وَيَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ
ذُنُوبَكُمْ وَاللَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ (آل عمران : ٣١)

Say (O Muhammad), “If you (really) love Allah, then follow me, Allah will love you and forgive your sins. And Allah is Most-Forgiving, Most Merciful.” (Q. 3:31)

There are many more words in the Qur’ān almost lost their original or classical meanings by the lapse of time like the word رَجَاء mentioned above. This is a glimpse of the problems faced by scholars who are involved in translating the Qur’ān, the language of which has been used for about fifteen centuries.

What will happen to the term *gay*, meaning, light-hearted, cheerful, happy and full of fun, but colloquially means “homosexual”? Will this colloquial meaning take over its dominant meanings, from the positive meanings into the negative one in the distant future? Only Allah knows and history will tell. (ANUMA, 17 March, 06)

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صحيح البخاري ج ٨

ابن الجوزي ، أبو الفرج (ت ٥٩٧هـ). نزهة الأعين النواظر في علم الوجوه و النظائر. بيروت :

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32. THE STYLE OF THE QUR'ĀN

Brothers in Islam.

There is an Arabic proverb saying, مَنْ أَحَبَّ شَيْئًا أَكْثَرَ مِنْ ذِكْرِهِ meaning, “Whoever loves something he mentions (remembers) it very often. If you love Allah you will remember Him very often. Our Prophet taught us so many expressions reminding us of Allah, such as سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ ، الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ ، اللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ and we say if we admire something اللَّهُ تَبَارَكَ اللَّهُ and if we do not like something we ask Allah’s protection from it and say أَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ ; if someone is sneezing he should say الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ and the person who hears him should pray for him and say يَرْحَمُكَ اللَّهُ “may Allah bless you” and the sneezing person prays back and says يَهْدِيْكُمْ اللَّهُ “may Allah guide you” and many other similar expressions.

As Muslims we believe that Allah talked to us through revelation to Prophet Muhammad, and is still talking to us and people in later generations until the Last Day when we read the Qur’ān. He says directly to people in general, including non-believers, by saying يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ “O people,” to the people of the Book (Jews and Christians) at least twelve times, by saying يَا أَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ “O People of the Book”, to the believers, by

saying, *يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا* “*O those who believe*”; but He does not talk directly to those who have already rejected the truth of Islam after it has been delivered to them. He ordered the Prophet to talk to them, by saying *قُلْ يَا أَيُّهَا الْكَافِرُونَ* “*Say: O those who reject the truth, (namely, infidel)*”. He talked directly to the non-believers only in the Hereafter, when it has become too late for them to accept Islam; Allah says,

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لَا تَعْتَذِرُوا الْيَوْمَ إِنَّمَا تُجْزَوْنَ مَا كُنتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ . (التحریم ، ٧)

(It will be said in the Hereafter) O you who disbelieve! Make no excuses this

Day! You are being requited only for what you used to do. (Q. 66:7).

Every speaker, every writer, has his own style. As the Qur’ān is Allah’s words, then He must have His own style, beyond human style in its eloquence that even the poets in Arabia could not imitate. As the Qur’ān is to be recited by Muslims belonging to various languages and ethnic backgrounds, Allah chose words which are easy to pronounce. Some examples are as follows:

- a. The word *آبَاء (ābā’)* meaning “fathers and forefathers” and *أَجْدَاد (ajdād)* meaning “grand fathers, and ancestors”. Here Allah chose the word which is easy to pronounce, namely, *آبَاء (ābā’)*, such as the following verse:

فَإِذَا قَضَيْتُمْ مَنَاسِكَكُمْ فَادْكُرُوا اللَّهَ كَذِكْرِكُمْ آبَاءَكُمْ أَوْ أَشَدَّ ذِكْرًا ... (البقرة : ٢٠٠)

*So, when you have completed your manasik
remember Allah as you remember your forefathers
or with a far more remembrance... (Q. 2:200).*

It means after performing your *manāsik al-ḥajj* (rituals of the pilgrimage), namely, *iḥrām*, *ṭawāf* around the Ka‘bah and *sa‘ī* between Mt. Safā and Mt. Warwah, *wuqūf* (stopping) at ‘Arafāt, *mabūt* (staying the night) at Muzdalifah and Miná, *ramy jamarāt* (stoning of the pillars at Miná symbolising Satan), and slaughtering the sacrifices animal (*hady*), then Allah told us not just forget Him,

but we should remember Him as we remember our forefathers. Here Allah used the word *ābā'* instead of *ajdād*.

In another verse Allah said,

وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُمْ اتَّبِعُوا مَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ قَالُوا بَلْ نَتَّبِعُ مَا أَلْفَيْنَا عَلَيْهِ آبَاءَنَا
أَوَلَوْ كَانَ آبَاؤُهُمْ لَا يَعْقِلُونَ شَيْئًا وَلَا يَهْتَدُونَ (البقرة، ١٧٠)

When it is said to them: "Follow what Allah has sent down", they say: "Nay! We shall follow what we found our fathers following." (Would they do that!) even though their fathers did not understand anything nor were they guided? (Q. 2:170)

- b. The words for news are *kḥabar* (pl. *akhbār* أَخْبَار), meaning, "news, information, report, rumour, message, story, affair," originally used for what has happened, or happened in the past, and *nabā'* (pl. *anbā'* أَنْبَاء), meaning: "news, tidings, information, announcement, report," originally used for what will happen in the future. A person who knows what happened in the past, and later called an "expert, specialist" is called *kḥabīr* (الْخَبِيرُ *al-Khabīr*, the Knowing) knows what happened in the past and what will happen in the future. The term for "prophecy" is *nubū'ah* (نُبُوءَة) and *nubuwwah* (نُبُوءَة) which also means "prophethood". The term *nabī* (نَبِيّ, "a prophet") was probably derived from *nabī'* (نَبِيَّة), meaning "a person who knows what will happen in the future", rather than from the verb *yanbū* (يَنْبُو - نَبَى *nabā, yanbū*), meaning "to be distant, to move away."

The word *kḥabar* (kḥabar) and its derivatives are used in the Qur'ān as follows: *kḥubran* (خُبْرًا, Q. 17:68 and 91), *bikhabarin* (بِكُحْبَارِينَ, Q. 27:7 and 28:29), *akhbārāhā* (أَخْبَارَهَا, Q. 99:4), whereas the term *kḥabīr* (kḥabīr, including *al-khabīr* and *kḥabīran*) are mentioned about 37 times. In short, *kḥabar* (kḥabar) as a noun is used 5 times, and the word

خَبِير *khābīr*) is used about 37 times. Total: about 42 times. It is never used as a verb, such as أَخْبَرَ (*akhbara*).

The use of the term نَبَأ (*naba'*) and its derivatives in the Qur'ān is as follows: as a verb, at least 50 times; as a noun, (meaning “news, information, etc.”) at least 33 times, meaning “a prophet” (or prophets), 32 times, and meaning “prophethood” five times. Total: 163 times.

It is easier to pronounce the word *naba'* than the word *khavar*, especially for non-Arabs. Although the Dutch and the German have this *kh* sound, such as *kilogram* and *achtung*, the English, French, Italian, Malay (Indonesian and Malaysian) do not have it. We adopted the word *khavar*, but change it into *kabar*. Therefore, Allah wants to make it easy for us to read the Qur'ān, and gives the word easy to pronounce, namely, *naba'* instead of *khavar*, especially as a verb. Among the examples of the use of *naba'* and its derivatives as a verb in the Qur'ān are as follows:

وَعَلَّمَ آدَمَ الْأَسْمَاءَ كُلَّهَا ثُمَّ عَرَضَهُمْ عَلَى الْمَلَائِكَةِ فَقَالَ أَنْبِئُونِي بِأَسْمَاءِ هَؤُلَاءِ
 إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ. قَالُوا سُبْحَانَكَ لَا عِلْمَ لَنَا إِلَّا مَا عَلَّمْتَنَا إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ الْعَلِيمُ الْحَكِيمُ.
 قَالَ يَا آدَمُ أَنْبِئْهُمْ بِأَسْمَائِهِمْ فَلَمَّا أَنْبَأَهُمْ بِأَسْمَائِهِمْ قَالَ أَلَمْ أَقُلْ لَكُمْ إِنِّي
 أَعْلَمُ الْغَيْبَ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَأَعْلَمُ مَا تُبْدُونَ وَمَا
 كُنْتُمْ تَكْتُمُونَ (البقرة: ٣١-٣٣)

And He taught Adam all the names (of everything), then He showed them to the angels and said, 'Tell Me the name so these if you are truthful.... He said, 'O Adam! Inform them of their names, and when he had informed them of their names, He said: 'Did I not tell you that I know the Ghayb (Unseen) in the heavens and the earth, and I know what you reveal and what you have been concealing? (Q. 2: 31, 33).

وَإِذْ أَسْرَ النَّبِيُّ إِلَىٰ بَعْضِ أَزْوَاجِهِ حَدِيثًا فَلَمَّا نَبَّأَتْ بِهِ وَأَظْهَرَهُ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ عَرَفَ بَعْضَهُ وَأَعْرَضَ

عَنْ بَعْضٍ فَلَمَّا نَبَّأَهَا بِهِ قَالَتْ مَنْ أَنْبَأَكَ هَذَا قَالَ نَبَّأَنِيَ الْعَلِيمُ الْخَبِيرُ. (التحریم : ۳)

And (remember) when the Prophet disclosed a matter in confidence to one of his wives (Hafsah), then she told it (to another i.e., 'Ā'ishah). And Allah made it known to him; he informed part thereof and left a part. Then when he told her (Hafsah) thereof, she said: 'Who told you this?' He said:

*The All-Knower, the Well-Acquainted (Allah)
has told me. (Q. 66:3)*

This verse is about the Prophet's promise not to drink honey any more, as the honey given by his wife Zaynab bint Jahsh, was falsely and probably out of jealousy claimed to have bad smell by his wife 'Ā'ishah, who had told the other wife Ḥafsah to complain to him of the bad smell.. But Allah informed him about this scheme and asked them ('Ā'ishah and Ḥafsah) to repent, or the Prophet might divorce them.

- c. There are two words for “marriage” in Arabic: زَوَّاج (zawāj) and نِكَاح (nikāḥ). The verb is زَوَّجَ (zawwaja) and نَكَحَ (nakaḥa), meaning, “to marry.” As a verb, *zawwaja* (and its derivatives) is used 5 times only in the Qur’ān, whereas the verb *nakaḥa* (and its derivatives) is used 17 times. As a noun the term *zawāj* is not used, but rather the term *nikāḥ*. Examples in the Qur’ān are as follows:

وَلَا تَنْكِحُوا مَا نَكَحَ آبَاؤُكُمْ مِنَ النِّسَاءِ إِلَّا مَا قَدْ سَلَفَ إِنَّهُ
كَانَ فَاحِشَةً وَمَقْتًا وَسَاءَ سَبِيلًا (النساء : ۲۲)

*And marry not women whom your fathers married, except
what has already passed; indeed it was shameful
and most hateful, and an evil way. (Q.4:22)*

وَلَا تَعْزِمُوا عُقْدَةَ النِّكَاحِ حَتَّى يَبْلُغَ الْكِتَابُ أَجَلَهُ ... (البقرة : ۲۳۵)

*... And do not consummate the marriage until
the term prescribed is fulfilled. (Q. 2:235).*

It is easier to pronounce *nakaha* than *zawwaja*, and to pronounce *nikāḥ* than *zawāj*, and therefore the former is used in the Qur’ān. In the Egyptian slang, the first and the last letter of the term *zawāj* is inverted and becomes *jawāz*, and the letter *j* is pronounced *g* in “go” and “get”, and the word becomes *gawāz*.

According to the Arab tradition before Islam, it was unacceptable that a man married the divorced wife of his adopted son. At that time once you adopted a son, he should be treated like a legitimate one, and his wife would be treated like a daughter-in-law, to whom marriage is prohibited. Allah wanted to change this tradition. Your adopted son is not your real son, but the son of his father. His wife is not your adopted daughter-in-law, and therefore you can marry her if she was divorced, because there is no blood-relationship with her. It was hard to accept by the Arabs at that time, and Allah chose the word which is also hard to pronounce. Allah said:

... فَلَمَّا قَضَىٰ زَيْدٌ مِنْهَا وَطَرًا زَوَّجْنَاكَهَا لِكَيْ لَا يَكُونَ عَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِينَ حَرَجٌ فِي أَزْوَاجِ

أَدْعِيَائِهِمْ إِذَا قَضَوْا مِنْهُنَّ وَطَرًا وَكَانَ أَمْرُ اللَّهِ مَفْعُولًا (الأحزاب : ٣٧)

...So when Zaid had accomplished his desire from her (i.e. divorce her), We gave her to you in marriage, so that (in future) there may be no difficulty to the believers in respect of (the marriage of) the wives of their adopted sons when the latter have no desire to keep them (i.e., they have divorced them). And Allah’ command must be fulfilled.

(Q. 33:37)

Here Allah Himself gave Zaynab bint Jahsh (the Prophet’s cousin and divorced wife of Zayd) in marriage to the Prophet. She was proud that the marriage took place in heaven, witnessed by Gabriel. No wonder if ‘Ā’ishah and Ḥafṣah felt rather jealous of her. Zayd was the only contemporary of the Prophet mentioned in the Qur’ān beside Abu Lahab. Zayd, a former slave received this honour, and Abū Lahab, one of the Quraysh leaders who was the Prophet’s own uncle became humiliated. Allah said, (تَبَّتْ يَدَا أَبِي لَهَبٍ وَتَبَّ ... (تَبَّتْ : ١)

“Perish the two hands of Abu Lahab and perish he...” (Q.111:1)

Here Allah turned the table upside down: the mean became noble, and the noble became mean.

Conclusion:

One of the miracles of the Qur’ān is its eloquence, and one of the aspects of eloquence is the choice of words which are easy to articulate; this is a kind of blessing for non-Arab Muslims as they have to read the Qur’ān in its original text in Arabic. (ANUMA, 8 December, 06)

33. CHRISTMAS

Brothers and sisters in Islam,

There is an Arabic proverb which says *النَّاسُ أَعْدَاءُ مَا جَهِلُوا* “meaning people are the enemy of what they do not know”. If you encounter a strange animal, for example, you might think that it is a dangerous one, until someone tells you that it is harmless and friendly. A tall Canadian man told me that when he visited an isolated village in Indonesia as one of the participants of the Youth Exchange Program between Canada and Indonesia, a young boy was very scared when he saw him. I told him that the boy might think that he could be a giant who fed on children as mentioned in Indonesian fairy tales and legends. He might be the first white man the boy had ever seen. People who do not know anything about religion might think that we Muslims worship the Ka’bah, and the Christians worship the Cross, and the Zoroastrians worship fire. It is true that they are holies according to these respective followers of Islam, Christianity and Zoroastrian, but they do not worship them.

Living in a country where its people are predominantly Christians it is very important to have some information about Christmas. Last

Monday, on the 25th of December most of the Christians in the world celebrated the Christmas.

a. Christmas

The word *Christmas* is derived from the Old English *Christes maesse* (Christ's Mass). It was first used in the eleventh century. In German *Weihnacht* (holy night) is used, and in Latin *Dies natalis Domini* ("the Birthday of the Lord") from which the Italian uses the word *Il Natale*. The French used the word *Noël* which is probably from the Anglo-Saxon word *geol* (a feast, especially the feast of the winter solstice, about 22 December). The solstice is the time when the sun is farthest North of the equator (on 21 June, i.e., summer solstice in Northern hemisphere) and South of the equator (22 December, winter solstice in Northern hemisphere).

The festival of the 25th December was the celebration of the birth of Mithra (or Mitra) the Persian mystery god, "the Sun of Righteousness", the ancient Persian god of light and truth. Mithra in Zoroastrian belief was a god acting as mediator between the Supreme God and man. In the later Avesta, the sacred writings of Zoroastrianism, he is the most important god in Zoroastrians after Ahura Mazda (Ormuzd), the supreme deity, the source of light, and the creator of the world. Later Mithra was considered the saviour god at Mithraism, the centre of the Roman mystery cult. In Vedic Mithra, he was said to have maintained harmony in the social order.

During the first three centuries of the Christian era there was a considerable opposition in the Christian church to the pagan custom in celebrating the birthdays, but the Roman Emperor Aurelian (Lucius Domitius Aurelianus, c. 214-275), who became emperor in 270 established a festival on this date, namely, 25th of December, in the third century, not as the birthday of Christ, but associated with the winter solstice, namely, when the sun is farthest from the North on the shortest day (22 December). After the triumph of Constantine the Great (c. 274-337), in 336 this pagan festival on this date was adopted and Christianized by the Romans who referred Christ (instead of Mithra), as "the Sun of Righteousness", and called the festival ("The Birthday of the

Sun of Righteousness”). However, Christian scholars know well that Jesus was not born on 25 December. They acknowledge that it is impossible to determine the exact date of the birth of Christ, either from the Bible or from tradition.

Constantine was the first Roman emperor who embraced Christianity. We do not know whether his conversion to Christianity was genuine or for political motives. He summoned and convened the first general council of the Church at the old city Nicaea (on the site of the modern Turkish village Iznik) in 325. This council promulgated the first version of the Nicene Creed which gave the orthodox doctrine of the Trinity against the Arian heresy¹⁵. In 330 Constantine moved his capital to Byzantium and renamed it Constantinople (now called Istanbul).

During the Middle Ages (5th -15th Century) this festival became the most popular one of the year in the church and at home with a blend of pagan tradition and Christianity. However, during the Reformation, the Christmas festival was suppressed. The Puritans in England condemned it, and from 1642 to 1625 they issued ordinances forbidding all church services and festivities.

Christmas is a celebration of the birth of Jesus Christ, but the actual date of his birth in Bethlehem was unknown. With the exception of St. Mark and St. John (who did not mention about Jesus’ birth), the authors of the Gospels claimed that Jesus was born in Bethlehem (Mat. 2:1; Luke 2:4-6) and therefore, the place was regarded as a holy place by Christians.

Apart from the New Testament, and to some extent the Qur’ān, historically, we do not know much about Jesus. According to the New Testament Jesus died at the age of 33, but it records the events of the last three years only of his life. In 1906, Albert Schweitzer (1875-1965), the

¹⁵Arius (c. 256-336), was the founder of Arianism which completely denied the divinity of Christ. He was born in Libya, became a priest in Alexandria in 311, and was excommunicated and fled to Palestine in 318, but his heresy spread extensively, so that Constantine called a council at Nicaea to affirm the dogma of the Trinity.

Alsatian¹⁶ clergyman, physician, missionary, philosopher, and musicologist, began the final chapter of his book, *The Quest of the Historical Jesus*, as follows:

*There is nothing more negative than the result
of the critical study of the life of Jesus.*

Another scholar, Rev. Dr. Charles Anderson Scott said in an article on Jesus Christ written for the 14th edition of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, as follows:

*The attempt to write a Life of Jesus should frankly be abandoned.
The material for it certainly does not exist. It has been calculated that
the total number of days of his life regarding which we have any
record does not exceed fifty days.*

(*Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 14th edition, vol xiii, pp. 16-17).

So, we have Biblical Jesus described extensively in the Bible, the Qur'ānic Jesus ('Īsā *a.s.*) described in the Qur'ān very briefly, and historical Jesus based on brief account of history.

Why did not the Qur'ān explain the history of Jesus, 'Īsā *a.s.* in detail? Well, the Qur'ān is not a book of history, but of guidance and enlightenment. Like any other history or biography of any prophet mentioned in the Qur'ān, the brief history of Jesus, 'Īsā *a.s.*, gives us a moral lesson, guidance. The Qur'ān's many scientific statements are confirmed by modern science, but is not a book of science. It is a book of awakening. If we read and follow what the Qur'ān said, we would become enlightened and awakened. For just one example, Allah says,

وَاللَّهُ خَلَقَ كُلَّ دَابَّةٍ مِنْ مَاءٍ فَمِنْهُمْ مَنْ يَمْشِي عَلَى بَطْنِهِ وَمِنْهُمْ مَنْ يَمْشِي عَلَى رِجْلَيْنِ وَمِنْهُمْ

Allah has created every moving creature from water. Of them

¹⁶ Alsace belonged to Germany after the Treaty of Frankfurt in 1871, returned to France after the Treaty of Versailles in 1919.

There are some that creep on their bellies, and some that walk on two legs, and some that walk on four. Allah creates what He wills. Verily, Allah is able to do all things. (Q 24:45).

Snakes creep on their bellies when they move. There are about 2,500 species of snakes presently known; about 500 of them are poisonous. The Arabs claimed to have about 200 names of snakes, among them are, حَيَّة ، نُعْبَانُ أَفْعَى ، and حَنْش . Men and birds walk on two legs.

Some ornithologists [experts in scientific study of birds] said that there are about 100 billion [GB “milliard, thousand millions”, world pop. 6 billion] individual birds in the world and about 8,600 species... (Collier’s Encyclopedia, 1989, vol. 4, p. 195).

Camels, horses, cats and dogs have four legs. Allah did not mention the creatures which have more than four legs, 6, 8, 10, 100, a.s.o. Wake up, men! Observe nature! Do not stop at creatures with four legs. Have you seen an ant? A chapter in the Qur’ān is called *sūrat al-Naml*, “the Ant”, chapter 27. They have 3 pairs of leg, namely, 6 legs. All ants are social. Termites, usually called *white ants*, are not true ants. Ants have more than 4,500 species. Keep on observing nature! Have you seen a spider? A chapter in the Qur’ān is called *sūrat al-‘Ankabūt* (“the Spider”, chapter 29). It has 4 pairs of leg, 8 legs. There are 30,000 known species of spiders in the world. Have you seen a scorpion? They have 4 pairs of legs too, 8 legs. There are more than 650 species of scorpions. Have you seen a centipede? The Arabs call it أُمُّ أَرْبَعٍ وَ أَرْبَعِينَ “the creature that has 44 legs”. But the word *centipede* is from Latin *centum* meaning “hundred” and *pes* and *pedis* meaning “foot”. Do you remember the word *pedestrian* and *pedometer* which measures the number of step and the approximate distance taken by a walker? Based on the meaning of its name, it must have one hundred legs. Some centipedes have 15 pairs of leg = 30 legs, some 31 pairs = 62 legs, and up to 173 pairs = 324 legs, more than 100 legs. Here we are just observing the **legs** only of Allah’s creatures.

If we keep going observing further, such as the eyes, the ears, the behaviour, the habitats of Allah's creatures, starting from creatures that have no eyes to bees which have compound eyes, and further, we would become a scholar in this field. Fish living at the bottom of the ocean where sunlight cannot reach, do not need eyes. Bees -- a chapter in the Qur'ān is called *sūrat al-Nahl*, "The Bee", Chapter 16 -- (about 20,000 known species of bees in the world) have compound eyes, composed of a very large number of sections, each with a separate lens functioning independently, so that its vision is a kind of "mosaic vision". These three chapters of the Qur'ān, namely, the Bee (ch. 16), the Ant (ch. 27) and the Spider (ch. 29) are all Makkan *sūrahs*, revealed in Makkah or before *hijrah* (migration to Medinah). Allah wants us to observe nature, including ourselves, to appreciate it, take advantage of it, and to become obedient to Him. Man has invented many things based of his observation of nature.

Back to Christmas, some Christian scholars suggest the birth of Jesus was about the first month of the 4th year of Christian Era. But according to Matthew, King Herod who heard the birth of Jesus from the "the wise men from the East" wanted to kill Jesus who might be a rival to his throne. Jesus was taken to Egypt by Joseph and his mother, and returned only after the death of Herod in 4 B.C. Therefore, based on Matthew's account, Jesus might be born in 6 B.C. The Eastern Church, such as the Armenian, celebrates the birth as well as the baptism of Jesus on 6 January. The Greek theologian and a father of the early Christian Church, Clement of Alexandria (c. 150-c.220) suggested May 20. There is an indication in the Qur'ān that Jesus, 'Īsā a.s., was born in Spring. His miracle birth is mentioned in the Qur'ān, *sūrat Maryam*, (chapter 19, Mary). When the archangel Gabriel (Jibrīl) appeared before her in the form of man, in all respect (verse17),

فَاتَّخَذَتْ مِنْ دُونِهِمْ حِجَابًا فَأَرْسَلْنَا إِلَيْهَا رُوحَنَا فَتَمَثَّلَ لَهَا بَشَرًا سَوِيًّا. قَالَتْ إِنِّي أَعُوذُ بِالرَّحْمَنِ مِنْكَ
 إِنْ كُنْتَ تَقِيًّا. قَالَ إِنَّمَا أَنَا رَسُولُ رَبِّكِ لِأَهَبَ لَكِ غُلَامًا زَكِيًّا. قَالَتْ أَنَّى يَكُونُ لِي غُلَامٌ وَلَمْ يَمَسِّنِي بَشَرٌ
 وَلَمْ أَكُ بَغِيًّا. قَالَ كَذَلِكَ قَالَ رَبُّكِ هُوَ عَلَيَّ هَيِّنٌ وَلْنَجْعَلْهُ آيَةً لِلنَّاسِ وَرَحْمَةً مِنَّا وَكَانَ أَمْرًا مَقْضِيًّا. فَحَمَلَتْهُ

فَأْتَبَدَّتْ بِهِ مَكَانًا قَصِيًّا. فَأَجَاءَهَا الْمَخَاضُ إِلَى جِذْعِ النَّخْلَةِ قَالَتْ يَا لَيْتَنِي مِتُّ قَبْلَ هَذَا وَكُنْتُ نَسِيًّا
 مَنَسِيًّا. فَتَنَادَاهَا مِنْ تَحْتِهَا أَلَا تَحْزَنِي قَدْ جَعَلَ رَبُّكِ تَحْتَكِ سَرِيًّا. وَهَزَّتْ يَدُهَا جِذْعَ النَّخْلَةِ
 فَسَاقَطَ عَلَيْكَ رُطْبًا جَنِيًّا. فَكُلِي وَاشْرَبِي وَقَرِّي عَيْنًا ... (مريم ، ١٨-٢٦)

She said: "Verily, I seek refuge with the Most Gracious (Allah) from you, if you do fear Allah." (The angel) said: "I am only a messenger from your Lord, (to announce) to you the gift of a righteous son." She said, "How can I have a son, when no man has touched me, nor am I unchaste?" He said, "So (it will be), your Lord said: 'That is easy for Me (Allah). And (We wish) to appoint as a sign to mankind and a mercy from Us (Allah), and it is a Him matter (already) decreed (by Allah).' So she conceived him, and she withdrew with him to a far place [i.e. Bethlehem valley about 5 miles a date palm. She said: "Would that I had died before this, and had been forgotten and out of sight!" Then [Gabriel] cried to her from below her, saying: "Grieve not: your Lord has provided a water stream under you. And shake the trunk of the date palm towards you, it will let fall fresh ripe dates upon you. So eat and drink and be glad...."

(Q. 19: 18-26).

What we learn from these verses:

When the angel Gabriel appeared before her as a man, she was scared that he might have bad intentions. Then he told her who he was, not as she thought, and gave her a glad tidings that Allah would bless her with a baby who would be a sign for mankind of Allah's power. Jesus (‘Īsá a.s.) was created as a mercy from Allah, which means that he would be one of the prophets who would call people to worship Allah Alone.

Maryam (Mary) went to Bethlehem (originally called *Aphrath*), to give birth there. In her grief a voice consoled her, that Allah had provided her with a water stream and fresh ripe dates by shaking the

trunk of the date palm. Ripe dates and best season of the year, in this case, to deliver a baby, is likely to be in Spring, not in Winter when it is cold. Prophet Muhammad *s.a.w.* was said to be born also in Spring (22 April 571 CE).

b. Santa Claus

Santa Claus is an American corruption of the Dutch *San Nicolaas*, and was also called St. Nicholas whose feast day is 6 December, and is still retained in some countries, like Germany and the Netherlands, but transferred to Christmas day in English speaking countries, including Australia.

According to tradition Santa Clause who lived in the 4th century was born in Parara, a city of Lycia (Present Turkey), became Bishop of Myra (present Turkey) where he died. He was said to have attended the Council of Nicaea in 325. Although very little is known about him, he was venerated for centuries in the Christian Church as a patron saint of: Russia, children, merchants, and sailors. In the Middle Ages he was also regarded by thieves as their patron saint. He was made patron saint of sailors in the East when, according the legend, his apparition appeared to save a storm-tossed sailor who prayed for his rescue. In the West he was made patron saint of children when, according to legend, he was said to have given three bags of gold to three poor sisters as gift of dowries to save them from dying of starvation or becoming prostitutes. Their father was very poor, and could not afford their dowries without which they could not get married.¹⁷ The father recognised Santa, and the news spread out. The custom of bringing presents to children at the eve of his feast celebrated on 6 December, has now shifted to the Christmas day of the 25th December; therefore he was also called *Father Christmas*.

Santa Claus died in Myra in the present Turkey, but on the 8th of May 1034 his relics, (*i.e.*, his scull, bones, and skeleton) were secretly removed, stolen and taken to Bari in Italy (by sixty-two sailors). A

¹⁷Dowry in the Western and Christian sense is not *mahr* in Islamic sense which is paid by the bridegroom to the bride, but property or money brought by the bride to her husband.

church was built there in honour of him. At present, children who have no chance to see any of the Santa Claus in malls and stores during the Christmas are still able to make contact with him by sending letters to him, to Santa Claus, North Pole, Alaska. North Pole is the name of a small town in Alaska, where Santa Claus has a small office opened in the day time only.

In Conclusion:

Christmas is based on two festivals: (1) the celebration of the birth of Mithra, the messenger god between the Supreme God and man, and the “Sun of Righteousness” in the Zoroastrian and ancient Persian religion on 25th of December, and (2) the pagan festival of the Winter solstice (22nd of December) in Europe.

Santa Claus is the enactment of the real Saint Nicholas, Bishop of Myra in Asia Minor (present Turkey) who lived in the 3rd century known for his generosity and compassion. (Canberra Mosque, 29 December, 06)

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[illegible]

Today we are celebrating *‘Īd al-Adḥá*, the Feast of Sacrifice. Two important events occur on this day. The first is that Muslims in various parts of the world are performing their pilgrimage at Makkah. It is an international convention for mankind where approximately 2,700,000 people this year get together in one place at one time once a year. They come irrespective of their colour, nationality, social status or language. It is a journey where you can see your brothers and sisters in faith coming from every corner of the world. It is the most significant, physical as well as spiritual journey for a Muslim, as the Prophet said:

عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ قَالَ قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ
الْحَجُّ الْمَبْرُورُ لَيْسَ لَهُ جَزَاءٌ إِلَّا الْجَنَّةُ (رواه أحمد)

Abū Hurayrah narrated that the Messenger of Allah s.a.w. said:

The reward of accepted pilgrimage is nothing but Paradise.

(Reported by Aḥmad)

Pilgrimage is a kind of *jihād*. A tradition runs as follows:

عَنْ عَائِشَةَ أُمِّ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا أَنَّهَا قَالَتْ
يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ نَرَى الْجِهَادَ أَفْضَلَ الْعَمَلِ أَفَلَا نُجَاهِدُ قَالَ لَا
لَكِنَّ أَفْضَلَ الْجِهَادِ حَجٌّ مَبْرُورٌ (رواه البخاري).

‘Ā’ishah, the Mother of the Believers, may Allah be pleased with her, said: “O Messenger of Allah, since jihād is the best work, why don’t we (women) go for the jihād? He replied:

‘But the best jihad is doing the pilgrimage’”

(Reported by Bukhārī).

It looks easy nowadays to go on pilgrimage, especially if you can afford to stay in big hotels near *Masjid al-Ḥarām*. Yet you cannot avoid the crowd, which you might have never encountered before, of over million people. You could be trampled to death by people, especially during the stoning the three pillars symbolising Satan at Mina. Many people die there for many reasons. More than 200 people have already died three days ago. You could be lost, especially at Arafah and Mina. Pilgrimage is a physical and spiritual journey. The second event is that Muslims all over the world go to the mosque or the field to perform the *‘Īd al-Adḥā* prayer and listen to the *khuṭbah* (sermon).

اللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ اللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ اللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ

When Prophet Abraham (Ibrāhīm, *a.s.*) became old and still had no son, his wife Sarah permitted him to marry his servant Hagar. From Hagar (Hajar), Ishmael (Ismā‘īl) was born. The Old Testament said that Abraham was 86 years old at that time. Fourteen years later, Isaac (Ishāq) was born from Sarah. Before Isaac was born Allah had ordered Prophet

Abraham through a dream to sacrifice his **only son** Ishmael. It is mentioned in the Qur'ān as follows:

فَلَمَّا بَلَغَ مَعَهُ السَّعْيَ قَالَ يَا بُنَيَّ إِنِّي أَرَىٰ فِي الْمَنَامِ أَنِّي أَذْبَحُكَ فَانْظُرْ مَاذَا تَرَىٰ
قَالَ يَا أَبَتِ افْعَلْ مَا تُؤْمَرُ سَتَجِدُنِي إِن شَاءَ اللَّهُ مِنَ الصَّابِرِينَ. فَلَمَّا أَسْلَمَا وَتَلَّهُ لِلْجَبِينِ.
وَنَادَيْنَاهُ أَن يَا إِبْرَاهِيمُ قَدْ صَدَّقْتَ الرُّؤْيَا إِنَّا كَذَلِكَ نَجْزِي الْمُحْسِنِينَ. إِنَّ هَذَا
لَهُوَ الْبَلَاءُ الْمُبِينُ. وَفَدَيْنَاهُ بِذَبْحٍ عَظِيمٍ. (الصافات: ١٠٢-١٠٧)

And when he (his son) was old enough to walk with him, he said: "O my son! I have seen in a dream that I am slaughtering you. So look what you think!" He said: "O my father! Do that which you are commanded, if Allah wills, you shall find me of the patient". So when they had both submitted (to Allah) and he had laid him prostrate on his forehead (for sacrifice) We called out to him, "O Abraham! Thou hast already fulfilled the dream! Thus indeed do We reward those who do right. For this was a clear trial—and We ransomed him with a momentous sacrifice."

(Q. 37:102-107).

Satan had tried to persuade Prophet Abraham to disobey Allah, not to sacrifice his son, but Prophet Abraham was firm in his decision to obey Allah. He threw stones at Satan (Devil) in rejection of his temptation, following this example of not listening to Satan and obeying Allah completely, even to sacrifice one's own son, Muslims at Mina threw pebbles at stones symbolizing Satan in three places where Satan appeared to Prophet Abraham.

This is the Qur'ānic version which we believe. The other version is that of the Old Testament. In Genesis 16:16 it is said: "*And Abraham was fourscore and six years (namely, 86 years) old when Hagar bare Ishmael to Abraham.*" In the Genesis 21:5 it is said "*And Abraham was an hundred years old when his son Isaac was born unto him.*" This is confirmed with Genesis 17:24-25 in which it is stated that Ishmael was thirteen years old when Abraham was ninety-nine. Notice the difference between those two verses: In the first verse it is mentioned "*Hagar bare Ishmael to him,*" namely his son through implication, not explicitly, while

in the other verse it is said "his son Isaac was born" where Isaac is mentioned explicitly the son of Abraham. From these two Biblical verses we also learn that Ishmael was fourteen years older than his younger brother Isaac. But Genesis chapter 22 that mentions this story said in the verse as follows: "[God told Abraham]: Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into land of Moriah." This verse implies, either Prophet Abraham a.s. had one son only (Isaac) whom he loved, which is contradictory to the previous verse (Genesis 16:16 and 21:5), or he had another son (Ishmael) but he loved Isaac only, an attitude which should not be attributed to a great prophet of Allah who was a model to his people. Moreover, Ishmael was the answer of Prophet Abraham's prayer for a son. He prayed:

رَبِّ هَبْ لِي مِنَ الصَّالِحِينَ. فَبَشَّرْنَاهُ بِغُلَامٍ حَلِيمٍ. (الصافات : ١٠٠-١٠١)

"O my Lord! Grant me a righteous (son).

So We gave him the good news of a forbearing son."

(Q. 37:100-101).

It is unthinkable that a chosen person like Prophet Abraham did not love his righteous and forbearing son Ishmael. He took his baby Ishmael and wife Hagar to the valley of Makkah, not because he did not love them, but because it was the command of Allah.

Prophet Abraham showed his happiness and gratitude to Allah for having two sons, as mentioned in the Qur'an,

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي وَهَبَ لِي عَلَى الْكِبَرِ إِسْمَاعِيلَ وَإِسْحَاقَ إِنَّ رَبِّي لَسَمِيعُ الدُّعَاءِ (إبراهيم : ٣٩).

Praise be to Allah, Who hath granted unto me in old age Isma'il and Isaac: for truly my Lord is He, the Hearer of prayer. (Qur.14:39).

He also prayed for himself and his offspring, as follows:

رَبِّ اجْعَلْنِي مُقِيمَ الصَّلَاةِ وَمِنْ ذُرِّيَّتِي رَبَّنَا وَتَقَبَّلْ دُعَاءِ (إبراهيم : ٤٠)

"O my Lord! Make me one who establishes regular prayer, and also (raise such) among my offspring. O my Lord! And accept my prayer."

(Q.14:40).

In Makkah Prophet Abraham and his son Ishmael built the foundation of the Ka‘bah. Allah says:

وَإِذْ يَرْفَعُ إِبْرَاهِيمُ الْقَوَاعِدَ مِنَ الْبَيْتِ وَإِسْمَاعِيلُ رَبَّنَا تَقَبَّلْ مِنَّا إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ .
 رَبَّنَا وَاجْعَلْنَا مُسْلِمَيْنِ لَكَ وَمِنْ ذُرِّيَّتِنَا أُمَّةً مُسْلِمَةً لَكَ وَأَرِنَا مَنَاسِكَنَا وَتُبْ عَلَيْنَا إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ
 التَّوَّابُ الرَّحِيمُ . رَبَّنَا وَابْعَثْ فِيهِمْ رَسُولًا مِنْهُمْ يَتْلُو عَلَيْهِمْ آيَاتِكَ وَيُعَلِّمُهُمُ الْكِتَابَ
 وَالْحِكْمَةَ وَيُزَكِّيهِمْ إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ . (البقرة: ١٢٧-١٢٩)

And remember Abraham and Ishmael raised the foundations of the House (with this prayer): "O our Lord! Accept (this service) from us: for Thou art the All-Hearing, the All-Knowing. Our Lord! Make of us Muslims, bowing to Thy (will), and of our progeny a people Muslim, bowing to Thy (will); and show us our places for the celebration of (due) rites; and turn unto us (in mercy); for Thou art the Oft-Relenting, Most Merciful. Our Lord! Send amongst them a messenger of their own, who shall rehearse Thy signs to them and instruct them in scripture and wisdom, and purify them: for Thou art the Exalted in Might, the Wise."
 (Q., 2:127-129)

Prophet Jesus, ‘Īsā a.s. also gave the good news of the coming of Prophet Muhammad s.a.w. after him, as mentioned in the Qur’ān. Allah says:

وَإِذْ قَالَ عِيسَى ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ يَا بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ إِنِّي رَسُولُ اللَّهِ إِلَيْكُمْ مُصَدِّقًا لِمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيَّ
 مِنَ التَّوْرَةِ وَمُبَشِّرًا بِرَسُولٍ يَأْتِي مِنْ بَعْدِي اسْمُهُ أَحْمَدُ ... (الصف: ٦)

And when ‘Īsā son of Maryam [Jesus son of Mary], said: "Children of Israel! I am the Messenger of Allah unto you, confirming the Torah before me, and giving glad tidings of a Messenger to come after me, whose name shall be Ahmad..." (Q. 61:6)

This prayer of Prophet Abraham was accepted with the advent of Prophet Muhammad *s.aw.* who said,

أَنَا دَعْوَةُ أَبِي إِبْرَاهِيمَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ وَبُشْرَى عِيسَى بْنِ مَرْيَمَ ،
وَرَأَتْ أُمِّي كَأَنَّهُ خَرَجَ مِنْهَا نُورٌ أَضَاءَتْ لَهُ قُصُورَ الشَّامِ (رواه أحمد)

*“I am (the answer of) the supplication of my (fore)father
Abraham a.s. and the good news of Jesus, the son of Mary,
and my mother saw a light that radiated from her
which illuminated the castles of Syria”*

(Reported by Ahmad).

The Prophet also said,

إِنَّ لِي أَسْمَاءً أَنَا مُحَمَّدٌ وَأَنَا أَحْمَدُ وَأَنَا الْمَاحِي الَّذِي يَمْحُو اللَّهُ
بِي الْكُفْرَ وَأَنَا الْحَاشِرُ الَّذِي يُحْشَرُ النَّاسُ عَلَى قَدَمِي وَأَنَا الْعَاقِبُ
(رواه البخاري ومسلم)

I have names: I am Muhammad and Ahmad.

*I am al-Māhī through whom Allah will eliminate
disbelief. I am al-Hāshir who will be the first to be
resurrected, with the people being resurrected
in the Hereafter. I am also al-‘Āqib
(i.e., there will be no Prophet after me).
(Bukhārī and Muslim)*

Unlike the Qur’ānic version where Prophet Abraham told his son Ishmael about his dream, Genesis chapter 22 says that Abraham did not tell his son Isaac that God wanted him to be sacrificed. In Genesis 22 it is mentioned as follows:

7. Isaac spoke up and said to his father Abraham, “Father?” “Yes, my son, Abraham replied. “The fire and wood are here”, Isaac said, “... but where is the lamb for a burnt offering?”
8. Abraham answered, “God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt offering, my son...” And the two of them went on together.

9. *When they reached the place God had told him about, Abraham built an altar there and arranged the wood on it. He bound his son Isaac and laid him on the altar, on top of the wood.*
10. *Then he reached out his hand and took the knife to slay his son.*
11. *But the angel of the Lord called out to him from heaven. "Abraham!, Abraham!" "Here I am," he replied.*
12. *"Do not lay a hand on the boy." He said. "Do not do anything to him. Now I know that you fear God, because you have not withheld from me your son, **your only son** [bold mine]." (Genesis 22:7-12). He did not tell his son Isaac that God wanted him to be sacrificed, and did not ask his view. Isaac knew only that he was "the lamb" to be sacrificed when he was bound. The expression "your only son" is mentioned again in verse 15-17 as follows:*
15. *The angel of the Lord called to Abraham from heaven a second time*
16. *and said, "I swear by myself, declares the Lord, that because you have done this and have not withheld your son, **your only son** [bold mine],*
17. *I will surely bless you and make your descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky and as the sand of the seashore...*

Apparently, Ishmael has been not only forgotten, but also denied of being the other son, let alone the firstborn son of Abraham.

As mentioned in the Qur'ān, Ishmael was consulted, informed that he was to be sacrificed by the command of Allah. He told his father: "Do as you are commanded, I shall be patient". He was not bound. Both the father and the son were obeying Allah's command, a tremendous test for both. Both are forbearing people حَلِيم . Allah said:

إِنَّ إِبْرَاهِيمَ لَحَلِيمٌ أَوَّاهٌ مُنِيبٌ (هود : ٧٥)

Verily, Abraham was without doubt forbearing, tender hearted and was repentant (to Allah all the time). (Q. 11:75)

إِنَّ إِبْرَاهِيمَ لَأَوَّاهٌ حَلِيمٌ (التوبة : ١١٤)

Verily, Abraham was tender hearted, forbearing. (Q. 9:114).

Ishmael inherited this forbearance. When Abraham prayed for a son, he said,

رَبِّ هَبْ لِي مِنَ الصَّالِحِينَ. فَبَشَّرْنَاهُ بِغُلَامٍ حَلِيمٍ (الصافات : ١٠٠-١٠١)

“O my Lord! Grant me a righteous (son),” So, We gave him the good news of a forbearing son. (Q.37:100-101).

Forbearance was desperately needed for this test. The Arabs used to say, كُنْ حَلِيمًا ، الْحِلْمُ سَيِّدُ الْأَخْلَاقِ “Be حَلِيم (forbearing, patient, gentle), for the حِلْم (forbearance, patience, gentleness) is the master of all good characters.” A man approaching his 100 years old longed for a son, but when he was blessed with a son, an only son at that time, before Isaac was born, he had to sacrifice him.

Following the example of Prophet Abraham we Muslims perform the pilgrimage at Makkah, we throw pebbles at the stone pillars symbolizing Satan and sacrifice a lamb at Mina near Makkah. The ritual is much easier than what Prophet Abraham and Ishmael had gone through. By learning and comparing the two versions, the Qur’ānic and the Biblical versions on the same subject of the sacrifice of Prophet Abraham, we would broaden our mind and understand some aspects of the similarity and the difference between these two sister religions, Islam and Christianity.

بَارَكَ اللَّهُ لِي وَلَكُمْ فِي الْقُرْآنِ الْعَظِيمِ وَ تَفَعَّلِي وَ إِيَّاكُمْ بِمَا فِيهِ مِنَ الْآيَاتِ وَ الذِّكْرِ الْحَكِيمِ أَقُولُ قَوْلِي هَذَا وَ أَسْتَغْفِرُ اللَّهَ لِي وَلَكُمْ وَ لِسَائِرِ الْمُسْلِمِينَ مِنْ كُلِّ ذَنْبٍ فَاسْتَغْفِرُوهُ إِنَّهُ هُوَ الْعَفُورُ الرَّحِيمُ.

(THE SECOND KHUTBAH)

اللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ اللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ اللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَ اللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ اللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ وَلِلَّهِ الْحَمْدُ.
الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ. وَالصَّلَاةُ وَالسَّلَامُ عَلَى أَشْرَفِ الْمُرْسَلِينَ سَيِّدِنَا مُحَمَّدٍ
وَ عَلَى آلِهِ وَ صَحْبِهِ أَجْمَعِينَ. أَمَّا بَعْدُ

Brothers and sisters in Islam

How enjoyable to live without having enemy, so that nobody would disturb us, and we will disturb nobody, and we all will live in peace and harmony. But alas, this is only wishful thinking. No matter how good we are, no matter how peaceful we are, we always have enemies. It is not our fault, the enmity is imposed on us.

Who are the enemies? Allah told us,

إِنَّ الشَّيْطَانَ لَكُمْ عَدُوٌّ فَاتَّخِذُوهُ عَدُوًّا... (فاطر: ٦)

Verily Satan is an enemy to you: so treat him as an enemy. (Q. 35:6). Satan always tries to lead us away from the right way and from obeying Allah.

There are two kinds of Satan: Satan which we cannot see, among the jinn (genie); the other is Satan from among human beings. They whisper to man's heart to do bad things.

In a long tradition narrated by Ḥudhayfah the Prophet said:

يَكُونُ بَعْدِي أُمَمٌ لَا يَهْتَدُونَ بِهَدَايَ وَلَا يَسْتَنُونَ بِسُنَّتِي وَسَيَقُومُ فِيهِمْ
رِجَالٌ قُلُوبُهُمْ قُلُوبُ الشَّيَاطِينِ فِي جُثَمَانِ إِنْسٍ (رواه مسلم)

After me there will be leaders who do not follow my way and guidance, and there will be people who have the hearts of Satans in the body of human beings.

(Reported by Muslim)

In another tradition the Prophet said:

يَخْرُجُ فِي آخِرِ الزَّمَانِ رِجَالٌ يَخْتَلُونَ الدِّينَ بِالذِّبْنِ يَلْبَسُونَ لِلنَّاسِ جُلُودَ الضَّأْنِ
مِنَ اللَّيْنِ أَلْسِنَتُهُمْ أَحْلَى مِنَ السُّكَّرِ وَقُلُوبُهُمْ قُلُوبُ الذَّنَابِ. (رواه الترمذي)

At the end of time there will people cheating the word through religion, wearing the skin of goat in tenderness, having tongues sweeter than sugar, but have the hearts of wolves. (Reported by al-Tirmidhī).

Let us be careful so that Satan would not be able to lead us away from the right path, and let us make our supplication together...

اللَّهُمَّ اغْفِرْ لِلْمُسْلِمِينَ وَالْمُسْلِمَاتِ وَالْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتِ الْأَحْيَاءِ مِنْهُمْ وَالْأَمْوَاتِ، إِنَّكَ يَا
 مَوْلَانَا سَمِيعٌ قَرِيبٌ مُجِيبُ الدَّعَوَاتِ وَقَاضِي الْحَاجَاتِ يَا رَبَّ الْعَالَمِينَ
 اللَّهُمَّ وَحْدَ صُفُوفِ الْمُسْلِمِينَ وَوَحْدَ كَلِمَتِهِمْ وَانْصُرْهُمْ عَلَى أَعْدَائِهِمْ
 اللَّهُمَّ نَوِّرْ عَلَى أَهْلِ الْقُبُورِ قُبُورَهُمْ؛ اللَّهُمَّ اغْفِرْ لِلْأَحْيَاءِ وَيَسِّرْ لَهُمْ أُمُورَهُمْ.
 اللَّهُمَّ تُبْ عَلَى التَّائِبِينَ وَ اغْفِرْ ذُنُوبَ الْمُذْنِبِينَ وَ اشْفِ مَرْضَى الْمُسْلِمِينَ وَ اكْتُبِ الصَّحَّةَ وَ الْعَافِيَةَ
 وَ التَّوْفِيقَ وَ الْهِدَايَةَ لَنَا وَ لِكَافَّةِ أُمَّةٍ مُحَمَّدٍ أَجْمَعِينَ.
 اللَّهُمَّ أَصْلِحْ لَنَا دِينَنَا الَّذِي هُوَ عِصْمَةُ أَمْرِنَا، وَ أَصْلِحْ لَنَا دُنْيَانَا الَّتِي فِيهَا مَعَاشُنَا، وَ أَصْلِحْ لَنَا
 آخِرَتَنَا الَّتِي إِلَيْهَا مَعَادُنَا، وَ اجْعَلِ الْحَيَاةَ زِيَادَةً لَنَا فِي كُلِّ خَيْرٍ وَ اجْعَلِ الْمَوْتَ رَاحَةً لَنَا
 مِنْ كُلِّ شَرٍّ
 اللَّهُمَّ أَرِنَا الْحَقَّ حَقًّا وَارْزُقْنَا اتِّبَاعَهُ وَ أَرِنَا الْبَاطِلَ بَاطِلًا وَارْزُقْنَا اجْتِنَابَهُ
 اللَّهُمَّ اجْعَلْنَا مُتَحَابِّينَ فِي جَلَالِكَ مُجْتَمِعِينَ عَلَى كَلَامِكَ وَ أَطْلُبْنَا تَحْتَ ظِلِّ عَرْشِكَ يَوْمَ لَا ظِلَّ إِلَّا
 ظِلُّهُ وَ تَوَفَّنَا مُسْلِمِينَ وَأَلْحِقْنَا بِالصَّالِحِينَ وَاجْعَلْ خَيْرَ أَعْمَالِنَا خَوَاتِمِهَا وَاجْعَلْ خَيْرَ
 أَيَّامِنَا يَوْمَ لِقَائِكَ.
 رَبَّنَا هَبْ لَنَا مِنْ أَرْوَاجِنَا وَذُرِّيَّتِنَا قُرَّةَ أَعْيُنٍ وَاجْعَلْنَا لِلْمُتَّقِينَ إِمَامًا
 رَبَّنَا لَا تُؤَاخِذْنَا إِنْ نَسِينَا أَوْ أَخْطَأْنَا رَبَّنَا وَلَا تَحْمِلْ عَلَيْنَا إَصْرًا كَمَا حَمَلْتَهُ عَلَى الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِنَا رَبَّنَا وَلَا تُحَمِّلْنَا
 مَا لَا طَاقَةَ لَنَا بِهِ وَاعْفُ عَنَّا وَاعْفِرْ لَنَا وَارْحَمْنَا أَنْتَ مَوْلَانَا فَانصُرْنَا عَلَى الْقَوْمِ الْكَافِرِينَ
 رَبَّنَا آتِنَا فِي الدُّنْيَا حَسَنَةً وَفِي الْآخِرَةِ حَسَنَةً وَقِنَا عَذَابَ النَّارِ. اللَّهُمَّ آمِينَ يَا رَبَّ الْعَالَمِينَ
 اللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ اللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ اللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ. لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَ اللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ. اللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ وَلِلَّهِ الْحَمْدُ

The term *martyr* in Arabic is *shahīd* (شَهِيد) is the emphatic form (مُبَالَغَة) of the term *shāhid* (شَاهِد) which basically means “a witness”. It is like the term ‘*alīm* (عَلِيم) meaning “the Omniscient” (one of the attributes of Allah), and ‘*ālim* (عَالِم), meaning “knowledgeable person, a scholar”. A person who dies in the path of Allah is called *shahīd* (martyr), because the angels of mercy witness him and the way of his death.

According to *mufasssirīn* (commentators of the Qur’ān) the term *shahīd* in the Qur’ān has seven *wujūh* (homonyms, or better, contextual meanings), as follows:

1. التَّيِّبُ الْمُبَلِّغُ (the prophet who conveys the message of Islam to his people), as in the following verse: وَمَنْ أَظْلَمُ مِمَّنِ افْتَرَى عَلَى اللَّهِ كَذِبًا أُولَئِكَ يُعْرَضُونَ عَلَى رَبِّهِمْ وَيَقُولُ الْأَشْهَادُ هَؤُلَاءِ الَّذِينَ كَذَبُوا عَلَى رَبِّهِمْ ... (هود : ١٨) “Who does more wrong than he who invents a lie against Allah. Such will be brought before their Lord, and the witnesses will say, ‘These are the ones who lied against their Lord...’” (Q. 11:18). These witnesses are the prophets who will be called upon in the Judgment day to testify for or against the communities to whom they were sent.
2. الْمَلِكُ الْحَافِظُ (the angel who keeps the record of man’s deeds), as in the verse, وَجَاءَتْ كُلُّ نَفْسٍ مَعَها سَائِقٌ وَشَهِيدٌ (ق : ٢١) “And every soul will come, with a driver and a witness.” (Q. 50:21). The term سَائِقٌ (a driver) is “an angel who drives the soul to Allah’s Judgment”; the term شَهِيدٌ (a witness), is “an angel who records and testifies its deeds.”
3. أُمَّةٌ مُحَمَّدٍ ص.م. (the *ummah* of Prophet Muhammad s.a.w.), as in the verse: رَبَّنَا آمَنَّا بِمَا أَنْزَلْتَ وَاتَّبَعْنَا الرَّسُولَ فَاكْتُبْنَا مَعَ الشَّاهِدِينَ (آل عمران : ٥٣) “Our Lord, we have believed in what You revealed and have followed the Messenger; so write us down among those who bear witness (to the truth)” (Q. 3:53). Here the term الشَّاهِدِينَ (lit. “the witnesses to the truth”) are the followers of Prophet Muhammad s.a.w. This is the

meaning if we cite it separately from its previous verses, especially if we cite it as a *du‘ā’* (supplication), that Allah may include us among the Prophet’s followers. But if the verse is considered to be the continuation of its previous verse dealing with Prophet ‘Īsā (Jesus) *a.s.* and his disciples, the حَوَارِيِّينَ (lit. “the helpers”), then the verse is their *du‘ā’* to be included among the followers of Prophet ‘Īsā (Jesus), *a.s.*

4. الشَّاهِدُ بِالْحَقِّ عَلَى الْمَشْهُودِ عَلَيْهِ (“the witness of the truth over the one given the witness”), as in the verse dealing with Allah’s direction to bring two witnesses and to write down in making a contract for a debt for a fixed period. It is the longest verse in the Qur’ān, where it is mentioned وَأَسْتَشْهِدُوا شَهِيدَيْنِ مِنْ رِجَالِكُمْ ... وَلَا يُضَارَّ كَاتِبٌ وَلَا شَهِيدٌ (البقرة: ٢٨٢) *“And get two witnesses out of your men ... and let neither scribe nor witness suffer any harm”* (Q.2:282)
5. الشَّرِيكُ وَهُوَ الصَّنَمُ (“the partner, i.e., the idol associated with Allah”), as in the verse, وَإِنْ كُنْتُمْ فِي رَيْبٍ مِمَّا نَزَّلْنَا عَلَى عَبْدِنَا فَأْتُوا بِسُورَةٍ مِثْلِهِ وَادْعُوا شُهَدَاءَكُمْ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ (البقرة : ٢٣) *“And if you are in doubt concerning that which We have sent down [i.e., the Qur’ān] to our slave (Muhammad), then bring a surah (a chapter) of the like thereof and call your witnesses (i.e. supporters) other than Allah, if you should be truthful”* (Q. 2:23). The verse means that as the Qur’ān was revealed by Allah to the Prophet, but they denied it, then let the idolaters call their deities to support them to produce a scripture like the Qur’ān.
6. الْحَاضِرُ (“the person who is present”), as in the verse, أَمْ كُنْتُمْ شُهَدَاءَ إِذْ حَضَرَ يَعْقُوبَ الْمَوْتُ إِذْ قَالَ لِبَنِيهِ مَا تَعْبُدُونَ مِنْ بَعْدِي قَالُوا نَعْبُدُ إِلَهَكَ وَإِلَهَ آبَائِكَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَإِسْمَاعِيلَ وَإِسْحَاقَ إِلَٰهًا وَاحِدًا وَنَحْنُ لَهُ مُسْلِمُونَ (البقرة : ١٣٣) *“Or were you witnesses (namely, present) when death approached Jacob, when he said to his sons: ‘What will you worship after me?’ They said, ‘We will worship your God and the God of your fathers, Abraham and*

Ishamael and Isaac – one God, and we are Muslims (in submission) to Him.” Q. 2:133).

7. وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا بِاللَّهِ وَرُسُلِهِ أُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الصَّادِقُونَ (“the martyr”), as in الْقَتِيلُ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ “And those who believe in Allah and His Messengers – they are [in the rank of] the supporters of the truth and the martyrs, with their Lord. They shall have their reward and their light.” Q. 57:19).

There is blessing in martyrdom. When ‘Abdullah ibn ‘Āmir fell martyr in the battle of Uhud that took place on Saturday 23 March 625, the Prophet called his (Abdullah’s) son Jābir to comfort him. He said:

“O Jābir, would you like to hear good news?”

“Certainly, O Messenger of Allah,” said Jābir enthusiastically, “a person like you will not give news except the good one.”

“O Jābir,” said the Prophet, “verily, Allah would never have any dialogue with anyone except behind a veil. But He had talked to your father without a veil. Allah said, ‘O Abdullah, ask Me anything and I will give you anything you want.’ Your father said, ‘O my Lord, I wish You bring me back to the world alive, so that I could tell my (Muslim) brothers of the bliss I am enjoying here now, then I wish to die again for Your sake (as martyr).’ But Allah replied, ‘O Abdullah, I have promised Myself that a dead person will never be brought back to life in this world.’ Abdullah said again, ‘O my Lord if it is so, who then will tell my companions about the blessing I am receiving here?’ Allah answered, ‘I shall tell them, O Abdullah.’ Then He revealed

وَلَا تَحْسَبَنَّ الَّذِينَ قُتِلُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ أَمْوَاتًا بَلْ أَحْيَاءٌ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ يُرْزُقُونَ. فَرِحِينَ بِمَا آتَاهُمُ اللَّهُ مِنْ فَضْلِهِ وَيَسْتَبْشِرُونَ بِالَّذِينَ لَمْ يَلْحَقُوا بِهِمْ مِنْ خَلْفِهِمْ أَلَّا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ

(آل عمران : ١٦٩-١٧٠).

Think not of those who are killed in the way of Allah as dead. Nay, they are alive, with their Lord, and they have provision. They rejoice in what Allah has bestowed upon them of His bounty and rejoice for the sake of those who have not yet

joined them, but are left behind (not yet martyred) that on them no fear shall come, nor shall they grieve. (Q. 3:169-170).

In another verse it is also stated that the martyrs are alive after their death, as follows:

وَلَا تَقُولُوا لِمَنْ يُقْتَلُ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ أَمْوَاتٌ بَلْ أَحْيَاءٌ وَلَكِنْ لَا تَشْعُرُونَ (البقرة : ١٥٤).

And say not of those who are killed in the way of Allah, 'They are dead.' Nay, they are living, but you perceive (it) not. (Q. 2:154).

In another occasion the Prophet said,

By Allah, in Whose hand is my soul, if it were not because of people who are not happy to be left behind, and as I am not able to take them with me, I would definitely like to join the fight for Allah's sake. By Allah in Whose hand is my soul, I wish I could fight for His sake, then be martyred then be revived again, then fight then be martyred then be revived again, then fight then be martyred then be revived again, then fight then by martyred. (Reported by Bukhārī on the authority of Abū Hurayrah).

In another *hadīth* the Prophet said,

مَنْ سَأَلَ اللَّهَ الشَّهَادَةَ بِصِدْقٍ بَلَغَهُ اللَّهُ مَنَازِلَ الشُّهَدَاءِ وَإِنْ مَاتَ عَلَى فِرَاشِهِ
(رواه مسلم والنسائي و ابن ماجه)

Whoever asks Allah martyrdom sincerely Allah will make him reach the level of martyrdom, although he dies in his bed.

(Reported by Muslim, al-Nasā'ī and Ibn Mājah)

‘Umar ibn al-Khattāb was reported to have said,

“O Allah, bless me with martyrdom in Medinah.”

“Will that happen, O father?,” asked his daughter Ḥafṣah.

“If Allah will, it will happen,” answered ‘Umar.

It did really happen when he was stabbed by the Magian Abū Lu'lu'ah who pretended to be a Muslim, on his way to the mosque for *fajr* prayer.

Another companion of the Prophet who was also his general, Khālīd ibn al-Walīd, also wished to be martyred in the battlefield, but died in his bed. Yet, based on the Prophet's statement mentioned above, Allah would elevate him to the level of martyrdom. More than eighty scars from arrows, swords and lances were found in his body.

The commonly known meaning word *shahīd* is “a martyr”, but basically it is the emphatic form of شَهِيد (*shāhid*) means “a witness”; however, it has many other meanings based on its context as we have seen above.

36. THE STAGES OF THE REVELATION OF THE QUR'ĀN AND THEIR MAIN OBJECTIVES

The stages of the revelation of the Qur'ān is one of the sciences of the Qur'ān. These sciences deal with the Qur'ān which facilitate the researcher to understand it correctly and to reveal its secrets and meanings. They are divided into two categories: (a) Sciences dealing with the history of the Qur'ān, such as its revelation, أسبابُ النُّزُولِ (*asbāb al-nuzūl*, events that lead to the revelation of the verses of the Qur'ān), its compilation, its variant readings, its نَاسِخ (nāsikh, abrogating) and مَنْسُوخ (mansūkh, abrogated); (b) Sciences as a means to understand the Qur'ān properly, such as, عُلُومُ اللُّغَةِ (‘ulūm al-lughah, Arabic language sciences), الإِعْجَاز (al-i‘jāz, inimitability or wondrous nature of the Qur'ān), الْمُحْكَم (al-muhkam, precise, clear) and الْمُتَشَابِه (mutashābih, ambiguous expressions in the Qur'ān), and الْعَرِيب (al-gharīb, uncommon words in the Qur'ān). All these sciences require understanding the history of the Arabs, their culture and social condition at the time of the revelation of the Qur'ān, because it was revealed in their language, clear Arabic.

The number of Sciences of the Qur'ān according to al-Zarkashī and al-Suyūfī is as follows:

Al-Zarkashī (d. 794/1392) in his work *al-Burhān fī 'Ulūm al-Qur'ān* (the Evidence in the Sciences of the Qur'ān) mentions forty-seven sciences, starting with the *asbāb al-nuzūl*, whereas al-Suyūfī in his work *al-Itqān fī 'Ulūm al-Qur'ān* (the Perfection in the Sciences of the Qur'ān) elaborates and puts it into eighty sciences, starting with *al-Makkī wa 'l-Madanī* (Makkan and Medinan verses and *sūrahs*), and putting *asbāb al-nuzūl* number nine.

Among the sciences of the Qur'ān are as follows: (1) the first verse revealed, (2) the last verse revealed, (3) verses revealed repeatedly (4) the names of the Qur'ān and its *sūrahs* (5) how it was revealed (6) how it was collected and arranged (7) the number of its *sūrahs*, verses, words and letters, (8) إِعْجَازُ الْقُرْآنِ (*i'jāz al-Qur'ān*, inimitability of the Qur'ān), (9) الْوُجُوهُ وَالنَّظَائِرِ (*al-wujūh wa 'l-naẓā'ir*, homonyms and synonyms), (10) مَعْرِفَةُ إِعْرَابِهِ (*ma'rifat i'rābihī*, knowing its desinential inflection), (11) أَمْثَالُ (*amthāl*, parables) of the Qur'ān, (12) أَقْسَامُ (*aqsām*, oaths) of the Qur'ān (13) تَفْسِيرُ (*tafsīr*) and تَأْوِيلُ (*ta'wīl*) (commentary) of the Qur'ān, and (14) طَبَقَاتُ الْمُفَسِّرِينَ (*ṭabaqāt al-mufasssirīn*, the biographical dictionary of commentators of the Qur'ān).

The Qur'ān was revealed to Prophet Muhammad *s.a.w.* in three stages, as follows:

a. The first stage

The first stage lasted about four or five years, starting from the first revelation, namely, *sūrat al-'Alaq*, verse 1 till verse 5, which started with the injunction of reading, اِقْرَأْ (*iqra'*, read!). At the early period of this stage the prophet still a prophet until he was ordered by Allah to convey the message to his close associates and near kindred secretly. His wife Khadījah, his cousin 'Ali *r.a.* and his close associate Abu Bakr became Muslims. Then he was ordered to call people to Islam openly when it was revealed to him,

يَا أَيُّهَا الْمُدَّثِّرُ. قُمْ فَأَنْذِرْ. وَرَبَّكَ فَكَبِّرْ. وَثِيَابَكَ فَطَهِّرْ. وَالرُّجْزَ فَاهْجُرْ.
وَلَا تَمْنُنْ تَسْتَكْثِرُ. وَلِرَبِّكَ فَاصْبِرْ (المدثر : ١-٧)

O you who covers himself [with a garment]. Arise and warn. And your Lord glorify. And your clothing purify. And uncleanness [i.e., the idols] avoid. And do not confer favour to acquire more. But for your Lord be patient. (Q. 74:1-7).

At this stage the Qur'ānic verses revealed to him contained (1) spiritual instruction from Allah, (2) basic understandings of Allah and His attributes and deeds, and (3) the fundamental Islamic morality and the response to the pre-Islamic views, such as the following *sūrah*s:

أَرَأَيْتَ الَّذِي يُكَذِّبُ بِالْإِيمَانِ. فَذَلِكَ الَّذِي يَدْعُ الْيَتِيمَ. وَلَا يَحْضُرْ
عَلَى طَعَامِ الْمُسْكِينِ. فَوَيْلٌ لِلْمُصَلِّينَ. الَّذِينَ هُمْ عَنْ صَلَاتِهِمْ سَاهُونَ.
الَّذِينَ هُمْ يُرَاءُونَ. وَيَمْنَعُونَ الْمَاعُونَ. (الماعون : ١-٧).

*Have you seen the one who denies the Recompense?
For that is the one who drives away the orphan. And does
not encourage the feeding of the poor. So woe to those
who pray. [But] who are heedless of their prayer—
Those who make a show [of their deeds].
And withhold [simple] assistance.
(Q. 107:1-7)*

Those who are heedless of their prayers are the hypocrites when no one sees them.

أَلْهَاكُمُ التَّكَاثُرُ. حَتَّى زُرْتُمُ الْمَقَابِرَ. كَلَّا سَوْفَ تَعْلَمُونَ. ثُمَّ كَلَّا سَوْفَ
تَعْلَمُونَ. كَلَّا لَوْ تَعْلَمُونَ عِلْمَ الْيَقِينِ. لَتَرَوُنَّ الْجَحِيمَ. ثُمَّ لَتَرَوُنَّهَا عَيْنَ الْيَقِينِ.
ثُمَّ لَتَسْأَلُنَّ يَوْمَئِذٍ عَنِ النَّعِيمِ. (التكاثر : ١-٨)

*Competition in [worldly] increase diverts you. Until you visit
the graveyards. No! You are going to know. Then, no! You are
going to know No! If only you knew with knowledge of certainty.*

You will surely see the Hellfire. Then you will surely see it with the eye of certainty. Then you will surely be asked that Day about pleasure. (Q. 102:1-8).

The expression “visiting the graveyards” means being dead and stayed temporarily in the grave until the Judgment day, where the person who was busy with competition to increase his worldly things will know that there is Hellfire. This is called *عِلْمُ الْيَقِينِ*, “knowledge of certainty” (Pickthall, “a sure knowledge”; A.Y. Ali, “certainty of mind”; Asad, “an understanding [born] of certainty”). When he sees the Hellfire with his own eyes, this is called *عَيْنُ الْيَقِينِ*, “the eye of certainty” (Pickthall, “sure vision”; A.Y. Ali, “certainty of sight”; Asad, “the eye of certainty”). This is the higher and the second level of certainty, namely, “seeing is believing”. When the person enters the Hellfire and feels the pain, then this is the highest and the third level of certainty, *حَقُّ الْيَقِينِ* “the truth of certainty” (Pickthall, “absolute truth”; A.Y. Ali, “assured certainty”; Asad, “truth absolute”) as mentioned in the verse (وَإِنَّهُ لَحَقُّ الْيَقِينِ (الحاقة : ٥١) “And indeed, it is the truth of certainty” (Q. 69:51). Another example of these three levels of certainty is knowing that honey is sweet, seeing honey and tasting it. In the last verse it is stated that in the Hereafter they will be accounted for the comfort of their worldly life, whether they are grateful to Allah for His blessings or not.

The reaction of people was that the majority of them rejected the Prophet’s call for Islam. The main reasons were:

- (1) Ignorance. They could not accept worshipping the One God, Allah. Instead, they worshiped idols, as mentioned in the Qur’ān. Allah said,

أَمْ اتَّخَذُوا مِنْ دُونِهِ آلِهَةً قُلْ هَاتُوا بُرْهَانَكُمْ هَذَا ذِكْرٌ مَنْ مَعِيَ وَذِكْرٌ مَنْ قَبْلِي بَلْ أَكْثَرُهُمْ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ الْحَقَّ فَهُمْ مُعْرِضُونَ (الأنبياء ، ٢٤)

Or have they taken gods besides Him? Say, [O Muhammad], “Produce your proof. This [Qur’ān] is the message for those with me and the message of those before

me.”[i.e., to call for the worship of Allah alone]. But most of them do not know the truth, so they are turning away.

(Q. 21:24).

- (2) Attachment to tradition. They did not want make any change in their belief, as mentioned in the Qur’ān, as follows:

بَلْ قَالُوا إِنَّا وَجَدْنَا آبَاءَنَا عَلَىٰ أُمَّةٍ وَإِنَّا عَلَىٰ آثَارِهِم مُّهُتَدُونَ.
وَكَذَٰلِكَ مَا أَرْسَلْنَا مِنْ قَبْلِكَ فِي قَرْيَةٍ مِنْ نَذِيرٍ إِلَّا قَالَ مُتْرَفُوهَا
إِنَّا وَجَدْنَا آبَاءَنَا عَلَىٰ أُمَّةٍ وَإِنَّا عَلَىٰ آثَارِهِم مُّقْتَدُونَ.

(الزخرف : ٢٢-٢٣)

Nay, but they say, “Behold, We found our forefathers agreed on What to believe—and, verily, it is in their footsteps that we find our guidance.” And thus it is: whenever We sent before thy time, a warner to any community, those of its people who had lost themselves entirely in the pursuit of pleasures would always say “Behold, we found our forefathers agreed on what to believe – and verily, it is but in their footsteps that we follow!”(Q. 43:22-23, Asad)

- (3) Envy and arrogance. One of the archenemy of the Prophet was Abū Sufyān. Although he was one of the leaders of the Quraysh tribe, but instead of belonging to Banī Hāshim’s clan he belonged to Banī Umayyah clan. He said, *لو نال بني هاشم فضل* “If the Banī Hāshim clan has got the superiority in the prophethood, what then would remain for us?”

b. The Second Stage

This stage lasted from eight to nine years. This was the period of struggle between Islam and the *Jāhiliyyah*, the Muslims and the Makkan non-believers who wanted to suppress the Muslims through threat, intimidation and persecution, so that they migrated to Ethiopia. It was in this period the following verse was revealed,

ادْعُ إِلَى سَبِيلِ رَبِّكَ بِالْحُكْمَةِ وَالْمَوْعِظَةِ الْحَسَنَةِ وَجَادِلْهُمْ بِالَّتِي هِيَ أَحْسَنُ

إِنَّ رَبَّكَ هُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِمَنْ ضَلَّ عَنْ سَبِيلِهِ وَهُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِالْمُهْتَدِينَ. (النحل : ١٢٥)

Invite (all) to the way of thy Lord with wisdom and beautiful preaching; and argue with them in ways that are best and most gracious; for thy Lord knoweth best who have strayed from His Path and who receive guidance. (Q. 16:125, Ali)

Allah threatened the Makkan idolaters with punishment for their disbelief as He did with the ‘Ād and Thamūd tribes in many verses, such as the following verses,

وَأَنَّهُ أَهْلَكَ عَادًا الْأُولَىٰ. وَتَمُودَ فَمَا أَبْقَىٰ. وَقَوْمَ نُوحٍ مِّن قَبْلُ إِنَّهُمْ كَانُوا هُمْ أَظْلَمَ وَأَطْعَىٰ.

وَالْمُؤْتَفِكَةَ أَهْوَىٰ. فَغَشَّاهَا مَا غَشَّىٰ. فَبَآئِيَ آلَآءِ رَبِّكَ تَتَمَارَىٰ. (النجم : ٥٠-٥٦)

And that it is He (Allah) Who destroyed the former ‘Ād (people). And Thamūd (people): He spared none of them. And the people of Nūḥ (Noah) a foretime. Verily, they were more unjust and more rebellious and transgressing [in disobeying Allah and His Messenger Nūḥ], and He destroyed the overthrown cities [of Sodom to which Prophet Lūṭ (Lot) was sent]. So there covered them that which did cover [i.e. torment with stones]. Then which of the Graces of your Lord (O man) will you doubt? This (Muhammad) is a warner (messenger) of the (series of) Warners (messengers) of old. (Q. 53:50-56)

(For more examples, see Q. 46:21-5, 53:51)

c. The Third Stage

This last stage lasted for about ten years, after the Prophet’s migration to Medinah. The verses revealed at this stage dealt with the laws and the establishment of the Muslim community, its relationship with the People of the Book (the Jewish people of Medinah), and the hypocrites in that city. The verses are generally long, explaining many precepts and advice to be followed. As the hypocrites caused danger to the Muslims their characteristics were elaborately explained in the Qur’ān. They were more dangerous to the Muslims than the Makkan idolaters, as they behave like Muslims. Their

identity was not revealed, although they were known through their behaviour. The Prophet treated them like Muslims, and did not attack them, so that people would not accuse him for killing his own followers. Their identity was revealed only by the Prophet before his death, but only to Khudhayfah al-Yamānī, so that the Muslims would not pray funeral prayer on them. Moreover Allah will punish the hypocrites severely in the Hereafter. He says,

بَشِّرِ الْمُنَافِقِينَ بِأَنَّ لَهُمْ عَذَابًا أَلِيمًا ... إِنَّ الْمُنَافِقِينَ يُخَادِعُونَ اللَّهَ
وَهُوَ خَادِعُهُمْ وَإِذَا قَامُوا إِلَى الصَّلَاةِ قَامُوا كُسَالَى يُرَاءُونَ النَّاسَ وَلَا يَذْكُرُونَ اللَّهَ
إِلَّا قَلِيلًا... إِنَّ الْمُنَافِقِينَ فِي الدَّرَكِ الْأَسْفَلِ مِنَ النَّارِ وَلَنْ تَجِدَ لَهُمْ نَصِيرًا.
(النساء : ١٣٨ ، ١٤٢ ، ١٤٥)

Give the hypocrites the tidings that there is for them a painful torment.... Verily, the hypocrites seek to deceive Allah, but it is He Who deceives them. And when they stand up for the prayer, they stand with laziness and to be seen of men, and they do not remember Allah but little.... Verily, the hypocrites will be in the lowest depth (grade) of the Fire; no helper will you find for them.
(Q. 4: 138, 142 and 145).

Their behaviour is mentioned in detail in *sūrat al-Baqarah* (chapter 2), verse 8 till 20. There is also a special *sūrah* in the Qur'ān dealing with them called *sūrat al-Munāfiqūn* (the hypocrites, chapter 63)

The invitation to Islam was extended to the People of the Book, (the Jews and the Christians), especially the Jews of Medinah. Allah called them to Islam and argued with them, directly by saying يَا أَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ ("O People of the Book") or indirectly by saying قُلْ يَا أَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ ("Say--O Muhammad--O People of the Book"), mentioned in the Qur'ān at least twelve times. For example,

يَا أَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ قَدْ جَاءَكُمْ رَسُولُنَا يُبَيِّنُ لَكُمْ كَثِيرًا مِمَّا كُنْتُمْ تُخْفُونَ
مِنَ الْكِتَابِ وَيَعْفُو عَنْ كَثِيرٍ قَدْ جَاءَكُمْ مِنَ اللَّهِ نُورٌ وَكِتَابٌ مُبِينٌ... يَا أَهْلَ
الْكِتَابِ قَدْ جَاءَكُمْ رَسُولُنَا يُبَيِّنُ لَكُمْ عَلَى فَتْرَةٍ مِنَ الرُّسُلِ أَنْ تَقُولُوا مَا جَاءَنَا

مِنْ بَشِيرٍ وَلَا نَذِيرٍ فَقَدْ جَاءَكُمْ بَشِيرٌ وَنَذِيرٌ وَاللَّهُ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ.

(المائدة : ١٥، ١٩)

O People of the Book (Jews and Christians!) Now has come to you Our Messenger (Muhammad) explaining to you much of that which you used to hide from the Scripture and pass over (i.e. leaving out without explaining) much. Indeed, there has come to you from Allah a light (i.e., Prophet Muhammad) and a plain Book (this Qur'ān).... O People of the Book! Now has come to you Our Messenger making (things) clear unto you, after a break in (the series of) Messengers, lest you say: "There came unto us no bringer of glad tidings and no warner." But now has come unto you a bringer of glad tidings and a warner. And Allah is Able to do all things.
(Q. 5:15, 19).

This direct invitation by Allah is a privilege to the People of the Book. The infidels in general and of Makkah in particular had never been addressed by Allah directly as non-believers, except once, and this will take place only in the Hereafter, as follows,

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لَا تَعْتَذِرُوا الْيَوْمَ إِنَّمَا تُجْرَوْنَ مَا كُنتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ (التحریم : ٧)

*O you who have disbelieved, make no excuse that Day.
You will only be recompensed for what you used to do.*
(Q. 66:7).

So far, we have seen that the Qur'ān was revealed in various stages and each stage had its own objectives. (ANUMA, 2 June, 05)

37. THE ARABIC QUR'ĀN (1)

Introduction

There has never been any doubt that the Qur'ān was revealed in Arabic, the language of the Quraysh tribe to which the Prophet Muhammad *s.a.w.* belonged. The expression قُرْآنًا عَرَبِيًّا (lit. “an Arabic Qur'ān”) is mentioned in the Qur'ān in many places, such as: 12:2, 20:113, 39:28, 41:3, 42:7 and 43:3. In another verse it is said that the Qur'ān was sent as a judgment of authority in Arabic language, as follows:

وَكَذَلِكَ أَنزَلْنَاهُ حُكْمًا عَرَبِيًّا (الرعد : ٣٧)

*And thus We sent it (the Qur'ān) to be a judgment
in authority in Arabic... (Q. 13:37).*

The Qur'ān was also referred to as a Book in Arabic language, as follows:

وَمِنْ قَبْلِهِ كِتَابُ مُوسَى إِمَامًا وَرَحْمَةً وَهَذَا كِتَابٌ مُصَدِّقٌ لِّسَانًا عَرَبِيًّا
لِيُنذِرَ الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا وَيُبَشِّرَ لِّلْمُحْسِنِينَ (الأحقاف : ١٢)

*And before this was the Scripture of Moses as a guide
and mercy. And this is a confirming Book (the Qur'ān) in the
Arabic language, to warn those who do wrong, and as
glad tidings to the doers of good. (Q. 46:12).*

When the people of Makkah rejected the Qur'ān and believed that it was not the very word of Allah, He revealed that it was revealed

وَلَقَدْ نَعْلَمُ أَنَّهُمْ يَقُولُونَ إِنَّمَا يُعَلِّمُهُ بَشَرٌ لِّسَانُ الَّذِي يُلْحِدُونَ
إِلَيْهِ أَعِجْمِيَّ وَهَذَا لِسَانٌ عَرَبِيٌّ مُبِينٌ (النحل : ١٠٣)

*And indeed We know that they (polytheists and pagans) say; ‘It is only
a human being who teaches him (Muhammad)’. The tongue of
the man they refer to is foreign, while this (Qur'ān) is in
a clear Arabic tongue. (Q. 16:103; see also Q. 26:195).*

The Arabic language is one of the Semitic languages, which include the Hebrew, Syriac, Chaldean, Babylonian, and Aramaic. Prophet Jesus (‘Īsá)’s mother tongue was Aramaic, but he also spoke Hebrew. The term *a’jamī* in the above verse has two meanings: non-Arabic and broken Arabic, and the Qur’ān is none of these.

Peculiarities of Arabic Language

As the language of revelation there must be some peculiarities of Arabic, among which are as follows:

1. *Dual*: Unlike many other languages it has dual beside singular and plural numbers, mostly broken plural, especially the inanimate beings.
2. It has two alphabetical orders; (a) the classical one, starting with *alif* and ending with *ghayn*, has a numerical value, starting from 1 till 10, then 20, 30 till 100, then 200, 300, till 1000. This classical order is similar to that of the Greek alphabet, e.g. *alif*, *bā’*, *jīm*, *dāl* correspond to *alpha*, *beta*, *gamma*, *delta*,...and *kāf*, *lām*, *mīm* correspond to *kappa*, *lamda*, *mu*, etc. (b) the modern one starts with *alif* and ends with *yā’*. Letters which have similar shapes are put together in order, such as *ب ت ث*, *ج ح خ*, *ز*, *س*, *ش*, *ص*, etc.
3. Like Latin the Arabic language has five *i’rāb* (desinential inflection): Nominative case, Accusative case, Genitive case, Dative case and Ablative case, and the pronoun indicating the subject and object are included in the verb itself, such as the expression *sa’arāka* (سَأَرَاكَ) meaning “I shall see you”, *sa* indicates “the future”, *’a* means “I”, and *ka* means “you”.¹⁸
4. Arabic language is called *lughatu’l-aḍḍād* (لُغَةُ الْأَضْدَادِ) ”the language of opposite meanings”. A word (and its derivatives) may have both the

¹⁸When a new pope was just selected after the death of Pope John II, it was displayed on his window in Vatican (Rome) *abamus papam* (*mus* means “we”, and the letter **m** in *papam* indicates an object, so that the expression means “we have a pope”, i.e., the newly elected Pope Benedict).

opposite meanings, although originally it has only one meaning. For example:

- a. *Shirā'* (شراء) originally means “buying”, but it may also mean “selling”, such as in the verse

وَشَرَوْهُ بِثَمَنٍ بَخْسٍ دَرَاهِمَ مَعْدُودَةٍ... (يوسف : ٢٠)

*And they **sold** him for a low price—for a few dirhams (silver coins)... (Q. 12:20).*

Here the travellers who found the boy Joseph in the well sold him to an Egyptian man for a few silver coins. (However, it is also said that the original meaning of *shirā'* is “exchange, trade, or substitution”, so that both “buy” and “sell” are applicable to this term).

- b. The word *fawqa* (فَوْقَ, above) could also mean *dūna* (دون, below), such as,

إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَسْتَحْيِي أَنْ يَضْرِبَ مَثَلًا مَا بَعُوضَةً فَمَا فَوْقَهَا (البقرة : ٢٦)

*Behold, God does not disdain to propound a parable of a gnat, or of something [even] **less** than that. (Q. 2:26, Asad).*

Quoting from al-Zamakhsharī, Asad comments in his footnote, as follows:

Lit. “something above it”, i.e., relating to the quality of smallness stressed here—as one would say, “such-and-such a person is the lowest person, and even more than that”

[Zamakhshari].

Pickthall translated *famā fawqahā* in his translation as “even”, i.e., “Lo! Allah disdaineth not to coin the similitude even of a gnat.” Dr. Muhammad Taqi-ud-Din Al-Hilali and Dr. Muhammad Muhsin Khān in their translation of the Qur’ān *The Noble Qur’an* translate it

“... even of a mosquito or so much more when it is bigger (or less when it is smaller) than that” to avoid translating the opposite meaning of *fawqa*, as Asad did above.

- c. The word *zann* (الظَّنّ, doubt) could mean *al-yaqīn* (البَيِّن, certainty, something certain), as in

إِنِّي ظَنَنْتُ أَنِّي مُلَاقٍ حِسَابِيَّةٍ (الحاقة : ٢٠)

*Behold, I did know that [one day] I would have
to face my account.* (Q. 69:20, Asad),

but could also mean *shakk* (الشَّكُّ, doubt, something doubtful), as in

وَإِذَا قِيلَ إِنَّ وَعْدَ اللَّهِ حَقٌّ وَالسَّاعَةُ لَا رَيْبَ فِيهَا قُلْتُمْ مَا نَدْرِي مَا
السَّاعَةُ إِن نَّظُنُّ إِلَّا ظَنًّا وَمَا نَحْنُ بِمُصْتَقِينَ . (الجمانية : ٣٢)

*When it was said that the promise of Allah was true and that
the Hour there was no doubt about its (coming) ye used to
say "We know not what is the Hour; we only think it is an idea
and we have no firm assurance."* (Q. 45:32, Ali).

- d. The word *al-rajā'* (الرَّجَاء, hope, expectation) could also mean *al-khawf* (الْخَوْف, fear). The expression *مَا رَجَوْتُ فَلَانًا* ("I did not expect So-and-so) could mean *مَا خِفْتُهُ* ("I did not fear him"), as generally one is not afraid of something one does not expect.
- e. The word *al-khashy* (الْخَشْي, fear, apprehension), could also mean *al-'ilm* (العِلْم, knowing), such as the poem of an unknown poet, as follows,

وَلَقَدْ خَشِيتُ بَأْنَ مَنْ تَبِعَ الْهُدَى * سَكَنَ الْجَنَانَ مَعَ النَّبِيِّ مُحَمَّدٍ¹⁹

*Verily, indeed I knew that whoever followed the
guidance, he would enter Paradise with
Prophet Muhammad.*

¹⁹ لسان العرب : "خشي", ج ٤، ص ٢٢٨. تاج العروس: فصل الخاء، ج ١، ص ٨٣٦٩.

The Arabic language of the Qur'ān

Every language, including Arabic is divided into prose and poetry, but the language of the Qur'ān is between the two. One of the characteristics of its eloquence is in the choice of words, namely, in selecting the words that are easier to articulate, especially for non-Arabic speakers, for example:

- a. Instead of using *ajdād* (أَجْدَادُ, “grand-parents”) the Qur'ān uses *ābā'* (آبَاءُ, which means “fathers” as well as “fore-fathers”) which is easier to articulate, as عَلَيْهِ آبَاءُنَا in Q. 2:170, 5:104, 7:28, 10:78, and 31:21; عَلَيْهَا آبَاءُنَا in Q. 7:28; وَجَدْنَا آبَاءُنَا in Q. 21:53, 26:74, and 43:22-23; there are more than sixty verses using the term *ābā'* (mostly meaning “forefathers”) instead of *ajdād* which is more difficult to articulate.
- b. Instead of using *akhbara* (أَخْبَرَ, “to tell, to inform, to report”), *khavar* (خَبَرَ, “report, message, story, affair, news”) and its plural form *akhbār* (أَخْبَارُ) the Qur'ān uses in most cases its respective synonyms, *anba'a* (أَنْبَأَ) or *nabba'a* (نَبَأَ) *naba'* (نَبَأَ) , and *anbā'* (أَنْبَاءُ) , mentioned more than eighty times in the Qur'ān, for example,

... فَقَالَ أَنْبِئُونِي بِأَسْمَاءِ هَؤُلَاءِ ... (البقرة : ٣١)

...then He said, '**Tell** me the name of these... (Q. 2:31),

قَالَ يَا آدَمُ أَنْبِئْهُمْ بِأَسْمَائِهِمْ فَلَمَّا أَنْبَأَهُمْ بِأَسْمَائِهِمْ ... (البقرة : ٣٣)

He said: “O Adam! **Inform** them of their names”,
and when he had **informed** them... Q. 2:33),

فَلَمَّا نَبَأَهَا بِهِ قَالَتْ مَنْ أَنْبَأَكَ هَذَا قَالَ تَبَّانِي الْعَلِيمُ الْخَبِيرُ (التحریم : ٣)

... Then when he **told** her thereof, she said:
“Who **told** you this?” He said: “The All-Knower,
the All-Aware (Allah) has **told** me.” (Q. 66:3).

For more examples, see Q. 6:34, 28:3, 38:67 and 78:2. The Qur'ān uses the term *khubr* (sing. *khibrah*, “experience; knowledge”) twice in Q. 18:68 and 91; the term *bikhabarin* in Q. 27:7 and 28:29; the term *akhbārikum* in Q. 9:94, *akhbārakum* in Q. 47:31; and the term *akhbārāhā* in Q. 99:4.

Instead of using the term *zawāj* (زواج) and its derivatives (used about five times) the Qur'ān uses mostly *nikāḥ* (نكاح) for “marriage” and its derivatives (more than twenty times), such as

وَلَا تَعْرُضُوا عُقْدَةَ النِّكَاحِ... (البقرة : ٢٣٥)

....Do not confirm the **marriage** tie... (Q. 2:235).

For other examples, see Q. 2:221, 230 and 237; 4:3, 24:3.

- c. The word *akh* (أَخ, “brother”) in Arabic is also used to indicate two identical things. For example, when we talk about two identical, we point to one of them and say هَذَا أَخُوهُ (lit. “this is its brother”), and two similar watches we say هَذِهِ أُخْتُهَا (lit. “this is its sister”). There are two plural forms of أَخ (brother), namely, إِخْوَان (ikhwān) and إِخْوَةٌ (ikhwah). Both have the same meanings, “brothers” and are used indifferently in Arabic and in the sayings of the Prophet. But in the Qur'ān, they are used differently. *Ikhwah* is used to indicate affinity, blood and blood relationship, and the rest is *ikhwān*, except for one thing. For “the brothers of Prophet Joseph (Yūsuf)” *ikhwah* is used, namely,

قَالَ يَا بُنَيَّ لَا تَقْصُصْ رُؤْيَاكَ عَلَى إِخْوَتِكَ... (يوسف : ٥)

He (the father) said: “O my son! Relate not your vision to your **brothers**...” (Q. 12:5)

لَقَدْ كَانَ فِي يُوسُفَ وَإِخْوَتِهِ آيَاتٍ لِّلْمُتَلِّينَ (يوسف : ٧)

Verily, in Joseph and his **brethren** there were āyāt (proofs, lessons, signs) for those who ask. Q. 12:7)

وَجَاءَ إِخْوَةُ يُوسُفَ... (يوسف : ٥٨)

And Joseph's **brethren** came ... (Q. 12:58)

... مِنْ بَعْدِ أَنْ نَزَعَ الشَّيْطَانُ بَيْنِي وَبَيْنَ إِخْوَتِي ... (يوسف : ١٠٠)

..., after Satan has sown enmity between me and my **brothers**. (Q. 12:100).

On the other hand, persons who are spendthrift are called in the Qur'ān, the devils' brothers,

إِنَّ الْمُبْدِرِينَ كَانُوا إِخْوَانَ الشَّيَاطِينِ... (الإسراء : ٢٧)

Verily, the spendthrifts are **brothers** of the devils... (Q. 17:27).

Muslim brothers are also called *ikhwān*. But there is one verse where *ikhwah* is used as if the Muslims were brothers and sisters in blood, namely,

إِنَّمَا الْمُؤْمِنُونَ إِخْوَةٌ... (الحجرات : ١٠)

All believers are but **brethren**... (Q. 49:10, Asad).

There is a hint here that Muslims should treat their Muslim brothers and sisters as if they belong to the same parents. There should be a strong family bond among them.

- d. The Qur'ān does not mention any person contemporary with the Prophet, even his most beloved wife Khadījah *r.a.*, except two persons: a slave, who then became an adopted son of the Prophet and who preferred to live with him rather than going back to his tribe; his name was Zayd. Allah said,

فَلَمَّا قَضَىٰ زَيْدٌ مِنْهَا ... (الأحزاب : ٣٧)

So, when **Zayd** divorced her... (Q. 33:37)

The other one, a noble person of the Quraysh tribe, the Prophet's own uncle who freed his slave-girl when she brought the news of the Prophet's birth, but became infidel and an enemy of the Prophet; his name was Abū Lahab. Allah said,

تَبَّتْ يَدَا أَبِي لَهَبٍ وَتَبَّ (المسد : ١)

Perish the two hands of **Abū Lahab** and perish he! (Q. 111:1).

This is a kind of a table turned upside down situation.

We have seen that Allah used His Own style in the Qur'ān as a divine revelation. He chose words which have deeper meanings. As the Qur'ān will be read by people of various language backgrounds, He chose words and expressions easier to articulate, especially for non-Arabs. No wonder that it is easier to read the Qur'ān than any other book in Arabic. (ANUMA, 29 May, 05)

38. THE ARABS BEFORE ISLAM

It is important to shed some lights on the Arabs in pre-Islamic Arabia: their characters and their socio-economic lives, so that we can see how far Islam has influenced them and brought them from the darkness of the *jāhiliyyah* (era of ignorance) to the light of Islam. Among the characters of the Arabs before Islam are as follows: They were free from inner tension and stress, which are more common in our time. They had strong passions: they were fiery in temper, ardent in love, bitter in hate, and delighting in war, wine and banquets. They had strong forbearance from cold, thirst and hunger. They were generous in their tongue and eloquent in their utterance. Their generosity and hospitality were well known. A large heap of ashes and bones outside their tents indicated that they had entertained many guests. This generosity extended even to animals, such as wolves. Loyalty and fidelity to their tribes were also important virtues. A fellow tribesman would be helped instantly whenever he asked for it.

Vengeance was so strong among the pre-Islamic Arabs that it was like a physical necessity; it was like eating and drinking. Without it he would not be able to sleep, would not have appetite and became sick and even mad. They said: "With the sword will I wash my shame away, let God's doom [namely, ruin or death] bring on me what it may". A typical Arab hero was a poet belonging to the Azd tribe called Sanfarā. He was captured when he was a child by Banū Salāman tribe. He did not know

until he grew up, then he returned to his tribe and swore to revenge against his captors: to kill one hundred people of the Salamān tribe. He killed 98 of them, but he was ambushed and taken prisoner. However, while he was struggling, one of his arms was cut by a sword stroke. He took the arm with his other arm and hit the enemy's face with it and killed him. He was killed and his body was left in the desert. One day, one of his enemies passed by and kicked his skull with his foot. A sharp edged bone entered into his foot and he died of infection, so that the number of the enemies killed by Sanfarā became one hundred persons. Finally, Sanfarā the poet and the outlaw, fulfilled his oath.

The Arabs in this *jahiliyyah* period had strong sense of personal dignity. They were against any form of authority, but they were loyal to the ancient traditions of their tribes. They did not see the importance of writing, and therefore, their literature was preserved only in their lips and hearts. They did not develop any form of art except the art of eloquence, unlike the Greek who developed the statues and architecture, and the Hebrew in psalm. Their wise saying was "The beauty of man lies in the eloquence of his tongue". Eloquence is the ability to express oneself forcefully and elegantly. It was one of the three basic attributes of the perfect man at that time; the other two, being archery and horsemanship. However, poetry was esteemed more than prose.

The poetry of the pre-Islamic Arabs described the joys of battle, the struggle for mastery, and the perils of long journeys; the noble horses and camels, the flashing of swords in the battle, the deadly lance and arrows, the wail of lament over the ashes of a long deserted encampment which had been the home of a beloved one. It was full of boasting and reviling, but was absent from prayer. Many merits and achievements, and memory of great actions and events were mentioned in poetry. The importance of poetry continued later in Islamic period. Many of Muslims scholars were themselves poets and wrote their books in special knowledge in poetry, such as Ibn Malik's *Alfiyyah* (one thousand verses on grammar).

With regard to the social life of the Arabs in the Arabian Peninsula before Islam, they were nomads. They did not like to settle, but

continued moving in search of pasture. Since they were nomads, their basic unit of life was their tribe rather than states. These tribes themselves were constantly on the move.

As nomads they did not have any universal law. They never subjected themselves to what we now call general political order. Contrary to settlers, who gave some parts of their freedom to rulers, authority, or the group as a whole in exchange for peace, security and prosperity, these nomads were free without any control except following their tradition. They moved freely to survive, to defend themselves with honour and integrity required in the free life of the desert.

They never suffered patience of injustice, as they could give up the pasture and move away in case a foreign authority or ruler wanted to impose any authority on them. This was one of the main reasons the Persians or the Romans never tried to conquer the Arabian Peninsula. There would be no benefit from conquering a desert where its people kept moving, and could go away if their country were conquered.

The harsh conditions of nomad life promoted the growth of many virtues, such as hospitality, bravery, and mutual assistance. However, these virtues became weaker in small towns, which grew up along the caravan route from Yemen to Syria, such as Makkah, Medinah, and Tā'if.

They held a general assembly once a year at the 'Ukāz where they recited their poems competing among themselves to get the first honour as the best poet of the year. Poets came to this place to recite their best poetry so that the best one would be hung at the door of the Ka'bah honouring the poet.

The Arabs in pre-Islamic Arabia enjoyed drinking alcohol, dancing, gambling and adultery. Their caravan carrying their native merchandise from Makkah to Syria India, Byzantine and Persian empires returned with luxurious habits and vices as well as slave girls from Syria and Iraq. Those who did not join them in their joy in these vices were considered stingy and unsociable. They found their solace in drinking wine. Their wise saying was، *اليَوْمَ خَمْرٌ وَعَدَا أَمْرٌ* “*Today is [to enjoy] wine,*

and tomorrow is a [different] matter”. They lived for the day and had no concern for the next day.

Most of the Arab tribes at that time had no conjugal fidelity. The husbands were indifferent about the infidelity of their wives. They might even send their wives to live with other men to get good offspring. Children of prostitutes had no stain of illegitimacy. Both polygamy (a man having many wives) and polyandry (a woman having many husbands) were common. Adultery was tolerated except of a person from another stock (line of ancestry) which was usually punished with death.

A particular tribe buried their female children (until they reached about six years old) alive for fear of poverty or for being poor. Female offspring were considered a burden to them, as they needed constant protection instead of protecting their parents and tribes when they grew up. On the contrary, male offspring would be expected to protect the tribe when they grew up. This practice was referred to by the Qur’ān as follows:

وَإِذَا بُشِّرَ أَحَدُهُم بِالْأُنْثَىٰ ظَلَّ وَجْهُهُ مُسْوَدًّا وَهُوَ كَظِيمٌ. يَتَوَارَىٰ مِنَ الْقَوْمِ مِنْ سُوءِ مَا بُشِّرَ بِهِ
أَيْمَسُّكُهُ عَلَىٰ هُونٍ أَمْ يَدُسُّهُ فِي التُّرَابِ أَلَا سَاءَ مَا يَحْكُمُونَ. (النحل: ٥٨-٥٩)

When news is brought to one of them, of (the birth of) a female (child), his face darkens, and he is filled with inward grief! With shame does he hide himself from his people, because of the bad news he has had! Shall he retain it on (sufferance and) contempt, or bury it in the dust! Ah! What an evil (choice) they decide on?

(Q. 16:58-59).

After the conquest of Makkah, the Prophet strongly prohibited people from practicing burying their female offspring alive.

In pre-Islamic Arabia a widow could be inherited by the husband’s heir. If he had no son, his brother or nephew would take her, either as his wife or marry her to another person with a good price, or keep her in confinement unless she redeemed herself by paying off. The Qur’ān prohibits this practice with the following verses:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا يَحِلُّ لَكُمْ أَنْ تَرِثُوا النِّسَاءَ كَرِهًا وَلَا تَعْضُلُوهُنَّ ... (النساء: ١٩)

O ye who believe! Ye are forbidden to inherit women against their will. Nor should you treat them with harshness, ... (Q. 4:19).

The word *كَرْهًا* meaning “with harshness” or “forcibly” in this verse does not mean it is a condition for inheriting them, so that they can be inherited leniently or willingly. The statement is merely the fact that they were inherited by force, as it is prohibited to inherit them willingly or unwillingly. In another verse it is stated that a widow cannot be married by her step-son, as follows:

وَلَا تَنْكِحُوا مَا نَكَحَ آبَاؤُكُمْ مِنَ النِّسَاءِ إِلَّا مَا قَدْ سَلَفَ
إِنَّهُ كَانَ فَاحِشَةً وَمَقْتًا وَسَاءَ سَبِيلًا. (النساء : ٢)

*And marry not women whom your father married,
--except what is past: it was shameful and odious—
an abominable custom indeed! (Q. 4:22).*

With regard to their economic life, the Arabs at that time were nomads who depended their livelihood on stockbreeding, especially camels. Camels were essential not only for meat (besides sheep), but also as a means of transportation, so that they were called “the ships of the desert”. The Arabs settlers earned their living besides trading by cultivating the land, especially in oases where dates grew, especially in Yathrib (later called Medinah). Others took favourable spots in the mountains where cereals grew such as in Tā’if. Some Jews established agricultural colonies, such as in Khaybar.

Some areas were not good for agriculture, such as Makkah; others were good, such as Yemen. There was a statement from the Prophet indicating his displeasure in a Muslim’s keeping a plough in his house. The prevalent interpretation was that the Prophet did not want the Muslims to divert their concern with their daily lives, in this case, agriculture, from observing their daily obligatory prayers. However, if this statement were made in Makkah, it would have been probably an indication that Makkah was not a good place for agriculture, due to lack of rain. The Muslims should find other kinds of jobs, such as trading

which he himself had done and recommended. He said that trading is nine-tenth of livelihood.

The commercial towns flourished, especially alongside the caravan routes, such as Makkah, Yathrib (Medinah) and Ṭā'if. Trading is the backbone of the economy of the Makkan people at that time. By the end of the 6th century CE they controlled most of the trade from Yemen to Syria. Syria at that time was called by the historians "the Greater Syria" which included Syria itself, Jordan, Lebanon and Palestine. Makkah became a flourishing town for its strategic location between Yemen and Syria. Caravans travelling between the two destinations passed through Makkah. Traders who passed through the route of Makkah were levied with various charges: upon their entering Makkah they had to pay tithes, namely, 10% of the value of their merchandise. Special tax was also levied for securing permits to stay in this town as well as departure taxes when they left. Foreign traders had many problems, especially if they did not have *jiwār* (neighbourhood) guarantees from a local clan or nobility. They had to obtain permits from the tribes whose areas they were intending to pass through for their safety.

Makkah was peculiar for being the site of pilgrimage besides being a commercial town, rivaled by Ṭā'if with its good climate where fruit, grapes and raisins were produced. Moreover, Ṭā'if was a good place for marketing wine, wheat and wood. Besides, Ṭā'if was also an industrial town where leather was manufactured in its tanneries polluting the area. Yathrib (Medinah) was a town of farming, as it was fertile and rich in water. It reminds us of the report of Abū Hurayrah saying that he knew more about the Prophet's statements and actions than others, as he kept following him, whereas the *muhājirīn* (emigrants from Makkah, fleeing from the prosecution of the Makkan idolaters) were busy in the market, and the *anṣār* (the "helpers", namely, the inhabitants of Medinah who assisted the Prophet and the *muhājirīn* in Medinah) were busy in cultivating their land. (Reported by Bukhārī and Muslim).

Commercial business was not exclusively for men. Some women were well known for business at that time, among them were Khadījah, Abū Jahl's mother, and Abū Sufyān's wife Hind whose merchandise was said to have been sold to the Kalbī tribe in Syria.

Ribā (usury) was the backbone of the financial and economic system of the Arabs in pre-Islamic era. Heavy rates of interests were imposed on the debts. The amount of debt was doubled if it was not paid in time, trebled, namely, three times as many as the amount borrowed if not paid at the expiry of the third year. Eventually, the creditor sometimes took the wife and the children of the debtor.

These were the conditions of the Arabs in pre-Islamic Arabia. It was the duty of Prophet Muhammad *s.a.w.* to change them in the light of Islam. Within twenty-three years of struggling to achieve this end, he had successfully established an Islamic city-state in Medinah where people lived in harmony and prosperity. It became a model of what is called in the Qur'ān, (سَبَّأُ: ١٥) "... *a fair land and an Oft-Forgiving Lord!*" (Q. 34:15)

39. MUḤARRAM & 'ĀSHŪRĀ'

The name of the first month of the lunar calendar is called *Muḥarram* (30 days) because it is one of the four months where the pre-Islamic Arabs *ḥarām* (prohibited) from fighting. The other months were *Rajab*, *Dhū-l Qi'dah*, and *Dhū 'l-Hijjah*.

The 'Āshūrā' is the 10th of the month of *Muḥarram* where Muslims fast voluntarily. Among important events occurring on this date of the month are as follows:

- a. the exodus of the Israelites from Egypt and their relief from the bondage of Pharaoh.

- b. Prophet Noah's ark landed at the top of Ararat called in the Qur'ān al-Jūdī
- c. the assassination of the Prophet's grand-son al-Ḥusayn at Karbalā'.

A. The exodus of the Israelites from the bondage of Pharaoh in Egypt.

Muslims are recommended to fast on this day in commemoration of the escape of the Israelites from bondage. There are nine *ḥadīths* about it, among which are as follows:

1. عَنْ عَائِشَةَ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا قَالَتْ كَانَتْ قُرَيْشٌ تَصُومُ عَاشُورَاءَ فِي الْجَاهِلِيَّةِ وَكَانَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ يَصُومُهُ فَلَمَّا هَاجَرَ إِلَى الْمَدِينَةِ صَامَهُ وَأَمَرَ بِصِيَامِهِ فَلَمَّا فُرِضَ شَهْرُ رَمَضَانَ قَالَ مَنْ شَاءَ صَامَهُ وَمَنْ شَاءَ تَرَكَهُ (رواه البخاري و مسلم)

On the authority of 'Ā'ishah r.a., she said, "The Quraysh tribe used to fast on 'Āshūrā' in pre Islamic era, and the Messenger of Allah used to fast on that day. When he emigrated to Medinah he fasted on that day and ordered the Muslims to fast on it. When fasting in the month of Ramadan was enjoined to Muslims, he said that whoever would, let him fast, and whoever would, he might leave it". (Reported by Bukhari and Muslim)

2. عَنْ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ بْنِ عُمَرَ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمَا أَنَّ أَهْلَ الْجَاهِلِيَّةِ كَانُوا يَصُومُونَ يَوْمَ عَاشُورَاءَ وَأَنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ صَامَهُ وَالْمُسْلِمُونَ قَبْلَ أَنْ يُفْتَرَضَ رَمَضَانَ فَلَمَّا افْتُرِضَ رَمَضَانُ قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ إِنَّ عَاشُورَاءَ يَوْمٌ مِنْ أَيَّامِ اللَّهِ فَمَنْ شَاءَ صَامَهُ وَمَنْ شَاءَ تَرَكَهُ (رواه مسلم)

On the authority of 'Abdullah ibn 'Umar r.a., he said: "People in pre-Islamic era used to fast on the day of 'Āshūrā', and the Messenger of Allah s.a.w. as well as the Muslims had fasted on that day before fasting in the month of

Ramadan was enjoined. When fasting in Ramadan became enjoined he said, ‘Āshūrā’ is one of the days of Allah, and therefore, whoever will let him fast, and whoever will, let him leave it.” (Reported by Muslim)

3. دَخَلَ الْأَشْعَثُ بْنُ قَيْسٍ عَلَى عَبْدِ اللَّهِ وَهُوَ يَتَغَدَّى فَقَالَ يَا أَبَا مُحَمَّدٍ اذْنُ إِلَى الْغَدَاءِ فَقَالَ
أَوَلَيْسَ الْيَوْمُ يَوْمَ عَاشُورَاءَ قَالَ وَهَلْ تَدْرِي مَا يَوْمَ عَاشُورَاءَ قَالَ وَمَا هُوَ قَالَ إِنَّمَا هُوَ يَوْمٌ كَانَ
رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ يَصُومُهُ قَبْلَ أَنْ يَنْزِلَ شَهْرُ رَمَضَانَ فَلَمَّا نَزَلَ شَهْرُ رَمَضَانَ
On the authority of ‘Abdullah ibn Mas‘ūd that
al-Ash‘ath visited him while he was having his lunch; then he
said, “O Abū Muḥammad, come and have lunch with us,” then
he asked, “Is not it ‘Āshūrā’ today?” He said, “Do you know
(something) about ‘Āshūrā’?” He asked, “That is it?” He
said, “It is the day the Messenger of Allah used to fast before
fasting in Ramadan was enjoined. When fasting in Ramadan
was enjoined, he left it.” (Reported by Muslim).
4. عَنْ ابْنِ عَبَّاسٍ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمَا قَالَ قَدِمَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ الْمَدِينَةَ فَوَجَدَ
الْيَهُودَ يَصُومُونَ يَوْمَ عَاشُورَاءَ فَسُئِلُوا عَنْ ذَلِكَ فَقَالُوا هَذَا الْيَوْمُ الَّذِي أَظْهَرَ اللَّهُ فِيهِ مُوسَى
وَبَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ عَلَى فِرْعَوْنَ فَتَحْنُ نَصُومُهُ تَعْظِيمًا لَهُ فَقَالَ النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ نَحْنُ
أَوْلَى بِمُوسَى مِنْكُمْ فَأَمَرَ بِصَوْمِهِ (رواه مسلم)

Ibn ‘Abbās r.a. narrated that the Messenger of Allah arrived at Medinah and found the Jews fasting on the day of ‘Āshūrā’. When they were asked about it they said, “This was the day when Allah rendered Prophet Moses and the Children of Israel victorious over Pharaoh, and therefore we fast in glorifying it”; then the Prophet s.a.w. said, “We are more deserving to Moses than you,” then he ordered (the Muslims) to fast on that day.

(Reported by Muslim)).

According to the Old Testament God ordered Prophet Moses a.s. to take the Children of Israel out of Egypt at night, after they had

borrowed an abundance of jewelry from the people of Pharaoh. The following morning, when nobody was found at the Israelite quarter Pharaoh became angry. He mobilized his troops: he took six hundred of the best chariots, along with all other chariots of Egypt (Exodus 14:7)

The Old Testament said further that although the Israelites went away with their arms, in order to avoid encountering the enemy which led to war, God led them not the shortest way to the Red sea, or they might change their minds and return to Egypt. (Exodus 14:17-18).

The Qur'ān states how they were being followed by Pharaoh and his army, as follows:

فَاتَّبَعُوهُمْ مُشْرِقِينَ. فَلَمَّا تَرَاءَى الْجَمْعَانِ قَالَ أَصْحَابُ مُوسَى إِنَّا لَمُدْرِكُونَ.
 قَالَ كَلَّا إِنَّ مَعِيَ رَبِّي سَيَهْدِينِ. فَأَوْحَيْنَا إِلَى مُوسَى أَنْ اضْرِبْ بِعَصَاكَ الْبَحْرَ فَأَنْفَلَقَ
 فَكَانَ كُلُّ فِرْقٍ كَالطَّوْدِ الْعَظِيمِ. وَأَزْلَفْنَا ثَمَّ الْآخَرِينَ. وَأَنْجَيْنَا مُوسَى
 وَمَنْ مَعَهُ أَجْمَعِينَ. ثُمَّ أَغْرَقْنَا الْآخَرِينَ. (الشعراء : ٦٠-٦٦)

*So, they pursued them at sunrise. And when the two
 Hosts saw each other, the companions of Moses said,
 "We are sure to be overtaken." Moses said, "Nay, verily
 with me is my Lord. He will guide me." Then We
 revealed (to Moses) (saying), "Strike the sea with your
 stick." And it parted, and each separated part (of that
 sea water) became like huge mountain. Then We
 brought near the others [i.e., Pharaoh's party] to that
 place. And We saved Moses and all those with him.
 Then We drowned the others. (Q. 26:60-66).*

It is said that Aaron (Hārūn), Yūsha‘ bin Nūn and a believer among the family of Pharaoh were at the front; Moses was in the rear. They asked him, "O Prophet of Allah, is it here that your Lord commanded you to bring us?" (Ibn Kathīr)

According to the Old Testament the Children of Israel kept complaining all the way. They were reluctant to leave Egypt, despite Pharaoh's oppression. They said,

Was it because there were no grave in Egypt that you brought us to the desert to die? What have you done to us by bringing us out of Egypt? Didn't we say to you in Egypt, "Leave us alone, let us serve the Egyptians"? It would have been better for us to serve the Egyptians than to die in the desert. Moses answered, "Do not be afraid. Stand firm and you will see the deliverance the Lord will bring to you today. The Egyptians you see today you will never see again. The Lord will fight for you; you need only to be still." (Exodus 14:11-14).

The Old Testament gave us more details of this episode, as follows:

Raise your staff and stretch out your hand over the sea to divide the water so that the Israelites can go through the sea on dry ground (Exodus 14:16).

Then Moses stretched out his hand over the sea, and all that night the Lord drive the sea back with a strong East wind and turned it into dry land. The waters were divided...(Exodus 14:21)

Then the Lord said to Moses, "Stretch out your hand over the sea so that the waters may flow back over the Egyptians and their chariots and horsemen." Moses stretched out his hand over the sea, and at daybreak the sea went back to its place. The Egyptians were fleeing towards (or from) it, and the Lord swept them into the sea. The water flowed back and covered the chariots and horsemen-- the entire army of the Pharaoh that had followed the Israelites into the sea. No one of them survived. But the Israelites went through the sea on dry ground with a wall of water on their right and their left. (Exodus 14:26-29)

... they went to the desert of Shur. For three days they traveled in the desert without finding water. When they

came to Marah, they could not drink its water because it was bitter. (That is why the place is called Marah [in Arabic, “murrah” fem. of “murr”, meaning “bitter”]). So the people grumbled against Moses, saying, “What are we to drink?” then Moses cried out to the Lord, and the Lord showed him a piece of wood. He threw it into the water, and the water became sweet. (Exodus 15:22-25)

Then they came to Elim, where there were twelve springs and seventy palm trees, and they camped there near the water. (Exodus 15:27)

Instead of stretching out his hand over the sea as mentioned in the Bible, the Qur’ān said that Prophet Moses was ordered by Allah to strike the sea with his stick. However, both sources mentioned that Prophet Moses was ordered by Allah to strike to stone (rock) with his stick so that water came out of it, as follows:

وَإِذِ اسْتَسْقَىٰ مُوسَىٰ لِقَوْمِهِ فَقُلْنَا اضْرِبْ بِعَصَاكَ الْحَجَرَ فَانْفَجَرَتْ
مِنْهُ اثْنَتَا عَشْرَةَ عَيْنًا قَدْ عَلِمَ كُلُّ أُنَاسٍ مَّشْرِبَهُمْ كُلُّوا وَاشْرَبُوا مِنْ رِزْقِ
اللَّهِ وَلَا تَعْتُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ مُفْسِدِينَ (البقرة : ٦٠)

And (remember) when Moses asked for water for his people,

We said: “Strike the stone with your stick.” When gushed forth therefrom twelve springs. Each (group of) people knew its own place for water. “Eat and drink of that which Allah has provided and do not act corruptly, making mischief on the earth.” (Q. 2:60).

The whole Israelite community set out from the Desert of Sin, traveling from place to place as the Lord commanded. They camped at Rephidim, but there was no water for the people to drink. So they quarreled with Moses and said, “Give us water to drink.” (Exodus 17:1-2) “... why did

you bring us out of Egypt to make us and our children and our livestock die of thirst?” (Exodus 17:3). The Lord answered Moses, “Walk on ahead of the people. Take with you some of the elders of Israel and take in your hand the staff with which you struck the Nile, and go. I will stand there before you by the rock at Horeb. Strike the rock, and water will come out of it for the people to drink.” So Moses did this in the sight of the elders of Israel. (Exodus 17: 5-6)

The twelve springs for the twelve tribes

The twelve springs were intended for the twelve tribes of the Children of Israel, each with a spring in order to avoid fighting among themselves for water. As for their food Allah sent them *manna* (a kind of honey) and *salwá* (quails). Allah said,

وَقَطَعْنَاهُمْ اِثْنَتَيْ عَشْرَةَ اَسْبَاطًا اُمَمًا وَاَوْحَيْنَا اِلَى مُوسَى اِذِ اسْتَسْقَاهُ قَوْمُهُ
اَنْ اَضْرِبَ بِعَصَاكَ الْحَجَرَ فَانْبَجَسَتْ مِنْهُ اِثْنَتَا عَشْرَةَ عَيْنًا قَدْ عَلِمَ كُلُّ اُنَاسٍ مَشْرِبَهُمْ
وَوَضَّلْنَا عَلَيْهِمُ الْغَمَامَ وَاَنْزَلْنَا عَلَيْهِمُ الْمَنَّاءَ وَالسَّلْوَى كُلُوا مِنْ طَيِّبَاتِ مَا رَزَقْنَاكُمْ
وَمَا ظَلَمُونَا وَلَكِنْ كَانُوا اَنْفُسَهُمْ يَظْلِمُونَ (الأعراف : ١٦٠)

And divided them into twelve tribes (as distinct) nations.

We revealed to Moses when his people asked him for water (saying): “Strike the stone with your stick,” and there gushed forth out of it twelve springs, each group knew its own place for water. We shaded them with the clouds and sent down upon them manna and the quail (saying): “Eat of the good things with which We have provided you.” They harmed Us not but they used to harm themselves. (Q. 7:160)

Allah also said,

وَلَقَدْ اَوْحَيْنَا اِلَى مُوسَى اَنْ اَسْرِ بِعَادِي فَاضْرِبْ لَهُمْ طَرِيقًا فِي الْبَحْرِ يَبَسًا
لَا تَخَافُ دَرَكًا وَلَا تَخْشَى. فَاتَّبَعَهُمْ فِرْعَوْنُ بِجُنُودِهِ فَغَشِيَهُمْ مِنَ الْيَمِّ مَا غَشِيَهُمْ.

وَأَضَلَّ فِرْعَوْنُ قَوْمَهُ وَمَا هَدَىٰ. يَا بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ قَدْ أَنجَيْنَاكُم مِّنْ عَدُوِّكُمْ وَوَاعَدْنَاكُمْ
جَانِبَ الطُّورِ الْأَيْمَنِ وَنَزَّلْنَا عَلَيْكُمُ الْمَنَّاءَ وَالسَّلْوَىٰ (طه : ٧٧-٨٠)

And indeed We revealed to Moses (saying): “Travel by night with My slaves and strike a dry path for them in the sea, fearing neither to be overtaken [by Pharaoh] nor being afraid (of drowning in the sea).” Then Pharaoh pursued them with his hosts, but the sea water completely over-whelmed them and covered them up. And Pharaoh led his people astray; and he did not guide them. O Children of Israel! We delivered you from your enemy, and We made a covenant with you on the right side of the Mount, and We sent down to you manna and quail (Q. 20:77-80).

With regard to the twelve tribes of the children of Israel, A.Y. Ali's gives us his commentary as follows:

Here we have a reference to the tribal organization of the Jews, which played a great part in their forty years' march through the Arabian deserts (Num. i and ii) and their subsequent settlement in the land of Canaan (Josh. xxii and xiv). The twelve tribes were derived from the sons of Jacob, whose name was changed to Israel (soldier of God) after he had wrestled, says Jewish tradition, with God (Genesis xxxii:28). [“Israel” in Hebrew means “contender of God”]. Israel had twelve sons (Gen xxxv:22-26), including Levi and Joseph. The descendants of these twelve sons were the “Children of Israel”. Levi's family got the priesthood and the care of the Tabernacle; they were exempted from military duties for which the census was taken (Nu. i, 47-53) and therefore from the distribution of Land in Canaan (Josh. xiv,3); they were distributed among all the Tribes, and were really a privileged caste and not numbered among the Tribes; Moses and Aaron belonged to the house of Levi. On the

other hand Joseph, on account of the high position to which he rose in Egypt as the Pharaoh's minister, was the progenitor of two tribes, one in the name of each of his two sons Ephraim and Manasseh. Thus there were twelve Tribes in all, as Levi was cut out and Joseph represented two tribes. Their having fixed stations and watering places in camp and fixed territorial areas later in the Promised Land prevented confusion and mutual jealousies and is pointed to as an evidence of the Providence of God acting through His prophet Moses.

(Note no. 73 of Q. 2:60)

Manna and Salwá (quail)

The Bible gives us more details about the *manna* the *salwá*. *Manna* was “a layer of dew on the ground around the camp. When the dew was gone, thin flakes like frost on the ground appeared on the desert floor” This was “the bread of the Lord” given to them. Each person could gather as much as he needed, but only an *omer* (about 2 liters) he could take to his tent. However, on the sixth day, they collected double they needed, as there would be no *manna* on the Sabbath day, the day of rest. (Exodus 16:113-16)

There was no explanation in detail about the quails. However, according to a study on this subject this could happen when migrating quails were tired of flying across the desert. They landed on the desert near the camps and could be picked up easily.

The drowned Pharaoh

Allah said in the Qur’ān,

وَجَاوَزْنَا بِبَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ الْبَحْرَ فَأَتْبَعَهُمْ فِرْعَوْنُ وَجُنُودُهُ بَغْيًا وَعَدُوًّا حَتَّى إِذَا أَذْرَكَهُ
الْغَرَقُ قَالَ آمَنْتُ أَنَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا الَّذِي آمَنْتُ بِهِ بَنُو إِسْرَائِيلَ وَأَنَا مِنَ الْمُسْلِمِينَ. أَلَا لَآنَ وَقَدْ
عَصَيْتَ قَبْلُ وَكُنْتَ مِنَ الْمُفْسِدِينَ. فَالْيَوْمَ نُنَجِّيكَ بِبَدَنِكَ لِتَكُونَ لِمَنْ خَلَقَ آيَةً
وَإِنَّ كَثِيرًا مِنَ النَّاسِ عَنْ آيَاتِنَا لَغَافِلُونَ (يونس : ٩٠-٩٢)

*And We took the Children of Israel across the sea, and Pharaoh with his hosts followed them in oppression and enmity, till when drowning overtook him, he said: "I believed that none has the right to be worshipped but He (Allah) in whom the Children of Israel believed, and I am one of the Muslims (those who submitted to Allah's Will)." Now ((you believe) while you refused to believe before, and you were one of the **mufsidūn** (evil doers and corrupters). So this day We shall deliver your (dead) body (out from the sea) that you may be a sign to those who come after you! And verily, many among mankind are heedless of Our signs, (Q. 10: 90-92)*

Asad's commentary on such incident is as follows:

.... It should always be remembered that all Qur'anic references to historical or legendary events – whether described in the Bible or in the oral tradition of pre-Islamic Arabia – are invariable meant to elucidate a particular lesson in ethics and not to narrate a story as such; and this explains the fragmentary character of these references and allusions." (Note: 110)

According to Maurice Bucaille, Ramses II was the Pharaoh of the Oppression, whereas his son Merneptah was the Pharaoh of the Exodus. He said that Moses was born during the reign of Ramses II who built the two cities of Ramesses and Pithom, and when Ramses II died Moses was in Midian. Then he was succeeded by his son Merneptah. Ramses II reigned 66 years (1301-1235 BC according to Drioton and Vandier's chronology, whereas according to Rowton he reigned from 1290-1224 BC. Merneptah reigned (according to Drioton and Vandier) 10 years (1234-1224 BC) or 20 years (1224-1204 BC). (Maurice Bucaille, *The Bible, the Qur'an and Science*. Indianapolis, Ind.: North American Trust, Publication, 1979, p. 233).

According to the Old Testament, Moses was 80 years old, and Aaron 83 years old when they spoke to Pharaoh (Exodus 2, 23). Ramses

II was 90-100 years old. He began reigning when he was 23-33 years old, and could have married by that time. Moses was found by Pharaoh's household according to the Qur'ān, or daughter according to the Bible, yet no contradiction appears here according to Bucaille. (Bucaille, p. 234). Bucaille, said:

When the Qur'ān was transmitted to man by the Prophet, the bodies of all the Pharaohs who are today considered (rightly or wrongly) to have something to do with the Exodus were in their tombs of the Necropolis of Thebes, on the opposite side of the Nile from Luxor. At the time however, absolutely nothing was known of this fact, and it was not until the end of the 19th century that they were discovered there. As the Qur'ān states, the body of the Pharaoh of Exodus was in fact rescued. Whichever of the Pharaohs it was, visitors may see him the Royal Mummy's Room of the Egyptian Museum, Cairo. (Bucaille, p. 239)

Pharaoh Merneptah's mummy was discovered by Loret in 1898 at Thebes in the King's Valley. Then it was transported to Cairo. Elliot Smith removed its wrappings on the 8th of July 1907. (For details, see his book, *The Royal Mummies*, 1912). Since then, the body of the mummy was well hidden under a cloth, except its neck and the body, and the only general photographs possessed by the museum were those taken by E. Smith in 1912. (Bucaille, p. 239)

In June 1975 Bucaille was allowed to examine the uncovered parts of his body and took photographs. He said that the body of Merneptah had lain in the tomb of Necropolis of Thebes for over 3000 years. Doctors found in the examination multiple lesions of bones with broad lacunae – some of which may have been mortal – died from drowning or very violent shocks preceding the moment when he was drowned – or both at once. (Bucaille, p. 241)

Then Allah made covenant with Moses of forty nights: he was to fast forty days, both the day and night. So, he made haste to the

mountain, leaving Aaron in charge over the Children of Israel. (For further details, see Q. 20:83 ff)

B. Prophet Noah's ark landed at the top of Ararat called in the Qur'ān al-Jūdī

The Qur'ān does not give us many details about the flood, neither the time nor the duration of it, as the object of the story is to give moral lessons to people in later generations, namely, whoever disobeys Allah and His messengers would be eventually punished. However, the Bible gives more details, such as the size of Prophet Noah's ark, and that the flood was a universal catastrophe. This, in the light of modern knowledge, was unacceptable. Based on Sacerdotal version of the 6th century BC, it was calculated that the flood took place in the 21st or 22nd century BC that destroyed the whole surface of the earth. By this time, it was known that civilization had been flourishing in several parts of the globe, such as in Egypt, at the Intermediate period following the end of the Middle Kingdom.

One of the descriptions of the Qur'ān regarding the occurrence of the flood as punishment for the people of Noah for their disbelief is as follows:

كَذَّبَتْ قَبْلَهُمْ قَوْمُ نُوحٍ فَكَذَّبُوا عَبْدَنَا وَقَالُوا مَجْنُونٌ وَازْدُجِرَ. فَدَعَا رَبَّهُ
أَنِّي مَغْلُوبٌ فَأَنْتَصِرْ. فَفَتَحْنَا أَبْوَابَ السَّمَاءِ بِمَاءٍ مُنْهَمِرٍ. وَفَجَرْنَا الْأَرْضَ عُيُونًا
فَالْتَقَى الْمَاءُ عَلَى أَمْرٍ قَدْ قُدِرَ. وَحَمَلْنَاهُ عَلَى ذَاتِ أَلْوَاحٍ وَدُسُرٍ. تَجْرِي بِأَعْيُنِنَا
جَزَاءً لِمَنْ كَانَ كُفِرَ. وَلَقَدْ تَرَكْنَاهَا آيَةً فَهَلْ مِنْ مُدَكِّرٍ. (القمر: ٩-١٥)

*Before them the People of Noah rejected (their apostle);
they rejected Our servant and said, "Here is one
possessed!" and he was driven out. Then he called on his
Lord, "I am one overcome: do thou then help me." So We
opened the gates of heaven with water pouring forth. And
We caused the earth to gush forth with springs so the
waters met (and rose) to the extent decreed. But We bore*

him on an (ark) made of broad planks and caulked with palm fibre. She floats under Our eyes (and care): a recompense to one who had been rejected (with scorn). And We have left this as a Sign (for all time); then is there any that will receive admonition? (Q. 54:9-15).

The above verses indicate that the flood was caused by heavy rain pouring from the sky and springs gushing water from the earth.

When Prophet Noah called his people to worship Allah instead of idols, they rejected him, and said that only mean people followed him. They threatened him with stoning to death if he did not stop preaching. He prayed to Allah to deliver him and his followers. Allah answered his prayer and saved him and those with him in a fully laden-ark, whereas those who remained behind became drowned, including his wife and his son. (for further detail, see Q. 26: 105-121, 29:15)

When Allah told Prophet Noah that no one would believe him other than those who had already believed, He ordered him to build an ark. Whenever the chiefs of his people passed by him they laughed at him. When water gushed forth in torrents He ordered him to place on board of his ark one pair of each kind of animals. The water kept rising until its waves were like mountains. He called his son to join and believe him, but he preferred to take refuge to the mountain, although he warned him that there would be no safety except by believing him and joining him in the ark. A wave rose up between them and the son drowned. (for further detail, see Q. 11:225-243).

The Qur'ān explained how the flood stopped, as follows:

وَقِيلَ يَا أَرْضُ ابْلَعِي مَاءَكَ وَيَا سَمَاءُ أَقْلِعِي وَغِيضَ الْمَاءُ وَقُضِيَ الْأَمْرُ
وَاسْتَوَتْ عَلَى الْجُودِيِّ وَقِيلَ بُعْدًا لِلْقَوْمِ الظَّالِمِينَ. (هود : ٤٤)

And it was said, “O earth! swallow up your water!” and “O sky! Cease your rain!” The floodwater abated and the judgment was carried out. The ark rested on Mount al-Jūdī, and it was said, “Gone are the wrongdoing people!”

(Q. 11:44)

The story of flood was common throughout the world. According to many Western scholars these common stories of flood were derived from a single event, the Accadian (Babylonian) flood. The ark “rested ... upon the mountains of Ararat” according to the Bible (Genesis 8:4), and the highest range of Ararat was in Armenia. The Qur’ānic account was that it rested on Mt. Judi (Q. 91:44), and the Orientalist R. Blachère said that it was a peak of a mountain in Arabia. However, Asad’s commentary on the above verse is that “the designation of Ararat (the Assyrian Urartu) at one time included the whole area to the south of lake Van in which Jabal Judi is situated”. This Jabal Jūdī [known in ancient Syriac as Qardu] is situated near the frontiers of modern Turkey, modern Iraq and modern Syria.

C. The assassination of the Prophet's grand-son Ḥusayn at Karbalā’.

When Mu‘āwiyah, the governor of Syria refused to pay homage to ‘Alī as a caliph, his son Yazīd who succeeded him as a caliph, ordered his governor in Medinah to force ‘Alī’s son Ḥusayn to pay homage to him. Ḥusayn as well as ‘Abdullah ibn al-Zubayr persistently refused, and took refuge at Makkah, as Yazīd was impious and drank alcohol. Some months later emissaries of pro-Ali’s party in Kufah persuaded Ḥusayn to lead a revolt against Yazīd in Damascus. Husayn sent his cousin to Kufah for preparation of the revolt, but the governor of Kūfah, ‘Abdullah ibn Ziyād discovered the plot, and got rid of Ḥusayn's cousin. Then ‘Abdullah set detachments of cavalry to watch Ḥusayn's movement and to persuade him to desist from the attempt of revolting, but Ḥusayn refused. ‘Abdullah's forces stopped the advance of Ḥusayn's fighters at Karbalā’. After a final summon to surrender, ‘Abdullah’s forces attacked the small group of Ali’s fighters and slew them. Eventually, Ḥusayn who watched the battle from a distance was also killed. It was said that he was prostrating in prayer when he was assassinated. This happened on 10th Muḥarram 61/10 October 680 at Karbalā’ at the bank of Euphrates River.

His head was put on the spear and paraded through towns on the way to Damascus and presented to Yazīd. This was a horrible and detested incident happened to the grand-son of the Prophet of whom the Prophet loved very much, he and his elder brother Ḥasan. Some *ḥadīths* mentioning their noble position follow:

- a. Abū Sa‘īd narrated that Allah’s Messenger (peace be upon him) said, “*Ḥasan and Ḥusayn will be the chief ones among the youth who go to Paradise.*” (Tirmidhī, *ḥadīth* no. 1624).
- b. ‘Abdullah ibn ‘Umar narrated that Allah’s Messenger (peace be upon him) said, “*Ḥasan and Ḥusayn are my offspring in the world.*” (Tirmidhī, *ḥadīth* no. 1625).
- c. Usāmah ibn Zayd narrated, “I went to the Prophet (peace be upon him) one night about something I required and he came out with something (I did not know what) under his cloak. When I had finished telling him my business, I asked him what he had under his cloak, and when he opened it I saw Ḥasan and Ḥusayn on his hips. He then said, ‘*These are my sons and my daughter’s sons. O Allah, I love them, so I beseech Thee to love them and those who love them.*’” (Tirmidhī, *ḥadīth* no. 1626).
- d. Ibn Abī Num narrated, “A person asked ‘Abdullah ibn ‘Umar whether a Muslim could kill flies. I heard him saying (in reply). ‘The people of Iraq are asking about the killing of flies while they themselves murdered the son of the daughter of Allah’s Apostle. The Prophet said, “*They (i.e. Ḥasan and Ḥusayn) are my two sweet basil in this world.*”’” (Bukhārī, *ḥadīth* 5.96).
- e. Ibn Abī Num narrated, “I was present when a man asked Ibn ‘Umar about the blood of mosquitoes. Ibn ‘Umar said, ‘From where are you?’ The man replied, ‘From Iraq.’ Ibn ‘Umar said, ‘Look at that! He is asking me about the blood of mosquitoes while they (the Iraqis) have killed the (grand) son of the Prophet. I have heard the

Prophet saying, “*They (Ḥasan and Ḥusayn) are my two sweet-smelling flowers in this world.*”” (Bukhārī, ḥadīth 8.23).

When the delegation from Medinah at Yazīd’s court learned that he was surrounded by alcohol drinkers, impious people and kept dogs, in 63/682-3 the people of Medinah revolted against him. They gathered together in the mosque of Medinah, threw down their turbans, mantels and sandals indicating their deposing him. They drove the pro-Umawī residents and supporters out the city. Yazīd sent an army led by his faithful friend Muslim ibn ‘Uqbah and conquered Medinah. They marched to Makkah, led by another general (Muslim had died on the way), besieged the city, threw catapults at the Holy Mosque, and the Ka’bah was caught fire.

News arrived that Yazīd died in 63/683 and the besiegers did not know any longer for whom they were fighting. Moreover, they doubted whether the adolescent son of Yazīd would be recognized as caliph. Their general wanted to proclaim ‘Abdullah ibn al-Zubayr caliph, on condition that he should go to Syria, but he refused. Yazīd’s son, Mu‘āwiyah II was proclaimed caliph, although not unanimously. However, he died shortly afterwards followed with chaos.

These are the three stories of incidents said to have taken place on the day of ‘*Āshūrā*’ (10th of Muharram).

40. CLEANNES AND PURITY

Brothers in Islam,

There are two Arabic words for “cleanness”, الطَّهَارَةُ and النِّظَافَةُ . The word النِّظَافَةُ means “cleanness, cleanliness, neatness and tidiness.” For something clean, neat or tidy we use the word نَظِيفٌ . The word الطَّهَارَةُ means “cleanness, cleanliness; purity, cultic purity (purity based on

Islamic law), chastity, sanctity, holiness, and circumcision.” Something clean, pure, chaste or modest is called طَهُور and طَاهِر.

The Prophet used both words الطَّهَارَة and النَّظَافَة and their derivatives, whereas Allah in the Qur’ān used the term الطَّهَارَة only and its derivatives. This is probably because it is easy to say the word الطَّهَارَة than the word النَّظَافَة ; نَظِيف (nazīf) meaning “clean”, should not be mispronounced as نَزِيف (nazīf) meaning “bleeding”; the word النَّظَافَة has more to do with physical cleanliness, whereas الطَّهَارَة indicates both physical and spiritual cleanliness. The examples from the ḥadīth is the Prophet’s statement, النَّظَافَة مِنَ الْإِيمَانِ (“Cleanliness is a part of īmān, faith”), and this is similar to the English proverb, “Cleanliness is next to godliness”. “Godliness” means “piety”. Allah’s command to the Prophet to convey the message of Islam to people, and to purify his clothes. Allah said:

يَا أَيُّهَا الْمُدَّثِّرُ. قُمْ فَأَنذِرْ. وَرَبَّكَ فَكَبِّرْ. وَثِيَابَكَ فَطَهِّرْ. (المدثر: ١-٤)

*O thou wrapped up (in a mantle), Arise and warn, And Thy
Lord glorify, And Your clothes purify (Q. 74:1-4)*

From that moment Prophet Muhammad s.a.w. was not only a nabī (a prophet), but also a rasūl (a messenger), to call and preach Islam to people. He was also ordered to purify his clothes and to keep them clean. This is physical cleanness. However, it could also mean spiritual cleanness. The word ثوب (thawb) and its plural form ثياب (thiyāb) meaning clothes could also be metonymically applied to what it covers, namely, the body, the self. For this reason, Muhammad Asad translates وثيابك فطهر (“And Your clothes purify”) as “And thine inner self purify,” so that this verse indicates Allah’s order to the Prophet to purify himself physically and spiritually besides calling people to Islam.

A person who has to give something good must be himself good. A person who is to preach purity and virtue must be himself a pure and virtuous person. The Prophet had been known for his good character

before he became a prophet. A good salesman must wear clean clothes and speak honestly to attract the buyers. Long, long ago I read in a guide book for travelers to Indonesia, that if you go to a small restaurant or food stall (*warung*) to eat, see if the owner (or the waiter or waitress) is wearing clean clothes. If so, it is an indication that the food is also clean.²⁰

Among the people who are loved by Allah are those who keep themselves clean physically and spiritually. Allah said:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ التَّوَّابِينَ وَيُحِبُّ الْمُتَطَهِّرِينَ (البقرة : ٢٢٢)

... Surely Allah loves those who turn to Him in repentance

And keep themselves clean (Q. 2:222)

As Allah loves those who turn to Him in repentance and those who keep themselves clean. The Prophet taught us to pray to become among them. After performing our *wudu'* (ablution) we raise our hands and say this *du'a* (supplication):

اللَّهُمَّ اجْعَلْنِي مِنَ التَّوَّابِينَ وَاجْعَلْنِي مِنَ الْمُتَطَهِّرِينَ

O Allah, make me one of those who turn to You in repentance, of those who keep themselves (physically and spiritually) clean, and make me one of Your pious servants.

لَمَسْجِدٍ أُسِّسَ عَلَى التَّقْوَى مِنْ أَوَّلِ يَوْمٍ أَحَقُّ أَنْ تَقُومَ فِيهِ رِجَالٌ

يُحِبُّونَ أَنْ يَتَطَهَّرُوا وَاللَّهُ يُحِبُّ الْمُتَطَهِّرِينَ (التوبة : ١٠٨)

*Certainly, a place of worship which was founded on piety from the very first day is more deserving that you should stand to offer **ṣalāh** (prayer) in it; for in it there are men who love to purify themselves; and Allah loves those who purify themselves (Q. 9:108).*

¹⁶In Indonesia a very small food stall where you can buy cheap food is called *warung Tegal*. *Tegal* is a small town in Central Java near Semarang. The first owner of this cheap food stall might have been from this town. Another expression dealing with Tegal is *bodoh Tegal* meaning “a person who pretends to be stupid”.

This verse is referring to Qubā' mosque, the first one built on *taqwā*, obedience to Allah and His Messenger, frequented by people whom Allah loved, as they loved to purify themselves. This verse also encourages us to join the prayer with other pious Muslims, so that Allah will include us among those whom He loves.

Another term used many times in the Qur'ān meaning "purity" is *zakāt*. His word also means "honesty, integrity, growth", and later also means the obligatory 'alms tax". The term *زَكَّى*, *يُزَكِّي*, is an intransitive verb meaning "to grow, to be pure in heart, to be just, to be good, to be righteous," whereas the term *زَكَّى*, *يُزَكِّي* is a transitive verb meaning "to purify, to justify, to make grow". The expression *غُلَامٌ زَكِيٌّ* "a pure son" meaning "a holy son" is applied to Prophet 'Isá (Jesus) *a.s.* when the angel Gabriel told Mary,

قَالَ إِنَّمَا أَنَا رَسُولُ رَبِّكِ لِأَهَبَ لَكِ غُلَامًا زَكِيًّا (مریم : ۱۹)

He said, "I am only a messenger from your Lord to tell you about the gift of a holy son" (Q. 19:19).

The expression *غُلَامًا زَكِيًّا* is translated as "a holy son" "a faultless son" and "a son endowed with purity" by A. Yusuf, Pickthall, and M. Asad respectively.

The expression *نَفْسٌ زَكِيَّةٌ* (lit. means "a pure soul") is translated as "an innocent person or human being" in the following verse,

فَانْطَلَقَا حَتَّىٰ إِذَا لَقِيَا غُلَامًا فَقَتَلَهُ قَالَ أَقْتَلْتَنِي نَفْسًا زَكِيَّةً
بِغَيْرِ نَفْسٍ لَّكَدْ جِئْتَ شَيْئًا نُكْرًا. (الكهف : ۷۴)

So, the two men went on, until they met a boy, and he [the sage, Khidr] slew him [whereupon Moses] exclaimed, "You have killed an innocent human being, although he had killed nobody! Surely, you have done a horrible deed." (Q. 18:74)

This was about Prophet Moses *a.s.* and the sage (wise man, in tradition called Khidr), where Allah wanted to teach Prophet Moses not to say that he was the wisest man in his time, and this wise man (by Allah's order)

killed an innocent boy because Allah wanted to give the parents of the boy a good and pious son in his place. This is also a lesson for us not to say we are the most knowledgeable in anything, but to be humble, and should say that we do not know, and Allah knows best (اللَّهُ أَعْلَمُ). Allah says,

وَفَوْقَ كُلِّ ذِي عِلْمٍ عَلِيمٌ (يوسف : ٧٦)

... and over every lord of knowledge there is one more knowing
(Pickthall);
... but above everyone who is endowed with knowledge there is
One who knows all (Asad) (Q. 12:76).

Allah ordered the Prophet to take the *zakat* from the Muslims to purify them and to make their wealth grow. Allah said,

خُذْ مِنْ أَمْوَالِهِمْ صَدَقَةً تُطَهِّرُهُمْ وَتُزَكِّيهِمْ بِهَا وَصَلِّ عَلَيْهِمْ إِنَّ صَلَاتَكَ سَكَنٌ لَهُمْ وَاللَّهُ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ. (التوبة : ١٠٣)

Take *ṣadaqah* [i.e., *zakāt al-māl*] from their wealth, so that they may thereby be cleansed and purified (grow in purity), and pray for them; for your prayer will give them comfort. Allah hears all and knows all. (Q. 9.103)

The Prophet comforted people who fear the loss in paying *zakāt*. He said,

مَا نَقَصَ مَالُ عَبْدٍ مِنْ صَدَقَةٍ (رواه الترمذي)

A wealth of a servant [of Allah] will not decrease with
Paid *ṣadaqah* (*zakāt*). (Reported by Tirmidhī)

As we know, there are two kinds of *zakāt*. *Zakātu 'l-fīṭr* will purify our soul, and *zakātu 'l-māl* will purify our wealth. All belong to our religious and social duty at the same time to help the needy. A collector of *zakāt* is like a fighter in the cause of Islam. The Prophet said: "The official who collects *ṣadaqah* (*zakāt*) in a just manner is like him who fights in Allah's path till he returns home." (Abū Dā'ūd, *Sunan*, *ḥadīth* no. 1282)

The term *zakāt* and its derivatives are mentioned several times (more than seventy times) in the Qurʾān, especially after mentioning the establishment of prayer (*ṣalāt*), such as, أَقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَآتُوا الزَّكَاةَ (see Q., 2:43, 83, and 110; 4:77; 22:78; 24:56; 58:13, and 73:20).

Nowadays, in this 21st century, people are more concerned with their physical well-being rather than their spiritual well-being. TV advertisements are full of these things: how to eliminate wrinkles in your face, how to fight baldness, how to look younger, may be you need plastic surgery, etc. A long time ago, the poet Abū 'l-Faṭḥ 'Alī ibn Muḥammad al-Bisṭī in his long poem lamented on people neglecting their spiritual being. He said,

يَا خَادِمَ الْجِسْمِ كَمْ تَسْعَى لِخِدْمَتِهِ * أَتَطْلُبُ الرِّيحَ مِمَّا فِيهِ خُسْرَانُ
أَقْبِلْ عَلَى النَّفْسِ وَاسْتَكْمِلْ فَضَائِلَهَا * فَأَنْتَ بِالنَّفْسِ لَا بِالْجِسْمِ إِنْسَانٌ²¹

O you who are the servant of physical body, how much you care for it! Are you looking for a profit where there is only loss in it? Occupy yourself with your nafs (spirit, soul) and perfect its virtue, for you are a human being by soul, not by physical body.

What the poet means is that we are human beings and different from animals, not only because of our body, but mainly because of our soul, moral excellence, good character; in other words, with a pure heart. A bad person is worse than an animal. He could be a monster, terrifying and terrorizing a village, a town, a city and a country, killing people by hundreds and thousands.

Conclusion:

There has to be a balance in purifying and taking care of our physical body and of our heart or soul, in order to have a healthy body and a healthy soul. (ANUMA, 4 May, 07)

²¹ أبو الفتح البستي، الكشكول، ج ١، ص ١١٦.

41. ISLAMIC BEHAVIOUR TOWARDS THE ENVIRONMENT

According to Islam, Allah creates the earth and its contents for human beings, as inheritors of them. Allah says in the Qur'ān,

هُوَ الَّذِي خَلَقَ لَكُمْ مَا فِي الْأَرْضِ جَمِيعًا ... (البقرة : ٢٩)

It is He Who has created for you all that there is in the earth... (Q. 2:29).

So, the earth and its contents: animals, plants, water, minerals, and so on, are created for human beings. They are here on this earth to inherit and to use them in order to get benefit from them. The Qur'ān mentions that human beings are made *khalīfah* (inheritors) on this earth. Allah said,

وَهُوَ الَّذِي جَعَلَكُمْ خَلَائِفَ الْأَرْضِ وَرَفَعَ بَعْضَكُمْ فَوْقَ بَعْضٍ دَرَجَاتٍ لِّيَبْلُوَكُمْ فِي مَا آتَاكُمْ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ سَرِيعُ الْعِقَابِ وَإِنَّهُ لَغَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ (الأنعام : ١٦٥)

He is the One Who has made you the inheritors of the earth and raised some of you in ranks over others so that He may test you in what He has given you. Surely your Lord is swift in retribution, yet, He is also very Forgiving, Merciful. (Q. 6:165)

The first inheritor of the earth was Adam a.s. When Allah was about to create Adam a *khalīfah* (a successor, a deputy, a vicegerent, an inheritor or a trustee) of this earth, He told the angels. Allah said,

وَإِذْ قَالَ رَبُّكَ لِلْمَلَائِكَةِ إِنِّي جَاعِلٌ فِي الْأَرْضِ خَلِيفَةً قَالُوا أَتَجْعَلُ فِيهَا مَنْ يُفْسِدُ فِيهَا وَيَسْفِكُ الدِّمَاءَ وَنَحْنُ نُسَبِّحُ بِحَمْدِكَ وَنُقَدِّسُ لَكَ قَالَ إِنِّي أَعْلَمُ مَا لَا تَعْلَمُونَ . (البقرة : ٣٠)

And (remember) when your Lord said to the angels: "Verily, I am going to place a vicegerent on earth." They said, "Will You place there one who will make mischief and shed blood while we glorify You with praises and thanks and sanctify You." He said, "I know what you do not know." (Q. 2:30).

As inheritors of the earth and as the descendants of Adam and Eve human beings are responsible and accountable for their conduct

towards themselves, towards other creatures on this earth as well as towards the earth itself. However, it does not mean that they belong to them. Allah says:

لَهُ مَا فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَا وَمَا تَحْتَ الثَّرَى (طه : ٦)

Unto Him belongs all that is in the heavens and all that is on the earth, and that is between them, and all that is beneath the soil. (Q 20:6).

Everything created by Allah is in perfect condition. He said,

الَّذِي خَلَقَ سَبْعَ سَمَاوَاتٍ طِبَاقًا مَا تَرَى فِي خَلْقِ الرَّحْمَنِ مِنْ تَفَاوُتٍ
فَارْجِعِ الْبَصَرَ هَلْ تَرَى مِنْ فُطُورٍ. (المالك : ٣)

The One Who created the seven heaven, one above another, you will not see any flaw in the creation of the Compassionate. Look once again, do you see any flaw?
(Q. 67:3)

As the earth is the only planet we know in our solar system on which Allah sustains life, every creature on it plays its role and lives in harmony with each other. There is a balance in everything, so that nothing is out of proportion. Allah said,

وَالسَّمَاءَ رَفَعَهَا وَوَضَعَ الْمِيزَانَ. أَلَّا تَطْغَوْا فِي الْمِيزَانِ. وَأَقِيمُوا الْوَزْنَ
بِالْقِسْطِ وَلَا تُخْسِرُوا الْمِيزَانَ. (الرحمن : ٧-٩)

And the heaven: He has raised it high, and He has set up the balance (or measure [for all things]) in order that you do not transgress the balance (or measure). And therefore, establish the weight with equity, and do not make the balance (measure) deficient. (Q. 55:7-9).

Since Allah creates everything in its proper balance, terrible misfortunes and violence take place on this earth from time to time because of man's violating this balance. Allah said,

ظَهَرَ الْفَسَادُ فِي الْبَرِّ وَالْبَحْرِ بِمَا كَسَبَتْ أَيْدِي النَّاسِ لِيُذِيقَهُمْ

بَعْضَ الَّذِي عَمِلُوا لَعَلَّهُمْ يَرْجِعُونَ (الروم: ٤١)

Corruption has appeared on land and sea in consequence of man's own misdeeds. That He may make them taste a part of that which they have done, in order that they may return. (Q. 30:41).

The above verse was revealed while the Romans from Eastern Roman Empire were waging war against the Persians creating disturbance and instability in that region. At present people are still fighting and killing each other, rather than settling their disputes peacefully, and people keep polluting the environment. Every machine that uses gasoline (petrol) for its engine to operate, from airplanes, to motorcycles, from factories to stoves all need oxygen (HO₂) to work without which they will not function. Living things including humans need oxygen to breathe and to survive. In addition, these things emit poisonous gas called carbon monoxide (CO) whereas human beings and animals emit carbon dioxide (CO₂). The cutting of trees that produce oxygen indiscriminately for logging such as in the jungles keeps going on resulting in erosion which in turn causes floods.

Many animals and birds are on the brink of extinction due to human abuse of environment. Their habitats shrink as people keep cutting trees where they live. Many of them are called endangered species, like the pandas of China, the snow tigers of Russia, and the orang-outang of Borneo/Kalimantan. Many birds can no longer lay eggs that can hatch because of the contamination of the water they drink or the areas they live. For example, beside industrial waste, it happened many times that tankers carrying crude oil sank and polluted the water where many birds and other animals live. These birds have to be raised in captivity with human assistance. Many other animals and birds have already been extinct because of the polluted environment, and this is irreversible.

In Canada many lakes are dying because of water pollution from factories. The fish in these lakes cannot be eaten any longer, because

these rivers are harmful, so that people who spent their vacation there just sit at their banks without touching their water.

Muslims are taught to join other creatures in glorifying Allah and to realize that each inhabitant on this earth has its own community, such as that of the ants. Muslims are taught not to pollute still water with impure things, and to pick and eat fruit without damaging its tree or branches. They are encouraged to plant trees disregarding whether they will get their fruits in their lifetime or not.

Muslims are not allowed to waste anything and to spend unwisely, as it indicates lack of one's appreciation of Allah's bounty. A person who is spendthrift is associated with devils as his brothers in ungratefulness. Allah said,

وَأْتِ ذَا الْقُرْبَىٰ حَقَّهُ وَالْمِسْكِينَ وَابْنَ السَّبِيلِ وَلَا تُبَذِّرْ تَبْذِيرًا. إِنَّ الْمُبَذِّرِينَ
كَانُوا إِخْوَانَ الشَّيَاطِينِ وَكَانَ الشَّيْطَانُ لِرَبِّهِ كَفُورًا (الإسراء: ٢٦-٢٧)

And give to the kinsmen his due, and to the poor and the wayfarer, and do not be spendthrifts. Verily, the spendthrifts are brothers of devils, and the devil is ever ungrateful to his Lord. (Q. 17:26-27).

Wasteful extravagance is against conservation and preservation. It is reported by n ‘Abdullah ibn ‘Amar ibn al-‘Āṣ narrated that the Prophet was passing by Sa‘d who was making ablution for prayer, and said to him; “What is this waste, O Sa‘d?” He replied: “Can there be waste in washing for the prayer?” The Prophet said: “Yes, even if you are beside the flowing river.” The Prophet said that whoever killed an animal or bird wantonly, without any valid reason or purpose, he would be responsible for it in the Hereafter. He also said that whoever planted a tree and its fruits were eaten by animals and birds, they were considered charity. However, it should not be misunderstood, that our crops should be left totally to animals or birds.

Australia is a continent that lacks rain and water, especially in areas far away from its shores. The government urges people to save and use water wisely, especially in watering our gardens. We should not

waste food and put in our plates more than what we need, so that the remainder will end up in the rubbish bins.

We have to conserve energy, and we have to stop indiscriminate logging, we should control the chemical and gases from factories and stop them from polluting our environment, the seas, the rivers, the land and the air. We have to encourage people to plant trees, help the government and any non-governmental organization dealing with conservation and preservation of the environment.

The earth is entrusted to us as *amānah* (trusteeship) to maintain and to take care if it and the creatures living on it. As Allah's representative or vicegerent on this earth, it is our responsibility for maintaining the welfare and the safety and of everything on it: humans, animals, trees, the water of the rivers and the oceans, even the minerals under its soil. The earth is our home; it is to us to make use of all its resources without causing any damage to it. Think of next generations, as this earth is not only for our generation, but also for generations to come. By doing this, we are actually doing our devotion to Allah in obeying His command to keep this earth in a good shape and in carrying out His *amānah*.

42. BROTHERHOOD IN ISLAM

Brothers in Islam,

We are living in the era where Muslims are so disunited. It is very shameful that we Muslims are not able to solve our problems and settle our difference peacefully. We can have different opinions and interest, but these should not lead us to mutual enmity and confrontation. Let the following fable give us a moral lesson.

Two cats found a piece of bread. They decided to divide it equally among themselves. As none of the cats wanted to have less than half of

it, they went to a monkey to help them divide the bread into two exactly equal halves. The monkey cut the bread into two and put each of it in a pan or scale of a balance. As one piece of the bread in a scale is heavier than the other, the monkey ate a piece of it and put it back onto the scale. As the scale became lighter, he took the bread of the other scale and ate a piece of it, and took it back to the scale. The scale became lighter, and the monkey took the bread from the other scale, ate a bite of it, and put it back into the scale. As the two pieces of bread could not be divided with exact equal weight, the monkey kept eating the heavy one, until nothing was left, and the scales had equal weight because they were empty. Had the two cats agreed to divide the bread among themselves and tolerated the difference in weight and size of the bread, each of them would have their share. The monkey, who tried to solve their problem, ended up eating the whole bread. "Half a loaf is better than no bread," said the English proverb.

Another example is as follows: A man who was in his death bed called his sons. He asked them to collect branches of trees and to bind them together. He then asked each of them to break the bound branches, but none of them could. Then he asked them to unbind the branches and asked to break them one by one, and all of them were able to do so. Then the dying father said to them.

"My sons, like these tree branches, if you are united nobody will be able to defeat you, but if you are disunited, then your enemy will easily defeat you."

If we are driving your car (in Australia on the left side of the road), and a car is coming on the wrong side of the road taking our side, we warn the driver to get back to his side of the road to avoid a collision. If we turn and take the right side to avoid the collision, the other driver might turn to his left side at the last moment, and the collision would happen on our wrong side of the road, and we will be guilty for the accident. Shall we continue driving and stick to our left side of the road, disregarding the possible collision? According to our traffic regulation, we are still considered guilty if we do not try to avoid collision. We

should avoid it by turning to the left (not to the right), to the shoulder of the road, and give our way to the oncoming driver.

One of many lessons we should learn from the Qur'ān is the story of the first person killed called Hābīl (Abel). By whom? By his own brother Qābīl (Cain). Out of jealousy Cain threatened to kill his own brother Abel, but Abel said, "If you intended to kill me, I will have no intention to kill you." Allah said:

وَأُتِلَ عَلَيْهِمْ نَبَأُ ابْنَيْ آدَمَ بِالْحَقِّ إِذْ قَرَّبَا قُرْبَانًا فَتُقُبِّلَ مِنْ أَحَدِهِمَا وَلَمْ يُتَقَبَّلْ مِنَ
الْآخَرِ قَالَ لَأَقْتُلَنَّكَ قَالَ إِنَّمَا يَتَقَبَّلُ اللَّهُ مِنَ الْمُتَّقِينَ. لَئِنْ بَسَطْتَ إِلَيَّ يَدَكَ لِتَقْتُلَنِي مَا
أَنَا بِبَاسِطٍ يَدِيَ إِلَيْكَ لِأَقْتُلَنَّكَ إِنِّي أَخَافُ اللَّهَ رَبَّ الْعَالَمِينَ (المائدة : ٢٧-٢٩)

*Recite to them in all truth the story of Adam's two sons:
How each offered a sacrifice, and how the offering of one
was accepted, while that of the other was not. The latter
[i.e. Cain] said, "I will kill you." The former [i.e. Abel]
replied, "Allah only accepts the sacrifice of the right-
eous. Even if you stretch your hand to kill me, I shall not
stretch my hand to kill you, for I fear Allah, the Lord of
the Worlds. I intend to let you bear the burden of my sins
as well as yours and thus become an inmate of the Fire
which is the reward of wrong doers." (Q. 5: 27-29)*

This is what we should do as Muslims: to give away our right if by sticking to it will cause danger to ourselves as Muslims. We sacrifice our right in order to protect our community from self destruction.

We are not even allowed to scare our Muslim brothers and sisters by pointing our weapon at them, let alone killing them. Abū Hurayrah narrated that the Prophet s.a.w. said:

*He who pointed a weapon towards his brother the angels
Invoke curse upon him even if he is his real brother as long as
he does not abandon it (the pointing of weapon towards
one's Muslim brother) (Muslim, ḥadīth no. 1202).*

Allah said,

وَمَا كَانَ لِمُؤْمِنٍ أَنْ يَقْتُلَ مُؤْمِنًا إِلَّا خَطَاً وَمَنْ قَتَلَ مُؤْمِنًا خَطَاً فَتَحْرِيرُ رَقَبَةٍ
مُؤْمِنَةٍ وَدِيَّةٌ مُسَلَّمَةٌ إِلَى أَهْلِهِ إِلَّا أَنْ يَصَّدَّقُوا ... (النساء: ٩٢)

It is not for a believer to kill a believer except by mistake; and whoever kills a believer by mistake, he must set free a believing slave and submit compensation (blood money) to the deceased's family unless they remit it... (Q. 4:92).

وَمَنْ يَقْتُلْ مُؤْمِنًا مُتَعَمِّدًا فَجَزَاؤُهُ جَهَنَّمُ خَالِدًا فِيهَا وَغَضِبَ اللَّهُ
عَلَيْهِ وَلَعَنَهُ وَأَعَدَّ لَهُ عَذَابًا عَظِيمًا (النساء : ٩٣)

Whoever kills a believer intentionally, his punishment is hell to live therein forever; and the wrath and the curse of Allah are upon him, and a great punishment is prepared for him. (Q. 4:93)

Aḥnaf ibn Qays narrated: “I went to help that man (i.e., Ali), and on the way I met Abū Bakrah who asked me, ‘Where are you going?’ I replied, ‘I want to help that man’ He said, ‘Go back, for I heard the Prophet saying: “If two Muslims face each other with their swords, (both) the killer and the killed one are in (Hell) Fire”. Abu Bakrah asked” O Messenger of Allah, it is alright for the killer, but what about the killed one?” He said” “The killed one was eager to kill his opponent.” (Bukhārī, vol. 1, *ḥadīth* 30, and vol. 9, *ḥadīth* 114).

Al-Ḥasan narrated that Aḥnaf ibn Qays said: “I went out carrying my arms during the nights of the affliction (i.e., the war between ‘Alī and ‘Ā’ishah) and Abū Bakrah met me and asked, “Where are you going?”, and I replied, “I intend to help the cousin of the Messenger of Allah (i.e., ‘Alī). Abū Bakrah said, “The Messenger of Allah said, ‘If two Muslims take out their swords to fight each other, then both of them will be from amongst the people of Hellfire.’ It was said to the Prophet, ‘It is alright for the killer, but what about the killed one?’ He replied, ‘The killed one

had the intention to kill his opponent.’ (Bukhārī, vol. 9, *ḥadīth* 204). The Prophet had warned us against blood offences. He said:

عَنْ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ قَالَ قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ أَوَّلُ مَا
يُقَضَى بَيْنَ النَّاسِ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ فِي الدِّمَاءِ (رواه مسلم و النسائي)

*‘Abdullah [ibn Mas‘ūd] narrated that the
Messenger of Allah said: "Blood offences are the first
disputes to be judged between the people on
the Day of Resurrection."
(Reported by Muslim and Nasā’ī)*

Conclusion:

If we stick to the teachings of our religion towards our Muslim brothers and sisters (in faith) and treat them like brothers and sisters of the same parents, then the condition of the Muslims world would be much better than what we are having now. Allah said,

إِنَّمَا الْمُؤْمِنُونَ إِخْوَةٌ (الحُجُرَات : ١٠)

The believers are but brothers... ” (Q. 49:10).

The word *إِخْوَةٌ* is used in the Qur’ān for brothers of the same parents, except in this verse, as if we should treat our brothers in faith like our brothers of the same parents. (ANUMA, 25.05.07)

43. MUṢṬAFÁ MAḤMŪD

An Egyptian prolific writer, Muṣṭafá Maḥmūd, wrote more than forty-five books: studies, short stories, plays, travels, and collections of articles. Among his writings is:

حوار مع صديقي الملحدا، الطبعة الأولى (بيروت : دار العودة ، ١٩٧٤)

(“A Dialogue with My Atheistic Friend”)

Dealing with the question raised by those who do not believe in God, *i.e.*, “If God exists, then who creates God?” Muṣṭafá Maḥmūd’s answer can be outlined as follows:

- a. The question itself is wrong, because: 1) the Creator cannot be, at the same time, created; 2) God who created time and space is not subject to them; 3) God who creates the law of causality (قانون السببية) is not subject to it.
- b. Emmanuel Kant (1724-1804 C. E.) himself admitted that reason cannot encompass the infinite truths. Reason in its nature is only capable of perceiving جُزئيات (*juz’iyyāt*, particles), not the absolute existence (الوجود الكلي), the existence of God. Kant asserted further that it is through conscience and not through reason that we perceive God, like the occurrence of thirst indicates the existence of water.
- c. Aristotle (348-322 B.C.) in his sequent digression of causes said that the chair is made of wood, wood is from the tree which, in turn, is from a seed, and the seed is from the farmer, and so on, until this sequence ends with a first mover (*primum mobile*) which does not need a cause. This, according to Muṣṭafá Maḥmūd, is God.²² There are many reasons that lead the atheists to reject the existence of God. One of them is the existence of evil. The atheists contend that since this world is full of evil it cannot be created by a Creator who is Wise, All Knowing, Merciful and Generous. In refuting this statement Muṣṭafá Maḥmūd gives us the following arguments:
 1. Judging a play by watching only one act of it is misleading. A boy will cry when his father takes him to the hospital for operation and will consider it an evil deed. But when the boy grows up he will understand that behind this accidental evilness there is a permanent goodness, for the sake of which forbearance is necessary. Man’s life is in the same way. His life is still going on, and his death does not

²² Muṣṭafá Maḥmūd, (حوار مع صديق المِلحد، الطبعة الأولى (بيروت : دار العودة ، ١٩٧٤)،

unveil the curtain, because the play goes on after his death where there are still other acts. Therefore, a play cannot be judged by witnessing only one act of it, *i.e.*, the presence of evil in this world.

2. Man's personality, character, firmness (صَلَابَة) and determination (عَزْمٌ) are firmly related to his suffering. Without wrong-doing (إِسَاءَة), hurting (أَلَمٌ) and injustice (ظُلْمٌ) there would be no forgiveness, mercy and justice.
3. A thing that seems to be a defect in a partial view is actually a blessing and goodness in the whole sight. It is like what seems to be a dirty spot in a picture looked very closely, while in fact, it is a shadow without which the picture will not appear beautiful. Earthquakes, volcanoes and other natural disasters, in spite of destroying thousands of people, have good function in keeping the balance between the disrupting and boiling inner part of the earth and its stable hard peel. Earthquakes restore mountains to their proper places after they have slowly moved. And mountains are like props protecting the peel of the earth from exploding, due to the hard pressure of the inner part of the earth.
4. Evil is one aspect of the nature of freedom given to man by God. Freedom of will will have no significance if it is exclusively for doing good. Man will become compelled to do good things only. Therefore, doing evil is another aspect of man's freedom of will.
5. Good and evil are two sides of one coin (وَجْهَانِ لِعُمْلَةٍ وَاحِدَةٍ). Flood and wars, for example, are evil on one side, but they mean life on the other. Wars divided people into families, clans, tribes, nations, and finally bring them into one international table in the Security Council of the United Nations. Through scientific research during the war people made discoveries and inventions: penicillin, blood transfusion, atomic energy, rockets, jet engine, submarines, radar, etc.
6. Evil in its pure origin does not exist. There is only lack of goodness, then the lack that accompanies the limitations of man as well as of other creatures. Otherwise, man will become free from defect, and in

urn, will become god, *i.e.*, every man is created to become a god, and this is impossible.²³

Conclusion:

The question of the existence and non-existence of God, good and evil and similar topics are mysteries of life. (ANUMA, 3 March, 2006).

تمت كتابة الجزء الثالث من سلسلة الخطب المختارة
مع بعض التصليحات و التصحيحات
في شهر أكتوبر ٢٠١١ م
و لله الحمد و الشكر.
المؤلف

²³*Idem.* (١٩٧٢)، الله ، الطبعة الأولى (بيروت: دار العودة، ١٩٧٢)، pp. ١١٠-١١٤; see also *idem*, حوار, pp. ٢٠-٢٣.