

02:04

ISSN: 2456-1215

The Indian Journal

of

Arabic and Islamic Studies

(A Quarterly Peer-reviewed Research Journal)

Vol.: 02, Issue: 04 (October-December 2017)

Special Issue

on

Qur'anic Studies-II

The Indian Journal of Arabic and Islamic Studies
Special Issue on **Qur'anic Studies-II**

Maulana Azad Ideal Educational Trust

Bolpur, West Bengal, India (Reg. No. IV01697/14)



The Indian Journal of Arabic and Islamic Studies

(A Quarterly Peer-reviewed Research Journal)

Vol.: 02, Issue: 4 (October-December 2017)

Special Issue

On

Qur'ānic Studies-II

Maulana Azad Ideal Educational Trust

Bolpur, West Bengal, India (Reg. No. IV01697/14)

The Indian Journal of Arabic and Islamic Studies

(A Quarterly Peer-reviewed Research Journal)

Editor: *Dr. Aurang Zeb Azmi*

Advisory Board <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Prof. F. U. Farooqi (Chairperson)2. Dr. Saleh al-Balushi (Vice- Chairperson)3. Dr. Suhail Farooqi (Member)4. Rasha Ali Umer (Member)5. Fatimatuz Zahra (Member)	Review Committee <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Abu Adam Farid bin Abdul Hafiz al-Hindi (Chairperson)2. Purba Banerjee (Vice- Chairperson)3. Dr. Kamal-deen Olawale Sulaiman (Member)4. Dr. Mohammed Fazlullah Shareef (Member)5. Dr. Md. Ashraf Hossain (Member)
Editorial Board <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Prof. (Maj.) N. A. Khan (Editor-in-Chief)2. Dr. Aurang Zeb Azmi (Editor)3. Dr. Heifa Shakri (Assistant Editor)4. Dr. Mohd Moatasim Azmi (Member)5. Dr. Mahfoozur Rahman (Member)	Corresponding Address: <p>The Editor, The Indian Journal of Arabic and Islamic Studies, Maulana Azad Ideal Educational Trust, Bolpur, Birbhum, W B. Pin: 731234 Read online: www.azazmi.com Email Id: aurang11zeb@yahoo.co.in azebazmi@gmail.com Mobile No.: 08010269376</p>
Subscription Rate in India <p>For Individuals Rs. 600 For Libraries Rs. 1000</p>	Subscription Rate for Abroad <p>For Individual USD 100 For Libraries USD 200</p>
Mr. Abdus Sattar printed and published on behalf of <i>Maulana Azad Ideal Educational Trust</i> , Bolpur, Birbhum, West Bengal, Pin: 731204	
The opinions stated or implied in the Journal are those of its contributors and are not necessarily representative of the Trust policy	

Content

<i>Qur'ān and Science:</i>	
○ <i>The Qur'ān and Science: An Appraisal</i> Mohd. Riāz Kirmānī	7
○ <i>Science as a Tool of the Qur'ān in the Third Millennium</i> Prof. 'Abdul 'Alī	32
○ <i>Science in Qur'ānic Perspective</i> Dr. <u>Kh</u> ālīd Mas'ūd	49
○ <i>The Qur'ān's Positive and Holistic Approach on Science</i> 'Abdul Mājīd <u>Kh</u> ān	59
○ <i>The Object of Scientific Pursuit in the Worldview of the Qur'ān</i> Dr. <u>Kh</u> ālīd Mas'ūd	77
○ <i>The Qur'ān and Wildlife Conservation</i> H.S.A. Yaḥyá	88
○ <i>Some Lessons of Technological Development in the Worldview of the Qur'ān</i> Dr. <u>Kh</u> ālīd Mas'ūd	123
○ <i>Human-Body Mechatronic with Concept of Control System in the Light of the Qur'ān</i> Mrs. Tanwīn Moḥammad Ṣalaḥuddīn <u>Ash</u> rafī	132
○ <i>Water in the Light of the Qur'ān and Science</i> Prof. Abū Sufiyān Iṣlāḥī Tr.: <u>Ash</u> ham	143

<i>Qur'ān and Orientalists:</i>	
○ <i>Oriental Studies of the Qur'ān, A Historical Survey</i> Dr. Muḥammad Mohar 'Alī	152
○ <i>Orientalists' Approaches to the Study of the Qur'ānic Texts</i> Dr. Me'rāj Aḥmad Me'rāj	198
○ <i>Assumptions of Orientalists to the Qur'ān</i> Dr. Muḥammad Mahr 'Ali Tr.: Dr. Moḥammad Ajmal	232
○ <i>Qur'ānic Sources and the Orientalists (A Critical Study)</i> Dr. Muḥammad al-Sayyid Rāḍī Jibra'īl Tr.: Dr. Moḥammad Ajmal	271
○ <i>Repetition in the Qur'ān (The Story of Adam and Saturn-A Case Study)</i> Maulānā Abullaith Iṣḥāḥī Nadwī Fāṭimatuz Zahrā'	340
○ <i>The Qur'ān and Sequence of the Prophets' Names</i> Maulānā Abul Laith Iṣḥāḥī Nadwī Tr.: Dr. Rizwān Aḥmad	376
○ <i>The Story of Ibrāhīm in the Qur'ān and Objections of the Orientalists</i> Maulānā Ḍiyā'uddīn Iṣḥāḥī Tr.: Dr. Heifā' Shākri	399
○ <i>Contribution of non-Muslim Indian Scholars to the Qur'ānic Studies</i> Prof. Vazeer Ḥasan	420

○ <i>Munshī Naval Kishore and Printing of the Qur'ān</i>	464
Prof. Md. Sa'ūd 'Ālam Qāsmī	
Tr.: Dr. Aurang Zeb A'ẓmī	

The Qur'ān and Science: An Appraisal

✎...**Mohd. Riāz Kirmānī**¹

There has been a remarkable discussion during the past few decades regarding the problematics of the exegesis of the Qur'ān. The discourse is mostly centred around understanding the kind of relationship between the Qur'ān and science; and whether or not the Qur'ānic ayat pertaining to nature can be understood and explained within the parameters of science. Is there some agreement between the Qur'ānic world-view and the scientific world view? Do we find some points common between the Qur'ānic and Scientific theory of knowledge? Are these both separate and watertight compartments of knowledge or an interaction between them is possible? If yes, on what conditions? Before dealing with all these aspects we shall try to know what the Qur'ān and science basically are? This is significant because a clear conception of the structure and definition of them will sufficiently help us understand the nature of unity and difference between the two.

1- Science and Scientificity:

First of all one should clearly understand what it means when something is claimed to be science or scientific. What is the basic character of a statement that makes it science or scientific? In the light of the English lexicon and the different usages of the word by scientist, four types of meanings of the word science can be understood.

1. Archaic meaning not in use now.
2. Very loose meaning

¹ Editor, Islamic Science, MAAS, 'Aligarh

3. Loose meaning
4. Formal strict meaning

Archaic Meaning of Science:

In ancient days the word was used in the meaning of knowledge. Now this sense is abandoned. Originally the word was scientia in Latin, which became science when transferred to English. In the beginning it gave the sense of knowledge even in English, but later as a result of tremendous growth in empirical knowledge in the west combined with religious intolerance it was claimed that religion and philosophy cannot be science [i.e. knowledge]. Science [knowledge] status can be given only to those beliefs, which depend upon empirical methods.

Very Loose Meaning of Science:

In common language the word science is often used to denote a systematized knowledge. A scientist can use the word in this very loose sense but only unconsciously. Otherwise he never likes to be so simple. Obviously a book of philosophy or religion cannot be supposed to provide science even if it is arranged highly systematically.

Loose Meaning of Science:

Systematic knowledge of nature and physical world is called science. This is the oft-quoted definition of science used and accepted by scientists.

Formal Strict Meaning of Science:

Science is that systematic knowledge of nature and physical world, which is based on observation, experiment and measurement. These are the meaning of science accepted and described by scientists. No other method is acceptable to them as directing towards knowledge.

1:2 What is Scientificity?

In English lexicon we come across four types of the meaning of the word scientific. They are as under.

1. Related to or used in science[e.g. scientific point of view, scientific research, scientific study]
2. Busy in science [e.g. scientific manpower]
3. Verifiable, testable or falsifiable by scientific methods.
4. Correct according to the rules and method of science [e. g. scientific point of view, scientific research, scientific study]

We shall keep this discourse confined to the last two meanings because these two display the basic concepts associated with the words science and scientific. A scientist considers a thing acceptable only when it looks correct according to the method used in science.¹

2. The Qur'ān and 'Ilm:

It is clear from the foregoing that science is in fact a knowledge confined to man' senses and his rational faculties . In contrast to this the Qur'ān claims time and again that it is a book of Allah, the Omniscient and Wise. It is a book of 'ilm, a description of *ḥaq*, a book of guidance. The Qur'ān does not simply claim to be so. But if it says: It is a revelation from (God) Most Gracious, Most Merciful". (Fuṣṣilat: 1-2), it also justifies this claim by saying:

"وَإِنْ كُنْتُمْ فِي رَيْبٍ مِّمَّا نَزَّلْنَا عَلَىٰ عَبْدِنَا فَأْتُوا بِسُورَةٍ مِّمَّنْ لَمِثْلِهِ وَادْعُوا شُهَدَاءَكُمْ مِّنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ ﴿٤٣﴾".

Tr.: And if ye are in doubt to what we have revealed from time to time to our servant then produce a sūrah thereunto; And

1 David B. G Webster's, *New World Dictionary of the American Language* (1978). Also see Colin's *Dictionary of the English Language*, London Collins.

call Your witness or helpers (if there are any) besides God, if your doubts are true. (al-Baqarah: 23)

As a book of knowledge it claims:

"حَمْ ﴿١﴾ تَنْزِيلُ الْكِتَابِ مِنَ اللَّهِ الْعَزِيزِ الْحَكِيمِ ﴿٢﴾".

Tr.: Ḥā Mīm, the revelation of the book is from God, the exalted in power and full of wisdom (al-Aḥqāf: 1-2)

"الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي أَنْزَلَ عَلَى عَبْدِهِ الْكِتَابَ وَلَمْ يَجْعَلْ لَهُ عِوَجًا ﴿١﴾".

Tr.: Praise is to God Who had sent to His servant the book, and allowed there in no crookedness (al-Kahf: 1).

"أَفَلَمْ يَدَّبَّرُوا الْقَوْلَ أَمْ جَاءَهُمْ مِمَّا لَمْ يَأْتِ آبَاءَهُمُ الْأَوَّلِينَ ﴿١٨﴾".

Tr.: Do they not ponder over the word (of God), or has any thing (new) come to them that did not come to their forefathers of old (al-Mu'minūn: 68).

"قَالَ إِنَّمَا الْعِلْمُ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ وَأُبَلِّغُكُمْ مَا أُرْسِلْتُ بِهِءَ".

Tr.: The knowledge is only with God. I proclaim to you the mission on which I have been sent" (al-Aḥqāf: 23)

The Qur'ān as being a book of truth says:

"ذَلِكَ بِأَنَّ اللَّهَ نَزَّلَ الْكِتَابَ بِالْحَقِّ".

Tr.: God sent down the book in truth (al-Baqarah: 176).

"الْحَقُّ مِنْ رَبِّكَ فَلَا تَكُونَنَّ مِنَ الْمُمْتَرِينَ ﴿١٧٧﴾".

Tr.: The truth is from thy Lord so be not at all in doubt" (al-Baqarah: 147).

"فَأَمَّا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا فَيَعْلَمُونَ أَنَّهُ الْحَقُّ مِنْ رَبِّهِمْ".

Tr.: Those who believe know that it is truth from their Lord" (al-Baqarah: 26)

"وَيَرَى الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْعِلْمَ الَّذِي أُنزِلَ إِلَيْكَ مِنْ رَبِّكَ هُوَ الْحَقُّ".

Tr.: And those to whom knowledge has come to see that the (revelation) sent down to thee from your Lord----that is truth" (Saba': 6).

As far as its being a book for action and guidance, the Qur'ān says:

"ذَلِكَ الْكِتَابُ لَا رَيْبَ فِيهِ هُدًى لِّلْمُتَّقِينَ ۝".

Tr.: This is the book; in it is guidance sure, without doubt, to those who fear God" (al-Baqarah: 2).

"وَالْعَصْرِ ۝ إِنَّ الْإِنْسَانَ لَفِي خُسْرٍ ۝ إِلَّا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ وَتَوَاصَوْا بِالْحَقِّ وَتَوَاصَوْا بِالصَّبْرِ ۝".

Tr.: By (the token of) time (through ages) "this book claims" verily man is in loss except such as have faith and do righteous deeds and (join together)in mutual teaching of truth, and of patience and constancy"(al-'Aşr: 1-3).

This claim is not without justification because human history is witness to this fact.

The Qur'ān present signs from within the man and the world around him to emphasize its knowledge status and attracts the common sense of man in this process. But if in spite of this, man does not accept it, it clearly tells the prophet:

"فَذَكِّرْ إِنَّمَا أَنْتَ مُذَكِّرٌ ۝ لَسْتَ عَلَيْهِم بِمُصَيِّرٍ ۝".

Tr.: You are one to admonish, you are not one to manage (men's) affairs" (al-Ghāshiyah:21-22).

For those who differ it says that their difference is not based on any knowledge, they differ only because of envy (Āli 'Imrān: 18-19)

2.1 Qur'ānic Justifications:

The Qur'ān provides justifications to the effect that it is from God based on reality and truth. We can divide these justifications into six types.

1. Internal Consistency:

"أَفَلَا يَتَذَكَّرُونَ الْقُرْآنَ وَلَوْ كَانَ مِنْ عِنْدِ غَيْرِ اللَّهِ لَوَجَدُوا فِيهِ اخْتِلَافًا كَثِيرًا ﴿٨٢﴾".

Tr.: Do they not consider the Qur'ān (with care)? Had it been from other than God, they would surely have found there in much discrepancy" (al-Nisā': 82).

2. Eloquence:

Was the book a handiwork of the Prophet (PBUH) then every Arab could have assembled it with ease. Thus,

"وَإِنْ كُنْتُمْ فِي رَيْبٍ مِمَّا نَزَّلْنَا عَلَىٰ عَبْدِنَا فَأْتُوا بِسُورَةٍ مِثْلِهِ".

Tr.: If you are in doubt as to what We have revealed from time to time to Our servant then produce a surah like thereunto. (al-Baqarah: 23)

3. Life of the Prophet:

"قُلْ لَوْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ مَا تَلَوْتُهُ عَلَيْكُمْ وَلَا أَدْرَبْتُكُمْ بِهِ ۗ فَقَدْ لَبِثْتُ فِيكُمْ عُمُرًا مِّن قَبْلِهِ ۗ أَفَلَا تَعْقِلُونَ ﴿١٦﴾".

Tr.: Say: If God had so willed, I should not have rehearsed it to you, nor would He have made it known to you. A whole lifetime before this have I tarried amongst you: Will you not then understand (Yūnus: 16)

4. Sign of Nature:

"لَوْ كَانَ فِيهِمَا آلِهَةٌ إِلَّا اللَّهُ لَفَسَدَتَا ۗ فَسُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَرْشِ عَمَّا يَصِفُونَ ﴿٢٢﴾".

Tr.: If there were in the heavens and the earth, other gods besides God, there would have been confusion in both" (al-Anbiyā': 22)

"صَرَبَ لَكُمْ مَثَلًا مِّنْ أَنفُسِكُمْ هَلْ لَّكُمْ مِّنْ مَّا مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَانُكُمْ مِّنْ شُرَكَاءَ فِي مَّا رَزَقْنَاكُمْ فَأَنتُمْ فِيهِ سَوَاءٌ تَخَافُونَهُمْ كَخِيفَتِكُمْ أَنفُسَكُمْ كَذَلِكَ نُفَصِّلُ الْآيَاتِ لِقَوْمٍ يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٢٨﴾".

Tr.: He does propound to you a similitude from your own (experience). Do you have partners among those whom your right hands possess, to share as equals in the wealth We have bestowed on you? Do you fear them as ye fear each other? Thus do We explain the signs in detail to a people that understand" (al-Rūm: 28)

"صَرَبَ اللَّهُ مَثَلًا رَّجُلًا فِيهِ شُرَكَاءُ مُتَشَابِهُونَ وَرَجُلًا سَلَمًا لِّرَجُلٍ هَلْ يَسْتَوِيَانِ مَثَلًا الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ بَلْ أَكْثَرُهُمْ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٢٩﴾".

Tr.: God puts forth a parable-A man belonging to many partners at variance with each other and a man belonging entirely to one master: or those two equal in comparison? Praise be to God! But most of them have no knowledge."(al-Zumar: 29)

5. Adjurations:

Oaths and adjuration are one of the often-used methods of justification in the Holy Qur'ān. Some of these oaths provide direct evidence in favour of the message while others indirectly indicate that the message is true. The following oaths give direct evidence of the truth contained in the Qur'ān.

"يس ﴿١﴾ وَالْقُرْءَانَ الْحَكِيمِ ﴿٢﴾ إِنَّكَ لَمِنَ الْمُرْسَلِينَ ﴿٣﴾".

Tr.: Yā Sīn, by the Qur'ān full of wisdom, you are indeed one of the apostles" :(Yāsīn: 1-3)

"لَا أُقْسِمُ بِهَذَا الْبَلَدِ ﴿١﴾ وَأَنْتَ حِلٌّ بِهَذَا الْبَلَدِ ﴿٢﴾ وَوَالِدٍ وَمَا وَلَدَ ﴿٣﴾ لَقَدْ خَلَقْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ فِي كَبَدٍ ﴿٤﴾".

Tr.: I do call to witness this city. And you are a free man of this city. And parent and child. Verily We have created man into

toil and struggle” (al-Balad: 1-4).

"وَالْعَصْرِ ۝ إِنَّ الْإِنْسَانَ لَفِي خُسْرٍ ۝ إِلَّا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ وَتَوَاصَوْا بِالْحَقِّ وَتَوَاصَوْا بِالصَّبْرِ ۝".

Tr.: By (the token of) time (through ages), verily man is in loss, except such as have faith and do righteous deeds and (join together) in the mutual teaching of truth and of patience and constancy” (al-‘Aṣr: 1-3)

6. Experiment:

Generally; we find rational arguments in the Qur’ān; these too on common sense level. The Qur’ān does not generally favour the attitude of showing by demonstration. However, at two places the importance and significance of experimentation is not only implicit but actual experiment has been set up as described in the Holy text. Once as given in al-Baqarah (2:259) a man was kept dead for hundred years in response to his question. During this period his donkey also died, degenerated and decayed and only its bones remained aloof. But his water and food were kept preserved. When he breathed again after hundred years, his donkey was given flesh and skin before his eyes. Thus he was made a sign.

Another event is related to the prophet Ibrāhīm who requested Allah to show how the dead ones will regain life. An experiment with four birds was suggested to the prophet but before that he was asked, “If he believes not”. The prophet (PBUH) aptly responded, (قَالَ بَلَىٰ وَرَبِّكَ لَيَظْمِنَنَّ قَلْبِي) (Tr.: of course I believe but it is for a bit of satisfaction of his own understanding” (al-Baqarah: 260). The conversation at this occasion points to the fact that Allah does not like the attitude of making observations and experiments in matters of the unseen world. On the other hand,

it also becomes explicit that in addition to *Īmān* and '*Aql* the observation and experimentation is also significant source of satisfaction. And these are the occasions when man is open to the danger of limiting the domains of knowledge to the material and sensual world. Scientist have actually done it. They rejected supernatural sources and methods of knowing and developed a unique methodology for science and limited the concept of the entire world in to the narrow confine of nature. The reality thus skipped from their vision because the only method for its search in their view was the scientific method. Contrary to this, the *Qur'ān* first tells about reality and then provides evidences of the reality from the very world around man.

2.2 Scientific World-view and Method:

Scientific world-view is limited to its concept of nature. In contrast to it the concept of *fiṭrat* in the *Qur'ān* is all – comprehensive including the supernatural aspects, which have nothing to do with the scientific concept of the nature. Scientific world – views is supposed complete even though it is confined to the material, mechanistic, sensible and physical world. But in reality this world view will remain incomplete so long as supernatural realities remain unacceptable to science. Thus Bacon, Descartes and Galileo despite believing in God did not consider divine guidance to be necessary for understanding the world. For them the science developed as a result of ratiocination of sense perception and experiment was complete in itself. They Encyclopedia Britannica reveals about Bacon, Descartes and Galileo as follows:

“In spite of their difference in style and contribution, these three prophets shared a common commitment about the natural world and its study. Nature itself was seen by them as devoid of spiritual and human properties. There could be no

dialogue with it, whether using mystical illumination or inspired authority”.¹

This is the point that makes science rebellious of revelation and religion and cultivates an attitude of expediting religious realities according to its own vindictive analysis. Even though the Qur’ān clearly looks supporting all the positive aspects of scientific method and as such it invites to ponder upon, study and try to understand the world and find its secrets; yet it explicitly tells many secrets beforehand. Then it claims to humanity that if man gives sound thought to the world there can be no reasonable ground for rejecting the revealed truth. Science is strictly against approving anything a prior and thus likes to keep objectivity on the top. As a result, though it is successfully studying the cause effect relationship in nature, it is considerably lacking in the knowledge of religion and God. This hindrance is prominent not only in matters of religion but also when science could grow using Cartesian, Newtonian and Galilic principle to the extent of studying the secrets of space, the Newtonian laws failed. Then Einstein had to seek help from relativistic world view and he developed the general and special theory of relativity.

Methodological failure of science is manifest in its history that begins with the search of truth. Beginning from the period of Descartes to that of Karl Popper the scientists are found engaged in stipulating rules to judge the truth of scientific theories by empirical method. Thus the positivists search for the criteria of verification,² collection of evidences favouring the principal of induction,³ logical empiricism,⁴

¹ Encyclopedia Britannica, “Science History of”--The prophet of revolution in the seventeenth century vol. 16.P. 370 (1982)

² Ibid vol. 14, P. 877; vol,16. PP.375-393.

³ Ibid vol. 16. PP. 375-393

⁴ Ibid vol. 14.P. 879 vol. 16, PP. 375-393

linguistic analysis¹ and finally the principal of falsification²-all were explicated to know the truth content of these scientific theories.

Interestingly enough the entire discourse ended in skepticism in the methodology itself, which is implicit in the discussions of Popper. Thus according to him instead of collecting empirical evidence to prove a theory to be true, experiments should be conducted to falsify the theory. And to keep any scientific theory free from metaphysical contents it should be falsifiable from the present laboratory or observational equipments.³ Lauden aptly puts the fact that now science, instead of being an activity of finding the truth, has become a problem – solving activity.⁴ By problem solving it is meant that the data may somehow become explainable. The theory itself is true or not has no importance. However, the theory should be testable or falsifiable by available means of observation and experimentation. When search of truth became obsolete, Feyerabend had to claim anything goes'.⁵

In the light of the foregoing survey of scientific methodology it might be clearly understood that now science has nothing to do with truth. The only important point is that the facts are explained by empirical and inductive methods and that there be no metaphysical contents in scientific explanations because the methodology acceptable to science has nothing to do with metaphysics.

¹ Ibid vol. 14, P. 882. vol. 16. PP. 375-393

² Popper, K.R. "Logic of scientific Discovery" Hutchinson & Co. (1980)

³ Ibid –chapter 1-3

⁴ Lauden, L. "Progress and Problems: Towards a theory of Scientific Growth", University of California Press (1977)

⁵ Feyerabend, P. "Against Method: Outline of an Anarchistic Theory of knowledge", Introduction and chapter 1, Verso, London (1982)

2.3 The Qur'ān and Scientificity:

Before we discuss on the subject of scientific exegesis of the Qur'ān it is better to have a look on what possible meanings may involve in declaring scientificity for the Qur'ān. For a statement to be scientific, as we have already expressed, it is necessary that the statement should be verifiable, testable or falsifiable by scientific methodology or it should look correct according to it. Thus we can certainly claim the following:

1. The Qur'ān cannot be claimed to be scientific even if we naively define science as systematic knowledge because the knowledge in the Qur'ān has not been systematically arranged.
2. Both the general and particular statements of the Qur'ān pertaining to the unseen (al- Ghaib) are unscientific.
3. The general statements of the Qur'ān like those of science cannot be judged for truth by scientific method.
4. Claiming for scientificity of certain āyāt of the Qur'ān because they belong to a subject of scientific interest is naïve scientificity.
5. The verifiable, testable, falsifiable, or verified particular statements of the Qur'ān are scientific but the application of falsifiability principle on the Qur'ān is a mean idea.

2.4 Scientificity of Qur'ān Misunderstood:

The word science as it is understood is neither a synonym of philosophy nor it is a branch of the latter. It stands unique and distinct from philosophy. Philosophy was used to be a comprehensive subject including metaphysics, physics (today's science), mathematics, biology, sociology, etc. Muslims accepted the comprehensive view of knowledge and added the Qur'ān and Sunnah in the contemporary system of knowledge. The European thinkers, however, extradited in the name of science all knowledge but physics, mathematics, biology, and the like. Thus

science denouncing all philosophical and metaphysical beliefs as non- science (no knowledge) rejected them out of the knowledge domain. Consequently, science, philosophy, metaphysics, religion etc. came into existence as separate domains. Now the claim of scientificity about any statement exterminates it from philosophy and metaphysics. Compared to it, the metaphysical or philosophical status of a statement makes it unscientific.

Keeping this fact in view an ayah of the Qur'ān can either be scientific or philosophical not both at once. Thus the claim for scientificity of an ayah of the Qur'ān is simultaneously a claim for rejecting the philosophical and metaphysical import of the ayah. First of all it no more remains an ayah (sign) of Allah because He is purely a metaphysical existence. Even if Allah has been explicitly referred to in the ayah the attention is focused simply on that aspect which is apparently scientific. Let us have a look, for example, into the following ayah of surah Mu'minūm:

"ثُمَّ خَلَقْنَا النُّطْفَةَ عَلَقَةً فَخَلَقْنَا الْعَلَقَةَ مُضْغَةً فَخَلَقْنَا الْمُضْغَةَ عِظْمًا فَكَسَوْنَا الْعِظْمَ لَحْمًا ثُمَّ
أَنشَأْنَاهُ خَلْقًا آخَرَ فَتَبَارَكَ اللَّهُ أَحْسَنُ الْخَالِقِينَ ﴿١٤﴾".

Tr.: Then We made the sperm into a clot of congealed blood: Then of that clot We made a (foetus) lump; then We made out of that lump bones and clothed the bones with flesh; then We developed out of it another creature. So blessed be God; the best to create (al-Mu'minūn: 14)"

Perhaps this ayah has attracted the attention of a large number of biologists and scientific studies of this ayah are on record in numerous books.¹ The idea of the ayah being scientific is explicit

¹ Keith, L.M. "The Developing Human with Islamic Notes from Al-Zindani, S.A.M. "Darul Qibla, Jeddah (1983). Also see. Bucaille Maurice. "The Bible, The Qur'ān and Science, Aligarh Crescent Publications (1978) and M. Moin Farooqui "Early Stages of Human Development in the Light of the Qur'ān, Hadith and Science. Jr. Islamic Science 8(2) PP. 37-53, MASS, Aligarh (1992).

as the subject of the ayah relates to biology. And because the physical facts described in the ayah are particular, they are scientific not only in being verifiable, testable or falsifiable but also in the sense that they have been verified by scientific methods. Notwithstanding this the claim for its scientificity per se is naïve because the facts have not been described in the ayah as purely natural events but they have been connected to the implicit words (We did)all this. Obviously a statement telling us that a natural phenomenon has been caused by a supernatural being cannot be a scientific statement.

One can say that many scientists believe in God. Descartes, Galileo, Newton, Darwin and Einstein are known as believers. One can also say with the same vigour that these scientists despite being believers did not consider God significant in understanding nature. Prof. 'Abdus Salām's quotation about Einstein is an eye-opener regarding his concept of God.¹

"Einstein has this to say: "I am satisfied with the mystery of the eternity of life and with the awareness and a glimpse of the marvelous structure of the existing world, together with the devoted striving to comprehend a portion, be it ever so tiny of the reason that manifests itself in nature ---(But) I cannot conceive of a God who rewards and punishes His creatures, or has a will of the kind that we experience in our self---. The existence and validity of human rights are not written in the stars". Instead his belief was that "the ideals concerning the conduct of man towards each other and the desirable structure of the community have been conceived and taught by enlightened individuals in the course of history"

We have discussed above that Descartes, Galileo and Newton did not believe in revelation despite believing in God. The

¹ Abdus Salam, "Scientific Thinking between Secularization and the Transcendent. An Islamic Viewpoint. Jr. Islamic Science 5 (1) P. 140 (1989).

situation after 350 years of scientific growth has not ameliorated but instead has become even more aggravated and grim.

According to 'Abdus Salām again:¹

“Newton had, infact, spoken on the constant intervention of God, the creator of a world whose activity He unceasingly nourished. Newton accused Leibniz of reducing God to the status of a Deus otiosus, an ideal king, who after a once and for all act of creation retires from the stage. In classical science dominated by the notion of the possibility of an omniscient power indifferent to the passage of time, Leibniz view prevailed”.

The learned audience may well conceive that by the time of Einstein the concept of God was replaced by Reason explicit in the world. It is not a God as conceptualized in religion. He neither punishes nor rewards, neither did he command rights and duties nor fixed a course of life for men. However, He does not play the dice.²

Ladies and Gentlemen! The discussion so far never means that Muslims should become skeptic and disregard science. Instead my purpose is to clearly enlighten about an aspect of science to develop an urge for safety in Muslim Ummah against scientism or scientific zeal. I believe I am a bit successful in my humble attempt but I don't like to stay here. As there is another face of science which if enlighten according to the guidelines provided by the Holy Qur'ān, it can function as a stream of Divine virtues.

¹ Ibid- PP. 134-135

² These are the famous words of Einstein. When Heisenberg was developing his concept of probability to understand Quantum Mechanics, Einstein uttered the same words and repeated them on several platforms. During developing a feasible concept of light the problem whether the light is composed of particles or waves was discussed. Heisenberg believed that both are equally probable. The experimenter, somehow, participates in the experiment so that if he sets experiment keeping in view of the particle nature results obtained most probably display the particle nature of the light. Contrast to it, if the experiment is done to test the wave nature. Einstein was not ready to accept it. That is why he used to say: God does not play the dice.

This is possible if we begin with the Qur'ānic worldview instead of the scientific world-view, consider the Qur'ānic methodology as the source of knowledge instead of confirming to the scientific methodology and finally we follow the Qur'ānic epistemology instead of the strangulated scientific epistemology. According to the Qur'ān 'ilm begins with īmān whose foundation is tauḥīd. If the Qur'ān discuss tauḥīd, the signs (*āyāt*) in its favour are spread throughout the world.

2.5 Īmān and 'Ilm:

Though in Arabic lexicon the word Īman means to accept one's statement as true, here we are using this word as a religious term. In religious terms it means to accept the Prophet's teachings as true. As we are discussing on the Qur'ān we mean by Īmān here as to believe in the Qur'ān, i.e. to consider every statement of the Qur'ān as true. In this particular sense a believer in the message of the Qur'ān is simultaneously the knower of the message. He knows the message at least on common sense level. The Companions of the Prophet, for example, knew about Allah, His throne, kursi, seven heavens, man and his status on the earth,¹ angels,² jinns,³ effect of mountains,⁴ and that the heavens were sometime nebular,⁵ heavens and earth were sometime close Allah opened them later⁶ etc, at least as much as these were described in the Qur'ān. Their knowledge was based on two factors. One that the

¹ The Qur'ān II:30 That is the main is *Khalīfah* on the earth.

² That is they are not simply the energy bonds but they are conscious, living creatures of Allah and never disobey His command.

³ That is they are conscious, living creatures compose of fire and having a will of their own. Therefore, they can go against Allah's commands. And that Iblīs belonged to this group.

⁴ That Allah (SWT) laid mountains to protect the earth from quakes (XXXI:10)

⁵ The Qur'ān -(XLI:9-12).

⁶ The Qur'ān- (XXI:30)

messages of the Qur'ān are true and the other because they believed in the message to be true. There are two essential features of knowledge. One is that the statement is true and the other that man considers is true. Thus the Companions of the Prophet and those after them who understandingly recited the ayah "He set on the earth mountains standing firm, lest it should shake with you" (Luqmān: 10) knew about this effect of mountains only because of Īmān.

Despite this fact one may also claim in scientific enthusiasm that:

"Until after 13 hundred years of the revelation of the Qur'ān the human treasure of knowledge was not acquainted with this effect of mountains. But now geography has come to know it and in modern geographic terms it is called isotacy"¹

It is worthy of mention in this context that revelation also gives man knowledge provided that he is believer. 'Ilm is not confined to science but revealed message also has the status of knowledge.²

"فَأَمَّا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا فَيَعْلَمُونَ أَنَّهُ الْحَقُّ مِنْ رَبِّهِمْ".

Tr.: Those who believe know that it is truth from their Lords. (al-Baqarah: 26)

2.6 Observation, Experience and 'Ilm

"وَلَا تَقْفُ مَا لَيْسَ لَكَ بِهِ عِلْمٌ إِنَّ السَّمْعَ وَالْبَصَرَ وَالْفُؤَادَ كُلُّ أُولَئِكَ كَانَ عَنْهُ مَسْئُولًا".

Tr.: And peruse not that of which thou hast no knowledge, for every act of hearing or of seeing or of (feeling) in the heart will be enquired in to (al-Isrā': 36)

¹ Wahiduddin Khan, *Ilm-i-Jadīd Ka Challenge* Hindustan Publications (1964) P. 176.

² M. Riaz Kirmani, "Īmān, 'Ilm and the Qur'ān", *Jr. Islamic Science* 7 (2) P. 7-18.

The word *sam'a* (hearing) in the ayah cannot be taken just in the scientific sense of a category of perception there by justifying in favour of scientific methodology. Instead the word *sam'a* in this ayah directs us to pay heed to the revealed message, *baṣar* emphasizes observation and *fu'ād* means to collate information obtained through the two sources and develop reason based on this fundamental information. The Qur'ān has repeatedly directed man to think on the creation but the Qur'ānic methodology is never confined to the scientific methodology; revelation is an essential part of the former. Thus whatever we obtain through revelation, observation, experimentation and experience has to be collated in the Qur'ānic methodology to seek intelligence and wisdom. If the world is studied with this methodology and the knowledge thus obtained, is developed in correspondence with the Qur'ānic world-view then it is highly appreciable, significant and inevitable for establishing man's *khilāfah* on the earth. When believers are admonished with the signs of their Lord, either mentioned in the Qur'ān or scattered around in nature, they drop not down at them as if they were deaf or blind (see al-Furqān: 73). Instead the attitude of the knower is that when the Qur'ān is recited to them they fall down on their faces in humble prostration and they say: (سُبْحٰنَ رَبِّنَا اِنْ كَانَ)
 ﴿وَعُدُّ رَبَّنَا لَمُفْعُولًا﴾ 'Glory to our Lord! Truly has the promise of our Lord been fulfilled (See: al-Isrā': 107-108)

The Qur'ānic method of knowledge after all, is that man should accept revelation, sense, perception, experiment and experience and derive inferences after giving deep thought to and interaction between all of these. It is this methodology on the basis of which a balanced unity between the Qur'ān and science can be expected. The tremendous work produced on the subject of Qur'ān and science is a reflection of this unity.

Scientific commentaries of the Qur'ān are in fact grounded in the possibility of this unification.

3. Scientific interpretation of the Qur'ān:

Islamic thinkers are found divided into two groups regarding the scientific interpretation of the Qur'ān. One group goes against the scientific commentaries of the verses of the Qur'ān pertaining to nature. Chief among them are Dr Amīn kholi,¹ Dr. Ays^ha 'Abdul Raḥmān, Bint Asshati,² Dr Zahbi,³ Imām Sh^hāṭibī,⁴ The other group favours scientific commentary. To this group belong Sir Syed Aḥmed Kh^hān,⁵ Sh^heikh 'Abduh,⁶ Rashīd Riḍā,⁷ Syed 'Abul A'lā Maudūdī.⁸ Mohd Sh^hahābuddīn Nadwī,⁹ Dr. Fandi,¹⁰ and Dr. Haluk Nurbaki.¹¹ The first group brings its own arguments, the counterarguments are produced by the other group. Let us try to understand the nature of the discourse by the studying the argument of each group.

¹ Karem, S. Ghoneim, "Ayat-i-kā'ināt ki Sciency Tashrīḥ Ayat 1 (1) P. 13.

² Ays^ha 'Abdul Raḥmān Bint as-Sh^hāṭī, "Al-Qur'ān wa Tafsīr al'Aṣr, "Dārul Ma'ārif, Egypt (1970).

³ Mohd Ḥusain Dhahbi- "Al-Ittijāhāt al-Munḥarifah fī Tafsīr il-Qur'ān il-Karīm, "Dārul E'tisām, Egypt (1978)

⁴ Karim, S. Ghoneim, Op.cit.P. 13.

⁵ Sir Syed Aḥmed Kh^hān- Tafsīr ul-Qur'ān wa Huwal-Hudá wal-Furqān"- Khudā Bakhsh Oriental Public Library Patna (1995)

⁶ For the openions of Sh^haikh 'Abduh see – Charls, C. Adam, "Islam and Modernism In Egypt" (London 1933) PP. 04-74; Hourani, "Arabic Thought" PP. 130-60. Also see Rashīd Riḍā, note 30 below:

⁷ Rashīd Riḍā "Tārīkh ul Ustād al-Sh^heikh Mohd 'Abduh" Cairo (1907)

⁸ Syed 'Abul A'lā Maudūdī, "Tafhīm ul- Qur'ān", Markazi Maktaba Islami, Delhi.

⁹ Mohd Sh^hahābuddīn Nadwī, "Qur'ān, Science our Musalmān" Furqāni Academy Trust Bangalore, Also see his Qur'ān Majīd our Dunyā'-i-Ḥayāt". "Chānd kī Taskhīr Qur'ān Majīd our Dunyā'-i Ḥayāt", "Chand kī Taskhīr Qur'ān kī Nazar main".

¹⁰ Mohd Jamāluddīn Fandi, "At Tafsīr ul -Islāmī Kuwait Vol.17(11)1981. Also see "Supreme Council of Islamic Affairs" (1961)

¹¹ Haluk Nurbaki, "Verses from the Holy Qur'ān and the Facts of Science" Tr. by Metin Beynan- Indus Publications Corporations, Karachi. The Urdu translation of the work is also available.

First Argument:

The opponents' first argument is that: The Qur'ān is in the language of the people who lived the first order generation. Therefore, it is incumbent upon us to follow the understanding of the people of that period. It is because they knew their language best and had a deeper understanding of the meanings of the words. The proponents counter this argument by raising two points.

1. The Qur'ān has come to guide people till the end of the world; for the civilization then present and also for those to come in future. Consequently, if some people could not get into the meaning of a certain ayah the other people may succeed.
2. One of the factors of the miraculous nature of the Qur'ān is that numerous levels of meaning are implicit in its language. These meanings unfold with the growth of knowledge and technology.

Second Argument:

The opponents of scientific interpretation put their second argument as follows: The Qur'ān is book of guidance for people; it does not teach us about physical science, natural studies, research and inventions. But this argument is only partly correct. It is because the Qur'ān is a guiding book not only with its commands but also with sincere thought on unique and mysterious works of Allah. Thus the Qur'ān itself invites people to ponder upon the mysteries of nature. If thinking on these mysteries on the common sense level may inculcate pioussness, more detailed study of the splendours explicit in the world will surely help grow piety.

Third Argument:

One more argument put forward by the opponents is that whatever is claimed to be a truth in science is often a set of

hypotheses and theories which change with further growth in science. The proponents counter this argument by saying that many theories do not change but, in contrast, they often prove to be true. For example the theory of the gravitational force, the cellular theory of living beings or the process of cell division, etc.-all these were put forward as theories but now have become fundamental truths of science. In the light of these arguments we can derive that there can be a conditioned permission of commenting upon the Qur'ān in the light of modern knowledge.

The following conditions are worth mentioning:

1. First of all one should make use of the traditional commentaries, such as Tafsīr Ibn Jarīr, Tafsīr Baiḍāwī, Tafsīr Ibn Kathīr, Tafsīr Alūsī, Tafsīr Shaiḫul Hind Maḥmūd al-Ḥasan, Bayān al-Qur'ān, Ma'ārif al-Qur'ān, Tafhīm-ul-Qur'ān, Tadabbur-i-Qur'ān and Fi Zilāl al-Qur'ān.
2. Expertise in assisting knowledge like the knowledge of Arabic lexicon, usage of the Qur'ānic words in pre-Islamic Arabic poetry.
3. Arguments based on proven scientific truths.
4. Keeping in view the various meanings of a word.
5. Keeping in view the context of the Qur'ān.
6. Following the rules of interpretation.

A careless following of these rules always leads to a mistaken interpretation. Scientific interpretations are often engrossed with these mistakes. I believe that such examples and many good models of scientific interpretation of the Qur'ān will be openly put forward and discussed during the three-day seminar. To conclude this address I beg your permission to discuss the interpretation of an important ayah of the Qur'ān:

"أَوَلَمْ يَرَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا أَنَّ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ كَانَتَا رَتْقًا فَفَتَقْنَاهُمَا^ط وَجَعَلْنَا مِنَ الْمَاءِ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ حَيًّا أَفَلَا يُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿٣٠﴾".

Tr.: Do not the unbeliever see that the heavens and the earth were joined together (as one unit of creation), before We clove them asunder? We made from water every living thing? Will they not then believe? (al-Anbiyā': 30)"

There has been a difference of opinion from the very beginning of its interpretation. Ibn-i-'Abbās (MABPWH) says: "Heavens were close, i.e there was no rain. The earth was close, i.e there was no vegetation. Allah opened the heavens through rain drops and the earth through vegetation growth".¹ Hasan and Qatādah say: Heavens and earth were close to each other. Allah created distance between them by filling air in between".² Maudūdī opines in the light of modern studies "These words apparently mean that the creation was initially like a homogenous mass. Afterward it was differentiated to form the earth and other heavenly bodies.³ Shabbīr Othmānī nicely collates all these interpretation. He says:

"The real meaning of *ratq* is to join and enter into each other. In the beginning both the earth and the heavens were intermingled together in the darkness of nothingness. Then in the initial period of existence also they were intermixed. Later, the Divine power separated them. After that the layers for each were differentiated. Yet they were close with no rain from above and no vegetation from below. Finally, Allah opened the gullets of both for the benefit of mankind. Water receded from above and the earth split from below. Finally,

¹ Mohd 'Alī As-Ṣābūnī' Ṣafwat at-Tafsīr' 2, P. 261.

² Ibid.

³ Abul A'lá Maudūdī, Tafhīmul Qur'ān' 3, P. 156, N. 28.

Allah opened the gullets of both for the benefit of mankind. Water receded from above and the earth split from below. Allah brought out springs, rivers, mines and numerous greeneries from the earth and decorated the heavens with stars each having separate orientation and orbit.”¹

These four interpretation of one single ayah clearly point to the fact that the scholars of each period have made use of the knowledge and experience of the period in understanding the Qur’ān. If it is done by keeping in view all the rules, some good results are always expected. In contrast to this if scientism becomes the rule I am afraid one can find atom, hydrogen, rotation and sphericity of the earth and even chlorophyll in the Qur’ān. Astonishingly a Darwinian animal may also be conceived out of the holy text by those Qur’ānic scientists who try to prove the text through scientist bent. The meaning of *naml*, *hudhud*, *jinn*s, *malā’ikah* and also the miracles may be made out of context. Everything of science thought in vanity can be proved by the Qur’ān, and science can even be made yardstick to measure the truth of the Qur’ān.

We have provided four interpretation of the above ayah. First of these dates back to the first order interpreters because Ibn-i-‘Abbās (MABPWH) is a companion of the Prophet. We consider this interpretation best of all because in it the entire text of the ayah has been kept in view. In fact just after referring to *ratq* and *fatq* it is said, “We made from water every living thing”. Therefore Ibn-i-‘Abbās (MABPWH) said: “Heavens were close, i.e. there was no vegetation. Allah opened the heavens through rain drops and the earth through vegetative growth”

¹ Maḥmūd-ul-Ḥasan and Shabbīr Othmānī ‘Al-Qur’ān al-Karīm wa Tarjamat Ma’ānīhi wa Tafsīrih ilal Lughatil Urdīyyah, Saudi’ Arabiyyah, P. 324, N. 5.

In this interpretation the part of the ayah “We made from water every living thing” has been fully kept in mind.

Ḥasan and Qatādah belong to the second order of interpreters because they are the disciples of the companions (MABPWT) of the prophet (PBUH). In their interpretation *rataq* connotes the heavens and earth were joined together and *fatq* means their separation. Though these meanings are quite different from those followed by Ibn-i-‘Abbās (MABPWH), they are, nevertheless, correct according to the Arabic lexicon. But the separation of heavens and earth through the creation of air in between cannot be derived from the ayah itself. Moreover one complete ayah divides into two separate parts. One related to *rataq* and *fatq* and the other related to the creation of living beings out of water. In this way both the processes become unrelated to each other while the ayah describes them together. However, this interpretation provides basis for modern scientific theory of the Big – Bang even though in the period of these interpreters there was no existence of this scientific theory and both of them were not scientist in modern sense of the word.

Maudūdī follows Ḥasan and Qatādah but with the difference that he knew about Bing-Bang and he interpreted under the influence of this theory. Shabbīr Othmānī’s commentary is, though a good model of eloquence and comprehensiveness that includes metaphysics, philosophy and science, and it has a beauty in itself, yet in the ayah under consideration there is neither a reference to the darkness of nothingness, nor to the theory of the Big-Bang , mines , stars and their movements.

Let us say that despite all the four interpretations being correct as to the lexicon and to the entire wealth of human beliefs and knowledge, the interpretation of Ibn-i-‘Abbās (MABPWH) is most concise and beautiful because in it the lexicon as well as the internal witness of the ayah has been fully taken care of and nothing extra has been said. Moreover,

the idea of opening and closing of heavens and earth presented by him is a common experience at each cycle of the season. Another attractive feature of this interpretation is that it is traceable back to the origin of the heavens and the earth. We know in the light of scientific research that the earth was sometime a fireball that cool down slowly. Its water encapsulated it in the form of clouds, frost, smoke or vapours did not rain down because of high temperatures.

Thus there was no life on the earth. It means that the sky as well as the earth were close. When the temperature lowered down to a considerable level the water started precipitating and rain down in huge amounts for a long time. It means that the sky was opened. Consequently the oceans, lakes and ponds came into existence. When the earth was fully saturated it was also opened for breath and cleft for vegetation so that the plants and trees grew, eels crawled and a number of animals hopped and jumped. Ibn-i-'Abbās was not a scientist albeit his interpretation is capable of comprehending the above scientific theory.

Scholars having scientific interest should try to judge whether the interpretation based on the Big-Bang is better or that which was put forward by Ibn-i-'Abbās (MABPWH).

Forget for a moment that Ibn-i-'Abbās (MABPWH) was a companion of the prophet to keep justice with the process of knowledge and search for a proper answer to my question : one interpretation enlightens us about only one aspect of the ayah, the interpretation explains both the aspects, while both interpretations are in accordance with separate scientific theories. Which interpretation is a better alternative in this situation? Should every new scientific theory (Big-Bang here) be always more attractive than the old theory (as per description) for making use of in the interpretation of the Qur'ān?

Science as a Tool of the Qur'ān in the Third Millennium

✎...Prof. 'Abdul 'Alī¹

At the very outset I would like to stress the point that both revelation and science are important sources of knowledge and wisdom. While revealed knowledge that emanates from Allah is in its perfect form, knowledge arrived at through science cannot be said to be so. Since science has its own limitations, there is always some scope for improvement, even change in it. Nevertheless, thanks to the centuries of efforts made by mankind, it has made marvelous discoveries and inventions, and broadened man's intellectual horizons in almost all fields of human activity.

The importance of science as an effective and fruitful tool for further exploration of the scientific foundations and signs of the Qur'ān lies in the fact that the Book itself is a wonderful blend of faith and reason, religion and philosophy. This point of its comprehensiveness is clearly reflected by the Qur'ānic verse:

"شَهْرُ رَمَضَانَ الَّذِي أُنزِلَ فِيهِ الْقُرْآنُ هُدًى لِّلنَّاسِ وَبَيِّنَاتٍ مِّنَ الْهُدَىٰ وَالْفُرْقَانِ فَمَن شَهِدَ
مِنكُمُ الشَّهْرَ فَلْيَصُمْهُ وَمَن كَانَ مَرِيضًا أَوْ عَلَىٰ سَفَرٍ فَعِدَّةٌ مِّنْ أَيَّامٍ أُخَرَ يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ بِكُمُ الْيُسْرَ
وَلَا يُرِيدُ بِكُمُ الْعُسْرَ وَلِتُكْمِلُوا الْعِدَّةَ وَلِتُكَبِّرُوا اللَّهَ عَلَىٰ مَا هَدَيْكُم وَلَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُونَ ﴿١٨٥﴾"

Tr.: The Qur'ān was revealed in the month of Ramaḍān as a guidance for mankind along with clear proofs in support of its being a guidance as well as the criterion of right and wrong.²

¹ Professor, Department of Islamic Studies, 'Alīgarh Muslim University, 'Alīgarh

² Al-Baqarah: 185

It is evident from the above that when we approach the Qur'ān with our faith in it as a source of guidance, we are in the realm of faith. But when we investigate in its proofs of its being the guidance, we deal with science. Hence, science, which involves pursuit of knowledge concerned with the physical world and its phenomena, can play an important role in not only aiding our understanding of the Qur'ān but also in depending our faith in its miraculous nature and divine origin to the level of yaqīn (firm faith), a precondition for believers to get inspired to present themselves as a model community on earth, enjoining right conduct and forbidding indecency.¹

It is important to note in this context that both the Qur'ān and the Sunnah of Prophet Muḥammad (PBUH), who has been rightly described by the Muslim 'ulamā' (scholars) as the Qur'ān in action, are full of exhortation for cultivation of scientific knowledge. There can be no denying the fact that the Qur'ān inspired man to unravel the secrets of nature more than any other school of thought could do with the two fold purpose of doing welfare to humanity at large as well as making him believe in the existence of Almighty Allah, because the more he knows about the universe, the more conscious he is likely to become of the creator of the universe, provided he is equipped with a sound power.²

The rational approach adopted by the greatest Muslim thinker of pre-modern India Shāh Walī'ullāh (1703-1762 AD) of Delhi in his interpretation of Islamic Sharī'at (law) and scripture has also got a special significance and relevance in this context. As propounded by him, all the commands are based on reason as

¹ Āli 'Imrān:110

² For details see the book *Arab-Islamic Legacy to Life Science* by 'Abdul 'Alī, Delhi, 1993, PP. 1-11.

well as designed to promote human welfare. He illustrated his standpoint in this regard by supporting and corroborating whatever premises he founded on the rulings of the Qur'ān with evidences provided by reason and empirical observation, thereby implying that there exists no conflict or contradiction between revelation, reason and empirical observation. That way he gave to the world a non-theological, secular foundation for the understanding and interpretation of the religious text of Islam.

While introducing the element of rational thought in his interpretation of the scriptures, he also gave an emutable method of curbing the growth of free thought in Islam by holding that reason by itself is not competent enough to interfere or tamper with any of the commands of *Sharī'at*, as they are all based on reason, irrespective of whether or not one understands the real motives of them. He further elaborated this point, saying:

“One must obey them as they are, because the vision of the Prophet was decided deep and higher than the vision of any of us, and his vision was brightened by Divine illumination. It is like a medicine, the real values of which are known only to the physician. If the sick person knows them, well and good; but if he does not know, he should not in any way worry over it. In fact if the medicine is used according to the instructions of the physician, he would be cured; otherwise he would suffer and meet death.”¹

Further, through this discipline of rational interpretation of scriptures one can also become a believer on the basis of a clear evidence from his Lord like the one who is informed by a truthful person that poison is lethal, and he takes him to be

¹ Fazle Maḥmūd, *A Study of Life and Works of Shāh Walī'ullāh*, Lāhore, 1972, pp. 110-11.

true in his information. After that he recognizes through contextual evidence that poison is lethal because its heat and dryness are excessive, which conflict with the temperament of man. And with the acquisition of this knowledge his belief turns into conviction.¹

Likewise, Sir Sayyid Aḥmad Khān (1817-1898), the greatest Muslim educationist of the nineteenth century as well as the founding father of 'Alīgarh Muslim University was of the firm view that the nature of the challenge thrown by the Qur'ān of the entire humanity relating to the authenticity of its source was not only with regard to its language and inimitable literacy style, but also with regard to the wisdom, knowledge and guidance contained in it.² It is, therefore, implied that a wise and knowledgeable person, provided that he has the will to do so, is likely to be easily convinced of the divine origin of the Book revealed to the unschooled Prophet on the basis of the flawless, unchallengeable knowledge contained in it not only about the spiritual world, but also about the laws of nature regulating the physical world, the secrets of which have now been abundantly disclosed by modern science and technology like never before. Besides, Sir Sayyid Aḥmad Khān clearly pointed out that Muslims could regenerate themselves both intellectually and spiritually only with the aid of the Qur'ān, philosophy and science. He also gave a graphic description of the hierarchical position of these three important sources of knowledge and wisdom in the life of the followers of Islam, saying: "Philosophy shall be in our right hand and natural science in our left; and the crown of 'there is no deity but Allah '(lā ilāha illā-Allāh) shall adorn our head".³

¹ Shāh Walī'ullāh, Ḥujjat-Allāh al-Bālighah, Delhi, 1373 AH, P.3

² Baṣhīr Aḥmad Dār, *Religious Thought of Sayyid Aḥmad Khān*, Lahore, 1957, PP. 240-41

³ K.A. Niẓāmī, *Sir Syed Speaks to You*, 'Alīgarh, 1968, PP. 62-63.

Again, that the acquisition of scientific knowledge by believers can better their perception of Allah was upheld by Nawāb Ṣiddīque Ḥasan Khān¹ (1832-1890 AD) also, who was a representative of the thought-pattern of classical Islam as propounded and practiced by the salaf-i-ṣāliḥīn (virtuous ancients.). While talking of the role which science particularly astronomy and anatomy, can play in making man more conscious and more appreciative of the wonders, power and wisdom of Allah, he approved of the following statement made by a certain Muslim scholar named Ibn Ṣadr al-Dīn by quoting it:

"من لم يعرف الهيئة والتشريح فهو عنين في معرفة الله تعالى"²

Tr.: One who does not have knowledge of astronomy and anatomy, will remain impotent (incapable) in his perception of Almighty Allah.

The above point is further brought home to us by the renowned astronaut Eugene Cernan, who landed on the moon and spent three days there on the Apollo 17 mission at a distance of about 250,000 miles away from his home. On his own admission, although he had been a believer in the existence of God all through his life, he first realized that there must be a creator of the universe only when he watches the earth rotate on its axis in a logical, beautiful and purposeful manner. To quote his own words, "I came to the conclusion very quickly that there are things that science just cannot explain, and that the earth was too beautiful and moving just too perfectly and logically to have just happened by accident".³

¹ Nawāb Ṣiddīque Ḥasan Khān was a distinguish religious scholar of international fame. He was author of about 222 books in Arabic, Persian and Urdu. Most of his books were published during his lifetime not only from India, but also from Constantinople and Cairo.

² Nawāb Ṣiddīque Ḥasan Khān, *Abjad al-'Ulūm*, P. 383.

³ *The Times of India*, New Delhi, dt. 2.6.2001.

Qur'ānic Inspiration for Cultivation of Scientific Knowledge

There are several verses in the Qur'ān that emphasize upon the Muslims the importance of knowledge and learning of success in this worldly life and in the here-after.¹ It has also been found out after scrutiny and research that there is nothing in the Book which does not appeal to reason and intellect. It has ordained five main measures to enable man to promote his scientific outlook, critical acumen and intellectual capacity for a better perception of the surroundings around him.

First, the Qur'ān gives man tremendous self confidence in his own destiny by telling him in clear terms that he is the supreme creature in this universe, and that all other creations including the stars, the sun, the moon, the seas, the mountains, the animal kingdom, the plant kingdom, etc., are created to serve him. As such he is exhorted to conquer that universe and press it into the service of humanity at large. Second, the Qur'ān seeks to purge the human mind of all sorts of superstitions, delusion and prejudices that kills its vitality. It has denounced conjecture, illusion and empty guesswork in the following words:

"وَمَا لَهُمْ بِهِ مِنْ عِلْمٍ إِنْ يَتَّبِعُونَ إِلَّا الظَّنَّ وَإِنَّ الظَّنَّ لَا يُغْنِي مِنَ الْحَقِّ شَيْئًا ﴿٨﴾"

Tr.: And they have no knowledge thereof. They follow but a guess, and lo! a guess can never take the place of the truth.²

"وَقَالُوا لَوْ شَاءَ الرَّحْمَنُ مَا عَبَدْنَاهُمْ مَّا لَهُمْ بِذَلِكَ مِنْ عِلْمٍ إِنْ هُمْ إِلَّا يَخْرُصُونَ ﴿٢٠﴾"

Tr.: And they say: If the beneficent One had so willed, we should not have worshipped them. They have no knowledge whatsoever of that. They do but guess.³

¹ 'Abdul 'Alī, *Arab-Islamic Legacy to Life Sciences*, op. cit., PP. 4-5.

² Al-Najm: 28, tr. by M.M. Pickthall.

³ al-Zukhruf: 20, tr. by M.M. Pickthall.

It is clear from the above verses that that the Qur'ān does not permit blind imitation of unhealthy practices and traditions irrespective of whether they have been inherited from one's own parents and forefathers or from others.

Third, man is repeatedly asked in the Qur'ān to assert his reason and intellect to attain knowledge. This is evident from the fact that the word *'ilm* (knowledge) and its derivatives have occurred 805 times; the word *albāb* (mind) times; and the word *'aql* (reason) and its derivatives 49 times in the Qur'ān.¹

Fourth, in order to facilitate the search for scientific knowledge, the Qur'ān teaches man the process of comparing and investigating the pattern of creation in different objects of nature:

"وَمَا يَسْتَوِي الْبَحْرَانِ هَذَا عَذْبٌ فُرَاتٌ سَائِغٌ شَرَابُهُ، وَهَذَا مِلْحٌ أُجَاجٌ وَمِن كُلِّ تَأْكُلُونَ لَحْمًا طَرِيًّا وَتَسْتَخْرِجُونَ جِلِيَّةً تَلْبَسُونَهَا"

Tr.: And two seas are not alike; this, fresh, sweet, good to drink, this (other) bitter, salt. And from them both you eat fresh meat and derive the ornament that you wear.²

Fifth, the Qur'ān exhorts man time and again to observe and investigate natural phenomena with a view to getting acquainted with the laws of nature operating in the universe. There are about 750 verses of the Qur'ān-about one-eighth of the Book-that not only emphasize reflection on natural phenomena, but also contain scientific signs which has been becoming more and more manifest with the advancement of science. Consider, for example, the following verses:

"إِنَّ فِي خَلْقِ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَأَخْتِلَافِ اللَّيْلِ وَالنَّهَارِ وَالْفُلْكِ الَّتِي تَجْرِي فِي الْبَحْرِ بِمَا يَنْفَعُ النَّاسَ وَمَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ مِنْ مَّاءٍ فَأَحْيَا بِهِ الْأَرْضَ بَعْدَ مَوْتِهَا وَبَثَّ فِيهَا مِنْ كُلِّ دَابَّةٍ وَتَضْرِيحِ الرِّيحِ وَالسَّحَابِ الْمُسَخَّرِ بَيْنَ السَّمَاءِ وَالْأَرْضِ لَآيَاتٍ لِقَوْمٍ يَعْقِلُونَ ﴿١٦٥﴾"

¹ Prof. Darwesh Muṣṭafá: "Tārīkh al-'Ulūm fī al-Ḥadarat al-Islāmīyah" in the journal *Manār al-Islām* (January 1977), P. 87.

² Ghāfir: 12, tr. by M.M. Pickthall.

Tr.: Behold! In the creation of the heavens and the earth; In the alteration of the night and the day; In the sailing of the ships through the ocean for the profit of mankind; In the rain which God sends down from the skies, and the life which He gives therewith to an earth that is dead; In the beasts of all kinds that He scatters through the earth; In the change of the winds, and the clouds which they trail like their slaves between the sky and the earth:- (Here) indeed are Signs for a people that are wise.¹

"أَفَلَمْ يَنْظُرُوا إِلَى السَّمَاءِ فَوْقَهُمْ كَيْفَ بَنَيْنَاهَا وَزَيَّنَّاهَا وَمَا لَهَا مِنْ فُرُوجٍ ﴿٦﴾ وَالْأَرْضِ مَدَدْنَاهَا وَأَلْقَيْنَا فِيهَا رَوَاسِيَ وَأَنْبَتْنَا فِيهَا مِنْ كُلِّ زَوْجٍ بَهِيجٍ ﴿٧﴾ تَبْصِرَةً وَذِكْرَى لِكُلِّ عَبْدٍ مُنِيبٍ ﴿٨﴾"

Tr.: Do they not look at the sky above them? How We made it and adorned it, and there are no flaws in it? And the earth-We have spread it out and set thereon mountains standing firm and produced therein every kind of beautiful growth (in pain)- To be observed and commemorated by every devotee turning (to God)²

"أَفَلَا يَنْظُرُونَ إِلَى الْإِبِلِ كَيْفَ خُلِقَتْ ﴿٧﴾ وَإِلَى السَّمَاءِ كَيْفَ رُفِعَتْ ﴿٨﴾ وَإِلَى الْجِبَالِ كَيْفَ نُصِبَتْ ﴿٩﴾ وَإِلَى الْأَرْضِ كَيْفَ سُطِحَتْ ﴿١٠﴾"

Tr.: Do they not look at the camels, how they are made?-And at the sky, how it is spread high?-And at the mountains, how they are fixed firm?-And at the earth, how it is spread out?³

Obviously, the call for observing the natural phenomena as maintained in the above verses does not mean mere casting a superficial look at them, but rather it is implied that man should try to understand and ascertain the universal laws of nature operating in them by developing and applying the experimental

¹ Al-Baqarah: 164, tr. by A. Yūsuf 'Alī.

² Qāf:6-8, tr. by A. Yūsuf 'Alī.

³ Al-Bayyinah:17-20, tr by A Yūsuf 'Alī.

method of research based on all faculties of reason and perception, with which he has been endowed by Allah.

By referring to various objects of nature and natural phenomena, the Qur'ān not only stirred man's intellectual curiosity, but also greatly advanced his scientific knowledge. There are a number of passages in the Qur'ān that catapulted man to the utmost heights of scientific knowledge by disclosing some secrets of nature which science has taken hundreds of year to verify and establish. The scientific significance of the Qur'ān vis-à-vis discoveries and inventions of modern science is briefly illustrated below with examples drawn from cosmology, physics, biology, and medicine.

Cosmology and Physics:

In the following verse the Qur'ān teaches man pure science by alluding to the rotation of the earth and other celestial bodies at a time when all kinds of superstitions had been dominant upon the minds of the people about this vital scientific fact:

"وَهُوَ الَّذِي خَلَقَ اللَّيْلَ وَالنَّهَارَ وَالشَّمْسَ وَالْقَمَرَ كُلٌّ فِي فَلَكٍ يَسْبَحُونَ ﴿٣٣﴾"

Tr.: And He (Allah) it is Who created the night and the day, and the sun and the moon. They swim, each in an orbit.¹

Another startling scientific discovery made in the recent past regarding the comets of ice clearly brings to light the scientific significance of the information contained in the following Qur'ānic verse.

"وَيُنزِلُ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ مِثْرًا مِثْرًا فِيهَا مِنْ جِبَالٍ فِيهَا مِنْ بَرَدٍ فَيُصِيبُ بِهِ"

Tr.: He sends down from the sky mountains wherein is hail.²

It is clear from the above verse that mountains of ice or comets of ice are being sent down regularly from the sky

¹ Hūd: 33, tr. by M. M. Pickthall

² Ibrāhīm: 43.

(space) towards the earth. Scientists were totally ignorant of this phenomenon until 1986. It was scientifically confirmed only in 1988. According to this discovery, heavy snowfalls or comets of ice weighing about 100 tones each and measuring about 30 feet across are constantly falling from unknown places in the space into the earth's atmosphere at the rate of 10 million a year. Finally, they break up into hail due to tidal waves in the atmosphere, and join the earth's water cycle.¹

The Qur'ān is full of such scientific miracles. A few more instances of the miraculous nature of the Book from the modern scientific view point are given below.

It is now fully established by science that everything exists in pairs as male and female including the rock crystals and electricity. The same fact was revealed in the Qur'ān in the following words:

"سُبْحٰنَ الَّذِى خَلَقَ الْاَزْوَاجَ كُلَّهَا مِمَّا تُثْبِتُ الْاَرْضُ وَمِنْ اَنْفُسِهِمْ وَمِمَّا لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٣٦﴾"

Tr.: Praise be to Him who created all things in pairs, of that which the earth grows, and of their own kind, and of kinds which they know not.²

Secondly, now it is a firmly established scientific fact that ever since its creation the universe has been expanding at an accelerating rate, with galaxies zooming away from each other. The same phenomenon is almost literally described in the Qur'ān as follows:

"وَالسَّمٰوٰتِ بَنَيْنٰهَا بِاَيْدٍ وَاِنَّا لَمُوسِعُونَ ﴿٥٧﴾"

¹ Ibrāhīm bin Syed: "The Qur'ānic Revelations on Comets of Ice" in The Muslim World League Journal, Saudi Arabia, Vol. XVI, Nos. 1&2, PP. 10-11

² Yāsīn: 36.

Tr.: We have built the firmament with might, and we are certainly expanding it.¹

Similarly, modern astronomical researches clearly point not only to the birth and death of the sun and the solar system, but also the vanishing away of the existing firmaments. It is indeed amazing to know that these science-based vaguely described possibilities and conclusions have got a clear mention in the following verses which talk of the said possibilities as predestined realities with the full vigour of certainty:

"إِذَا الشَّمْسُ كُوِّرَتْ ﴿١﴾ وَإِذَا النُّجُومُ انْكَدَرَتْ ﴿٢﴾"

Tr.: When the sun is folded up; and when the stars falls, losing there lusture.²

"يَوْمَ نَطْوِي السَّمَاءَ كَطَيِّ السِّجِلِّ لِلْكُتُبِ كَمَا بَدَأْنَا أَوَّلَ خَلْقٍ نُعِيدُهُ وَعَدَا عَلَيْنَا إِنَّا كُنَّا فَاعِلِينَ ﴿١٥﴾"

Tr.: The day that We roll up the heavens like a scroll rolled up for books. Even as We produced the first creation, so shall We produce a new one: a promise We have undertaken; truly We fulfill it.³

Biology:

The Qur'ān contains numerous references to both animals and plants, the scientific significance of which was further highlighted by modern discoveries and researches. For instance, the following Qur'ānic verse increased man's curiosity about the kingdom of animals by rightly describing them as organized and intelligent creatures:

"وَمَا مِنْ دَابَّةٍ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَلَا طَيْرٍ يَطِيرُ بِجَنَاحَيْهِ إِلَّا أُمَّمٌ أُمَّتَالِكُمْ"

¹ Al-Dhāriyāt: 47

² Al-Takwīr: 1-2, tr. by A. Yūsuf 'Alī.

³ Hūd: 104, Ibid.

Tr.: There is not an animal (that lives) on the earth, nor a being that flies on its wings, but (forms part of) communities like you.¹

The Qur'ān further established that each species of animals that live together have some definite medium of communication among them. The Qur'ān preceded the modern scientific discovery in this context by telling about the language of animals in the following clear terms:

"وَوَرِّثَ سُلَيْمَنُ دَاوُدَ وَقَالَ يَتَّابِئُهَا النَّاسُ غُلِّمْنَا مَنْطِقَ الطَّيْرِ"

Tr.: And Solomon was David's heir. He said: O You people! We have been taught the speech of birds".²

"حَتَّىٰ إِذَا أَتَوْا عَلَىٰ وَادِ النَّمْلِ قَالَتْ نَمْلَةٌ يَتَّابِئُهَا النَّمْلُ ادْخُلُوا مَسْكِنَكُم لَّا يَخْطِبَنَّكُمْ سُلَيْمَنُ وَجُنُودُهُ وَهُمْ لَا يَشْعُرُونَ ﴿١٨﴾"

Tr.: At length, when they came to a (lowly) valley of ants, an ant exclaimed: Oh you ants, get into your habitations, lest Solomon and his hosts crush you (under foot) without knowing it".³

It is interesting to note that earlier these verses were taken for a mere metaphorical description. Their real significance was to realize only after entomologists discovered the well-planned and organized ways of the life of ants. Thus the Qur'ān shattered the age-old myth about animals that they were mere living tools without soul, and that they were deprived of the faculty of intelligence. Now they were considered as intelligent creatures that deserved proper care and kind and treatment.

Similarly, the Qur'ān contains about 169 references to plant life which provided man with a great deal of scientific information

¹ Al-An'ām: 38, Ibid.

² Al-Naml: 16, Ibid.

³ Al-Naml: 18, Ibid.

about it. Some of these passages describe in detail the varieties and wonders of the vegetable kingdom, while others refer to the different processes of reproduction in them. Besides, as described in the Qur'ān, the vegetable kingdom providing varieties of crops, fruits, flowers, medicinal herbs, etc, is not only rich source of sustenance to man and other living creatures, but also plays an important role in maintaining the ecological balance on earth to the advantage of mankind-a fact which was scientifically ascertained only in recent times. The following verses are worthy of mention in this context.

"وَالْأَرْضَ مَدَدْنَاهَا وَأَلْقَيْنَا فِيهَا رَوَاسِيَ وَأَوْبَقْنَا فِيهَا مِنْ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ مَوْزُونٍ ﴿١٩﴾"

Tr.: And earth We have spread out (like a carpet); set thereon mountains firm and immovable; and produced therein all kinds of things in due balance.¹

"إِنَّا كُلَّ شَيْءٍ خَلَقْنَاهُ بِقَدَرٍ ﴿٤٩﴾"

Tr.: Verily, all things We have created in portion and measures".²

It is clear from the above verses that the fundamental truths about animal life and plant life described in them are not only in complete agreement with, but also further highlighted by, the findings of modern science in these fields.

Medicine:

One of the major breakthroughs made by the Qur'ān in the world of medicine is its description of the origin of life, according to which every living thing is created out of water. This is strictly in accordance with the modern scientific data that firmly establish the fact that life is not possible without water, as it is the major component of living cells.³ The

¹ Al-Hijr: 19, Ibid.

² Al-Qamar: 49, Ibid.

³ Maurice Bucaille, *The Bible, the Qur'ān and Science*, P. 186.

Qur'ānic disclosure of this vital fact came in total disregard of the numerous myths on the origins of life that were current at the time of its revelation.¹

Secondly, long before modern medical researches could establish the importance and function of sleep in the human body. It is further held as a fundamental characteristic of every living creature, whereas the Creator Himself is neither in need of it, nor does need overtake Him. According to the latest medical research, sleep is caused by some chemical changes that take place in the cells of the living body due to action and exertion. Any attempt at obstructing the natural course of sleep is bound to adversely affect the health of man, as through it the body regains its former state of freshness and vitality.² And since both physical exertion and sleep are inter-related and equally important for the maintenance of health, man has been advised in the Qur'ān to exert himself during the day and to have recourse to sleep during the night.³ That is the main reason why some modern scientists like Professor Arthur J. Alison became convinced of the truth of the Qur'ān after studying its verses related to sleep.⁴

Thirdly, the formation and development of the human embryo in the womb of the mother has been mentioned in the Qur'ān in an astonishingly scientific manner:

"يَأْتِيهَا النَّاسُ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ فِي رَيْبٍ مِّنَ الْبَعْثِ فَإِنَّا خَلَقْنَاكُمْ مِّن تُرَابٍ ثُمَّ مِنْ نُّطْفَةٍ ثُمَّ مِنْ عَلَقَةٍ ثُمَّ مِنْ مُّضْغَةٍ مُّخَلَّقَةٍ وَغَيْرِ مُّخَلَّقَةٍ لِّبَيِّنٍ لِّكُمْ"

¹ Ibid. p. 187.

² Dr. 'Abdul Azīz Ismā'īl: "al-Islām wa al-Ṭibb al-Ḥadīth" in the journal Majallah al-Azhar, Cairo, Vol. VII, P. 478.

³ Al-Ḥāqqah: 9-11.

⁴ Moḥammad Ilyās: "Reaching the Revealed Truth through Science" in The Muslim World League Journal, Saudi Arabia, Vol. 31, No 2, P. 33.

Tr.: O mankind if you have a doubt about the Resurrection, (consider) that We created you out of dust, then out of leech-like clot, then out of a morsel of flesh, partly formed and partly unformed in order that We may manifest (Our power) to you".¹

Now it is a well-known fact that modern scientists have expressed their astonishment over the perfection and accuracy of this Qur'ānic description. The findings of Dr. Keith Moore, a University of Toronto embryologist, corroborated by the test-tube baby pioneer Dr. Robert Edwards, reveal that the above verse contains an accurate description of the stage by stage development of the human embryo. On the basis of his findings, Prof. Moore was fully convinced that the Qur'ān was the Word of the Creator and the Prophet Muḥammad (PBUH) was His messenger on the grounds that the said Qur'ānic description came at a time when nobody knew that fact as there was no microscope, no x-rays, no laser beam, and no other tool to scan the sub-microscopic stages of the formations of the embryo.²

Yet another Qur'ānic verse enlightened man on sex hygiene ordains that the mothers should breastfeed their new-born babes for full two years as given below.

"وَالْوَالِدَاتُ يُرْضِعْنَ أَوْلَادَهُنَّ حَوْلَيْنِ كَامِلَيْنِ لِمَنْ أَرَادَ أَنْ يُنِمَّ الرِّضَاعَةَ"

Tr.: Mothers should suckle their children for two whole years: (that is) for those who wish to complete the suckling".³

The wisdom contained in the above verse has been further highlighted by the findings of modern science. It has now been

¹ Yūsuf: 5, tr. by A. Yūsuf 'Alī.

² Prof. Zaghlūl al-Najjār: "Islam Awareness Week" in *The Muslim World League Journal*, Saudi Arabia, Vol. 28, No. 11, PP. 25-26.

³ Al-Baqarah: 233, tr. by M.M. Pickthall.

scientifically established that breastfeeding is beneficial not only for the health of the child, but also for the sexual organs of the mother. It also diminishes the possibility of fresh pregnancy during the period of breastfeeding.¹

Finally, it is now common knowledge that the Qur'ānic prescription of physical cleanliness and spiritual purification play an important role in providing protection to man against disease by boosting his power of immunity. It is also now not difficult to understand the true significance of the emphasis which the Qur'ān has laid on the observance of prayer on a regular basis, as they have been found to soothe one's nerves and provide relaxation. Little wonder then that even modern psychotherapists exhort their patient to have recourse to prayers and meditation. Likewise, science has amply demonstrated that physical and mental health of man can be significantly improved by practicing the Qur'ānic measures for his psychological empowerment such as faith in the unity of the creator, life after death, the Islamic concept of reward and punishment, victory in the forces of righteousness, etc, as they build in him a strong fortification against all kinds of despair even in the most adverse circumstances. They also make him move and dash forward by keeping his interest in life intact till his last breath.

Conclusion:

The above observations are only a few specimens of the vast scientific information found in the Qur'ān. As rightly held by the distinguish French surgeon and scholar Maurice Bucaille in his book *The Bible, the Qur'ān and Science*, there is not even a single statement in the Qur'ān which may be assailable from a modern scientific point of view.² The valuable scientific

¹ Dr. 'Abdul Azīz Ismā'īl, *op. cit.*, P. 477.

² *The Bible, the Qur'ān and Science*, *op. cit.*, P. vii

information contained in the Qur'ān revealed to the unschooled Prophet Muḥammad over fourteen hundred years ago in the age of superstitions and blind faith, needs to be studied more seriously with the aid of science as an effective tool of study and research with the aid of science as an effective tool of study and research with a view further exploring and demonstrating the scientific truths of the Book. This will not only deepen man's faith in the divine origin and miraculous nature of the Qur'ān, but also assist him in comprehending the true significance of the following and like Qur'ānic verses:

"أَفَلَا يَتَدَبَّرُونَ الْقُرْآنَ وَلَوْ كَانَ مِنْ عِنْدِ غَيْرِ اللَّهِ لَوَجَدُوا فِيهِ اخْتِلَافًا كَثِيرًا ﴿٨٢﴾"

Tr.: Do they not ponder on the Qur'ān? Had it been from other than Allah, they would surely have found therein much discrepancy".¹

"سَنُرِيهِمْ آيَاتِنَا فِي الْأَفَاقِ وَفِي أَنْفُسِهِمْ حَتَّىٰ يَتَبَيَّنَ لَهُمْ أَنَّهُ الْحَقُّ أَو لَمْ يَكْفِ بِرَبِّكَ أَنَّهُ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ شَهِيدٌ ﴿٥٣﴾"

Tr.: Soon will We show them Our signs in the (furthest) regions (of the earth), and in their own souls, until it becomes manifest to them that this is the Truth".²

¹ Al-Nisā': 82, tr. by A. Yūsuf 'Alī.

² Al-Naḥl: 53, Ibid.

Science in Qur'ānic Perspective

✎...Dr. Khālīd Mas'ūd¹

There is a growing consciousness among the Muslim scientists that a very large number of Qur'ānic verses relate to the subjects which have relevance to modern science. They have tried to pick up such verses which, in their view, have direct or indirect reference to any field of science. Quite voluminous literature has been produced to show that the Qur'ān has alluded to almost every branch of science, and this fact is regarded as one of the proofs of the authenticity of the Holy Book. This is obviously done out of love ingrained in the hearts of the Muslim scientists for the articles of their faith and, therefore, is justifiable. However, one aspect of this exercise is noteworthy. Although one cannot deny the fact that quite a large number of verses contain elements of various branches of science, yet when one studies the Qur'ān in its own perspective, the context of the verses said to have reference to the scientific phenomena, is found rarely to have any scientific import.

Let us examine the issue by means of some of the verses related to natural phenomena. Discussion on each and every verse will be quite lengthy and not so essential. Therefore, only one or two representative verses will be quoted to determine what message they have to convey.

Evidences:

One of the most indelible impressions one gets from some of the verses under question is that they are meant to serve as

¹ A great Pākistānī writer of Islamic Studies.

evidences to prove certain realities quite apparent from what we see around us. In such verses the word *āyah* or *āyāt*, meaning signs are portents, is invariably used. In order to prove its stance on various subjects, the Qur'ān refers to natural phenomena calling them signs pointing towards the conclusion the Qur'ān wants to draw. To cite an example, the following passage may be perused:

"وَإِلَهُكُمْ إِلَهٌ وَحِدٌ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ الرَّحْمَنُ الرَّحِيمُ ﴿١٧٦﴾ إِنَّ فِي خَلْقِ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَأَخْتِلَافِ اللَّيْلِ وَالنَّهَارِ وَالْفُلْكِ الَّتِي تَجْرِي فِي الْبَحْرِ بِمَا يَنْفَعُ النَّاسَ وَمَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ مِنْ مَّاءٍ فَأَحْيَا بِهِ الْأَرْضَ بَعْدَ مَوْتِهَا وَبَثَّ فِيهَا مِنْ كُلِّ دَابَّةٍ وَتَضْرِيحِ الْريِّحِ وَالسَّحَابِ الْمُسَخَّرِ بَيْنَ السَّمَاءِ وَالْأَرْضِ لآيَاتٍ لِقَوْمٍ يَعْقِلُونَ ﴿١٧٧﴾".

Tr.: Your God is God alone; there is no deity except Him, the mercy-giving, the merciful! In the creation of Heavens and Earth, the alternation between night and day, the ships which plough the sea with something to benefit mankind, and any water God sends down from the sky with which to revive the earth following its death, and to scatter every kind of animal throughout it, and directing the winds and clouds which are driven along between the sky and earth, are signs for folk who use their reason".¹

Here the verse refers to a number of phenomena which, no doubt, are scientific facts related to the fields of astronomy, physics and climatology etc. But the Qur'ān exhorts us to use reason and learn that these are signs of the oneness of their Creator. These phenomena include creation of the heavens and the earth with a definite order and purpose, systematic and precise alternation of day and night. And cooperation among divergent things like the sea, and the earth to produce

¹ Al-Baqarah:163-164

purposeful results which are so beneficial for the human kind. These are the evidences of Allah being the sole Creator of the universe. Had there been no Designer, the universe would have been devoid of any purpose behind creation. Had there been a number of creators, there could have been no cooperation among them and hence no harmony in their creation. Therefore, the system, order, harmony and purposefulness in the universe presuppose that it is the handiwork of only one God and there is no deity except Him.

There are other passages in the Qur'ān which state similarly observable facts to bear upon the Day of Judgment. For example, the reproduction of a baby in the womb of its mother and the sprouting in soil to produce every sort of lovely species mentioned in verse 22: 5 are the evidences of how man will be given new life in the Hereafter, and the task would not require any big effort from the almighty Allah. Some verses comment on the situation in which the Prophet (PBUH) and his companions found themselves in face of their adversaries, and the explanation is given in the light of God's practice manifest in nature.¹ In all such passages, emphasis is not on sciences as such but on their being evidences of the facts stated in a particular context.

Allah's Attributes:

Secondly, some of the verses having reference to scientific phenomena are meant to bring home to man the attributes of Allah. The following passage is quite clear in this respect:

"ذَلِكَ وَمَنْ عَاقَبَ بِمِثْلِ مَا عُوقِبَ بِهِ ثُمَّ بُغِيَ عَلَيْهِ لِيَنْصُرَنَّهُ اللَّهُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَعَفُوفٌ عَفُورٌ ﴿٥٠﴾ ذَلِكَ بِأَنَّ اللَّهَ يُولِجُ اللَّيْلَ فِي النَّهَارِ وَيُولِجُ النَّهَارَ فِي اللَّيْلِ وَأَنَّ اللَّهَ سَمِيعٌ بَصِيرٌ ذَلِكَ بِأَنَّ اللَّهَ هُوَ الْحَقُّ

¹ Al-Rūm: 46-50

وَأَنَّ مَا يَدْعُونَ مِنْ دُونِهِ هُوَ الْبَاطِلُ وَأَنَّ اللَّهَ هُوَ الْعَلِيُّ الْكَبِيرُ ﴿٣٢﴾ أَلَمْ تَرَ أَنَّ اللَّهَ أَنْزَلَ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ مَاءً فَتُصْبِحُ الْأَرْضُ مُخْضَرَّةً إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَطِيفٌ خَبِيرٌ ﴿٣٣﴾ لَهُ مَا فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَإِنَّ اللَّهَ لَهُوَ الْعَلِيُّ الْحَمِيدُ ﴿٣٤﴾ أَلَمْ تَرَ أَنَّ اللَّهَ سَخَّرَ لَكُمْ مِمَّا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَالْفُلْكَ تَجْرِي فِي الْبَحْرِ بِأَمْرِهِ وَيُمْسِكُ السَّمَاءَ أَنْ تَقَعَ عَلَى الْأَرْضِ إِلَّا بِإِذْنِهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ بِاللَّاسِ لَزُؤُفٌ رَحِيمٌ ﴿٣٥﴾"

Tr.: God will support anyone who retaliates in so far as he has suffered, then is set upon again; For God is pardoning, Forgiving. That is because God merges night into daylight and merges daylight into night. God is alert, Observant. That is because God is Truth, while anything they appeal to instead of Him is false. God is the sublime, the Great. Have you not seen how God sends down water from the sky, so the earth becomes verdant? God is so Gracious, Informed. He holds whatever is in Heaven and whatever is on Earth; God is the Transcendent, the Praiseworthy! Have you not seen how God has subjected whatever is on earth to you, and the ships that sail at sea by His command? He holds back the sky from falling down on the earth except with His permission. God is so Gentle, Merciful towards mankind.¹

In these verses the attributes of Allah, which were responsible for bestowing His favours on human beings, are interspersed, making use of natural phenomena the manifestation thereof. They reveal that Allah is not indifferent to His creation, nor is He ill-informed or incapable. He holds complete authority over the universe. He regulates its days and nights. He holds the reins of everything. It is with His permission that man is able to use his contrivances to his advantage. If God had not been so Gracious, nothing would have been subservient to man and his science would have met with utter failure. The attributes made out in these verses are Allah's alertness, observation,

¹Ibrāhī:32-34

knowledge, greatness, sublimity, transcendence, praiseworthiness, graciousness and mercy. All these attributes can be understood by means of their effect which is observable in the objects of nature around us. In other verses God's power, wisdom, control and planning are deduced from similar observations. Man can know God by these attributes and fairly understand his own position in his dominion.

Gratitude:

The third import of the verses having reference to scientific phenomena is that these are designed to impress upon man that he is a creature with little power of his own. God knew his imperfections and bestowed favours on him. This makes it obligatory for man to be grateful to God alone. The following passage is clear in this respect:

"اللَّهُ الَّذِي خَلَقَ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ وَأَنْزَلَ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ مَاءً فَأَخْرَجَ بِهِ مِنَ الثَّمَرَاتِ رِزْقًا لَكُمْ
وَسَخَّرَ لَكُمْ الْفُلُوكَ لِتَجْرِيَ فِي الْبَحْرِ بِأَمْرِهِ وَسَخَّرَ لَكُمْ الْيَمِينَ وَالشَّمْسَ وَالْقَمَرَ دَائِبِينَ وَسَخَّرَ لَكُمْ اللَّيْلَ وَالنَّهَارَ ﴿٣٣﴾ وَعَاتَبَكُمْ مِنْ كُلِّ مَا سَأَلْتُمُوهُ وَإِنْ تَعُدُّوا نِعْمَتَ اللَّهِ
لَا تُحْصُوهَا إِنَّ الْإِنْسَانَ لَظَلُومٌ كَفَّارٌ ﴿٣٤﴾"

Tr.: God is the One Who has created Heavens and Earth, and sends down water from the sky. He brings forth produce by means of it as sustenance for you. He has subjected ships to you so that they may sail at sea by His command; and subjected rivers to you. He regulates the sun and moon for you, both journeying on and on, and regulates night and day for you. He gives you everything you ever ask Him for. If you counted up God's favours, you would never be able to number them; yet man is so unfair, ungrateful.¹

¹ Ibrāhīm:32-34

The verse means that God created everything for the sake of man, who was appointed His vicegerent on earth. He subjected the powers of nature to his service and provided him whatever he was in need of. The Sustainer-Master would continue to provide him all his necessities till the end of life on the earth. These favours call for a deep sense of gratitude in man towards Allah resulting in humility and submission. But unfortunately man goes on enjoying all these privileges without caring for his responsibility. This behaviour is a witness to his ungratefulness.

Other passages conveying the same message are 29: 63, 35: 11-13, 39: 5-7 and 43: 9-14. God in his majesty declares as follows:

"إِنْ تَكْفُرُوا فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ غَنِيٌّ عَنْكُمْ وَلَا يَرْضَىٰ لِعِبَادِهِ الْكُفْرَ وَإِنْ تَشْكُرُوا يَرْضَهُ لَكُمْ"

Tr.: Even if you were ungrateful, God could still dispense with you. He does not approve of ungratefulness among His servants; however, if you act grateful, He will approve of you.¹

Man in his ignorance considers himself master of the universe. Success in his scientific pursuits has given him this wrong impression. The Qur'an dispels such impressions and points out limitation of his science. It makes it clear that man can take steps but the ultimate result rests with Allah. A passage reads as follows:

"أَفَرَأَيْتُمْ مَا تَحْرُثُونَ ﴿٣٦﴾ ءَأَنْتُمْ تَزْرَعُونَهُ أَمْ نَحْنُ الذَّاكِرُونَ ﴿٣٧﴾ لَوْ نَشَاءُ لَجَعَلْنَاهُ حُطَبًا فَظَلْتُمْ تَفَكَّهُونَ ﴿٣٨﴾ إِنَّا لَمَعْرُومُونَ ﴿٣٩﴾ بَلْ نَحْنُ مَحْرُومُونَ ﴿٤٠﴾ أَفَرَأَيْتُمُ الْمَاءَ الَّذِي تَشْرَبُونَ ﴿٤١﴾ ءَأَنْتُمْ أَنْزَلْتُمُوهُ مِنَ الْمُزْنِ أَمْ نَحْنُ الْمُنزِلُونَ ﴿٤٢﴾ لَوْ نَشَاءُ لَجَعَلْنَاهُ أُجَاجًا فَلَوْلَا تَشْكُرُونَ ﴿٤٣﴾"

Tr.: Have you considered what you plant as crops? Do you grow it or are We **the** Growers? If We so wished, We would turn it into chaff so you would do nothing but exclaim: We are

¹ Al-Zumar: 7

debt-ridden; in fact, we are destitute'; Have you ever considered the water you drink? Do you pour it down from the rain-clouds or are We its Pourers? If We so wished, We might make it brackish. If you would only act grateful.¹

The passage means that man should be aware of his limitations and cast aside his misgivings about Allah's control over his designs. Only with this consciousness can he act gratefully.

Parables:

Quite a large number of the parables in the Qur'ān are actually the statements of natural phenomena. Being real experiences, they are instrumental in producing vivid understanding of the subject under discussion. The light of faith in Allah in a believer's mind and the darkness of infidelity in an infidel's is made really perceptible by comparing it to our physical experiences quite common in nature. The Qur'ān says:

"اللَّهُ نُورُ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ مِثْلُ نُورِهِ كَمِشْكَاةٍ فِيهَا مِصْبَاحٌ الْمِصْبَاحُ فِي زُجَاجَةٍ الزُّجَاجَةُ كَأَنَّهَا كَوْكَبٌ دُرِّيٌّ يُوقَدُ مِنْ شَجَرَةٍ مُبَارَكَةٍ زَيْتُونَةٍ لَا شَرْقِيَّةٍ وَلَا غَرْبِيَّةٍ يَكَادُ زَيْتُهَا يُضِيءُ وَلَوْ لَمْ تَمْسَسْهُ نَارٌ نُورٌ عَلَى نُورٍ يَهْدِي اللَّهُ لِنُورِهِ مَنْ يَشَاءُ وَيَضْرِبُ اللَّهُ الْأَمْثَلَ لِلنَّاسِ وَاللَّهُ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمٌ ﴿٣٥﴾"

Tr.: God is the Light of Heaven and Earth! His light (in a believer's mind) may be compared to a niche in which there is a lamp; the lamp is in a glass; the glass is just as if it were a glittering star kindled from a blessed olive tree, which is neither eastern nor western, whose oil will almost glow though fire has never touched it. Light upon light. God guides anyone He wishes to His light. God is aware of everything".²

¹ Al-Wāqī'ah: 63-70

² Al-Nūr: 35

"وَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا أَعْمَلُهُمْ كَسَرَابٍ بِقِيَعِهِ يَتَّخِذُهُ الظَّمْآنُ مَاءً حَتَّى إِذَا جَاءَهُ لَمْ يَجِدْهُ شَيْئًا وَوَجَدَ اللَّهَ عِنْدَهُ فَوَفَّيَهُ حِسَابَهُ وَاللَّهُ سَرِيعُ الْحِسَابِ ﴿٣٦﴾ أَوْ كظلماتٍ في بحرٍ لئيمٍ يَعِشُهُ مَوْجٌ مِّنْ فَوْقِهِ مَوْجٌ مِّنْ فَوْقِهِ سَحَابٌ ظُلُمَاتٌ بَعْضُهَا فَوْقَ بَعْضٍ إِذَا أَخْرَجَ يَدَهُ لَمْ يَكِدْ يَرُهَا وَمَنْ لَّمْ يَجْعَلِ اللَّهُ لَهُ نُورًا فَمَا لَهُ مِن نُّورٍ ﴿٣٧﴾"

Those who disbelieve (will find) their deeds (will disappear) like a mirage on a desert: the thirsty man will reckon it in water till, as he comes upto it, he finds it is nothing. Yet he finds God (stands) beside him and he must render Him his account; God is prompt in reckoning! Or like darkness on the unfathomed sea: one wave covers up another wave, over which there (hang) clouds; layers of darkness one above the other! When he stretches out his hand, he can scarcely see it. Anyone whom God does not grant light will have no light!"¹

In the first parable, the light of the lamp combines various factors for its incandescence, each factor enhancing the intensity of glow. Likewise, a believer finds a number of factors to enlighten his mind. His nature and intellect are already full of inward light, and the guidance through revealed word is, in fact, light upon light, so that the believer never finds his way enshrouded in darkness. An infidel, on the contrary, lives beneath layer after layer of darkness. His nature has no inward light. His intellect is prone to all types of whims and heresies. He keeps himself aloof from prophetic guidance and, therefore, is unable to receive light from God. His so-called good deeds will be ineffectual like a mirage and he will not be rewarded for these deeds. Parable of worldly life in verses 10: 24 and 57:20 makes use of our experience of an attractive plantation full of promise, mowed down by some natural calamity. The message is convincingly conveyed.

¹ Al-Nūr: 39-40

Summing up, it may be stated that the natural phenomena in the Qur'ānic perspective are indicators of Allah's sovereignty and power in the universe. These are witnesses to His oneness and uniqueness. These are signs foretelling the Day of Judgment and the evidences of various laws governing this universe. One can understand the attributes of Allah by observing and experiencing these phenomena. They convey the message that man should be grateful and subservient to Allah alone, and this is the right way to live in this earth.

Conclusions:

The Muslim scientists' plea that the Qur'ān makes reference to scientific facts can, by no means, be ignored altogether. The import might be any as stated above. Yet they are scientific phenomena and the Qur'ān exhorts us to make a point to study them. Therefore, we must draw conclusions satisfying the scientists' plea without jeopardizing the Qur'ānic perspective, as under:

First, science in Islam is neither secular nor mundane. It is one of Allah's favours on man designed to be of service to him during his tenure on earth. It is pregnant with arguments for Allah's oneness and defines obligations of man towards Him. Therefore, the guise of science in western civilization is far from being realistic. That is why, it is overladen with mundane purposes and has a tendency to become dangerous for man's life.

Secondly, science is not an end in itself but a means to comprehend realities of the universe, the foremost being to recognize the Creator along with His true attributes. God reveals Himself through His creation. Therefore, each discovery should bring the scientist nearer to God and every invention making life easy, comfortable and luxurious should make the user more and more grateful to Allah.

Thirdly, just as the natural phenomena have a message to convey, science being a derivative of these phenomena must also have a message. Hence, it is imperative that science should be taught with religious orientation. Books on science written without moral conclusions are apt to make its logic lopsided and bereft of Divine blessings.

Lastly, that exercise of the Muslim scientists to extract science out of Qur'ānic verses needs caution. The exercise tends to ignore the contextual meanings of the verses to make room for scientific import. This would result in making the countenance of Islamic science similar to that of western science. It is high time that the enthusiastic Muslim scientists place the Qur'ānic precept in the forefront.

The Qur'ān's Positive and Holistic Approach on Science

✎... 'Abdul Mājīd Khān¹

Man stands more amazed at the advent of the new millennium compared to the past. Today we are buried in an avalanche of scientific papers that threaten to proliferate at an exponential rate and no one can review even a small fraction of this information and relate to it. It was not always thus.² The philosopher and scientist, Immanuel Kant, in reviewing the knowledge of his day, has commented on the seeming perfection of the universe thus:

“The Universe, by its immeasurable greatness and the infinite variety and beauty that shines from it on all sides, fills us with silent wonder. If the presentations of all this perfection move the imagination, the understanding is seized by another kind of rapture when, from another point of view, it consider how such magnificence and such greatness can flow from a single law, with an eternal and perfect order.”³

The present predicament of man and the way to come out of it is presented by Ibrahim Stokes thus:

We live in a time when almost all we know concerns the physical world. Scientific investigation moves fitfully by fitfully by flashes of insight, like lightning that illuminates everything for a short distance and then leaves us in darkness with more

¹ Associate Professor, Department of Islamic Studies, 'Aligarh Muslim University, 'Aligarh.

² Stokes. Ibrāhīm in Introduction to Sheikh Fadhlalla Haeri's Book *Journey of the Universe as Expounded in the Qur'ān* (London. KPI1987)

³ Quoted by Stokes N.1.

questions unanswered than before. Pursued in isolation, science cannot possibly lead to the unifying goal of all knowledge but to endless proliferation. The ultimate question of the origin and destiny of the universe lies always just outside our reach. The way forward from here is to turn back to revelation. This is knowledge that comes to us from the other side of time. It requires that for the moment we leave aside the scientific pursuit and suspend judgment.

Now is exactly the time to redress the balance and turn to insight, to review what has come to us that speaks of inward values, right action and ultimate reward. This is in the purview of religion, which we first posited in opposition to science. But now we have to see religion as a unifying way of life that links the outward and inward dimensions in man, not as an imposed ritual.¹

Such voices are now no more strange in the circle of serious scholarship, primarily because scientism, nuclearism, serious ecological imbalances, the ever widening gulf between haves and have-nots and lots of other major problems are threatening the very existence of human civilization. While science and scientific paradigms are constantly challenged globally for its drawbacks and inadequacies to lead mankind to peace and harmony, we are nevertheless confronted by a paradox, there are continuous attempts by a segment of Muslim intelligentsia in particular trying to 'prove' that all that modern science stands for is exactly what the Qur'ān upholds! This is not a presumption but a fact of the academic discourse relating to science and the Qur'ān.

Considering the limited scope of this paper, let us examine very briefly the particular trend of thought and its repercussion.

¹ Stokes, Ibrāhīm N.1.

The headlines on the April 1985 issue of **Bulletin of the Islamic Medical Association of South America** announces a staggering discovery “Canadian scholar confirms Qur’ān and Aḥādīth on Human Embryology “The story tells us that a certain Dr. Keith Moore, Chairman of Anatomy Department of the University of Toronto’s School of Medicine has discovered the happy marriage between the Islamic revelation and contemporary human developmental anatomy, “I am amazed at the scientific accuracy of these statements which were made in the seventh century. It is quite reasonable for Muslims to believe that these verses are revelations from God. Moore is reported to have said.¹ It simply reads modern biology into certain Qur’ānic verses describing the development of foetus and illustrating then with clinical drawings and text-book descriptions for example the Qur’ānic verse: “Verily We fashioned man from a small quantity of mingled liquids (nuṭfah amshāj) (76:2) is explained by Moore as referring to the mixture of a small quantity of sperms with the oocyte and its associated follicular fluid or the male and female sexual secretion. The resulting mixed drop made up of the ovum and penetrating sperm becomes the zygote, the precursor of the embryo. Similarly, for example, the following verses: “Verily, We created man from a product of wet earth then placed him

¹ Ziāuddīn Sardār in his article titled “Between Two Masters: Qur’ān or Science” published *Afkār Inquiry*, August, 1985 (London) takes up the apologetic strand of Muslim responses on Science and the Qur’ān and subjects it to a thorough criticism and analysis. He concludes that science is not the pursuit of Truth and its “discoveries” and ‘facts’ do not, and cannot have the same validity as the verses of the Qur’ān. Science is a problem solving enterprise; it is a method, a techniques, for solving problems within a given paradigm and world-view. Keith, Moore, Maurice Bucaille, Muḥammad Jamāluddīn El Fandy and others related to this apologetic scholars trend have been quoted from the above mentioned write-up of learned author

as a drop (of seed) (nuṭṭah) in a safe lodging, then fashioned We the drop a clot (‘alaq), then fashioned We the little lump bones (‘iẓām), then clothed the bones with flesh and then produced it as another creation so blessed be Allah the Best of Creator” (23:12-14). Looking into these verses Moore shaped some plasticine like the embryo at 28 days and put his own teeth-mark on it. The chewed plasticine was a carbon copy of the embryo, with the embryos somites similar to the teeth-marks. Further examination showed that in an embryo of six weeks the bones begin to form muscles attached to them. By the seventh week the bones give a human shape to the embryo. The ears and eyes begin to form in the 4th week and are visible by the 6th or 42 days after the zygote has been formed all these developments are in conformity with the Qur’ānic description, Moore tells us.

Sp what does all this prove? Does it confirm the Divine origins of the Qur’ān? or does it merely tell us that the Qur’ān is a treasure chest of the scientific facts? Ziauddin Sardar poses these questions and comes forth with an impressive reply.¹

On the surface such attempts to legitimize modern science by equating it with the Qur’ān or to prove the divine origins of the Qur’ān by showing that it contains scientifically valid facts appear harmless indeed even commendable exercise. However when pursued on a native basis as it is often done by Muslim scholars such methods can be dangerous and when undertaken deliberately be it sincerely often by non-Muslim scholars it can have mischievous consequences. The inference drawn from by comparing the Qur’ān and Science is two-fold. If the facts and theories mentioned in the Qur’ān which was revealed 1400 years ago are supported by modern science, the Divine nature

¹ Ibid.

of the Qur'ān is confirmed (if confirmation is indeed what we are looking for); and conversely, if modern scientific facts and theories find a reflection in the Qur'ān then modern science must also have the same universal and eternal validity as the Qur'ān.¹ Sardar boldly affirms the fact that the Qur'ān which is book of guidance does no need confirmation from any other source for the Muslims it is a *priori* valid and eternal. Any attempt at reading science in the Qur'ān makes the eternal scripture subservient to science and it elevated science to the level where it becomes the arbitrator of what is and what is not truth. It further enforces the mythical notion that scientific theories are neutral, universal and eternally valid. Moreover, trying to read science in the allegorical metaphorical and symbolic verses of the Qur'ān often stretches analogical reasoning beyond its limits and lends to absurd and in some authors to quite contradictory conclusions then intended by the Qur'ān. It is apologia of the worst type.²

Muslim authors trying to prove that the Qur'ān is very scientific and modern often start by stating that the Qur'ān places great emphasis and indeed it does, on the pursuit of knowledge and use of reason. Some 750 verses almost one eighth of the Qur'ān in contrast to only 250 legislative verses exhort the believers to study nature, reflect, make the best use of reason and make scientific enterprise an integral part of the community life. It is further pointed out that the Qur'ān mentions several scientific facts and theories all of which are supported by the most recent discoveries and advances.³

This type of apologetic literature developed in the nineteenth century Muslim world. Sir Syed Aḥmad and Muḥammad

¹ Ibid.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

'Abduh and 'Allāmah 'Ināyatullāh Khān Mashriqī are that way precursors of the movement.¹ However, this trend tried to give scientific legitimation to the Qur'ān got reflected more strongly in early sixties of the twentieth century. One of the earliest pamphlets came out of Cario, **On Cosmic Verses in the Qur'ān**, by Muḥammad Jamāluddīn El Fandy (The Supreme Council of

¹ Sir Syed: Sayyid Aḥmad Khān (1817-1898) was one of the towering personalities of the nineteenth century India, whose thought and movement greatly influenced the Muslims attitude to the Western Civilization. During the later half of the nineteenth century he was an accredited leader of the Muslims of India. The British Government acknowledged his serviced and knighted him. He insisted that for the survival of Muslims in the west dominated world a reinterpreting of Islam was necessary. So he himself took the task of reinterperatation of Islam and Qur'ān. His thoughts were deeply influenced by the rationalist philosophy of the West and he attempted at interpreting the Holy Qur'ān in the light of the then scientific knowledge of the west.

'*Abduh*: Muḥammad 'Abduh (1849-1905) Egyptian scholar and reformer regarded as the architect of Islamic modernism. The crucial influence in his development was the impact of Jamāl-ud-Dīn al-Afghānī (1839-1897) a strenuous advocate of a unitary Islam who emphasized the concept of Ummah (Community) against regionalism that in next century was to break up allegiance to the Ottoman Caliphate into nationalism and the nation state (for further details see 'Abduh Muḥammad in Esposito, John L (ed) The Oxford, Encyclopedia of The Modern Islamic World (New York Oxford University Press, 1995)

'Allāmah Mashriqī: 'Ināyatullāh Khān 'Allāmah Mashriqī (1888-1963) belonged to Pathān family of Punjāb. He was academically brilliant. He was an ardent Pan-Islamist. Unofficially, he represented India at the Islamic Conference, Cairo in 1976. He founded the Khāksār Movement in 1931 (Khāksār means humble and lowly as the dust), a paramilitary organization with a uniform khaki dress for its followers, a belcha (spade) as its symbol and regular drills and road marches as part of its routine. Its aim was to regenerate society and revive the lost glories of early Islam. His Tazkirah, became the main ideological plank of his followers. (For further details see 'Ināyatullāh Khān, 'Allāma Mashriqī in Nagendra Kr. Singh (ed) Encyclopedia of Muslim Biography (New Delhi, APH Publishing Corporation, 2001, vol. III PP. 42-44.)

Islamic Affairs, 1961). It appears that Il Fandy suffers from a deep inferiority complex which he tries to overcome by proving that every recent (that is in the 1950s) astronomical discovery and scientific theory has already been mentioned in the Qur'ān as the Qur'ān as 'the best example of scientific expression' is a mathematical equation and there certainly are no equations in the Qur'ān)¹ El-Fandy finds Qur'ānic evidence for the creation of red giants, white dwarfs, existence of ether(?), the evolution of the planets and the big bang theory. And there is more science supports the Qur'ān's claim writes El-Fandy that life exists on other planets".²

All this is not just bad science. It makes a mockery of the Qur'ān compared to many others. El- Fandy is quite sane. Azīz-ul-Ḥasan 'Abbāsī, a Pākistānī Neuropsychiatrist, in his pamphlet *The Qur'ān and Mental Hygiene* (Karāchī undated) manages to find in the Qur'ān modern cures for diabetes, tuberculosis, stomach ulcers, rheumatism, arthritis, blood pressure, asthma, dysentery and paralyses!³

In recent years this rather banal comparative approach to science and Islam has been legitimised by the French surgeon Maurice Bucaille his book *The Bible, the Qur'ān and Science* (Seghers, Paris, 1976 and North American Trust Publication Indianapolis, 1978) is essential reading for Muslims with larger than life inferiority complexes and has been translated into almost every Muslim language from Arabic, Persian, Turkish, Urdu to Indonesian. Bucaille sets out to do a detailed and thorough analysis of the "holy scriptures in the light of

¹ Sardār, N. 4, discusses in detail the naivety of El Fandys assertions in this regard.

² Ibid.

³ Quoted by Sardār N. 4

modern knowledge". He focuses on four topics: astronomy, the earth, animal and vegetable kingdom and human reproduction. The methodology followed is the well established one of quoting the Qur'ānic verses and then giving a scientific commentary on them. Bucaille tries to be more objective and takes pains to point out that the Qur'ān contains scientific information that was not available at the time of revelation and, in fact, some of the information contained in it, is contrary to what people believed at the time of the Prophet. After going through the standard motions of examining verses about the orbit of the moon and sun, the water cycle, the reproduction procedure, he concludes:

"The Qur'ān most definitely did not contain a single preposition at variance with the most firmly established modern knowledge, nor did it contain any of the ideas current at the time on the subjects it describes. Furthermore, however, a large number of facts are mentioned in the Qur'ān which were not discovered until modern times. So many in fact, that on November 9, 1976, the present author was able to read before the French Academy of Medicine a paper on ***The Physiological and Embriological data in the Qur'ān***. The data like many others on differing subjects constituted a veritable challenge to human explanation in view of what we know about the history of various sciences through the ages. Modern man's findings concerning the absence of scientific error are therefore in complete agreement with 'the Muslim executes' conception of ***the Qur'ān as Book of Revelation***. It is a consideration which implies that God could not express an erroneous idea.¹

The Bible, of course, did not meet the stringent criteria of modern knowledge and the clear cut conclusion of Bucaille is

¹ Ibid.

that “it is impossible not to admit the existence of scientific errors in the Bible.” However, all this simply states the obvious with a sense of real discovery the Muslim belief that the Qur’ān as word of Allah cannot contain any error and that the Bible as it exists today is not true Divine revelation.¹ And there can be no denying the fact that the bold assertions made by Buccaille in the light of firmly established scientific knowledge adequately establish the point that the Qur’ān is and will remain the word of God even if tested intellectually and scientifically.

But where Buccaille stops Buccaillism takes over.² The dangers inherent in Buccaillism are very graver. There is the obvious fact that it generates a strangely dumb founding theology -as all scientific knowledge is contained in the Qur’ān simply studying the Qur’ān from a scientific perspective will reveal everything and lead to new theories and discoveries while the Qur’ān obviously contains some passing references to natural facts, it is by no means a text-book of science.³

By equating the Qur’ān with science Buccaillism elevates science to the realm of the sacred and makes divine revelation subject to the verification of Western science apart from the fact that the Qur’ān needs no justification from modern science. Buccaillism opens the Qur’ān to the counter argument to popper criteria of refutation, would the Qur’ān be proved false and written off just as Buccaille writes off the Bible, if a particular scientific fact does not tally with it or if a particular fact mentioned in the Qur’ān is refuted by modern science? And what if a particular theory which is confirmed by the

¹ Ibid.

² Sardār gives a long list of authors who have tried to look further for scientific facts and theories in the Qur’ān. for details see Sardār’s articles mentioned in N. 4

³ Sardār, N. 4

Qur'ān is in vogue today but abandoned tomorrow for another theory that presents an opposing picture? Does that mean that the Qur'ān is valid today and will not be valid tomorrow?¹

By raising science to the level of sacred knowledge, Buccaillism undermines any criticism of science. Because the pursuit of knowledge is so strongly emphasized in the Qur'ān, most Muslim scientists already possess a sense of reverence towards modern science. Buccaillism takes this science to a new level a whole generation of Muslim scientists do not just accept all science as Good and True, but attack anyone who shows a critical or skeptical attitude towards science. Furthermore, the belief in a universally beneficial science leads to a pestiferous kind of fatalism since science is universal and for the benefit of all humankind, it will eventually make its way to Muslim societies and serve their needs!²

It must be made clear that science is not the pursuit of truth and its: discoveries and facts do not and cannot have the same validity as the verses of the Qur'ān science is a problem-solving enterprise. It is a method, a technique, for solving problems within a given paradigm and worldview³ when bacon said that nature yields her secrets under torture he made torture and suppression an integral and legitimate part of modern science as it exists today is designed to deep a particular culture and world-view dominant reading the verses of the Qur'ān into modern science is not going to change its essential character and style.⁴

Revealing the nature of the scientific method Sardar observes:

¹ Ibid.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid.

That there is something magically objective and neutral about the Scientific method is a cruel hoax and biasfree observation is a myth. Nothing “out there” can be perceived without filtering it through our world view and culture scientists too often modify their observation with their own ideas and prejudices, values and norms of their society. Not just observation but experimentation too cannot be made in a cultural vacuum, but have meaning and significance solely in the framework of a theory itself set in the conceptual picture of a world-view. Putting a theory into a mathematical picture code does not strip the value content of a proposition of modern science, on the contrary, the nature of mathematics is such that its application to the world through science is purely fortuitous, mathematical propositions, including the geometric propositions of Euclid are a priori analytic-that is to say, that their status is determined merely by analyzing the term of the proposition that one plus one equals two can be determined as conforming to the principle that one plus one means two passages that some theories can be codified in mathematical expression is a matter of scientific convenience. The laws of nature are expressed in mathematical formulae in ball points in laboratories and institutes.

The fact that some of these manufactured laws and theories agree with what the Qur’ān says is not in itself of much significance. What is more important to note in this context is that the Qur’ān promotes the pursuit of knowledge within a framework of values. It is these values which should be the focus of our attention and which should shape our scientific activity. It is only by turning these values into living reality that we can be truly honest to the Qur’ān and fulfill our obligation towards it.¹

¹ Ibid.

Islam and Science:

The Qur'ān presents the reality including the physical

Universe as a Coherent System:

"الَّذِي خَلَقَ سَبْعَ سَمَاوَاتٍ طِبَاقًا مَّا تَرَىٰ فِي خَلْقِ الرَّحْمَنِ مِن تَفْوُوتٍ فَأَرْجِعِ الْبَصَرَ هَلْ تَرَىٰ مِن فُطُورٍ ﴿٣١﴾"

Tr.: Who has created seven heavens in harmony? You (Muhammad) can see no fault in the Beneficent One's creation: then look again; can you see any faults? (al-Mulk: 3)

It also speaks of the ability of man to know the reality:

"وَعَلَّمَ آدَمَ الْأَسْمَاءَ كُلَّهَا ثُمَّ عَرَضَهُمْ عَلَى الْمَلَائِكَةِ فَقَالَ أَنبِئُونِي بِأَسْمَاءِ هَٰؤُلَاءِ إِن كُنتُمْ صَادِقِينَ ﴿٣١﴾"

Tr.: And He taught Adam all the names then showed them to the angels, saying; inform me of these if you are truthful (al-Baqarah:31)

This knowledge of reality including that of the physical universe is assigned the high function of enabling the gnosis of God.

"إِنَّمَا يَخْشَى اللَّهَ مِنْ عِبَادِهِ الْعُلَمَاءُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَزِيزٌ غَفُورٌ ﴿٣١﴾"

Tr.: Those truly fear God, among His servants who have knowledge: for God is Exalted in Might, of- Forgiving. (Fāṭir:28)

The physical universe is presented not only knowable but also amenable to manipulation by man for fulfilling his needs:

"وَسَخَّرَ لَكُم مَّا فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ جَمِيعًا مِّنْهُ إِنَّ فِي ذَٰلِكَ لَآيَاتٍ لِّقَوْمٍ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ ﴿٣١﴾"

Tr.: And has made of service unto you whatsoever is on the heavens and whatsoever is in the earth; it is all from him. Lo! Herein verily are portents for people who reflect. (al-Jāthiyah: 13)

The use of the physical universe consequent to knowing it is given a high value by being presented as a means of actualizing

a dimension of God-given nobility of man *viz* enjoying a high physical standard of life due to his technological abilities:

”وَلَقَدْ كَرَّمْنَا بَنِي آدَمَ وَحَمَلْنَاهُمْ فِي الْبَرِّ وَالْبَحْرِ وَرَزَقْنَاهُمْ مِنَ الطَّيِّبَاتِ وَفَضَّلْنَاهُمْ عَلَى كَثِيرٍ مِمَّنْ خَلَقْنَا تَفْضِيلًا ﴿٧٠﴾”

Tr.: Verily We have honoured the children of Adam. We carry them on the land and the sea and have made provision of good things for them and have preferred them above many of those whom We created with a marked preferment. (al-Isrā': 70)

The technological ability averred by science is given another implied value by enjoining the accomplishment of military might for upholding the truth which would necessarily need scientific and technological abilities.

”وَأَعِدُّوا لَهُمْ مَا اسْتَطَعْتُمْ مِنْ قُوَّةٍ وَمِنْ رِبَاطِ الْخَيْلِ تُرْهَبُونَ بِهِ عَدُوَّ اللَّهِ وَعَدُوَّكُمْ وَأَخْرَبِينَ مِنْ دُونِهِمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَهُمُ اللَّهُ يَعْلَمُهُمْ وَمَا تُنْفِقُوا مِنْ شَيْءٍ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ يُوَفَّ إِلَيْكُمْ وَأَنْتُمْ لَا تُظْلَمُونَ ﴿٦٠﴾”

Tr.: Make ready for them although canst of (armed) free and of horses tethered that there by you may dismay the enemy of Allah and your enemy and others beside them whom you know no. Allah knows them whatever you spent in the way of Allah it will be repaid to you in full and you will not be wronged (al-Anfāl:60)

Thus it is not only the Qur'ān affirmation of observation as a means of knowledge (وَلَا تَقْفُ مَا لَيْسَ لَكَ بِهِ عِلْمٌ إِنَّ السَّمْعَ وَالْبَصَرَ وَالْفُؤَادَ) (Tr.: O Man! Follow not that whereof you have no knowledge. Lo! The hearing and the sight and the heart-of each it will be asked. (al-Isrā': 36)

That paves the way of science as shown by 'Allāmah Muḥammad Iqbāl (1977-1938) and other earlier scholars, but a whole

continuum of metaphysics, ethics and practical policy that creates a very congenial soil for the emergence of high science.

The greatest boon that the Muslim East bestowed upon the West was the scientific or inductive method of inquiry. Although most of the Muslim thinkers used the inductive method in their scientific investigation in deferent fields, the two of them who particularly expounded this method were Muḥammad bin Zakaria al-Razī and Ibn Haitham. Ibn Ḥazm, writing on the scope of logic emphasized sense-perception as a source of knowledge. Later Ibn Taimiyyah in his refutation of Aristotelian logic showed that induction was the only form of reliable inference. Suhrawardī Maqtūl too offered a systematic refutation of Greek logic. It was the method of observation and experiment which led al-Bairūnī to the discovery of reaction time, al-Kindī to the formula that sensation is a response of the organism proportionate to the stimulus, and Ibn Haitham to his findings in optics (*The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*, Lahore, 1954, P. 129).

It also offers the explanation for the actual and remarkable emergence of science in Muslim Civilization that amounted to a scientific revolution at the level of entire mankind as admitted by George Sarton that the medieval ages were scientifically dark only for Europe but humanity as a totality not only continued to enjoy scientific enterprise but made remarkable and revolutionary advances in science at the hands of the Muslims:

The most valuable of all, the most original and the most pregnant works were written in Aramic. From the second half of the eighth to the end of the eleventh century the most pregnant works were written in Arabic. From the second half of the eighth to the end of the eleventh century Arabic was

the scientific and most progressive language of mankind. During that period anyone wishing to be well informed and up-to-date had to study Arabic. It will suffice here to evoke a few glorious names without contemporary equivalents in the West: Jābir bin Ḥayyān al-Kindī, al-Khawārazmī, al-Farḡhanī, al-Razī, Thābit bin Qurrah, al-Battānī Ḥusain bin Iṣḥāq, al-Farābī, Ibrāhīm bin Sinān, al-Mas'ūdī, al-Ṭabarī, Abul Wafā, 'Alī bin 'Abbās, Abul Qāsim, Ibn al-Jazzār, al-Bairūnī, Ibn Sīnā, Ibn Yūnus, al-Karkhī, Ibn al-Ḥaytam, 'Alī 'Īsā, al-Ghazālī, al-Zarqālī, 'Umar Khayyām-a magnificent array of names which it would not be difficult to extend. If one tells you that the middle ages were scientifically sterile just quote these names to him. All these scientists flourished between 750 to 1000 A D (Introduction to the History of Science vol. 1)

Āyah/Āyāt (Signs):

Often Qur'ānic verse are quoted to support the claim that modern scientific 'facts' theories and discoveries are there in the Qur'ān. Therefore, it is pertinent to understand what this Qur'ānic term connotes many meanings and connotations of the term are recorded in the relevant literature.¹ However, one connotation of the āyat is to point to something as it is a sign only. Sign points to something. Allah's Oneness and the belief in the hereafter, in prophethood of Muḥammad (PBUH)

¹ Very interesting and informative research article titled "Āyāt (Signs): A Study in Qur'ānic Perspective" by M Razīul Islām Nadwī in MAAS J. Islamic Sciences ('Alīgarh) vol. 7, no. 2, July-Dec. 1991/1412 AH, must be consulted. He has not only investigated the lexical connotation of the terms but has shown the historical understanding of the terms by the leading scholars including Ibn Jauzī, Rāghīb Iṣfahānī and Maulānā Maudūdī; also see the Karīm Sayyed Ghanīm's article "Scientific Interpretation of the Āyāt-i-Qur'ān" in MAAS J. Islamic SC. Vol. 8, no. 1, Jan-June, 1992/1412 AH for contemporary understanding of āyāt-i-Qur'ānī in scientific perspective.

and other commandments of Allah encompassing moral, social, economic and other domains of human life are often the objectives of the verses.

Concept of Khilāfah:

Man being the khalīfah of Allah on earth has to know how to relate himself to the world. In addition to his world-view, belief system, he has to understand the physical nature of the world as well as the spiritual dimensions of the mater.

Hence those of us who want to understand the relevance of the Qur'ān to our scientific enterprise can get a light from those verses of the Qur'ān which speak of man's appointment as a khalīfah on earth.¹

Epistemological Foundations:

Science is adamant in excluding all the references to metaphysical dimensions of the reality. It insists that physical senses only provide the necessary truths about the matter. Reason is the sole criterion. Qur'ānic epistemology not only affirms the proper significance of physical senses and reason but speaks of Qalb and Fu'ād and Revelation. It warns mankind against entertaining wrong notions based on speculations. It highlights the inborn, innate, intrinsic faculties of man, which help him fathom the larger part of the reality, which is beyond the physical aspects of it. It concludes that lowest level of that innate faculty is rationality while the highest part is represented by the faculty to which is addressed waḥī-Ilahīh (The Revelation)²

¹ M. Riāz Kirmānī's article "Epistemological Foundations of Islam" in MAAS J. Islamic SC. Vol. 3, No. 1, Jan-June, 1987/1407 AH speaks of 'ilm and khalīfah.

² Ibid; Dr. K. M. Yūsuf Amīn's (Reader A.K. Ṭibbīyah College), lecture on "Qur'ān and Epistemology" has helped me to formulate this portion of the paper.

Origins of the Western Science:

The fact remains that Muslim intellectual and scientific tradition was instrumental in rescuing the west from the dark ages. But this is only a partial truth the other part of the reality is that the Renaissance had a strong anti-religious sentiment. Though the immediate cause of their hatred towards the religion was the church and its functions, yet the development of modern western science continues to harbor an anti-religious sentiment which is not confined to Christianity only but heavily infringes upon the premises upheld by the Qur'ān and Islam.

One of the malpractices of the church in the pre renaissance period had been that the cosmological references of the scriptures had been interpreted and those interpretations had been given a status equal to that of the scriptures themselves, with the passage of time when many of the interpretations of the scriptures regarding cosmology were challenged, it was deemed to represent heresy.

It is high time that the dangers inherent in this approach are well understood.

Conclusion:

Al-Qur'ān is the word of Allah. It is the book of guidance. Its basic doctrine, *Tauḥīd* implies that the knowledge acquired through experience and that received by revelation derive their meaning within a holistic back ground in which both the experiential and revelational knowledge have their place. The doctrine of Khalifah relates knowledge with the purpose of the creation of man both the experimental and revelational knowledge are equally important for a society, which is eager to play the role of Khalīfah in the real sense of the Qur'ān the doctrine of *hidāyah* lays further emphasis on the fact that man is always in need of revelational guidance without which the

experiential guidance is always reductionist and partial and the action commanded by such guidance is directionless¹

In the words of Dr. Kalīm Ṣiddīqī Islam provides the 'Grand Paradigm' for which "Revealed Paradigm 'the core' and 'science paradigm' is part of this paradigm 'science paradigm' is totality of human Knowledge based on man's quest, reflection, speculation, experience and experimentation in the epistemology of Islam, the revealed paradigm controls and directs the scientific paradigm. He regrets that under the influence of western civilization, science paradigm is dominated by an epistemological tradition that denies the very existence of the Revealed paradigm. He stresses that the growth and the development of western science paradigm are often, of nearly always, made by non – scientists. These priorities are determined by such factors as sentiments of national pride, prosperity and economic profitability.²

Lastly let me quote Sheikh Fadhlalla Haeri, thus:

Confusion is there because we are not unified we have divided for information's sake – this is my work that is his etc. Reality, however, is permeated by oneness. Throughout our life we seek to unify, to interrelate and co relate. All our sciences clumsily attempt to interconnect various subsystems in this one, all encompassing all – engulfing perfection. Confusion occurs because we do not trust that all is held together by one fibre, be it invisible or visible, subtle or physical.³

¹ Riāz Kirmānī, N. 23.

² See Dr. Kalīm Ṣiddīqī, "Integration and Disintegration in the Politics of Islam and Kufr" in Kalīm Ṣiddīqī (ed.) *issues in the Islamic movement, 1982-83* (London, 1984).

³ Haeri, *Sheikh Fadhlalla*, "Journey of the Universe as expounded in Qur'ān", (London, kpl, 1987), P. 94.

The Object of Scientific Pursuit in the Worldview of the Qur'ān

✎...Dr. Khālid Mas'ūd¹

It is a matter of great significance that the Qur'ān describes reason as the basis of faith. An ardent student of the Book finds it largely comprising of discourses regarding (i) the attributes of the Almighty Allah, (ii) the commission of the prophets of Allah and (iii) the eschatology. These three subjects are interspersed in whole of the Book and one is astonished to find that nowhere the Qur'ān thrusts its contention upon its audience. It justifies and argues every theme by means of arguments drawn from nature or the psyche of man.² Surprisingly, when the Prophet Muḥammad's (PBUH) audience asked for some sort of miraculous appearance of the providence or His angels before they could be convinced of the veracity of the Prophet's message, the Qur'ān dispensed with such demands merely by saying that in the past miracles failed to convince people. Hence a rational approach was now supposed to be necessary:

"وَمَا مَنَعَنَا أَنْ نُرْسِلَ بِالْآيَاتِ إِلَّا أَنْ كَذَّبَ بِهَا الْأُولُونَ وَءَاتَيْنَا ثُمُودَ النَّاقَةَ مُبْصِرَةً فَظَلَمُوا بِهَا
وَمَا نُرْسِلُ بِالْآيَاتِ إِلَّا تَخْوِيفًا ﴿٥٣﴾"

Tr.: And nothing hinders Us from presenting signs except that the people of old had discredited them. We presented to

¹ A great Pākistānī writer of Islamic Studies.

² The fact is asserted in the Qur'ān in verse 53 of Fuṣṣilat as follows:

"We shall show them our portents on the horizons and within their self until it is manifest unto them that this is the Truth".

Thamūd a she-camel as a visible sign; yet they maltreated her. We give signs only by way of warning".¹

Thus the Qur'ān does not deprive the rational being of his prime quality of reasoning things for the sake of gaining his allegiance.

On close examination of the signs drawn from nature (and these signs make the bulk of Qur'ānic arguments) one finds that these are no more than natural phenomena which call for scientific inquiry. These have been drawn from the realm of astronomy, astrophysics, geology, botany, physiology, climatology and science of the like. People have counted as many as 750 verses of the Qur'ān on this subject.² According to Maurice Bucaille, the Book did not contain a single statement that was assailable from a modern scientific point of view.³ The Muslim scientists have felt the need of producing scientific literature wherein the Qur'ānic view finds a pivotal position.⁴

The Qur'ān encourages, scientific inquiry because it is more fruitful for perception of realities than mere faith. A subject of such fundamental importance has not gone undefined in the Book. In normal practice, a scientific pursuit requires the use of senses to make observations and of intellect to draw conclusions and enunciate theorems. In the process one lays hands on material gains, which ultimately become an end in

¹ Al-Isrā': 59

² Al-Najjār, Zaghūl R., *The Limitations and the Teachings of Science*, Amer. Jour. Isl. Soc. Sci. Sept. 1986. P. 67.

³ Bucaille, Maurice, *The Bible, The Qur'ān and Science*. American Trust Publications, 1979, P. vii.

⁴ The Late Dr. Ismā'īl al-Fārūqī established the International Institute of Islamic Thought in America in 1981 with the express desire of 'Islamization of Knowledge'. The Association of Muslim Social Scientists, Indiana, USA, is also working on these lines.

themselves. That is why, science is considered secular and mundane. The Qur'ān, on the other hand, relies on the use of senses and intellect but at the same time defines more elaborate functions for the intellect. This results in an approach toward science which is quite different from the one we are familiar with.

Let us see how the Qur'ān develops this theme. The Qur'ān urges us to use our faculties of hearing and observing to the maximum when it says:

"وَمِنْ آيَاتِهِ مَنَامُكُمْ بِاللَّيْلِ وَالنَّهَارِ وَآبَتِغَاؤُكُمْ مِنْ فَضْلِهِ إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَاتٍ لِّقَوْمٍ يُسْمِعُونَ ﴿٣٠﴾"

Tr.: Of His signs is your slumber by night and by day, and your seeking of His bounty. Herein indeed are portents for those who hear.¹ (30:23)

"أَلَمْ تَرَ أَنَّ اللَّهَ يُرْسِطُ السَّحَابَ ثُمَّ يُؤَلِّفُ بَيْنَهُمْ ثُمَّ يُجْعَلُهُمْ رُكَّامًا فَتَرَى الْوَدْقَ يَخْرُجُ مِنْ خِلَالِهِمْ وَيُنزِلُ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ مِنْ جِبَالٍ فِيهَا مِنْ بَرَدٍ فَيُصِيبُ بِهِ مَنْ يَشَاءُ وَيَصْرِفُهُ عَنِ مَنْ يَشَاءُ يَكَادُ سَنَا بَرْقِهِ يَذْهَبُ بِالْأَبْصَرِ ﴿٣١﴾ يُقَلِّبُ اللَّهُ اللَّيْلَ وَالنَّهَارَ إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَعِبْرَةً لِّأُولِي الْأَبْصَارِ ﴿٣٢﴾"

Tr.: Have you not seen how Allah drives the clouds, then gathers them, then makes them layers, and you see the rain comes forth from between them; He sends down from the heaven mountains wherein is hail, pelting with it whom He will, and averts it from whom He will. The flash of His lightning almost snatches away the sight. Allah causes the revolution of the day and the night. Herein indeed is a lesson for those who see.²

This hearing and listening is not limited to its physical use only but is intended to be an instrument for drawing conclusions and learning lessons.

¹ Another verse of similar import is 16:65.

² Al-Nūr: 43-44

Next comes the role of the mental faculties. In this sphere the Qur'ān expects much more from a scientist than mere inferences of physical nature that are generally considered the end of a scientific pursuit. The Qur'ān uses the words – 'Aql, Fiqh, 'Ibrah, Tadhakkur and Tafakkur – to describe the functions of the mental activity of a true scientist.

'Aql, according to William Lane,¹ signifies intelligence, understanding, intellect, reason and the knowledge of the quality of things, of their goodness and badness etc. Every scientist is normally required to use this quality in his pursuits. The Qur'ān points out the use of this quality in verse 2:164.

"إِنَّ فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ لَآيَاتٍ لِّلْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿١٦٤﴾ وَفِي خَلْقِكُمْ وَمَا يَبُتُّ مِن دَابَّةٍ آيَاتٍ لِّقَوْمٍ يُوقِنُونَ ﴿١٦٥﴾ وَأَخْتَلَفُ اللَّيْلُ وَالنَّهَارُ وَمَا أَنزَلَ اللَّهُ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ مِن رِّزْقٍ فَأَحْيَا بِهِ الْأَرْضَ بَعْدَ مَوْتِهَا وَتَصْرِيفِ الرِّيْحِ آيَاتٍ لِّقَوْمٍ يَعْقِلُونَ ﴿١٦٦﴾"

Tr.: Lo! in the creation of the heavens and the earth, in the alteration of night and day, in the ships that sail the ocean with cargoes beneficial to man, in the water which Allah sends down from the sky, thereby reviving the earth after its death, and dispersing therein all kinds of beasts, in the circulation of the winds and in the clouds obedient between heaven and earth, are signs for people who have sense.²

This verse alludes to the harmony in nature in spite of the contrasts prevalent here and there. Omnipotence and beneficence of the Creator is self-evident. Once a person applies his mind to the phenomena described in the verse, he will find instruction for the cultivation of his mind. Fiqh means

¹ Lane, Edward William, Arabic-English Lexicon, William & Norgate, London, 1874.

² Other verses of similar import are al-Naḥl: 67, al-Rūm:24 and al-Jāthiyah: 5.

comprehension and through understanding of a subject so as to learn the science of a thing. According to Maulānā Amīn Aḥsan Iṣlāḥī,¹ 'Ilm is the outcome of intellect but Fiqh is a function of heart and mind which is full of emotions and feelings. Therefore, Fiqh takes the pursuit beyond material gains. The signs of Allah are not unveiled to a person whose prime concern is materialistic. The use of this faculty of understanding is invoked in verse 6:98, which says:

"وَهُوَ الَّذِي أَنْشَأَكُمْ مِنْ نَفْسٍ وَاحِدَةٍ فَمُسْتَقَرٌّ وَمُسْتَوْدَعٌ قَدْ فَصَّلْنَا الْآيَاتِ لِقَوْمٍ يَفْقَهُونَ ﴿٩٨﴾"

Tr.: It was He that created you from one being and furnished you with a dwelling and a resting place. We have made plain our revelation to men who comprehend.²

The verse argues oneness of God by the multiplicity of human race and fulfillment of their needs through a perfect planning.

'Ibrah means an evidence whereby one passes from the knowledge of what is seen to the knowledge of what is not seen. Thus one learns lessons from the observed facts. This 'Ibrah has been invoked while explaining how Allah brings forth constituents of milk from a conjunction between the contents of the intestines and the blood:

"وَإِنَّ لَكُمْ فِي الْأَنْعَامِ لَعِبْرَةً نُسْقِيكُمْ مِمَّا فِي بُطُونِهِمْ مِنْ بَيْنِ فَرْثٍ وَدَمٍ لَبَنًا خَالِصًا سَائِغًا لِلشَّارِبِينَ ﴿٦٦﴾"

Tr.: In cattle, too, there is a lesson for you. We give you to drink of that which is in their bellies, from betwixt the refuse and the blood, pure milk palatable to the drinkers.³ (the Qur'ān, 16:66).

¹ Iṣlāḥī, Amīn Aḥsan, Tadabbur-i-Qur'ān, II, Markazī Anjuman Khuddām-ul-Qur'ān, Lāhore, 1976. P. 500.

² Al-An'ām: 98

³ Another verse of similar import is al-Mu'minūn: 21.

The verse describes a sign of Allah's beneficence. He is a great Designer with subtle means to produce unimaginable results.

Tadhakkur, according to William Lane,¹ means to become reminded of something. In Qur'ānic usage, too, being reminded through association of ideas is Tadhakkur. The knowledge of all the realities has been endowed to man, who very often forgets it. The signs available in the Universe remind him of these forgotten realities. For example, if someone is not convinced of the Day of Resurrection, he should observe how Allah gives life to barren soil by means of rain. Similarly, Allah has created things in pairs which are complementary to each other. If life in this world seems lopsided and there is no explanation to justify this lopsidedness, then why should a man not think of another life in the Hereafter which should be complementary to this world. The scientists are required to call into play the mental faculty of Tadhakkur in the following verses:

"وَالْقَىٰ فِي الْأَرْضِ رَوَاسِيَ أَن تَمِيدَ بِكُمْ وَأَنْهَارًا وَسُبُلًا لَّعَلَّكُمْ تَهْتَدُونَ ﴿١٥﴾ وَعَلَّمَنَّاكَ جَمِيعًا لَّعَلَّكَ تَهْتَدُونَ ﴿١٦﴾ أَفَمَن يَخْلُقُ كَمَن لَّا يَخْلُقُ أَفَلَا تَذَكَّرُونَ ﴿١٧﴾"

Tr.: And He cast into the earth firm mountains lest it should quake with you, and set streams, roads and landmarks so that you may be rightly guided. And by the stars they are directed. Is He then who creates like him who has created nothing? Will you not then be reminded.²

The verse implies that it is unreasonable on the part of man to associate other gods with the Almighty Allah, when no one equals Him in His attributes.

Fikr, according to Lane,³ means repeated consideration for the purpose of seeking to discover its meaning are arranging of

¹ Lane, Edward William, Loc cit.

² Al-Nahl: 15-17

³ Lane, Edward William. Loc. Cit.

known things in the mind in order to attain to the knowledge of an unknown thing. Thus Tafakkur is reflection to arrive at the wisdom lying hidden in the various occurrences. The Qur'ān promises greater reward to persons who are in the habit of reflection. This function of mind leads one to the metaphysical domain of life, to feel the presence of Allah in the Universe, to understand divine laws in force on this planet, and to perceive the Hereafter approaching in the wake of death. The Qur'ān says:

"وَأَوْحَىٰ رَبُّكَ إِلَى النَّحْلِ أَنِ اتَّخِذِي مِنَ الْجِبَالِ بُيُوتًا وَمِنَ الشَّجَرِ وَمِمَّا يَعْرِشُونَ ﴿٦٨﴾ ثُمَّ كُلِي مِن كُلِّ الثَّمَرَاتِ فَاسْلُكِي سُبُلَ رَبِّكِ ذُلُلًا يَخْرُجُ مِنْ بُطُونِهَا شَرَابٌ مُّخْتَلِفٌ أَلْوَانُهُ فِيهِ شِفَاءٌ لِلنَّاسِ إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَةً لِّقَوْمٍ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ ﴿٦٩﴾"

Tr.: Your Lord inspired the bee, saying: choose your habitations in the hills, in the trees and in that which thatch: then feed on every kind of fruit, and follow the paths of your Lord made smooth for you. There comes forth from their bellies a drink diverse of hues, wherein is healing for mankind. Surely in this there is a portent for people who reflect.¹

Production of honey by a very complicated process and harnessing the bee for the benefit of mankind is a great portent of Allah's mercy and sustenance.

Another verse reads:

"اللَّهُ يَتَوَفَّى الْأَنْفُسَ حِينَ مَوْتِهَا وَالَّتِي لَمْ تَمُتْ فِي مَنَامِهَا فَيُمْسِكُ الَّتِي قَضَىٰ عَلَيْهَا الْمَوْتَ وَيُرْسِلُ الْأُخْرَىٰ إِلَىٰ أَجَلٍ مُّسَمًّى إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَاتٍ لِّقَوْمٍ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ ﴿٥١﴾"

Tr.: Allah takes away men's souls upon their death and soul of the living during its sleep. He keeps that soul for which He has ordained death and restores the rest till an appointed term.

¹ Al-Nahl: 68-69

Herein indeed are portents for people who reflect.¹ (the Qur'ān, 39: 42)

The verse means that life of the human beings is under strict control of the creator. Man rehearses daily for his resurrection on the Day of Judgment.

According to the Qur'ān, Tafakkur should be the ultimate endeavour of every scientist. If properly carried out, it unveils the obscure realities which are of paramount importance for the future of man. He does not see the universe as a jumble of causes and effects which came into being through accident. He observes an accomplished design in it. This design is so perfect and full of wisdom that it much has been brought about by the omnipotent and omniscient God whose will is supreme and binding on his creation. He is so wise that he must not have created the universe as a plaything. Everything here is perishable. The world as a whole must also face an end. Man, who enjoys privileges in this world, must be answerable to his creator and should face the doom if he fails to discipline life as desired by his Lord. The Qur'ān reveals that such are the conclusions a true scientist arrives at when he carries out the scientific pursuit in accordance with the Qur'ānic injunctions. It says:

"إِنَّ فِي خَلْقِ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَاخْتِلَافِ اللَّيْلِ وَالنَّهَارِ لَآيَاتٍ لِأُولِي الْأَلْبَابِ ﴿٣٩﴾ الَّذِينَ يَذْكُرُونَ اللَّهَ قِيَمًا وَقُعُودًا وَعَلَىٰ جُنُوبِهِمْ وَيَتَفَكَّرُونَ فِي خَلْقِ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ رَبَّنَا مَا خَلَقْتَ هَذَا بَطْلًا سُبْحَانَكَ فَقِنَا عَذَابَ النَّارِ ﴿٤٠﴾"

Tr.: Lo! In the creation of the heavens and the earth and in the alternation of night and day or tokens for men of understanding, such as remember Allah standing, sitting and

¹ Other verses of similar import are al-Ra'd: 3, al-Naḥl: 11, al-Rūm:21 and al-Jāthiyah: 13.

reclining, and reflect on the creation of the heavens and the earth, (and say) : O Lord! You have not created this in vain. Glory be to you! Preserve us from the doom of fire.¹

In the chapter 45, the Qur'ān describes some of the natural phenomena followed by verse 6 which reads:

"بَلِّغْ أَهْلَ الْبَلَدِ أَنَّ اللَّهَ نَزَّلَهَا عَلَيْكَ بِالْحَقِّ"

Tr.: These are the portents of Allah which We describe before you with an aim.²

Maulānā Iṣlāhī, an eminent exeget of the Qur'ān, explains this verse in a manner which is conducive to the above contention. He says:

The word al-Haq in this verse denotes the definite and correct conclusion reached after reflection on the above portents. So far as mere pondering over the signs is concerned, people do this job but with a specific and limited point of view, with the result that either they cannot arrive at the realities underlying these signs or they do reach correct conclusions but these happen to be against their wishes and therefore, they ignore them. An astronomer does ponder over the signs in the heavens and a geologist the sign in the earth, an anatomist studies human body, a zoologist looks into various aspects of animal life, a meteorologist gathers much out of the revolution of night and day, the direction of winds and the climatic conditions but all of them have a short-sighted approach. They use telescopes and microscopes to observe the tiniest of objects. Yet they are unaware of the most gigantic of all realities. The meteorologist would foretell that on a following day the weather will remain hot and dry

¹ Āi 'Imrān: 190-191

² Al-Jāthiyah: 6

because of such and such factors. This prediction often comes true and the factors may also be correctly defined, but these observations are limited to the study of atmosphere. The meteorologist is not concerned with the question as to who is responsible for the variation of weather and what are his rights and obligations. The fact of matter is that the variations and changes observed in this universe are meant to guide man to the above question. He is required to discover its answer himself or if anybody else provides him with a plausible answer, he is expected to own it and act accordingly.¹

When we judge the modern science according to the criteria given in the Qur'ān, we find in it complete lack of Tafakkur, Tadhakkur and 'lbrah. That is why it has become divorced from metaphysics, ethics and religion. The scientist has forgotten God and is unaware of His place in the Universe. He is not mindful of the realities of life and death. He has become a prophet of gloom having no inner light to guide him. He is piling up knowledge for destructive purposes and the mankind is awaiting disaster wrought by the scientists. Salvation of the mankind lies in adopting the Qur'ānic view of the scientific pursuits.

¹ Iṣlāḥī, Amīn Aḥsan, *Tadabbur-i-Qur'ān*, VI. Fārān Foundation, Lāhore, 1978. PP. 306-7.

Bibliography

1. The Holy Qur'ān
 2. Al-Najjār, Zagh̃lūl R., The Limitations and the Teachings of Science, Amīr. Jour. Isl. Soc. Sci. Sept. 1986.
 3. Bucaille, Maurice, The Bible, The Qur'ān and Science. American Trust Publications, 1979.
 4. Iṣlāhī, Amīn Aḥsan, Tadabbur-i-Qur'ān, II, Markazī Anjuman Khuddām-ul-Qur'ān, Lāhore, 1976.
 5. Lane, Edward William, Arabic-English Lexicon, William & Norgate, London, 1874.
-

The Qur'ān and Wildlife Conservation

✍...H.S.A. Yahyá¹

Introduction

For the benefit of mankind all religions of the world preach peaceful living and suitable life style. Therefore, it is desirable to look into the Islamic teachings and philosophy to find out the principles and guidelines for the conservation of nature, especially the wild flora and fauna. Evidently Islamic teachings and philosophy are the most intricately close to the concept of nature conservation. The Qur'ān, the foremost divine book for Islamic code of conduct, has mentioned repeatedly through various verses to maintain the balance of nature. It has warned time and again not to be wasteful as well as to maintain peace and harmony among mankind and with other creations. Protection, preservation and compassion for God's creations (biodiversity and other natural resources) can be regarded as Ḥaqq-ul-Makhlūq (Right of Animals/Plants, etc.) which after Ḥaqq-ul-Allāh (Rights of God) and Ḥaqq-ul-'Ibād (Rights of Humans) is the third most important obligation. Similarly, there are several Ḥadīth (Sayings, Deeds and Principles laid down by the Prophet Muḥammad, PBUH), that ordain treating animals, plants, ecosystems and other biodiversity with respect and magnanimity. There is hardly any chapter of Islamic Fiqh, Ijmā' or Qiyās (By-laws), that does not deal with the animals and their habitat. There are mentions of taming, using, gifting, riding, hunting, slaughtering and conserving animals. There are also frequent references to conservation of forests, pastures and water-bodies for use of

¹ Professor, Department of Wild Sciences, Aligarh Muslim University, Aligarh

mankind and other creatures.¹ In fact, the Ḥimá (=equal sustainable share of natural resources by the local people) and the Ḥarim systems prevailing in ancient Arabia, strengthened by the Prophet Muḥammad (PBUH), and now being re-established in some parts of the Middle East, are perhaps the best systems for conserving and developing the natural resources. As given by some scholars² for proper land use the Ḥimá system was a well-recognized linkage of local traditions with the conservation of renewable resources for the sustainable development of any nation, more applicable to the rural areas. Love for nature and its conservation has also been strongly backed in teachings of many Islamic sufis, poets and philosophers. Despite this strong backing of religious sentiment, depletion of wildlife, degradation of environment and ecological crises continue worldwide including the Muslim countries.

Considering the utility of the biodiversity it is quite natural that many past and present scientists/scholars have emphasized the value and importance of its conservation (wise/judicious use). Many Islamic scholars have also contributed considerably. Reverent late Qārī Muḥammad Ṭayeb³ wrote long ago that the discourse of science and its experimental interpretations and inferences may change in different periods but the scientific temperament of Islam remains as valid as ever. There is hardly any contradiction of science in Islam. In fact the Islamic and scientific concepts are complementary to each other. According to Maulānā Rābi' al-Ḥasanī Nadwī, President Indian Muslim Personal Law Board, Islam does not separate Dīn (religion) and

¹ 'Alī, A. 1999: Islamic Law as an Antidote for Maintaining Water Quality, Water Law Review, University of Danver, USA. Vol. II (2): 169-188

² Child G. & Grainger, J. 1990: A Plan to Protect Areas in Saudi Arabia NCWCD and IUCN, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

³ Qārī Muḥammad Ṭayeb, 1938: Science & Islam (in Urdu), Institute of Dār-ul-Ma'ārif, Deoband, (UP)

Dunyá (world) rather it brings them together. Therefore, the concept of evolution of biodiversity under the process of natural selection is in accordance with the creativity of God and the modern developments of science support this view. The famous physicist and Nobel Prize winner, Albert Einstein has rightly said, “Science without religion is lame. Religion without science is blind”.

Though the concept of biodiversity is rather new, the illustration of National History which comprises wildlife was first given by Aristotle as far back as 384-322 BC. Several Qur’ānic verses elaborately reveal elements of nature and emphasize study of Natural History. According to Mirzā¹ ‘the study of Natural History for a Muslim is harmonious rather than conflicting with his religious values’. “In Islamic civilization, Natural History has always played a central role as the investigating and all embracing matrix within which particular descriptive sciences of nature have been cultivated, from mineralogy to zoology. It has sought to integrate particular forms of knowledge of the natural order into universal principles of a metaphysical and cosmological nature. And it has sought to study nature not only with respect to other physical and biological forms and vis-à-vis man’s relation to these forms but most of all as the ‘signs’ or ‘portents’ (verse) of Allah to be contemplated rather than simply analyzed”.² The Qur’ān says, “Observe all that is in the Heavens and on the earth.” (al-Qur’ān, 10: 101). The Prophet Muḥammad (PBUH) emphasized, “By studying nature a Muslim intends to have the cognizance of the Creator”.

¹ Mirzā, M. R., & Şiddiqui, M. I. 1986: Muslim Contributions to Science, Qādī Publications, Chicago, Illinois, USA

² Naşr, S. H. 1992: Islam & Environmental Crisis. In Spirit and nature (Steven C. Rockefeller & John C. Elder eds)

From al-Jāhiz (a ninth century scholar and a prolific Arabic writer) to Naṣr¹ a number of Islamic scholars have contributed on the Islamic concept of nature and environment. In this context it is interesting to mention that Jalāluddīn Rūmī in his famous Mathnawī (Urdu translation by Sajjād Ḥussain, 1947) has given an account of evolution through natural selection much before Darwin.² However, his hypothesis was not persuaded, discussed or supported much. Late Qāḍī Mujāhid-ul-Islam Qāsmī, former President, All India Muslim Personal Law Board, gave me almost a similar explanation on the concept of evolution as that of Rūmī's while clarifying my query about the same from Islamic point of view.³ The relevant verses in Rūmī's Mathnawī declaim:

In the beginning human was (sort of) mineral: it evolved to plant.

Remained as plant for years.

Does not remember its floral life.

Evolved to animal from plants.

Does not remember its animal life: except during springs.

Like babies do not remember their suckling days.

Then God (who knows him well) evolved him to human.

Thus the man reached his present form and wisdom, evolving stage by stage.

Regarding the evolution of the man, almost similar description is given by Maulānā Abul Kalām Āzād⁴ in his translation and

¹ Naṣr, S. H., 1996: The Need for a Sacred Science, Curzon Press Ltd. Surrey.

² Darwin, C. 1959: On the origin of species. Murray, London.

³ Yaḥyá, H.S.A., 2002: Memories of Qāḍī Mujāhid-ul-Islam (in Urdu) Millī ittihād Special Issue. Vol. 5 (43-46): 213-216. May-August, 2002, Jāmia Nagar, New Delhi

⁴ Maulānā Abul Kalām Aḥmad Āzād. 1931: Tarjamān-ul-Qur'ān (in Urdu), Vol. 1: 1-47, Office of Tarjama-tul-Qur'ān, Delhi

commentary of the Qur'ān . Maulānā Rūmī had also mentioned about earth's gravitational force in his Mathnawī (vol, 1) almost three centuries before Newton formulated the theory.¹

Though not directly related to wildlife conservation, the voluminous work of Kamāl al-Dīn al-Damīrī, an Egyptian scholar of 14th century, had compiled a vast reference on a large number of animals in his book 'Ḥayāt-ul-Ḥaiwān'.² After reading his book one gets amazed on the macroscopic and diversified information that al-Damīrī had collated on the animals. Aspect of different beneficial roles of almost all animals known to men by his time have been mentioned in his book. Though there are some statements that might not be scientifically true, benefits and harms from sighting, eating and even dreaming animals are highlighted. It is indeed a unique and admirable work.

Like some other famous languages of the world in Arabic literature too, animals have been frequently used in poetry, folklore and fiction. Arabic poems Shi'r al-Ṭabī'ah composed by poets of Spain give a unique dimension to the natures' concept, probably for the first time in any language of the world.³ With such a great influence of biodiversity and natural elements on poetry and culture, Spain was a sort of 'Garden of the World' during that period. It appears that ancient Arabs had a deeper sense of animal observations. Based on their appearance, speed, sex, age, taste and habits, 160 words for camels and 120 words for horses have been mentioned in

¹ David, H. 1947: Fundamental of Physics 4th ed. Asian Book Ltd., New Delhi

² Damīrī, K.M., 14th century, Ḥayāt-tul-Ḥaiwān, Urdu translation by Moḥd. Irfān (1981) Rāḥat Printing Press, Deoband (UP)

³ Al-Jawwād al-Rikābī, 1959: al-Tabeah fī al-Sh'ir al-Undulusī, Jain Publication, Damascus

Arabic.¹ This clearly indicates the richness of the Arabic language. Though lion and elephant are now extinct in Arabia, their earlier occurrence is evident by references in some Arabic books, especially in al-Damīrī work and in the Qur'ān.

Maulānā 'Abdul Mājīd Daryābādī² and Fārūqī³ have given an account of animals and plants respectively: while Nadwī⁴ has described geographical history mentioned in the Qur'ān, Yaḥyá⁵ has written on birds mentioned in the Qur'ān. After carefully reading and understanding the meanings of the Qur'ān, it becomes obvious that the cause of biodiversity conservation and sustainable utilization of natural resources have been emphasized at many places. Though around the time the Qur'ān was revealed to Prophet Muḥammad (PBUH), words like biodiversity, conservation, balance of nature, etc. were not pronounced, surprisingly there are several such references in the Qur'ān and Ḥadīth which carry exactly the same meanings. Many other biological facts that have been described much later in science have got illustrative accounts in the Qur'ān.⁶ Islam is a branch of the same religion of Abraham which is followed by the Jews and Christians.^{7,8} And

¹ Anonymous. 1973: Encyclopedia of Islam (in Urdu), University of the Punjab Press, Lāhore, Pākistān. Vol. 8: 770-785

² Maulānā 'Abdul ājīd Daryābādī. 1954: Ḥaiwānāt-i-Qur'ānī (in Urdu). Academy of Islamic Research, Nadwa-tul-'Ulamā', Lucknow, New Print 2000, Qāsimjān Street, Ballīmārān. Delhi

³ Fārūqī, I. 1989: Plants of the Qur'ān, A Scientific Analysis. Publication Sheikh Muḥammad Bashīr & Sons. Urdu Bāzār, Lāhore, Pākistān

⁴ Nadwī, S.H. 1985: A Geographical History of the Qur'ān. Tāj Company. Delhi

⁵ Yaḥyá, H.S.A. 1998: Birds in the Qur'ān. The Alumini International. Toronto, Canada. Vol. 3: 17-18

⁶ Bucaille, M. 1997: The Bible, The Qur'ān & Science, Indian Print, Kitāb Bhawan, Delhi

⁷ Szule, T. 2001: Abraham Journey of Faith. National Geographic Magazine, December, 2001

⁸ Don Belt. 2002: The World of Islam, National Geographic Magazine, January 2002: 76-85

the Qur'ān is in fact the extension and culmination of the true Injīl (Bible). Universal good teaching, peaceful and harmonious living with nature is prevalent in almost all religions of the world that could also be depicted through various mathematical models.¹

Recent series of thirteen conferences on religions ecology at the Harvard Centre of World Religions (USA), where long discussions have taken place on the relevant matter pertaining to nature /environment conservation in various religions, have also highlighted the issue. However, there is a lack of a comprehensive account and critical analysis of Islamic teachings on this issue. Considering this I have written a book on 'Importance of Wildlife Conservation from Islamic Perspectives'² that deals with Islamic guidelines for the conservation of wildlife/biodiversity. However, the work cannot be claimed complete, for both nature and Islamic teachings are very vast subjects to comprehend. Nevertheless, I hope that the book would be a useful contribution in the mission of nature conservation throughout the world in general and in Muslim countries in particular.

Though the Qur'ān is not a scientific book, it is a 'Signs' book^{3,4}. These signs invite mankind to realize the purpose of his existence on earth, and to live in harmony with nature. Noble Laureate Prof. 'Abdus Salām said, "There is not a single verse in the Qur'ān where natural phenomena are described and

¹ Nelson, D. Joseph, G.G. & Williams, J. 1993: *Multicultural Mathematics*, Oxford University Press, Oxford.

² Yaḥyá, H.S.A. 2003: *Importance of Wildlife conservation from Islamic perspective*, Authors' Press, New Delhi, & The Netherlands

³ Deedāt, A. 1997: *al-Qur'ān: The Miracles*, Islamic Propagation Centre & Institute, Durban, South Africa.

⁴ Zākir Nā'ik 2000: *Qur'ān and Modern Science, Compatible or Incompatible*. Islamic Research Foundation, Mumbai

which contradicts what we know for certain from our discoveries in sciences”.¹ Islam regards this world with all its greatness, vastness, and marvels and all the interconnections between its various phenomena are a homogenous reality dependant upon another reality which is independent, sovereign and supreme God is recognized by his attributes. It is through these signs that we obtain valuable and fruitful knowledge of Him. And among His wondrous signs is the unity of design in the widest diversity of nature”.² In this context it is relevant to state that the present branding, by certain section of people, of Islam as the religion of terrorists is quite untrue. The Qur’ān clearly proclaims, “Whoever killed a human being except as punishment for murder or other villainy in the land, shall be deemed as though he had killed all mankind” (the Qur’ān, 5: 32). With such a strong doctrine there is no place of terrorism in Islam. If some people indulge in such acts, they are not true Muslims. Sheikh Anwar al-Aulakī of Washington D.C has rightly said, “Islam is the prescription for harmony in everyday life. In the Qur’ān God commands us to be merciful with one another, to live an ethical life. In many ways God’s message in the Qur’ān boils down to “Treat others better than they treat you”.

About the uniqueness of the Qur’ān as the best contemporary guidelines for sustainable living on this planet, some proclamations (purely based on scientific concept) of the Qur’ān are the best testimony. In addition to the verses quoted below, there are hundreds of verses in the Qur’ān which deal with natural history, wildlife and science.

¹ Khān, M.S. 1987: Social Structure and Economic Change in Islam. Kitāb Ghar Educational Publishers, Aligarh, UP

² Khān, Wahīda. 1996: Environment in Islamic perspective in psychology and society in Islamic perspective. M.G. Hussain ed. PP.158-164. Institute of objective studies, New Delhi

I have frequently consulted and quoted ‘Abdullāh Yūsuf ‘Alī’s¹ translation and commentary of the Qur’ān, Pickthal et, al² has also been cited. There are some very good translations and commentaries of the Qur’ān and Ḥadīth in Urdu. I have referred to Sir Syed Aḥmad Khān,³ Maulānā Abul Kalām Aḥmad Āzād, Maulānā Aḥraf ‘Alī Thānawī,⁴ Maulānā Syed Sulaimān Nadwī,⁵ Maulānā Abul A’lā Maudūdī,⁶ Maulānā Shabbīr Aḥmad ‘Uthmānī⁷ and Maulānā Akhtar Shāhjahānpūrī.⁸ I have also referred to the following web-sites for collecting relevant information: www.whyislam.org, www.islam-city.com, www.icna.org, www.dawahinamerica.com, www.readmirror.com, www.muslimmy.com, www.irf.net, www.askismam.com, www.nationalgeographic.com/ngm/0201.

Essence of Wildlife Conservation based on al-Qur’ān:

Understanding and trying to reveal the mystery of nature has been the quest of mankind ever since the dawn of human life on this planet. The great philosopher and thinker ‘Allāmah Iqbāl said, “Though the inquisitiveness is the inborn instinct of human,

¹ Yūsuf, A.A. 1946: The Meaning of the Glorious Qur’ān Text, translation and commentary, al-Madīnah Edition, 1998

² Pickthal, M. 1948: The Meaning of the Glorious Qur’ān , An Explanatory Translation, 2nd Impression, George Allan & Unwin Ltd. London

³ Sir, Sayed Aḥmad Khān, 1980: Tafsīr-ul-Qur’ān (in Urdu), ‘Alīgarh Institute Press, ‘Alīgarh

⁴ Maulānā Aḥraf ‘Alī Thānawī, 1934: Bayān-ul-Qur’ān (in Urdu), Markaz Aḥraf-ul-‘Ulūm, Deoband.

⁵ Maulānā Abul A’lā al-Maudūdī, 1968: Tafhīm-ul-Qur’ān (in Urdu) Print Set, Ghāziābād

⁶ Maulānā Abul A’lā al-Maudūdī, 1968: Tafhīm-ul-Qur’ān (in Urdu) Print Set, Ghāziābād

⁷ Maulānā Shabbīr Aḥmad Uthmānī, 1989: Urdu Translation of the Qur’ān, Tāj Publisher, Delhi

⁸ Maulānā Akhtar Shāhjahānpūrī, 1992: Urdu Translation of al-Buḥārī, 2nd Ed. Vol. 1,2,3. Rūmī Publication and Printers, Lāhore, Pākistān

the Nature has concealed the mystery of life from them". Therefore, it is obvious that the man has been trying to reveal the mystery of nature and to understand its complicity. With the advancement of the science, especially the natural science, we now know some details of functioning of various ecosystems, partially though. The scientific revelations have come to light of late, but the influence of religions on human civilizations has been long lasting and by and large has determined the course of human history. While some religions have been based on books, claimed by their adherents to be divinely inspired, others have relied solely on human experiences. According to the Islamic belief the Qur'ān is a divine book containing guidance for all mankind. Furthermore, the message of the Qur'ān is for all times and relevant to every age.

Many scholars of the world have testified and supported the above claims. As quoted by Aḥmad Deedāt, Rev. Bosworth Smith has said, "The Qur'ān is a miracle of purity of style, of wisdom and truth, it is the one miracle claimed by Muḥammad, his standing miracle, and a miracle indeed it is".

The Presidency of Islamic Researches, IFTA, Call and Guidance at al-Madīnah (Kingdom of Saudi Arabia) has drawn attention to given following special features of the Qur'ān:

1. It is the actual World of Allah, not created but revealed for the benefit of mankind.
 2. It is complete and comprehensive.
 3. It is a theoretical and practical Book, not only moralizing but also defining specifically the permissible and forbidden.
 4. Allah has preferred His religion for all mankind with the revelation of this Book.
 5. It is Allah's eternal miracle revealed to the Prophet Muḥammad for all succeeding generations.
-

6. It has been revealed to re-establish the sincere worship of Allah alone, without association of any partner with Him.
7. It contains the complete code that provides guidelines for all areas of life, whether spiritual, intellectual, political, social or economic.
8. Allah has taken upon Himself the duty of preserving the Qur'ān forever in its entirety.

As mentioned earlier it is a proven fact that for the believers, especially the Muslims, the Qur'ānic revelations are the binding guidelines for peaceful and sustainable life. The Qur'ān has repeatedly mentioned that God's all creations are for the service of mankind on the basis of their sustainable utilization. Since human have been trusted as custodians of this planet, in addition to various rights, they also have duties to protect and conserve the elements of 'nature' which are the basis of all life forms. In this respect the dedicated wildlife conservations working under the aegis of various government and non-government organizations have been doing righteous works. Though there have been frequent mentions of cattle, names of only 12 species of animals are clear in the Qur'ān. Out of 114 chapters, six are named after animals, viz, al-Baqarah (Heifer), al-An'ām (The Cattle), al-Naḥl (The Bees), al-Namal (The Ants), al-'Ankabūt (The Spider), and al-Fīl (The Elephant). I have quoted 80 verses and 34 Ḥadīths which directly or indirectly support the essence of wildlife/nature conservation in the said Book.¹ Some of them are described below:

¹ Erdur, Oguz. 1997: Re-appropriating the Green Islamic Environmentalism New Perspectives on Turkey, Paper presented in Conference on Islam and Ecology, Harward Centre for World Religion, USA

Chapter 1: al-Fātiḥah

1:2

"الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ"

Tr.: Praise be to Allah the Cherisher and Sustainer of the worlds. The Arabic word 'Rabb', usually translated as Lord, has also the meaning of cherishing, sustaining, bringing to maturity. Therefore, it is obvious that God cares for all the worlds He has created. So conserving and preserving His creations is a big responsibility of the Muslims in the world. Maulānā Abul Kalām Āzād has quite elaborately discussed the Arabic word 'Rabubīyyat' (the sustainer). It is proven fact now that the functioning of the Universe is governed by well-organized systems. We term it as ecosystem, terrestrial, aquatic, forest, desert, etc. Components (biotic or abiotic) of each system work in cohesion and in perfect balance. Requirements of each factor are met within proportionate quantity as and when needed. The overall governance of such functional unit is the law of nature. The Qur'ān reveals this phenomenon in several other verses (9: 13, 18: 23, 39: 22, etc). Āzād has given the example of water. Water is needed for all life forms in different quality and quantity. Therefore, the water cycle has been arranged in a perfect manner to benefit all creations until and unless the human disturbs this by irrational exploitations. Similar are the provision of heat (radiation), and other renewable resources for maintenance and existence of all life forms on sustainable basis.

Chapter 2: al-Baqarah

2: 29

"هُوَ الَّذِي خَلَقَ لَكُمْ مَّا فِي الْأَرْضِ جَمِيعًا ثُمَّ اسْتَوَىٰ إِلَى السَّمَاءِ فَسَوَّاهُنَّ سَبْعَ سَمَاوَاتٍ وَهُوَ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمٌ ﴿٢٩﴾"

Tr.: It is He Who has created for you all things that are on earth, then He turned to the heaven and made them into seven firmaments and of all things He has perfect knowledge.

The creator of even small worldly things would never like to destroy them, then certainly God will be pleased with those who help conserve His creations.

2: 57

"وَوَهَبْنَا لَكُمْ السَّمْنَ وَالسَّلْوَىٰ كُلُّهُمَا مِنْ طَيِّبَاتِ مَا رَزَقْنَاكُمْ وَمَا ظَلَمُونَا وَلَكِنْ كَانُوا أَنْفُسَهُمْ يَظْلِمُونَ ﴿٥٧﴾".

Tr.: And We gave the shade of clouds and sent down to you manna and quails, saying, 'Eat of the good things We have provided for you', but they rebelled; to Us they did not harm but they harmed their own selves.

The verse mentions some of the good provisions of God. Manna is the sweet deposition on certain desert plant and the Salwá (=quails) that the followers of Prophet Moses used to eat while on the exodus. Conservation of these items as well as all other things to be of use to mankind is important and necessary.

2: 65

"وَلَقَدْ عَلِمْتُمُ الَّذِينَ اعْتَدَوْا مِنْكُمْ فِي السَّبْتِ فَقُلْنَا لَهُمْ كُونُوا قِرَدَةً خَاسِئِينَ ﴿٦٥﴾"

Tr.: And well ye knew those amongst you who transgressed in the matter of the Sabbath. We said them: Be ye apes despised and rejected".

Sabbath was the prohibition of fishing on Saturday for the Jews. Those who did not obey this and breached were punished, even to death. Prohibiting fishing for one day per

week could have been an act aimed at conservation and sustainable use of fishes.

2: 117

"بَدِيعُ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَإِذَا قَضَىٰ أَمْرًا فَإِنَّمَا يَقُولُ لَهُ كُنْ فَيَكُونُ ﴿١١٧﴾"

Tr.: The Originator of the Heavens and the earth. When He decrees a matter, He says to it, "Be," and it is.

When His commandments are such that anything is created when He says, "Be" how can we effort to abuse or misuse his creations. Nowhere it is mentioned in the Qur'ān, "not to be" or "get destroyed". Therefore, it is the responsibility of a believer to continue caring of His creations. (Also see Yūsuf 'Alī, al-Madīnah edition, note number 120, page 47-48)

2: 164

"إِنَّ فِي خَلْقِ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَأَخْتِلَافِ اللَّيْلِ وَالنَّهَارِ وَالْفُلْكِ الَّتِي تَجْرِي فِي الْبَحْرِ بِمَا يَنْفَعُ النَّاسَ وَمَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ مِنْ مَّاءٍ فَأَحْيَا بِهِ الْأَرْضَ بَعْدَ مَوْتِهَا وَبَثَّ فِيهَا مِنْ كُلِّ دَابَّةٍ وَنَصْرِيفِ الرِّيْحِ وَالسَّحَابِ الْمُسَخَّرِ بَيْنَ السَّمَاءِ وَالْأَرْضِ لَآيَاتٍ لِّقَوْمٍ يَعْقِلُونَ ﴿١٦٤﴾"

Tr.: Behold! In the creation of the heavens and the earth, in the alternation of the night and the day, in the sailing of the ships through the ocean for the profit of mankind, in the rain which Allah sends down from the skies, and the life which He gives therewith to an earth that is dead, in the beasts of all kinds that He scatters through the earth, in the change of the winds, and the clouds which they trail like their slaves between the sky and the earth (Here) indeed are the signs for a people that are wise.

This is a beautiful verse revealing about the creation of many objects- the sun, the moon, the night, the day, the rain, the

wind, the sky, the earth and so on, for the benefit and utility of mankind. The rain softens the earth and renders it as arable and productive, the clouds bring the rain, the oceans provide navigation and sailing of ships. Now to continue harvesting these benefits it is left on the wise people to decide “This magnificent Nature passage stands out like a hill in a landscape, enhancing the beauty of our vie, and preparing us for every-day laws and ordinance which follow. Note its literary architecture. Allah is one and among His wondrous signs is the unity of design in the widest diversity of Nature. The signs are taken from the features of beauty, power and utility to man himself, and lead up to and appeal to Man’s own intelligence and wisdom. We begin with the glory of the heavens and the earth, the wide spaces covered by man’s imagination, remote and yet so near to his own life. The most striking everyday phenomenon resulting from the interrelations of the heavens and the earth is the alteration of day and night, regular and yet hanging in duration with the seasons and the latitudes of our glob, the stately ships flowing across the seas, for communications and merchandise as between men and men, the seas thus serve us no less than land. The rain further exemplifies the give and take between sea, sky land. The rain leads to fertility of land, and here we are reminded of the contrast between the winter’s of Nature and her revivification in the spring. Here we are reminded of agriculture and the use we make of cattle, and all kinds of living creatures. The word translated ‘beast’ has a wide meaning, including crawling creatures, insects, etc. all contributing to the round of Nature’s operations”.

Therefore, everything around and with us points to unity of purpose and design; and thus it is our paramount duty to care for them for sustainable use and preservation.

2: 205

"وَإِذَا تَوَلَّى سَعَى فِي الْأَرْضِ لِيُفْسِدَ فِيهَا وَيُهْلِكَ الْحَرْثَ وَالنَّسْلَ وَاللَّهُ لَا يُحِبُّ الْفُسَادَ"

Tr.: When he turns his back, his aim everywhere is to spread mischief through the earth and destroy crops and progeny but Allah loves not mischief.

It is very clear that anyone who destroys crops and progeny (or any species, unnecessarily) commits an act of mischief. Allah does not allow doing so in any circumstances. Therefore, any sort of extravagance is prohibited in Islam. Conservation and sustainable use is the best way of living.

2: 255

"اللَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ الْحَيُّ الْقَيُّومُ لَا تَأْخُذُهُ سِنَّةٌ وَلَا نَوْمٌ لَهُ مَا فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ مَنْ ذَا الَّذِي يَشْفَعُ عِنْدَهُ إِلَّا بِإِذْنِهِ يَعْلَمُ مَا بَيْنَ أَيْدِيهِمْ وَمَا خَلْفَهُمْ وَلَا يُحِيطُونَ بِشَيْءٍ مِنْ عِلْمِهِ إِلَّا بِمَا شَاءَ وَسِعَ كُرْسِيُّهُ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ وَلَا يَئُودُهُ حِفْظُهُمَا وَهُوَ الْعَلِيُّ الْعَظِيمُ ﴿٢٥٥﴾"

Tr.: Allah! There is no god but He, - the Living. Self-subsisting, Supporter of all. No slumber can seize Him nor sleep. His are all things in the heavens and on the earth. Who can intercede in His presence except as He permits. He knows what (appears to His creatures as) before or after or behind them nor shall they compass aught of His knowledge except as He wills. His Throne does extend over the heaven and the earth, and He feels no fatigue in guarding and preserving them for He is the Most High, the Supreme (in glory).

The attributes of Allah are different from anything we know in our present world: He lives but His life is self-subsisting and eternal. He does not depend upon other beings and is not limited to time and space. The attribute of Qayyūm includes not only the idea of 'self-subsisting' but also the idea of

'keeping up and maintaining all life'. Therefore, when Allah's will and commandment is aimed at keeping up and maintaining all life forms, the ethics of today about wildlife or nature conservation is complete harmony with His will. The believers should be active conservationists, using the natural renewable resources not wastefully but wisely and sustainably.

Chapter 3; Āli-'Imrān

3: 54

"وَمَكَرُوا وَمَكَرَ اللَّهُ وَاللَّهُ خَيْرُ الْمَاكِرِينَ ﴿٥٤﴾"

Tr.: And (the unbelievers) plotted and planned, and Allah too planned, and the best of planners is Allah.

God is the best planner, and His plan is peace and harmony with the nature. Therefore, it is an obligation of the believers to act according to His plan and keep harvesting His benevolence but only perpetually.

Chapter 5; al-Mā'idah

5: 1

"يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا أَوْفُوا بِالْعُقُودِ أُحِلَّتْ لَكُمْ بَهِيمَةُ الْأَنْعَامِ إِلَّا مَا يُتْلَى عَلَيْكُمْ غَيْرَ مُحِلِّي الصَّيْدِ وَأَنْتُمْ حُرْمٌ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَحْكُمُ مَا يُرِيدُ ﴿١﴾"

Tr.: O ye who believe! Fulfill (all) obligations. Lawful unto you (for food) are all beasts of cattle with the exceptions named but animals of the chase are forbidden while ye are in the Sacred Precincts or in the state of pilgrimage.

Yūsuf 'Alī explains, "This line has been justly admired for the terseness and comprehensiveness. Obligations, "Uqūd" the Arabic word implied so many things that a whole chapter of

commentary can be written on it. First, there are the divine obligations that arise from our spiritual nature and our relation to Allah. He created us and implanted in us the faculty of knowledge and foresight: besides the intuition and reason, which He gave us. He made nature responsive to our needs, and His signs in Nature are so many lessons to us in our own inner life. He further sent Messengers as teachers, for the guidance of our conduct in individual, social, and public life. All these gifts create corresponding obligations, which we must fulfill. There are tacit obligations, living in civil society, we must respect its tacit conventions unless they are morally wrong, and in that case we must get out of such society. There are tacit obligations in the characters of host and guest, wayfarer or companion, employer or employed, etc. which every man of faith must discharge conscientiously. The man who deserts those who need him and goes to pray in a desert is a coward who disregards his obligations. All these obligations are inter-connected. Truth and fidelity are parts of religion in all relations of life. In addition to above, the believers have great obligations of Him for caring all creations living or non-living". Thus as per the Islamic prophesy in conserving the nature and wildlife the believers would fulfill an obligation of Almighty Allah.

It is further stressed in the verse that no living being should be destroyed while the believers are in the pilgrimage, bound to honour the sanctum sanctorum of sacred place vis-à-vis the wildlife therein.

5: 96

"أَجَلٌ لَكُمْ صَيْدُ الْبَحْرِ وَطَعَامُهُ، مَتَنَعًا لَكُمْ وَلِلسَّيَّارَةِ وَحُرْمٌ عَلَيْكُمْ صَيْدُ الْبَرِّ مَا دُمْتُمْ حُرْمًا ۗ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ الَّذِي إِلَيْهِ تُحْشَرُونَ ﴿٩٦﴾"

Tr.: Lawful to you is the pursuit of water-game and its use for food,- for the benefit of yourselves and those who travel, but forbidden is the pursuit of land-game as long as ye are in the Sacred Precincts or in the state of pilgrimage and fear Allah, to Whom ye shall be gathered back.

There are some provisions mentioned regarding hunting and game. While water-game is allowed at all times land-game (hunting) is prohibited during the pilgrimage. Besides some other reasons, it could be way of sparing hunting at least for some time. At some other place in this chapter (5:5), rules have been laid down for hunting with trained hawks, hounds, cheetah or other animals. The games killed by them is legalized on conditions that they are trained to kill, not merely for their own appetite, or out of their wantonness, but for their master's food. If such animal does not leave the prey willingly for its master, the prey should be left to the hunting animal. This is a great supportive directive for the lovers of animal rights. The Islamic concept is quite clear in this regard.

Chapter 6; al-An'ām

6: 99

"وَهُوَ الَّذِي أَنْزَلَ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ مَاءً فَأَخْرَجْنَا بِهِ نَبَاتَ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ فَأَخْرَجْنَا مِنْهُ خَضِرًا نُخْرَجُ مِنْهُ حَبًّا مُتَرَاكِبًا وَمِنَ النَّخْلِ مِن طَلْعِهَا قِنْوَانٌ دَانِيَةٌ وَجَنَّاتٍ مِّنْ أَعْنَابٍ وَالزَّيْتُونَ وَالرُّمَّانَ مُشْتَبِهًا وَغَيْرَ مُتَشَبِهٍ انظُرُوا إِلَى ثَمَرِهِ إِذَا أَثْمَرَ وَيَنْعِهِ إِنَّ فِي ذَٰلِكُمْ لَآيَاتٍ لِّقَوْمٍ يُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿٩٩﴾"

Tr.: It is He Who sends down rain from the skies with which We produce vegetation of all kinds from some We produce green (corps), out of which We produce close-compounded grain out of the date-palm and its sheaths (or spathes) (come) clusters of dates hanging low and near and (then there are) gardens of grapes, and olives, and pomegranates, each similar

(in kind) yet different (in variety); when they begin to bear fruit, and the ripeness thereof. Behold! In these things there are signs for people who believe?

This long verse beautifully illustrates the benevolence of Allah and enlists some of the gifts of nature, in different forms for mankind. The concept of 'Biodiversity' which is prevalent now was already described in the Qur'ān 14 centuries ago. Now if the believers intend to continue harvesting these natural resources, obviously they have to preserve and conserve them. At the end of the verse it is emphasized that the occurrence of diversity of life forms (either it is on genetic level, species level or at system level) is great sign for people who understand. As 'understanding' is a higher faculty than 'knowledge', the believers are ordained to observe, think and understand the various phenomenon and functioning of the Universe.

6: 141

"وَهُوَ الَّذِي أَنْشَأَ جَنَّاتٍ مَّعْرُوشَاتٍ وَغَيْرِ مَّعْرُوشَاتٍ وَالنَّخْلَ وَالزَّرْعَ مُخْتَلِفًا أَكْلُهُمُ وَالزَّيْتُونَ وَالرُّمَانَ مِثْلَهَا وَغَيْرَ مِثْلَيْهِ كُلُوا مِنْ ثَمَرِهِ إِذَا أَثْمَرَ وَعَاتُوا حَقَّهُ يَوْمَ حَصَادِهِ وَلَا تُسْرِفُوا إِنَّهُ لَا يُحِبُّ الْمُسْرِفِينَ ﴿١٤١﴾"

Tr.: It is He Who produces gardens, with trellises and without, and dates, and tilth with produce of all kinds, and olives and pomegranates, similar (in kind) and different (in variety): Eat of their fruit in their season, but render the dues that are proper on the day that the harvest is gathered. But waste not by excess: for Allah loves not wasters.

A very significant verse which brings out the creation of variety of plants/fruits in different seasons and sustainable harvest of the biodiversity. Though utilization of the produces

is encouraged, wastage is strictly prohibited. Yūsuf ‘Alī has very clearly illustrated the point, “waste not, work not”, says the English proverb. Here the same wisdom is preached from a higher motive. See what magnificent means Allah provides in nature for the sustenance of all His creatures, because He loves them all. He also enjoins them to be moderate and grateful in their exploitation of natural resources.

Most of the problems that the world is facing today are caused on account of man’s greed and selfishness. If the believers (Muslims) are contented many problems regarding environmental degradation can be solved. Islam does not allow wastage or extravagance of any sort. Conservation or sustainable or wise use of natural resources is a clear-cut directive in Islamic teachings, as may be elsewhere too. It is quite evident that stress in life of mankind is increasing day by day due to his/her wasteful nature and exaggerated life style. Much of the wildlife trade is related to fashionable decorations of drawing/living rooms. Even in a country like Saudi Arabia I noticed lot of wastage of food which is un-Islamic. Since Allah does not like wasters, conservation (judicious use of natural resources) should be the motto of all believers.

Chapter 7; al-A’rāf

7: 56

"وَلَا تُفْسِدُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ بَعْدَ إِصْلَاحِهَا وَأَدْعُوهُ خَوْفًا وَطَمَعًا إِنَّ رَحْمَتَ اللَّهِ قَرِيبٌ مِّنَ الْمُحْسِنِينَ ﴿٥٦﴾"

Tr.: Do not mischief on the earth, after it has been set in order, but call on Him with fear and longing (in your hearts): for the mercy of Allah is (always) near to those who do good.

In the first two sentences there is a clear warning for the believers not to be mischievous. The mischievous conduct

could be of various kinds. From our perspective, poaching and trade of wildlife, illicit cutting of trees, indiscriminate altering or polluting habitats, torturing animals, etc, all come under the purview of mischief; and are anti-Islamic.

7: 163

"وَسَأَلَهُمْ عَنِ الْقَرْيَةِ الَّتِي كَانَتْ حَاضِرَةَ الْبَحْرِ إِذْ يَعْتَدُونَ فِي السَّبْتِ إِذْ تَأْتِيهِمْ حِيَتَانُهُمْ يَوْمَ سَبْتِهِمْ شُرَّحًا وَيَوْمَ لَا تَأْتِيهِمْ كَذَلِكَ نَبُحُوهُم بِمَا كَانُوا يَفْسُقُونَ ﴿١٦٣﴾"

Tr.: Ask them concerning the town standing close by the sea. Behold! They transgressed in the matter of the Sabbath, for on the day of their Shabbath their fish did come to them, openly (holding up their heads,) but on the day they had no Shabbath, they came not: Thus did We make a trial of them, for they were given to transgression.

The verse reveals and supports the view that when protection is given to animals they feel secure. As given earlier also (2: 65), the Israelis were forbidden to fish on Sabbath day (Saturday). And when this practice was observed, the fish used to come up with a sense of security to their water channels or pools openly on the Shabbath day, but not on other days when fishing was permitted. The pious people who obeyed the commandment, they were rewarded while the mischievous were punished. As mentioned earlier, prohibition of hunting one day per week could be considered a means of sustainable harvesting of natural resources. Under ethics of nature conservation sustainable harvest of renewable resources is a part of wildlife management. And hence, when the population of an animal crosses the limit of carrying capacity in a particular ecosystem, at times killing (selective killing) is suggested.

Chapter 10: Yūnus

10: 24

«إِنَّمَا مَثَلُ الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا كَمَاءٍ أَنْزَلْنَاهُ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ فَاخْتَلَطَ بِهِ نَبَاتُ الْأَرْضِ مِمَّا يَأْكُلُ النَّاسُ وَالْأَنْعَامُ حَتَّى إِذَا أَخَذَتِ الْأَرْضُ زُخْرُفَهَا وَازَّيَّنَتْ وَظَنَّ أَهْلُهَا أَنَّهُمْ قَدِرُونَ عَلَيْهَا أَتْنَاهَا أَمْرًا لَيْلًا أَوْ نَهَارًا فَجَعَلْنَاهَا حَصِيدًا كَأَن لَّمْ تَغْنَ بِالْأَمْسِ ۚ كَذَلِكَ نُفَصِّلُ الْآيَاتِ لِقَوْمٍ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ ﴿٢٤﴾»

Tr.: The likeness of the life of the present is as the rain which We send down from the skies by its mingling arises the produce of the earth which provides food for men and animals (It grows) till the earth is clad with its golden ornaments and is decked out (in beauty); the people to whom it belongs think they have all powers of disposal over it. There reaches it Our command by night or by day, and We make it like a harvest clean-mown, as if it had not flourished only the day before! Thus do We explain the signs in detail for those who reflect.

The cycle of rain, its effect on the land and on growing plants is emphasized. The rain comes down in drops and mingles with the earth. Through it, by Allah's matchless artistry, the womb of the earth is made fruitful. All kinds of good, useful and beautiful grain, vegetables, and fruits are produced for men and animals. The earth is covered in its armour of green and gold and all kinds of colours. All these phenomena are natural, not governed by humans whatever way human may ensure, at times even mature grain or ripe fruits are destroyed by natural calamities.

As we know that evolution and extinction both are natural process, the verse in the first few sentences elaborates the process of creation (evolution) of various animate and inanimate objects useful to mankind. However, all these creations are also subject to decay, loss, or extinction. If it is a

natural phenomenon leading to elimination of entire population of a species we call it natural extinction, and if it is man-made, we call it a man-influenced extinction. Recent accelerated trend of endangerment and extinction of plant and animal species is mostly man influenced. If this trend is not halted, mankind would jeopardize its own sustainable existence.

Chapter 11: Hūd

11: 6

"وَمَا مِنْ دَابَّةٍ فِي الْأَرْضِ إِلَّا عَلَى اللَّهِ رِزْقُهَا وَيَعْلَمُ مُسْتَقَرَّهَا وَمُسْتَوْدَعَهَا كُلٌّ فِي كِتَابٍ مُبِينٍ ﴿٦﴾"

Tr.: There is no moving creature on earth but its sustenance depends on Allah. He knows its resting place and its temporary deposit: all is in a clear record.

Once again it is emphasized that Allah provides sustenance to all His creatures, macro or microorganism and He also has the knowledge of their whereabouts (habitat). We know that there is an intrinsic link between an organism and its habitat and in orbit of that connection (ecological niche) the sustenance is available. This inter dependence is also depicted in the form of food chain and food web any imbalance in this system may cause severe derailment and an organism that is supposed to sustain itself within its niche may suffer adversely. Thus helping to maintain the balance of nature is great responsibility on mankind and in accordance with Islamic fabric.

Chapter 13: al-Ra'd

13:3

"هُوَ الَّذِي مَدَّ الْأَرْضَ وَجَعَلَ فِيهَا رَوَاسِيَ وَأَنْهَارًا وَمِنْ كُلِّ الْجَبَلِ جَعَلَ فِيهَا زُرُوجِينَ آمِنِينَ
يُغْشَى اللَّيْلَ النَّهَارَ إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَاتٍ لِقَوْمٍ يُتَفَكَّرُونَ ﴿٣﴾"

Tr.: And it is He Who spread out the earth, and set thereon mountains standing firm, and (flowing) rivers: and fruit of every kind He made in pairs, two and two, He draws the night as veil over the day. Behold! Verily, in these things there are signs for those who consider!

The above and preceding two verses (13:4 & 13: 5) reveal about the diversity of the habitats (aquatic, terrestrial, aerial, etc.) and diversity of crops, fruits and gardens created by God for the benefit of mankind. These creations are the signs for those who consider. In the Qur'ān the word 'fikr' or 'tafakkur' (= to think and observe) has been mentioned at several places. Mankind has been advised by Allah to look into the signs of creations. Regular movements of the earth, moon, and stars; forming of day and night; production and maintenance of variety of flora and fauna, the cycles of air, water, chemicals/nutrients, etc. all provide lots of material of thought for considerate people. Since most of these creations are subject of management, humans (believers) being the vicegerent or representative (*khalīfah*) of God on this planet have great responsibility to think and act for proper management and conservation of nature and natural resources. The point is more clearly illustrated below:

Chapter 15: al-Hijr

15: 19

"وَالْأَرْضَ مَدَدْنَاهَا وَأَلْقَيْنَا فِيهَا رَوَاسِيَ وَأَشْبَعْنَا فِيهَا مِنْ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ مَّوْزُونٍ ﴿١٩﴾"

Tr.: And the earth We have spread out (like carpet); set thereon mountains firm and immovable; and produced there in all kinds of things in due balance.

Regarding creation of vast space of earth and making it firm by hills and mountains, the verse is quite supportive for

maintaining the balance of nature. It also describes the inter- and intra-specific relation and dependence of various objects. The Arabic word 'mauzūn' (= perfect) very clearly mentions that everything has been created in perfect shape and size and in proper symmetry. If we observe anatomy of an animal, whether it is unicellular, multi-cellular, diplolastic or triploblastic, radially, horizontally or vertically arranged, there is a definit symmetry. It is also in the case of plants perfect and well-balanced ecosystem. The plant kingdom (flora) supports the animal kingdom (fauna), they in term help plants to disperse and propagate. The biotic factors play their own role and even minor imbalance of an element disturbs and checks the growth of affected species and may jeopardize the whole system. Even the by-products, the waste, dead and decayed material and minor organism help in maintaining the balance. It is a chain of gradation and interdependence.

15: 20

"وَجَعَلْنَا لَكُمْ فِيهَا مَعْيِشَ وَمَنْ لَسْتُمْ لَهُ بِرَازِقِينَ ﴿٢٠﴾"

Tr.: And We have provided therein means of subsistence, - for you and for those for whose sustenance ye are not responsible.

The verse very clearly mentions that God provides sustenance to all of his creatures including men, women, plants and animals (tamed/wild) with due economy and balance. Man by his wisdom has known some of the nature's cycle (provision) of food/shelters, etc) for regulating the sustenance to wild animals but yet they do not know many marvels of nature. The hibernation, aestivation, migration of animals, parasitism and predation, etc. all these phenomenon of nature perfectly match the demands of the system and situation for their survival and propagation.

15: 21

"وَإِن مِّن شَيْءٍ إِلَّا عِندَنَا خَزَائِنُهُ وَمَا نُنزِلُهُ إِلَّا بِقَدَرٍ مَّعْلُومٍ ﴿٢١﴾"

Tr.: And there is not a thing but its (sources and) treasures (inexhaustible) are with Us; but We only send down thereof in due and ascertainable measures.

Yūsuf ‘Alī comments, “All the wonderful gifts and forces and energies which we see in the world around us have their sources and fountain heads with Allah, the Creator and Sustainer of the worlds. And what we see or perceive or imagine is just a small portion of what exists. That portion is sent out to us and to our world according to our needs from time as the occasion arises. It is strictly limited according to rule and plan. Its source is unlimited and inexhaustible (if used sustainably). In the same way the forces, which we see operating around us, in nature or in the spiritual world are according to laws, which we can grasp and ascertain, are mere derived forces, in the 2nd, 3rd, or 9th degree”.

It is a well-known fact that many plants and animals have many other values (such as medicinal) besides their food value. Furthermore, mankind knows benefits of only some part of natural bounty but a lot is still to be identified and named, which might reveal their beneficial role for mankind in future. The conservation of natural resources is therefore also very important from futuristic point of view. But with the rate man is over-exploiting and altering the natural resources it appears that we would exhaust them sooner than destined. The treasures and gifts of nature can remain inexhaustible (renewable) ‘only if we harvest them judiciously, manage them properly and provide them conducive environment to propagate perpetually.

Chapter 16: al-Naḥl

16: 11

"يُنْبِثُ لَكُمْ بِهِ الزَّرْعَ وَالزَّيْتُونَ وَالنَّخِيلَ وَالْأَعْنَابَ وَمِنْ كُلِّ الثَّمَرَاتِ إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَةً لِّقَوْمٍ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ ﴿١١﴾"

Tr.: With it He produces for you corn, olives, date-palms, grapes, and every kind of fruit. Verily, in this is a sign for those who give thought. He has made subject to you the night and the day: the sun and the moon. And the stars are in subjection by His command: verily, in this are signs for men who are wise.

16: 14

"وَهُوَ الَّذِي سَخَّرَ الْبَحْرَ لِتَأْكُلُوا مِنْهُ لَحْمًا طَرِيًّا وَتَسْتَخْرِجُوا مِنْهُ جِلْيَةً تَلْبَسُونَهَا وَتَرَى الْفُلْكَ مَوَاجِرَ فِيهِ وَلِتَبْتَغُوا مِنْ فَضْلِهِ ۗ وَلِعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُونَ ﴿١٤﴾"

Tr.: It is He Who has made the sea subject, that you may eat thereof flesh that is fresh and tender, and that you may extract therefrom ornaments to wear: and you seek the ships therein that plough the waves, that ye may seek (thus) of the bounty of Allah and that you may be grateful.

Conclusion:

Conservation of wildlife is an essential factor if this planet is to be kept in productive condition. All living forms play an important role in the upkeep of harmony of nature. Though with gradual advancement of research and discovery of more and more floral and faunal elements, we have started understanding the intricacy of nature, there are still many life forms in water and on land about which we know nothing. It is likely that many of them are playing a key role unnoticeably in maintaining the balance of nature. By rapid alteration and polluting the wildlife habitat we are also jeopardizing our own

existence. Consequences of rapid industrial growth and deforestation have started showing their impact in the form of global warming, depletion of ozone layer, green house effect, melting of ice-bergs and rise of sea level, etc. The issue of wildlife conservation and degradation of habitat on global level are mainly owing to our greed and indiscriminate use of natural resources. Hence all religions and civilizations have taught the lesson of contentment, pious living and to keep harmony with nature, such as Christianity, Islam, Buddhism, Hinduism, Jainism, Judaism and other faiths. Essence of nature conservation is found in teachings of all religions. They all give foremost importance to humanity and the humans should be kind and just to all creatures. Our planet is a composite garden and no garden can remain beautiful and productive without diversity of life forms. Since Islamic teachings and philosophy are more intricately closer to the nature, it has far stronger code of conduct of nature conservation as illustrated earlier.

As mentioned in the Qur'ān, Ḥadīth and other Islamic teachings, many attributes of God are reflected through the bounty of nature ninety nine such attributes are names called 'al-Asmā' al-Ḥusnā' (The Most Beautiful Names) are interspersed throughout the Qur'ānic text, thirteen are given in verses 59:23-24.

Submission to the will of God, together with obedience to His beneficial law, is the best safeguard of peace and harmony. It enables man to make peace between himself and his fellow creatures. According to Islam, God-made laws administer everything in the world. This makes the entire physical world necessarily obedient to God and submissive to His laws.

The Islamic teaching and philosophy are so close to nature that most of the Islamic countries' flags contain the colour

green. Islam considers human to be a part of a single structure of the universe that is intimately interrelated. Humans are at the apex of this structure on earth wherein they are to act as representatives of God, taking God's due and giving Him their own due (Qur'ān 2:30). However, man's position in this structure does not grant him power to destroy, to recreate or to rule over nature, otherwise, man would have taken ultimate authority.

Thus while harvesting the produce of nature humans must love and admire the objects of the world, animate or inanimate. They should not deprive any organism of its primary habitat. Excessive exploitation of environment/nature driven by insatiable consumerism, individual economic gain, or limitless development, is hardly consistent with the trusteeship of humankind over all matter. The arguments given by Foltz¹ should be treated as an eye-opener. It is true that despite such strong Islamic teachings for maintaining the balance of nature and clean environment many Muslim countries have failed to practice the same.² According to Islamic belief, cleaning of internal environment (self-introspection, avoidance of corruption, etc) is as important as maintaining the external environment. It is high time that more effective steps are taken to conserve the wildlife and their habitats in accordance with the Islamic Sharī'ah that strongly supports the ethics of nature conservation. Only then the human life will be able to overcome the present economic and ecological crisis.

¹ Foltz., R. 1998: Islamic Environmentalism: A Matter of Interpretation. Conference on Islam and Ecology, Harvard Centre for World Religion, USA

² Abou Bakr Aḥmad Ba Kader, 'Abdul Laṭīf Tawfīk El Shirazy al-Sabbagh, Muḥammad al-Sayyed Al-Glenid and Mouel Yousef Samarrail Izzidein (1983): Islamic Principles for the Conservation of the natural environment. Gland, Switzerland: IUCN. And MEPA, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

Under such a strong link of Islamic philosophy and teaching about nature, it is obvious that conservation of nature and natural resources is a great obligation on believers of Islam. Today though man's irrational actions often damage the environment and destroy wildlife and their habitats, he can also plan and execute the following remedial measures:

1. Treat biodiversity with respect.
2. Encourage use of natural and recyclable materials.
3. Save energy and minimize waste.
4. Awareness and education.
5. Involving participation at the individual level.
6. Arrest pollution at its source.
7. Initiate and implement environment-friendly schemes and policies.
8. Enforcement of protection laws.

Fortunately Islamic laws have the provisions of all the above corrective measures and there is no reason why the same cannot be implemented across the Muslim countries. Having such a forceful Islamic directive for the conservation of nature/wildlife it is indeed very important that the Muslims give due consideration of treating biodiversity with respect and for maintaining the balance of nature by optimizing their needs and minimizing the wastage. While conservation of biodiversity as illustrated by Primack,¹ should form an important component, along with the theology of religions, Theology of Nature, should also form the part of academic curriculum in Muslim countries.

Islam also welcomes and encourages incorporation of any regional or international endeavour in the fields of social

¹ Primack R.B. 1998: *Essentials of Conservation Biology*. Sinauer Associates Inc. Sunderland, Massachusetts, USA

development vis-à-vis wildlife conservation. Therefore, collaborative efforts should be made for the maintenance of biodiversity for the present and future generations.



Bibliography

1. 'Alī, A. 1999: Islamic Law as an Antidote for Maintaining Water Quality, *Water Law Review*, University of Danver, USA. Vol. II (2): 169-188
 2. Abou Bakr Aḥmad Ba Kader, 'Abdul Laṭīf Tawfīk El Shirazy al-Sabbagh, Muḥammad al-Sayyed Al-Glenid and Mouel Yousef Samarail Izzidein (1983): *Islamic Principles for the Conservation of the natural environment*. Gland, Switzerland: IUCN. And MEPA, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
 3. Al-Jawwād al-Rikābī, 1959: *al-Tabeah fī al-Sh'ir al-Undulusī*, Jain Publication, Damascus
 4. Anonymous. 1973: *Encyclopedia of Islam (in Urdu)*, University of the Punjāb Press, Lāhore, Pākistān. Vol. 8: 770-785
 5. Bucaille, M. 1997: *The Bible, The Qur'ān & Science*, Indian Print, Kitāb Bhawan, Delhi
 6. Child G. & Grainger, J. 1990: *A Plan to Protect Areas in Saudi Arabia* NCWCD and IUCN, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.
 7. Damīrī, K.M., 14th century, *Ḥayā-tul-Ḥaiwān*, Urdu translation by Moḥd. Irfān (1981) Rāḥat Printing Press, Deoband (UP)
 8. Darwin, C. 1959: *On the origin of species*. Murray, London.
 9. David, H. 1947: *Fundamental of Physics* 4th ed. Asian Book Ltd., New Delhi
 10. Deedāt, A. 1997: *al-Qur'ān: The Miracles*, Islamic Propagation Centre & Institute, Durban, South Africa.
 11. Don Belt. 2002: *The World of Islam*, National Geographic Magazine, January 2002: 76-85
 12. Erdur, Oguz. 1997: *Re-appropriating the Green Islamic Environmentalism New Perspectives on Turkey*, Paper presented in Conference on Islam and Ecology, Harward Centre for World Religion, USA
-

13. Fārūqī, I. 1989: Plants of the Qur'ān, A Scientific Analysis. Publication Sheikh Muḥammad Baṣhīr & Sons. Urdu Bāzār, Lāhore, Pākistān
 14. Foltz., R. 1998: Islamic Environmentalism: A Matter of Interpretation. Conference on Islam and Ecology, Harvard Centre for World Religion, USA
 15. Khān, M.S. 1987: Social Structure and Economic Change in Islam. Kitāb Ghar Educational Publishers, Aligarh, UP
 16. Khān, Wahīda. 1996: Environment in Islamic perspective in psychology and society in Islamic perspective. M.G.Ḥussain ed.pp.158-164. Institute of objective studies, New Delhi
 17. Maulānā 'Abdul āajid Daryābādī. 1954: Ḥaiwānāt-i-Qur'ānī (in Urdu). Academy of Islamic Research, Nadwa-tul-'Ulamā', Lucknow, New Print 2000, Qāsimjān Street, Ballīmārān. Delhi
 18. Maulānā Abul A'lā al-Maudūdī, 1968: Tafhīm-ul-Qur'ān (in Urdu) Print Set, Ghāziābād
 19. Maulānā Abul Kalām Aḥmad Āzād. 1931: Tarjamān-ul-Qur'ān (in Urdu), Vol. 1: 1-47, Office of Tarjama-tul-Qur'ān , Delhi
 20. Maulānā Akhtar Shāhjahānpūrī, 1992: Urdu Translation of al-Buḥārī, 2nd Ed. Vol. 1,2,3. Rūmī Publication and Printers, Lāhore, Pākistān
 21. Maulānā Aṣhraf 'Alī Thānawī, 1934: Bayān-ul-Qur'ān (in Urdu), Markaz Aṣhraf-ul-'Ulūm, Deoband.
 22. Maulānā Shabbīr Aḥmad Uthmānī, 1989: Urdu Translation of the Qur'ān, Tāj Publisher, Delhi
 23. Mirzā, M. R., & Ṣiddīqī, M. I. 1986: Muslim Contributions to Science, Qāḍī Publications, Chicago, Illinois, USA
 24. Nadwī, S.H. 1985: A Geographical History of the Qur'ān. Tāj Company. Delhi
 25. Naṣr, S. H. 1992: Islam & Environmental Crisis. In Spirit and nature (Steven C. Rockefeller & John C. Elder eds)
 26. Naṣr, S. H., 1996: The Need for a Sacred Science, Curzon Press Ltd. Surrey.
-

27. Nelson, D. Joseph, G.G. & Williams, J. 1993: Multicultural Mathematics, Oxford University Press, Oxford.
 28. Pickthal, M. 1948: The Meaning of the Glorious Qur'ān , An Explanatory Translation, 2nd Impression, George Allan & Unwin Ltd. London
 29. Primack R.B. 1998: Essentials of Conservation Biology. Sinauer Associates Inc. Sunderland, Massachusetts, USA
 30. Qārī Muḥammad Ṭayeb, 1938: Science & Islam (in Urdu), Institute of Dār-ul-Ma'ārif, Deoband, (UP)
 31. Sir, Sayed Aḥmad Khān, 1980: Tafsīr-ul-Qur'ān (in Urdu), 'Alīgarh Institute Press, 'Alīgarh
 32. Szule, T. 2001: Abraham Journey of Faith. National Geographic Magazine, December, 2001
 33. Yaḥyá, H.S.A. 1998: Birds in the Qur'ān. The Alumini International. Toronto, Canada. Vol. 3: 17-18
 34. Yaḥyá, H.S.A. 2003: Importance of Wildlife conservation from Islamic perspective, Authors' Press, New Delhi, & The Netherlands
 35. Yaḥyá, H.S.A., 2002: Memories of Qāḍī Mujāhid-ul-Islam (in Urdu) Millī ittihād Special Issue. Vol. 5 (43-46): 213-216. May-August, 2002, Jāmia Nagar, New Delhi
 36. Yūsuf, A.A. 1946: The Meaning of the Glorious Qur'ān Text, translation and commentary, al-Madīnah Edition, 1998
 37. Zākir Nā'ik 2000: Qur'ān and Modern Science, Compatible or Incompatible. Islamic Research Foundation, Mumbai
-

Some Lessons of Technological Development in the Worldview of the Qur'ān

✎...Dr. Khālid Mas'ūd¹

Technology is defined as “the invention and employment of artefacts i.e. the materials altered through human agency for human uses”.² It is defined more pragmatically as “The tools, techniques, procedures, things: the artefacts fashioned by modern industrial man to increase his power of mind and body”.³ In this sense of the word, man has employed technology from the times immemorial and the discovery of plough points and simple workman’s tools in the ruins of ancient cities and of extensive irrigation systems of ancient Egypt and Iraq are witness to it. During the recorded history, there were periods when technology made tremendous strides. However, the advent of the age of Science, two hundred years ago, was accompanied by spectacular progress of technology. It is rightly said of modern technology that “it has enhanced human power beyond anything known or even dreamt of before. This is a power over matter, over life on earth, and over man himself; and it keeps growing at an accelerated pace”.⁴ It continues to move forward in quite unpredictable ways and has the capacity of going out of the control of man, who has invented and harnessed it so far. This

¹ A great Pākistānī writer of Islamic Studies.

² Feibleman, James K., *Technology & Reality*, Martins Nighopp, The Hague, 1982, P. xi

³ Lawrence, W.W., *Modern Science and Human Values*, Oxford University Press, 1986, P. 32

⁴ Jones, Hans, *The Imperatives of Responsibility*, University of Chicago Press, 1984, P. ix

aspect of modern technology has caused worry among the humanists and social philosophers. The Muslims are also deeply worried about the negative effects of this technology which are manifest among the most developed nations, while the developing nations are finding it difficult to exploit the advantages of technology without experiencing its ill-effects.

Technology is One of Allah's Favours:

A Muslim's concept of life stems from the precepts of the Qur'an, which attributes man's ability to harness the power of nature to Allah's benevolence. Allah created man to act His vicegerent on earth and subjugated (سخر) the powers of nature in his service. Just as God taught the birds to fly, to make nests, to find food and to procreate, He bestowed on man –the best of His creation – the powers of perception, reasoning and inference. Having created everything that man would ever need, He keeps on inspiring him how to utilize it for his well-being. Man has accordingly resorted to agriculture to grow a large variety of food, harnessed waters to irrigate land and to generate electrical energy, invented vessels to float in the ocean, conserved solar energy, and so on. The Qur'an makes mention of this fact in the following verses.

"اللَّهُ الَّذِي خَلَقَ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ وَأَنْزَلَ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ مَاءً فَأَخْرَجَ بِهِ مِنَ الثَّمَرَاتِ رِزْقًا لَكُمْ ۗ وَسَخَّرَ لَكُمْ الْفُلْكَ لِتَجْرِيَ فِي الْبَحْرِ بِأَمْرِهِ ۗ وَسَخَّرَ لَكُمْ الْأَنْهَارَ ۗ وَسَخَّرَ لَكُمْ الشَّمْسَ وَالْقَمَرَ دَائِبَيْنِ ۗ وَسَخَّرَ لَكُمْ اللَّيْلَ وَالنَّهَارَ ۗ وَعَاتِدْكُمْ مِّنْ كُلِّ مَا سَأَلْتُمُوهُ وَإِن تَعُدُّوا نِعْمَتَ اللَّهِ لَا تَحْصُوهَا ۗ إِنَّ الْإِنْسَانَ لَقَلِيلٌ لَّظَلُومٌ كَفَّارٌ ﴿١٤٦﴾"

Tr.: Allah is He who created the Heavens and the earth and sent down water from the clouds, then brought forth thereby the fruits for your provision. And He subjugated the ships to run on the sea by His command; and He subjugated to you the

rivers. And He has made subservient to you the sun and the moon pursuing their courses, and He has made subservient to you the night and the day. And He conferred upon you of all that you asked Him. And if you count Allah's favours, you will never be able to enumerate them.¹

Thus science and technology (S&T) as well as their products are, in the Qur'ānic perspective, bounties of Allah bestowed by Him on man to be of service to him. The Qur'ān, therefore, is not against technology. Rather it enumerates a number of its products such as apparel, woolens, ornaments, tentage and armour and describes them as Allah's favour.²

God's creation is not without planning. He unravels the advantages of S&T to man according to His own design and programme. He says:

"وَإِنْ مِنْ شَيْءٍ إِلَّا عِنْدَنَا خَزَائِنُهُ وَمَا نُنزِلُهُ إِلَّا بِقَدَرٍ مَّعْلُومٍ ﴿٣١﴾"

Tr.: And there is not a thing but with Us are the treasures of it, and We do not send it down but in a known measure.³

Technology is not Omnipotent:

Modern Technology, with a tremendous record of its successes, tends to claim its omnipotence. The Qur'ān makes man recall that he is neither the designer nor the creator of anything. Rather he discovers laws to consume the raw material created by God to his benefit. He is successful only to the extent which Allah wills that he should attain success. He can dig tube-wells and obtain water so long as God wills. But if the water should sink away, there is none to bring him flowing water.⁴ Man

¹ Ibrāhī- 34

² Al-Naḥl: 14, 80-81.

³ Al-Ḥijr: 21

⁴ Al-Mulk: 30.

voyages in vessels laden with goods and reaches his destination comfortably. It is Allah by whose leave this voyage is made. Had He willed, He could sink the ship and there could be nobody to help and come to rescue the people on board.¹ Man can sow the crops and irrigates the field but God can make the crops crumble to pieces even at a juncture when man is planning for their harvest.² By these examples, the Qur'ān makes it clear that it is only Allah who is omnipotent. He controls the reins of everything, but man, with his wishful thinking, considers himself the master of the universe.

Technology is not inherently Value-laden:

Thinkers have not been able to resolve so far whether technology is “value-laden” or “value-free”. According to William Lawrence, “technical activity must be considered value-laden in two senses: technical people’s social values and value-perceptions affect their research and service; and that work, in turn, affects the value-situations of others in the public”.³ Sardar is of the view that “there is nothing neutral or value-free about technology. Modern technology is the product of the particular history and culture of Western civilization, and it carries the seeds of its cultural origin wherever it goes”.⁴ On the other hand, Pacey describes technology as culturally, morally and politically neutral, essentially amoral, a thing apart from value.⁵ The former two thinkers attribute value to technology because of the social values of the technologists or the history and culture of their civilization. Obviously these factors are not intrinsic to

¹ Yāsīn: 43

² Al-Qāqī'ah: 65

³ Lawrence, William W., Loc. Cit P. 6

⁴ Sardar, Z., *Islamic Futures*, Mansell Publishing Limited, London, 1985, P.185

⁵ Pacey, Arnold, *The Culture of Technology*, MIT Press, Cambridge, 1983, P. 2.

technology but external to it. A machine designed to spin yarn would accomplish its job equally well in the hands of a pious worker and an irreligious person. The process of fermentation in itself is very beneficial to man and rich in possibilities in the manufacture of chemicals and drugs, yet it is man who decides whether to use dates and grapes to make vinegar or wine. From a Muslim's point of view, in the latter choice, the question of value creeps in because of a factor external to technology. Thus it may be concluded that technology is essentially apart from values. However, it is an instrument which can be used for both good or ill purposes.

This point may further be elaborated by an example from the life of Prophet Muḥammad (PBUH). When the verses prohibiting drinking (wine) were revealed at Madīnah, he banned the use of Muzaffat, Naqīr, Ḥantam and Dubbā- various types of vats used for fermentation. However, when the instructions about drinking were fully implemented, and there was no likelihood of the misuse of the vats in the Islamic society, the Prophet withdrew the ban, allowing use (of vats) for purposes other than making wine.¹

Causes of Ill-Effects of Technology:

Now let us consider another important question – if technology is not value-laden, why do we experience its ill-effects? It is argued that large scale manufacture has destroyed the moral fabric of the human personality and society, and has led to mortal conflicts at social, political, economic and international levels.¹³ Organised crime has become a great threat to social order. Every great advancement has an immense impact on human culture and social behaviour. The danger of global nuclear war is acute and the situation is pregnant with the

¹ Buḫhārī, Kitāb-ul-Maghāzī, Ch. Waḥd 'Abdul Qais, No. 654

chances of destruction of human civilization. These are hard facts but, again, external to technology itself. It is the man behind the wheel who matters. He is to be blamed for the misuse of technology. Think of knife. It is an instrument of great benefit to man. But if one uses it to strike the belly of someone to kill him, it is not the fault of the knife but of its user. According to the Qur'ān, every bounty of Allah can be misused. Even such simple and harmless things as the wealth and the progeny of man are described as *Fiṭnah* i.e., a means to try the faithfulness of man. This type of ordering was necessary in the scheme of things as designed by the Almighty Allah, who created this world to try the humankind. Therefore, the correct approach for man here is to use every bounty of Allah to satisfy his genuine needs and remain grateful to Him. If he misuses the bounty against the commands of the Almighty, he proves himself to be disloyal, ungrateful and fit for His chastisement.

This fact is brought home in the Qur'ān at a number of places. For example, man is required to remember the benevolence of Allah while riding a horse, boarding a ship or wearing garments designed to protect him from the vagaries of seasons or the weaponry of the enemy.¹

Two Models of Technologically-Developed Nations:

In order to explain the point further, the Qur'ān has presented two models of the society affluent with the products of technology and discussed their character. The first model is represented by the society during the reign of David and Solomon (PBUH) ---the prophet-kings of Jewish history. According to the Qur'ān, this period was characterized by unprecedented advancement in the metallurgy of iron and

¹ Sardar Z., *Science , Technology and Development in the Muslim World*, Croom Helm, London, 1977, P. 55

copper; the metals were put to use in making armour and various objects of use. Solomon's navy of ships had connections with far-off lands; Solomon utilized forces manned by creatures other than human beings, in large construction works. Affluence of this period is not questioned by the present-day researchers, who describe it as a period of exceptional intellectual and cultural change in which an industrial revolution was brought about. Navy was organized and the united kingdom of Israel reached the zenith of its grandeur.¹¹⁵ In spite of this affluence, the Qur'ān says, both the kings were fully alive to their duty towards God. They were grateful to him. They attributed their successes not to their own actions but to the favour of the Almighty Allah. They firmly believed that God tries the human beings with favours and affluence. Therefore, they were all obedience towards Him. They always acted in accordance with His commands. God was also kind and their peoples flourished. Such a character of a technologically developed nation finds Allah's approval and blessings and is a good example to follow.

The second model for developed nations mentioned in the Qur'ān is that of 'Ād, Thamūd and the people of Sheba. 'Ād', because of their might, had no match among the nations of their age. Their might and affluence revealed itself in their monuments, lofty buildings, fortresses and tyrannical behaviour. Thamūd excelled in the art of hewing houses out of the mountains and making lush gardens. People of Sheba were a nation with flourishing agriculture and trade. Yet all these nations used their affluence and technology for making mischief and committing inordinacy in the land. Because of their ingratitude, God let His chastisement fall on them. 'Ād and Thamūd were destroyed by natural disaster and the people of

¹ Al-Zukhruf: 13 and al-Naml: 81

Sheba saw the withdrawal of the sources of their affluence and the whole community perished. The character of these doomed nations invites Allah's wrath and is a bad example to follow.

Modern Technology and Qur'ānic Ethics:

Unfortunately, technological development in this age is following a pattern reminiscent of the one followed by the tribes of 'Ād, Thamūd and the people of Sheba. No doubt, there has been a sustained growth during the last two hundred years and it has transformed every phase or life of modern man; yet this development has eroded the foundations from which social norms could be derived. It has failed to provide social harmony, international justice and moral and spiritual fulfillment. The humanists today are advocating containment of technology and adoption of new ethical policies and moral discipline.

From the Qur'ānic point of view, the human values are ingrained in the nature of man and are the same for all times. Therefore, there is no need of evolving a new code of ethics; what we require is to create awareness of human values and man's responsibility before God. Technology should not be allowed to enjoy unrestrained exercise of human will. It must be subjected to remain within the limits ordained by God. Only then will mankind be able to avoid the ill-effects of technology and the disastrous end as a result of God's chastisement.

Bibliography

1. The Holy Qur'ān
 2. Feibleman, James K., *Technology & Reality*, Martins Nighopp, The Hague, 1982
 3. Lawrence, W.W., *Modern Science and Human Values*, Oxford University Press, 1986
 4. Jones, Hans, *The Imperatives of Responsibility*, University of Chicago Press, 1984
 5. Sardar, Z., *Islamic Futures*, Mansell Publishing Limited, London, 1985
 6. Pacey, Arnold, *The Culture of Technology*, MIT Press, Cambridge, 1983.
 7. Bukhārī, Kitāb-ul-Maghāzī, Ch. Wafd 'Abdul Qais, No.654
 8. Sardar Z., *Science , Technology and Development in the Muslim World*, Croom Helm, London, 1977
 9. Zeitlin, Irving M., *Avcient Judaism*, Polity Press, Cambridge, 1984
-

Human-Body Mechatronic with Concept of Control System in the Light of the Qur'ān

✎ Mrs. Tanwīn Moḥammad Ṣalaḥuddīn Ashrafī¹

Abstract

A control system is a concept that helps to view any complex system in simple mathematical equations. Any system can be viewed under the basic block diagram of control system. In this new era, researches' main point of concentration is human-body working. Many a study have been done under the heading of 'mechatronics' of human body'. The core of this studies is the block that takes actual control i.e mind, (say brain or in the Qur'ān *qalb*). The Qur'ān is the best document to explain many views with correlation of natural world. In this paper, an attempt has been made to view human body mechanism with the help of control system. To support views, the Qur'ān has given the ground for discussion.

Key words: Control System, Mechatronics, Mind, etc.

Introduction:

The fundament view of control system is that it is a conceptual framework for designing systems with capabilities of regulation and/or tracking to give a desired performance. This explains that we can analyse any system under the heading of control system.

The use of feedback to control a system has a fascinating history. The earliest application is seen in an oil lamp devised

¹ Assistant Professor, Department of Physics, G.M. Momin Women's College, Bhiwandi

by Philon in approximately 250 B.C. and used a float regulator in an oil lamp for maintaining a constant level of fuel oil. Heron of Alexandria, who lived in the first century A.D., published a book entitled *Pneumatica*,¹ which outlined several forms of water-level mechanisms using float regulators. This feedback of control system has resulted in automatic control system. This closed-loop control system with application of negative feedback to a system. Automatic control in engineering and technology is a wide generic term covering the application of mechanisms to the operation and regulation of processes without continuous observer.

When mechanical control and technology comes in contact with each other, they form a terminology as mechatronics. Mechatronics is a multidisciplinary field of science that includes a combination of mechanical engineering, electronics, computer engineering, telecommunications engineering, systems engineering and control engineering.

Human Brain Major Core of the Human System: To understand the brain, many algorithms are designed to understand its automatic neuronal reconstruction and morphological analysis.²

- I. **Human System:** This system is combination of moral, emotional, biological, mechanical and many more fields. Many researches are always carried out on this object.
- II. **Control System:** The basis for analysis of a system is the foundation provided by linear system, which assumes a cause effect relationship for the components of a system.

¹ Dorf, Richard C., and Robert H. Bishop. *Modern Control Systems*. 11th ed. P.4: Pearson Education, 2008. Print. 978-317-1887-2.

² Shillcock, J.C., Hawrylycz, M., Hill, S. et al. *Brain Inf.* (2016) 3: 205. doi:10.1007/s40708-016-0041-7.

A component or process to be controlled can be represented by a block as shown in Figure¹.

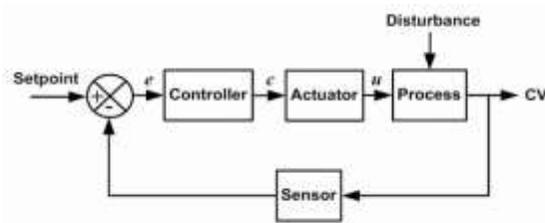


Figure 1: Block diagram of feedback control system.¹

The use of feedback to control a system has resulted in automatic control system. Automatic control system is basic and important block diagram of any systems to be designed. Japanese senior engineer Tetsura Mori introduces the concept of mechatronics by in 1969.² It refers to the automation of machines by introducing computers and other electronic equipments to develop a system which provides functions and capabilities as replica of human bio system.

- a. Sensors: A sensor is a transducer that converts a physical stimulus from one form into a more useful form to measure the stimulus. Human system is endowed with unique features like: hearing, seeing, testing, and feeling. This provides unique signals to the human mind, which acts like sensor to an automatic control system. The Qur'ān supports that hearing, seeing, feeling are the features given to human as sensor to sense the outside world. The Qur'ān says:

¹ Rigg, James. B., and M. Nazmul Karim. *Chemical and Bio-process Control*. Pearson Education International, 2007.

² Mahalik. *Mechatronics: Principles, Concepts and Applications*. 2003 ed. New Delhi: Tata McGraw-Hill, 2006.

ثُمَّ سَوَّاهُ وَنَفَخَ فِيهِ مِنْ رُوْحِهِ ۗ وَجَعَلَ لَكُمُ السَّمْعَ وَالْأَبْصَرَ وَالْأَفْئِدَةَ قَلِيلًا مَّا تَشْكُرُونَ ﴿٩﴾

Tr.: Then He (Allah) fashioned him (Adam) in due proportion and breathed into him from His rooh. And he made for you (features of) hearing, seeing and feeling. Little thanks it is you give!¹

That means that Allah has given this sensor to automate whole body according to the feedback it received through these senses.

- b. *Transfer Function*: Control system works on a transfer function which performs the work on the inputs it got.² In general, these inputs are the combination of actual input and sample of output which feedback to input to improve the performance. This transfer function is actual program (means written instruction) or mathematical formulation that has been written to take action according to the need. In the Qur'ān, this is verified as follows:

"وَلَهُ مَنْ فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ ۚ كُلُّ لَّهُ قَانُونَ ﴿٣١﴾"

Tr.: To Him belongs every being that is in the skies and the earth. All are subservient (i.e., functioning as programmed) to Him.³

That means that all works have been functioning according to its program. In human system, this transfer functions vital role by rūḥ. The Qur'ān supports this view as follows:

"وَيَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ الرُّوحِ ۚ قُلِ الرُّوحُ مِنْ أَمْرِ رَبِّي وَمَا أُوتِيتُمْ مِنَ الْعِلْمِ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا ﴿٨٥﴾"

¹ al-Sajdah: 9.

² Smarajit Ghosh, *Control Systems Theory and Applications*, 2005 ed. Pearson Education International, 2007. Print.

³ Al-Rūm: 26.

Tr.: And they ask you, [O Muḥammad], about the soul. Say, "The soul is of the affair of my Lord. And mankind have not been given of knowledge except a little."¹

In this 'affair' which indicates the instructions of Allah well defined to the system. Prof. Wahid et al 2003 also tries to explain that rūḥ is genetic program that means an invisible component, forms the software of the system. He defined, in his research, the phenomenon of life as the manifestation of the execution of the genetic program (soul) and death as the deletion of the software from the cell memory.²

- c. *Controller*: In any control system, another important block is the processor or to say the thing that perform the action on the input according to the predefined transfer functions and produce desirable output.³ That means a block that has control means controller. In human system, this processor or controller has been named by mind. The word qalb used in the Qur'ān means mind. According to Prof. Wahid et al 2010.⁴ qalb is described as free willed, intelligent and conscious processor of human bio system. That means this is high power processor which takes decision by its own calculation, not being controlled by any master. The David cooper also explains this phenomena by relating the mind as free-will processor.⁵ This is the highest

¹ Al-Isrā': 85.

² Wahid, P.A. 2003. Definitions of life, death, genetic program and soul based on the Qur'ān and computer concept of the universe. *J. Islamic Sci.* 18(1-2): PP.137-147.

³ S. Hasan Saeed, *Automatic Control System*, S. K. Kataria & Sons, 2008, P. 3.

⁴ P. A. Wahid, *The Qur'ān Scientific Exegesis*, 2016 ed. New Dehli: Adam Publishers & Distributors, PP. 264-274.

⁵ David E. Copper. *World Philosophies an historical introduction*, 2003 ed. Blackwell Publisher Ltd. PP.165-167.

feature of any processor in this world. The Qur'ān also explains the feature of mind as being free-will with reciting.

"قُلْ كُلُّ يَعْمَلُ عَلَى شَاكِلَتِهِ ۗ فَرُبُّكُمْ أَعْلَمُ بِمَنْ هُوَ أَهْدَىٰ سَبِيلًا ﴿٨٤﴾"

Tr.: Say: Everyone acts according to his own disposition. But your Lord knows best who is best guided on the path.¹

In the Qur'ān, Allah also hinted that He has given man the best processor to work with. The Qur'ān says,

"إِنَّ فِي ذَٰلِكَ لَذِكْرًا لِمَن كَانَ لَهُ قَلْبٌ أَوْ أَلْقَى السَّمْعَ وَهُوَ شَهِيدٌ ﴿٣٧﴾"

Tr.: Verily in that is scope for thinking for the one who has a mind or who listens and is a witness.²

This processor does its own calculation, creates its own transfer function, keeps record of necessary data, and takes decision in less than nano seconds.

- d. *Actuator*: An actuator is a component of a machine that is responsible for moving or controlling a mechanism or system that produces output. With such powerful processor, system revealed to have a program for most important concept of communication, means speaking, reading & writing. The Qur'ān says: عَلَّمَهُ الْبَيَانَ ﴿٤﴾ (Tr.: He taught him to speak.)³

That means Allah installs a program of speak into the mind of human. Prof. Wahid et al 2016, in his work talks about how Allah taught man. He refers the topic with the help of

¹ Al-Isrā': 84.

² Qāf: 37.

³ Al-Raḥmān: 4.

the Qur'ān.¹ Allah says:

"أَفَرَأَىٰ وَرَبُّكَ الْأَكْرَمُ ۝ الَّذِي عَلَّمَ بِالْقَلَمِ ۝ عَلَّمَ الْإِنْسَانَ مَا لَمْ يَعْلَمْ ۝"

Tr.: Recite, and your Lord is the most Generous -Who taught by the pen; taught man that which he knew not.²

These abilities are unique for the species of the earth. This program of reading, writing and speaking result into the strongest communication tools to develop humanity in the world.³ It has been stated in the Qur'ān:

"وَلَقَدْ كَرَّمْنَا بَنِي آدَمَ وَحَمَلْنَاهُمْ فِي الْبَرِّ وَالْبَحْرِ وَرَزَقْنَاهُمْ مِنَ الطَّيِّبَاتِ وَفَضَّلْنَاهُمْ عَلَىٰ كَثِيرٍ مِّمَّنْ خَلَقْنَا تَفْضِيلًا ۝"

Tr.: And We have certainly honoured the children of Adam and carried them on the land and sea and provided for them of the good things and preferred them over much of what We have created, with [definite] preference.⁴

"لَقَدْ خَلَقْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ فِي أَحْسَنِ تَقْوِيمٍ ۝"

Tr.: We have created man in the best composition,

"لَقَدْ خَلَقْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ فِي كَبَدٍ ۝"

Tr.: Indeed We have created man (to live) in hard struggle.

Allah has given numbers of fantastic actuators to human bio-system, whose replicas are still big question of man technology. The Qur'ān has referred to man as the best

¹ P. A. Wahid, *The Qur'ān Scientific Exegesis*, 2016 ed. New Delhi: Adam Publishers & Distributors, P. 294.

² Al-'Alaq: 3-5.

³ Bjorklund, Pellegrini, *Origins of the social Mind: Evolutionary Psychology and child Development*, Guilford Press (2005): New York, PP. 383-410.

⁴ Al-Isrā': 70.

creation of Allah with complete development of his personality of physical, mental, emotional, cognitive, rational and reflective skills.^{1,2}

"ثُمَّ خَلَقْنَا اللُّطْفَةَ عَلَقَةً فَخَلَقْنَا الْعَلَقَةَ مُضْغَةً فَخَلَقْنَا الْمُضْغَةَ عِظْمًا فَكَسَوْنَا الْعِظْمَ لَحْمًا
ثُمَّ أَنْشَأْنَاهُ خَلْقًا آخَرَ فَتَبَارَكَ اللَّهُ أَحْسَنُ الْخَالِقِينَ ﴿١٤﴾"

Tr.: Then We turned the sperm-drop into a clot, then We turned the clot into a fetus-lump, then We turned the fetus-lump into bones, then We clothed the bones with flesh; thereafter We developed it into another creature. So, glorious is Allah, the Best of the creators.

Allah has given man hands to work, with the special motor skills that hasn't seen in any other animals and technique to walk on two legs.³

- e. *Process*: The portion of controlled system which is to be controlled or regulated, is called process. What is the purpose to make such (human bio-system) beautiful but strongest control system?

"خُلِقَ الْإِنْسَانُ مِنْ عَجَلٍ سَأُرِيكُمْ آيَاتِي فَلَا تَسْتَعْجِلُونِ ﴿٢٧﴾"

Tr.: Man is made of haste. I shall show you My signs, so do not make haste with Me.

In the Qur'ān, Allah explains that the purpose of creation is to worship Him with your free will.^{4,5} With the processor that is much free to take decision to whom it will submit its will, Creator wants to have a servant who admires his

¹ al-Tīn:4

² Al-Balad:4.

³ Al-Mu'minūn:14.

⁴ Al-Dhāriyāt: 56.

⁵ Al-A'rāf: 11-18

creation and biased on his own calculation worship him without any force.

- f. *Disturbance*: Disturbance signals represent unwanted inputs which affect the control-system's output, and result in an increase of the system error. In human moral system "Iblīs" does the job of disturbance.

"وَلَقَدْ خَلَقْنَاكُمْ ثُمَّ صَوَّرْنَاكُمْ ثُمَّ قُلْنَا لِلْمَلَائِكَةِ اسْجُدُوا لِآدَمَ فَسَجَدُوا إِلَّا إِبْلِيسَ لَمْ يَكُن مِّنَ السَّاجِدِينَ ﴿٣٦﴾ قَالَ مَا مَنَعَكَ آلَا تَسْجُدُ إِذْ أَمَرْتُكَ قَالَ أَنَا خَيْرٌ مِّنْهُ خَلَقْتَنِي مِن نَّارٍ وَخَلَقْتَهُ مِن طِينٍ ﴿٣٧﴾ قَالَ فَاهْبِطْ مِنْهَا فَمَا يَكُونُ لَكَ أَنْ تَتَكَبَّرَ فِيهَا فَاخْرُجْ إِنَّكَ مِنَ الصَّاغِرِينَ ﴿٣٨﴾ قَالَ أَنْظِرْنِي إِلَى يَوْمِ يُبْعَثُونَ ﴿٣٩﴾ قَالَ إِنَّكَ مِنَ الْمُنظَرِينَ ﴿٤٠﴾ قَالَ فِيمَا أُغْوَيْتَنِي لِأَقْعُدَنَّ لَهُمْ صِرَاطَكَ الْمُسْتَقِيمَ ﴿٤١﴾ ثُمَّ لَا تَبْتَهُمْ مِّن بَيْنِ أَيْدِيهِمْ وَمِنْ خَلْفِهِمْ وَعَنْ أَيْمَانِهِمْ وَعَنْ شَمَائِلِهِمْ وَلَا تَجِدُ أَكْثَرَهُمْ شَاكِرِينَ ﴿٤٢﴾ قَالَ أَخْرَجَ مِنْهَا مَذْمُومًا مَّدْحُورًا لِّمَنِ تَبِعَكَ مِنْهُمْ لَأَمْلَأَنَّ جَهَنَّمَ مِنْكُمْ أَجْمَعِينَ ﴿٤٣﴾"

Tr.: And We have certainly created you [O Mankind], and given you [human] form. Then We said to the angels, "Prostrate to Adam", so they prostrated, excepted form ibles. He was not those who prostrated. [Allah] said, "What prevented you from prostrating when I commanded you?" [Satan] said, "I am better than him. You created me from fire and created him from clay." [Allah said, Descend from Paradise, for it is not for you to arrogant therein. So get out; indeed you are of the debased. [Satan] said, "Reprieve me until the Day they are resurrected." [Allah] said, "Indeed you are those reprieved." [Satan] said, "Because You have put me in error, I will srely sit in wait for them on Your straight path. Then I will come to them from before them and from behind thme and on their right and on their left, and You will not find most of them grateful [to You]." [Allah] said, "Get out of Paradise, reproached and expelled. Whoever follows you

among them, I will surely fill Hell with you, all together.

He influences our mind to mislead us from the path of Allah.¹ Iblīs is an entity, created by Allah to worship Him, but due to ego problem he misleads himself. It means again a genius processor (of Iblīs) created by the Creator but this time he was created to submit his will to the Creator by force. This processor was not created for free-will calculation but finds himself in close loop system with positive feedback. The effect of positive feedback is always resulted into oscillation. This oscillation nature of positive feedback will be fruitful if it follows Barkhausencriterion condition, but in this case condition fails.²

- e. *Set Point*: A set-point is the desired or target value for an essential variable of a system, often used to describe a standard configuration or norm for the system. For Human the set-point is paradise. The Qur'ān explains it saying:

"وَالَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ لَا نُكَلِّفُ نَفْسًا إِلَّا وُسْعَهَا أُولَٰئِكَ أَصْحَابُ الْجَنَّةِ هُمْ فِيهَا خَالِدُونَ ﴿٥١﴾"

Tr.: But those who believed and did righteous deeds - We charge no soul except [within] its capacity. Those are the companions of Paradise; they will abide therein eternally.³

Any designed system wants to reach its goal to be honoured and appreciated. That shows, the set point to man to achieve is Paradise. Where man will be honoured to be one of the finest servants of Creator.

¹ Al-A'rāf:11-18.

² Chance, Bb, et al.: *Waveforms*, Radiation Laboratory Series, McGraw- Hill Book Company, New York, 1949.

³ Al-A'rāf:42.

Conclusion:

Today on the topic of human system a huge literature is available to explain its nature in all aspects of its life cycle. These available literatures help in explanation and understanding of the Qur'ān, visa-versa. In this paper, complex human system has been viewed in simple block diagram of the control system. The discussion has been supported by the Qur'ān. The Qur'ānic verses about the physical and biological components of human system can be systematically explained on the basis of control system.



Water in the Light of the Qur'ān and Science

Prof. Abū Sufiyan Iṣlāḥī¹

Tr.: Ashham²

Abstract

In fact the life of every living being has been originated being dependent on water and none can deny its vital role in our life. Its importance in forming the creation in all of its aspects in general and the living-creatures in particular such as human kind, animals and plants etc. However, the Qur'ān mentions water as magnificence that it would not have been an easy thing to convince people of fourteen centuries ago. Indeed, if 1400 years ago you had stood in the desert and told someone, "All of that you see is mostly made-up of water, none would have believed you. Proof of that was not available until the invention of the microscope. They had to wait to find out that cytoplasm, the basic substance of the cell, is made-up of 80% water. Nonetheless, the evidence did come, and once again, the Qur'ān stood the test of time.

Key words: Rainclouds, Civilizations, Fertility, Mā'an Ṭahūran, Existence, Water cycle.

Introduction: The Qur'ān is basically a divine book- a holy book for guidance. This holy book has three different main themes- monothesisim, prophethood and hereafter. All themes and other things are related to these themes. The main theme deals with the different civilizations of the existing world where the stories of prophets, hypocrites and holy

¹ Professor, Department of Arabic, 'Alīgarh Muslim University, 'Alīgarh

² Research Scholar, Monād University, Hāpur, UP

punishments are mentioned. The Qur'ān cannot be termed as an art or a book of science hence it is not possible to estimate the Qur'ān with science. It's because there are no changes in the themes of the Qur'ān. On the other hand, there are variations in the study of science and other subjects especially the science is still incomplete the scientists say so comparing the Qur'ān with science is not logical.

Many scholars have come to a conclusion that there is no difference in the Qur'ān and science but at several stages and times it has been proved that with the help of the Qur'ān, the scientists have discovered new things and its study has been proved right. The Qur'ān is the everlasting book which is a remedy for every generation. The Qur'ān attracts different individuals from society with respect to their professions and they are benefited by it. People can even approach the religious scholars for more benefits as the Qur'ān says:

"وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَا مِنْ قَبْلِكَ إِلَّا رِجَالًا نُوْحِيْٓ اِلَيْهِمْ فَمَسَلُوْا اَهْلَ الدِّيَارِ اِنْ كُنْتُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُوْنَ ﴿٤٣﴾"

Tr.: And We sent not before you except men to whom We revealed [Our message]. So ask the people of the message if you do not know."¹

Indeed, the Qur'ān is a guide to education as different ideas and innovation occur for the Qur'ān will be having a significant role in it. Science analyses different things through experiments and the Qur'ān has forced scientist to carry out different experiments. In this vast universe science is the basic inspiration to move ahead but with the help of the Qur'ān this process can be carried with an ease so with the help of science the Qur'ān can be understood and analysed much better.

¹ Al-Nahj: 43

Water in the Light of the Qur'ān and Science

In the Qur'ān the word water has occurred 63 times which reveals its importance. Water is considered as an important and basic element of human life. Without water life is not sustainable. The Qur'ān has pointed out the importance of water. Thus Allah has blessed us with water and described it as the most important creation. The water is useful for human glow, cultivation, drink for animals etc. In the Qur'ān water is the basic element of life for the entire living beings. Science has proved the utmost important and precious use of water. As there are different species in the world there is life under water also in the oceans and sea. According to biology there are many living things in the water also. Hence, water is considered as the important unit of life for genesis and survival as the Qur'ān says:

"وَاللَّهُ خَلَقَ كُلَّ دَابَّةٍ مِّن مَّاءٍ فَمِنْهُمْ مَّن يَمْشِي عَلَى بَطْنَيْهِ وَمِنْهُمْ مَّن يَمْشِي عَلَى رِجْلَيْنِ وَمِنْهُمْ مَّن يَمْشِي عَلَى أَرْبَعٍ يَخْلُقُ اللَّهُ مَا يَشَاءُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ﴿٤٥﴾"

Tr.: Allah has created every [living] creature from water. And of them are those that move on their bellies, and of them are those that walk on two legs, and of them are those that walk on four. Allah creates what He wills. Indeed, Allah is over all things competent."¹

From the above verse it has been addressed that each and every life-unit has been made by water and without it nothing would happen. Life is basically dependant on water. Living cells do not exist without water. In the whole universe the world has been situated at a place where is the existence of water while the other planets are not having water according

¹ Al-Nūr: 45

to the latest findings of the science. Hence life exists on the planet of earth only. The Almighty Allah has described water as his best creation and placed it on the top of His creations.

"وَاللَّهُ خَلَقَ كُلَّ دَابَّةٍ مِّن مَّاءٍ فَمِنْهُمْ مَّن يَمْشِي عَلَى بَطْنَيْهِ وَمِنْهُمْ مَّن يَمْشِي عَلَى رِجْلَيْنِ وَمِنْهُمْ مَّن يَمْشِي عَلَى أَرْبَعٍ يَخْلُقُ اللَّهُ مَا يَشَاءُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ﴿٥٤﴾"

Tr.: Have those who disbelieved not considered that the heavens and the earth were a joined entity, and We separated them and made from water every living thing? Then will they not believe?"¹

According to Sheikh Tanṭāwī Azharī: all lives created by Allah are through water and other units of life are attached to it. Today's scientist has also agree with this fact that life first existed in water and all the species of birds, animals etc were born in water and then turned into mammals due to climatic and weather conditions.

After scientific experimental exercises it has been found that water is the basic unit of life and according to the Qur'ān:

"وَهُوَ الَّذِي خَلَقَ مِنَ الْمَاءِ بَشَرًا فَجَعَلَهُ نَسَبًا وَصِهْرًا وَكَانَ رَبُّكَ قَدِيرًا ﴿٥٥﴾"

Tr.: And it is He who has created from water a human being and made him [a relative by] lineage and marriage. And ever is your Lord competent [concerning creation]"².

Earlier scientist have stated that the life starts from a seminal fluid produced from living beings but this research was not considered as a fact while the Qur'ān had proved it fourteen hundred years ago:

"إِنَّا خَلَقْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ مِن نُّطْفَةٍ أَمْشَاجٍ نَّبْتَلِيهِ فَجَعَلْنَاهُ سَمِيعًا بَصِيرًا ﴿٥٦﴾"

¹ Al-Anbiyā': 30

² Al-Furqān: 54

Tr.: Indeed, We created man from a sperm-drop mixture that We may try him; and We made him hearing and seeing.”¹

The second role of water is that it falls from sky and it makes the land fertile for vegetation which happens by monsoon where the clouds travel from one place to the other carrying water in it and it is certainly the best creation of Almighty Allah. The Qur’ān says:

"وَهُوَ الَّذِي يُرْسِلُ الرِّيحَ بُشْرًا بَيْنَ يَدَيْ رَحْمَتِهِ حَتَّىٰ إِذَا أَقْلَّتْ سَحَابًا ثِقَالًا سُقْنَاهُ لِبَلَدٍ مَّيِّتٍ فَأَنْزَلْنَا بِهِ الْمَاءَ فَأَخْرَجْنَا بِهِ مِنْ كُلِّ الثَّمَرَاتِ كَذَٰلِكَ نُخْرِجُ الْمَوْتَىٰ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَذَكَّرُونَ ﴿٥٧﴾"

Tr.: And it is He who sends the winds as good tidings before His mercy until, when they have carried heavy rainclouds, We drive them to a dead land and We send down rain therein and bring forth thereby [some] of all the fruits. Thus will We bring forth the dead; perhaps you may be reminded.”²

The description of the monsoon has been also in the Qur’ān:

"وَأَرْسَلْنَا الرِّيحَ لَوَاقِحَ فَأَنْزَلْنَا مِنَ السَّمَاءِ مَاءً فَأَسْقَيْنَاكُمُوهُ وَمَا أَنْتُمْ لَهُ بِخَازِنِينَ ﴿٢٢﴾"

Tr.: And We have sent the fertilizing winds and sent down water from the sky and given you drink from it. And you are not its retainers.”³

The findings of scientist state that the rainy water is far better than normal water for growth and cultivation. Hence rain plays an important role in the land’s fertility. Earlier the earth was a ball of fire and changed into hard rock where cultivation was not possible but slowly and gradually with the occurrence of rain and lightening the thunder effect changed the rock into

¹ Al-Dahr: 2

² Al-A’arāf : 57

³ Al-Hijr:22

the rain emerge from within it. And He sends down from the sky, mountains [of clouds] within which is hail, and He strikes with it whom He wills and averts it from whom He wills. The flash of its lightening almost takes away the eyesight.¹

In the Qur'ān it has been revealed that rain water is the only water which is purified and mineral [sweet]. This water is liable for drinking as it evaporates from sea being salty in nature, science justified this and mentions that only water gets evaporated leaving salt. Allah mentions in the chapter of al-Wāqi'ah:

"لَوْ نَشَاءُ جَعَلْنَاهُ أُجَاجًا فَلَوْلَا تَشْكُرُونَ ﴿٧٠﴾"²

Tr.: If We willed, We could make it bitter, so why are you not grateful?

Allah has described his supremacy with the role of water. Scientist has come to a conclusion that there is one God and the Qur'ān is the divine book. The chapter al-Mulk describes the Qur'ān as follows:

"قُلْ أَرَأَيْتُمْ إِنْ أَصْبَحَ مَاؤُكُمْ غَوْرًا فَمَنْ يَأْتِيكُمْ بِمَاءٍ مَّعِينٍ ﴿٣٠﴾"³

Tr.: Say, "Have you considered: if your water was to become sunken [into the earth], then who could bring you flowing water?"

The Qur'ān also describes that the underground water reaches back to ocean and sea and then it is changed into sea and waterfall. Allah says:

"وَجَعَلْنَا فِيهَا رِوَاسِيَّ سَلِيمًا وَأَسْفَيْنَاكُمْ مَاءً فُرَاتًا ﴿٧١﴾"¹

¹ Al-Nūr: 43

² Al-Wāqi'ah: 70

³ Al-Mulk: 30

Tr.: And We placed therein lofty, firmly set mountains and have given you to drink sweet water.

The Qur'ān has mentioned that there are various benefits of rain water which are now being analysed from different observations and researches. Rain water gets absorbed by land and transfers to many ponds and underground water sources. It has been highlighted in the Qur'ān as Allah sends the water in the form of rain and it is stored in different bodies as the humans cannot store it.

Rain water helps in growth of herbs and shrubs. In these plants Allah has created an environment which is pleasant for humans. In the Qur'ān it is mentioned that Allah has scattered the land, assembled mountains and hills, created plains and plateaus, water bodies and forest in a perfect ratio. Both the science and the Qur'ān have some common study, but the findings of science had variations from time to time.

The diet of humans is the basic key factor where water has its important role in feeding and cultivation which resulted in food for humans. In the earlier days it was observed, that water was found on oceans, sea, river, lake or pond. Indeed the development of science revealed that the water is stored in the deep earth crust which has been revealed in the Qur'ān:

"وَأَنْزَلْنَا مِنَ السَّمَاءِ مَاءً بِقَدَرٍ فَأَسْكَنَّاهُ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَإِنَّا عَلَى ذَهَابٍ بِهِ لَقَادِرُونَ ﴿٢٧﴾"

Tr.: And We have sent down rain from the sky in a measured amount and settled it in the earth. And indeed, We are able to take it away".²

By the blessing of Almighty Allah it has been noted that water

¹ Al-Mursalāt: 27

² Al-Mu'min: 18

is an important element for the growth and survival of Flora and Fauna. This scientific study shows that the scientists should specially study those parts that directly convey the message of scientific study case so that the research can be done with ease and also in a short time more things will be explored. It will not be only a time saving tool but more things will be innovated.

In this perspective Muslim scientists and scholars are advised to make the teaching and study of the Qur'ān easily reachable to every individual in the society so that a maximum benefit can be achieved.

Conclusion:

The Qur'ān is the first book that handles the disinfecting characteristic of rain water or distilled water and this attribute is not mentioned except in association with the sky water. Whereas the human writing does not differentiate between the fresh water, the sweet water and the pure water while the Qur'ān accurately made a distinction and positioned eachone's term in its accurate place.

Glory is to Allah, every single letter and word in His Book fits flawlessly. The question we wish to forward to the sceptics in the field of scientific Qur'ānic miracle is: If the Qur'ān was a result of human formation, would it have been able to make the distinction between those words at that age? Then we can denounce that the Qur'ān spoke about those specifications before the physicists discovered it by long centuries. That is to say that the Qur'ān is the first book that makes the distinction between the natures of the water and this is a material proof of the Divine origin of such a book.

Oriental Studies of the Qur'ān, A Historical Survey

✎...Dr. Muḥammad Mohar 'Alī¹

Preliminary Remarks: The orientalist's study of the Qur'ān takes place in the context of their broader study of Islam and Islamic history. As such, three things need to be borne in mind. First the story of their study of the Qur'ān goes back to the beginning of orientalism itself in its proper sense. Second the purpose and attitude that underlie their study of Islam also characterize their study and treatment of the Qur'ān. Third although many of orientalist deal specially with the Qur'ān, in general all those who deal with Islam and Islamic history speak about the Qur'ān, in some form or other; for no account of Islam and its history is possible without a reference to the Qur'ān and the Prophet Muḥammad (PBUH). Often these latter types of studies highlight and summarise the pattern of the specialists' thinking about the Qur'ān current at the time: but sometimes they raise new points and issues that are in turn taken up by the specialists for verification and elaboration. The subject of the orientalist study of the Qur'ān thus embraces both their specialist and particular treatment of the Qur'ān as well as their treatment of it in general works on Islam and Islamic history.² The scope and purpose of the present article, however, do not admit of any comprehensive survey of both these types of studies. Attention will, therefore, be focused mainly on specialist and particular studies, though accounts in

¹ A renowned British Benglādeśhī scholar of Islamic Studies

² A characteristic instance is P.K. Hitti's *History of the Arabs*, first published in 1927, wherein he devotes a chapter (Ch. IX) to the Qur'ān (titled "The Koran the Book of Allah") and draws a parallel between Qur'ānic passage and those from the Bible, in an attempt to support the favourite orientalist theory that the Qur'ān is based on Judaeo-Christian source.

the general works on Islam and Prophet Muḥammad (PBUH) will be occasionally taken into consideration.

The story of the orientalist study of the Qur'ān falls into three broad but unequal periods. The early period starts with the first Latin translation of the Qur'ān made in 1143 CE, and runs till roughly the end of the eighteenth century. The second or modern period covers the nineteenth and the first three quarters of the twentieth century: and the third and the latest period began from the mid-seventies of the twentieth century and is still holding sway today. Each of these periods has some landmarks in the progress of Qur'ānic studies that are indicated in italicized sub-headings.

The First Period and the Method of Translation-Refutation

(a) The First Qur'ān Translation and the Beginning of Orientalism:

Even before the launching of the Second Crusade, Christian thinkers realized the need for combating Islam on the intellectual level and forging what P.K. Hitti calls “an instrument of pacific crusade”.¹

Foremost among such thinkers were the Archbishop Raymond of Toledo (1126-51) and Peter the Venerable, abbot of Cluny (d. 1157). The former was instrumental in establishing a school of translation at Toledo where important Arabic works on theology and science were translated, while the latter, Peter the Venerable, commissioned the first translation of the Qur'ān with the declared objective of refuting Islam. This translation was made in Latin and completed, as mentioned above, in 1143 by Robert Kettenensis of Chester, Hermann of Dalmatia and two other associates, assisted by an Arab Muslim. The initiatives taken by Archbishop Raymond and Peter the Venerable led

¹ P.K Hitti, *History of the Arabs*, 6th edition, reprinted London, 1958, P. 663

ultimately to the establishment of the first School of Oriental Studies in Europe at Toledo in 1250, the College of Fariars at Miramar in 1276 for the study of Arabic in which Raymond Lull of Catalonia played an important part, and the resolution of the Council of Vienna in 1311 creating chairs of Arabic at the universities of Paris, Louvain and Salamanca.

As the objective of the translation of the Qur'ān was to defend Christianity and to "refute" Islam, Peter the Venerable had prepared a "Refutation of Islam" in Latin to accompany the translation. This "Refutation" consisted of four parts dealing with (a) an account of the Jews and the Christians' preservation of their sacred scriptures, (b) the life of Muḥammad (PBUH), (c) the supposed absence of miracles in his life and (d) his claim to prophethood and the "innovations" he introduced. A manuscript of this first translation of the Qur'ān containing the autograph of the translator is preserved in the Bibliotheque de Arsenal in Paris. Qualitatively it was not quite a translation but merely a paraphrasing of the passages of the Qur'ān with blatant mistakes and distortions. According to George Sale a subsequent translator, "it deserves not the name of translation; the uncountable liberties therein taken, and the numberless faults, both of omission and commission, leaving scarce any resemblance of the original."¹ Nevertheless this first Latin translation remained the sole or main source of information about the Qur'ān available to the Europeans for about five centuries.

(b) *Development during the Renaissance and the Reformation: Role of Martin Luther:*

During the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries there was an intellectual awakening in Europe brought about by the Renaissance which was quickened by the advance of the

¹George Sale, *The Koran etc*, London, 1734, preface (To the Reader), P.V.

Ottomans in Europe and the fall of Constantinople in their hands in 1453. This latter event led to the migration of many Greek scholars to Italy which in turn gave a further impetus to the Renaissance. In the context of these developments Christian thinkers once again turn their serious attention to the task of confronting Islam on the intellectual plane. This time the lead was taken by Juan Alfonso de Segobia (d. after 1456), a Professor of the University of Salamanca and a member of the Synod of Basel. Like Peter the Venerable he also undertook a project of combating Islam through a translation of the Qur'ān to be issued with a "refutation" of Islam. For this purpose he acquired the services of a Spanish Muslim who also knew Arabic, and with his help prepared a Latin translation of the Qur'ān and he himself prepared a book in refutation of Islam entitled, *De Mitt; nndo Galdio Spiritus in Sarracenes*. Both these works are, however, lost except that they are mentioned in later bibliographical compilation.¹

The next stage in the development of European Qur'ānic studies was related with the Reformation Movement. In launching it Martin Luther (1483-1546) aimed not really to reform Christianity as such but to do away with claims and pretensions of the Pope of Rome, raising the slogan: "Prove it from the Scriptures". Luther was equally alive to the danger of his movement developing into one for dismantling Christianity and paving the way for the spread of Islam in Europe. Hence he undertook, on the one hand, to translate the Bible into German in order to make it accessible to his people and on the other, to find fault with Islam and to publish Peter the Venerable's "Refutation of Islam" together with the Latin translation of the Qur'ān made at his instance. In this task, Luther was assisted and encouraged by Theodor Bibliander

¹ 'Abd al-Raḥmān Badawī, *Mausū'at al-Mustashriqīn*, Beirut, 1989, P. 26.

(1504-1564), a Swiss orientalist. Luther himself wrote an introduction to this Latin translation and it was published together with Luther's introduction and Peter the Venerable's "Refutation", by Bibliander from Basel and Zurich between 1543 and 1550. Through his speeches also Luther made his followers aware of the "evil" of Islam, comparing Prophet Muḥammad (PBUH) with the Pope as "slaves of Satan and enemies of Christ".¹ Conscious of the force and appeal of Islam, however, Luther warned himself as well as his fellow Christians as follows: "The abominable Muḥammad almost became my Prophet, and both Turks and Jews were on the way to sainthoodSo take my advice, do not celebrate too soon. Watch out that your skill does not desert you. Be concerned, be humble, and pray that you may grow in this art and be protected against the crafty Devil."²

(c) The First Print of the Qur'ān –Burnt at the Pope's Instance-Appearance of Translation in European National Languages:

It was also during this period of the Reformation that the full Arabic Qur'ān was printed for the first time in Venice about the year 1533; but all the copies were subsequently burned at the instance of the Pope.³ The venture was doubtless facilitated by the invention of the art of printing in the previous century by the use of movable letters (types). Throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, however, the orientalist Qur'ānic studies followed in general the pattern set by Peter the Venerable, namely to issue

¹ Martin Luther, *Lectures etc*, quoted in M. Reeves, *Muhammad in Europe etc.*, London, 2000, P. 119.

² Martin Luther's works, tr. J. Pelican, St. Louis, 1958-1967, vol. 14, PP. 37-38, quoted in *ibid.*, P. 127.

³ Mentioned by Thomas Erphenius (1584-1624) in his work on Arabic Grammar. See Badawī, *op. cit.*, P. 302.

translations of the Qur'ān together with "refutations" of it and of Islam. The main change in the field brought about by the Renaissance and the Reformation was that henceforth translations and "Refutations" started appearing in modern European languages along with Latin.

The way was in fact shown by Luther's German translation of the Bible. Thus Andrea Arrivabene made from the Latin translation or rather paraphrasing of Ketenensis's (Bibliander) an Italian version, *L, Alcorano di Macometto*, which was published in 1547; and from this Italian translation of the translation Solomon Schwiegger made the first German translation *Alchoranus Mahometicus*, published from a Nuremberg in 1616: and from the German translation of the translation was prepared the first Dutch translation, *Dr. Arabische Alkoran*, issued posthumously in 1641.

Shortly, following this Dutch translation came the first French translation, *L' Acoran de Mahomet*, made independently by Andre du Ryre, who had been French Consul General in Egypt, and was published from Paris in 1647. It was, however, no better than its predecessors, "there being mistakes in every page", as Sale observes, "besides frequent transpositions, omission and additions, faults unpardonable in a work of this nature."¹ Worse than this, du Ryre wrote an epistle to the reader by to the reader by way of introduction in which he discussed what he conceived to be the "absurdities" of the Qur'ān with the avowed objective "that the knowledge of what is contained in this Book, will render that Law contemptible."² And because of this objective of the work Alexander Ross made from it the first English translation which was published just two years afterwards, in

¹ Sale, op, cit., P. VI.

² Translated by A. Ross, *The Alcoran of Mahomet etc.*, London, 1649, P. A4.

1649. Ross's objective and his adoption of du Ryre's translation are clearly stated in the title of the translation itself which runs as: *The Alcoran of Mahomet, Translated out of Arabique in to French by the Sieur du Ryre, Lord of Malezair, and Resident for the king of France, at Alexandria. And newly Englished, for the satisfaction of all that desire to look into the Turkish vanities.* This English translation of Ross was still worse than the French original which he translated. To quote Sale again, Ross, "being utterly unacquainted with the Arabic, and no great master of the French, has added the number of fresh mistakes of his own to those of du Ryre, not to mention the meanness of his language"¹ The French translation of du Ryre also fathered a version in Dutch by Glazemaker, published in 1658, another in German by Lange, published in 1688 and another in Russian by Postnikov and Veryovkin, all of which were printed several times throughout the seventeenth century and after.

Thus for more than five hundred years, from the middle of the 12th to the end of the 17th century, there were only two basic translations of the Qur'ān, the one in Latin by Robert Ketenensis (1143) and the other in French by du Ryre (1647) from which other translations were made into Italian, German, Dutch, English and Russian. Both these two basic translations and those that emanated from them are, by the admissions of subsequent orientalist themselves, not worth the name of translations, and are grossly incorrect and faulty, being vitiated by omissions, commissions and transpositions. All these were also professedly aimed at refuting Islam and the Qur'ān and as such, served the purpose of giving a distorted picture of both to the Europeans.

¹ Sale, op. cit ., P. VI. See also similar remarks by Zwemer who calls Ross's translation "faulty in extreme." See *The Moslem World*, 1927, P. 250.

(d) Attempt of the Congregation Propagatia de Fidei of Rome to Refute the Qur'ān Translation of Marracci and its offshoots:

The next notable step in the European Qur'ānic study was taken by the Congregatio de Propagatione Fidei of Rome which, under the direction of the Pope, prepared and published a Latin "refutation" of the Qur'ān in 1691 under the title: *Prodromus ad Refutationem Alcorani*. This was shortly afterwards republished along with the full Arabic text of the Qur'ān.¹ Almost simultaneously, in 1694, *Abraham Hinckelmann* published the full Qur'ān in Arabic from Hamburg in Germany in 1694. Copies of this print of the Qur'ān are preserved in some of the European libraries. More importantly, a new Latin translation of the Qur'ān prepared by Ludivico Marracci was published from Padua in 1698. Marracci was a confessor to Pope innocent XI and the work was dedicated to the Holy Roman Emperor Leopold I. The professed aim of the work was the same as that of its predecessors, to refute and discredit Islam and the Qur'ān; but it differed from them in scope. It gave a translation together with the Arabic text. Second, it added explanatory notes and comments in two forms: in the translation of almost every āyah explanatory notes were included in the body of the translation which more often than not distorted its meaning; and further comments for the same purpose were added as footnotes. These were also carefully selected from the unorthodox and faulty Arabic commentaries so as to give the worst possible impression of Islam. Third, the whole work was introduced by a companion volume entitled "Refutation of the Qur'ān".

Naturally this work was eagerly welcomed by the Christian enthusiasts and evangelists and it was translated as well as

¹ Badawī, op. cit., P. 303.

made the basis for further translations in a number of European languages. Thus, just five years after its publication, David Nerreter translated Marracci's translation into German which was published at Nuremberg in 1703. And in 1734 was published the famous English translation of George Sale which was based on Marracci's work.¹ Like Maracci, Sale introduced his translation by *A Preliminary Discourse* on Islam and the Qur'ān. This Preliminary Discourse as well as the notes and comments were based on Marracci's work. Although Sale states that he made his translation directly from the original Arabic, he guardedly admits his indebtedness to Maracci in the introduction saying with reference to the latter's work thus: "This work, however, with all its faults, is very valuable, and I should be guilty of ingratitude, did I not acknowledge myself much obliged thereto; but still, being in Latin, it can be of no use to those who understand not that tongue."²

Sale's work proved very popular in Europe and the English speaking countries and it went through a number of reprints and editions throughout the eighteenth and the nineteenth countries. His preliminary Discourse was also translated and published separately in several European languages. It was also translated into Arabic by the Protestant Christian Missionaries in Egypt and published under title; *Maqālāt fī al-Islām*. Meanwhile Marracci's and Sale's translations were in turn translated into other European languages. For instance, in 1751 M. Savary made a French translation of Marracci's and Sale's translation under the title: *Le Coran, traduit de Arabe, accompagnée de notes* etc. The title page of one edition of this

¹ George Sale, *The Koran*, commonly called the Alcoran of Mohammad, Translated into English immediately from the original Arabic; with Explanatory Notes, taken from the most approved Commentators. To which is prefixed A Preliminary Discourse, London, 1734.

² *Ibid.*, pp. vi-vii.

work states that it was published in Makkah in 1165H.¹ The claim is evidently false and it was made no doubt to impress its authenticity on the readers. The work proved, however, almost as popular as that of Sale's and it went through several editions and reprints at Paris, Amsterdam, Rotterdam and London by various publishers. Equally popular proved to be another French translation made by M. Kasimriski, which was based on Sale's translation and published in Paris for the first time in 1840. In short, throughout the eighteenth and the greater part of the nineteenth centuries translation of the Qur'ān in various European languages emanated from the Latin translation of Marracci and alter-ego the English translation of George Sale.

The Modern Period: Changed Tactics to Assail the Qur'ān

(a) European Imperial Expansion and a New Phase of Qur'ānic Studies:

Sale's translation and Preliminary Discourse marked the apogee of the pattern of translation–refutation set in motion by Peter the Venerable. The rest of the eighteenth and the first half of the nineteenth century marked a transition to the second period of the orientalist studies. During this transition period and also afterwards various Marracci-Sale based and independent translations of the Qur'ān were of course issued;² but the world situation was changing completely which called for new approaches to the Qur'ānic studies. By the middle of the nineteenth century the European nations had established their imperial dominion over a number of Asian and African

¹ J. D. Pearson, "Bibliography of Translation of the Qur'ān into European languages", *The Cambridge History of Arabic Literature*, Vol. I, Cambridge, 1975, Appendix, P. 505.

² See for a critical review of the orientalist translations of the Qur'ān M.M. 'Alī, *The Qur'ān and the Orientalist*. Ipswich, 2004, PP. 323-352.

countries, mostly Muslim lands, and had come into closer contact with their Muslim populations. This imperial expansion gave rise to new hopes for Christianizing the conquered peoples and led to the establishment of a number of Christian missionary societies in Europe. These missionary societies, aided and encouraged directly and indirectly by the imperial administrators, conducted their activities in the conquered lands in a very extensive and systematic manner. These were intellectually supported by a new phase of orientalism. In fact many of the new generation of orientalists of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries came from among the ranks of the missionaries and imperial administrators.

The imperial expansion also made the classical Arabic and Islamic works more easily accessible to European scholars. The changed situation led to a change in technique and approach. Hitherto translations of the Qur'ān and orientalist writings in general had been meant essentially for European readers and the main purpose was to prevent the Europeans from being influenced by Islam. Now such writings were to be directed to the Muslims and other conquered peoples. Hence it became necessary to abandon the previous practice of open declaration of hostility to Islam and the adoption of at least a show of objectivity and impartiality. Also it was essential to attack Islam not with a superficial knowledge of it but with a deeper and more thorough understanding of it. Such understanding was needed also for successfully administering the imperial dominions. This need for understanding better the history and customs of the Asians in general and the Muslims in particular led to the formation of specialist learned societies like the Asiatic Society of Bengal, formed in 1784, Societe Asiatique of Paris, formed in 1822, Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland, formed in 1824 and the American Oriental Society, formed in 1824. These societies published learned and

specialist journals as well as monographs touching the history, geography, cultures and religions of Asia.

All these developments led to a widening of the scope of Qur'ānic studies from merely its translation and "refutations" to the study of its history, language and text, the nature of Qur'ānic revelations, its exegeses, teachings the supposed sources of it and of Islam, etc. Henceforth one constant argument advanced by the orientalists was that the Qur'ān and for that matter Islam was made up of ideas and precepts borrowed from Judaism and Christianity. The theory of Jewish origin of the Qur'ān and of Islam was first systematically advanced by Abraham Geiger in 1833 in his work was *hat Mohammad aus dem Judenthem aufgenommen?*¹ Thenceforth the theme was expanded into a Judaeo-Christian origin by others, particularly in works dealing with the life of Prophet Muḥammad (PBUH). It is to be noted that the titles of works of this nature did not show themselves to relate to the Qur'ānic studies; but they very much dealt with the subject of the Qur'ān.

The misunderstandings and prejudices produced by the previous orientalist writings continued, however, to influence European concept about the Qur'ān and Islam. In fact the new trend in the Qur'ānic studies attempted only to justify and perpetuate the old misconceptions. A characteristic instance of the continuance of such prejudices is provided by Thomas Carlyle who, while advocating in 1841 the "sincerity" of the Prophet Muḥammad (PBUH) gave vent to the age-old bias against the Qur'ān saying that "it is a wearisome confused jumble, crude, incondite; endless iterations, long-windedness, entanglement; most crude, incondite; insupportable stupidity, in short."² Two years

¹ Published from Bonn, 1833.

² T. Carlyle, *On Heros, Hero Worship and the Heroic in History*, 1841, reprinted New York, 1900, P. 63, quoted in E. Said, *Orientalism*, Penguin edition, 1985, P. 152.

afterwards in 1843, was published E.W. Lane's *Selections from the Qur'ān with an Interwoven Commentary*.¹ It was not quite a departure from the previous pattern of issuing translations with "refutations" and notes. Before the close of the first half of the nineteenth century, however, the printing of the Qur'ān was well under way. In 1831 it was printed in Calcutta (Kolkata), Bengal, with help of a new kind of types which became very popular in the south Asian subcontinent. Three years subsequently, in 1834, Gustav Fluegel had the Qur'ān printed in Europe which came to be used by the orientalist and other researchers.

(b) The Pattern set by Sprenger-Muir-Noldeke:

Early in the second half of the nineteenth century, however, more serious studies about the Qur'ān started appearing. The lead was given by the German scholar Aloys Sprenger who was appointed the Principal of the Calcutta Madrasa in 1850 by the East India Company's administration in Bengal to de-Islamize the courses of studies in that institution. In the course of his work he came in contact with a number of classical Arabic works including al-Suyūṭī's *al-Itqān fī 'Ulūm al-Qur'ān*. This work contains a chapter on the naturalized Arabic words in the Qur'ān,² which is a summary of an independent work by him on the subject entitled *al-Muhadhdhab fī mā waqa'a fī al-Qur'ān min al-Mu'arrab* (A revised presentation of what occurs in the Qur'ān of Arabicized words). On the basis of this information Sprenger penned an article entitled "Foreign words occurring in the Qur'ān" which was published in the *Journal of Asiatic Society of Bengal for 1852*.³ The treatment was sketchy but Sprenger dwelt on the theme of the Prophet's supposed authorship of the Qur'ān and remarked that he used to make a

¹ Published by James Maden, London, 1843.

² See al-Suyūṭī, *al-Itqān* etc., vol. I, Riyadh, 1407/1987, PP. 366-380.

³ J.A.S.B., 1852, PP. 109-114.

parade of these foreign terms and the number of other peculiar expressions. This article of Sprenger's appears to be the first treatment of a particular Qur'ānic topic published in a specialized journal. It also paved the way for the treatment of the subject in a more elaborate way by subsequent scholars.

Sprenger was in fact engaged at that time in preparing a work on the life of the Prophet Muḥammad (PBUH) in which he dealt elaborately with the Qur'ān. He and another official of the East India Company, William Muir, had strong evangelical sympathies and both were in close touch with the well-known Protestant Christian Missionary Carl Gottlieb Pfander who was then engaged in missionary activities in Bengal and northern India. Pfander's activities ushered in a new era of Muslim-Christian debates which culminated in the famous Āgra debate of 1854 between him and Raḥmat Allāh Kairānawī.¹ Both Sprenger and Muir were inspired and encouraged by Pfander to write about the life of the Prophet and the Qur'ān. Muir specifically acknowledges in the preface to the first edition of his work, *Life of Mahomet* etc. that he wrote it "at the instance" of the Pfander. It was published in four volumes between 1858 and 1861. Sprenger's work, *Life of Mohammad from Original Sources* was published in Allahābād in 1851. His larger and more elaborate work on the same subject in three volumes written in German entitled *Das Leben und die Lhre des Mohammads* was published from Berlin between 1861 and 1865. Both the scholars dealt rather extensively with the Qur'ān, its composition, style and history and the nature of Qur'ānic waḥy, attempting mainly to

¹ See A.A Powell, "Maulānā Raḥmat Allāh Kairānawī and Muslim Christian Controversy in India in the mid- nineteenth Century", *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, No. 1, 1976, PP. 45-58; also, M.M. 'Alī, *History of the Muslims of Bengal*, vol. II, Riyādh, 1988, PP. 227-233.

substantiate the theory of the Prophet's supposed authorship of the Qur'ān and his borrowings from Judaism and Christianity.

It was also about this time that another scholar who became more famous in the field of Qur'ānic studies was emerging on the scene. He was Theodore Noldeke (1836-1931) of Germany. In 1856 he obtained the degree of Ph.D by writing a thesis in Latin on "*the History of the Qur'ān*". In 1858 the Paris Academy announced a prize for the best research monograph on the same subject. Among others, A. Sprenger, T Noldeke and A. Amari (of Italy) participated in the competition and the three jointly received the award, its value being doubled for dividing it among them. Most of what Sprenger wrote on the subject was incorporated in his *Das Leben* etc. Noldeke translated and enlarged his Latin essay into German and published it in 1860 under title *Geschichte des Qorans*.¹ Amari's essay was translated into French under title *Memoire sur la Chronologie du Caron* (Chronological Arrangement of the Qur'ān).

Of all these works, Noldeke's *Geschichte* etc. proved to be the most successful in influencing subsequent orientalist studies on the subject. In fact it may be said that all the orientalist works that subsequently appeared on the Qur'ān till the middle of the twentieth century were in some form or other elaborations and extensions of Noldeke's ideas and assumption. It is therefore worthwhile to indicate here briefly his main lines of approach.²

¹ Subsequently Noldeke further enlarged the work into two volumes (Leipzig, 1909-1910) with the assistance of his students Schwally.

² A good summary of his ideas and assumptions is given by Noldeke himself in his article on the Qur'ān published in the 9th edition (1891) of the *Encyclopaedi Britanica*, PP. 597 ff: also reproduced in Ibn Warrāq (ed). *The origins of the Koran Classic Essays- on Islam's Holy Book*, Prometheus Books, New York, 1998, PP. 36-63.

Taking his cue from the basic facts of the gradual revelation of the Qur'ānic, composition of the surahs by a combination of the passage received at different times and the "occasions" of as revelations are narrated in the Muslim sources Noldeke attempted to identify the dates of the Qur'ānic passages as well as of the surahs. In the process he discussed what he conceived to be the Judaeo-Christian origins of the Qur'ān, the nature of the Qur'ānic waḥy, the nature and character of the Prophet and the literary merit of the Qur'ān, reflecting and reiterating more or less the same views as those of the other orientalist like George Sale, Aloys Sprenger and W. Muir. Noldeke also dealt with the "collection" and publication of the entire Qur'ān during the times of Abū Bakr and Uthmān.

In tracing the dates of the Qur'ānic passages (apart from the surahs) Noldeke does not, in most cases, follow the "occasions" of revelations given in the Muslim sources but proceeds on two main assumptions, namely, (a) that many of the long surahs are the result of an amalgamation of various originally distinct revelations and, (b) the supposed differences in the literary style, "abrupt" changes in the subject matter and interruptions in the collection of thought on the basis of these two assumptions he serves out many pieces of long surahs as originally independent, assigning them supposed dates. His object in doing so is to show that the Qur'ān is, as he sees it, a patchwork of incoherent themes and episodes.

He follows more or less the same logic in tracing the chronological order of the surahs. Thus, he divides the surah into four periods, the early Makkan, the mid-Makkan, the late Makkan and the Madinan, fixing the chronological order of each group according to the length theme literary style and what he conceived to be the "conclusive excitement" of the

early group, the gradual diminishing of the glow and fervor of the middle and late Makkan groups and the “prosoic” tone of the Madīnan group of surahs, using as far as it suits his purpose the known “occasions” of revelations. Needless to say that his chronological order of the surahs differs considerably from that given by the Muslim sources.

As regards the collection and publication of the Qur’ān under ‘Abū Bakr and ‘Uthmān Noldeke’s main assumptions are that Zaid ibn Thābit collected the texts, “edited/redacted” them, combined the many originally independent passages into surahs and arranged them in the present order; and that nonetheless the Qur’ān is not complete. He also spoke about the literary style of the Qur’ān and of the “foreign” words in it, reiterating Sprenger’s view that the Prophet made a show of his knowledge of these words.

These views of Noldeke are faulty in many respects specially he is wrong in supposing that Zaid ibn Thābit collected the many disjointed passages into surahs are “edited/redacted” them and that the Qur’ān is nonetheless incomplete. The chronological order given by him to the passages and surahs is not agreed by the other orientalists themselves. Even his contemporary Muir gives a different order for the surahs. All these are essentially guess-work and suppositions.¹

(c) Extensions of Noldeke’s Assumptions:

Nevertheless, the fashion thus set for determining the chronology of the surahs and passages of the Qur’ān, led the Rev. J.M. Rodwell to publish in 1861 his *The Koran: Translated from the Arabic, the surahs arranged in Chronological Order*,

¹See for a critical discussion of Noldeke’s assumption M.M. ‘Alī, *The Qur’ān and the Orientalists: An Examination of their Main Theories and Assumption*, Ipswich, 2004, PP. 205-217.

with Notes and Index. In a rather lengthy preface Rodwell discusses the rise of Islam and of the Qur'ān and refers his readers to the works of Sprenger and Muir, and also reproduces their views about the Qur'ānic waḥy and their theory of the Qur'ān and Islam being an amalgam of bits from Judaism and Christianity.¹ The Prophet of Islam produced a doctrine, Rodwell wrote which is "Judaism divested of its Mosaic ceremonial, and Christianity divested of its Atonement and the Trinity." In a footnote to this statement he advised his fellow-Christian Missionaries saying: A line of argument to be adopted by Christian Missionary in dealing with a Mohammedan should be not, to attack Islam as a mass of error, but to show that it contains fragments of disjointed truth-that it is based upon Christianity and Judaism partially understood-especially the latter, without any appreciation of its typical character, pointing to Christianity as a final dispensation.²

Amidst this monotony of studied onslaughts on the Qur'ān, at least one Christian author of the time raised a voice of reason and dissent. He was John Davenport whose work, *An Apology for Mohammed and the Koran*, was published in 1869.³ It consisted of 188 pages, divided into four chapters entitled: I. *Mohammed: A Biography*; II. *The Koran and its Morality*; III. *Charges against Mohammed Refuted* and IV. *Beauties of the Koran*.

Meanwhile the lines indicated by Sprenger, Muir and Noldeke were followed by other scholars. Thus in 1880 S. Fraenkel published a study of the "foreign vocabulary" in ancient Arabic poetry and the Qur'ān in his *De vocabulis in antiquis Arabum carminibus et in Corano pregrinis*.⁴ And in 1882-1884 the Rev. E.

¹ Rodwell, *The Koran*, etc. London, 1861, preface, P.xxv.

² *Ibid.*, P. xxii.

³ Published by J. Davy and Sons, Long acre, London, 1869

⁴ Published in Leiden, 1880.

M. Wherry incorporated the ideas of Sale, Muir and Noldeke in an enlarged edition of Sale's translation in 4 volumes entitled *A Comprehensive commentary of the Qur'ān comprising Sale's translation and preliminary discourse, with additional notes and emendations, together with a complete index to the text, preliminary discourse and notes*.¹ Another work relating to the Qur'ānic vocabulary was done by C. C. Thorrey under title *The Commercial-Theological Terms in the Koran*, which was published in Leiden in 1892. Before the century was over two other works were published which reiterated the theory of Judaeo-Christian origins of the Qur'ān and Islam. The one was written by Muir with avowed evangelical purpose and was entitled *The Qur'ān: Its Composition and Teaching and the Testimony it bears to the Holy Scriptures*. It was published in 1897. And in the following year (1898) the missionary circles published from Madras, India, an English and revised version of Abraham Gieger's work under title *Judaism and Islam*.

The twentieth century started with a further extension of the Muir-Noldeke approach of tracing the origins of the Qur'ān. Thus in 1901 the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge in London published the Church Missionary Society's the Rev. W. St. Clair Tisdall's *The Sources of Islam*. William Muir himself wrote a "Foreword" for it exultantly remarking: "Now if it can be shown that much of this grand book [Qur'ān] can be traced to human sources existing daily around the Prophet, then Islam falls to the ground. And this is what the author proves with marvelous power and erudition." Muir also suggested that the book" should be translated into Arabic, Urdu and other languages of the East, and so made accessible to Muslim readers everywhere.² Tisdall had

¹ In 4 volumes published by Kegan Paul, Trench and Trubner, London, and Houghton Mifflin, Boston, 1882-1884.

² The work together with the foreword are reproduced in Ibn Warrāq (ed). *Op. cit.* PP. 227-192. The above quotations are at PP. 227 and 230.

been engaged in missionary activities in Persia and he had written the original of his work in Persian. The book is divided into six chapters in which he discusses, respectively, what he supposes to be (i) the Muslim view of the sources of Islam, (ii) the borrowings from the doctrines and practices of the Arabs of the "days of ignorance", (iii) the borrowings from the doctrines and histories of the Jews and the Sabaeans, (iv) the borrowings from the "tales of the heretical Christian sects", (v) the borrowings from the Zoroastrian and Hindu beliefs and (vi) the influence of the ḥanifs. Needless to say, this work of Tisdall is beset with much prejudice, misconception and misunderstanding of the Qur'ān. The height of prejudice is the attempt to relate the Qur'ānic teachings to the doctrines of Hinduism and polytheism which the Qur'ān relentlessly denounces. It is strange that this Christian missionary turns a blind eye to the striking similarity between the Christian doctrines of incarnation of God and the Trinity on the one hand, and the Hindu doctrine of incarnation of God and the concept of Tri-Deva, a sort of trinity of Brahma, Vishnu and Siva, on the other. Tisdall's book was reissued with modifications in 1905 under the title *The Original Sources of the Qur'ān*.

The hunt for the "sources" of the Qur'ān became almost a fashion and in the year following the publication of Claire Tisdall's *Sources of Islam*, i.e., in 1902, there appeared the *New Researches into the Composition of the Koran* by H. Herschfeld, which was published by the University of London Press. It did not really open up any new ground and trod mainly on the beaten track. Another work on the supposed source of the Qur'ān was prepared in French by Cl. Huart entitled *Une nouvelle source du Qoran* (A New Source of the Qur'ān) which was published in 1904. Almost similar in nature, but following more the foot-steps of Noldeke, was E. Sell's *The Historical Development of the Qoran* published in 1905.

Another work touching the supposed "sources" of the Qur'ān but more academic in nature was Robert Roberts' *The Social Laws of the Qoran Considered, and Compared with those of the Hebrew and other Ancient Sources*. It was originally written in German as a Ph.D. Thesis early in the twentieth century and submitted to the Leipzig University: but was subsequently translated into English and published for the first time in 1925. It deals with such matters as marital relations, slavery, inheritance, charities, criminal offences, trade and commerce and food, the author's plan being, as stated in the preface, to trace the Prophet's "enactments where possible to their sources". In the notice on the Jacket of the book it is further stated: "Muhammad... appeared as a social reformer as well, and ... allowance must necessarily be made for the debt which Islamic laws owe to those found in the Old Testament and Talmudic literature."

The idea and assumptions transmitted through the above mentioned publications percolated into general works published at the time on Islam and Prophet Muḥammad (PBUH). A characteristic instance is the Oxford Professor David Samuel Margoliouth's *Mohammed and the Rise of Islam*, the third edition of which appeared in 1905. It reproduces principally the views of Sprenger, Muir and Noldeke about the Qur'ān and the Qur'ānic waḥy with much offensive disparagement. More significantly, it was about this time that the Italian orientalist Prince Leon Caetani's monumental work, *Annali dell' Islam*, began to appear. Its first volume was published in 1904 in Milan, and its tenth and final volume came out in 1926. In its seventh volume Caetani dealt elaborately with the Qur'ān. Discussing the views, among others, of Noldeke and building upon his conclusions Caetani drove at three assumptions, namely, (a) that the Qur'ān does

not represent the very words (ipissima verba) of Prophet Muḥammad (PBUH), (b) that the tradition about the first collection (Caetani uses the expression *recencio* = recension, a critical revision of a text) of the Qur'ān during the time of Abū Bakr (MABPWH) is a myth and (c) that the *recencio* during 'Uthmān's (MABPWH) time was undertaken more of political than for religious motives. A summarised English translation of these views was published shortly afterwards in *The Moslem World* in 1915.¹ It needs to be pointed out that Caetani is very much wrong in these assumptions. He betrays the misconception of the orientalist in general that the Qur'ān is made up of the Prophet's verba (words).

Meanwhile Ignaz Goldziher (1850-1921), whose work, *Muhammedanische Studien* (Studies on Islam) in two volumes and published from Halle in 1889-1890 had established him as an authority on the history of the Ḥadīth literature,² turned his attention to Qur'ānic studies. In 1910 the first volume of his lectures on Islam was published. In this volume he discussed, among other things, the concept of "Predestination and Free will" in the Qur'ān. And in the second volume of this work, which was published in 1920, he dealt elaborately with the history and development of Qur'ān commentaries (*tafāsīr*).

(d) Further Extensions of Noldeke's Assumptions-The Torret-Bergstrasser Hunt for Variant Texts:

Goldziher's work on the Qur'ān commentaries in fact reflected a new trend in the orientalist studies on the Qur'ān. By the beginning of the twentieth century the classical Arabic works including the commentaries of the Qur'ān became accessible

¹ Vol. 5, pp. 380-390.

² Goldziher discussion the ḥadīth literature in the second volume of his work.

to the orientalists. Many of the commentators note the variations in the vocalization (*qira'at*) of a number of words and expressions in the Qur'ān. These variations - some of which have their origin in the dialectical differences of Arabic in morphology, syntax, vocabulary and phonology- were part of the Qur'ānic revelation as indicated by the Ḥadīth, "The Qur'ān has been revealed according to seven types of variations".¹ The variant readings are recorded in all standard works of tafsīr. The *Qurrā'* (the Qur'ān Reciters) all over the world recite the different variants of each āyats. Educated Muslims, thus, have always been aware of these variations. On learning of these variant readings the orientalists, however, conjured up the existence of different and various texts of the Qur'ān and enthusiastically took up the point to assail the authenticity of the Qur'ān and to prove that the text universally used by the Muslims is not the only text of it but that there exist other different texts.

The earliest notable work in this respect was *Leaves from Three Ancient Qurans Possibly Pre- 'Othmanic with a List of their variants*, edited by Rev. Alphonso Mingana and Agnes Smith Lewis and published in Cambridge in 1914. The work does not really concern three ancient Qur'āns, as claimed, but only select texts taken from different commentaries focusing on the variant readings of some words and expressions. Mingana followed it up by an article entitled "*The Transmission of the Koran*", published in 1916, in which he copiously drew on the history of the compilation and publication of the Qur'ān during the writings of Paul Casanova, Noldeke, St. Clair Tisdall and D. S. Margoliouth to cast doubts on the times of 'Abū Bakr and 'Uthmān

¹ Reported by Buḫḫārī and Muslim

(MABPWT).¹ Two years afterwards appeared the tenth volume of the *Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics*.² The article on the Qur'ān in it was jointly written by Margoliouth and Mingana. The former summarised his views as contained in his *Mohammed and the Rise of Islam*, dealing particularly with what he thought to be the "sources" of the Qur'ān, the theory of revelation, and chronology and arrangement of the text: and the latter, Mingana, focused his main attention on what he called "editions and various readings".³ A few years subsequently, Mingana authored another work entitled *Syriac Influence on the Style of the Koran* which was published by the Manchester University Press in 1927.

It was soon realized that a study of the "readings" as noted by the Muslim scholars involved also a study of Qur'ānic vocabulary. Once again, therefore, the orientalists found themselves drawn into a consideration of what seemed to them unusual and "foreign" words in the Qur'ān. The result was the appearance in 1926 of the then Frankfort University Professor Joseph Horowitz's (1874-1931) *Koranische Untersuchungen* (Qur'ānic Researches). In it he attempted a detailed analysis of the Qur'ānic language, using pre-Islamic poetry to understand the words and expressions in the Qur'ān. The work was bedevilled, however, by much exaggeration and errors so much so that it did not receive the approval even of the orientalists themselves. The same urge led Arthur Jeffery to write a thesis on "*The Foreign Vocabulary of the Qur'ān*" which he completed in the same year (1926).⁴ Almost simultaneously

¹ First published in The Journal of the Manchester Egyptian and Oriental Society and republished in The Moslem World, vol. VII, 1917, PP. 223-232, 402-414

² It was edited by J. Hasting and published by T&T Clark, Edinburgh. 1918.

³ Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics, vol.X, PP. 538-550

⁴ It was subsequently published from Baroda, India, in 1938

he began the work of identifying and collecting the "variant readings" of the Qur'ān. At the same time, the Munich University Professor G. Bergstrasser was working on a similar project and the first fascicule of his *Geschichte des Qorantexts* was published in that very year (1926). The publication of this work led Jeffery to meet Bergstrasser at Munich and they "agreed to collaborate on a much bigger plan", as Jeffery writes, "of assembling all the material that would assist in some day making it possible to elucidate the history of the text." Jeffery was to go on with his task of collecting the variants and preparing an edition of the text, while Bergstrasser was to commence gathering material for an archive of photographs of all the oldest Kufic manuscripts of the Koran, a collation of which he hoped would "throw much light on the history of the text." Then they were to pool their "resources with a view to a large volume dealing with the variants."¹

Accordingly, Bergstrasser concentrated on collecting the photographs of available Kufic manuscripts of the Qur'ān and Jeffery worked on the collection of the "variant readings". The publication in 1927 of Ibn al-Jazarī's *Kitāb al-Naṣhṛ fī al-Qira'at al-'Aṣhr* at Damascus in two volumes gave a fillip to their plan. In 1928 Bergstrasser visited Cairo and made a collection of Kufic manuscripts of the Qur'ān along with a search for works on Qur'ānic "readings". He also visited Istanbul and made further photocopies of Qur'ān manuscripts. Meanwhile his student Dr. Otto Pretzl edited 'Abū 'Amr al-Danī's *Taisīr* and *al-Muqni'* two important works on *qira'at*, which were published respectively in 1930 and 1932. About the same time Jeffery discovered at Damascus two manuscripts of Ibn 'Abī Dāwūd's (d. 316 H.) *Kitāb al-Maṣāḥif*. In 1933 Professor Bergstasser

¹ A. Jeffery, "progress of the study of the Koran Text", *The Moslem World*, vol., 25, 1935, PP. 4-16, reproduced in Ibn Warrāq, op. cit, P. 141.

died of an accident; but his work of collecting photocopies of Qur'ānic manuscripts was continued by his students Dr. Pretzl, Antony Spitaler, and A. Fischer, Pretzl also finished the third fascicule of Bergstrasser's *Geschichte des Qoran texts*.

The plan of editing a text of the Qur'ān with an indication of the variant readings did not materialize. The upshot was the publication by Jeffery of his *Materials for the History of the Text of the Qur'ān: The Old Codices - The Kitāb al-Maṣāḥif* of Ibn Abī Dā'ūd together with a Collection of the variant Readings from the Codices of Ibn Mas'ūd, Ubai, 'Alī, Ibn 'Abbās, Anas, Abū Mūsá and other Early Qur'ānic authorities which represent a Type of Text Anterior to that of the canonical Text of 'Uthmān.¹ It is to be pointed out that the title given by Jeffery to his work is misleading in two main respects. First, it tends to give the impression that the "variant readings" noted are taken from the "codices" of the persons mentioned, while the fact is that "the variant readings" recorded are not from the "codice as such but from what is reported by others, the exegetes and lexicographers, as having come down from the codices mentioned. Second, the concluding part of the title, namely, that the variant readings noted "represent a type of text anterior to that of the canonical text of 'Uthmān" is grossly misleading. The persons of whose codices are mentioned by Jeffrey were all Companions of the Prophet (PBUH), and were contemporaries of one another and of Zaid ibn Thābit who himself had one copy of the text of the Qur'ān and who was one of those in charge of making what is called the "canonical text of 'Uthmān". 'Uthmān himself was a senior contemporary of all these persons and they were all alive at the time of making the compilation under him. The "codices" of the persons mentioned were and could only be contemporary with the codices of Zaid and

¹ Printed of the Trustees of the "De Goeje Fund" by E.J. Brill, Leiden, 1937.

others of the Prophet's Companions. They were copies of the same text as given out by the Prophet and by no means "anterior" or posterior to one another. The different codices or copies were made simultaneously by the Prophet's Companions and were in no way different texts of the Qur'ān, though they differed in respect of completeness. In fact, even according to Jeffery's own admission, the "variant readings" concern only a number words and expressions in the Qur'ān and they do by no means show the existence of "different" texts of the Qur'ān. More importantly, Jeffery notes that different lexicographers and commentators given different "readings" for the same word, though each traces the "reading" of that work to the same codex! Jeffery's work consists of two parts. The first part is an introduction containing the list of "variant readings" as gleaned from a number of exegeses and lexicographical works: and the second part consists of an edition of Ibn Abī Dāwūd's *Kitāb al-Maṣāḥif*.

The other part of the Bergstrasser-Jeffery plan, that of finding out differences in the Qur'ānic text by comparing its extant manuscripts, did not also lead to any encouraging results. Before the commencement of the Second World War and the consequent destruction by bombing of the photocopies of the Qur'ānic manuscripts collected at the Munich University, the scholars and authorities in charge of these had completed a preliminary study and survey and issued a statement saying that their study and comparison of the various manuscripts had not revealed any discrepancy and difference in the texts except minor difference in spelling in some places which was natural and all of which did not affect the correctness and integrity of the Qur'ānic texts as a whole.¹

¹ See Moḥammad Ḥamīdullāh, *Khūṭabāt-Bhāwalpūr* (Urdu text). Taḥqīqāt-i-Islām, Islāmābād, 1985, PP. 20-21, reproduced by. M.M. A'zamī in the *Impact International*, March, 200, P. 28.

Simultaneously with the Bergstrasser-Jeffery quest for variance in the Qur'ānic texts the theory of Judaeo-Christian origins and the assumptions of Sprenger-Noldeke-Muir about the Qur'ān and Qur'ānic waḥy continued to be reiterated and developed. Thus in 1922 there appeared in Stuttgart Wilhelm Rudolph's *Abhängigkeit des Qorans von Judentum und Die Christentum*.¹ And in 1926, which witnessed the completion of Jeffery's thesis on the "Foreign vocabulary etc," and the publication of the first fascicule of Bergstrasser's *Geschichte des Qorantexts* and Horowitz's *Qur'ānic Researches*, there appeared in London the Rev. Richard Bell's *The Origin of Islam in its Christian Environment* and at Stockholm Tor Andre's *Der Ursprung des Islams und des Christentum*. This was followed by the publication in 1930 of a rather lengthy article by Karl Ahrens on the same subject entitled "*Chrisrliches in Qoran*".² And as if to mark the centenary of Abraham Geiger's work, C. C. Torrey had his work, *The Jewish Foundation of Islam*, published from New York in 1933.³ The same thesis was restated in A. I. Katsh's *Judaism in Islam* which appeared in 1954.⁴

(c) *The Bell-Watt Speculations:*

Meanwhile Richard Bell built upon the Sprenger-Muir-Noldeke assumption. Working on the assumptions of Noldeke and Rodwell, he carried out a rearrangement of the surahs and issued a translation of the Qur'ān in two volumes under title *The Qur'on: Translation with a Critical Rearrangement of the Surahs*. These were published in 1937-39 from Edinburgh. His

¹ A French translation of the work was published at Paris in 1955 under the title: *Les Origines de l' Islam et le Christianisme*.

² ZDMG (Zetischrift der Deutschen Morgenlaendischen Gesellschaft), 1930, PP. 15-68, 148-190.

³ Republished in 1967

⁴ New York, 1954

arrangement of the surahs, however, differed from that of Rodwell. At the same time Bell worked on the nature of Qur'ānic waḥy and the theory of "revision" of its text by the Prophet as suggested by Noldeke and Rodwell. Bell first put forth his assumptions in a series of two articles in two issues of *The Moslem World* for 1934 under captions "*Mohammed's call*" and "*Mohammed's visions*".¹ These were followed by two more articles published in the Transactions of the Glasgow University Oriental Society for 1949 and 1951. The two articles were captioned respectively "*The Beginning of Muhammad's Religious Activity*" and "*The Style of the Qur'ān*".² In the meantime R. Blachere published in 1947 his *Introduction au Coran*.³ Blachere generally reflects the pattern of orientalist thinking of the time regarding the Qur'ān and does not break much new ground. Almost in imitation of this latter work, however, Bell prepared his introduction to the Qur'ān which was published from Edinburgh in 1953.⁴ In it he consolidated his views and dealt mainly with three themes, namely dating and characterization of Qur'ānic passages, the nature of Qur'ānic waḥy and the theory of "revision".

Building upon the suggestion of Noldeke and working on two basic but erroneous assumptions that (a) the normal unit of revelation was a short passage and (b) that the Prophet "revised" the texts before combining them into surahs. Bell classifies the Qur'ānic passages into various types, calling

¹ *The Moslem World*, January 1934, PP. 13-19 and April, 1934, PP. 145-154

² See the Transaction of the Glasgow University Oriental Society, vols., VIII and XI, PP.16-24 and 9-15 respectively.

³ Published from Paris. He also produced a new French translation of the Qur'ān, *Le Coran. Traduction Nouvele*, Paris, 1947-50.

⁴ Bell also prepared a commentary on the Qur'ān which was subsequently edited by C.E. Bosworth and M.E.J. Richardson and published by the University of Manchester in 2 vols. in 1991.

them the "sign" type, the "slogan" type, the "soothsayer" type, etc. He also assigns as many as ten different dates to the passages, such as "very early", "early Meccan", "Meccan", "late Meccan", "connected with Badr", "connected with Uhud", etc. Needless to point out that his dating is as conjectural and untenable as that of Noldeke's and is similarly not accepted by all orientalists.

As regards the Qur'ānic waḥy, Bell stresses six assumptions, namely, (a) that the tradition regarding the coming of waḥy are inventions of a later age and are founded upon the Qur'ānic passage 53:1-8; (b) that before he "encountered" the "visions in the above mentioned passage the Prophet had been "speaking" in some manner but had not started delivering the Qur'ān; (c) that the term waḥy does not mean verbal communication of the text of the Qur'ān but "suggestions", "prompting" or "inspiration" to "compose" the Qur'ān; (d) that according to the passage 53:1-8 the Prophet claimed to have seen Allah; (e) that as he subsequently became aware of the existence of angels he reasserted in surah 81 (al-Takwīr) that he had seen the angel messenger on the clear horizon and, (f) that still more subsequently, at Madīna, he introduced Gabriel as the conveyer of waḥy. It is to be pointed out that with the exception of the assumptions (a) and (c), the other assumptions are merely repetitions of those of the previous orientalists, specially of Muir and Margoliouth. All the assumptions are, however, wrong and unenable.

As regards the theory of "revision" Bell not only enlarges on what Noldeke and Rodwell suppose to be changes in rhymes and subject matters but adds a new assumption that the Prophet used to write the supposed revision on the opposite side of the material on which the original revelation was written! He also harps on the subject of *naskh* (abrogation).

Bell's assumptions and theories were further enlarged by his pupil W. Montgomery Watt. He made his debut in the field of Qur'ānic study by his thesis on Freewill and Predestination in Early Islam which was published in London in 1948. This was the second detailed discussion on the subject by an orientalist after Ignaz Goldziher's treatment of it in 1910.¹ Watt's major discussions on the Qur'ān, however, are contained in his *Muhammad at Mecca*, published in 1953. In it he incorporated all the theories of his predecessor orientalists about the Qur'ān and also built upon the theories of Bell.² To support Bell's assumption that the Prophet initially claimed to have seen Allah, Watt quotes and grossly misinterprets 'Urwah's report about the coming of waḥy and also misinterprets chapter al-Najm, devoting a special section on the so-called "Satanic verses". To support the view that the Qur'ān emanated from the Prophet himself, Watt advances a theory of "intellectual locution", and misinterprets the term ummiyy to prove that the Prophet knew reading and writing. Watt also strongly advocates the theory of Judaeo-Christian borrowings and enlarges it by adding to it a new dimension of what he calls the environmental influence on the Prophet. Shortly after the publication of his *Muhammad at Mecca*, Watt published an assessment of Bell's dating of the Qur'ānic passages.³ In 1969 he consolidated his views about the Qur'ān and Qur'ānic waḥy in his *Islamic Revelation in the Modern World*.⁴ Almost simultaneously he edited and enlarged Bell's *Introduction to the Qur'ān* which was published the following year.

¹ See supra, P. 18.

² See specially chapters II and III of his *Muhammad at Mecca*.

³ Watt "The dating of the Qur'ān: A Review of Richard Bell's theories", *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, London, 1957, PP. 46-56

⁴ Published by the Edinburgh University Press, 1969

Watt's above-mentioned work may be said to mark end of the modern period of orientalist study of the Qur'ān which started in the middle of the nineteenth century. As an epilogue to this period one may mention John Burton's *The Collection of the Qur'ān*, which was published by the Cambridge University Press in 1977. Burton builds upon the Goldziher-Schacht assumption that the reports and Ḥadīth literature in general are fabrications of the second and third Islamic century and on the Bell-Watt assumptions that the Prophet had made a "collection" of the revelations, some "revised" and some "unrevised" and that the reports about the collection of Qur'ān are manipulated in order to give 'Abū Bakr and 'Umar (MABPWT) the main credit and to 'Uthmān a subsidiary role. With these assumptions Burton blends his own theory of naskh. He says that the Prophet himself had compiled the Qur'ān; but later Muslim jurists "forged" the concept of naskh in order to justify certain fiqh positions and also forged certain verses in support of their views and held that these verses once formed part of the Qur'ān but were abrogated. Burton further says that Muslim jurists, in order to justify their theory of naskh, also claimed that the Prophet could not have compiled the Qur'ān in his lifetime because naskh of any āyah could occur at any time as long as he lived; and since he could not have compiled the Qur'ān, it must have been done by his Companions. Hence arose the "forged" narrations about the compilation of the Qur'ān. Initially, the role was given to 'Uthmān (MABPWH), but as he became unpopular, the credit of initial compilation was given to 'Abū Bakr and 'Umar (MABPWT) and a lesser role was assigned to 'Uthmān (MABPWH).¹ This motive of proving the validity of naskh, further emphasizes Burton, "induced the Muslims to exclude

¹ I. Burton, *The Collection of the Qur'ān*, PP. 230-234.

their Prophet from the history of the collection of their Qur'ān text. It was a compelling motive. It was their only motive.¹

It is of course a fact that some later Muslim writers state that the Qur'ān could not have been compiled during the Prophet's lifetime because *naskh* could take place at any time during his life. But it is to be noted that this statement is neither the Prophet's nor that of his Companions. It is merely the opinion of such writers who intend to justify the fact of the compilation of the Qur'ān after the Prophet's death, not to suppress the fact of his having compiled the Qur'ān nor to sustain the theory of *naskh*. It is further to be noted that whatever the implication of the concept of *naskh*, it has its root in the Qur'ān itself.² It thus really betrays a lack of knowledge of the Qur'ān to make such a bold and unfounded assertion that the theory of *naskh* was forged by later Muslim jurists.

The Latest Period: Plunge into Self-Deception:

(a) *The Revisionists Fallacies:*

The very year in which Burton was thus suggesting that it was the Prophet himself, and not his Companions, who compiled the Qur'ān, there appeared a work by another orientalist which, working on the same Goldziher-Schacht assumptions about ḥadīth literature, went to the other extreme of suggesting that it was neither the Prophet nor his Companions who compiled the Qur'ān but that it came into being much later than the coming into being of Islam and the Muslims, i.e., in the second century of Islam. This was J. Wansborough's *Qur'ānic Studies: Sources and methods of Scriptural Interpretation* (1977).³ He followed it up by another work,

¹ Ibid, P. 232.

² See the Qur'ān. 2:106.

³ Oxford, 1977

published the following year, entitled *The sectarian Milieu: Content and Composition of Islamic Salvation History* (1978). These publications may be said to have ushered in the latest period of orientalist study of the Qur'ān.

Wansborough represented a new generation of orientalists who set out to cast doubt on the whole course of Islamic history and are hence known as the "revisionists". By employing what is called the "instruments and techniques" of biblical criticism such as "form criticism, source criticism, redaction criticism" etc., Wansborough advanced mainly the following assumptions:

- (a) That different part of the Qur'ān originated in different communities located not in Arabia but in Iraq and Syria and that these evolved only gradually from originally independent prophetic traditions ("prophetic logia") during a long period of oral transmission, assuming their final and "canonical" form in the late second/eighth century.
 - (b) That this development took place in a "sectarian milieu" in which Christians, Jews, Zoroastrians and the Believers hurled ideas and claims against one another until these groups had clearly delineated their confessional, theological and ritual boundaries.
 - (c) That this "canonization" of the Qur'ānic text was linked with the rise of classical Arabic and its grammar and the appearance of the Qur'ānic commentaries.
 - (d) That the Islamic tradition is an example of what is known to biblical scholars as "salvation history"; "a theologically and evangelically motivated story of a religion's origins invented late in the day and projected back in time," the whole process being similar to that of the canonization of the Hebrew scripture. Taking Schacht as his authority, Wansborough
-

further states that the Qur'ān did not serve as a basis for Muslim law before the ninth century.

Concurrent with the appearance of Wansborough's works, there appeared another highly controversial work prepared along similar lines by Patricia Crone and Michael Cook under the title *Hagarism: The making of the Islamic World* (1977). Crone and Cook admit that they did not say much about the Qur'ān in their book that was not based on Wansborough. The latter's conclusions, however, immediately elicited sharp criticism even by a number of orientalists, some of whom describe his work as "drastically wrongheaded", "ferociously opaque" and a "colossal self-deception". In fact it is simply a high-sounding nonsense: and the whole manoeuvre is indeed a plunge into self deception. "His awkward prose-style, diffuse organization" and "confused presentation", observes one critic, "makes grasping his basic points all the more difficult."¹ Wansborough relies on a series of assumptions and suggestions rather than on straight argument; and these can be refuted by general arguments.

Despite the obvious absurdity of Wansborough's views, others were affected by his fallacies. Notable among them are J. Koren and Yahuda d. Nevo. They undertook to supplement Wansborough's theories by archaeological evidence and thus to dismantle the sources of Islamic history. In a joint article they postulated that it is "necessary to corroborate a view derived solely from the Muslim literary account" by the "hard facts" of material remains; "and where the two conflict the latter should be preferred"; and that if there is no evidence for an event outside the "traditional account", this should be

¹ Frederic M. Donner, *Narrative of Islamic Origins: The Beginnings of Islamic Historical Writing*, Princeton, 1998, P. 38.

taken as a "positive evidence in support of the hypothesis that it did not happen."¹ They further state that excavations carried out in the Central Negev have revealed some thirty pagan sites which correlate with the description of the *Jāhili* pagan sanctuaries in the Muslim literary sources. From this they conclude that the accounts of the pre-Islamic pagan religion in the Ḥijāz could well be back-projections of a paganism actually known from later and elsewhere. Elaborating these views in another article, Nevo states that the study of a number of early Arabic inscriptions from the Negev and elsewhere suggest the existence of a generic monotheism as well as a Judaeo-Christian environment in the Negev. "From the fact that the Qur'ān contains many phrases present in the Muslim inscriptions of the second century A. H. and later", concludes Nevo, "it was canonized quite late, i. e., after these phrases had entered the religious vocabulary."²

Clearly this Koren-Nevo theory is a reiteration in a different form of the Goldziher-Schacht-Wansborough view about the sources of Islamic history with the exception that, while Wansborough guards his assumption by the safety phrases that it is "tentative and emphatically provisional", Koren and Nevo take it as an established fact. And just as the extreme views of Goldziher, Schacht and Wansborough elicited sharp criticisms from members of their own rank, so have the views of Koren and Nevo come under attacks by the more reasonable of the orientalists. Thus, for instance, Stella Whellan squarely joined issue with them in an article under the title "*Forgotten Witness: Evidence for the Early*

¹ J. Koren and Y.D. Nevo, "Methodological Approaches of Islamic Studies". *Der Islam*, Band 68, Haft I, PP. 91-102.

² Y.D. Nevo, "Towards a Pre-History of Islam", *Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam*, vol. 17, 1994, PP.125-126

Codification of the Qur'ān".¹ She points out three kinds of historical evidence, namely, the Umayyad inscriptions on the Dome of the Rock, al-Walīd's inscription at the Great Mosque at Madīna and the information about the existence of a group of Qur'ān copyists at Madīna since the middle of the first century of Islam. Another scholar, F. M. Donner, points out that Yehuda Nevo's argument is circular. "The absence of specifically Qur'ānic or Muslim phraseology from the generic monotheism of the earliest Negev texts--- may be taken as evidence for the late codification of the Qur'ān only if we knew that the Qur'ānic texts crystallized in this region (i.e., the Negev, or at least geographical Syria) rather than somewhere else, such as Arabia; but the crystallization of the Qur'ān outside Arabia is another of Nevo's (and Wansborough's) assumptions, not a known fact."²

(b) *The San'a' find and renewed speculations:*

Meanwhile the discovery of a stock of old parchment manuscripts containing Qur'ānic manuscripts in the loft of the Great Mosque at San'a' gave rise to fresh speculations about the history and textual integrity of the Qur'ān. The discovery was made in 1972; but it was early in the eighties that the Yamani Antiquities Authority, particularly its President Qādī Ismā'īl al-Akwa' invited through the German Foreign Ministry two German experts, Dr. Gerd. R. Puin and H. C. Graf von Bothmer for the restoration and preservation of the manuscripts. They worked at San'ā' for some years in this project. It appears that besides being experts in restoration and preservation of manuscripts they had "orientalist" motives; for,

¹ *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, vol. 118, no. 1. 1988, pp. 1-14

² F. M. Donner, *Narrative of Islamic Origins: The Beginnings of Islamic Historical Writing*, Princeton, 1998, p. 62

it is reported that Bothmer made microfilm copies of some 35,000 sheets of manuscripts and took them to Germany. In 1987 he wrote an article on these manuscripts mentioning, among other things, that one of them, no. 1033-32, could be assigned a date in the last quarter of the first Hijri century. More orientalist in nature was the article which Puin wrote under title: "*Observations on the Early Qur'ān Manuscripts in San'ā'*."¹ These writings attracted the attention of the orientalist to the San'ā' manuscripts and they held a seminar at Leiden in 1998 on "*Qur'ānic Studies*" at which both Bothmer and Puin delivered lectures on the San'ā' manuscripts.

It is not known what exactly they said there on the subject; but in the above mentioned article Puin stresses three things. First, he refers to the attempts made previously by the orientalist like Jeffery. Pretzl, Spitaler and Fischer to collect the existing manuscripts of the Qur'ān with a view to preparing what they call a revised version by comparing any differences in them and regretfully mentions that the very large number of manuscripts collected for the purpose at the university of Munich, Germany, were destroyed by bombing during the Second World War.² He then expresses the hope that the San'ā' find offers an opportunity to resume that project. Second, he mentions what he has been able to note the "discrepancies" in the San'ā' manuscripts, such as the writing of the letter alif (hamzah) in an incorrect way, the numbering of the āyahs in some surahs, and the order or surahs written on a couple of sheets. Third, he recognizes that these "discrepancies" are minor and they would not probably lead to any sudden and significant advance in the

¹ Published in Stefan Wilde (ed.), *The Qur'ān as Text*, E. J. Brill. Leiden, 1996, pp. 107-111.

² See *Supra*, P. 22

field of Qur'ānic studies. Nonetheless he asserts that the Qur'ān, though it claims to be "clear" (mubīn) is not so and that the existence of the above mentioned "discrepancies" show that the surahs of the Qur'ān were not written down in their final form during the lifetime of the Prophet and that it is probable that a different order of the surahs was in circulation for a long time.

It is to be pointed out that these statements and conclusions are far-fetched and totally untenable: but they gave rise to wide speculations among the orientalist enthusiasts. One of them, Toby Lester, Held a telephonic conversation with Puin on the subject and then put forth a heavy-weight journalistic article in the January 1999 issue of *The Atlantic Monthly* under title "*What is the Qur'ān?*"¹ The article was made up of three types of materials: (a) information about the San'a' find and the conclusions said to have been arrived at by Puin and Bothmer; (b) assumptions of the other orientalists like Wansborough, Cook, Crone, Nevo and J. Bellamy about the Qur'ān and (c) indications about what the orientalists are doing or proposing to do in the field of Qur'ānic studies, specially the preparation of a Qur'ānic Encyclopedia.

Reference has already been made to the works of Wansborough, Cook, Crone and Nevo. As regards J. A Bellamy, he is also somewhat influenced by "revisionism" in as much as he conceives copyists' errors in the Qur'ān needing corrections. In a series of articles written between 1991 and 1996 and published in the journal of *the American Oriental Society*² he

¹ The Atlantic Monthly, 1999, PP. 43-56.

² J.A. Bellamy, "Al-Raqīm or al- Ruqūd? A note on Surah 18.9". Journal of the American Oriental Society, 1991, PP. 115-117; Fa-Ummuhā Hāwiyah: A note on surah 101:9", *ibid*, 1992, PP. 485-487.; "Some proposed emendations to the text of the Koran", *ibid*, 1993, PP. 562-573; "More purposed emendations to the text of the Koran", *ibid.*, 1996, PP. 196-204

examines some twenty-two difficult words and expressions in the Qur'ān which he thinks are mistakes due to errors committed by copyists or mistakes in the originals from which, according to him, parts of the Qur'ān were drawn. Therefore, he suggests emendations of these words and expressions, understandably by the orientalist themselves. The words and expressions dealt with by Bellamy have been explained and interpreted by both classical commentators and modern lexicographers. He has disregarded these explanations and interpretations and have drawn his conclusions on faulty understanding or misinterpretations of them.¹

Similar in nature are the compilations entitled *Approaches to the Qur'ān*, edited jointly by G. R. Hawting and K. A. Shareef and published in 1993, and Kenneth Cragg's *The Event of the Qur'ān: Islam in its Scripture*, published in 1994. To the same category belong the works of Andrew Rippin. He appears to have made his debut in the field of Qur'ānic studies by writing an article published in 1985 under the title "*Literary Analysis of the Koran, Tafsir and Sira: The Methodologies of John Wansborough*."² In general Rippin endorses the skepticism and "revisionism" of Wansborough and says that he "has marked a path in broad outlines, but the road must still be cleared."³ By way of "clearing" this road Rippin edited a collection of the studies entitled *Approaches to the History of the Interpretation of the Qur'ān*, published in 1988. He followed it up by editing two other compilations, *The Qur'ān: Formative Interpretation*, published in 1999, and *The Qur'ān: Style and*

¹ See for discussion M.M. 'Alī, op. cit., PP. 316-323.

² Published in R. C. Martin (ed), *Approaches to Islam in Religious Studies*, University of Arizona Press, Tucson, 1985, PP.151-63, 227-32

³ Published in R. C. Martin (ed), *Approaches to Islam in Religious Studies*, University of Arizona Press, Tucson, 1985, PP. 151-63, 227-32

Contents, published in 2001. In the same year appeared his solo work: *The Qur'ān and its Interpretative Tradition*.

The twenty-first century opened with the publication of another work similar to Arthur Jeffery's *Foreign Vocabulary of the Qur'ān* and C. C Torrey's *The Commercial-Theological Terms of the Koran*. This new work is *The Syro-Aramaic Reading of the Koran* by one Christoph Luxenberg, a pseudonym who is said to be "a scholar of ancient Semitic Languages in Germany".¹ Adopting the line of Wansborough and the "revisionists" in general, Luxenberg attempts to show that parts of the Qur'ān are derived from pre-existing Christian-Aramaic texts that were misinterpreted by later Islamic scholars who are said to have prepared the editions of the Qur'ān now in use. Each of the assumptions contained in this premise is wrong and unsubstantiated. It is nowhere clearly stated or established who prepared the "parts" of the Qur'ān on the basis of pre-Islamic Christian Aramaic texts, and when and where. If later Islamic scholars misinterpreted the parts of the text, why did the Muslims who had hitherto been reading and using the Qur'ān not raise any objections to the alleged misinterpretations? How could later Islamic scholars of a certain period all agree on such alleged misinterpretations? How, again, could any alleged misinterpretation of the text constitute any alteration or edition of it? Luxenberg does not ask himself these questions, let alone advancing any specific evidence on any of these points. Also, the attempt to ascribe Hebrew, Syriac or Aramaic origins of some words or expressions in the Qur'ān is nothing new. In fact Luxenberg's main drive is towards this topic of the so-called foreign vocabulary of the Qur'ān, together with the supposedly original meanings of such words, with no new fact or argument but only a repetition in effect and different forms of the old and Stale Sprenger-Noldeke assumptions and surmises.

¹ Published by Verlag des Arabische Buch, Berlin, 2001

During the past couple of years, the five consecutive volumes of an *Encyclopaedia of the Qur'ān*, about the preparation of which Toby Lester made a forecast in his article in 1999, have been published by Georgetown University, Washington, D. C. It is prepared under the general editorship of Jane Dammen McAuliffe. A number of orientalists and others have contributed the different articles in it. The materials represent mostly the views and assumptions so far made by the orientalists regarding the Qur'ān and subjects related to it.

The event of 11 September 2001 and its aftermath also have their effect in the field of Qur'ānic studies. Thus there appeared last year (2004) at least one serious work, *Jihād from Qur'ān to bin Laden* by Richard Bonney, with a foreword by Sheikh Dr. Zakī Badawī.¹ It gives an exposition of the concept of jihād in the Qur'ān and the traditions together with an analysis of the views of scholars and experts on the subject.

The above is a very brief historical survey of the orientalist studies of the Qur'ān. Naturally it has not been possible to notice many other studies, particularly specialist articles published in various learned journals touching a number of subjects relating to the Qur'ān including even particular phrases and expressions in it.

Epilogue: Because orientalism was conceived and developed as "an instrument of pacific crusade", the constant purpose since the beginning of the orientalist studies has been, with rare exceptions, to "refute" Islam and assail the Qur'ān, particularly to disprove its divine origin, i.e., its having been sent down by God. In general a two-fold strategy has been adopted to attain this purpose, namely, (a) to show that the Qur'ān is a composition of the Prophet Muḥammad (PBUH) himself and (b) to trace the "sources" of his information.

¹Published by Palgrave Macmillan, Basingstoke, 2004

To bring home the first point the fact of the Prophet's having been an 'ummiyy, i. e., bereft of any formal education, has been questioned and doubted, the nature of divine communication (waḥy) has been analyzed and it has been endeavored to show that waḥy emanated from within himself: it was his rhapsodical and trance utterances, his soliloquy or intellectual or imaginary locution, or ever his deception! For the same purpose the language, style and doctrines of the Qur'ān have been subjected to meticulous scrutiny, and the theory of the Prophet's having "revised" the text of the Qur'ān from time to time has been advanced. Even the role of the angel Jibrīl as the carrier of waḥy to him has been denied and wide speculations have been made with respect to the titles al-Rūḥ and Rūḥ al-Quds given him in the Qur'ān attempts having been made to show that these titles are coterminous with the Christian concept of the "Holy Ghost". One orientalist has even gone to the length of suggesting that the Prophet was subject to his environment influences, so much so that he even reproduced the prevailing erroneous notions about the earth and the sky in the Qur'ān! The same objective underlies the "materialistic" and "economic" interpretations of the rise of Islam and the teachings of the Qur'ān.

A regards the alleged "sources" of the Qur'ān, the main emphasis has been on the supposed borrowings from Judaism and Christianity, though Hindu, Zoroastrian, Persian, Hellenistic and other sources have been suggested no less enthusiastically, the only exception being, so far as the present writer is aware, that Confucianism and the ancient Chinese culture have been deprived of any share in the stock of materials in the Qur'ān even the works on the "Foreign" vocabulary of the Qur'ān and its 'Commercial. Theological Terms" are intended to supplements the concept of its

"sources" and the Prophet's supposed authorship of it. Also studies relating to specific concepts and teachings in the Qur'ān, such as "predestination" and "free-will" and the social laws of the Qur'ān, have been designed to demonstrate its supposed "sources" and the Prophet's authorship of it. In sum, the orientalist's studies conjure up the Prophet as an extraordinary multilingual scholar with thorough acquaintance with the prevailing religious and philosophical systems, including knowledge of a number of defunct ancient languages! Inconsistently enough, it has at the same time been suggested that because of his lack of knowledge and education, the Prophet received instructions and information from a number of persons in order to give out the Qur'ān!

As ancillary to this purpose, the history of the text and compilation of the Qur'ān, and its textual integrity have been subjected to critical analysis and discussion and, beginning with the theory of the Prophet's having himself composed and compiled the Qur'ān the orientalist's have of late ended up with the suggestion that it was not he who did so compose and compile it but that it was composed and compiled some two centuries after him out of his reported "logia" or utterances! They have been led on to this absurd position because of their dependence, rather uncritically, on the Goldziher-Schacht hyper-criticism of the Islamic sources.

The orientalist studies of the Qur'ān and of Islam clearly indicate their wide knowledge: but because their purpose in general is to make people misunderstand rather than understand Islam, their usual method is misinterpretation of the texts, twisting of the facts, generalization on solitary or ambiguous evidence, drawing maximum number of conclusions on minimum number of facts and often baseless assumptions, wide speculations and employment of double standards. As a

corollary to these methods many an orientalist advertises his "objectivity" and "impartiality", though what he writes clearly illustrates his subjectivity and prejudice. Criticism of the absurd views and faulty methods of the orientalists has sometimes emanated from member of their own ranks, but with such rare exceptions the above remarks apply to the work of the orientalists in general throughout the ages.



Selected Bibliography

1. 'Alī, Moḥammad Mohar, *The Qur'ān and the Orientalists: An Examination of their Main Theories and Assumptions*, Ipswich, 2004
 2. A. A'zamī, M. M., *The History of the Qur'ānic Text from Revelation to Compilation A Comparative Study with the Old and New Testaments*, Leicester, 2003
 3. Badawī, 'Abd al-Raḥmān al-Mausā'at al-Mustashriqīn, Beirut, 1989
 4. Daniel, Norman, *Islam and the West the Making of An Image*, rev. edn. Oxford, 1984.
 5. Ibn Warrāq (ed), *The Origin of the Koran Classic Essays on Islam's Holy Book*, New York, 1998
 6. Khalīfa, Moḥammad, *The Sublime Qur'ān and Orientalism*, London and New York, 1983
 7. Reeves, M., *Moḥammad in Europe, A Thousand Year of Myth-making*, Garnet, 2000
 8. Said, E. W., *Orientalism*, Penguin Books, 1978
 9. *Sīrat al-Nabī and the Orientalists With Special Reference to the Writings of William Muir, D. S. Margoliouth and W.Montgomery Watt*, Voll. 1A & Voll. 1B. King Fahd Complex for the Printing of the Qur'ān, 1997
 10. Whelan, Estelle, "Forgotten" Witness: Evidence for the Early Codification of the Qur'ān", *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, 1998
 11. Wilde, Stefan (ed.), *The Qur'ān as Text*, E.J. Brill, Leiden, 1996
-

Orientalists' Approaches to the Study of the Qur'ānic Texts

Dr. Me'rāj Aḥmad Me'rāj¹

Abstract

The phenomena which are known as orientalism, is basically a Western exercise in the misinterpretation of the Qur'ān and the Islamic thoughts and philosophy. The west perceived Islam as the main competitor on the stage of the world religions. The basic source of the study of Islam is obviously the Qur'ān. Given the pre-eminent status of the Qur'ān as the principal scriptural source of Islam, many orientalist have repeatedly proclaimed that the Qur'ānic text is hardly a preserved and divined speech of God; rather, it is composed and fabricated by the Prophet of Islam. As the orientalist seem enthusiastic in establishing different versions of the Qur'ān, they did their all efforts to prove the Qur'ānic text as unauthentic applying their so-called modern and scientific methods. They have always played negative role in distorting the image of Islam. A large number of orientalist have done their research on Qur'ānic texts with negative motives. This paper aims to review the important works carried out by the prominent orientalist in the Qur'ānic texts. The main purpose of this paper is to discuss oriental approaches to the Qur'ānic studies by examining the interpretations of some prominent orientalist and their motives. This study also aims to analyze the orientalist research methodologies implemented for the textual criticism.

Key words: Qur'ān, Islam, orientism, Translation, Tafsīr,

¹ Assistant Professor, Department of Arabic, Aliah University, Kolkata

Introduction: The Arabic word, which is used for the 'orientalism' is "*Istiushrāq*" and the orientalist is known in Arabic as "*Mustashriwqūn*". The broad meaning of the orientalism is 'oriented towards an oriented culture. Orientalism is the study of Eastern world. This term contains various meanings that this movement discusses about Eastern languages, literatures, civilizations and religions. Orientalism is a school of interpretation whose material happens to be the orient, its civilization, peoples and localities. Its objective discoveries are the works of innumerable devoted scholars, who edited texts and translated them, codified grammars, wrote dictionaries, reconstructed dead epochs, produced positivistically verifiable learning are and always have been conditioned by the fact that its truths, like any truth delivered by language, are embodied in language and what is the truth of language.¹ Oriental studies stands to the study of Islam and Muslim societies and culture. Orientalism is an academic methodology which uses classical heritage of Islamic civilization, mostly textual to analyze it philologically emphasizing evolution of ideas through borrowing and syncretic endeavors and prove that nothing is original in Islamic civilization.² According to their research, it appears as if Islam could not be treated as a mere object of scientific research. They have never tried to unveil the realities and the diverse aspects of the Islam. The main reason behind this consistent approach remained the objectives they set before the execution of research in the study of Islam. With the progress of both exploration and scholarship, the term orientalist became increasingly unsatisfactory. Orientalists have always played negative role in distorting the image of Islam. A

¹ Edward W. Said, *Orientalism*, P. 2

² Professor Sachadina explains Orientalism in a lecture delivered at IIT, Washington D.C. to participants of Winter Institute on January 15, 2014.

large number of orientalists have done their research on Islam with negative motives. Hence, they did not left any stone unturned to prove the Qur'ānic text as unsecure and unauthentic applying so-called modern and scientific methods. Their basic purpose is to prove Judio-Christian superiority over Islam. They use all their resources to present the degraded, denigrated, unclear and negative picture of Islamic culture and history so that European society would not be affected by Islamic culture. If we examine the issues raised by orientalists concerning the addition or subtraction in the Qur'ānic text chronologically, it would become clear that they (issues) have been shifted from simplicity to the complexity. For example, during the reign of Prophet Muḥammad (PBUH) non-believers only made claims to prove that the Qur'ān does not belong to Almighty Allah. They named the Qur'ānic subjects as fictitious and spurious stories of past generations. Sometimes they named the Qur'ānic text as poetry or the work derived from popes or Christian clergy men. This paper is a humble attempt to do a thematic study regarding orientalists' approaches to the study of Qur'ānic texts by examining the interpretations of some prominent orientatlists and their motives reviewing their important works for the textual criticism.

Orientalism: Past and Present: Orientalism is an ancient tradition of Western scholarship in which Islam and Arabs are portrayed as inferior and corrupted against the West. During post-colonial era orientalist scholarship was dominated by British and the Europeans. In the twentieth century the banner of this scholarship was transferred to Americans. Oriental Studies departments and departments of Near Eastern Languages and Cultures at various American universities to establish their political hegemony over the Middle East and the Muslim world

during the cold war. According to orientalist scholarship whether European or American, West is projected as progressive and rational as compared to the East. Orientalism thus is an ancient tradition of Western view of the East.¹

1. Orientalism during Colonial Era: (15th to 19th Century):

The first European colonization wave took place from the early 15th century. In this era Europeans colonized the Americas and established European colonies in India and Maritime Southeast Asia. The second major phase of European colonization also known as New Imperialism was primarily focused on Africa and Asia. During this period there was limited interaction between Muslim and European cultures even though there was plenty of trade between Europe and Middle East. During European Renaissance Muslims had to flee to Middle East and North Africa due to Spanish persecution which curtailed interaction between Muslims and the Europeans.

European interest in Arabic literature, Arabic science and Islamic philosophy was felt in the 16th century France and 17th century. D'Herbalot's "*Bibliothèque Orientale*" was published in 1697 and it remained the standard reference work on orientalist scholarship in Europe until the early nineteenth century. In *Bibliothèque*, D'Herbalot calls Muḥammad "*author and founder of heresy which has taken on the name of religion, Muḥammadan.*" Western writers studied Eastern societies based on certain assumptions and intentionally created a unique stereotyped image of Arabs and Muslims. The accuracy and authenticity of that unique personality have never been verified by other sources. Even

¹ Lockman, Zachery, *Contending Visions of the Middle East: The history and Politics of Orientalism* ,2nd ed, ,2010, Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press. PP. 8-9

Arabs themselves, the subject of those assumptions, never got the chance to counter balance the orientalist approach¹, the deep-rooted collective image in Western mind about Arabs and their culture and history has been largely relying on the representation which the orientalists provided throughout the years.²

2. **Modern Orientalism (19th to 21st Century):** The period of Modern Orientalism began when Napoleon invaded Egypt in 1798 to 1801 in which scholars started taking keen interest in this field and it gradually developed into a relatively consistent field of study.³ Classical Arabic texts were translated into European languages which were then analyzed, criticized and exploited by the European scholars against the Arabs and Islam. This wealth of information and knowledge replicated by the West about the East is today termed as orientalist scholarship. This scholarship flourished under European Imperialism and once again reinforced essential differences between the Muslim World and Europe.
3. **British and European Orientalist Tradition:** Orientalists from Europe (Great Britain and Holland) and Russia worked closely with colonizers and military commanders and conducted many social and linguistic inquiries in the East. Their mission was primarily to belittle and reduce the contribution of Islam and Arabs to the progress of human civilization.
4. **American Orientalist Tradition:** In early twentieth century American orientalist scholarship focused on the ancient Near East and showed less interest in Arabic and Islam. To

¹ William Muir, *Life of Mohammad*, P. 69

² Dr Tahir Ramdane and Dr. Merah Saud, (2011) '*Between Orientalists and Al-Jazeera: Image of Arabs in the West (Comparative Inquiry)*' *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science*, 1/4/73 (April 2011)

³ Phillip Rushworth, '*Orientalism Revisited*', - last revised February 2012.P.142

study the ancient Near East philological approach was adopted by the orientalist. Oriental Institute was established at University of Chicago and in 1927 Princeton University started the Department of Islamic Near East headed by a Christian Arab Philip Hitti (1886- 1979) who then started a program of “Arabic and Islamic Studies” at Princeton, he introduced the field of Arab culture studies to United States. By mid twentieth century that is after the World Wars and during Cold War era Americans had started influencing the world politics in all its spheres so the orientalist tradition is dominated by American scholarship in the 20th century. From the beginning of nineteenth century till the end of World War II America dominated the orient and approaches it as France and Britain once did but it is the British orientalist tradition that left the most lasting imprints on the American field of Islamic Studies.

After the Second World War American policy makers identified the need of experts in languages and cultures of Middle East and Islam for intelligence and Foreign Service. In 1951, five leading universities of US established centers of Middle Eastern Studies. Middle East area studies centers Ford also funded the establishing of Center of Arabic studies in Cairo for language training.¹

Orientalists and their Motives to the Study of the Qur’ān: The orientalist contributed significantly to the development of Qur’ānic studies, understanding the literature and culture of Islamic world, but it is also a fact that some of them tried their level best to for false criticism basically on Qur’ān and the prophet of Islam. Although, it may not be

¹ Timothy Mitchell, *‘The Middle East in the Past and Future of Social Science’* ed. By Szanton, D. L, 2004, *The politics of knowledge: area studies and the disciplines*. Berkeley: University of California Press., P.111.

appropriate to have the same perception about all the orientatlists as their approaches were under the process of change with time and situations.

The orientatlists can be divided in following categories:

1. The first category of the orientatlists refers to those who contributed to the field of Qur'ānic studies with the intention of maligning and defaming Islam during the crusade wars. They were concerned with Christian missionaries. So they made their all efforts to criticize Islam and the prophet of Islam.
2. The second category of the orientatlists refers to those who are not directly associated with missionaries but they came forward to study the Qur'ān to compare its teaching and philosophy with other Semitic religions. They were some kind of moderate in nature.
3. The third category of the orientatlists refers to those who are associated with the academic institutions. They are more moderate and have some kind of realistic approaches towards the Qur'ānic studies. They actually strive for the academic and intellectual excellence.

It is worth mentioning that the criticism now appears to be more intellectual and civilized in nature but some false and silly criticism also appears which hold no water at all. The Muslims scholars answered them with full satisfactory manner by writing books and scholarly articles, but there is still need to clearly put forth the viewpoint of true spirit of Islam in right context.¹

The Qur'ān, What It Is Actually? The word Qur'ān is derived from the Arabic root word "qara'a" which means to call, to proclaim, to recite etc. The Arabic word Qur'ān means that

¹ Faisal Mustafa: *Holy Qur'ān and the Orientalists*, Rajat Publication, New Delhi, 2004. P.83.

which is to be read aloud. The first chapter revealed to the prophet of Islam starts with the command ‘recite in the name of Lord who created you’. It is also to be noted that at the time of the first revelation there was no written text to justify the rendering of “Iqra” as read. As used in the Qur’ān itself, the word refers to revelation from Allah in broad sense and it is not always restricted to the written form in the shape of a book, as we have it before us today. The literal meaning of the Qur’ān would be a proclamation, a charter. In this sense, the Qur’ān can be considered a collection of revealed oral message or divine address. Hence, the Qur’ān is the collection of Divine messages which were revealed to the Prophet Muḥammad through ‘waḥiy’.¹ For the Qur’ān more than 55 names have been narrated in the Qur’ān itself like al-Furqān, al-Tanzīl, al-Majīd, al-Ḥakīm, al-Kitāb etc. The name “Qur’ān” has been mentioned in the Qur’ān seventy-three times. The Qur’ān says in chapter *al-Isrā’*: “إِنَّ هَذَا الْقُرْآنَ يَهْدِي لِلَّتِي هِيَ أَقْوَمُ” (Tr.: Verily this Qur’ān does guide to that which is most right.)²

What is not the Qur’ān? The Qur’ān is not poetry while accusations were made by the non-believers during the life time of the Prophet that it was poetry. The accusations were indeed based on the usage of a particular style employed by the Qur’ān which was very close to Saj’ (rhythmic ending). The accusation was not motivated to allege that the messages of the Qur’ān were not of Divine origin. The Qur’ān simply refuted the accusation and said: “إِنَّهُ لَقَوْلُ رَسُولٍ كَرِيمٍ ﴿٥١﴾ وَمَا هُوَ بِقَوْلٍ ﴿٥٢﴾ شَاعِرٍ قَلِيلًا مَّا تُوْمِنُونَ ﴿٥٣﴾” (Tr.: This is verily the revealed word of an honored messenger: it is not the word of a poet: little it is you

¹ Dr. Hassanuddin Ahmed, *Introducing the Qur’ān*, Goodword Books, New Delhi, 2004, P. 13

² The Qur’ān, 17:9

believe?)¹ The Arabic poetry usually dealt with pure fantasy and with matters which had hardly any basis in wisdom whereas the Qur'ān, on the other hand, is a book of pure wisdom. The Qur'ān is not authored by any human being. It was revealed to the Prophet Muḥammad through Gabriel what he (Prophet) transmitted to his companions, and he himself declared that he was not its author. But Allah had bestowed it through revelation 'waḥiy'.

The Artistic Features of the Qur'ān: The Qur'ān was revealed over a period of twenty three years in bits and pieces but put together as one book; it flowed so smoothly from beginning to end, perfectly consistent in its literary style, its standard of eloquence, its themes, and its philosophy as if it was written within one sitting under a well-thought out vision, plan, and goal. This happened without ever needing any revision whatsoever of any word or phrase throughout the book of more than 6,000 verses.

One special features of the Qur'ān is that the language is arranged in stylized patterns. The literary excellence of the Qur'ān resides partly in its style, which is so perfect and lofty that like it none could ever produce.² A literary approach to the study of the Qur'ān begins with the awareness of its reliance on stylistic language. The celestial melody and intrinsic merit of the Qur'ān struck the Arabs dumb when they first hear it as well as when it was compiled word by word. This spoken message turned into a masterpiece of literature and the oral message revealed at intervals became a code of life for all times. The claim of the Qur'ān to its scriptural Divine origin rests on this plea.³

¹ The Qur'ān, 69: 40-41

² Dr. Hassanuddin Ahmed, *A New Approach to the study of the Qur'ān*, Goodword Books, New Delhi, 2005, P. 13

³ Author's – *An Easy Way to the Understanding of the Qur'ān*, Iqra International Educational Foundation Chicago, 1987, 1/2-3

- **Repetition:** One of the most stylistic device employed by the Qur'ān is repetition, one comes across word, phrases and even verses again and again. This device has given beauty to the style of the Qur'ān and its message is better understood. For instance, in chapter *al- Raḥmān* a single verse is repeated 31 times.¹
- **The Qur'ān and Arabic Poetry:** Arabic poetry was unusually an array of words which impressed the listeners with its artistic beauty. But the impact of such poetry was only short lived. Although, the language of the Qur'ān is related to what had already become the poetical coined of the Arabs, it cannot be equated with it. Later the language of the Qur'ān became the basis of format or classical poetry, both literary and spoken. It is regarded as the standard piece of writing. Its style is nevertheless inimitable. The Arabs in pre Islamic era were frequently reminiscent of the '*Saj'* which stands between poetry and prose, with assurances, rhymes and line lengths and meters which frequently shift, but the Qur'ān proved itself beyond the imitation in its form and style. The Qur'ān was revealed at a time when Arabic poetry reached to its zenith but the Qur'ān did not accept the style of Arab poetry. It has empathically denied and criticized the poets who blamed Qur'ān as poetry.
- **Rhyme and Rhythm:** The Qur'ān in its distinctive style has a beauty and charm of its own. This beauty lies in its verses which are often rhymed. When it is read aloud or recites, it has almost hypnotic effect. Indeed it may be affirmed that within the literature of the Arabs, wide and fecund as it is both in poetry and prose, there is nothing to

¹ Baqi Mukammad Fuad Abdul, Mujjaam al Muffahras, *Concordance and index of the Holy Qur'ān*, P. 762

compare with the Qur'ānic style. The Qur'ān is revealed in rhyming prose. It is artistically constructed. It brought about a style which is neither poetry nor prose. This style is far above the linguistic standards of the Arabic language.

- **Narratives:** One of the narrative features of the Qur'ān is that it contains narratives. This is referred to in the Qur'ān itself: “ نَحْنُ نَقُصُّ عَلَيْكَ أَحْسَنَ الْقَصَصِ بِمَا أَوْحَيْنَا إِلَيْكَ هَذَا الْقُرْآنَ وَإِنْ كُنْتَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِ لَمَنِ الْعَافِينَ ﴿٣﴾ ” (Tr.: We do relate to you the most beautiful narrative, in that we reveal you this Qur'ān.)¹ The Qur'ān mostly restricts itself to narrate the stories of the previous prophets. The exceptions are the narratives about the companions of the cave '*chapter al-Kahf*'. These narratives are not mere stories, but awaken our conscience and recall to us the working of the Divine law in human affairs. The narratives of the Qur'ān give valuable lessons to guide our conduct. The main propose of the Qur'ānic narratives is to emphasize the general message of Islam. The narratives of the Qur'ān are not imaginary fables, but these are found in the sacred scriptures of the people of the book. The Qur'ān confirms the narratives of the Bible in main outline.²
- **Digression:** Digression is a kind of style in which there is sudden transition and the address is changed during the discourse itself. It is characteristic of the Digression that something altogether different, but relevant to the subject is suddenly introduced into the middle of the discourse. Digression of address has infinite possibilities of penetrating into the heart of addressee. As a means of communication, it has tremendous impact on people's

¹ *The Qur'ān*, 12: 3

² Dr. Hassanuddin, *A New Approach to the study of the Qur'ān*, Goodword Books, New Delhi, 2005, P. 22

minds. The Qur'ān performs the function of a speaker who addresses different people all over the world. It focuses on one person or group at one time, and diverts it to another during the same address. Its range includes those who are present as well as those who are absent. The Qur'ān frequently adopts the method of warning or emphasize a particular point in the middle of the narration. Its object is not to relate a story but to make its description clear to warn those who oppose the spread of the truth.¹

- **Ellipsis:** The omission of one or more words in a sentence, which would be needed to express the sense completely, is called ellipsis. We find the elliptic of verses in the Qur'ān as a part of its unique style, in which one or more unnecessary words, phrases or passages are omitted. Elliptic passages, in fact make one to complete and apply his mind so as to determine the omitted words or passage, and bring out the desired meaning or the central theme by means of interpretations. The frequent use of ellipsis contributes to its beauty. Apart from the beauty of the literary style, one advantages of ellipsis is that the reader is left to contemplate himself and ponder over the text of the Qur'ān and try to think of suitable interpretations.
- **Obscurity (*Ibhām*):** Obscurity is the quality or condition of not being clearly understood. It is conserved as one of the beauty of poetry. As said earlier, the Qur'ān is not poetry, so, the Qur'ān generally avoids using obscurity, and the Qur'ān is as a book of Divine, its message must be clear to all. As a rule, the Qur'ān has not used any obscurity, but at certain places, the Qur'ān has deliberately used phrases which appear to be vague '*Mubham*' to an ordinary human

¹ Ibid, P. 24

being. For example the Qur'ān says about an experience of the Prophet: “فَبِأَيِّ آءَالَآءٍ رَبَّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ ﴿١٦﴾” (Tr.: When the Sidra was veiled with whatever veiled it.)¹

- **Brevity (*I'jāz*):** Brevity is a stylistic device in which an idea is presented and the subsidiary details are omitted. Brevity has wealth of meaning; it is a soul of wisdom. It is the best composition with a brief and full of meaning. The Qur'ān has used brevity as one of its stylistic features. The language of the Qur'ān does not contain any redundancy. The Qur'ān abounds in aphorism which is the best examples of this style. Referring to the drink which the believers will get in the paradise, the Qur'ān says: “مَرَجٍ ﴿١١﴾” (Tr.: By which they will not have any after-ache nor will they suffer intoxication.)²
- **Detail after Epitome:** The Qur'ān very often uses summarization and follows it with details. The detailed account embodies a wealth of the knowledge and explains minor points as well. This is an excellent method of instruction. The Qur'ān has used detail after epitome as a stylistics feature is mentioned in the Qur'ān itself. The Qur'ān says: “الَّذِي كَتَبْنَا أَحْكَامَهُ آيَاتِنَا ثُمَّ فَضَّلْنَا مِنْ لَدُنْ حَكِيمٍ خَبِيرٍ ﴿١١﴾” (Tr.: This is a book, with message basic or fundamental, which are further explained in detail.)³ When the Qur'ān addresses the Arabs, it usually resorts to brevity, but when the Qur'ān addresses the people of Israel, it uses the style of detail after epitome. This stylistic feature creates a reaction of acceptance, doubt or rejection. Then the same idea is explained in detail. This detail expands the concept so that more people could fully comprehend it.

¹ *The Qur'ān*, 55: 16

² *The Qur'ān*, 56: 19

³ *The Qur'ān*, 11:1

- Structural Reversal:** The Qur'ān employs a unique method of structural reversal as one of its stylistic features. It makes a statement and during discussion its continuation is left off and it indulges into a related idea, and then there is a reversal to the original idea or statement. We find this kind of expression in *chapter* 24 serious notes is taken of people who put forward slanders about women without adequate evidence. Then the continuation left off. In verse no six to eleven related matters is discussed. Then there is structural reversal and contents of verses no eleven to thirteen are in continuation of the contents of verse no four and five. By not taking a note of this structural reversal correct understanding of the verse no twenty four.¹
- Parenthesis:** Parenthesis is an explanatory word, clause or sentence inserted into a passage, with which it has not necessarily any grammatical connation.² The use of parenthesis is one of the stylistic features of the Qur'ān. The Qur'ān sometimes employs parenthesis in order to amplify an argument. The following are the some of the parenthesis clauses identified as such in the Qur'ān. The Qur'ān says: “فَإِنْ لَّمْ تَفْعَلُوا وَلَنْ تَفْعَلُوا فَاتَّقُوا النَّارَ الَّتِي وَقُودُهَا النَّاسُ وَالْحِجَارَةُ ﴿١٠﴾” (Tr.: And if you cannot do it----and most certainly you cannot do it---- then be conscious of the fire whose fuel is human beings and stones (idols).³ The clause “and most certainly you cannot do it” is parenthesis.
- Swearings:** In pre-Islamic Arab society, it was a practice to take shelter under the pretext of oath in the name of God, for the commission or the omission of an act, such acts

¹ Dr. Hassnauddin. *A New Approach to the study of the Qur'ān*, Goodword Books, New Delhi, 2005, p. 39

² Little, William, *Shorter Oxford English Dictionary*, P. 1433

³ *The Qur'ān*, 2: 24

were mostly unjust. They took the name of God lightly and on the other hand, they made an oath an excuse for not doing what was right and just. The Qur'ān has strongly condemned such oaths. The Qur'ān has given an altogether new dimension to oaths. The oaths or swearing of the Qur'ān are calls to witness. The verses in which swearing are used, the object of the nature are specified to focus the attention of the addressee. The Qur'ānic swearing has been termed as adjurations by some scholars. To adjure in English meaning is to charge or entreat solemnly, as if under oath, or under penalty of course. Hence, the Qur'ānic swearing used for calling the witness as adjurations. The Qur'ān has used the word "*la Uqsimu*". Usually, the words "*La Uqsimu*" are followed the verses of nature which are used for calling to witness. The Qur'ān says: " وَإِنَّهُ لَقَسَمٌ لَّوْ تَعْلَمُونَ عَظِيمٌ ﴿٧٦﴾ Nay, I call to witness the coming down in parts (of this Qur'ān) and, behold, this is indeed a most solemn affirmation, if you but knew it."¹ This feature has many advantages. The affirmation becomes more forceful than a simple, direct statement due to its emotional appeal. It leaves no room for disputation and clinches an argument.

The Challenges of the Qur'ān: The Qur'ān encourages its readers to reflect, investigate, and verify that this book is purely from the creator of the universe. The Qur'ān still exists today as a miracle. The diction and style of the Qur'ān are magnificent and appropriate to its Divine origin. The Qur'ān has by virtue of its claim of Divine origin, challenged mankind to produce, even all together, just a few lines comparable to those in the Qur'ān. This challenge has remained unanswered to this day. The holy Qur'ān is a living miracle which can be studied from innumerable points of views and there is no end

¹ *The Qur'ān*, 56: 76

to this research. With the passing of time, the Qur'ān becomes new to newer and every day a new miracle is revealed. The Qur'ān's challenges everyone mostly to make only one chapter in terms of rhetoric and eloquence like Qur'ān, So far no one has surmounted this challenge, but the authenticity of the Qur'ān has been challenged today as it has been in the past. With the passing of time, the Qur'ān is becoming new to newer and every day a new miracle is discovered.

The Qur'ān and the Orientalists: The Qur'ān is absolutely exempt from all such criteria that may be applicable to all worldly books. It is regarded as the exclusively singular book since the ancient times. No one can ever say about it that such and such a chapter has a doubt over its authenticity or such and such a verse that is present in such and such a manuscript is missing from another manuscript. Nobody can ever claim that another version of the Qur'ān existed anywhere, or still exists. Islam has of course been the object of studies by Western orientalists who, over the last two centuries, have published an extensive learned literature on the subject. This is a historical fact that prejudice is a hall mark of orientalists methodology. They always had shown hostility and bias in the study of Qur'ānic texts. This is a fact that a large number of orientalists have neglected the basic rules of evaluation and research and adopted self created principles for achieving their targets. The most important aspect of orientalists methodology is that they always Judge Islamic teachings on the basis of their own principles. Their studies have based on exaggeration and fragile transmissions.¹ The general feature of orientalists methodology for the interpretation of Islamic history is totally different from those principles which are mentioned in the Islamic resources. Maryam Jamīlah, the famous Muslim scholar, has written a book with the

¹ Numani, Shibli Allam., *Sirat-un-Nabi*, Kazi publication Lahore, 1/86

title of "Islam and Orientalism." In this book she has reviewed the research work of six orientalists like Philip K. Hitti, Kenneth Cragg, S.D. Goitein, Welfred Cantwell Smith, Nadav Safran and Freeland Abott. After that review she has presented the conclusion about the orientalists methodologies in the study of Islam. She comments, "Orientalism is not a dispassionate objective of study of Islam and its culture by the erudite faithful to the best traditions of scholarship to create profound original research but noting an organized conspiracy of incite our youth to revolt against their faith, and scorn the entire legacy of Islamic History and culture as obsolete.¹ Actually, quite a few orientalist scholars were Christian missionaries one among them is Sir William Muir who was an active missionary and author of several books on Islam. Today, these books are viewed as very biased studies, even though they continue to be used as references for those wishing to attack Islam to this very day. Among the orientalists, he exerts the utmost to invest his intellectual capabilities on the spiritual and Divine aspects of Islam. He has not hesitated to prove that Islamic teachings are contrary to culture, decency and good manner of a modern society. He even goes a step ahead, alleging that the present down-fall of the Muslims is the output of Islamic teachings.² He attacked the character and personality of the Prophet of Islam.

Orientalists on the Style of Qur'ān: The Qur'ān is a splendid literary challenge which remained unmet though centuries have passed since its revelation. The literary grandeur of the Qur'ānic style is simply inimitable. It treats diverse subjects in such a unique and exalted manner as is nowhere to be found in any genre of Arabic literature.

¹ Jameelah, Maryam., *Islam and Orientalism*, Yousaf Khan Publisher Lahore 1971.P.212

² William Muir, *Life of Mohammad*, P. 34

According to the renowned Muslim Jurist Jalāluddīn Sayūṭī, Ibn Kathīr, and Ibn ‘Abbās, these verses of the Qur’ān throw a challenge to all literary men to create a chapter that resembles the unique literary form of the Qur’ān.¹ The unique literary and linguistic nature of Qur’ān is that this book is not written by any man rather its inimitable literary form has come from a Divine pen. Fortier Fitzgerald Arbuthnot, an eminent orientalist, states: “though several attempts have been made to produce a work equal to it as far eloquent writing is concerned, none has succeeded”.² The Qur’ān is neither prose nor verse. It is rather Qur’ān and it cannot be called by any other name but by this. It is not verse because it is not bound to any verse form. And it is not prose, for it is bound by bonds peculiar to itself, not found elsewhere; some of the binds are related to the endings of its verses, and some that musical sound which is all its own... it has been one of kind, and nothing like it has ever preceded and followed it.”³ But in spite of what has been mentioned above, some orientalists have tried to find faults with the Holy Qur’ān and consequently associated several literary defects to its style and form. Orientalists have bitterly criticized the literary style of the Qur’ān. William Muir, a famous orientalist, says that the Prophet expressed his views in “wild rhapsodical language, enforced often with incoherent oaths in “fragments of poetry”.⁴ Noldeke stated that in point of style, and artistic effect the different parts of the Qur’ān are of very unequal value”. In his view, the

¹ Ibn Kasir, Isma’īl bin Omar, *Tafsir ibn kasir*, Dar Tayyib Linnashr wa Taudh’ee, 1999

² F. Arbuthnot, *The Construction of the Bible and The Koran*, London, 1885, P.5

³ Lecture entitled, Prose in the second and third centuries after Hijrah, delivered at the Geographical Society in Cairo 1930, Dār al-Ma’ārif

⁴ William, Muir, *Life of Mahomet*, London, Smith Elder and Co., 65, Cornhill, P.39

different parts of the Qur'ān are not equally "vivacious, imaginative and poetic."¹ Noldeke's failure to understand that the Holy Qur'ān is not poetry ultimately led him to state "the Koran is never metrical, and only a few exceptionally eloquent portions fall into a sort of spontaneous rhythm".²

The Arabic prose can be categorized into rhymed (*Saj'*) and straightforward normal speech '*Mursal*'. The Qur'ān is neither *mursal* because it employs rhyme, and unique stylistic features nor *Saj'* as Noldeke thinks it be. The Qur'ān is a miraculous fusion of both metrical and non-metrical speech. This literary blend of metrical and non-metrical is found throughout the Holy Qur'ān.³ This is encapsulated by the prominent Arabic literary figure. In spite of raising the question on its authenticity, the noted orientalist Arthur J. Arberry has no choice but to accept that the Qur'ān is neither prose nor poetry, but a unique fusion of both.⁴ The Qur'ān is a miracle as its literary form cannot be explained via the productive capacity of the Arabic language, because all the possible combinations of Arabic words, letters and grammatical rules have been exhausted and yet the Qur'ān's literary form has not been imitated. The Arabs who were known to have been Arab linguists with par excellence failed before the challenge of the Qur'ān. The Qur'ān does not follow a regular pattern of consistent rhyme. There is no gainsaying the fact that the Qur'ān does not conform to any set pattern of style. According to Rummani, the language of the Qur'ān is semantically oriented.⁵ The Qur'ān is a master piece of Arabic language and

¹ Noldeke's Essay on the Koran in the Encyclopedia Britannica, 1891,16/44

² Ibid, P. 45

³ Mitwalli al-Sharwi, *The Miracles of the Qur'ān*, Dār al-Taqwá, P.31

⁴ Arthur J.Arberry, *The Koran*, Oxford University Press, 1998. P.10

⁵ Ali Ibn Isa al-Rummani, *Thalath Rasa'il Ijaz al-Qur'ān*,Cairo, 1956, P.97-98

literature. It would be appropriate conclude with the gist of his views as he observes that the language of the Qur'ān is not only "elegant" but also "beautiful". It is highly expressive...in parts the language is lofty.¹ In fact, the reason responsible for the popularity of the Qur'ān among the people was its extraordinary, supernatural literary and artistic dimension depicted in its rhetoric and eloquence. It was this strong literary attraction towards the Qur'ān.

Orientalists' approaches to Qur'ānic Studies: The Orientalists have keen interest in Qur'ānic studies. They published books, conducting conferences and presenting research papers to prove the Qur'ān a purely human book. The Qur'ān is not only a holy book restricted for worship and prayers, in fact it is a doctrine for life. It includes laws that organize all aspects of Muslims' life. The Qur'ān is the last divine message for humanity and thus; Qur'ān is a restatement of the previous messages before it. Definitely, it has assured the message sent by earlier prophets which is to worship only Allah and not to share any other divinity in worshipping Allah "The only one God". The Qur'ān is far above the usual norms of authenticity and the craft of manuscript reading. Moreover, besides the fact that the Qur'ān is one of the heavenly scriptures and has been regarded by its followers as the most basic and authentic proof of the Prophet's claim to prophethood. Prophet Muḥammad's status as a role model is an issue based on the Qur'ān and the Sunnah. Islamic scholars, as with many other issues, have examined the status of the Prophet as a role model and leader not in a sectional framework, but from a unified perspective, and they have reached the conclusion that the best method is to examine the verses of

¹ George, Sale, *Translation of the Qur'ān*, P.47

the Qur'ān that determine and demonstrate the status of the Prophet as a whole.

Translation of the Qur'ān by Orientalists: The translations of the Qur'ān have been significant and positive contributions to humanity. For many centuries, a great number of people from across the world have been introduced to the message of the Qur'ān through its translations. The text of the Qur'ān has some very unique characteristics that its translation is bound to lose. The mode of expression of the Qur'ān is very special and unique. It has its own style and rhythm that is neither poetry nor prose. It has a rare beauty and grandeur, and it is sublime. Further, the Arabic of the Qur'ān is a very rich language, and many of its words have numerous shades of meaning that sometimes cannot be easily found in other languages, including English. While Arabic is a living language, the classical Arabic of the Qur'ān requires more study in order to fully appreciate and understand the depths of meanings. The Qur'ān as an inexhaustible source of meaning for all times continues to reveal its meaning for the changing needs of humanity as knowledge of life advances. Therefore, there is a continuous challenge to improve the quality of the translations of the Qur'ān in other languages. The translation of the Qur'ān is a highly delicate and extremely difficult task to undertake. The translation process has to be based on the fact that the output will be an interpretation of the underlying meanings of the Qur'ān rather than a substitution for the original text; it is vital that a distinction is made between the Qur'ān and a translated Qur'ān.¹ For years, Islam is becoming the object of ever-growing interest due to politically and socially-related events and the influence these events have on western societies. This deficiency is most evident when we talk about the studies on

¹ Hussein, *The Qur'ān: Translation Discourse, Texture, and Exegesis*, P, 19,

the Koran. The research presented here examines some of the issues relating to the translation of the Qur'ānic texts into Western languages. Islamic doctrine and Qur'ānic terminology, which requires major efforts in understanding such texts, should be understood by means of their own concepts with the help of a specific vocabulary. Because if the true sense of the words is lost, then the problem of assimilation and reception arises with its subsequent incomprehension or misunderstanding of a term. Terms play a very important role in the Qur'ān. The Qur'ān has its own terminology. Without a full grasp of the Qur'ānic terminology, all efforts to understand the message of the Qur'ān will be futile. Several Idioms have been used in the Qur'ān. If the components of an idiom are translated literally, which has actually been done in some cases, the meaning of the Qur'ānic texts will appear ridiculous. As part of the present study, 17 idioms have been identified and explained. The Qur'ān has employed aphorism to convey its divine message. These beautiful gems are intimately connected for the guidance of entire humanity, which is the central theme of the Qur'ān. The orientalist translation of Arabic terminology is only one of the elements, or one of the tools used in the creation of the "orientalist ideology" and of its vision of what is Arabian and Islamic. No doubt, the resulting translation is the least conflicting of the elements making up that orientalist ideology. At the same time that the translation of Arabic terminology demonstrates the orientalist's degree of knowledge of the Arabic language, it also indicates their idea of Islam. In other words, how that particular orientalist understands Islam, and from there, by comparing the equivalent used for the terms in Arabic with the true meaning of the original, the degree of success or error in their understanding of Islam can be deduced, or rather, of the referred to Qur'ānic texts of the translation.

The Encyclopedia of the Qur'ān as an example of

Orientalist Translation: To legitimize the quality of the work that appears in the Encyclopedia of the Qur'ān, In the process of translation, they have carried out in historical, political and religious texts about Islamic and Qur'ānic doctrine. It is necessary to go to specialized sources in the language of origin so that the work does not lack objectivity and scientific rigor. In the Arabic language, when elaborating a dictionary, glossary, encyclopedia of the Qur'ān and in selecting the terms that will be used in its make-up, the works of scholarly Muslims are vital. Thus, knowing and understanding their point of view, as well as how they treat and the interest they show about the different Qur'ānic terms becomes equally necessary. It is important to differentiate between the Qur'ān and a translation of the Qur'ān. Therefore, only the Qur'ān in Arabic is the Qur'ān, and translations are simply interpretations or explanation of the meanings of the Qur'ān in another language. A translation of the Qur'ān is not the Qur'ān, but rather an interpretation of its meaning. The Qur'ān has been translated numerous times into English and other European languages- one of the main questions affecting translations of the Qur'ān into western languages. Any translation of Qur'ān is a human effort; hence it cannot be substitute to the original Qur'ān the actual word of God.

Some Notable Translations of the Qur'ān by the

Orientalists: The Qur'ān is the word of God, directly revealed in Arabic, to the last Messenger Muḥammad during 23 years of his Apostolic mission about fourteen centuries ago. It was instantly preserved by putting in to writing and memorization by his companions. God says: “بَلْ هُوَ قُرْآنٌ مَّجِيدٌ ﴿١١﴾ فِي لَوْحٍ مَّحْفُوظٍ ﴿١٢﴾”
“Surely this is a Glorious Qur'ān, inscribed on an Imperishable

Tablet.”¹ God has taken responsibility to guard it against corruption: “إِنَّا نَحْنُ نَزَّلْنَا الذِّكْرَ وَإِنَّا لَهُ لَحَافِظُونَ ﴿١٠٠﴾” (Tr.: Surely We have revealed the reminder (Qur’ān) and We will most certainly guard it (from corruption).)² The Qur’ān comprising over 6000 verses; a unique distinction which makes Qur’ān, the only written book in the human history to have been continuously preserved through this method along with the written form. No other scripture or book can rival this claim. The translation of the Qur’ān means the expression of the meaning of its text in a language different from the language of the Qur’ān, for understanding by those not familiar with Qur’ānic Arabic. It is customary to quote the original Arabic Qur’ānic text (*ayah*, verses) along with the translation, this requires special handling due to reverence of the sacred text. However, some prominent orientalists made their immense effort to translate the Qur’ān according their understanding and motives. The followings are as examples.

- **The Qur’ān Translated:** Richard Bell one of most noted orientalist produced a translation of the Qur’ān with special reference to its chapter order, It is a literary translation which attempts to be as faithful as possible to be the original Arabic, getting back behind the traditional Muslims scholars which is sometimes influenced by dogmatic developments. According to Bell’s theory, the Qur’ān fragments were assembled in a disorder fashion.³ This makes the translation rather difficult to use any way except as reference book.⁴ Richard Bell tried his hard to rearrange the chapters and verses according to the dates

¹ *The Qur’ān*, 85: 21-22

² *The Qur’ān*, 15:9

³ Faisal Mustafa, *Holy Qur’ān and the Orientatlists*, New Delhi, 2004, P. 52

⁴ *Encyclopedic survey of Islamic Culture*, 2/242

of revelation. Commenting on his translation work, A.R Kidwai said: "In rearranging of Sūrah order of the Holy Qur'ān, Bell in fact, makes a thorough mess of the traditional arrangement and tries to point out and alternatives substitution and derangements in the text."¹

- **The Koran Interpreted:** A.J Berry, one of the most prominent orientalists, according to him the best translation of the Qur'ān was rendered by orientalists in the fourteen hundred years of Islamic History. It may be regarded one of the good attempts in the field of translation of the Qur'ānic text, because of its clarity, authenticity in its style in the serious translation by the orientalists. Nonetheless, it is not altogether free from mistake of omission and interpretation; however, it is a serious attempt to imitate to those rhetorical and rhythmical patterns which are the glory and the sublimity of the Qur'ān.² Berry was also of the opinion that the systematic arrangement of the chapters in the Qur'ān is not on the rational basis. A.J Arberry concedes the relevancy of the orthodox Muslim view that the Qur'ān is untranslatable; the rhetoric, he believes, and rhythm of the Qur'ān are so characteristic, so powerful, and so highly emotive, that any version whatsoever is bound to be but a poor copy of the glittering splendor of the original.³
- **The Essential Qur'ān:** Cleary Thomas, one of the famous orientalist did his level best to bring a simple translation of randomly selected thirty nine chapters of the Qur'ān. The translator has provided a brief introduction. He has also discussed the difficulties faced by him during the

¹ Faisal Mustafa, *Holy Qur'ān and the Orientalists*, New Delhi, 2004, P. 53

² Books in English on *Islam, Muḥammad and Holy Qur'ān*, P. 48

³ A.J. Arberry, *The Koran Interpreted*, George Allen and Anwilll, London, 1980, P. 26.

translation process of the most sacred scripture of Islam. The English version for the title of each chapter is provided with citing the original Arabic Text. It is translation without citing the Qur'ānic text but very comprehensive in nature. No reference has been given in footnotes throughout the book. It could be considered a transliteration rather than a translation. Syyed Hosain Nasr observed that the present translation has the virtue of making many such passages available in easily comprehensible language, thereby opening the doors for many readers to the inexhaustible treasure of the sacred text.¹

The translation of the Qur'ān is not an easy task at all. Bosworth and Richardson² observe that in their attempt to translate the Qur'ān, Richard Bell closely examined the Qur'ānic text verse by verse, and observing the lengths of verses, their external and internal rhymes and assonances came to acknowledge, however, that the structure of the Qur'ān was far more complex than had hitherto been believed. Therefore, it has become clear even to some of the non-Muslim scholars that the translations of the Qur'ān can never replace the actual Qur'ān in the Arabic language.³ In many western translations of classic Islamic texts, it is obvious that neither the historical context nor the ideological meaning of the language used was taken into account. Words have been understood, not based upon the meaning they had when the writer wrote them, but rather based on knowledge and academic experience; an example of the acceptance of Western academic speech in linguistic strategies. This interference in semantic values has resulted in the misrepresentation or an understanding guided by academic or ideological prejudices of

¹ Syyed Husain Nasr, *The Essential Koran*, P.16

² C. F. Bosworth and M .E. Richardson, *Commentary on the Qur'ān*, 1991,1/236

³ S. Murata and w.e. Chittick, *The Vision of Is/am*, LB. Tauris, London, 1995. P. 15

these said Islamic sources and the substitution of their real content for another mistaken interpretation.

Exegesis (*Tafsīr*) Writing by the Orientalists: The word *tafsīr* is derived from the Arabic word *fassara*, which literally means to lift the curtain, to make clear, to show the objective, and hence by analogy *tafsīr* is the body of knowledge which aims to make clear the true meaning of the Qur'ān. Exegesis '*Tafsīr*' is but one of the Islamic sciences and it is dependent on those other sciences for much of its content and methodology. Commentary on the Qur'ān is a genre that attempts to explain and elucidate the contents of the Islamic revelation. The Arabic word *Tafsīr* means interpretation or exegesis, and it is commonly used to indicate this genre as well as the activity itself. As the direct word of God in Arabic revealed to the Prophet Muḥammad, the Qur'ān is the central document of the Islamic tradition, and the *Tafsīr* genre simultaneously interprets the Qur'ānic text and maintains or reinforces its status as sacred authority and divine revelation.

A variety of *tafsīr* styles exists, but in its most essential form *tafsīr* consists of a section of Qur'ānic text, usually a verse, but perhaps a phrase or even a single word, followed by comments on the meaning and/or significance of the passage. Among the issues most commonly addressed in *tafsīr* are lexical and grammatical difficulties, the elaboration of narrative elements, and legal implications. Explanations of the background and context in which the verse was revealed are frequently included. Opinions of the Prophet's Companions and other prestigious early figures are common.

The Qur'ānic commentary developed into a genre with well-defined rules and standards, and like other Islamic sciences, there were limits to speculative interpretation. The most

reliable sources of knowledge, scholars generally agreed upon, were reports or comments (*Ḥadīth*) passed on from reliable authorities. In Qur'ānic exegesis this opposition is represented by two terms. *Al-tafsīr bi-l-ma'thūr* refers to exegesis consisting of the transmission of reports (*riwāyah*) from early authorities, while *al-tafsīr bi-l-ra'y* indicates "exegesis by personal opinion."¹ These are the two major types and all the *Tafsīrs* that are written in one or more of these types. The lines below explain each type of *Tafsīrs*. The Exegesis '*Tafsīr*' of Qur'ān is not something done by anyone with ordinary or common intellect and understanding of Islam, rather it is done by people after obtaining extensive knowledge about Islam and reading the history of Islam thoroughly.

Some notable Exegesis by the Orientalists: Orientalists showed great interest in studying on Qur'ānic sciences, particularly the *Tafsīr* Literature. Exegesis is a descriptive and supportive field that helps to understanding the Qur'ān better and recognizing its core message. However, there is no doubt that such fields often make the first choice for most orientalists, either by studying and searching or analyzing and criticizing. But such studies may not be taken into account as they usually tend to falsify axioms held by Muslims and question their indubitable beliefs. In spite of that, a thorough examining of orientalists' most popular books in Qur'ānic sciences particularly the *Tafsīr* is sufficient to give general idea about the main features of orientalists' methodology in studying and writing the *Tafsīr*. They wrote the commentary of the Qur'ān according to their specific motives. Here are some noted commentaries of the Qur'ān written by the orientalists in different time and periods.

¹ Hafiz al- Dhabī, *al-tafseer Wal Mufasssiroon*, 1/247

- **Comprehensive Commentary on the Qur'ān:** Wherry. E. M, one of famous orientalist wrote this commentary on the Qur'ān in four volumes. It was first published in 1884. It was the only exegesis '*Tafsīr*' that had been written by an orientalist. In fact, it is a summary of the chapters of the Qur'ān in which the commentator tried to provide the thought content of the selected particular chapters of the Qur'ān in a systemic order, it came in four volumes. The author not only wrote the commentary of the chapters he also gave a detailed introduction to the title of each chapter, literal translation of the chapter, years of revelation with special focus on the place of revelation. The Author sometimes gives very long notes to justify his views. The aim and objective of this commentary, according to the author, are to gather up in a few volumes the result of the labors of those who have endeavored to elucidate the text of the Qur'ān, adding the findings of their own study.¹
- **Qur'ānic Studies: Sources and Method of Scriptural Interpretation:** This commentary came on the hand of John Wansbrough in 1980. In fact, this book is a collection of certain articles on the Qur'ān and its exegesis by the author. He provides a detail discussion on the revelation and prophecy in Islamic perspective, along with the origin and development of Arabic language, particularly the classical Arabic language. The author emphasized on the various principles of Tafsīr (exegesis) writing. He classified the exegesis using two different criteria namely stylistic and function.² The author provided a numbers of heading for each and every

¹ Faisal Mustafa, *Holy Qur'ān and the Orientlists*, New Delhi, 2004, P.60

² Ibid, P.61

chapter. The first three chapters deal with the concept of revelation, Prophethood and origin and development of Arabic classical language. In the four and final chapter, he discussed the principles of exegesis in detail. The book is a good reference tool for better understanding the orientalist's approaches to the Qur'ānic studies.

- **Qur'ānic Christian: An Analysis of Classical and Modern Exegesis:** Dammen McAuliffe did her B.A in philosophy from Trinity College Washington. She obtained her M. A and Ph.D in religious studies from the University of Toronto, She has published primarily in the areas of Qur'ānic studies and Muslim-Christian relations. She was also the general editor of five volumes Encyclopedia of Holy Qur'ān. The book analyses the selected portions of the Qur'ān and deals with Christianity. It also contains the commentaries of well known exegetics of different period of those verses that are directly related to Christianity. The book is basically divided into two parts. Firstly "Qur'ānic Commentary and Commentators'. Secondly, "Qur'ānic Commendation of Christianity". The book begins with *Ṭabrī* and comes to the end with Muḥammad Husain Ṭabāṭabā'ī Tafsīr. The author has also given brief biographies of ten Muslim commentators to acquaint the readers with a number of major figures in the history of the Qur'ānic interpretation.¹
- **Modern Muslim Koran Interpretations:** This interpretation was written by one of the famous orientalist Baljon, J.M.S, the author did a critical comment on the various issues interpreted by the modern exegetics during the year 1880-1960. There is a detail introduction on various aspects of the exegesis-writing. The book also contains some useful

¹ Ibid, P.64

information about the basic characteristics and importance of the Qur'ān. The Author has given an index at the end. It is a good reference book for the scholars of the modern period to understand the oriental approaches to the Qur'ānic studies.¹

- **The Qur'ān and its Exegesis:** Originally this book was written in German by the Catge, H., Later Alferd T. Walch translated into English seeing its popularity and significance. The German title of Book was “Koran and the Koran Exegeses”. The English edition is based on both German and original Arabic text. The book begins with a brief life sketch of the Prophet. In the introductory chapter, the author has discussed Islam as a religion, life of Prophet Muḥammad, The History of the text of the Qur'ān and the classical exegesis of the Qur'ān. The first chapter deals with the concept of revelation in Islam. The second and third chapters deal with the prophetic experience gained by the prophet of Islam. The author also discussed the other prophets' names mentioned in the Qur'ān such as Abraham, Noah, Solomon and Isaac etc, in the light of Qur'ānic verses. In the fourth and last chapter, the author discussed the issues related to Muslims, Jews and Christians in the light of the Qur'ān.² The main objective of this book, according to author, is to provide an impression of exegetic activities of Muslims towards non-Muslim scholars, particularly the orientalist approaches to the study of the Qur'ānic texts. The basic feature of this book is its varied coverage of important topics mentioned in the Qur'ān such as the God, the Prophets, the Angels, the Universe and the mankind etc. The author has taken the

¹ Ibid, P..65

² Ibid, P..67

interpretation of some selected verses of the Qur'ān from different exegetics both classical and modern such as Ṭabrī, Zamakhsharī, Ghazālī and Baiḍāwī.

- **The Development of Exegesis in Early Islam:** This book was written by Berg. Herbert which deals with the origin and development in the early and formative period of exegesis writing of the Qur'ān. The book also highlights the significance of the Ḥadīth while writing the commentary of the Qur'ān. According to the author the main objective of the book is to deal with first extensive survey and to analyze the Western debates over the authenticity of Ḥadīth and early Tafsīr. The author made a comparison of stylistic profile of Ibn 'Abbās's exegesis at various levels of transmission suggests that exegetical Ḥadīth are no more reliable than any genre of Ḥadīth. The first chapter provides a brief introduction to Ḥadīths that were used by the exegetics. The second chapter deals with criticism of the Ḥadīths. The third and fourth chapters contain information and explanation about the exegetical Ḥadīths, Origin of Tafsīr literature and methodology. The last and fifth chapter deals with the authenticity of Ibn 'Abbās's Ḥadīth in Ṭabrī's Tafsīr.¹

Oriental's Views on the Inimitability of the Qur'ān: The best of Arab writers have never succeeded in producing anything equal in merit to the Qur'ān itself is not surprising. They have agreed before-hand that it is unapproachable, and they have adopted its style as the perfect standard; any deviation from it therefore must of necessity be a defect. Again, with them this style is not spontaneous as with Muḥammad and his contemporaries, but is as artificial as though Englishmen should still continue to follow Chaucer as their model, in spite of the changes which their language has undergone. With the Prophet,

¹ Ibid, P.69

the style was natural, and the words were those in every-day ordinary life, while with the later Arabic authors the style is imitative and the ancient words are introduced as a literary embellishment. The natural consequence is that their attempts look labored and unreal by the side of his impromptu and forcible eloquence. The above observation makes the hypothesis advanced by those who see Muḥammad as the author of the Qur'ān quite untenable.¹ How could a man, from being illiterate become the most important author, in terms of literary merit, in the whole of Arabic literature? How could he then pronounce truths of a scientific nature that no other human being could possibly have developed at the time, and all this without once making the slightest error in his pronouncements on the subject? The ideas in this study are to be developed from a purely scientific point of view. They will lead to the conclusion that it is inconceivable for a human being living in the seventh century AD. to have expressed assertions in the Qur'ān on highly varied subjects that do not belong to his period and for them to be in keeping with what was to be revealed only centuries later.

Conclusion: Since the time of the Prophet unbelievers and critics have merely rehearsed the Makkan unbelievers' view about the Qur'ān. And since the middle of the nineteenth century modern European scholars and the orientalists have repeated the same objections and arguments. Foremost of these nineteenth and early twentieth century orientalists are A Sprenger, William Muir, Theodor Noldeke, Ignaz Goldziher, W. Wellhausen, Leone Caetani and David S. Margoliouth. Their work and conclusions have been further developed and summarised in the middle and later part of the twentieth century principally by Richard Bell and his pupil W.

¹ E H Palmer (Tr.), *The Qur'ān*, 1900, Part I, Oxford at Clarendon Press, *The World's Religions*, Cambridge University Press 1992, P.281

Montgomery Watt. All these scholars have attempted to show, by one device or another, that the Qur'ān is Muḥammad's own composition. During the last quarter of the twentieth century, however, a new trend has appeared among certain orientalist who have come forward with the suggestion that not only is the Qur'ān a work by human hand. This group of orientalist, are generally known as the "revisionists". It is to be noted that this assumption of personal ambition and preparation on his part to play the role of a prophet-reformer is totally groundless and is not at all sustained by the sources, neither by the text of the Qur'ān, or by the traditions. The challenge remains open till today. A new and constructive approach to the depth study of the Qur'ān, with a view to indicate the methodology could be adopted for its better understanding.

Assumptions of Orientalists to the Qur'ān

Dr. Muḥammad Mohar 'Alī¹

Tr.: Dr. Moḥammad Ajmal²

Abstract

The orientalists often try to prove that the Qur'ān is the creation of human being, especially the allegation that it has been compiled by the Prophet Muḥammad (PBUH). This phenomenon coming from them about the Qur'ān is not anew but in fact it is not different from the views of Makkan polytheists to whom the Prophet literally conveyed his message and the Qur'ānic revelation. So they presumed that the Qur'ān is nothing but the speech of man, and their "trustful" and "illiterate" man has become poet or crazy magician, or that another man has taught him the Qur'ān, and the verses of the Qur'ān are nothing but fables of the ancients which he had written down (al-Furqān: 5).

The Qur'ān rejects all these allegations categorically through seven prime principles:

1. Allah Almighty says that the Qur'ān is not the word of man, neither it is word of a poet nor is it the word of a charmer (وَمَا عَلَّمْنَاهُ الشِّعْرَ وَمَا يَنْبَغِي لَهُ إِنْ هُوَ إِلَّا ذِكْرٌ وَقُرْآنٌ مُّبِينٌ ﴿٦٩﴾) (Tr.: We have not taught him any poetry nor would it be fitting for him. This is merely a reminder and a clear Qur'ān. Yāsīn: 69)
2. Allah emphatically reiterates in the Qur'ān that it is He Who sent down the Qur'ān on his slave (Muḥammad) to become warner for the worlds, and that it is a covenant from the Lord of the worlds in the clear Arabic tongue.³

¹ A renowned British Benglādeśhī scholar of Islamic Studies

² Assistant Professor, CAAS, SLL&CS, JNU, New Delhi, India

³ See: al-Qur'ān: 25: 1, 26: 192, 195

3. Similarly Allah commands his messenger (PBUH) by saying (لَا تُحْرِكْ بِهِ لِسَانَكَ لِتَعْجَلَ بِهِ ۗ إِنَّ عَلَيْنَا جَمْعَهُ وَقُرْآنَهُ ﴿١٦﴾) (Tr.: Do not move your tongue too fast in your attempt to learn this revelation. We ourselves shall see to its collection and recital. al-Qiyāmah: 16).

These bunch of Qur'ānic verses indicate that whatsoever was sent down on the Messenger (PBUH) is not merely an idea and imagination, rather it is an authentic text and manuscript.

4. Likewise Allah Almighty commiserates with his Prophet (PBUH) repeatedly and encourages him to bear the opposition of the unbelievers and their reluctance to the righteousness with patience and to be patient, reminding him that there was no synecdoche prophet before him but he was deceived by his people and confronted with injustice and oppression.

5. In the same way Allah declares to all (وَلَوْ تَقَوَّلَ عَلَيْنَا بَعْضُ الْأَقَاوِيلِ ﴿١٤﴾ لَأَخَذْنَا مِنْهُ بِالْيَمِينِ ﴿١٥﴾ ثُمَّ لَقَطَعْنَا مِنْهُ الْوَتِينَ ﴿١٦﴾ فَمَا مِنْكُمْ مِنْ أَحَدٍ عَنْهُ حَاجِزِينَ ﴿١٧﴾) (Tr.: If he had invented any lies about us, we would indeed have seized him by his by his right hand, and would indeed have cut his live-vein, and none of you could have held Us off from him. al-Hāqqah: 44-47).

6. Allah narrates to people through Prophet and says: (لَلَّكِنِ ﴿١﴾ اللَّهُ يَشْهَدُ بِمَا أَنْزَلَ إِلَيْكَ أَنْزَلَهُ بِعِلْمِهِ ۗ وَالْمَلَائِكَةُ يَشْهَدُونَ ۗ وَكَفَى بِاللَّهِ شَهِيدًا ﴿٢﴾) (But Allah bears witness to what He has sent down to you. He has sent it down with His knowledge. The angels too bear witness and Allah suffices as a witness. Al-Nisā': 166).

As He commands His Prophet to inform the people that Allah, Who is witness between him and them in the matter of the Qur'ānic revelation. (قُلْ أَيُّ شَيْءٍ أَكْبَرُ شَهَادَةً ۗ قُلِ اللَّهُ شَهِيدٌ بَيْنِي وَبَيْنَكُمْ ۗ وَأُوحِيَ إِلَيَّ هَذَا الْقُرْآنُ لِأُنذِرْكُمْ بِهِ ۗ وَمَنْ بَلَغَ) (Tr.: Ask them, what

carries the most weight as a witness? Tell them it is Allah, He is witness between me and you. Say, this Qur'ān has been revealed to me so that through it I may warn you and whoever it reaches. al-An'ām: 19).

These verses are very important as they prove that the revelation of Allah is a exceptional command between Him and His prophet and no other can be aware of it.

And above all these, Allah challenges all and warns them

by saying: (وَإِنْ كُنْتُمْ فِي رَيْبٍ مِّمَّا نَزَّلْنَا عَلَىٰ عَبْدِنَا فَأْتُوا بِسُورَةٍ مِّثْلِهِ وَادْعُوا

شُهَدَاءَكُمْ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ ﴿٢٤﴾ فَإِنْ لَمْ تَفْعَلُوا وَلَنْ تَفْعَلُوا فَأْتُوا النَّارَ

الَّتِي وَفُودَهَا النَّاسُ وَالْحِجَارَةُ أُعِدَّتْ لِلْكَافِرِينَ ﴿٢٥﴾) (Tr.: If you are in doubt

about the revelation We have sent down to Our servant, then produce a single chapter like it, and call upon your helpers besides God if you are truthful. But you cannot do it and you can never do it, then guard yourselves against the fire whose fuel is men and stones prepared for those who deny the truth. al-Baqarah: 24)

And the challenge is open forever.

Since the time of the Prophet (PBUH), critics from unbelievers and non-Muslims have been reiterating the opinions of the polytheists of Makkah regarding the Qur'ān, and particularly since the middle of the 19th century, some of the Western orientalist have started retrieving similar objections and fabrications on the Qur'ān by spreading innumerable wrong hypothesis and propagandas. Leaders of those orientlatists are viz: Aloy Spernger, William Muir, Theodore Noldeke, Ignaz Goldziher, W. Wellhausen, Leon Caetani, David Samuel Margoliouth. Views and conclusions of these orientalist were developed and expanded with full of exaggeration by others in the 20th century and the foremost of them are: Ritchard Bell and his disciple William Montgomery Watt. All these

orientalists made their utmost efforts through different styles of their presentation that the Qur'ān has been authored by the Prophet Muḥammad (PBUH).

But in the last quarter of 20th century, the new generation of the orientalists began a new trend of allegations and suggested that the Qur'ān is barely the compilation of the Prophet Muḥammad, but its current form gradually has come across through several developments and changes which happened to be in the first and second centuries of the Hijrah. More prominent of those boasters are viz. J. Wansbourough, J.A. Bellamy, Andrew Rippin, and the propagandas fomented by them promoted others such as: Patricia Crone, Michael Cook, Kenneth Cragg and Toby Lester.

Those who are of the opinion that the Qur'ān is the compilation of the Prophet Muḥammad (PBUH) focus on the following proclamations:

1. That Muḥammad (PBUH) was an ambitious man adopted well-studied plans for the role he played afterwards.¹
2. He especially devoted himself for the art of poetry to be able to compile the Qur'ān.²
3. He had not been a man without the knowledge of writing and reading as Muslims assume it and the word "الأُمِّي" (unlettered) to which he is attributed is an another facet.³
4. And that he has extracted the thoughts and stories from Judaism and Christianity what he mixed with the Qur'ān.⁴

¹ See: W. Muir: *Life of Mohamet*, 1923, PP. 25-26 D. S. Margoliouth: *Mohammed and the Rise of Islam*, London, 1905, PP. 46-65, Montgomery Watt: *Muḥammad at Mecca*, Oxford, 1960, P. 39, and *Muḥammad's Mecca*, Edinburgh, 1988, PP. 50-51.

² See: Margoliouth, *op. cit.*, P. 52-53, 60, Muir: *op. cit.* P. 15.

³ See: Watt: *Muḥammad's Mecca*, P. 52.53.

⁴ See, Abraham Gelger: *Judaism and Islam*, Madras, 1898; Richard Bell: *The Origin of Islam and its Christian Environment*, London, 1926; C.C. Torey: *The Jewish Foundation of Islam*, New York, 1933; A.I. Kash: *Judaism in Islam*, New Delhi, 1954.

5. That a contemporary scientific mistakes especially those concerning with the world and universe reflected in the Qur'ān, as many other customary texts, terminologies and non-native alphabets are available in it. These all indicate that it is the compilations of the Prophet Muḥammad (PBUH).¹
6. That the word of "revelation" doesn't mean that this text has been sent down by Allah but it means that it is a suggestion or indication or intellectual locution.²

As far as those people are concerned who proclaim that the Qur'ān has developed through the first and second centuries of the Hijrah, so their argument revolves around the following assumptions:

- 1- The Islamic historical sources are not contemporary and it is impossible to ratify them.
- 2- The archeological excavations in the Arabian peninsula, particularly those which took place in the Najaf region, discovered a number of antique inscriptions indicate the unavailability of the Qur'ān in the first century of Hijrah.
- 3- The ancient Qur'ānic manuscripts which were ascertained recently in the Ṣana'ā' refer to the development of the Qur'ān through the ages.
- 4- And that the criticism of Qur'ānic text refers to the mistakes in the copies of the Qur'ān.

It becomes clear from the aforesaid discussions that the assumptions of the orientalist have different aspects and dangerous dimensions and they do not abstain from efforts to obtain by the Qur'ān.

¹ See, Watt: *Muḥammad's Mecca*, PP. 45-46, C.C. Torrey: *The Commercial. Theological Terms of the Koran*, Leiden, 1892; Arthur Jeffry: *The Foreign Vocabulary of the Qur'ān*, Baroda, 1938.

² Richard Bell: "Muḥammad's Call", *The Moslem World*, January 1934, PP. 13-19; Moḥammed's Vision, *ibid*; Watt: *Muḥammad at Mecca*, PP. 52-58, and "The Islamic Revelation in the Modern World", Edinburgh, 1969.

As it was noticed that the first collections of their allegations are related to the biography of the Prophet (PBUH) as such, and their prime arguments have been treated in the book entitled “Biography of the Prophet (PBUH) and the Orietnalist”, as far as these allegations and propagandas are concerned,¹ in every respect, it is not possible to cover their all aspects of discussion in a limited single argument, therefore the following pages have confined to cast some light on their ideologies.

Retrogression of J. Wansborough and his Associates to their Stereotypical Thought

Ignaz Goldziher, who attempted to become skeptical to the authenticity of the historical sources of Islam in the late 19th century by stating that the most of the verses are sayings of the prophets though not all, came into existence in the second century (or third) of Hijrah following the emergence of political, contractual and legal controversies amongst the Muslims, and every group of their brought such a fabricated verses which endorse their opinions and their particular stand which cannot be taken under consideration.²

Goldziher has committed mistake in his understanding in this regard from several angles, more prominent of those, is that he has neglected the extreme attention of the narrators of the Ḥadīth in their critical approach to the source and authority by the texts.³

¹ See: M.M. ‘Alī: *Sīrat al-Nabī and the Orientalists*, vol: 1A, King Fahd Qur’ān Printing Complex, Medina, 1997, Chapters: x-xii and xvi-xxii.

² See: Ignaz Goldziher, *Moḥammedarische Studien* (first published in 1890) vol: 2, tr. Into English by C.R. Borber and Snt. Sten under title: *Muslim Studies*, vol. 2, London, P. 170.

³ See, M.M. al-A’zamī: *Studies in Early Ḥadīth Literature*, Beirut, 1968; and Muḥammad Luqmān Salafī, *Ihtimām al-Muḥaddithīn bi Naqdi al-Ḥadīth Sanadan wa Matnan wa Daḥḍi Mazā’im al-Mustashriqīn wa Atbā’ihim*, Riyāḍ, 1984. Also Muḥammad ‘Abd al-Nāzīr, *Dirāsāt Goldzehr fī al-Sunnah wa Makānatihā al-‘Ilmīyyah*, Ph. D. Thesis, Tunisia University, 1404H/1984AD

On the contrary a renowned orientalist, J. Horovitz, in the first quarter of the 20th century took his responsibility to enquire the matter and wrote a series of deep and well-researched booklets in which he proved that the collecting of Ḥadīths and their record began accurately and with full precision in the second quarter of the first century of Hijrah.¹ So the idea of Goldziher did not meet the acceptance of common orientalist themselves.

But in the mid-twentieth century, Joseph Shacht, while being a Professor in the School of Oriental and African Studies in University of London, got influenced with the ideologies of Goldziher which he compiled in a huge book entitled: "Origins of Muḥammadan Jurisprudence"² in which he said: The Islamic verses have not authenticity at all, and even the historical records cannot be taken into consideration as those have been created for the sake of legislative purposes, and the Islamic legitimacy had been out of the scope of the Islamic religion, and the Qur'ān had not been a source of it during the first and second centuries of Hijrah.

Naturally, book of Shacht sparked sharp criticism, not only by the Islamic scholars,³ but by the Western scholars as well. So N.J. Coulson, another Professor of University of London said: The hypothesis of Shacht leads to a historical gap which cannot be accepted viewing the reality".⁴ And W.M. Watt said: The Western scholars accept the authenticity commonly what has

¹ See: J. Horovitz: "The Earliest Biographies of the Prophet and their Authors", translated from the German by Marmaduke Pickthall, *Islamic Culture*, vol. 1, 1927, PP. 535-559; vol. 2, 1925, PP. 22-50, 164-182 and 495-523

² Published at Oxford, 1950.

³ See for example: M.M. al-A'zamī: *On Shacht's Origin of Muḥammadan Jurisprudence*, King Saud University and John Wiley & Sons, Inc., New York, 1985.

⁴ See: N.J. Coulson: *A History of Islamic Law*, London, 1946, PP. 64-65.

come in the biographies of the Prophet Muḥammad and they accomplish them what references are available in the Qurʾān, and the best style is the adoption of the verses and Qurʾānic references to become exclusive.”¹ Maxime Rodinson said: The interlude period of a century will not be considered as excessive time because a Sudanese tribe known for narrating its people the memories of their ancestors of its historic chronicles go dates back to a period before three centuries. Similarly, it has old-age friends who narrate the memories of their fore-fathers as Engels go dates back between 1840 and 1848, and some of these memories have been included in his book published by the Institute of Marxism-Leninism).² Rodinson adds by saying: This sort of “family attribution” is considerably acceptable in which Shacht has suspected.

Despite these criticisms and general rejection of wrong ideologies addressed by Goldziher and Shacht, there are some of the members of teaching faculty in the School of Oriental and African Studies in the University of London have regarded them³ for seventies of the last century and they have exceeded all the borders of amplification and exaggeration. The pioneer among them is John Wansborough who issued two successive books in 1977 and 1978, they are: *Qurʾānic Studies: Sources and Methods of Scriptural Interpretation* and *Sectarian Mileu: Content and Composition of Islamic Salvation History*. Wansborough has practiced in it what called the accessories of criticism on the holy book, its style of correction, criticism of text and its history of change and amendment and summarized according to the following:

¹ See: M.M. Watt: *Muḥammad at Mecca*, Oxford, 1960, P.xv; and his “The Materials used by Ibn Ishāq” in B. Lewis and P.M. Holtfield (ed): *Historians of the Middle East*, London, 1962, PP. 23-24.

² See: *Souvenirs Sur Marx et Engels*, Russian Edition, 1956.

³ Wansborough: *Qurʾānic Studies*, etc, Oxford, 1977, PP. 42-45.

- a. The Qur'ān developed gradually in the 8th and 9th centuries Christian era out of verbal narratives by means of the changes took place through the two centuries, then were converted to Canonical form and this was followed by the emergence of the Qur'ānic interpretations and this process was similar to what happened in calibration of the holy book of Jews.
- b. The dialectical nature for many of what has come in the Qur'ān indicate that the strong Jewish opposition was the reason in the process of demarcation.
- c. The Islamic narratives are similar to what the scholars of holy book called or "Salvation History" meant, a story created recently for the religious and preaching purpose then it was projected back in time.

The interpretation of the absence of any historical Islamic material from the first century AH due to their non-existence and it is impossible to ratify the most of the Islamic narratives and verses by contemporary non-Islamic sources. As Wansborough states by referring Shacht: the Qur'ān has never been the source of Islamic Shari'ah before the 19th century AD.¹

The publication of Wansborough's first book synchronized another controversial book by Patricia Crone and Michael Cook in 1977. They were in the School of Oriental and African Studies at that time. The title of their book is: "Hagarism: The Making of the Islamic World". Cook and Crone have confessed that they did not write anything in the book regarding the Qur'ān and there is base what Wansborough has written in his book "The Qur'ānic Studies".²

¹ Ibid. P. 44.

² Quote of Toby Lester in his article "What is the Koran", The Atlantic Monthly, January 1999, P. 55

This indicates that both of them were aware of what Wansborough used to write while they were compiling their book.

Hence, the issues were dealt with by Wansborough are extremely entangled and muddled, it is because that these were based on the views of Goldezher and Shacht which are totally wrong and decayed, because the thought suffers like the suffering of the genuine false. In addition Wansborough has committed mistake in other issues, as follow:

First: Wansborough is extremely impressed by what he recognizes from the compilation of the holy book and its revision, therefore he tries to conform that story with the Qur'ān, while he completely ignores the process of the issuance of a new book such as the holy book, unlike a usual book, which accomplishes always only through a council or a conference, and happening of such this event takes place usually having great importance as eyes of people do not miss it so the historians and observers record it. The time, Wansborough indicates to, witnessed political and contractual differences among the Muslims themselves and the sprawling Abbasid dynasty consisting on parts with the Indian sub-continent in the East and parts in Europe to the West. So had there been published any religious book for the Muslims in that epoch the history would have recorded it in one way or the other. But Wansborough and associates are not able to refer to any such type of examples or happenings, neither through Islamic sources nor the Greek, Persian or Indian sources either, so his hypothesis has no base of any authenticity.

Second: Wansborough presumes that the different Qur'ānic verses remained verbal through centuries, the collection of those verses were carried out in the 19th century AD, at this

stage he says, that the historical Islamic narratives were not available before, but fabricated in the ninth century and were attributed to the early first century of Hijrah, so his idea of the collection of verses according to his assumption contradicted with his idea of other collection of verses, furthermore, his assumption is illogical because imagination of the fabrication of formidable numbers of verses is beyond the capacity of human being which are also connected to happenings and various developments with their large differences to the times, places and people.

Third: Wansborough has made mistake by saying that the Qur'ān was propagated sparsely in verbal narratives. Connotation of this saying is that the Muslims used to memorize it thoroughly in their hearts and minds, but in addition to that the Qur'ān was concurrently circulated in a complete book form as well and that is since the caliphate of Uthmān bin 'Affān (MABPWH).

Fourth: Similarly he has committed mistake in his narration that the Qur'ān is controversial to a larger extent, if you want to portray it in an environment mutilated by a strong Jew opposition, but the matter of fact is that, the Qur'ān is not controversial rather it criticises and abolishes the types of polytheism and deviation from monotheism in totality. So it denounces the Paganism, Zoroastrianism, the worship of stars, sun, moon and the worship of trees and mountaineering hills, at the same time it censures the believe of trinity and defecation of Prophet 'Īsá as well as Jewish obsoleses Jewish dogmas and doctrines of misconceptions.

Fifth: Wansborough has made blunder in his gossip: that there are no historical sources of Islam before the ninth century AD (end of the second century AH). In addition to the Qur'ān

there are numerous evidences that prove the writing of the sayings of the Prophet Muḥammad during his lifetime¹ apart from the compilation of the Ḥadīths and verses regularly in the second quarter of the first century.²

Apart from this, the availability of the old Qur'ānic scriptures, antiquities and archaeological incisions which dates back to the first century AH, invalidates and nullifies the claim of Wansborough, worth mentioning here is that the discovery of the set of Qur'ānic scriptures in Ṣan'ā in 1970, among some of which dates back to the last quarter of the first century AH (especially scripture No. 20-1033).

Before we discuss these scriptures of Ṣan'ā we would like to point out some of the other assumptions by which the people got influenced by the thought of Wansborough.

Yehuda De Nevo and Revisionists

Some of the modern orientalis got influenced by the thought of Wansborough, especially those who are entitled to be called revisionists and believe that in the modern period for Jews it is mandatory to revise or sink into the history of middle ages and that is to explore or make way to enable them to have coexistence with others on equal level, amongst them are Yehuda De Nevo and J. Crone, both of them fixed their method in two points, as follows:

1. It is mandatory to consolidate on any information that singles out the Islamic connotations with the existence of archaeological evidence material, and in the case of contraction between them the second will be preferred.

¹ See: Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukḥārī, PP. 111 – 112, Musnad Aḥmad, vol. 2, PP. 192, 207, 215, 403.

² See: Horovez' previously mentioned articles.

2. Non-availability of an external evidence for an event singles out the Islamic connotations considered to be positive evidence, that the occurrence didn't happen.

Being based on these two points, De Nevo and J. Crone state that excavations carried out in the desert regions of Jordan have discovered the inscriptions of Greeks, Nabateans and Romanians, at the same time, the deep excavations have uncovered such inscriptions indicated to the existence of Paganism and ignorant people there in the sixth and seventh centuries AD (first century AH) and this ignorance is similar to what the Islamic sources mention. As far as Ḥijāz is concerned in that period, notwithstanding that the excavations in Ḥijāz itself did not discover any inscriptions of the Jahiliyah people and pagans, neither the inscriptions point out to the existence of Jews in Madīnah or in Khaiber or in the Qurá valley either. This means that the Islamic sources have received the informations about Jahiliyah people and pagans prevailing in the diggings that attributed to the history of Ḥijāz and Makkah in the sixth century AD.¹

On the other hand, in the excavations a number of Arabic sculptures were discovered which point out to the existence of Judaism and Christianity there vis-a-vis the idea of monotheism without the mention of any prophet or messenger, likewise it consists on expressions existed in that century but they mention neither the Qur'ān nor Islam or the Prophet either, these incisions date back to the first century and second centuries AH., at the same time, in Ḥijāz no incisions were discovered which could be evidenced on the existence of the Qur'ān and Islam there in the first and second centuries AH. So this means that the Qur'ān has quoted the

¹ See: Koren & Y.D. Nevo: "Methodological Approaches to Islamic Studies", Der Islam, Band 68, Hapt 1, PP. 91-102.

ideas and thoughts from Judaism and Christianity and from the intellects of ancient excavated monotheism. The portrayal of the Qur'ān was taken place¹ after Arabic expressions were included in it existed into those incisions concerning with the religious terminologies of the Muslims and that is at the end of second century AH or after that.²

It is very clear that these assumptions are amalgamated to that of what the ancient orientalist have said: that the Qur'ān has been quoted by the Jews and Christianity, and according to Goldezhher and Schacht and Wansborough who presume that the Islamic historical sources are totally different in the second century AH., and the Qur'ān has been portrayed in that particular time only.

De Nevo and his alikes have attempted to consolidate these opinions with what they presumed to be the archaeological evidences. But their stand and attitude are irrational and unbelievable to the extent that its rebuttal came initially by the non-revisionist orientalist. Therefore, Prof. F.M. Donar has written a separate book³ in which he has proved that compilation of the verses and Islamic history started in the early first century A.H. and states: that unavailability of the Qur'ānic style in the Arabic incisions discovered in the excavations with an indication in it to monotheism may be taken as an evidence over the collection of the Qur'ān at a later stage. Had it been proved that the collection of the Qur'ān took place first in the Levant and not in Hijāz – but this was not proved neither by Nevo nor by Wansborough – the same evidence could have been used to prove that the

¹ It means spread of the Qur'ān officially adopted by the Caliph.

² See: Y.D. Nevo: "Towards a pre-History of Islam", *Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islamic*, vol. 17, 1999, PP. 125-126.

³ See: Fred M. Donner: *Narratives of Islamic Origins: The Beginnings of Historical Writings*, Darwin Press, Inc, Preston, 1998.

teachings of the Qur'ān and its style spread gradually to the neighbouring countries such as the Levant or Syria.

The laday orientalist Estelle Whelan points out to three evidences which annul the propagandas and claims of Nevo and Wansborough.¹

First: The two long incisions found on the fronts of gates of Dome of Rock in Jerusalem, consist of the quotes and excerpts of the Qur'ān, particularly the two verses 2:57 and 1:46 along with the prove of كلمة الشهادة in both of them, sculptured by the Umayyad Caliph 'Abdul Malik in 72 AH (691–692 AD), however the Abbasid Caliph al-Ma'mūn portrayed his own replacing the name of 'Abdul Malik without change in the date. Whelan states by saying: that the existence of light differences in the texts will not denote that the excerpts are not from the Qur'ān, as Crone and Cook have their opinions,² rather put in it in order to coordinate the text with the subject and context and the Muslims still use to mix up the Qur'ānic text to other expressions go well with the incisions, books and speeches, this indicates that the Qur'ān was not only compiled text but was well-circulated and familiar to the common Muslim intellectuals. Besides these two engravings in the green Dome, there are many small Qur'ānic verses for instance 112: 1-2 and 9:133 over the currencies of Umayyads between 77 and 132 AH (697–750 AD). All these evidences represent to the existence of the Qur'ān and its circulation amongst the Muslims since the mid first century AH unlike what Nevo and Wansborough have assumed.

The second evidence is a large engraving on southern wall (to the prayer direction) of the revered Masjid of the Prophet in

¹ See: Estelle Whelan: "Forgotten Witness: Evidence for the Early Codification of the Qur'ān", *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, Vol: 48, No: 1, 1998, PP. 1- 14.

² See: P. Crone & M. Cook, *Hagarism etc.*, PP. 18; 167.

Madīnah and it stretches from the gate of al-Salām through the wall to the gate of Jibraʿīl and it is consisting on the chapter al-Fātiḥah and other chapters between 91–114. This incision was observed by Abū ‘Alī bin Rustah¹ in 290 AH (903 AD). Likewise a Spanish visitor has visited it, ‘Umar bin ‘Abdul ‘Azīz had set up it in 88 AH (706 AD) when he was the Governor of the caliph Walīd in Madīnah.

Ibn Rustah has indicated that there are other Qur’ānic engravings in the walls of the Masjid which the Khawārij have demolished in 120 AH (747 AD). Al-Sumhudī has also pointed out quoting al-Wāqidi and Ibn Zabalāh that other Qur’ānic engravings were on the walls from both the internal and external fronts and above the gates of the Masjid.²

Whelan further says: that the presence of 24 chapters consecutively from last parts of the Qur’ān in the incision on the front wall is a perfect evidence that the sequence of the Qur’ānic chapters had been completed far before the reign of ‘Umar bin ‘Abdul ‘Azīz.³

The third evidence is the presence of copyists of the Qur’ān in Madīnah since the mid century AH, were known as “Ashab al-Masāhif”⁴ (The People of Scriptures). A school for Grammarians concerning to write the Qur’ān also developed in it at the end of the first century AH.⁵

¹ Ibn Rustah: *Kitāb al-A’alāq al-Nafsīyyah*, edit. M.J. De Geeje, Liden 1892, P. 70.

² Al-Sumhudī: *Wafā’ al-Wafā’ bi Dār al-Muṣṭafá*, vol. 1, (edit. M.M. ‘Abdul Ḥamīd), Cairo, P. 371.

³ Whelan: *ibid.* P. 10.

⁴ *Ibid.* PP. 10-12, quoted by al-Ṭabrī, *The History*, (Pub. Leiden) 2329:13; also see her article: “Writing the Words of God: Some Early Qur’ān Copyists and their Kilieu”, part 1, *Ars Orientalis*, 1990, PP. 113.

⁵ See: R. Talman: “An Eight century Grammatical School in Madina: The Collection and Evaluation of the Available Materia”, *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*, vol. 48, 1985, PP. 225-228.

There is no doubt that Madīnah was a centre of knowledge and culture for the Muslims before the establishment of cities in Iraq and these copyists used to receive increasing demand of copies of the Qur'ān for the studies and pedagogical purposes in the Masjid, schools and public houses. Worth mentioning is that the Umayyad Caliphs, beginning from Mu'āwiyah used to manage and organize the all walks of religious life, so Mu'āwiyah for example decorated the rostrum in the Masjid of the Prophet and ordered to construct palaces in the Grand Masjids and 'Abdul Malik practiced the Qur'ānic texts by using suitably decorated in incisions and engravings and on currencies, as far as Walīd is concerned, he expanded the Masjid of the Prophet to a larger extent. Viewing all these, their interest to these issues most likely came after their interest to the collection of the Qur'ān and its distribution among people.

In addition to all these realities, Nevo commits mistake in his idea in other respects. They are as follows:

First: His supposition is that, whatever the Islamic narratives and sources state in terms of history of Islam of the first and second centuries AH it is most likely to approve them by the contemporary un-Islamic or materialist sources, if it is not possible to approve them then they would be considered as non-existent. This method is unbelievable and inappropriate, while there are loads of facts of modern history are available apart from the facts of history of middle and ancient periods which are inevitably be considered most of the times on the basis of single source not the contemporary one for that matter.

Second: If he thinks that the story of pre-Islam and paganism concerning to Hījāz is fabricated, and believes that whatsoever

is possible regarding the excavations in that region, have been carried out and no work remains in this connection then it is not true at all because most of the places still do not want any survey and study. Likewise an issue here is being ignored which is an important one that is the idols and worshiping places of the pagans have been destroyed and effaced in Ḥijāz on large scale and completed after the advent of Islam from what the case was in the neighboring countries wherein Islam reached gradually.

Third: Nevo also ignores the nature of paganism in Ḥijāz, as it did not belong originally to there but was imported from the Levant, therefore the root of the same was not so deep and developed stereotypically there as it happened to be in Greece, Iraq and India, though it spread in a large manner soon before the rise of Islam. An Islamic story narrates: that 'Amr bin 'Alī, the leader Khuzā'ah tribe who brought the paganism from the Levant and came with an idol of Hubal, he installed it in Makkah and ordered people to worship and honour it.¹ Similarly he brought the idols Wudd, Ṣuwā' Yaghūth, Ya'ūq and Nasr,² these were the idols the followers of Nūḥ used to worship, the Qur'ān has also narrated about them.³ Is the issue is like that, the archeological discoveries through the excavations rely on the Islamic sources in this manner without contradiction as Nevo believes.

Fourth: Nevo makes mistakes in his indication that Islam was the reaction for paganism, because, he says that, the Muslims

¹ Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukḥārī: PP. 3521, 4623-4624, Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim: P. 2856, Musnad Aḥmad, vol. 2, PP. 275-276 and vol. 3, PP. 318, 353-54, and vol. 5, PP. 137; and Ibn Hishām: The Biography of Prophet (edit. Muṣṭafá al-Saqqā and others), vol. 5, PP. 78-79; al-Kalbī: Kitāb-ul-Aṣṇām A (edit. Aḥmad Zakī Pāshā), Cairo, 1343 AH, P. 8.

² Ibn Ḥajar: Faṭḥ-ul-Bārī, vol. 6, P. 634.

³ Al-Qur'ān : 71: 23.

differed in the issue of paganism in Hijāz soon before the advent of Islam, the Qur'ān undoubtedly condemns paganism, even doesn't stop here but deplores it and prevents from all types of deviations to monotheism and all kinds of polytheism which prevailed not only in Arabian peninsula but in the entire world. So the Qur'ān taboos worship of the sun, moon, and other heavenly and astronomical objects which were very common in some of the regions of the Arabian peninsula which came from east to west, the presence of the (Temple of Heaven) in Beijing (China) is the clear indication to that, similarly the existence of the pyramids for the worship of sun, moon and the astronomical objects in south east Asia and across North Africa to South America.¹ Likewise, the Qur'ān forbids from the worship of mountains, trees, rivers and natural phenomena such as the cloud, lighting and thunder. Allah says:

(لَا تَسْجُدُوا لِلشَّمْسِ وَلَا لِلْقَمَرِ وَاسْجُدُوا لِلَّهِ الَّذِي خَلَقَهُنَّ)

(Tr.: Do not prostrate yourselves before the sun and the moon, but prostrate yourselves before Allah who created them all. Fuṣṣilat: 37).

Allah further said: (أَلَمْ تَرَ أَنَّ اللَّهَ يَسْجُدُ لَهُ مَنْ فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَمَنْ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَالشَّمْسُ

وَالْقَمَرُ وَالنُّجُومُ وَالْجِبَالُ وَالشَّجَرُ وَالْدَّوَابُّ وَكَثِيرٌ مِّنَ النَّاسِ)

(Tr.: Do you not see that whoever is in the heavens and whoever is on the earth, as well as the sun and the moon, and the stars and the mountains and trees and the beasts and many human beings. Al-Ḥajj: 18).

Allah said: (وَيُسَبِّحُ الرَّعْدُ بِحَمْدِهِ وَالْمَلَائِكَةُ مِنْ خِيفَتِهِ وَيُرْسِلُ الصَّوَاعِقَ فَيُصِيبُ بِهَا مَنْ

يَشَاءُ وَهُمْ يُجَادِلُونَ فِي اللَّهِ وَهُوَ شَدِيدُ الْمِحَالِ ﴿١٣﴾

(Tr.: It is He Who shows you the lighting, inspiring fear and hope, and gathers up the heavy clouds; and the thunder glorifies Him with His praise and the angels do so too in awe of Him, and He sends His thunderbolts to strike anyone He

¹ Alan F. Alford, *Gods of the New Millennium*, London, 1996.

pleases, yet they dispute about Allah, who is inexorable in His power. Al-Ra'd: 13). In the same way, Allah prohibits in the Qur'an of apotheosis to the angels, prophets and the prominent people as many people in the different sides of the world do so and still doing. Allah enormously says: (وَلَا يَأْمُرُكُمْ أَنْ تَتَّخِذُوا الْمَلَائِكَةَ (إِنَّ الَّذِينَ تَدْعُونَ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ عِبَادًا أَمْثَلُكُمْ) (Tr.: Nor would he enjoin you to take the angels and the prophets as your lords. Āli 'Imrān: 80), and says: (لَا تَتَّخِذُوا إِلَهَيْنِ اثْنَيْنِ إِنَّمَا هُوَ إِلَهُ وَاحِدٌ) (Tr.: Do not take two gods, He is only One God. Al-Nahl: 51). In another place He says: (الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي خَلَقَ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ وَجَعَلَ الظُّلُمَاتِ وَالنُّورَ ثُمَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا بِرَبِّهِمْ يَعْدِلُونَ) (Tr.: Praise be to Allah, who has created the heavens and the earth and brought into being darkness and light, yet those who deny the truth set up equals to their Lord. Al-An'am: 01).

In the same context, the Qur'an denounces the deification of 'Isa and made sons and daughters for Allah, similarly the idea of trinity and incarnation etcetera of polytheism and deviations from monotheism, so the Qur'an is universal book from both standpoint and message equally, so there is no need for the Muslims to create story for paganism in Hijaz the way it was existed in the engravings, as Nevo and his alikes presume.

Since Nevo does not perceive this nature of the Qur'an and believes that the Qur'an is mixed up of thoughts of Judaism and Christianity and the oneness prevailed in the excavation

soon before the advent of Islam, in fact, Qur'ān does not deny the presence of Judaism and Christianity, but criticizes and rejects the deviations from monotheism and traditions of polytheism which occurred to them, as it says that it has come to revive and accomplish the message of monotheism which the prophets and messengers preached before, the Qur'ān says: (لَئِنَّا هَدَدْنَا لَفِي الصُّحُفِ الْأُولَىٰ ﴿١٨﴾ صُحُفِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَمُوسَىٰ ﴿١٩﴾) (Tr.: This, indeed, is what is taught in the former scriptures – scriptures of Ibrāhīm and Mūsá. Al-A'alá: 18-19).

And it also points out that, despite the injustice and tyranny, the marginal population of polytheists among the believers are still found in different places¹ in the same way the Islamic narratives point out to the existence of some of the believers in oneness in Ḥijāz before the appearance of Islam. So the informations about the archeological excavation, especially those which point out to the existence of the idea of oneness, corroborate and strengthen what the Qur'ān and Islamic sources state, unlike what Nevo believes.

Fifth: Nevo disregards that the Arabs are emotional and poignant proud to their Islam, if the Quraish were not polytheists at the appearance of Islam, their descendants from Umayyads or the Abbasids would not have allowed to desecrate the memory of their ancestors with paganism, he also makes mistakes in his claim that there are no traces of Jews in Madīnah or in Khaiber. The engravings of the fort of Ka'b ibn al-Ashraf, one of Madīnah's Jewish leaders lived during the reign of the Prophet (PBUH), are still present in the neighboring areas. In sum, Nevo's allegations and assumptions are corrupt and baseless.

¹ Al-Qur'ān, 85: 4-8.

Qur'ānic Scriptures of Ṣan'ā and Orientalists' New Speculations

As we pointed out previously to the Qur'ānic scriptures in Ṣan'ā¹ that in 1970 AD there were found a set of ancient Qur'ānic scriptures in the 'Alawī era in the grand Masjid of Ṣan'ā. In the early eighties, Director of Archeological Department of Yemen Justice Ismā'īl al-Akouh called two German experts, Dr. Gerd R. Puin and H.C. Graf Von Bothmer to restore the scriptures and their maintenance with the collaboration of Foreign Affairs of Germany. Both Bothmer and Puin worked in Ṣan'ā for a number of years. It appears that they did not work only as experts for its restoration but their aim was to work as orientalist as well. Bothmer snapped micro film pictures for more than 35000 pages and took away to Germany, and in 1987, he wrote an article in which he has discussed these scriptures and indicated to one of them bearing no. 23-1033 goes back to last quarter of the first century AH.² Puin has also written an article with the title of "Observations on the Ancient Qur'ānic scriptures of Ṣan'ā"³. Information of these observations has extremely incited amongst the orientalists, so they held a symposium in 1998 in Leiden about "Qur'ānic Studies" wherein both Puin and Bothmer delivered their lectures on Manuscripts of Ṣan'ā.

Both the lectures of Puin and Bothmer have not been published yet, however Puin has pointed out in his article to his ideas and the ideas of other orientalists in this connection. He infact has indicated first to the efforts made by the former oreintalists like Arthur Jeffery, Otto Pretzel, Anton Spitaler and A. Fischer to

¹ See: P. 9.

² Bothmer, *ibid*.

³ Gerd R. Puin: "Observation on Early Qur'ān Manuscripts in Ṣana'ā", in Sefan Wilde (ed), *The Qur'ān as Text*, E.J. Brill, Leiden, 1996, PP. 107-111

collect the Qur'ānic ancient manuscripts then to prepare a revised version of the Qur'ān after comparing different available versions, and says: these efforts would not succeed because the manuscripts acquired by the Munich University for this purpose – its formidable number of manuscripts were destroyed by a bomb during the second world war. Puin further says: The Qur'ānic manuscripts of Ṣan'ā provide the opportunity to renew the efforts in the same direction.¹

Secondly: Puin indicates to the points which he has observed in the manuscripts and mentioned a few of them: (a) Writing of “alif” (أ) is not in a proper way in a number of places (b) difference in the statistics of counting of the verses concerning some chapters (c) difference in the order of the chapters in two or three pages.²

Thirdly: Puin emphasizes that these differences are very incommensurable, if they are not collected completely, probably it would not lead to any breakthrough or sudden progress in the Qur'ānic studies but he goes on saying: “The Qur'ān is not emphatic (with its claim that it is clear) and the existence of these differences points out to the chapters of the Qur'ān have not been written in their final shape during the life of Muḥammad (PBUH) and it is likely that the Qur'ān is in a different order to its chapters was common for a long period of time.³ There is no doubt that writing of Puin and Bothmer instigates large speculations to the orientalist's circle, therefore one of the orientalist's Toby Lester contacted telephonically with Puin⁴ then he edited a journalistic article published in The

¹ Ibid, P. 107.

² Ibid, pp. 108-110

³ Ibid, pp. 107-111.

⁴ See, Letter of Poin to Justice al-Akouh on 14/2/1999 quoted in Impact International, vol. 3, (1) Issue, March 2000 AD, P. 27.

Atlantic Monthly, January 1999, entitled: "What is the Qura'n?".¹ The article contains on three varieties of materials (a) information about the manuscripts of Ṣan'ā and findings to which Puin and Bothmer concluded (b) assumptions of the other orientalists such Wansborough, Crone, Cook, Nevo and J.A. Bellamy about Qur'ān (c) indication to what orientalists are carrying out presently in terms of Qur'ānic studies or what they intend to do in the near future.

As far as the manuscripts of Ṣan'ā and the work of Puin and Bothmer are concerned, Toby Lester reiterated what Puin has said in his afore-said article and added that Puin observes that the Qur'ān developed over a long time and is not a book revealed from the heaven on the Prophet Muḥammad (PBUH) in the seventh century AD and it is not a comprehensible and "clear" but every five verses of the Qur'ān, the fifth one is unable to be understood and or interpreted, and there are many signs in manuscripts indicate to rewrite some of its expressions and texts in some places. The officials in Ṣan'ā are not keen to conduct a detailed study of these manuscripts so that no confusion could turn out in the Islamic world, despite the fact that the manuscripts of Ṣan'ā would cooperate the orientalists to prove that for the Qur'ān there is also history as there is a history of the holy books (Old Testaments).² As far as the sayings of Wansborough and others go, we have discussed them already except the statement of Bellamy to which we would point out later. But regarding what orientalists intend to work on it so we would signify it in the conclusion, in sha Allah.

This article of Toby Lester provoked more than the articles of Puin and Bothmer which led to a wave of demonstration and

¹ See: The Atlantic Monthly, January 1999, PP. 43-56.

² Ibid. P.56

protest in the newspapers of Yemen against the officials in the Department of Archeology. Therefore Puin and Bothmer hastened to present letters to Justice Ismā'īl Al-Akouh to prevent from the deterioration of relations between them and the Yemeni officials. In it, Puin defended himself and the American journal "The Atlantic Monthly" by saying that it is sorrowful "what is presumed that the American journal has published so-called discoveries of German researchers and that it is among the restored plaques within the German project is different Qur'ān from the Qur'ān which is presently found amongst the Muslims.... This media campaign has no base to what the American journal has published likewise it has no basis to what relates to the manuscripts of Ṣan'ā and there is no base of it with regard to the Qur'ānic researches we have conducted I and my colleague Dr. J. F. Bothmer... I am very sorry for this campaign targeted to harm the joint work cooperation between Yemen and Germany...¹

Defense of Puin doesn't concur the contents of his article and the article of Toby Lester, so they are witness for it, and has said what we pointed out above on the basis of these two articles. He also expressed his desire in proving that the Qur'ān has a history pointing out to the efforts of the former orientalist in this regard. So we should talk a little about the points which Puin incited for:

First: That when he points out to the Qur'ānic manuscripts collected by the University of Munich in Germany, annihilated by a bomb during the second world war, indicates to an vital reality, that the officials upon these manuscripts had published a preliminary report soon before the outbreak of the war and says that comparison between a number of versions have been

¹ See: Copy of Poin's Letter in Impact International, vol. 3, March 2000, P. 27.

conducted though the comparison of all have not completed, and there is no difference found in the Qur'ānic text except slight mistakes in the dictation or copying here and there which do not touch the text at all.¹ So the difference that Puin has noticed in the manuscripts of Ṣan'ā is a natural one and this doesn't accede the dictatorial mistakes.

Second: Rewriting of a word or a text in any place indicates merely that the writer had committed mistake initially in writing the word or alphabets, so it must be corrected after deleting the word, or the word was erased for any reason so it is necessary to rewrite the word. In every case, it does not indicate to develop or change the text except in the case of existence of another version found in the same place. This will not be evidence for manuscripts of Ṣan'ā or for any other scriptures.

Third: Availability of a chapter or a part of it or any other of them disorderly for the sequence of the Qur'ān on a single page will not indicate to the existence of a version of the Qur'ān in a different order, because it was the habit of the Muslims from beginning – and it is still there – to collect selected chapters in a small compilation, for the purpose of memorization or reading or teaching in the different educational stages, and it is intrinsic that before the rise of printing this system of collections considered through Xeroxing. So it is not strange if manuscripts with chapters in different sequence of the Qur'ān are found, particularly those which are found in the Masjids which were happened to be schools for education unexceptionally.

And even the presence of full version of the Qur'ān in different order of the chapters indeed does not indicate that the Qur'ān

¹ See: Muḥammad Ḥamīdullāh, *Khuṭbāt Bhāwalpūr* (Urdu), Taḥqīqāt Islāmī, Islāmābād, 1985, P. 30-21 quoted in Impact International, Leiden, March 2000, P. 28

is in different shape which is in the possession of the Muslims for a long time, unless it is proved that it was acceptable and valid for them. And it is viewed that the people have, from time to time, spread the Qur'ān in the sequence of chapters according to times or sequence of revelation. For example, A. Rodwell has translated the meanings of the Qur'ān into English and put the chapters in order according to the periods and sequence of events, and has named it: "The Coran: Translation with Suras Arranged Chronologically". In 1911 a Muslim from Bengal followed it and did a new translation of the meanings of the Qur'ān and arranged the chapters according to the periods and its revelation.¹ Likewise, Richard Bell did another translation in the same way in 1937 AD². We have recognized that the aims of orientalist are to prepare a revised version of the Qur'ān. At the later stage, J. A. Bellamy brought this suggestion once again claiming that there are many mistakes in the Qur'ān possible to be corrected, and Toby Lester pointed out in his article to the writings of Bellamy in this regard. We should think upon them.

Dangerous Mistakes of J.A. Bellamy

Bellamy wrote a series of articles in the "Journal of the American Oriental Society", discussing in that about 22 difficult words and expressions in the Qur'ān assuming that these mistakes have been made by the copyists or were available in sources and narratives extracted from the parts of the Qur'ān. He suggests to correct these "mistakes" and says in his last article: "The non-Muslim scholars of Qur'ān agreed

¹ See: Mirzā Abul al-Faḍl, *The Qur'ān, Arabic Text and English Translation, Arranged Chronologically*, 1911, (British Library (British Museum) Catalogue Call mark 14512, d. 15).

² R. Bell: *The Qur'ān: Translated with a Critical Rearrangement with the Suras*, T. & T. Clark, Edinburgh, 1937.

upon that Muḥammad has compiled the Qur'ān in one way or the other, therefore they attribute all the problems to him.¹

Initially it is necessary to point out that the Muslims will not accept that Muḥammad (PBUH) has written the Qur'ān in any way. In fact this is the subject of discussion. Similarly the assumption that the mistakes may have been in the sources or in the narratives extracted from the parts of the Qur'ān is just an imagination of the orientalist and there is no base of it to believe. Bellamy takes both the assumptions made by the previous orientalist. As far as the words and expression are concerned which he discusses in his article he has solved them, and the exegetes and grammarians have interpreted them in both the manners old and new, but Bellamy has belittled these analyses and interpretation and figured out on the basis of his imagination and misunderstanding therefore he confronted with vicious mistakes. In reality he confesses his mistakes in one of his articles in interpreting words of "muqaṭṭ'at" which he had presented earlier by saying: It is short form of Basmalah, worth mentioning is that the renowned orientalist, Theodore Noldeke has suggested in the 19th century AD that the words of "muqaṭṭa'āt" may be the short forms of names of people who compiled the chapters.

To the extent of Bellamy's error, it will become clear if we look into some of the samples whatever has been written in this regard. So the first word which he discusses about in his article in the 1993 journal is the word "ḥaṣab", in Allah's word

¹ See: J.A. Bellamy: "Al-Raqīm or al-Ruqa?": A note on Surat 18:9", *Journal of American of Oriental Society*., 1991, PP. 115-117; "Fa-Ummuhu Hāwiyah: A Note on Surah 101A:9", *ibid*, 1992, PP. 485-487; "some proposed Emenuation to the Text of the Qur'ān", *ibid*, 1993, PP. 562-573 and "More proposed Emenuations to the Text of the Koran", *ibid*, 1996, PP. 196-204.

(إِنَّكُمْ وَمَا تَعْبُدُونَ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ حَصَبُ جَهَنَّمَ) (Tr.: You and what you worship instead of Allah will be fuel for hell-al-Anbiyā': 98). So he says the meaning of the word "الحصاة" (The pebble) or (البذور الصخري) (Rock seeds) and the meaning of "الوقود" (fuel) which, the interpreters and lexicologists for example al-Zabīdī in "Tāj al-'Arūs" or Lane in his dictionary narrate as not true, similarly he declines the statement of some of the orientalis that the word is derived from Hebrew "حصبه" which means "خشب" (wood) or "قطع الخشب" (pieces of wood) then he further says: the word should be here "حطب" (wood) which means wood burns in fire and has been used in other place in the Qur'ān... it is very easy to imagine how this mistake happened in writing the word "الحطب" the copyist forgot to put the word vertically for "طا" so "طا" became "صا".¹

Statement of Bellamy is just an assumption, there is no truth in this, because he believes in things without evidence that there was a version wherein there is a word "الحطب" but he did not point out to anything like this and the so called version doesn't exist at all. Secondly: He ignores a reality that the Qur'ān was open and published since the beginning it was not hidden from people at any time, had a copyist may make mistake in writing a word in copy, hundreds of thousands of memorizers, readers and ordinary Muslims who read it daily in their prayers and studies, would have been discovered those mistakes. Third: Likewise he ignores that in each and every language have number of words and every word has different meaning according to context and subject, so he believes that the word "الحصب" has a single meaning only and it cannot be used in any

¹ Journal of the American Oriental Society, 1993, P. 564.

other meaning, because of this point the most of interpreters ancient lexicologists and narrators of Ḥadīth among the Muslims and Europeans have deplored Bellamy. Forth: Bellamy mentions that the Qur'ān has used the word "الحطب" in the meaning of wood of fire (72:15 and 111:4) but at the same time he neglects that the Qur'ān states out rightly in two places that "الحجارة" (stone) will be fuel of the fire *فَاتَّقُوا النَّارَ الَّتِي وَقُودُهَا النَّاسُ وَالْحِجَارَةُ* (Guard yourselves against the Fire whose fuel is men and stones- al-Baqarah: 24) and *وَأَنْفُسَكُمْ وَأَهْلِيكُمْ نَارًا وَقُودُهَا النَّاسُ وَالْحِجَارَةُ* (Safeguard yourselves and your families from a Fire fuelled by people and stones-al-Taḥrīm: 6). It is not bizarre if the Qur'ān mentions "الخصب" for fuel of the hell. Fifth: If Bellamy was thinking that "الحجر" (stone) and "الخصب" (fertile) are not suitable for (الاشتعال) "inflammation" and (التوقد) "fuel" so it is not possible to be fuel for fire which is extremely wrong, because the stone and minerals melt and burns as we see in the lava which throws the volcanoes which ossify after it becomes cool. In fact all the objects burn and depend on the temperature. It is known that the temperature of lava is 1150 degree Celsius and (الألماس) "diamond"– which is a most strong mineral know till date– melts and burns in the temperature of 4000 degree Celsius. This important scientific fact lies in the aforesaid verses of the Qur'ān. When the Qur'ān says that people and stone are (among them idols) the fuels of fire, it indicates to intense heat on one side and severe torment for unbelievers and polytheists on the other side.

It is worth mentioning that some people use grits and pieces of stone to make the heat intense to heat up and radiate through the temperature generated from them for long time

arrangement or in order to correct the phrase.¹ This proclamation of Bellamy faces the same discussion as it happened to the above-mentioned word "حصب". He assumes actually the thing which does not exist and cannot be referred to it. He also ignores the fact that the publication of the Koran has never been an individual aspect and it has not seen by other Muslims. In addition to that, likewise he assumes here two defects in the so-called copyist, and they mistook in reading the alleged origin and its implication of correcting or modifying the text of the Qur'ān, and both without evidence except suspicion which is unacceptable. If the so called copyist was able to feminize the adjective of the feminine noun as Bellamy says it would have paid attention to the strangeness in the meaning of the phrase that he writes and to contemplate into the matter at the same time he would have re-examined it, and since he did not do anything regarding this, he did not feel the meaning of the phrase bizarrely and did not make mistakes in reading or writing.

Secondly: Bellamy pays no attention to the word "أمة" (people) used in the Qur'ān in numerous meanings among which is the meaning of "المدة" (period) or "الحقبة من الزمن" (a period of time),² likewise he takes no notice of what the European lexicologists provide the meaning, for example, Han Wehr writes that the word "أمة" is intended to (Generation) as far as to other meanings concerned.³ Generation in English means generation of people or their period that is the period in which the children

¹ See: Journal of the American Oriental Society, 1993, P. 564.

² See: Ma'jduddīn Moḥammed Yāqūb al-Firrozbādī: Baṣā'ir Dhawī al-Tamīz fī Laṭ'if al-Kitāb al-'Azīz, (edit. Muḥammed 'Alī al-Najjār), Beirut, without date, vol. 2, PP. 79-180. Al-Ḥussain bin Moḥammed al-Damghanī: Qāmūsal-Qur'ā (edit. 'Abdul 'Azīz Sayyid al-Ahl), Beirut, 1985, PP. 42-44.

³ See: Hans Wehr: A Dictionary of Modern Written Arabic (ed.).

grow up from childhood to the age of adultery and reproduction.¹ If Bellamy had reiterated to this type of English-Arabic dictionaries, he would have found the word "أمة" in these two verses which is correct and not strange.

Another word addressed by Bellamy in his latest essay in this series is "ل" in verse "وَإِنْ كُنَّا لَمَّا لِيُوفِّيَنَّهُمْ رَبُّكَ أَعْمَلَهُمْ" (-- And whatever your Lord has given them because of their action-Hūd: 111). Bellamy rejects the grammatical interpretation presented by the Muslims and European interpreters for instance: R. Bell and G. Bargstrasser. Here he did not go for that this word is wrong or it is possible to hid it and modify the verse, but adds by saying that this word has come here due to the mistake committed by the copyist. He says that the copyist when became free from writing "وإن كلا" of the verse no. 111, lifted his sight from the page and diverted his sight towards the verse no. 109 where this phrase lies "وإننا لموفوهم" so he started to write from the word "لموفوهم" but when he finished the writing of "ل" and "م" felt his mistake and cancelled the two letters by putting vertically through "م" an "alif" and wrote there "ل" between "كلا" and "ليوفينهم" in this way "ل" entered into the verse.²

There is no need to refer to the grammatical interpretation of "ل" in this place and is sufficient to refer to irrational argument which Bellamy has brought to. First, it is not normal that the alleged copyist diverted his sight his back before finishing the full verse (verse no. 110) which is longer than two normal lines, then he begins the writing of phrase

¹ See: Oxford Advanced Learners Dictionary of Current English, ed. A.S. Hornby and others, third edition, 1974, eighteenth Edition, 1983, P. 357.

² Ibid. P. 197.

which he has written a little ago. There is no similarity between the two phrases where the verse 111 starts with "وإن" followed by "كلا" which is in the verse no. 109 and starts with "إنا" followed by "لموفوهم". Furthermore, the so-called copyist had begun writing of a new verse, (means verse no. 111) and the phrase "وإن" lies in the beginning where the phrase "وإنا لموفوهم" is mentioned at the end of the verse no. 109, so the mistake, Bellamy assumes for that the so called copyist had committed it, is totally far from logic and probability.

Second: Had the so-called copyist realized his mistake after writing the two letters "اللام" and "ميم", he would have cancelled them by putting a horizontal line over both of them, not by putting vertical line over them nor by putting vertical line over the ميم only as Bellamy alleges.

Third: The suspicion that the copyist later read the vertical line as "alif", and wrote "ا" in that place is not reasonable at all where the second so-called copyist was of course knowing the language and understanding the written phrase, as it is impossible that one version of the Qur'ān which the first alleged copyist had prepared was available so the later so-called copyist compelled to take shelter to that to prepare his version.

Going through these issues the argument of Bellamy is misleading and cannot convince any pure sensed person.

These are some examples that Bellamy has written in this subject and no need to ponder upon the rests of the words which he deals with in his articles, in the writing of these twenty two words he infact commits nasty mistakes in the same number.

Conclusion:

It becomes clear from the above discussion that the orientalist belong to two groups as far as our subject of discussion is concerned. The first group has moderate stand to the Islamic sources so they accept their common authenticity, but they do not care for the chronicle of narratives and other factors of their authenticity and tend to utilize those narratives which corroborate their perspectives without any criticism or objection and denounce those which come across their opinions and tendencies.

The second group is extremists to their position upon sources and say that these are not contemporary and so is not considerable for the Islamic history of the first and second centuries AH, in spite of that majority of the first group refute the assumptions of the second group in sources, despite that the Muslim scholars also refute these allegations, so the second group insist on their passion that is especially in order to obtain from the Qur'ān.

As far as the Qur'ānic perception is concerned, both the groups are equal. So the first group attempts with various resources and arguments to prove that the Qur'ān is compiled by the Prophet Muḥammad (PBUH) and excerpted from Judaism and Christianity and other ancient beliefs while the second group relies on the conclusions and then goes to the extreme point and states that the Islamic historical sources cannot be reliable for the first two centuries and the Qur'ān is not merely the compilation of Muḥammad (PBUH) but it developed over these two centuries then it took its present form at the end of the second century and later stages. Similarly, the two groups aim at making the Qur'ān equal to what is called the holy book as far as the history is concerned,

or as they say: that for the Qur'ān there is a history similar to that of the holy book (OT) has a history.

The entire conclusions and findings of the two groups are false and corrupt as well as they are null and void but alas both the concerned groups do not realize it. In recent times they have been following their efforts in spreading and promoting their views, and they are reprinting the writings of the ancient orientalist on this subject on one side¹ and on the other hand preparing new publications. Toby Lester tells us that European and American orientalist have adopted a project to prepare what they call the "Qur'ānic Encyclopedia" which will include all the Western scholars' findings in the last century regarding the Qur'ānic studies². Therefore, it is necessary to follow up what they write and publish and to confront them in their own area by refuting all their conclusions one by one.

¹ See: Andrew Rippin (ed.) *The Qur'ān, Formative Interpretation*, Ashgate Publishing, Aldershot, 1999, and Ibn Warrāq (ed.): *The Origin of the Koran*, New York, 1998.

² Toby Lester: *The Atlantic Monthly*, January 1999, P. 30.

Bibliography

(a) Books:

1. A.I. Kash, *Judaism in Islam*, New Delhi, 1954
 2. Abraham Gelger, *Judaism and Islam*, Madras, 1898
 3. Alan F. Alford, *Gods of the New Millennium*, London, 1996
 4. Al-Ḥussain bin Moḥammed al-Damghanī, *Qāmūs al-Qur'ā* (edit. 'Abdul 'Azīz Sayyid al-Ahl), Beirut, 1985
 5. al-Kalbī, *Kitāb-ul-Aṣnām A* (edit. Aḥmad Zakī Pāshā), Cairo, 1343 AH
 6. Al-Sumhudi, *Wafā' al-Wafā' bi Dār al-Muṣṭafá*, vol. 1, (edit. M.M. 'Abdul Ḥamīd), Cairo, n.d.
 7. Andrew Rippin (ed.) *The Qur'ān, Formative Interpretation*, Ashgate Publishing, Aldershot, 1999
 8. Arthur Jeffry, *The Foreign Vocabulary of the Qur'ān*, Baroda, 1938.
 9. C.C. Torey, *The Jewish Foundation of Islam*, New York, 1933
 10. C.C. Torrey, *The Commercial. Theological Terms of the Koran*, Leiden, 1892
 11. D. S. Margoliouth, *Moḥammed and the Rise of Islam*, London, 1905
 12. Fred M. Donner, *Narratives of Islamic Origins: The Beginnings of Historical Writings*, Darwin Press, Inc, Preston, 1998
 13. Ibn Hiṣhām, *The Biography of Prophet* (edit. Muṣṭafá al-Saqqā and others), n.d.
 14. Ibn Rustah, *Kitāb al-A'alāq al-Nafsīyyah* (edit. M.J. De Geeje), Leiden, 1892
 15. Ibn Warrāq (ed.), *The Origin of the Koran*, New York, 1998.
-

16. Ignaz Goldziher, *Moḥammedarische Studien* (first published in 1890)
 17. M. al-A'zamī, *On Shacht's Origin of Muhammadan Jurisprudence*, King Saud University and John Wiley & Sons, Inc., New York, 1985.
 18. M.M. 'Alī, *Sīrat al-Nabī and the Orientalists*, vol: 1A, King Fahd Qur'ān Printing Complex, Medina, 1997
 19. M.M. al-A'zamī, *Studies in Early Ḥadīth Literature*, Beirut, 1968
 20. M.M. Watt, *Muḥammad at Mecca*, Oxford, 1960
 21. B. Lewis and P.M. Holtfield (ed), *Historians of the Middle East*, London, 1962
 22. Majduddīn Moḥammed Yāqūb al-Firrozbādī, *Baṣā'ir Dhawī al-Tamyīz fī Laṭ'if al-Kitāb al-'Azīz* (edit. Muḥammed 'Alī al-Najjār), Beirut, n.d.
 23. Mirzā Abul al-Faḍl, *The Qur'ān, Arabic Text and English Translation, Arranged Chronologically*, 1911
 24. Montgomery Watt, *Muḥammad at Mecca*, Oxford, 1960
 25. Muḥammad 'Abd al-Nāzīr, *Dirāsāt Goldzehr fī al-Sunnah wa Makānatihā al-'Ilmīyyah*, Ph. D. Thesis, Tunisia University, 1404H/1984AD
 26. Muḥammad Luqmān Salafī, *Ihtimām al-Muḥaddithīn bi Naqdi al-Ḥadīth Sanadan wa Matnan wa Daḥḍi Mazā'im al-Mustashriqīn wa Atbā'ihim*, Riyāḍ, 1984
 27. N.J. Coulson, *A History of Islamic Law*, London, 1946
 28. Oxford Advanced Learners Dictionary of Current English, ed. A.S. Hornby and others, third edition, 1974, eighteenth Edition, 1983
 29. R. Bell, *The Qur'ān: Translated with a Critical Rearrangement with the Suras*, T. & T. Clark, Edinburgh, 1937.
-

30. Richard Bell, *The Origin of Islam and its Christian Environment*, London, 1926
31. Stefan Wilde (ed), *The Qur'ān as Text*, E.J. Brill, Leiden, 1996
32. W. Muir, *Life of Mohamet*, 1923
33. Wansborough, *Qur'ānic Studies, etc*, Oxford, 1977
34. Watt, *Muḥammad's Mecca*, Edinburgh, 1988
35. Wehr, *A Dictionary of Modern Written Arabic* (ed.). n.d.

(b) Periodicals:

36. *Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islamic*, vol. 17, 1999
 37. *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, 1993, P. 564.
 38. *Taḥqīqāt Islāmī*, Islāmābād, 1985, P. 30-21
 39. *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*, vol. 48, 1985
 40. *Islamic Culture*, vol. 1, 1927
 41. *The Moslem World*, January 1934
 42. *The Atlantic Monthly*, January 1999
 43. *Impact International*, Leiden, March 2000
-

Qur'ānic Sources and the Orientalists **(A Critical Study)**

✎...Dr. Muḥammad al-Sayyid Rāḍī Jibra'īl¹

Tr. Dr. Moḥammad Ajmal²

Introduction

The Qur'ān is the Message of Islam: It is a reality that the Qur'ān is the message of Islam and the orientalist know it very well. Therefore, they chose the Qur'ān as a subject for their study and research.³ On the other hand, some of the hypocrites exploited this living fact because of the high place of the Qur'ān among Muslims so they tried downgrade the sacred way of life of the Prophet Muḥammad and lower its role in becoming articulate Qur'ān, as the Qur'ān itself specified this in one of its verses: (وَأَنْزَلْنَا إِلَيْكَ الذِّكْرَ لِتُبَيِّنَ لِلنَّاسِ مَا نُزِّلَ إِلَيْهِمْ وَلَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ ﴿٤٤﴾) (Tr.: We have sent down to you the reminder to enable you to make clear to mankind what has been sent down to them so that they may reflect upon it-al-Naḥl:44). So they proclaimed by denying that there was no need to have anything other the Qur'ān, it is alone considered to be enough for guidance, which is a step aims at the end to relegate the Qur'ān itself.

The Prophet (PBUH) pointed to this kind of thought when he said: (ألا إني أوتيت الكتاب ومثله معه، ألا إني أوتيت القرآن ومثله معه ألا يوشك

¹ A scholar of Qur'ānic Studies

² Assistant Professor, Centre for Arabic and African Studies, SLL&CS, JNU, New Delhi

³ Even if the most of those studies aim at creating suspicion in the Qur'ān to squander its evidence as it will come ahead.

رجل ينثني شبعاً على أريكته يقول: عليكم بالقرآن، فما وجدتم فيه من حلال فأحلوه، (Tr.: See, I was given the Book and similar to that an another thing with it, verily, I was given the Qur'ān, and similar to that an another thing with it, verily, a man about to bend his feet to his knees and says: follow the Qur'ān, if you find in it what is permissible get it, and what you found in it impermissible leave it.)

Aim of both the parties is one and that is to obtain from the Qur'ān and to obtain from Islam altogether, but how it may be possible: (يُرِيدُونَ لِيُطْفِئُوا نُورَ اللَّهِ بِأَفْوَاهِهِمْ وَاللَّهُ مُتِمُّ نُورِهِ وَلَوْ كَرِهَ الْكَافِرُونَ ﴿٨٨﴾) (Tr.: They wish to push His light out with their mouths but he will perfect His light, much as those who deny the truth may dislike it. Al-Şaff: 8)

Therefore, this chapter was made and it deals with two points: First: Determination of the Qur'ān as a true message and divine source of Islam. Second: Dissemination of this message is to achieve the universality which has been proved by the Qur'ān which says: (وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَاكَ إِلَّا كَافَّةً لِّلنَّاسِ بَشِيرًا وَنَذِيرًا وَلَكِنَّ أَكْثَرَ النَّاسِ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٨٨﴾) (Tr.: We have sent you as a bearer of glad tidings and a warner for the whole of mankind, but most people have no knowledge. Saba': 28)

The following is an explanation of these two points:

First: The Qur'ān determines the righteousness of the message of the Prophet Muḥammad (PBUH): Allah sent His messenger Muḥammad (PBUH) with the message of Islam which is the completion of the all declared prophethoods, so it is narrated: (إن مثلي ومثل الأنبياء من قبلي كمثل رجل بنى بيتاً فأحسنه وأجمله، إلا موضع لبنة من زاوية، فجعل الناس يطوفون به ويعجبون له، ويقولون: هلا وُضعت هذه اللبنة؟ قال: فأنا

اللبنة، وأنا خاتم النبيين)¹ (Tr.: My like and the like of the prophets before me is like a man who built a house, then he furnished it and beatified it except a corner which he left to put a brick, so the people started to take a round around it and were admired it, saying: why was this brick not put hear? He said: I am that brick and I am the completion of the all Prophets.)

The Prophet (PBUH) arrived and preached with the call of previous prophets, which is one and similar call, and the similar principles of belief are: belief in Allah, His angels, books, messengers and the day hereafter. And the basis of legislations are: purity, chastity in morals, integrity and intent in behavior, justice and fairness in dealings and advice to the nation in the states: (شَرَعَ لَكُمْ مِنَ الدِّينِ مَا وَصَّى بِهِ نُوحًا وَالَّذِي أَوْحَيْنَا إِلَيْكَ وَمَا وَصَّيْنَا بِهِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَمُوسَى وَعِيسَى أَنْ أَقِيمُوا الدِّينَ وَلَا تَتَفَرَّقُوا فِيهِ) (Tr.: Allah has ordained for you the same religion which He enjoined on Nūḥ and which We have revealed to you, and which We enjoined upon Ibrāhīm and Mūsá and ʿĪsá so that you should remain steadfast in religion and not become divided in it. Al-Shurá: 13) The message of Islam arrived over the course of time of the previous messengers, the world had sunk into a dark ignorance: where in the features of goodness were hidden, and extinguished the lamps of thought and disrupted the talents of the mind, which does not find with it an expression of the approach that prevailed in the life of the human kind before Islam more authentic than the description of the Qurʾān in the words of Allah: (هُوَ الَّذِي بَعَثَ فِي الْأُمِّيِّينَ رَسُولًا مِنْهُمْ يَتْلُوا عَلَيْهِمْ آيَاتِهِ وَيُزَكِّيهِمْ) (Tr.: It is He who has raised among the unlettered people a messenger from

¹ Bukhārī has mentioned this Ḥadith in his book from the narration of Abū Hurairah: k/Al-Manāqib, b/Khātimum Nabīyyīn (PBUH).

among themselves who recites His revelation to them and purifies them and teaches them the Book and wisdom, for they had formerly been clearly misguided. Al-Jumu'ah: 02)

Among the idol-worshippers many evil-doers, tyrants and lusty people resuscitated and started to oppose to the Prophet (PBUH) and denied his prophethood and repulsed his belief and worked against his call.

The Prophet Muḥammad (PBUH) firmly followed the path of Allah which was a total support for His messengers and their endorsement through the miracles, as Allah supported His former messengers with receptive miracles which eyewitnesses observed and passers-by saw: for instance, the camel of Ṣāliḥ and the wand of Mūsá and so on and so forth. But Allah at final espoused a great miracle which became witness on the truthfulness of the Prophet (PBUH) and approved what called it a revered Book, the Qur'ān in Arabic that addressed the generations for every era and epoch passed and to come, and which is recited every now and then.

In this connection, the Prophet (PBUH) says: (ما من الأنبياء نبي إلا أعطي من الآيات ما مثله آمن عليه البشر، وإنما كان الذي أوتيته وحياً أوحاه الله إلي، فأرجو أن أكون أكثرهم تابعاً يوم القيامة)¹ (Tr.: Each and every Prophets were given some of the verses, such as the one on which men have believed, but it was the one that I was given is a revelation Allah sent to me. I hope that most of them will follow it till the Day of Judgment.)

Allah has revealed the Qur'ān in the language of the Arabs at a time when their language was on the zenith of eloquence and articulation and on peak of rhetoric and expression, no any

¹ The Ḥadīth has been mentioned by Bukhārī in his book /Faḍā'il al-Qur'ān, b/ How the revelation was sent, and the first time was revealed.

other language on the earth than Arabic exists vis-à-vis their tongue throughout the ages in which the Final Book was revealed and the Prophet called the opponents and deniers to accept the challenge demonstrated by the Qur'ān in its verses to produce a book as the Qur'ān has presented: (أَمْ يَقُولُونَ تَقْوَلَهُ بَلْ (Tr.: Or do they say, He has invented it himself? Indeed, they are not willing to believe. Let them produce a scripture like it, if what they say is true. Al-Tūr: 33-34) Or they should produce ten verses like those of it: (أَمْ يَقُولُونَ افْتَرَاهُ قُلْ فَأْتُوا بِعَشْرِ سُوْرٍ مِّثْلِهِ مُفْتَرِيْتٍ وَأَدْعُوا مَنِ اسْتَضَعْتُمْ مِّنْ دُونِ اللّٰهِ اِنْ (Tr.: If they say, 'He has invented it himself', Say, 'If you are truthful-Hūd: 13), produce ten invented chapters like it and call on whom you can besides Allah, to help you".) Or just a single chapter like it: (وَ اِنْ كُنْتُمْ فِي رَيْبٍ مِّمَّا نَزَّلْنَا عَلٰى عَبْدِنَا فَأْتُوا بِسُوْرَةٍ مِّثْلِهِ وَ اَدْعُوا شُهَدَاءَكُمْ مِّنْ دُونِ اللّٰهِ اِنْ كُنْتُمْ صٰدِقِيْنَ ﴿٣٣﴾ فَاِنْ لَّمْ تَفْعَلُوْا وَلَنْ تَفْعَلُوْا فَاتَّقُوا النَّارَ الَّتِي وَقُودُهَا النَّاسُ وَالْحِجَارَةُ اُعِدَّتْ لِلْكَافِرِيْنَ ﴿٣٤﴾ (Tr.: If you are in doubt about the revelation We have sent down to Our servant, then produce a single chapter like it, and call upon your helpers besides Allah, if you are truthful. But if you cannot do it, and you can never do it, then guard yourselves against the Fire whose fuel is men and stones prepared for those who deny the truth. Al-Baqarah: 23-24)

The Qur'ān faced them with this challenge, so they were none but unable to speak out before the truth of the book of Allah and the truth what Muḥammad (PBUH) brought with him.

However, we must emphasize the fact that one should not disregard the miracle of the Qur'ān, which is that this miracle [the Qur'ān] has carried at the same time the constitution that aims at building the nation of Islam on its basis and guiding the people in all walks of life.

In this regard, Sheikh Maḥmūd Chaltout says: Allah has revealed it for two great reasons; **One of them** is: that to be a miracle marking on the truth of the Messenger to call for the message and preach to Allah through it, according to this approach, it carries in its style, meanings, legislation and knowledge. The elements of miracles, as He ordered His Messenger to challenge the mankind thus he did so with them so as to disclose their inability and thus he succeeded over them. The miracles of the messengers before him were touching paranormal, not-rational, in which the mind wanders, and the mind works with contemplation and celebration, and it is extinct and not permanent, because their message was not common to the people of their time, and nor it is immortal.

Second reason: that to be a foundation of guidance and leadership and source of legislation and provisions, must be followed and referred to, and it is not sufficient to prove that the necessary to follow, is the mere evidence that it is miraculous, but it must be noted that the miracle represents that it is from Allah and it has contained explicit divine command to be followed, and work with the guarantee of rulings without a single method, therefore Allah says: (أَتَّبِعُوا مَا أَنْزَلَ إِلَيْكُم مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ وَلَا تَتَّبِعُوا مِن دُونِهِ أَوْلِيَاءَ ۗ) (Tr.: Follow what has been sent down to you by your Lord and do not follow any protector other than Him.) Allah further says: (إِنَّا أَنْزَلْنَا إِلَيْكَ الْكِتَابَ بِالْحَقِّ لِتَحْكُمَ بَيْنَ النَّاسِ بِمَا أَرْنَاكَ اللَّهُ) (Tr.: We have sent the book down to you with the truth so that you can judge among mankind by means of what Allah has shown you. Al-Nisā': 105)

The Muslims have agreed upon that the Qur'ān is the basis of religion and Shari'ah even it has become the source of every necessary knowledge about the religion for them.¹

Perhaps we are not unaware of the correct understanding if we say: The above verses determine the unbroken connection between the miracle of the Qur'ān and its guidance that is the connection between the preludes and the results so the purpose of the to be miraculous is an introduction of its guiding result, or you can say if you want: The purpose of miracles is to precede in determination the purpose of guidance; because if the people are called for the work through any method, they must be convinced of the safety of the source of this approach so that they will be guided to it with insight and reassurance. That is how the miracles in this aspect have led them to the purpose that could fulfill this goal, so it is known that the Qur'ān is the speech of the Lord of mankind and their Creator. And it is well-known what is right for them and for what they reconciled them.

Thus, the place of the Qur'ān from this message of Islam becomes crystal clear, therefore, it has become the definitive evidence approving the Prophet (PBUH) and the validity of his final common message.

The Qur'ān and the Spread of the Message of Islam: With the same characteristics of truth, the Qur'ān carried the banner of propagating the call of Islam, because the Muslims came across the time of distress in the early years of the preaching seeking security and empowerment, or after that they launched the triumphs to the countries on the earth with guidance, goodness, urbanization and justice.

¹ Imām Maḥmūd Shaltūt, *Al-Islām 'Aqīdah wa Shari'ah*, PP. 498-500, Dār al-Shurūq, ed/sixth, 1972.

(a) At the time of distress and the quest for security and empowerment, we have two examples in this regard, in which the Qur'ān has been considered, if somebody heard of it, it became a direct cause for embracing Islam:

First: It has prominently been mentioned in the dialogue of Ja'far bin Abū Ṭālib, - expressing to the Muslims who migrated to Abyssinia- with the king of Najash and their bishops, when the Quraiṣh sent to get these migrants back forcibly and instructed their messengers to Najashi, 'Amr ibn al-Āṣ and 'Abdullāh bin Abū Rabī'ah before their embracing of Islam to tempt the Negashi with gifts and instigate him by interpolating and confronting so that he may handover the migrants to them. But Najashi declined it before hearing the offer by Muslims, so Ja'far ibn Abū Ṭālib spoke on behalf of them and stated by saying: (O King, we have been the people of Jahiliyyah who worshiped the idols, ate the dead, committed obscenities, broke relationships and abused the neighbors. Our powerful people maltreated the fragile people, so we were on all these, then Allah sent among us a messenger from us, we know his genealogy and truthfulness, his honesty and modesty who called us to Allah to believe in His oneness and obey Him, to forsake what we and our ancestors worshiped such as the stone and idols. In addition to it, the Prophet also preached us to speak truth and pay off the loyalty and stressed to keep the bond of relationship, good treatment with the neighbors, abstaining from incest and shedding blood, stopped us from committing obscenities and telling lie, eating the wealth of orphans, defamations of pureness of somebody. He sternly ordered us to worship Allah Alone without sharing Him with anything and ordered us for steadfastness of prayer and to pay poor-due and observe the fasting of the month of Ramadan. So we approved him and believed in him and imitated him on

what he brought from Allah, therefore we worshiped Allah Alone and did not share with Him anything, we forbade to what He prohibited us from and we perceived permissible what He allowed us to practice, hence our people became enemy for us, they tormented on us and strived us from our believe. Therefore, when they plagued and aggrieved and became annoyance on us, we traveled to your kingdom and we chose you over anyone else. O king, we hoped that we would not be oppressed under you, then the Najashi said: do you have what your Prophet has brought from Allah? Ja'far replied: yes; Najashi asked him: read it to me, he read preceding (كهيصص) Najashi started crying as his beard became wet – when his bishops heard of what was recited upon them began crying even their chests went wet, then the Najashi said: verily this and what 'Isá came with has come out from the same lamp, both 'Amr ibn al-'Āṣ and 'Abdullāh bin Abū Rabīah went back and he said, I take oath of Allah, I would not handover them to you and no one conspire against them).¹

Regarding Najashi and his apostles' acquiescence towards the truth, the word of Allah was revealed: (وَإِذَا سَمِعُوا مَا أُنزِلَ إِلَى الرَّسُولِ تَرَىٰ (وَإِذَا سَمِعُوا مَا أُنزِلَ إِلَى الرَّسُولِ تَرَىٰ أَعْيُنُهُمْ تَفِيضُ مِنَ الدَّمْعِ مِمَّا عَرَفُوا مِنَ الْحَقِّ يَقُولُونَ رَبَّنَا ءَامَنَّا فَاكْتُبْنَا مَعَ الشَّاهِدِينَ ﴿٨٣﴾)² (Tr.: When they listen to what has been sent to the Messenger, you see their eyes overflowing with tears, because of the truth they recognize. They say 'Our Lord, we believe, so count us among those who bear witness. Al-Mā'dah: 83)

Second: In the story of embracing Islam of Sa'ad bin Ma'ādh and Usaid bin al-Hudair, it manifested: Ibn Ishāq narrated in the biography of the Prophet Muḥamamd (PBUH) from 'Ubaidullāh

¹ Dialogue of Jafā bin Abū Ṭālib with the Najāshī has been mentioned by Aḥmad, Musnad Aḥmad bin Ḥanbal, al-Risālah Foundation, 2/263-269.

² Asbāb-un-Nuzūl by Wāḥidī, P. 152.

ibn al-Mughīrah ibn Mu'āqib and 'Abdullāh ibn Abū Bakr ibn Muḥammad ibn 'Amr ibn Ḥazm that Mus'ab ibn 'Umair went as an envoy of the Prophet (PBUH) to Madīnah to teach the Qur'ān to its inhabitants, and was hosted by As'ad bin Zurārah who accompanied him to an orchard- one of the orchards of Banū Ḥafṣah, where gathered a few men who had embraced Islam. Those days Sa'ad bin Ma'ādh and Usaid bin al-Hudaid were the leaders of their tribes and both of them were polytheists. When they came to know about Mus'ab, Sa'ad bin Ma'ādh sent Usaid to prevent him from his word and scold him, when As'ad bin Zurārah saw Usaid coming, said to Mus'ab: He is a leader of his tribe, who has come to you. May Allah make him right in his intention! Mus'ab said: If he sits, I will talk to him. Usaid stopped there and started abusing them, and said: what brought you over here to make fool our weaker people and threatened to kill them, but Mus'ab asked him: Can you sit and listen, if you agree upon an issue, it means you accepted it, if you don't like stop from your hate? He said: you are right, Musa'b talked to him and recited a few verses of the Qur'ān to him. After he listened to it, he said: what a good and beautiful thing is it! What do you do when someone intends to enter this religion? They replied: you have to take bath, clean your clothe then you will bear witness of truth and then offer prayer, so he did, after that he came back to Sa'ad bin Ma'ādh, but Sa'ad did not like his stand and he himself went to do what Usaid didn't. Musa'b spoke to him in the same way he talked to Usaid and recited the Qur'ān before him and accepted Islam.¹

(b) As for the context of conquests, the true stories of people's embracing Islam and their hearing Qur'ān from Muslims, its instances are numerous. In this regard it is sufficient to indicate that the motive of the Muslim caliph

¹ *Sīrat Ibn Hishām*, Maktabah Kulliyat al-Azhar, Egypt, 1974, 2/58-59

'Uthmān (MABPWH) to collect the Qur'ān on the letters of the Quraish to prevent the difference in reading was that a large number of people entered into Islam who were non-Arabs and were unable to recite the Qur'ān correctly and it was afraid that some non-Arabic dialects may infiltrate into the Holy Book.

Attitude of Denying Groups of Prophecy of Muḥammad (PBUH) by the Qur'ān

(in the period of Prophethood)

The unbelievers among the Quraish, from the very beginning, had demonstrated enmity towards the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) even they allured others what they believed that the Qur'ān to which they are being called to believe in it is not a revelation from Allah rather it is a farce and fabricated.

They surpassed all limits in a categorical condition, so sometime they claimed that the Qur'ān is a fictitious speech created by Muḥammad himself: (وَإِذَا تُتْلَىٰ عَلَيْهِمْ آيَاتُنَا بَيِّنَاتٍ قَالُوا مَا هَذَا إِلَّا رَجُلٌ يُرِيدُ أَنْ يَهْدِيََنَا سَبِيلًا مَّا هُوَ إِلَّا نَجْمٌ مُّذْتَرَىٰ) (Tr.: Whenever our messages are conveyed to them in all their clarity, they say, 'This (Muḥammad) is nothing but a man who wants to turn you from what your forefathers worshipped', and they say: 'This Qur'ān is nothing but an invented falsehood. Saba': 43)

While sometime they said that Muḥammad sought help from others to form the Qur'ān or this Qur'ān is stereotypical myths of the ancients which has been dictated: (وَقَالَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا إِنْ هَذَا إِلَّا إِفْكٌ افْتَرَاهُ وَأَعَانَهُ عَلَيْهِ قَوْمٌ آخَرُونَ فَقَدْ جَاءُوا ظُلْمًا وَزُورًا ۗ) (Tr.: Those who deny the truth, say, 'This is only a forgery of his own invention in which others

have helped him.’ What they say is unjust and false. They say, ‘It is just fables of the ancients, which he had written down. They are dictated to him morning and evening. Al-Furqān: 4-5)

However, those who meditate on this position through what the Qur’ān has narrated from their sayings, and record their past in this regard show three characteristics which describe their ignorance, misguidance and lies, and ultimately their insistence on infidelity.

First of these characteristics: the confusion that reveals their ignorance, their anguish and their self-darkness: In this connection, they sometimes accuse very roughly, as in a single verse, Allah Exalted narrates from their sayings many pictures of their accusations, they do not rely on one of them for an obvious reason, which has no base of it which the Qur’ān ratifies by stating: (بَلْ قَالُوا أَضْغَتْ أَحْلَمِ بَلِ افْتَرَاهُ بَلْ هُوَ شَاعِرٌ فَلْيَأْتِنَا بِآيَةٍ كَمَا أُرْسِلَ الْأَوْلُونَ ﴿٥﴾) (Tr.: Some say: ‘These are his confused dreams,’ others say, ‘He has invented it himself,’ and yet others say, ‘He is a poet, let him bring us a sign as previous messengers did. Al-Anbiyā’: 5)

Once it becomes a fact to be the Qur’ān a revelation harder from their denial then they turn their allegation about the Holy Book to one over whom it was sent down, in this case their speech consists on the confession that the Qur’ān is revealed but it was sent down on who is not capable because of his poverty: (وَقَالُوا لَوْلَا نُزِّلَ هَذَا الْقُرْآنُ عَلَى رَجُلٍ مِّنَ الْقُرَيْشِيِّينَ عَظِيمٍ ﴿٣١﴾) (Tr.: They said, ‘Why was this Qur’ān not sent down to a great man of the two cities. Al-Zukhruf: 31)

And sometime they confess of its being truly revealed and the capability of whom it was sent down, but at this time they deny the nature of its descending: (وَقَالَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لَوْلَا نُزِّلَ عَلَيْهِ الْقُرْآنُ جُمَلَةً ﴿١٠٠﴾)

وَاجِدَةً (Tr.: Those who deny the truth say, 'Why was the Qur'ān not sent down to him in a single revelation. Al-Furqān: 32)

Sometime their objection disgrace them so they demand for another Qur'ān: (وَإِذَا تُتْلَىٰ عَلَيْهِمْ آيَاتُنَا بَيِّنَاتٍ قَالَ الَّذِينَ لَا يَرْجُونَ لِقَاءَنَا آتِ بِآيَاتٍ كَذِبَةٍ أَوْ بَدِّلْ

بِقُرْآنٍ غَيْرِ هَذَا أَوْ بَدِّلْهُ) (Tr.: When Our clear revelations are recited to them, those who do not expect to meet Us say, 'Bring us a different Qur'ān or make some changes in it. Yūnus: 15)

All this articulate of their confusion and bewilderment in denying the truth, does not find a reason to deny it or an evidence for its un-authenticity.

Second characteristic amongst other characteristics of the infidels attitude about Qur'ān: mannerism and arbitrariness to justify their lied attitude towards the Qur'ān: It becomes very clear because of the bafflement of some of their erudite eloquent when they heard the Qur'ān, they didn't find better speech than it and more eloquent in wordy manner than it and sophisticated ideally than it, so he went back to his people with this thought about the Qur'ān, hence they reprimanded him and did not agree upon him rather they pronounced a speech according to infidelity and falsehood they were indulged in.

It has been mentioned in detail in the narration of Ibn 'Abbās (MABPWH) that Walīd bin al-Mughīrah came to the Prophet (PBUH) and recited the Qur'ān before him, as if it made him soften. This information reached Abū Jahl who came to him and said: O uncle, your people think to collect a heavy wealth for you, he said: why? Replied: to give to you, because you came to Muḥammad to show what it was before him, he said: Quraish knew I am the wealthiest, he said: you say here something to your people that dictates you are denying him or you do not like him, he said: what I say? Swear to Allah, no

man amongst you knows better poetry, rajz and qaṣīdah than me, nor they know the poetry of Jinn, swear to Allah, no commonality with what he says, and swear to Allah, whatever he speaks is sweet and elegance, his upper side is plentiful and the lower one is bountiful, he verily ascends and never be lowered, he smashes what is beneath him, he said: your people will not agree with you until you say here, he said, let me think, when he thought said: this is an influential magic, affects others, then revealed: (ذُرِّي وَمَنْ خَلَقْتُ وَحِيدًا ۝۱).1

The proof of what revealed from the Qur'ān about this man is the narration of Allah Exalted: (ذُرِّي وَمَنْ خَلَقْتُ وَحِيدًا ۝۱ وَجَعَلْتُ لَهُ مَالًا مَمْدُودًا ۝۲ وَبَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ شُهُودًا ۝۳ وَمَهْدَتْ لَهُ تَمَهِيدًا ۝۴ ثُمَّ يَظْمَعُ أَنْ أَزِيدَ ۝۵ كَلَّا إِنَّهُ كَانَ لِآيَاتِنَا عَنِيدًا ۝۶ سَأَرْهِفُهُ ۝۷ صَعُودًا ۝۸ إِنَّهُ فَكَّرَ وَقَدَّرَ ۝۹ فَقَتِلَ كَيْفَ قَدَّرَ ۝۱۰ ثُمَّ قَاتَلَ كَيْفَ قَدَّرَ ۝۱۱ ثُمَّ نَظَرَ ۝۱۲ ثُمَّ عَبَسَ وَبَسَرَ ۝۱۳ ثُمَّ أَدْبَرَ وَاسْتَكْبَرَ ۝۱۴ فَقَالَ إِنْ هَذَا إِلَّا سِحْرٌ يُؤْتَرُ ۝۱۵ إِنْ هَذَا إِلَّا قَوْلُ الْبَشَرِ ۝۱۶) (Tr.: Leave Me alone (to deal) with him whom I have created alone. And to whom I have granted resources in abundance, and sons to be by his side, and whom I have provided with every resource, and yet, he greedily desires that I give him even more! By no means! He has been stubbornly hostile to Our revelation: I shall force him to endure a painful uphill climb! For he thought and he plotted —and woe to him; how he plotted! Let him be destroyed. How he calculated! Then he looked around; then he frowned and scowled, and he turned his back and behaved arrogantly and said, 'This is nothing but the word of mortal. Al-Muddaththir: 11-25)

The above sacred verses describe the extent of suffering in a false testimony collides the right, so this infidel exhausted his

¹ This Ḥadīth has been mentioned by al-Ḥākim in his Mustadrik (2/507): k/interpretation, b/ interpretation of the chapter of al-Muddaththir.

mind and concocted his talent and frowned his forehead and he is suffering a difficult birth of an idea of defective by the Qur'ān does not find anything of that and escalates what is wearing his face and changing colour and does not reach something convincing and instead of accepting the truth, contrives for, and passes a statement about the Qur'ān for his own interest without believing in: (إِنْ هَذَا إِلَّا سِحْرٌ يُؤْتَرُ ﴿٣١﴾) which is mannerism for infidelity and victory for the false!

Third characteristics: The insistence on disbelief after the emergence of truth and the predominance of its evidence: It assimilates the rejection of compliance for the truth-believing in the Qur'ān stubbornly as well as arrogantly, but pushed them the stubbornness to refuse the belief in any revelation before the Qur'ān: (وَقَالَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لَنْ نُؤْمِنَ بِهَذَا الْقُرْآنِ وَلَا بِالَّذِي بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ) (Tr.: Those who deny the truth say, 'We shall believe neither in this scripture nor in (any) that (came) before it'. Saba': 31)

The unbelievers were advising to each other not to listen to the Qur'ān and confusing those who followed it, fearing that their listeners would be affected so their resistance would be undermined for this truth by its sincere and evident advice: (وَقَالَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لَا تَسْمَعُوا لِهَذَا الْقُرْآنِ وَالْغَوْا فِيهِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَعْلَبُونَ ﴿٢٦﴾) (Tr.: Those who deny the truth say, 'Do not listen to this Qur'ān. Drown it out with noise, so that you may gain the upper hand. Fuṣṣilat: 26))

Thus, the position of the infidels of Quraish used to change about the Qur'ān in the era of the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) between the false accusation which is not based on any evidence, and confusion between the untrue claims and obstinacy and insistence on infidelity despite the truth has become clear and all that the Qur'ān discharges argument after argument and proof followed by another proof to these imposters.

Secondly: Position of the people of Book among the Jews and Christian from the holy Qur'ān: The position of these people is different from that of their predecessors, on the other hand, they are more blatant and misguided in their position, because the people of the book knew the truth but they denied it with wenchful enviousness as they did not have the Prophethood for themselves, even though their books described them the truth of Muḥammad (PBUH) before his prophecy and the time to come.

The verses of the Qur'ān have recorded these truths and described these perverted deniers what they deserve: Allah Exalted said: (وَلَمَّا جَاءَهُمْ كِتَابٌ مِّنْ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ مُصَدِّقٌ لِّمَا مَعَهُمْ وَكَانُوا مِنْ قَبْلُ يَسْتَفْتِحُونَ عَلَى الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا فَلَمَّا جَاءَهُمْ مَا عَرَفُوا كَفَرُوا بِهِ فَلَعْنَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَى الْكَافِرِينَ ﴿٨٩﴾) (Tr.: And now that a Book has come to them from Allah, fulfilling that (predictions about the final prophet in their scriptures) which is with them, they deny it- whereas previously they used to pray for victory against the disbelievers—yet when there came to them that which they recognized as the truth, they rejected it. Allah's rejection is the due of all who deny the truth. Al-Baqarah: 89)

Allah further said: (وَلَمَّا جَاءَهُمْ رَسُولٌ مِّنْ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ مُصَدِّقٌ لِّمَا مَعَهُمْ نَبَذَ فَرِيقٌ مِّنَ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ كِتَابَ اللَّهِ وَرَاءَ ظُهُورِهِمْ كَأَنَّهُمْ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿١٠١﴾) (Tr.: Whenever a messenger from Allah has come to them, fulfilling that (predictions) which they already had, some of those to whom the Book was given have cast off the Book of Allah behind their backs as if they had no knowledge. Al-Baqarah: 101)

Allah Exalted said: (الَّذِينَ آتَيْنَاهُمُ الْكِتَابَ يَعْرِفُونَهُ كَمَا يَعْرِفُونَ أَبْنَاءَهُمْ وَإِنَّ فَرِيقًا مِّنْهُمْ لَيَكْتُمُونَ الْحَقَّ وَهُمْ يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿١٤٦﴾) (Tr.: Those to whom We have given the Book recognize it just as they recognize their own sons. But, some of them knowingly conceal the truth. Al-Baqarah: 146)

Allah Almighty said: (أَفَعَيِّرَ اللَّهُ أَتَّبَعِي حَكَمًا وَهُوَ الَّذِي أَنْزَلَ إِلَيْكُمُ الْكِتَابَ مُفَصَّلًا

وَالَّذِينَ آتَيْنَاهُمُ الْكِتَابَ يَعْلَمُونَ أَنَّهُ مُنَزَّلٌ مِّن رَّبِّكَ بِالْحَقِّ فَلَا تَكُونَنَّ مِنَ الْمُمْتَرِينَ ﴿١١٤﴾)

(Tr.: Should I seek a judge other than Allah, when it is He who has revealed the Book, clearly know that it is the truth revealed by your Lord. Therefore, have no doubts. Al-An'ām: 114)

The biography of the Prophet Muḥammad (PBUH) has narrated us a lot of information of these disobedient and the most prominent of what the story of Huayy ibn Akḥṭab and his brother Abū Yāṣir mentioned which has been narrated by umm-ul-mu'minīn Ṣafiyah bin Huayy ibn Akḥṭab, she said: (I was the most beloved boy of my father and also of my uncle Abū Yāṣir, I did not see them with any boy but they catch me to have with them, and then said: When the Messenger of Allah came to Madīnah and rested in the tribe of Banū 'Amr bin 'Auf and reached there my father Huayy bin Akḥṭab and uncle Abū Yāṣir bin Akḥṭab at the pre-dawn time. Then she said: They did not return till the sunset, and said: they came tired,¹ idled and walking crawled, she said: I shuddered to them as I was happened to do but by God no one of them pay heed to me because of what they suffered from, she said: I heard my uncle Abu Yasir as he was saying to my father Huayy bin Akḥṭab: is this he? He said: yes by God, he said: do you recognize and assert him? He said: yes, he said: what is your opinion about him? He said: by God his animosity does not exist."²

On the contrary the Qur'ān recorded the position of the group which approved the truth and followed it, Allah the Glorified said: ﴿وَلَقَدْ وَصَّلْنَا لَهُمُ الْقَوْلَ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَذَكَّرُونَ ﴿٥١﴾ الَّذِينَ آتَيْنَاهُمُ الْكِتَابَ مِن قَبْلِهِ هُمْ

(Tr.: Those whom We have already given the Book, بِهِ يَوْمُنُونَ ﴿٥٢﴾)

¹ كل الرجل: the man tired, كل السيف: the sword did not cut, Lisā n-ul-'Arab stem-letter كلل.

² Sīrat Ibn Hishām, 2/119.

they believe in it, and when it is read out to them, say, ‘We believed in it. It is truly from our Lord. We were the believers before that. Al-Qiṣaṣ: 52-53)

Allah Almighty further said: *(وَكَذَلِكَ أَنْزَلْنَا إِلَيْكَ الْكِتَابَ فَالَّذِينَ ءَاتَيْنَاهُمْ (Tr.: الْكِتَابَ يُؤْمِنُونَ بِهِ وَمِنْ هَؤُلَاءِ مَنْ يُؤْمِنُ بِهِ وَمَا يَجْحَدُ بِآيَاتِنَا إِلَّا الْكَافِرُونَ ﴿٥٧﴾* likewise We have sent down the Book to you. Those to whom We gave the scripture believe in it, and so do some of your own people. Only those who deny the truth reject Our revelations. Al-‘Ankabūt: 47)

Perhaps the most prominent examples of this group is Mukhairiq whom of Ibn Ishāq narrates his story saying: “it is said about Mukhairiq that he was a pontiff scholar, a wealthy man having wealth from palm dates, one who recognized the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) by his Prophethood, received knowledge from him, overwhelmed upon the gregariousness of his religion, and lived firm over it till the day of Uḥud which was Saturday, he said: O the Jews, I swear to God you must be knowing that helping Muḥammad is your right, they replied: the day is Saturday, he said: there is no Saturday for you, and he lifted his weapon and came out the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) for Uḥud, and promised to his people saying: if I am killed, my wealth will be for Muḥammad (PBUH), and when people started fighting, he too fought even he was killed. The Messenger of Allah used to recount saying: Mukhairiq is the best amongst the Jews, the Messenger of Allah took his wealth in his possession and distributed it to the people of Madīnah”.¹

In the context of report and elucidation of the good tiding of the Gospel about the Prophet (PBUH) to be as the occult prophet, Sheikh Raḥmatullāh bin Khalīl al-Raḥmān al-Hindī

¹ Ibid, 2/119.

presents the two previous instances in the end of the ten reasons for one of the good tidings of Gospel about Muḥammad (PBUH) then comments saying: (تلك عشرة كاملة) “these are ten in full”.¹

These are the abysmal people of Judaism who recognized the truth so they followed it, on the contrary the people who recognized the truth but denied it, this is what initially the mind goes to, when the stand of the Jews be mentioned in the Qur’ān and the Qur’ān itself has reasoned this stand – especially that of Jews – because it is the repugnant envy against the Prophet (PBUH) – when he was bestowed with the Message and this is the envy which confronted with them for the opposition of the infidels of Quraish leveling the sword as it happened in the battle of Aḥzāb and on the level of falsehood by argument for example it has come in the Qur’ān: (أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَى الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا نَصِيبًا مِّنَ الْكِتَابِ يُؤْمِنُونَ بِالْحَبِيبِ وَالظَّلُوعِ وَيَقُولُونَ لِلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا هَؤُلَاءِ أَهْدَىٰ مِنَ الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا سَبِيلًا ﴿٥١﴾ أُولَٰئِكَ الَّذِينَ لَعَنَهُمُ اللَّهُ وَمَن يَلْعَنِ اللَّهُ فَلَن نَّجِدَ لَهُ نَصِيرًا ﴿٥٢﴾ أَمْ لَهُمْ نَصِيبٌ مِّنَ الْمُلْكِ فَإِذَا لَا يُؤْتُونَ النَّاسَ نَقِيرًا ﴿٥٣﴾ أَمْ يَحْسُدُونَ النَّاسَ عَلَىٰ مَا ءَاتَاهُمُ اللَّهُ مِن فَضْلِهِ فَقَدْ ءَاتَيْنَا ءَالَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ الْكِتَابَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ وَءَاتَيْنَاهُمْ مُلْكًا عَظِيمًا ﴿٥٤﴾ (Tr.: Have you not seen those who were in possession of portion of the Book? They believe in idols and devils. They say of those who deny the truth, “they are more rightly guided then the believers. Those are the ones God has rejected: you will not find anyone to help those God has rejected. Have they a share in God’s Kingdom? If they did, they would not give others so much as groove of a date stone. Do they envy others because of what God has given them out of His bounty? We granted the house of Abraham the Book and wisdom and We granted them a

¹ Izhār-ul-Ḥaq, 4/1128, KSA, 1410H-1989AD.

great kingdom. Some of them believed in it and some held back from it. Hell will suffice as a blazing Fire. Al-Nisā': 51-55)

So it is narrated from 'Abbās (MABPWH): "Huyiy bin Akḥṭab and Ka'ab bin Ashraf arrived Makkah to Quraysh and they took oath on the killing of the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) and said: you are the people of ancient knowledge and the holders of first book, tell us our story and about Muḥammad, they said: what are you and what about Muḥammad? They replied: we slaughter the "الكوماء" (the high-heeled camel), we serve milk in place of water, torture with –detainees- serve water to pilgrims and enjoin relations with relatives, then they said: what about Muḥammad? They replied: he is a faucet – read (without follower), breaks relationships with us, the tribe Banū Ghaffār, the thief of pilgrims follow him, they said: so you are better than him and well-guided, so Allah Exalted revealed the verse: (أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَى الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا نَصِيحًا مِّنَ الْكِتَابِ يُؤْمِنُونَ بِالْحَيَاتِ وَالطَّاغُوتِ) (Tr.: Have you not seen those who were in possession of portion of the Book? They believe in idols and devils. Al-Nisā': 51)

Stand of the Orientalists about the Source of Holy Qur'ān

Why the orientalist focused their attacks over the Source of the Qur'ān? If we go back what we said in the introduction about the fierce intellectual war waged against Islam by its enemies from the groups of unbelievers, as well as what we mentioned in the preamble on the place of the Holy Qur'ān in the matter of determining its truth, and carrying the banner of its publicity, the answer to this question here is easy.

We clearly say that the Orientalists in their war on Islam have concentrated their attack on the Qur'ān, this is simply because

it is a miracle of this religion and belief and methodology for doctrine and dogmatic values – as we mentioned – if they succeed in achieving their goal from the Qur’ān – and they can never do so -.

They singled out in the attack of the source of the Qur’ān for the purpose of wasting the fact that it is an infallible revelation that does not come falsehood from within or from behind it until it becomes a critical text in the first step in its content and in another step raises the claim of the shortcomings of this content, and its imperfection to the necessities of life and evolution, but it becomes a challenge for what they wanted to harm this valuable religion, which concluded with its message and all the messages and this great book, which has come down to certify the books which have been sent down before so that it could have dominated over them.

This chapter, which represents the core and essence of the subject, addresses this issue, so it presents the claims of the people here, similarly it responds and refutes them in matters that would be detailed later, but before that we would like to emphasize the motive and goal of orientalists as follows:

Purpose and Perspective: Orientalists pretend to be impartial in scientific or academic research when they become doubtful in the Qur’ān and proceed with this rule, while their aim is to deny that the Qur’ān is a divine revelation, and to prove that it is a human speech, that has been created by Muḥammad (PBUH) or has transmitted from others.

The orientalists have made this issue the focus of their research, and have accumulated in their denial of the rules of scientific research in this area that they did not make what they aim to determine the scientific hypothesis to prove them, but they made it a reality to seek reason and explanation, and what we are dealing with here is not a revealed speech, but confirms

that one of the most important works of the orientalist in their study of Islam and its sciences, is the encyclopedia of Islamic learning in the subject of Holy Qur'ān, began to deny the divine character of the Qur'ān from that very fact.

We illustrate their discussion in this regard and we quote their text along their length without divulging to become clear the image before the reader, and then come back with analysis and criticism to see that – what they dealt with – aiming surely to the skepticism of whether the Holy Qur'ān is divine revelation, nothing in it for the Prophet (PBUH), as we have provided, but the receipt of the clear and honest communication, and the statement of healing, and then they have what it is that the Qur'ān is the words of the Prophet (PBUH) or others' teaching.

Interpreter of Qur'ānic¹ subject under the title of "Muhammad and the Qur'ān": that he has linked the holy Qur'ān to the Prophethood of Muḥammad (PBUH) as we are not able to understand any of them without understanding the other, and the Muslim's perception is that Allah is the speaker and Muḥammad (PBUH) is the receiver and in the same way the angel Gabriël is the conveyer of the word of Allah (revelation) to Muḥammad (PBUH) but the analysis of the Qur'ānic text shows us that the matter is more complicated than that.

Because there is no indication for the source of revelation or the subject of conveyer in the chapters and verses which appeared that these are the most oldest of what was sent down from the holy Qur'ān, so in some of the verses there is no

¹ This version specifically is not of the interpreter of this subject which we have quoted from this part of the concise of Islamic encyclopedia but the appreciation has come in the preamble of this part – which consists on the subject of Qur'ān and etcetera – who have interpreted it they are: M. B. Hotsma, T.W. Arnold, R. Basit, R. Hartman.

reference or indication that it is a message from Allah, refer for example the verses 1 to 10 of the chapter of al-Ḍuḥá,¹ and the chapter of al-Qāri’ah, al-Takāthur and al-‘Aṣr also.

We bring here the afore-said holy verses consecutively: (وَالشَّمْسِ)

وَضُحَاهَا ① وَالْقَمَرِ إِذَا تَلَّهَا ② وَالنَّهَارِ إِذَا جَلَّهَا ③ وَاللَّيْلِ إِذَا يَغْشَاهَا ④ وَالسَّمَاءِ وَمَا بَنَاهَا ⑤

(Tr.: By the sun and its rising brightness and by the moon as it follows it, and by the ay as it revels its glory and by the night when it draws an veil over it, by the sky and how He built it and by the earth and how He spread it, by the soul and how He formed it, then inspired it to understand what was right and wrong for it. Al-Shams: 1-8).

And as mentioned in the chapter of al-Qāri’ah: (الْفَارِعَةُ ⑥ مَا الْفَارِعَةُ ⑦)

(Tr.: The Clatterer! What is the Clatterer?)

Would that you knew what the clatterer is!-Qāriyah: 1-3). And also in the chapter of al-Takāthur: (الْهَنَكُمُ الْكَاثِرُ ⑧ حَتَّى زُرْتُمُ الْمَقَابِرَ ⑨),

(Tr.: Greed for more and more distracted you {from God} till you reached the grave. Al-Takāthur: 1-2). Likewise in the chapter of al-‘Aṣr: (وَالْعَصْرِ ⑩ إِنَّ الْإِنْسَانَ لِرَبِّهِ لَكَنُفٍ ⑪),

(Tr.: I swear by the passage of time, that man is surely in a state of loss. Al-‘Aṣr: 1-2). Also in some other verses, it appears, as if Muḥammad (PBUH) is the speaker as it is mentioned in the chapter of al-Takwīr (15-21) and al-Inshiqāq (16-19).

In the early phase of Madīnah we find in the verse 97 of the chapter of al-Baqarah that Gabriel is one who is assigned to convey the message: (قُلْ مَنْ كَانَ عَدُوًّا لِجِبْرِيلَ فَإِنَّهُ نَزَّلَهُ عَلَى قَلْبِكَ بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ مُصَدِّقًا لِمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ وَهُدًى وَبُشْرَى لِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ ⑫)

(Tr.: Say, ‘Anyone who is an enemy of Gabriel- who by God’s leave has brought down to

you the Qur’an, confirming what came before it and good news for the believers).

Al-Baqarah: 97). In the chapter of al-Ahzab (1-3) it is mentioned that the messenger of Allah is one who is assigned to convey the message: (قُلْ إِنَّمَا أَنَا رَسُولُ اللَّهِ قَدِ ابْتُلِيتُ بِالْمَنَادِ ⑬)

(Tr.: Say, ‘I am only a messenger of Allah, I have been tested by the call).

Al-Ahzab: 1). In the chapter of al-Ankabūt (1-2) it is mentioned that the messenger of Allah is one who is assigned to convey the message: (قُلْ إِنَّمَا أَنَا بَشَرٌ مِثْلُكُمْ يُوحَىٰ إِلَيَّ الْوَحْيَ وَأَنَا نَذِيرٌ ⑭)

(Tr.: Say, ‘I am only a human like you, I am only a messenger of Allah, I have been tested by the call).

Al-Ankabūt: 1). In the chapter of al-Mā'idah (1-2) it is mentioned that the messenger of Allah is one who is assigned to convey the message: (قُلْ إِنَّمَا أَنَا رَسُولُ اللَّهِ قَدِ ابْتُلِيتُ بِالْمَنَادِ ⑮)

(Tr.: Say, ‘I am only a messenger of Allah, I have been tested by the call).

Al-Mā'idah: 1). In the chapter of al-Ahzab (1-3) it is mentioned that the messenger of Allah is one who is assigned to convey the message: (قُلْ إِنَّمَا أَنَا رَسُولُ اللَّهِ قَدِ ابْتُلِيتُ بِالْمَنَادِ ⑯)

(Tr.: Say, ‘I am only a messenger of Allah, I have been tested by the call).

Al-Ahzab: 1). In the chapter of al-Ankabūt (1-2) it is mentioned that the messenger of Allah is one who is assigned to convey the message: (قُلْ إِنَّمَا أَنَا بَشَرٌ مِثْلُكُمْ يُوحَىٰ إِلَيَّ الْوَحْيَ وَأَنَا نَذِيرٌ ⑰)

(Tr.: Say, ‘I am only a human like you, I am only a messenger of Allah, I have been tested by the call).

Al-Ankabūt: 1). In the chapter of al-Mā'idah (1-2) it is mentioned that the messenger of Allah is one who is assigned to convey the message: (قُلْ إِنَّمَا أَنَا رَسُولُ اللَّهِ قَدِ ابْتُلِيتُ بِالْمَنَادِ ⑱)

(Tr.: Say, ‘I am only a messenger of Allah, I have been tested by the call).

¹ Like this, perfect: ((Al-Shams)).

your heart {the Qur'ān} fulfilling that {predictions about the last prophet in the earlier revelations} which precedes it, and is a guidance and good news for the faithful. Al-Baqarah: 97), and considering this holy verse and the number of noble Ḥadīths, the exegetes have interpreted the spirit in the previous verse and in the chapter of al-Shu'arā', verse no. 194, the intention overhere is Gabriel.

The Messenger (PBUH) has emphasized on writing the Qur'ān – by compilation and collection, and a part of it had been accomplished – writing of the Qur'ānic text and collection of it during the period of Muḥammad (PBUH) and the sayings of the Messenger (PBUH) indicate to the instructions concerning the order of the Qur'ānic text and the sequence of the verses. (See: Chapter of Faḍl-ul-Qur'ān in the Ṣaḥīḥ of Bukhārī, and the chapter of Ṣalāt in the Sunan of Abū Dāwūd as Ibn Sa'ad has elaborated this issue.).

It is inevitable that sometimes Muḥammad (PBUH) himself may write what he was revealed upon from the Qur'ān and it can be understood by the following verses:

The chapter of al-Furqān, the verses between 4-6: (وَقَالَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا إِن هَذَا إِلَّا إِفْكٌ افْتَرَاهُ وَأَعَانَهُ عَلَيْهِ قَوْمٌ آخَرُونَ فَقَدْ جَاءُوا ظُلْمًا وَزُورًا ۖ وَقَالُوا أَسْطِيرُ الْأُولِينَ أَكْتَتَبَهَا فَهِيَ تُمْلَىٰ عَلَيْهِ بُكْرَةً وَأَصِيلًا ۗ قُلْ أَنْزَلَهُ الَّذِي يَعْلَمُ السِّرَّ فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ إِنَّهُ كَانَ غَفُورًا رَحِيمًا ۝) (Tr.: Those who deny the truth say, 'This is only a forgery of his own invention in which others have helped him.' What they say is unjust and false. They say, 'It is just fables of the ancients, which he has had written down. They are dictated to him morning and evening. Say to them, 'It has been revealed by Him who knows every secret that is in the heavens and on the earth. Truly He is most forgiving and most merciful.) But in a common sphere it is to

be understood that the Messenger (PBUH), had a particular of writing at the phase of Madīnah, people used to write what revelation he dictated to them.¹

While the collection of the Qur'ānic text in the era of the Messenger (PBUH), it required some revisions and changes as it is perceived by the Qur'ānic text itself, so in the verse 106 of the chapter of al-Baqarah; "مَا نَنْسَخْ مِنْ آيَةٍ أَوْ نُنسِهَا نَأْتِ بِخَيْرٍ مِّثْلَهَا أَوْ مِثْلِيهَا"

" (Tr.: Whatever verse We abrogate or ignore, We bring better than it or similar to it. Do you not believe that Allah is Powerful upon everything? Al-Baqarah: 106) and in the verse 101 of the al-Naḥl chapter: "وَإِذَا بَدَّلْنَا آيَةً مَكَانَ آيَةٍ وَاللَّهُ"

" (Tr.: And when We replace a verse by the other, and Allah is well-aware what He reveals, they say, 'You are simply a forging but most of them do not know. Al-Naḥl: 101) we let up with this text to see to what has been aimed at: by an indication or declaration towards the believe of the writer about the source of the Qur'ān:

1- We need to be just ourselves to say: we do not stand at the position of trapping others to catch mistakes, but we are directly aligned to the accurate of the mind when we find it from their words or the words of others, and from this premise: we agree with the writer of the article as he began his purview

¹ The last sentence of the interpreter's speech states that the Prophet (PBUH) sometime tried to write. This is contrary to the historical fact which the unbelievers do not assert to, and nobody has a doubt that the Prophet (PBUH) did not read the written Qur'ān or wrote with his hand, therefore the false people had doubted.

As for what the writer has meant here, is to show human source for the Qur'ān as evidence witnessing the claim of unbelievers that the Qur'ān is the myths of forego people which the Prophet (PBUH) wrote down.

² Summary of the Islamic Encyclopedia (for a group of orientalist): 26/8166-8168.

by saying: The prophethood of Muḥammad (PBUH) has begun with revelation in the Ḥirā cave: (أَقْرَأْ بِأَسْمِ رَبِّكَ الَّذِي خَلَقَ ﴿١﴾) (Tr.: Read in the name of your Lord Who created-al-'Alaq: 1), on the basis of this, the universe did not know the situation that nothing was sent down from the Qur'ān but through Muḥammad (PBUH), and his prophethood was not known but with what he recited and preached from the Qur'ān, so his first declaration regarding what he stated is the revelation which brought the angel Gabriel which he narrated to Khadījah (MABPWH) who took him away to Warqah bin Naufal, and the dialogue which 'Ā'ishah (MABPWH) has recounted to us in the Ḥadīth of beginning of the revelation: she said: The beginning of the revelation to the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) was in the form of good dreams which came true like bright daylight; then, the love of seclusion was bestowed upon him. He used to go in seclusion in the cave of Ḥirā where he used to worship Allah continuously for many days until he desired to see his family. He would take with him food for the stay and then come back to his wife Khadījah to take his food again, until suddenly the truth descended upon him while he was in the cave of Ḥirā. The angel came to him and asked him to read. The Prophet replied, "I do not know how to read." The Prophet added, "The angel caught me and pressed me so hard that I could not bear it any more. He then released me and again asked me to read and I replied: I do not know how to read; thereupon he caught me again and pressed me a second time until I could not bear it any more. He then released me and again asked me to read but I replied: I do not know how to read; thereupon he caught me for the third time and pressed me, and then released me and said: (أَقْرَأْ بِأَسْمِ رَبِّكَ الَّذِي خَلَقَ ﴿١﴾ خَلَقَ الْإِنْسَانَ مِنْ عَلَقٍ ﴿٢﴾ أَقْرَأْ وَرَبُّكَ الْأَكْرَمُ ﴿٣﴾) (Tr.: Read in the name of your Lord, Who has created everything, Who has created man from a clot. Read! And your

Lord is the Most Generous. (al-‘Alaq: 1-3) Then Allah’s Apostle returned with the inspiration and with his heart-beating severely. Then he went to Khadījah bint Khuwailid and said, “Cover me! Cover me!” They covered him until his fear subsided and then he told her everything that happened and he said, “I fear that something may happen to me.” Khadījah replied, “Never! By Allah, Allah will never disgrace you. You keep good relations with your family, you help the poor and the destitute, you serve your guests generously, and you assist those afflicted by calamities.”

Khadījah then accompanied him to her cousin Waraqah bin Naufal who became a Christian in the pre-Islamic period and knew Hebrew. He would write from the Gospel in Hebrew as much as Allah wished him to write. He was an old man and had lost his eyesight. Khadījah said to Waraqah, “Listen to the story of your nephew, O my cousin!” Waraqah asked, “O my nephew, what have you seen?” The Prophet described whatever he had seen. Waraqah said, “This is the same one who keeps the secrets whom Allah had sent to Mūsá....¹ Waraqah further said: “I wish I were young and could live up to the time when your people would turn you out.” The Prophet asked, “Will they drive me out?” Waraqah replied, “Yes, anyone who came with something similar to what you have brought was treated with hostility; and if I should remain until till the day when you will be turned out then I would strongly support you.” But after a few days Waraqah died and the revelation was paused for a while.

But the winking, confusion and skepticism begin in the words of the writer immediately after this initiation:

2– The winking: we study it in the light of the writer’s view: “perception of the Sunni Muslims is not that Allah Almighty is

¹ The Ḥadīth has been mentioned in al-Buḫārī, k/ Bad’ al-Wahi, b/3,h/3.

the speaker in this phrase as they are Sunnis gives an impression there are doctrines in Islam, this view is not been seen in the Qur'ān for being the revelation of Allah Almighty to His Messenger Muḥammad (PBUH), as it happened in the Christians' view to 'Īsá, from the breadth of their dispute and its ferocity about the concept and nature of 'Īsá, to the degree of contradiction and non-convergence, in any case, it is not coming to the stand of all Muslims regarding the Qur'ān, so their consensus is based on the fact that the whole Qur'ān is the word of Allah revealed to him by the Angel Gabriel on the heart of Muḥammad (PBUH) and that what we read today, and after this day to the dooms day, is the word of Allah, He has revealed to the Prophet (PBUH) without addition of a character or making subtraction or change in it.

3– Skepticism: As far as skepticism is concerned, it comes immediately after this:

It is according to the writer: “But analysis of the Qur'ānic text shows us that the issue is more complicated”. From that We have here with the author two opinions:

First opinion: Here we discover a lucid paralogism which induces the yearning in proving what has been supposed to be the Qur'ān is not a revelation, that is because the author proclaims that no reference ever is available for the source of revelation or subject of narrator in most chapters by descending, and he has presented in this regards a few early ascended Makkan chapters, for instance, chapters of al-Shams, al-Qāri'ah, al-Takāthur and al-'Aṣr and the verses he has detailed to explain what did he mean.

We are extremely perplexed because the author undoubtedly left here the declaration of descending of the Qur'ān and numerous pronouns of prominence for the Glorified Speaker

or Narrator in this, which is the first and foremost in the order of descending the chapters those he has mentioned, I mean the chapter of al-Muzzammil, it is the third in the order of descending, regarding which the Almighty says: ﴿يَتَأْتِيهَا الْمُرْتَلُّ ۝ فَمِمَّ الْأَيْلِ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا ۝ يَصْفَهُرَ أَوْ أَنْقُصَ مِنْهُ قَلِيلًا ۝ أَوْ زِدْ عَلَيْهِ وَرَتِّلِ الْقُرْآنَ تَرْتِيلًا ۝ إِنَّا سَنُلْقِي عَلَيْكَ قَوْلًا ثَقِيلًا ۝﴾ (Tr.: O you who are wrapped up in your mantle, stand up to pray for much of the night. It may be half the night or a little less than that or a little more, but recite the Qur'ān slowly and distinctly. For We are about to send down to you an message of considerable gravity. Al-Muzzammil: 1-5).

As far as the chapter of al-Muddaththir goes, it is the fourth in the order of descending, that is what al-Suyūṭī has concurrently reported from the narration of al-thiqat (the authenticity)¹ Allah says: ﴿يَتَأْتِيهَا الْمُنذِرُ ۝ فَمِمَّ فَانذِرْ ۝ وَرَبِّكَ فَكَبِيرٌ ۝﴾ (Tr.: O you who wrapped in your cloak, arise and give warning! Proclaim the glory of your Lord-al-Muddaththir: 1-3) and Indhār (warning) simply from the Qur'ān which has been lamented earlier in the chapter of al-'Alaq, similarly it has come in the word of Allah with the pronoun for first person ﴿ذَرْنِي وَمَنْ خَلَقْتُ وَحِيدًا ۝﴾ (Tr.: Leave me and one whom I have created alone. Al-Muddaththir: 11)

The author forsakes this and refer to the chapter of al-'Aṣr, and it is the twelfth in the order of descending and the chapter of al-Shams is the twenty sixth and al-Qāri'ah is the thirty fist in the order.

Second opinion: The author's saying doesn't fit as evidence of what he intends to argue upon and it does not withstand

¹ Jalāluddīn al-Suyūṭī, Al-Itqān fī 'Ulūmil Qur'ān (Edtd: Muṣṭafá Dīb al-Baghā, 1407H-1987AD, 1/29).

before any serious scientific criticism, so either the Qur'ān as whole from one source or a few of it from multiple sources and the latter did not say anyone but the whole Qur'ān from one particular of the divine revelation.

The verses of Qur'ān have have illustrated in many places that its sender as a whole is Almighty Allah and He is the protector till the day of the judgment and we mention here some of these verses:

So in the chapter of al-Insān, Allah says:- (إِنَّا نَحْنُ نَزَّلْنَا عَلَيْكَ الْقُرْآنَ
(تَنْزِيلًا ٢٣) (Tr.: Truly, it is We who have revealed to you the Qur'ān, a gradual revelation-al-Insān: 23) and in the chapter of Tāhā He says: (وَكَذَلِكَ أَنْزَلْنَاهُ قُرْآنًا عَرَبِيًّا وَصَرَّفْنَا فِيهِ مِنَ الْوَعِيدِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَّقُونَ أَوْ
(يُحَدِّثُ لَهُمْ ذِكْرًا ١١٣) (Tr.: We have thus sent down the Qur'ān in Arabic and given all kinds of warnings in it, so that they may fear Allah, or may take heed-Tāhā: 113), and in the chapter of al-Hijr, Allah has declared the diktat, that He is sending down the Qur'ān taking pledge of its full perpetuation by saying: (إِنَّا
(نَحْنُ نَزَّلْنَا الذِّكْرَ وَإِنَّا لَهُ لَحَافِظُونَ ٩) (Tr.: It is We who have sent down the Reminder and We will, most surely, safeguard it. Al-Hijr: 9).

Is it reasonable to even fit the matter in the mind of the author of this article to state in each and every verse of the Qur'ān numbered by six thousand two hundred and thirty six verses that the sender of the Qur'ān is Allah through Gabriell and the receiver is Muḥammad (PBUH), hence how to be the rhetoric of the Qur'ān and its attributes when it is formulated in this way and gave up for the reader to justify on this scientific course for orientalist!

4- Lets come to the last para of discussion of the Encyclopedia which we have previously quoted: wherein the authors says:

“While the collection of the Qur’ānic text in the era of the Messenger (PBUH), it required some revisions and changes as it is perceived by the Qur’ānic text itself”.

The author here points out to the issue of abolition, while he uses the narration: “revision and change, so that the reader may allude that it has not been descended through revelation but it is by the Prophet (PBUH) because of the circumstances, and perhaps- that is on the basis of what came out from its word with regard to the source of Qur’ān- the pronouns returns in His wordings "نأْت (ننسخ، نأت" and "بدلنا آية" to the Prophet (PBUH) ... and we have already stated that the Qur’ān, along with its verses, words and letters, is from Allah the Lord of the whole universe.

As far as the issue of abolition is concerned, it has another debate which does not relate to this discussion, however, in a quick way we can state: the abolition is to lift a former legitimate ruling by another late legitimate command and both obliterator (المناسخ) and obliterated (المنسوخ) are from the Allah, and nothing is from the Prophet (PBUH). He is assigned only to receive and preach, and in the law of Islam obliteration has taken place as it occurred to the previous divine laws, so it has been reported that Ādam had married the brother with sister and this tabooed in the ruling of Mūsá and at the later periods.

By reviewing the above discussion, it became very clear that the revelation is not the source of Qur’ān as these orientalist are of the opinion in the Encyclopedia of Islam.

Then what is the source for them after this useless effort which they made to remove the status of revelation from it by contempt and falsely? They have declared in this case their false claims that we bring here coupling with its annulment and revocation as follows:

First: A dissemination that source of the Qur'ān is the Prophet (PBUH) himself, and revocation of this claim:

Researcher of the stand of entire community of the orientalist concerning the Qur'ān finds out that the ultimate outcome of orientalist doctrine is that the Qur'ān is the speech of Muḥammad (PBUH) and that – read the Qur'ān- is the consequence of psychological suffering for Muḥammad (PBUH), so much so that it reflects on conflict and personal developments for him.¹

English orientalist Dr. (Sinclair Tusdal) has said in his book: *Mīzān al-Ḥaqq*, in the page No. 372: “had Muslims agreed upon that the Qur'ān is the compilation of Muḥammad and has written by revelation? And is not as they say: that it has been dictated by Gabriel to him, it would have been stronger argument for them”

Another English orientalist, George Seal, has said in his book: *An Essay on Islam*, page No. 116: “And which there is no doubt in it, two facets must not be differed from each other, that Muḥammad is surely the author of the Qur'ān and first creator of it although it is inevitable that others have not extended their succor and cooperation in this mission as the Arabs happen to raise their fingers of accusation to him, however, for their extreme differences in engaging the persons whom they presumed to have helped him, faded their argument and they failed to prove their claim, perhaps because Muḥammad was too meticulous to leave a way for disclosing the matter”.

Author of the article “An Essay on Islam” commenting on (George Seal) said (ibid): “According to al-Zamakhsharī and al-Baidhāwī, some of the Arabs said that in the chapter 16:105, 25:5,6 (Jābir al-Rūmī servant of 'Āmir bin al-Ḥadramī who was a

¹ See: Dr. Muḥammad Abū Lailá, *The Holy Qur'ān in the Orientalist Perspective*, Dār al-Nashr lil-Jamī'at, Egypt, 1423 H- 2002AD, P. 93,

writer has supported it, some others say: rather two of the loyal persons of Makkah had helped him, and they were able to read, Muḥammad heard what they read so he memorized”.¹

Velozen² said: “In the Qur’ān, the divine power is sometimes expressed in terms of divine justice, sometimes according to what the Prophet had felt without taking into account the balance between the two factions. Muḥammad does not feel any contradiction, because he was neither a philosopher nor a proponent of a theoretical doctrine of dogmas”.³

Professor Muḥammad Quṭb⁴ adds on what Velozen has said after his quote that: “Apart from the fact that the author attributes the Qur’ān to the Prophet (PBUH), which is an issue wherein all the orientalists gather together on a natural way, the author adds that there is contradiction and imbalance in the Qur’ān; because it highlights the divine power sometimes and divine justice at other times, then it turns back to the particular psychological state on which the Prophet (PBUH) happened to be usually at the time of compilation, then he says that the Messenger (PBUH) does not feel that contradiction, because he is neither a philosopher nor a doctrinal thinker!”.

Before we countermand this claim, we would like to show the extent to which its claimants underestimate the scholarly research and its methodology, especially with regard to what the author of "The Tail of an Article in Islam", which he has

¹ These scripts are quoted from “the Orientalist and Qur’ān”, P. 333, Dr. Yūsuf Luqmān, Manuscript of Doctoral Thesis in the Library of Kulliat Usūliddīn of Cairo, University of Al-Azhar, No. 793, 1977AD.

² A German orientalist, studied theology to criticize the Gospel then certified in Eastern languages on Ifald Jotenhin, amongst his important books: History of Jews, Muḥammad in Madīnah, History of Umayyad Dynasty, see his full biography in Najīb al-‘Aqīqī, The Orientalists, Dār al-Ma’ārif, Egypt, 1965, 2/724.

³ History of Arab State: P. 2, quoted from “Orientalists and Islam”, P. 156

⁴ Orientalists and the Qur’ān, P. 156.

quoted from Zamakhsharī as saying, "Some Arabs said," etc. The author deliberately amputates Zamakhsharī's words for illusion with his consent on the claimants that Muḥammad (PBUH) learned the Qur'ān from others.

So the version of Zamakhsharī's word (أرادوا بالبشر: النحل: 103) is a servant boy of Huwaytib bin 'Abdul 'Uzzá at the time of interpretation of the saying of Allah, who had embraced and enhanced his belief, namely "Ā'ish" or "Yā'ish", was an author of many books, it is also said, that he is "Jabr" a Roman servant boy was for 'Āmir bin al-Ḥaḍramī, and is said: they were two servants (Jabr and Yāsar) were manufacturing swords in Makkah and read both Gospel and Bible, so the Prophet (PBUH) whenever passes through them, hear what they read, so people started saying: they teach him, one of them were asked of, replied: but He use to teach us.¹

The knowledge accountability requires that we say: that after the prolong effort and patience in the search of what the commentators on this issue has mentioned, we find that the authenticated interpretations such as Ṭabarī and others have been limited in what has been quoted the sentence: (When the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) stopped at them and listens what they read, they said: they were teaching him) but they did not mention the sentence: (then one of them were asked, so he replied: but he teaches me).

We are not going to discuss here the narrative in its source and authenticity, since the author has quoted the version of Zamakhsharī alone, including the sentence (بل هو يعلمني) - but he teaches me) so we tried to mete out with it, while the writer has overlooked the quotation of this sentence, and this

¹ Al-Kaṣhshāf of Zamakhsharī, 2/344.

indicates to its contempt for the honesty of scholarly research on the one hand as the claim comes by principle by the other end, and in any case it is not dependable on it alone as we will explain further.

Countermand of this claim: To begin with, the orientalist's claim is false and exposed void and null, neither the mind accepts it nor the reason supports, even the realism does not approve it, that is according to the following:

- (a) If the Qur'ān is the words of Muḥammad (PBUH) the Arabs would not have perplexed in this matter, never would have differed as well as their views would not have befuddled in it, and they would not hesitated in praising him, - as aforementioned Walīd bin al-Mughīrah has done so-, and accusing it to be the myths of the early people once again, rather they were unanimously believe that it is the words of Prophet Muḥammad (PBUH), they treated with him in the same way, but we observed that their objection focused sometimes on the Qur'ān and sometime on the nature of its revelation as augur, while sometimes on Who revealed it, this discussion has already treated well above.
 - (b) Had the Qur'ān been creation of Prophet (PBUH), the Arabs would not have faced inefficiency to counter it, as they had prolific eloquent, well-expressed rhetoric, notwithstanding, they were challenged to produce one in the same form, or even a single chapter like it, and they were strongly thrown this challenge, but despite their keenness to oppose and deny it, they were unable to do so.
 - (c) Had the Qur'ān been the words of Muḥammad (PBUH) there mandatorily be an able reader and writer before receiving the prophethood, it is not enough only, but there should have been a scholar who could deal with the entire
-

Qur'ānic methodological process in doctrinal believe, law jurisdiction, manners and dealings, and he should have the knowledge of stories of forbearing people with infinite precision which the enemies were not able to bring a hiatus towards it, and the Allah Almighty says: *رَمَّا كُنْتُمْ تَتْلُونَ* (Tr.: You were not able to read any book before this, nor did you write one down with your hand. If you had done so, the followers of falsehood would have had cause to doubt it-al-'Ankabūt: 48), and the historical realism confesses and approves it.

- (d) And the sine-qua-non that incises the opinion of every claimant in this section that this Qur'ān, if it was the words of Muḥammad (PBUH) it would have sought to proof of himself, and when he was acquitted of being a questioner, but was seen in his attribution to him as honor and dignity, and a way of sovereignty if he intends for.

In this section the statement of Dr. Muḥammad 'Abdullāh Darrāz is worth to mention: it is undoubtedly a precious speech, we strive for proving it with its word; whatever it is: in terms of clear thought, pure argument and rhetorical expressive, he says: "the Qur'ān is straightforward, there is no workmanship of Muḥammad (PBUH) in it, nor of any other creature, rather it is revealed by Almighty Allah with its all context and connotation, though it is surprising that some of the people try to prove at the initial stage of this issue that it is not the creation of Prophet Muḥammad (PBUH).

In fact, this issue, had have a jury for true justice, hearing this certificate produced by its owner itself, would have been enough, and would not have required any other

witness nor by reason or textual either, and it is not because it belongs to the proclaims that requires a prove, rather it is a kind of confession from its owner, and no friend and foe can determine to accept it, so what interest remains for the gentleman who claims the right of leadership for himself in this regard and takes challenge the people of strangeness and miracles for the support of this leadership? We say: what interest is for him in attributing his capacity for other to be elapsed? While he was able to impersonate with it and increase the altitude and magnificence of the situation, if he gets impersonated, there is no one who opposes and claims it for himself.

What we know is that, many of the writers overshadow the effects of others so they plagiarize it, or steal from it, which mitigated its work and worthed the value of and secured its charge even among them there are people who exhumed the graves of the dead, and wear their coffins and go out to his people in the adornment of those borrowed clothes, moreover there are people who attributes the effects of their mind and the most precious thing that his interest likes, this is what the world has not yet given birth to.

If we assume of any bit when we know a reasonable or almost a reasonable explanation for it, there is only one thing that may be distorted in the ignorant mind, that has seen his attribution of the Qur'ān to the divine revelation, which helps him to reclaim the people with the providence of their obeying, and the implementation of its rule upon them, because that attribution makes according to his view of sanctity and glorification of what he does not have if attributed to himself. This measure is invalid in itself, but in fact it is null through its basis.

Yes it is invalid in itself, because the possessor of this Qur'ān has issued the attributed speech to himself, and the attributed speech is of Allah Almighty, so attributing it to himself will not contradict the need to obey something, and no proportion of what he has attributed to the Lord will increase anything, in fact, he has adhered people to obey it in an equal way, therefore, its honour in the souls in an equal way, and obeying it is the obedience to Allah, and its disobedience is the disobedience of Allah, so he approved all of his words from the words of Allah, this is what, it was as it is obsessed by that illusion.

As for the altered form of this analogy, and that is because it is based on a false assumption, which is to exaggerate that this leader is amongst those who do not come to reach a final solution to pass on lies and camouflage, and this is an aspect which denies the historical realities categorically, because one who tried to find out his noble conduct in his all movements, in his expressions and indication, in his consent and anger, in his loneliness and open, does not have doubt that he was far from the people who are interactive and equivocal, and that his secret and frankness were both in the same accuracy of truthfulness and the rigidity of truth in big and tiny affairs. These were the best qualities of his characteristics and morals, and his most visible attributes before and after the prophethood as observed and witnessed by his friends and enemies.¹

However, the contemplator in the rest of the comment of the writer of (dhail maqalat al-Islam) of the claim of the teaching of some people the Messenger of Allah (PBUH), the Qur'ān finds that it is a claim of no value based on falsehood from his preceding genre.

¹ Dr. Muḥammad 'Abdullāh Darāz, *al-Naba' al-'Azīm* (New views in the Qur'ān), *Idārah Iḥyā' al-Turāth al-Islāmī*, Qaṭar, 1405H-1985AD, PP. 21-23,

So those who are attributed this they are the pro of the lower and meanness character, who have nothing to do with thought, knowledge and culture, apart from their non-arabness which is spared from Arabic even in its ordinary words, is dulling peak of eloquence, which the Qur'ān has produced, so they are – as it was – in isolation from the domain altogether. If we assumed it a debate or discussion, they would have one of two ways: either they were doing it for themselves, so instead of teaching who goes with the honor of prophethood before them as they believe it so, and no one can stop them to do so. Or they are among those were declaring that they are the teachers of this Prophet, whom they taught, the history has not talked about any of these two ways, so what logic straightens in a mind of a wise person to be assumed by someone as far as Muḥammad (PBUH) is concerned, who received the Qur'ān from another entity.

Second: A claim that the Source of the Qur'ān is the pagan ignorant atmosphere, and dismissal of this claim: The basis, orientalist has built for their position in this claim and before it, is their belief that the Messenger (PBUH) was keen of political leadership, worldly sovereignty he felt in himself those elements and that the conditions of renaissance in Makkah were favorable for that.

Gibb¹ is of the opinion: “that Makkah had a rich life commercially, politically and religiously, and that had found many leaders and leadership and found a social injustice among its inhabitants and that the Prophet (PBUH) himself

¹ He is H.I. Gibb, a famous contemporary English orientalist, still has the same fame amongst his most prominent contemporary orientalist. He was a member of Academy of Arabic Language in Cairo, because of his devotion to Arabic Language, and indicates to other side the range of his popularity in people in his time and the range of good impression.

was impressed and fully aware of all these aspects and its effects can be seen in his life while conveying the Qur'ān and his struggle until he died!

Similarly, Gibb observes that the psychological revolution of the Messenger did not emerge in the form of social reform and did not practice it as a reformist for the Makkan social life, but it emerged in the form of religion and in a form that he is a Messenger, and it is because he intended to exploit the values of leadership of religious' shrines and economic prosperity in Makkah! and the opposition of Makkan – for that matter – was the opposition in the political leadership, fearing their economic prosperity would weaken if they accept his belief and doctrine, their very opposition was not for the sake of faith, belief and conviction! Otherwise, the Qur'ān itself indicates that the idea of unity - is the basic idea in Islam – which was well-known in western Arabian Peninsula".¹

After that, it may be discussed in the proclamations (that the ignorant atmosphere is the source of Qur'ān) based on a set of introduction, which have been developed by the orientlists to draw conclusions that are not conducive to those introductions.

The orientlists have made efforts to make message of Islam an extension – with some refinement – for the religious movement which was prevalent in the Arabian Peninsula, that the Arab society - in their view - before Islam had all the elements of religious life that brought the message of Islam i.e. belief, legislation and ethics.

As far as belief is concerned, these orientlists presumed that Arabs were aware of oneness of Allah and they came close to it and did not associate any one with Allah in the worship, as for practices of worship go, they thought that

¹ Dr. Muhammad al-Bahī, has mentioned this in his book 'al-Fikr al-Islāmī al-Ḥadīth wa Silatuhu bi al-Isti'mār al-Gharbī, PP. 228-229.

Arabs were offering prayers and pilgrimage and regarding the morals and ethics they assumed that they were characterized by chastity, bravery, generosity and outreach to the oppressed, this was Islam which brought as a message, it is only when the Qur'ān provided the product of this prosper life, and that Muaḥammad (PBUH)- who is one of the Makkan- does not behove him to be a leader who has inspired by the life of ignorance in his own era, which he has presented in his book about which he has declared that it is a revelation and he is a Messenger.

The author of (*al-Shi'r al-Jāhili*) has dealt with this concept whose idea is that the Arab of pre-Islamic period does not solicit the poetry of the ignorant Arabs, which he considers to be personified and false, with its cruelty, intensity and lack of preparation rather it does beseech from the Qur'ān.

The author says about the Arabs of that epoch, that they were not irreligious, neither were ignorant nor cruel. Similarly, they were not in isolation from politics or economy vis-à-vis with other nations. Likewise, the Qur'ān represented them, as they were the people of knowledge and religion, people of wealth, power and authority, in the same way they were the people of politics connected with popular politics, both influenced with and influential, so there were developed and cultured people, not barbaric ignorant, and how a wise man be able to rectify that the Qur'ān emerged in a barbaric ignorant people".¹

So, in view of the author, the Qur'ān is the truest mirror for the ignorant era – not the pre-Islamic poetry – this concept has also been approved by Rainan.²

¹ *Al-Shi'r al-Jahili*: P. 15.

² Arnest Rainan (1823-1892) a French philosopher, born in Trejeh city of Britania district in France, entered Theology School where he became prominent expert in the Eastern Languages and an authority, then he adopted the idea of free-thinking, traveled to the east, associated with Islamic beliefs, his productions: *Tārīkh al-Adyān*, etc., the *Orientalists*: 1/202.

Dr. Muḥammad ‘Abdullāh Darrāz says: in one of his articles, read Rainan about (Muḥammad and the Sources of Islam): “presented to us a wonderful picture of the Arabian Peninsula in the sixth century AD, and instead of this polytheist people as he recognized them, brought to us another people, who believe that Allah is multiple or diverse, rather they recognize Him as One divinity who does not give birth nor was He born, as this orientalist succeeded in emerging the high literary interest for this people and its powerful realistic ideology, and in ignoring the entire other characteristics which does not get honoured it, so instead of this corrupt autocratic materialism which does not incline to any thinking or re-flexion belongs to the Semitic facts, portrayed for us a society in the zenith of its religious fervor amalgamated in it all the religions and doctrinal belief, and civilizations as a whole, in addition to that the main concern of the religion and in this manner, the message of Muḥammad (PBUH) is no more to be an extension for the religious movement which went in his period without being proceeded by Muḥammad (PBUH) to any new”.¹

Then the matter requires a quite discussion:

So in the aspect of oneness of Allah and His worship alone: were the Arabs in the Peninsula and its surroundings really monotheists who associated any other god with Allah? And this claim straightens what al-Qadhi and al-Dani have introduced of their several idols which they worship individually with multi numbered of people and namely with multi numbered of their tribes, until then three hundred and sixty idols were put around the Ka’bah, the Prophet (PBUH) entered Makkah in the year of Faṭḥ, and it was as it is, so he

¹ Al-Madkhal ilá Dirásāt al-Qur’ān al-Karīm, Dār al-Qalam, Beirut, 1993, PP. 129-130

began to stab and scratch with a stick in his hand saying: (جَاءَ الْحَقُّ وَزَهَقَ الْبَاطِلُ إِنَّ الْبَاطِلَ كَانَ زُهُقًا ﴿٥٨﴾¹ (Tr.: The truth has come, and the false has disappeared. Really, false is to disappear). Likewise, the Qur'an has mentioned – in the context of their denial – the names of their big idols: (أَفَرَأَيْتُمُ اللَّاتَ وَالْعُزَّىٰ ﴿١٦﴾ وَمَنَاةَ ٱلْقَالِئَةَ ٱلْأُخْرَىٰ ﴿١٧﴾ أَلَكُمُ الذَّكَرُ وَلَهُ ٱلْأُنثَىٰ ﴿١٨﴾ تِلْكَ إِذًا قِسْمَةٌ ضِيزَىٰ ﴿١٩﴾ إِنَّ هِيَ ٱلْأَسْمَاءُ سَمَّيْتُمُوهَا أَنْتُمْ وَءَابَاؤُكُمْ مَّا أَنزَلَ ٱللَّهُ بِهَا مِن سُلْطٰنٍ إِن يَتَّبِعُونَ إِلَّا ٱلظَّنَّ وَمَا تَهْوَى ٱلْأَنفُسُ وَلَقَدْ جَاءَهُمْ مِّن رَّبِّهِمُ ٱلْهُدَىٰ ﴿٢٠﴾) (Tr.: Have you really considered Lāt and 'Uzzá, and the third one, Manāt? 'what? For you the males and for Him the females?' That indeed is an unfair division—these are nothing but names which you yourselves have devised, you and your forefathers. Allah has sent down no authority for them. They follow nothing but conjecture and what their own selves desire, even though guidance has already come to them from their Lord! Al-Najm: 19-23)

If they were monotheists – as Rainan presumes – so in what they were astound, their aversion and anger, when the Prophet (PBUH) was given prophethood, he calls them to Oneness of Allah so they denied saying: (أَجْعَلِ ٱللَّهُةَ إِلَهًا وَحِدًا إِن هٰذَا لَشَىْءٌ عَجَابٌ ﴿٥﴾ وَٱنظَلَقَ ٱلْمَلَأُ مِنْهُمْ أَن ٱمْسُوا وَٱصْبِرُوا عَلَىٰ ءِلٰهَتِكُمْ إِن هٰذَا لَشَىْءٌ يُرَادُ ﴿٦﴾ مَا سَمِعْنَا بِهٰذَا فِى ٱلْءَلَمِ ٱلْءَلَىٰ وَإِن هٰذَا إِلَّا ٱخْتِلَافٌ ﴿٧﴾) (Tr.: Does he make all the deities out to be one God? This is indeed a strange thing. Their leaders departed, saying, 'walk away! Hold fast to our deities. This is clearly a conspiracy. We have not heard of any such thing in the old religion. This is nothing but a fabrication. Şād: 5-7)

These are three Makkan verses from the chapter of Şād, the first explains: how they denied the call of the Prophet to the

¹ Al-Bukhārī, Ḥadīth No. 4720.

Oneness of Allah, the second sates their adamant on polytheism and and third illustrates taking ahead their pledge with this polytheism.

Even after this a claimer proclaims that Oneness of Allah was the religion of the people of Makkah, and the Qurʾān arrived as an extension to determine that belief?

In the context of worships, the Qurʾān mentions a pattern of that worship in the prayer of the polytheists, which was a mixture of applause, whistling, noise and entertainment. Allah says: (وَمَا كَانَ) صَلَاتُهُمْ عِنْدَ الْبَيْتِ إِلَّا مُكَاءٌ وَتَصْدِيَةٌ¹ (Tr.: Their prayers at the Sacred House are nothing but whistling and clapping of hands. Al-Anfāl: 35), so is it that of prayer that Islam has legitimated in its reverence, remembrance, supplication and disobedience to Allah?

In the context of Ḥajj: the calls of polytheism were mixed up by the polytheists around the Kaʾabah, declaring clear blasphemy. Ibn ʿAbbās has reported: the polytheists used to say: we are present and there is no partner for you, he said: the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) says: (ويلكم قد قد) “wails on you for sure”, they say: this is the only partner for you, they pronounce this and take rounds of the house.¹

In the context of legislation and jurisdiction on which the society is based, and its root is the family, marriage in the Pre-Islamic era was the most blatant form of adultery, Islam came to erase all these images of activities and invalidated them and did not preempt them except only the pure and ideal image that Allah has prescribed for His servants.

ʿĀʾiṣhah (MABPWH) narrated: Marriage in the Jāhiliyah was of four types: One was the marriage of people as it is today, where a man betroths his ward or his daughter to another man, and

¹ Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim, Ḥadīth No. 1185.

the latter assigns a dower (bridewealth) to her and then marries her. Another type was where a man said to his wife when she was purified from her menses, 'Send to another man and ask her to have intercourse with him;' her husband then stays away from her and does not touch her at all until it is clear that she is pregnant from that (other) man with whom she sought intercourse. When it is clear that she is pregnant, her husband has intercourse with her if he wants. He acts thus simply from the desire for a noble child. This type of marriage was (known as) *nikah al-istibda*, the marriage of seeking intercourse. Another type was when a group (*raht*) of less than ten men used to visit the same woman and all of them had to have intercourse with her. If she became pregnant and bore a child, when some nights had passed after the birth she sent for them, and not a man of them might refuse. When they had come together in her presence, she would say to them, 'You (pl.) know the result of your acts; I have borne a child and he is your (sing.) child,— naming whoever she will by his name. Her child is attached to him, and the man may not refuse. The fourth type is when many men frequent a woman, and she does not keep herself from any who comes to her. These women are the *baghaya* (prostitutes). They used to set up at their doors banners forming a sign. Whoever wanted them went in to them. If one of them conceived and bore a child, they gathered together to her and summoned the physiognomists. Then they attached her child to the man whom they thought (the father), and the child remained attached to him and was called his son, no objection to this course being possible. When Muḥammad (peace be upon him) came preaching the truth, he nullified all the types of marriage of the *Jahiliya* except that which people practice today.¹

¹ Al-Bukhārī, Ḥadīth No. 5127.

This is what the Qur'ān has narrated in the context of burying children (al-An'ām: 140), blackmailing with dowries and inheritance of women and relatives by (al-Nisā': 19-21), rapacity, neglect of poors and contempt of weak people (al-Fajr: 17-20).

As for the generosity, courage, salvation and values of the famous Arab, it was not motivated by faith or religion, as the Orientalists claim, but it was a kind of ostentation and splurge to attract praise and good reputation and fame, otherwise on the other hand there was injustice, punk and aggression as it was discussed earlier.

This was their life-style in the above-mentioned areas, thenafter the Qur'ān was revealed and called for purity in monotheism, integrity of worship, fairness of legislation and cleanliness of morality.

After all this, it can be said: The pagan environment was a source of the Qur'ān: in doctrine, legislation and ethics? Shall the melancholy goes out for honey, or the rocks will grow fruit?

Third: Claim that the sources of the Qur'ān are the rightly-guided people, and countermand of this claim: What is the meaning of Ḥanīfiyyah to which Ḥunafā' are attributed? The root letters or the radicals of this word is (ح ن ف) which indicates to tendency or inclination, therefore, الحنيف means one who is far from evil and doed good. It the Qur'ān it means one who submitted to the order of Allah and did not turn down to even a single thing.¹

It is the meaning of the word in Islam, and if every Muslim is Ḥanīf, customization in the name is no longer needed, rather it

¹ Lisān al-'Arab, Stem-letters: حنف.

is a characteristic would be mentioned at the time of number on which Muslims are stagnant in its methodology.

As far as al-Ḥunafā' are concerned, if they are discussed in the context of historical process, they sparse number of people turned from paganism and worship of idols to monotheism and Oneness of Allah, and after that they were not organized by a single law, but their appearance was in different places and in distant times: so they appeared in Yemen influenced by the principles of monotheism brought to them by Judaism and Christianity ... They appeared in the Arabian Peninsula as an extension of the call of the prophets of Allah, Ibrāhīm and his son Ismā'īl and they remained custodians of some of the heritages of Ibrāhīm to the call of Oneness of Allah and renunciation of the worship of idols and acknowledgment of the resurrection, reappearance and revitalization, giving good tiding to the believers of paradise, frightening the disbelievers from the fire, keep away from wine and burying girls alive and bad morals.¹

One of most famous Ḥunafā', who appeared in the Arabian Peninsula before the prophetic mission (Quss bin Sā'idah al-lyādī) was preaching people in their clubs, and calling them to the same religion of Ibrāhīm one day he delivered a speech in the market of 'Ukāz what he delivered was: "wail for the people who are in oblivion, the doer must complete his work properly, the hoper must inspect his expectation, ney, He is the only God, He begets not, nor is He begotten, He resurrect and revives, gives death and does reincarnation, creates male and female, He is the Lord of hear-after and the earlier world, After all, O people of Iyad! Where the people of Ad and Thamud? And the fathers and forefathers? Where is A-l 'Alil and 'Awad? Every one has their resting place, Qis takes oath of the Lord of servants, Where are who built exquisite mansions and abodes

¹ Opinions of Orientalists about the Qur'ān and its Interpretation: 1/265.

of stone? Where are the Nimrod and the Pharaoh, who beside himself in worldly riches said to his people 'Am I not your greatest lord?' The Earth ended up grinding them all in its mill. Even their bones have now rotten away, scattered. Their abodes stand deserted, now inhabited by dogs. Do not ever become heedless like them! Do not tread their path! Everything is mortal, only the Almighty is not. There is many a passage to enter the river of death, but alas, no way out! All things great or small migrate. Whatever befalls all shall befall you too, so one group is in the paradise and another one is in hell".¹

And one day he delivered a speech on a red camel as saying: "O People! Come, listen, if you hear me remember, if you remember get benefit of it and speak and when you speak tell truth, whoever lives dies, whoever dies perishes and whatever is bound to happen happens. Rain falls, grass grows, alive and dead, dark night, the skies a lofty ceiling. The stars will expire and the seas will come to a rest, there will be light and dark, night and days, good deeds and sins, The skies are filled with news, the ground with lessons to be taken, until he said: O people: verily, for Allah there is religion it is the best loved one then your religion in which you are practicing, this is His time and entity"²

This call, to which these people preached, most of them are in astray and ignorance, so they wanted to distance themselves from what was the religion of Ibrāhīm which made the Orientalists believe that the Prophet (PBUH) had taken from them the revelation and were the source of what came from the Qur'ān.

Some of the orientalist like Tsdal and Mr. Canon Russell³ who baselessly claim that the Qur'ān is derived from the remnants of Unafa, their claim is baseless for the following reasons:

¹ Ibn Kathīr, Al-Bidāyah wa al-Nihāyah, Dār al-Fikr al-'Arabī, 2/233.

² Ibid, 2/234.

³ See: Opinions of Orientalists about the Qur'ān and its Interpretation, 1/263.

- (a) It was not proven that the Prophet (PBUH) sat down to them or learnt from them. If there was a meeting between them, like Waraqah ibn Naufal, who had extended his support - it was a transient meet. The narrations recorded what happened in it, and that is when the Prophet (PBUH) went to him with his wife Khadījah (MABPWH) to tell him about what happened at the time of the revelation, so Waraqah admitted to him about the prophethood and the mission, and he did not sit before him like a teacher nor did he say: those are the effects of the Hanīfiyyah that we preached for, or that the message is its outcome.
- (b) Similarly, these Hunafā' themselves, in their preaching, were looking for a Prophet to be assigned or missioned – so he will renew the religion of Ibrāhīm – so that they follow him, and move on this true path, to which this Prophet is guiding them by the permission of Allah Almighty, as it was discussed in the speech of Quss.
- (c) There is a big difference between what came in the speeches of these Hunafā' for people in the issue of argument of creation on the creator, and guidance of good deed, preparation for death and reincarnation, and between the complete method and curriculum of Islam with regard to the doctrine of Oneness of Allah and its basics, and the determination of the acts of worship, its elements and characteristics, its dealings of its proceedings, morals and its components, the repulsion and its limits, death and dooms day, and subsequently the punishment, calculation, paradise and fire, this is the valued religion and undoubtedly right.

In this regard it is concluded that one who found Islam among them, embraced it, such as Waraqah bin Naufal, who followed the Prophet by approving him, and he did not sit as a teacher

before him nor did he claim that this mission is the outcome of his teaching, he is amongst the Ḥunafā', rather he wished for himself a long life when he would help the Prophet when he would face the opposition of his people.

As stated in the context of Ḥadīth of 'Ā'ishah (MABPWH) about the narrative of Waraqah for the Prophet "This is the Divine law that came down on Mūsá, I wish, if I had a trunk in it, so that I might be alive when your people throw you. The messenger of Allah said, "Or they could have thrown them." He said: Yes, no man has ever brought similar to what I brought except my return, and if you realize your days I would have helped you by moaning, then Waraqa didn't care of anything until he died".¹

Four: The claim that source of Qur'ān is Judaism and Christianity, and countermand of this claim: It was supposed to separate both sides of this claim with an issue, but we have turned down from this, because the Orientalists' claim in this regard is one, that is the Qur'ān was impersonated from the Judaism and Christianity, and to counter of this claim is one, nonetheless there are some different preferences.

Orientalists presume that the source of the Qur'ān is the Judaism and Christianity and in this context it has been combined between books of Jew and Christian (Gospel and Bible) and between the inheritance left by their scholars, declaration of this about what they have written has been done.

Goldezhher (1850–1921)² says: in the context of his skepticism regarding source of the Qur'ān through number of readings,

¹ Al-Buḫhārī, k/ Ba'd al-Wahy, b/3, h/3.

² An orientalist certified for Semitic languages by senior professors in Budapest Lizard and Berlin and Liden, when became prominent, appointed for visiting faculty in the science college of University of Budapest in 1873, then appointed a Chair professor in 1906, of his authorship is: *Belief and Legitimacy in Islam, Myths of Jew, and many other, Orientalists: 3/906.*

and that Qur'ān has not have a single version with many endeavors which have not been reconciled mention the following text: "in the verse of 54 of the chapter of al-Baqarah, the conversation revolves concerning the anger of Mūsá when he came to know that al-Isrā' has made a calf of gold and their worship of it, so he says: وَإِذْ قَالَ مُوسَىٰ لِقَوْمِهِ ۖ يَبْقَوْمِ إِنَّكُمْ ظَلَمْتُمْ أَنفُسَكُمْ بِاتِّخَاذِكُمُ الْعِجَلِ فَتُوبُوا إِلَىٰ بَارِيكُمْ فَاقْتُلُوا أَنفُسَكُمْ ذَلِكُمْ خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ عِنْدَ بَارِيكُمْ بِاتِّخَاذِكُمُ الْعِجَلِ فَتُوبُوا إِلَىٰ بَارِيكُمْ فَاقْتُلُوا أَنفُسَكُمْ ذَلِكُمْ خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ عِنْدَ بَارِيكُمْ (Tr.: O my people, you have indeed wronged yourselves by worshiping the calf; turn in repentance to your Creator and slay (the culprits) among you. That course is best for you in the sight of your maker. He relented towards you, He is the. He is the forgiving One-al-Baqarah: 54), meant, they should fight each other, or in real verbal meaning of the text: kill one another, this conforms in fact on what has come in the chapter of "al-khurūj" section 32 of part 27 which is the source of the Qur'ānic words".¹

He says in another place indicating to Islam: "and as the teachings of Islam advance, even in its initial stage a picture of two sects, selection and emerging (from Judaism, Christianity and religions of Persians etcetera) likewise a few foreign testimonials of scientific experiments implemented from the external surrounding in the development of some issues what came out after this."²

Similarly it was followed by the orientalist like Tsdal, Masih, Andrew and Lamonse.³

German orientalist Chakht born in 1902AD says expanding the ball of accusation in personating the Qur'ān from others

¹ Goldzher, *Madhāhib al-Tafsīr al-Islāmī*, Dār al-Iqr, 1983, P. 10

² Ibid, P. 171.

³ See: *Opinions of Orientalists about the Qur'ān and its Interpretation*: 1/ 289, 235.

entitled: “Muḥammad and the Qur’ān”: “Muḥammad emerged in Makkah as a religious reformist, he strongly argued with disbelievers of Makkah who belonged to the same place of Makkah but they considered him just meager a presbyter or a fortune-teller, that is because of his powerful personality as he was called to Madīnah in 622AD as a Judge for tribal dispute among the people of Madīnah, and that as Prophet he became a leader and lawmaker, judging a new society of the basis of religion and that Muḥammad has excerpted from the Jews of Madīnah many of the ruling clauses, that the verses of collection of the Qur’ān as fabricated, the jurist scholars have fabricated them, in the same way, basics of jurisprudence (Uṣūl al-Fiqh) and the Islamic legislations personified from the Roman law, Byzantine and Eastern churches’ Laws, likewise, from the teachings of Ptolemy, sayings of intellectuals and the Sasanian laws. From all these laws, teachings and regulations, the Islamic Sharī’ah has been constituted”.¹

This proclamation which the orientalist and their ilk presume is a false claim in its root, biased in objective, fake in terms of evidences and desecrated by all its angles.

Before we reply we must fix direction of the discussion in the actual issue by stating the relation of the Qur’ān with early books (Gospel and Bible).

The relation of the Qur’ān represents the previous books and in its prelude (Gospel and Bible) by three aspects:

First aspect: Ratification of the principles of faith and belief, principles of legitimate laws which did not observe any kind of distortion; because the root of religion is one only, so here no skepticism will be considered as an evidence on adopting the

¹ Prelude of Islamic Legitimacy P. 20, 21

Qur'ān in comparison with the previous books. In fact, it is a single principle on which the books have been continuously followed.

Second aspect: Dominance, in the sense: bearing sense, remembrance, and monitoring¹ and here it is in the meaning of rule or judgment on the basis of what these books have the contents, whence nullification or adoption of ruling, etcetera and to prove these two aspects together Allah Almighty says:

(وَأَنْزَلْنَا إِلَيْكَ الْكِتَابَ بِالْحَقِّ مُصَدِّقًا لِمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ مِنَ الْكِتَابِ وَمُهَيِّمًا عَلَيْهِ فَاحْكُم بَيْنَهُمْ بِمَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ وَلَا تَتَّبِعْ أَهْوَاءَهُمْ عَمَّا جَاءَكَ مِنَ الْحَقِّ لِكُلِّ جَعَلْنَا مِنْكُمْ شِرْعَةً وَمِنْهَاجًا)

(Tr.: We have sent down the book to you with the truth, fulfilling {the predictions} revealed in the previous scriptures and determining what is true therein, and as a guardian over it. Judge, therefore, between them by what Allah has revealed, and do not follow their vain desires turning away from the truth that has come to you. To every one of you We have ordained a law and a way. Al-Mā'dah: 48)

Describing the essence of relationship, Sheikh Ṭāhir bin Ash'ur says in the explanation of this verse: "The verse indicates to the two conditions of the Qur'ān in respect of previous scriptures, so it is a support of some of its fixed laws, from every rule, its interest totally was not different from the interest of various people and era, in this respect it is a rectifier, meant full proof, it is also to be making invalid for some of the previous laws and regulations, and voider of many rulings of every interests temporary partly considered in it the conditions of a particular people's of nations".²

We must not forget to mention here that these are all about which have not been distorted in these scriptures of followers

¹ Lisān al-'Arab, Stem-letters: حمن

² Sheikh Muḥammad Ṭāhir bin Ash'ur, Al-Ṭabrī wa al-Tanwīr, Dār al-Sahnun, Tunis, 6/221.

of prophets who were asked to protect it but they did not do so, rather they changed it and made amendments into it.

Similarly, it is not a prejudging things, or confiscating the results to confirm the fact that the entire Qur'ān is a perfect and faultless miracle, there is no even a slightest defect, and it is an issue on which the evidence of miracles has been made, and do not need of any evidence behind it, and the purpose of this assertion is to show that the balance of the Qur'ānic ruling on that relation between it and the previous scriptures is one scale of justice which will not change.

Third aspect: The relationship between the Qur'ān and the previous scriptures has disclosed of what the people of the book did with regard to their Messengers, and what they committed of crime in respect of them and in respect of their books, and this is the very aspect which is the subject of discussion, and that is the countermand of the claim of Orientalists in personifying the Koran by the Jews and Christians.

The Qur'ān has recorded them, and has revealed their actions as follow:

1. **Their concealment of truth in their book:** Allah Almighty says: *الَّذِينَ آتَيْنَاهُمُ الْكِتَابَ يَعْرِفُونَهُ كَمَا يَعْرِفُونَ أَبْنَاءَهُمْ وَإِنَّ فَرِيقًا مِنْهُمْ* (الَّذِينَ آتَيْنَاهُمُ الْكِتَابَ يَعْرِفُونَهُ كَمَا يَعْرِفُونَ أَبْنَاءَهُمْ وَإِنَّ فَرِيقًا مِنْهُمْ لَيَكْتُمُونَ الْحَقَّ وَهُمْ يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿١٥﴾) (Tr.: Those to whom We have given a Book they recognize it just as they recognize their own sons. But, some of them knowingly conceal the truth. Al-Baqarah: 146) What is meant by the concealment of the truth in this verse is the concealment of the Prophethood of Muḥammad (PBUH) which is mentioned in their books, and has been explained in the second chapter while discussing the position of Jews regarding the Qur'ān.
-

2. Their distortion of those books by changing their provisions:

Allah says: ﴿يَتَأْتِيهَا الرَّسُولُ لَا يَحْزُنكَ الَّذِينَ يُسْرِعُونَ فِي الْكُفْرِ﴾
 مِنَ الَّذِينَ قَالُوا ءَامَنَّا بِأَفْوَاهِهِمْ وَلَمْ تُؤْمِن قُلُوبُهُمْ وَمِنَ الَّذِينَ هَادُوا سَمَّعُونَ لِلْكَذِبِ
 سَمَّعُونَ لِقَوْمٍ ءَاخِرِينَ لَمْ يَأْتُوكَ يُحْرِفُونَ الْكَلِمَ مِنْ بَعْدِ مَوَاضِعِهِ يَقُولُونَ إِنْ أُوتِيتُمْ هَذَا
 (Tr.: Messenger, do not be grieved by those who vie with one another in denying the truth; those who say with their tongues, 'We believe,' but have no faith in their hearts; from among the Jews also, there are those who listen eagerly to any lies. They to you to convey to others {religious leaders} who do not come to you {out of pride and conceit}. They {these leaders} take words out of their context and say, 'if this be given to you, receive it, but if not, then beware. Al-Mā'dah: 41)

So they change what accords their wish about the punishment of adultery and they used to conspire each other in this regard, therefore, the ruling of the Prophet (PBUH) that accords their desire either change it or stay away from it, this is the meaning of the verse: ﴿يَقُولُونَ إِنْ أُوتِيتُمْ هَذَا فَخُذُوهُ وَإِن لَّمْ تُؤْتَوْهُ﴾
 (Tr.: they say, 'if this be given to you, receive it, but if not, then beware.)

Buḥḥārī has produced the narration by 'Abdullāh ibn 'Umar as saying: "Jew came to the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) and narrated that a man and a woman had an act of adultery, the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) told them: what do you have in the Gospel regarding punishment by stoning? They said, we expose and hunter them, 'Abdullāh bin Salām said: you lied, because its punishment is stoning, then they brought the Gospel and opened it, and one of them put their hands on the verse of stoning, then he read a few before and after the very verse, 'Abdullāh bin Salām said: Lift your hand, so he lifted his

hand which was hiding verse of stoning, thence they said: you are true, Muḥammad, there is the verse of stoning.¹

It is not being said that the person who directed the Prophet (PBUH) to it is ‘Abdullāh bin Salām, but it is the revelation which made him (PBUH) aware of as they ask him about the ruling of punishment of adultery in Gospel, when they knew of their lie, but in fact ‘Abdullāh bin Salām helped him in fixing the context of punishment by stoning in the Gospel.

3. Their belief in some part of the book and disbelief in

some other: Allah Almighty says: (وَإِذْ أَخَذْنَا مِيثَاقَكُمْ لَا تَسْفِكُونَ

دِمَاءَكُمْ وَلَا تُخْرِجُونَ أَنْفُسَكُمْ مِنْ دِيَارِكُمْ ثُمَّ أَقْرَرْتُمْ وَأَنْتُمْ تَسْهَدُونَ ﴿٨٥﴾ ثُمَّ أَنْتُمْ هَتُّوْا لَهُ تَقْتُلُونَ أَنْفُسَكُمْ وَتُخْرِجُونَ فَرِيقًا مِنْكُمْ مِنْ دِيَارِهِمْ تَظَاهَرُونَ عَلَيْهِمْ بِالْإِثْمِ وَالْعُدْوَانِ وَإِنْ يَأْتُوكُمْ أُسْرَىٰ تَقْدُوهُمْ وَهُوَ مُحْرَمٌ عَلَيْكُمْ إِخْرَاجُهُمْ أَفْتُوْمُنُونَ بِنِعْضِ الْكِتَابِ وَتَكْفُرُونَ بِبَعْضٍ فَمَا جَزَاءُ مَنْ يَفْعَلْ ذَلِكَ مِنْكُمْ إِلَّا خِزْيٌ فِي الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا (Tr.: When

they made a covenant with you, We said, ‘You shall not shed each other’s blood, nor turn your people out of their homes.’ You consented to this and bore witness. Yet, there you are, slaying one another and driving some of your own people from their homelands, aiding one another against them, committing sin and aggression; but if they came to you as captives, you would ransom them. Surely their very expulsion was unlawful for you. Do you believe in some part of the Book and deny another part of it? Those of you who act thus shall be rewarded with disgrace in this world and with a severe punishment on the Day of Resurrection.

Allah is never unaware of what you do. Al-Baqarah: 84-85) Al-Shaukānī says: the exegesists say: Allah had taken from the children of Israil four covenants: prevention from killing,

¹ Al-Bukhārī, Ḥadīth No. 3635

prevention from expulsion, prevention from demonstration, and giving ransom for captives, so they turned from all of what they were ordered to do except the ransom, therefore, Allah Almighty scolded them on this act by saying: (أَفْتُوْمُنُوْنَ بِبَعْضِ) (Tr.: you believe in some part of the Book and deny another part of it?)

4. Their keeping the Book behind their back because of intransigence in the Qur'ān: Allah Almighty says: (وَلَمَّا جَاءَهُمْ)

رَسُولٌ مِّنْ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ مُصَدِّقٌ لِّمَا مَعَهُمْ نَبَذَ فَرِيقٌ مِّنَ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ كِتَابَ اللَّهِ وَرَاءَ ظُهُورِهِمْ كَأَنَّهُمْ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿١٠١﴾ (Tr.: Whenever a messenger from Allah has come to them, fulfilling hat {predictions} which they already had, some of those to whom the Book was given have cast off the Book of Allah behind their backs as if they had no knowledge. Al-Baqarah: 101)

It means that the Messenger (PBUH) was certified by Mūsá in Torah which was a good tiding for the mission of Muḥammad (PBUH).

As for his saying: (نَبَذَ فَرِيقٌ.....), it is an imagery of their abandonment and disobeying the Book of Allah, as it is forsaken behind back through dispensing with it and lack of attention to it, and the book that they have rejected is the Torah; because its is understandable except what they stuck with first, but if they do not pay attention to it, it will not be considered that they have rejected it, but it is said: How is it correct for them to do that? The answer is that since the Torah is an evidence on the prophethood of Muḥammad (PBUH), as it contains of his praise and his character, they turned down from its ratification, and they were their native so they stuck to be casted off it.¹

¹ See: Faḵhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī, Al-Tafsīr al-Kabīr, Dār al-Fikr, Demuscus, 1985, 3/218

5. Mixing truth with falsehood and concealment of the

truth: Allah Exalted says: *يَتَأْهَلُّ الْكِتَابِ لِمَ تَلْبِسُونَ الْحَقَّ بِالْبَاطِلِ*

وَتَكْتُمُونَ الْحَقَّ وَأَنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٧١﴾ (Tr.: People of the Book! Why do

you mix truth with falsehood and knowingly conceal the truth? Āli 'Imrān: 71)

Al-Qāsimī says in the explanation of the meaning of the verse: (it meant, you hid the revealed truth with your camouflage falsehoods), and conceal the truth (i.e., which does not accept any camouflage or distortion) and you know (i.e., are aware of what you are hiding of its reality, and they surely know what is in the Torah and the Bible concerning the good tiding being Muḥammad as the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) and His prophet-hood, and bewilder people in this connection as they practice their habitude to others.

6. Their indifference: Allah Almighty says: *وَقَالَتِ الْيَهُودُ لَيْسَتْ*

النَّصَارَى عَلَى شَيْءٍ وَقَالَتِ النَّصَارَى لَيْسَتِ الْيَهُودُ عَلَى شَيْءٍ وَهُمْ يَتْلُونَ الْكِتَابَ.

(Tr.: The Jews say, 'The Christians have no ground to stand on, and the Christians say, 'The Jews have no ground to stand on', Yet they both recite the Book. al-Baqarah: 113)

7. Record of the pious biography, and high status of the prophets of Allah in response to what the people of the

Book stuck with fiends: Stories of the Prophets and their biographies regarded the common framework through which the orientlists proclaim that the Qur'ān is derived from the Books of Jews and Christians and that is because of the similarity in the happenings mentioned in it, for example; two sons of Ādam, story of Ibrāhīm and his safeguard from the fire of Namrūd, the story of Sulaimān with the Queen of Saba, story of Hārūt and Mārūt and the story of Mūsá,¹ and they ignored the complete discrepancy

¹ See: Opinions of Orientalists about the Qur'ān and its Interpretation, 1/335.

in the basis of these stories, and what surrounded the prophets and their biographies in these books which they have distorted, and in the Qur'ān, which narrates their stories with what they liked to have been: such as purity, clarity, justice, righteousness, integrity and determination.

We will discuss here what the Qur'ān has brought regarding the position of the Prophets in general which is a witness for what we have described, after that we will lament with a little detail what the Jews and Christians have stucked with a number of prophets, and what the Qur'ān has uttered about these prophets themselves.

- (a) The messengers of Allah are the chosen among His creatures to convey His message to the universe: (اللَّهُ يَصْطَفِي) (Tr.: Allah selects messengers from both angels and from mankind; Allah is all hearing and all seeing- al-Hajj: 75), (وَمَا كَانَ اللَّهُ لِيُظْلِعَكُمْ عَلَى) (Tr.: On no account will Allah reveal to you the unseen but Allah chooses those of His messengers whom He will. Āli 'Imrān: 179)
- (b) This selection is based on the knowledge of Allah with whom He selected and their capability to fulfill the message: (اللَّهُ أَعْلَمُ حَيْثُ يَجْعَلُ رِسَالَتَهُ) (Tr.: But Allah knows best whom to appoint as His messenger. Al-An'ām: 124)
- (c) They called entirely with the order of Allah to His slaves alone: (مَا أَرْسَلْنَا مِنْ قَبْلِكَ مِنْ رَسُولٍ إِلَّا نُوحِي إِلَيْهِ أَنَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا أَنَا فَاعْبُدُونِ) (Tr.: We sent all messengers before you with this revelation: 'There is no deity save Me, so worship Me alone. Al-Anbiyā': 25)
- (d) They have been protected from negligence concerning Oneness of Allah so that they provide safeguard to their followers: (وَلَقَدْ أُوحِيَ إِلَيْكَ وَإِلَى الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِكَ لَئِنْ أَشْرَكْتَ لَيَحْبَطَنَّ عَمَلُكَ) (Tr.: It has already been revealed to you

and to those who have gone before you that if you ascribe any partner to Allah, all your works will come to nothing and you will surely be among the losers. Al-Zumar: 65)

- (e) They are the leaders of guidance: (وَجَعَلْنَاهُمْ أَئِمَّةً يَهْدُونَ بِأَمْرِنَا) (Tr.: We made them leaders who guided people by Our command We revealed to them the doing of good. Al-Anbiyā': 73)
- (f) They surpass to do good: (إِنَّهُمْ كَانُوا يُسْرِعُونَ فِي الْحَيْرَاتِ وَيَدْعُونَنَا رَغَبًا وَرَهَبًا وَكَانُوا لَنَا خَشِيعِينَ ﴿٩٠﴾) (Tr.: They used to hasten to do good and they called on Us in hope and fear, and they were always humble towards us. Al-Anbiyā': 90)
- (g) They showed steadfastness against any evil: (وَلَقَدْ كَذَّبْتَ رَسُولًا مِّن قَبْلِكَ فَصَبْرُوا عَلَىٰ مَا كُذِّبُوا وَأَوْدُوا حَتَّىٰ أَتَاهُم نَصْرُنَا وَلَا مُبَدِّل لِكَلِمَاتِ اللَّهِ وَلَقَدْ جَاءَكَ مِن نَّبِيِّئِ الْمُرْسَلِينَ ﴿٣٤﴾) (Tr.: Other messengers have been denied before you, and they bore their rejection and persecution steadfastly, until Our help came to them. There is no one who can change the words of Allah. You have already received some account of those messengers. Al-An'ām: 34)
- (h) Allah Almighty has fixed their outcome for success and victory: (وَلَقَدْ سَبَقَتْ كَلِمَتُنَا لِعِبَادِنَا الْمُرْسَلِينَ ﴿٧١﴾ إِنَّهُمْ لَهُمُ الْمَنْصُورُونَ ﴿٧٢﴾ وَإِنَّ جُنَدَنَا لَهُمُ الْغَالِبُونَ ﴿٧٣﴾) (Tr.: and Surely Our word has gone forth respecting Our servants, the messengers: that it is certainly they who will be helped; and that it is Our host that that would certainly triumph. Al-Şāffāt: 171-173)
- (i) And they are liable for peace, serenity and respect: (وَسَلَامٌ عَلَى الْمُرْسَلِينَ ﴿١٨١﴾ وَالْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ ﴿١٨٢﴾) (Tr.: Peace be upon the Messengers and praise be to Allah, the Lord of all the Worlds. Al-Şāffāt: 181-182)

These are a few milestone of the status of the Messengers as have been mentioned in the Qur'ān, the verses in this respect have been mentioned in the context of their stories which Allah Almighty has narrated in His Book.

So what about of these Messengers who have been distorted by Jews and Christians in their Books which the orientalist have presumed to be the source of the Qur'ān.

We leave those texts which these Distorted Books have mentioned about, and we quote them by compulsion seeking forgiveness of Allah so as to enable us to explain the position of the people about their prophets and to make them the source of recommendation as the Qur'ān has stated regarding them.

They have committed crime regarding the prophets, proclaimed lie and falsehood for them. They made them partner with Allah Almighty and worshiped them, and there are people who killed others with pretext, some of them committed act of adultery illegally. These are their falsities we will discuss some of them in short:

First: They made false claim that Hārūn, who sculpted the calf for the children of Israel and worshiped them! In the thirty second chapter of al-Khurūj it came:

“(1) People observed that Mūsá halted in coming down from the mountain, so they gathered around Hārūn and asked him: get up, and make for us a god who can walk before us, because Mūsá who got us out from the land of Egypt, he afflicted with us what you do not know (2) Hārūn told them: put off the gold ornaments in ears of your wives, sons and daughters and give them to me (3) the entire gathering of people put off the gold ornaments which were in their ears and gave them to Hārūn (4) He took them from their hands, pictured them in template and made a molten calf from them, then they said: this is your god,

O Israel, which made you to get out from the land of Egypt (5) when Hārūn saw this built a butcher house in front of it, Hārūn called and said tomorrow is a celebration for the lord (6) so they awoke early the next day and lifted the burning objects and slaughtered an animal of peace, then people sat and started eating and drinking and played altogether”.

This is what has been discussed who recalled the Torah, but what the Qur’ān said regarding Hārūn is as follows: Allah Almighty says:

(﴿ وَمَا أَعْجَلَكَ عَنْ قَوْمِكَ يَا مُوسَىٰ ﴿٣٣﴾ قَالَ هُمْ أَوْلَاءٌ عَلَيَّ أُثْرِي وَعَجَلْتُ إِلَيْكَ رَبِّ لِتَرْضَىٰ ﴿٣٤﴾ قَالَ فَإِنَّا لَفِتْنًا لَّكَ قَوْمَكَ مِنْ بَعْدِكَ وَأَضَلَّهُمُ السَّامِرِيُّ ﴿٣٥﴾ فَرَجَعَ مُوسَىٰ إِلَىٰ قَوْمِهِ غَضْبَانَ أَسِفًا قَالَ يَقَوْمِ أَلَمْ يَعِدْكُمْ رَبُّكُمْ وَعَدًّا حَسَنًا أَفَطَالَ عَلَيْكُمُ الْعَهْدُ أَمْ أَرَدْتُمْ أَنْ يَحِلَّ عَلَيْكُمْ غَضَبٌ مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ فَأَخْلَفْتُم مَّوعِدِي ﴿٣٦﴾ قَالُوا مَا أَخْلَفْنَا مَوْعِدَكَ بِمَلِكِنَا وَلَكِنَّا حَمَلْنَا أَوْزَارًا مِّن زِينَةِ الْقَوْمِ فَقَذَفْنَاهَا فَكَذَلِكَ أَلْقَى السَّامِرِيُّ ﴿٣٧﴾ فَأَخْرَجَ لَهُمْ عِجْلًا جَسَدًا لَهُ خُورٌ فَقَالُوا هَذَا إِلَهُكُمْ وَإِلَهُ مُوسَىٰ فَنَسِيَ ﴿٣٨﴾ أَفَلَا يَرَوْنَ أَنَّهُ لَا يُرْجِعُ إِلَيْهِمْ قَوْلًا وَلَا يَمْلِكُ لَهُمْ صَرًّا وَلَا نَفْعًا ﴿٣٩﴾ وَلَقَدْ قَالَ لَهُمْ هَارُونُ مِن قَبْلُ يَقَوْمِ إِنَّمَا فُتِنْتُمْ بِهِ وَإِنَّ رَبَّكُمُ الرَّحْمَنُ فَاتَّبِعُونِي وَأَطِيعُوا أَمْرِي ﴿٤٠﴾ قَالُوا لَنْ نَبْرَحَ عَلَيْهِ عَاكِفِينَ حَتَّىٰ يَرْجِعَ إِلَيْنَا مُوسَىٰ ﴿٤١﴾)

(Tr.: O Moses, why have you come with such haste from your people?’ He said, ‘They are following in my footsteps, while I have hastened to You, my Lord, to please You.’ But God said, ‘We have tested your people in your absence. The Samiri has led them astray.’ Moses returned to his people in anger and great sorrow. He said, ‘My people, did your Lord not make you a handsome promise? Was my absence too long for you? Did you desire that your Lord’s wrath should descend upon you, when you broke your promise to me?’ They answered, ‘We did not break our promise to you of our own accord, but we had to carry loads of the people’s ornaments and so we threw them [into the fire] for that was what the Samiri suggested,’

then he forged a calf for them—an image producing a lowing sound. They said, ‘This is your deity, the deity of Moses; he has forgotten it.’ Why did they not see that it could not give them any response and had no power to harm or benefit them? Aaron had already told them, ‘O my people! You are only being tested by this. Your Lord is the All Merciful, so follow me and obey my command. *Ṭāha*: 83-91)

Second: They falsified by saying that Dāwūd made an act of adultery with wife of one of his soldiers and his pretext was to kill him in a bid to keep away from him: In the eleventh chapter of the travel of second king: “(2) in the evening Dāwūd got up from his bed and walked on the terrace of the King’s house, he saw a woman over the terrace was taking bath, the woman was very beautiful (3) Dāwūd sent a person to enquire about the woman, he was told: she is Betchayeh, daughter of Aliaam, a woman of Oria al-Hatha (4) Dāwūd sent a gift to her, she took it and they had entered each other, she purified for being impurity (5) she came back to her house, became pregnant, she sent a person and informed Dāwūd that I am pregnant (6) then he sent a person to Yuaab to go to Oria al-Hatha, then Yuaab sent Oria to Dāwūd.... to (14) in the morning Dāwūd wrote a letter to Yuaab and sent it via Oria (15) he wrote in the letter as saying: move to a place where a fierce fighting is going on and attack from back side, they will be beaten up and killed (16) the city was under the siege of Yuaab, he made Oria to be in the places which are known to have been many brave men (17) the men of the city came out and fought with Yuaab, some of the soldiers of Dāwūd were killed and Oria al-Hatha was also killed”.

This is what the distorters have lamented, but the Qur’ān narrates his story in a different way. He is the one who recites the name of Allah, and the universe recites with him: his bird

and inanimate objects: ﴿وَلَقَدْ ءَاتَيْنَا دَاوُودَ مِنَّا فَضْلًا يٰجِبَالُ اَوْبِيْ مَعَهُ وَالطّٰيْرُ ﴿٣٠﴾﴾ (Tr.: We bestowed upon Dāwūd great favour. We said, ‘O mountains and birds! Join with him in celebrating Our praise’. We soften iron for him. Saba’: 10). ﴿وَإِذْ ذُكِّرْ عَبْدَنَا دَاوُودَ ذَا الْأَيْدِيِّ ﴿١٠﴾﴾ (Tr.: Bear with their words patiently. Remember Our servant Daood, a man of strength who always turned to Us: We made the mountains join him in glorifying Us at sunset and sunrise; and the birds, too, in flocks, all turned to Him. We made his kingdom strong and bestowed upon him wisdom and sagacity in judgment. Şād: 17-20) So rape and killing can be the wisdom? He is the person upon whom Allah has bestowed the caliphate and commanded him to rule among people with just-ful manner: ﴿يٰٓدَاوُدُ اِنَّا جَعَلْنٰكَ خَلِيْفَةً فِى الْاَرْضِ فَاْحْكُمْ بَيْنَ النَّاسِ بِالْحَقِّ وَلَا تَتَّبِعِ الْهَوٰى فَيُضِلَّكَ ﴿٢٦﴾﴾ (Tr.: We said, ‘Dāwūd, We have given you mastery over the land. Judge fairly between people. Do not follow your desires, lest they divert you from Allah’s path. Şād: 26)

Third: They falsified by saying that Lūṭ drank wine, raped his two daughters one after the other and atrociously they became pregnant: In the thirteenth chapter of Psalms it is narrated:

“(30) From Sau’r, Lūṭ climbed and stayed on the mountain, he and his two daughters, when he feared from staying in Sau’r, he and his daughters lived in the cave (31) the elder told the younger: our father has become old, nobody here who can have sex with us as it happens in this whole area (32) come let us make our father drink wine and sleep with him and will establish a generation from our father (33) they served their father wine that night, then the elder daughter came and slept

with her father and he did not know about her sleep nor her awake (34) the following day the elder daughter said to the younger one, yesterday I slept with my father, let us serve him wine tonight also, you come and sleep with him so that we can establish a generation from our father (35) both of them served wine to their father that night also and the elder daughter also had sex with him, and he did not know about her sleep nor her awake (36) both the daughters of Lūṭ became pregnant from their father (37) a son was born by the elder and she named him as Muaab, he is the father of Muabites till this day (38) and another son was born by the younger daughter and named him N’amaa and his the father of the children of Amoon till this day”.

This is what these lairs have illustrated! Now see what the Qur’ān says about him: (وَلُوْطًا ءَاتَيْنَاهُ حُكْمًا وَعِلْمًا وَنَجَّيْنَاهُ مِنَ الْقَرْيَةِ الَّتِي كَانَتْ تَعْمَلُ الْخَبِيْثَ) (Tr.: To Lūṭ We gave wisdom and knowledge and delivered him from the city which practiced abomination. Al-ANbiyā’: 74)

Allah preferred him among all the prophets in worlds: (وَإِسْمَاعِيْلَ) (Tr.: Ismail, Elisa, Yunus and Loot – We favoured each one of them above other people-al-An’ām: 86), he hated the obscene act of his people: (وَلُوْطًا إِذْ قَالَ لِقَوْمِهِ إِنَّكُمْ لَأْتُونَ الْفَحِشَةَ مَا سَبَقَكُمْ بِهَا مِنْ أَحَدٍ مِنَ الْعَالَمِيْنَ) (Tr.: Lūṭ said to his people, indeed you commit obscenity such as no people before you have ever committed in the worlds. Al-’Ankabūt: 28) He exhorted for good manner because of it his people wanted him to throw out: (وَلُوْطًا إِذْ قَالَ لِقَوْمِهِ أَتَأْتُونَ الْفَحِشَةَ وَأَنْتُمْ تُبْصِرُونَ) (Tr.: أَيْنُكُمْ) (Tr.: And tell of Lūṭ. He

said to his people, 'Will you commit evil knowingly? Must you go lustfully to men instead of women? Indeed, you are a people who are deeply ignorant. The only answer of his people was, Drive out Loot and his family from the city". Al-Naml: 54-56)

After all that we have mentioned in this chapter, is it truly mentioned in a rational mind that what the Jews and Christians have distorted from their books and their lies – as the orientalist claim - is a source of the Qur'ān? Is not this mere a claim?

Did the orientalist bring something new in an effort to negate the colour of divine revelation about the Qur'ān?

When we reviewed what was elaborated earlier about the propagations of the orientalist, we contemplated upon them, so we are on the verge to immediately realize that what they have brought is not but only echoes and hesitations- over the centuries- of their contemporaries of the Jews and the Christians regarding the Qur'ān, and about the status of the Messenger (PBUH), for the claims of the disbelievers of Quraish.

So the efforts made by the orientalist to deny the divine revelation of the Qur'ān, the attempt that they were carried out for their success in wealth and men and spent it in order to market their money is nothing but a picture of what the disbelievers have done earlier, wore a new outfit, and named as the scientific research, and insisted that the minds accept it by disliking despite being its false, so they earned a failure which is not less than the failure of their predecessors, and remained the elusive truth which tells that Muḥammad (PBUH) is the last of the all prophets and that the Qur'ān is the revelation of Allah to him, which is the last of the all books, and that Islam is the conclusion of all messages to the entire mankind, and those seeking another religion will not be accepted it.

Conclusion:

It appeared from the above long discussion that the Prophet Muḥammad (PBUH) was an Arab. He was born in the Quraish tribe. He was also unlettered person. He got prophethood when he reached forty. His prophethood was certified by the uncle of Khadijah the wife of the Prophet (PBUH) who brought him to her uncle when the Prophet happened to face the angle Gabriel. Since then the revelation of the Qur'ān started which took a time-span of twenty three years to be completed. The Qur'ān is in Arabic language. The Prophet, during this period, met the Jews and Christians and discussed them on different issues to find out truth with them. Though the message of the Qur'ān looks similar to the old heavenly books, it is contrary to these scriptures in many places. This Book was revealed to correct the mistakes committed by the people of the heavenly Books in their books knowingly or unknowingly. This is a final divine message. The opponents of the Qur'ān, through ages, tried their level best to blaim it or to confront its teachings and contents but their all attempts went in vain. They were either answered by the Prophet (PBUH) or by his followers. The claims or blaims of the modern orientalsts are similar to their ancestors except the way and style. Their ancestors attacked the Qur'ān directly but these new-borns steal their ill-intentions in the garb of academic endeavours. But Allah is ever-Watcher. As He disclosed their ill-intentions in the early periods He will continuously disclose it to His pious servants who are always ready to answer any attack on their Book and above all Allah has promised to save it from any attack, academic or non-academic. And Allah does not break His promise (وَاللَّهُ لَا يُخْلِفُ الْمِيعَادَ)

Bibliography

1. 'Abd al-Raḥmān bin Abū Bakr al-Suyūṭī, *Al-Itqān fī 'Ulūm al-Qur'ān*, Edtd: Muṣṭafá Dīp al-Baghā, 1987.
 2. 'Alī bin Abū Bakr al-Haithamī, *Majma' al-Zawā'id wa Manba' al-Fawā'id*, Dār al-Fikr, Beirut, 1994.
 3. 'Alī bin Aḥmad al-Wājidī al-Nisāpūrī, *Asbāb al-Nuzūl*, 468H.
 4. Abū Muḥammad 'Abdul Malik bin Hiṣḥām, *Al-Sīrah al-Nabawīyyah*, Maktabah al-Kullīyyat al-Azharīyyah, 1874.
 5. Dr. 'Umar Ibrāhīm Radwān, *Ārā al-Mustashriqīn ḥaula al-Qur'ān al-Karīm wa Tafsīrihi*, Dirāsah wa Naqd, Dār Ṭayyibah 1413H.
 6. Dr. Muḥammad 'Abdullāh Darrāz, *al-Madkhal ilā Dirāsah al-Qur'ān al-Karīm*, Dār al-Qalam, 1993.
 7. Goldzehr, *Madhāhib al-Tafsīr al-Islāmī* Tr.: Dr. 'Abdul Ḥalīm al-Najjār), Dār Iqrā', Beirut, 1983
 8. Ismā'īl bin Kathīr, *al-Bidāyah wa al-Nihāyah*, Dār al-Fikr al-'Arabī, 1932.
 9. Ismā'īl bin Kathīr, *Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-'Azīm*, Dār al-M'arifah, Beirut, 1403H.
 10. Maḥmūd Shaltūt, *al-Islām 'Aqīdah wa Sharī'ah*, Dār al-Shurūq, al-Sadisah, 1993.
 11. Muḥammad al-Ṭāhir bin 'Ash'ur, *al-Taḥrīr wa al-Tanwīr*, Dār Sahnūn, Tunis, N.d.
 12. Muḥammad bin 'Abdullāh al-Ḥakīm al-Nisāpūrī, *al-Mustadrak 'alā al-Ṣaḥīḥain*, Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmīyyah, Beirut, 1990.
 13. Muḥammad bin 'Alī al-Shaukānī, *Fatḥ al-Qadīr*, Dār al-Wafā, 1994.
-

14. Muḥammad bin 'Umar bin al-Ḥussain al-Rāzī, Tafsīr al-Kabīr, Dār al-Fikr, 1985.
 15. Muḥammad bin Aḥmad bin Abū Bakr al-Qurṭubī, al-Jāmi' li Aḥkām al-Qur'ān, Dār al-Gharb al-'Arabī, Cairo, 1410H.
 16. Muḥammad Jamāl al-Dīn al-Qāsmī, Maḥāsin al-Tawīl, Mu'assasah al-Tārīkh al-'Arabī, 1995.
 17. Muḥammad Muḥammad Abū Lailah, al-Qur'ān al-Karīm min al-Manzūr al-Istishrāqī, Dār al-Nashr li Jam'iyyat Miṣr al-Ula, 2002.
 18. Muḥammad Muḥammad al-Bahī, al-Fikr al-Islāmī wa Ṣilatuhu bi al-Isti'mār al-'Arabī al-Ḥadīth, al-Maktabah al-Faiṣaliyyah, Makkah, 1973A.
 19. Muḥammad Quṭb, Al-Mustashriqūn wa al-Islām, Maktabah Wahbah, 1999AD
 20. Najīb al-Aqīqī, al-Mustashriqūn, Dār al-Ma'ārif, al-Thalithah, 1965.
 21. Raḥmatullāh bin Khalīl al-Raḥmān al-Hindī, Izhār al-Ḥaqq, al-Ri'āsah al-'Āmmah li Idārat al-Buḥūth al-'Ilmīyyah wa al-Iftā wa al-Da'wah wa al-Irshād bi al-Mamlakah al-Arabiah al-Saudiyah, 1989.
 22. Yūsuf Luqmān, al-Mustashriqūn wa al-Qur'ān al-Karīm, Manuscript of Ph.D thesis of Maktabah Kullīyyah Uṣūl al-Dīn, al-Azhar University, No. 793 year, 1977.
-

Repetition in the Qur'ān

(The Story of Ādam and Satan-A Case Study)

✎...Maulānā Abullaith Iṣlāḥī Nadwī¹

Tr.: Fāṭimatuz Zahrā'²

Among the objections raised on the Qur'ān by the orientalisists is repetition in its stories and contents; there are certain issues and a few stories mentioned time and again. This, apart from boring the minds, is a great demerit for a book.

In reply to this objection Muslim scholars gave different answers but none is satisfactory. Not only this, there is a number of scholars who replied that repetition is the habit of the Arabs and for it they cited some long Arabic poems wherein some parts of the verses have been repeated. But the fact is that it is not a satisfactory answer, rather it is an evidence to strengthen this objection. When our reasons consider repetition as demerit then how can this demerit be merit simply for being used in the poetry of ancient Arab poets. And the fact is that there are very few examples of repetition in the pre-Islamic Arabic poetry. The natural sharp intellect of the Arabs never liked repetition because sharp intellect does not like to listen to repeated thing nor does it like to say repeatedly. The poems these scholars cited for the proof of repetition are actually free from repetition. In fact repetition is fault for any speech, from which everyone likes to save his speech or book thinking it as demerit. Then how can we accept that this demerit is found in that book which

¹ Great Muslim scholar and reformist of Azamgarh (U.P.)

² Member, Advisory Board, The Indian Journal of Arabic and Islamic Studies

competed the whole existing literary heritage of the world. We don't deny that some issues and stories have been repeated again and again in the Qur'ān. If we deny it, we will deny the reality. But we cannot accept that this repetition is of that kind of repetition which is considered demerit of the speech, boring the minds, tasteless, useless and a sign of the speaker's negligence and inexpertise. Like other worldly things repetition too has both the sides of fault and efficiency, demerit and merit; when repetition is inappropriate, boring and useless, it will be a demerit but if the matter is contrary to it who dares to blame it. The repetition scholars rejected is of the first kind but as for the repetition of the second kind no intellectuals can consider it as demerit. No doubt, some issues and stories have been repeated in the Qur'ān but everywhere the context needed it, and moreover everywhere there is a need of new and attracting style of speech. Not only this, this kind of repetition has added to its literal beauty and widened its meaning. And if anyone finds repetition anywhere he is requested to ponder upon it, he will surely find some different wise aspects and new benefits. Thus we can rightly say that the Qur'ān has no repetition therein but perhaps the opposition may not be satisfied with this short of answers so it needs to be discussed in detail with ample examples.

Repetition in the Qur'ān is divided into two kinds: (1) repetition of the meanings (2) and repetition of the sentences; the stories of past nations and prophets and contents of monotheism, life hereafter and prophethood perhaps have been mentioned repeatedly in all chapters of the Qur'ān. Similarly, there are several sentences which have been repeated again and again in the same chapter like 'فِي أَيِّ آلاءِ رَبِّكُمَا' in the chapter of al-Raḥmān and 'وَيْلٌ يَوْمَئِذٍ لِلْمُكَذِّبِينَ' in the

chapter of al-Mursalāt. Keeping these examples in minds, people think that the Qur'ān is also not free from verbal and literal repetition.

Thanks to Allah, the Muslim scholars took the notice of this objection and tried to reply to the repetition of both the kinds; as for the verbal repetition we find their famous reply that repetition benefits emphasis but their replies to the question of literal repetition are very interesting; some of them replied: the Qur'ān has provided, everywhere, satisfaction for the thirst of soul of its reader like a man who takes water after being thirsty and food after he feels hungry and his soul does not feel any boring nor anyone does oppose it" while some others replied: the Qur'ān has mentioned some issues in all chapters because if a man does not find time to read the whole Qur'ān he may read as much as he can and thus he will grasp the sense of the whole book." There are some other answers given by other scholars. Here we do not like to indulge ourselves in the matter whether these answers are correct or wrong except that we have only one answer to both the questions of verbal and literal repetitions and that is that though some stories and sentences look repeated in the Qur'ān, they are new and independent regarding their specified meanings. The Qur'ān repeats monotheism, prophethood and life hereafter for emphasis but if we continue pondering over it, we will find that they are mentioned everywhere differently; sometimes monotheism has been mentioned to prove that belief in it is a nature's requirement while in some other places it was mentioned to prove that it has been given by all the previous prophets. Moreover, in some places it was mentioned to prove that belief in it is requirement of several favours done by Allah. In some places it was mentioned to say that it is evident from

the similarity of administration of universe, its unity and uniformity. Thus monotheism is not mentioned everywhere in one style and in a similar way.

Likewise, resurrection is mentioned in one place because the Divine justice requires it while in another place the grace of Allah wants to bring a day when good will distinguished from the bad and everyone will see result of his deed. Moreover, this day is mentioned to prove the creation of earth and sky and even creation of human being useful. It was also mentioned because if this is not brought, it will incite bad elements. Similarly, it has been mentioned in some places as a result of the call of all messengers towards it. There are also some places where Almighty pointed out some rules of the universe and declared that its arrival is a natural result because everything has its pair so pair of this world is that one (Hereafter).

Likewise, prophethood is mentioned in one place as a proof for the monotheism while in another place it is mandatory for the belief in one God. Similarly, it was mentioned to prove that if material provisions are mandatory for the physical satisfaction, the Divine message is necessary for spiritual satisfaction. And because all these discussions are mentioned in different chapters of the Qur'ān, they look and seem repeated and though it is not wrong that ways of this repetition may be similar in some places, if we think upon these similar places, we find that their aspects are different everywhere.

Here one question arises: Why have these discussions been mentioned in different chapters and in different ways? Why have these discussions not been mentioned in one chapter? But, to me, this question is not related to the repetition, rather it is related to the order of the discussion. So we leave it here. The same case is with the repetition of the sentences; they look

repeated randomly but they are mentioned everywhere with a fresh target. The sentence 'ويلٌ يومئذ للمكذبين' is repeated ten times in the chapter of al-Mursalāt and it looks that this repetition is useless but Maulānā'Abdul Ḥamīd Farāhī has proved in the commentary of al-Mursalāt that this sentence denotes new meanings in all places and the Qur'ān has used it rhetorically.¹ Similarly, the Maulānā pointed out the rhetoric of 'فبأي آلاء ربكما' in his commentary on the chapter of al-Raḥmān.

Along with the repetition of the sentences, repetition of the stories is more annoying the people because there are some stories that have been mentioned repeatedly in the Qur'ān so we want to focus on the repetition of the stories in this article.

The Qur'ān has often mentioned stories of different prophets and events of ancient nations to remind or to cite. And these two acts have different aspects so we can cite one story for different things as well as we can take several benefits of reminder from one event. That's why sometimes one story is repeated for different reasons. If we think upon them keeping in mind their context, it will be clear why they have been mentioned? It is also possible, and there is no fault in it, that one story has been mentioned in two places for the same reason but if you ponder upon it, you will find that every story has been mentioned in every place for a new reason, which is why you will see that the single story that has been mentioned in different chapters is different from each other in wordings and notions.

The story of Ādam and Devil is mentioned in the Qur'ān in seven places with a different citation in each place, that's why everywhere the style and words are different. So one story

¹ Tafsīr of the chapter of al-Mursalāt (Urdu translation by: Maulānā Amīn Aḥsan Iṣlāḥī), Dā'irah Ḥamīdīyyah, Madrasat-ul-Iṣlāḥ, Sarā'imīr, A'zamgarh, 2nd Edition, n.d. PP. 7-8

has been cited for different things from different aspects and for these reasons the style has been changed and the words increased or decreased because care for the situation is the spirit of the rhetoric. And those who do not put in mind this side they think that this story has been repeated and they say that this repetition is useless. The same happened with other stories mentioned in the Qur'ān. But because of oft-mention of the story of Ādam and Devil or Pharaoh and Moses those who don't know the reason have doubt of this repetition. So it was needed to mention the contexts and aims of their mention so as to make clear that the stories mentioned in the Qur'ān even seven times are not considered to be repeated. In the meanwhile we will find that those who don't believe in the coherence of the Qur'ān and think that these stories have been mentioned at random will see that the stories of the Qur'ān are co-related to the central theme.

We will see these stories from two aspects;¹ (1) to fix aims of their mention and (2) to show the reasons behind the difference among their styles. The story of Ādam has been mentioned in the following seven chapters: al-Baqarah, al-A'arāf, al-Hijr, al-Isrā', al-Kahf, Tāha and Šād. Keeping in mind the order of the Qur'ān we start from the chapter of al-Baqarah.

The Story of Ādam and Devil in the Chapter of al-Baqarah: Let's have in our mind as an introduction that we believe that the meanings of the verses and the objectives of the stories are fixed through its coherence. It may be that the verses and stories contain, at first sight, different meanings and objectives but the context will decide the exact meanings of the verses and the theme of the stories but it is a miracle of the book of Allah that some verses and stories contain, in

¹ To fix the reasons here help has been sought from the footnotes of Imām Farāhī on the Qur'ān.

some places, different aspects and you find from every aspect is finely united like a pearl in the ring. The condition of the story of Ādam in the chapter of al-Baqarah is like that. It has been mentioned here from different aspects and is related to its precedent from different points. In the following we will mention four-five reasons:

1. To understand one finest relation let's keep in mind the aforementioned verses. Allah says:

"كَيْفَ تَكْفُرُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَكُنْتُمْ أَمْوَاتًا فَأَحْيَاكُمْ ثُمَّ يُمَيِّتُكُمْ ثُمَّ يُحْيِيكُمْ ثُمَّ إِلَيْهِ تُرْجَعُونَ ﴿٢٨﴾ هُوَ الَّذِي خَلَقَ لَكُمْ مَّا فِي الْأَرْضِ جَمِيعًا ثُمَّ أَسْتَوَىٰ إِلَى السَّمَاءِ فَسَوَّاهُنَّ سَبْعَ سَمَاوَاتٍ وَهُوَ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمٌ ﴿٢٩﴾".¹

Tr.: How can you believe in Allah? When you were without life, He gave you life, and then He will cause you to die, then restore you to life, and then to Him shall you be made to return. It is He Who created for you all that is in the earth; then He turned towards the heavens, and He perfected them as seven heavens; and He knows all things.

After it the story of making Ādam as vicegerent starts. Now think upon their relation with the story of Ādam's being as vicegerent. To understand it you must understand the meanings of those verses clearly. Imām Farāhī says explaining these verses of al-Baqarah: these verses prove to be an evidence on existence of Allah, arrival of resurrection, condemn of polytheism and necessity of worship.

How do these verses prove the above points is mentioned in my own words: first analyze these sentences according to the meanings then you will find that every part has an evidence in it.

(1) كَيْفَ تَكْفُرُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَكُنْتُمْ أَمْوَاتًا فَأَحْيَاكُمْ (1)

This part is an open witness to the existence of Allah; when all the things found in the world indicate to their inventor,

¹ Al-Baqarah: 28

why is there not be a creator for the human being, who develops him gradually. If there is no creator then who does all these activities. Is it possible for a non-living thing to perform such a work?

(2) *تُمْ يُمِيتُكُمْ ثُمَّ يُحْيِيكُمْ*

Though this part is related to its precedent, it also proves life after death for which there are some reasons; in the above Allah's existence was proved because it is He Who created the man then it is also an evidence for the resurrection because if Allah can create you of nothing, how can He not create you when you are something.

(3) *هُوَ الَّذِي خَلَقَ لَكُمْ مَّا فِي الْأَرْضِ جَمِيعًا*

This verse is a proof for falseness of polytheism from two aspects: (1) everything in the universe has unity so there must be one creator for them all, (2) when Allah has created all universe for us then it is our unfaithfulness that we make any partner for Him.

All these three points are proven clearly. After their truthfulness it is proved that one should worship his Creator. When Allah is aware of our deeds and we have also to be presented before Him in the Hereafter, we must worship Him. He keeps mercy over us by some favours such as He has created the universe for our comfort so it is our duty to thank Him and to worship Him.

After this clarification now it is easy to understand that belief in Allah, thankfulness to His grace and belief in resurrection result in worship of Allah. So if anyone accepts the existence of Allah, pays sincere thanks to His favours and believes in resurrection must prostrate before Allah and ought try his best to know the ways to please Allah and this feeling would pave a way to the prophethood because it is the messengers of Allah who can

exactly guide us to know the will of Allah. Therefore, the proof of worship of Allah is first proven by Ādam's being the first man as vicegerent of Allah because this account proves in general the prophethood whose last chain is the Prophet Muḥammad (PBUH) and this description proves generally the prophethood from two aspects- Ādam's being vicegerent and the covenant to follow the messengers taken by Allah from all human. Allah says addressing the human being:

فَإِنَّمَا يَأْتِيَنَّكُمْ مِنِّي هُدًى فَمَن تَبِعَهَا فَلَآ خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ¹

Tr.: --- and if there comes to you guidance from Me, then whoso shall follow My guidance, on them shall come no fear, nor shall they grieve.

Revelation of divine guidance signifies arrival of the messengers as came in the chapter of al-A'rāf:

يَبْنَئِ آدَمَ إِمَّا يَأْتِيَنَّكُمْ رُسُلٌ مِّنكُمْ يَفُضُّونَ عَلَيْكُمْ آيَاتِي²

Tr.: O children of Adam! If messengers come to you from among yourselves, rehearsing My signs unto you ---.

Here revelation of divine guidance is replaced by the last messenger which can be known by this covenant through which Allah has called mankind towards the prophethood of the Prophet Muḥammad (PBUH). As it came in the coming verses wherein obedience was felt to followed in a way to prove such apostleship that could virtually guide the mankind to the ways of such obedience.

(4) Before this description Allah has mentioned, regarding His favours upon the mankind, creation of man and subjecting all that is in the sky and the earth to him but this man could enjoy all these favours only when there is a guide for

¹Al-Baqarah 38

² Al-A'rāf: 35

them who might establish the foundation of co-existence among them that's why after mentioning all these favours Allah mentioned viceroyship of Ādam which indicates to the root of this viceroyship in the name of prophethood and its requirements.

- (5) Here Allah mentioned the story of Ādam to highlight His numerous favours upon mankind. This starts with the mention of refuting polytheism. It's because when man worships other than the creator, who has created all things in the universe for him, it is considered a heinous crime before Allah. So He mentioned His most valuable favour, i.e. prostration of the angels to Ādam which points that He not only created all things for this man but also He made the angels prostrate before him so making partners with Allah after all these great favours is a heinous crime indeed. This story is preceded by such favours, and the story of Ādam and the obedience of the angels to prostrate before him is a part of it.
- (6) It is agreed upon that the central theme of the chapter of al-Baqarah is to prove the apostleship of the Prophet Muḥammad specially for the Jews that's why the Children of Israel have been mentioned in detail just after this story but the story of Ādam before this mention has been narrated for a particular reason containing things which may become like an introduction 'to address the Children of Israel'. In fact this story is like a mirror for the past and future of the Children of Israel despite they (the Children of Israel) denied the prophethood of Muḥammad while they did recognize him just like the Devil denied to prostrate before Ādam for his pride. They denied it basically for their family pride. They thought that they are dears to Allah and till now almost of the prophets were descended in this
-

generation so why the last prophet was descended in a race other than it. But Allah clarified his objective by saying that the prophethood is a gift from Him which He bestows upon whom He wishes. They have no reservation for it so the story of Devil is an example of them. This story narrates the story of breaking the covenant by Ādam and its consequences. It is a warning for the Children of Ādam because the Children of Israel also denied the prophethood of Muḥammad and thus they broke their covenant so mention of Ādam is a kind of reminder of repentance for the Children of Israel.

The Story of Ādam and Devil in the Chapter of al-A'arāf:

The reason of mentioning Ādam and Devil in the chapter of al-A'arāf is not difficult to be understood but it is very easy to get the point if you read the verses mentioned below. Allah says addressing the inhabitants of Makkah:

اتَّبِعُوا مَا أَنْزَلَ إِلَيْنَا مِنْ رَبِّكُمْ وَلَا تَتَّبِعُوا مِنْ دُونِهِ أَوْلِيَاءَ قَلِيلًا مِمَّا تَذَكَّرُونَ ﴿١﴾

Tr.: Follow what that has been revealed to you from your Lord, and don't follow protectors against Him. How little do you remember!

And then they were threatened to be punished if they disobey Allah's command. Allah says:

فَمَا كَانَ دَعْوَانُهُمْ إِذْ جَاءَهُمْ بُأْسُنَا إِلَّا أَنْ قَالُوا إِنَّا كُنَّا ظَالِمِينَ ﴿٢﴾

Tr.: So when Our punishment came to them, their cry was nothing but that they accepted that they were transgressors.

After threatening of punishment in this world He threatens of punishment in the Hereafter too:

¹ Al-A'rāf: 03

² Al-A'r5f: 03

فَلَنَسْأَلَنَّ الَّذِينَ أُرْسِلَ إِلَيْهِمْ وَلَنَسْأَلَنَّ الْمُرْسَلِينَ ﴿٦﴾¹

Tr.: So We must ask those to whom messengers were sent, and We must ask the messengers as well.

After these two types of threat He addressed the people of Makkah by mentioning His special favours upon them:

وَلَقَدْ مَكَّنَّاكُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَجَعَلْنَا لَكُمْ فِيهَا مَعَايِشَ قَلِيلًا مَّا تَشْكُرُونَ ﴿١٠﴾²

Tr.: And We have established you in the earth and provided for you therein means of subsistence. How little thanks you give!

In the above verse 'أرض' (Arḍ) is meant for the land of Makkah while 'معايش' (Ma'ā'ish) is meant for the favours which they were bestowed upon by Allah in this unfertile land thanks to His Sacred House. Allah has mentioned these favours in several chapters of the Qur'ān and then ordered them to worship 'رب البيت' (Rabb-ul-Bait: The Lord of the House). Here He also addressed the people of Makkah and reminded of these favours and then astonished how they do not believe in Him after these favours, but they worship other than Him. It's the most heinous unfaithfulness.

After that the story of Ādam begins as following:

وَلَقَدْ خَلَقْنَاكُمْ ثُمَّ صَوَّرْنَاكُمْ ثُمَّ قُلْنَا لِلْمَلَائِكَةِ اسْجُدُوا³

Tr.: Surely We created you and then We shaped you then We told the angles to prostrate before you.

Here also they were addressed with the word 'كم' (You) which points out that this story has been mentioned for the above

¹ Al-A'rāf: 06

² Al-A'rāf: 10

³ Al-A'rāf: 11

purpose for which their establishment in the earth and other related things have been mentioned. It's because this story also proves a great honour of the human being. This story shows how Allah created Ādam, made him of the best shape, made him viceroy and ordered His important creature (angels) to prostrate before him. So creation of Ādam, his excellent shape, his viceroyship and his honour are like establishment of the people of Makkah and other provisions for them. It's because Ādam's creation and other favours on him are not for a single person but his creation was like creation of the world, his honour was like honour of the whole mankind and his highest position is in fact an honour for the whole mankind. This is why Allah considered the creation of Ādam and his honour for the whole mankind and for this very reason He used the pronoun 'كم' (You in plural).

But here one question arises: if the reason behind this story was as mentioned above then few verses containing the creation of Ādam and being prostrated by the angels were enough for the said matter. But why other things have been mentioned like whispering by Devil, his inciting, Ādam's being naked and his ousting from the Paradise? What is the relation between these things and the honour or favour upon him?

In fact, the Qur'ān mentions the stories for citation or reminder but while mentioning the story its other related things are mentioned too so as to add significance to the aim of the story. If you are aware of the central theme of the chapter, its addressees and aim of the story and then think upon the things mentioned in the story and their relation with the aim of the story, you will find that everything is useful and necessary in its place. To me this story is mentioned here to point out to the honour and favour but it also contains a

reminder for the people of Makkah from a different angle. And for this only reminder, other related things of the story have been mentioned. As for the reminder for the people of Makkah, their father Ādam did not comply with the covenant and was befooled by Devil losing all favours and facilities, similarly if they do not deter from following the Devil and remain influenced by him, they will surely be deprived of the patronage of Ka'bah and all favours which you have due to it. That's why the following verses contain some examples of their influence by the Devil i.e. He showed that they were made naked in the worldly heaven (Makkah) as he made Ādam naked in the Paradise. It is due to Devil's inciting that they move round the Ka'bah naked and it is for his misguidance that they made several pure things impure for them. This is why they were addressed by 'يا بني آدم' (O the Children of Ādam) just after this story:

"يٰۤاِبْنِيٓ اٰدَمَ قَدْ اَنْزَلْنَا عَلٰیكَمۡ لِبَاسًا یُّوَارِیۡ سَوْءَۤاَتِیْكُمْ وَرِیۡسًا وَّلِبَاسًا طَّیِّبًا ۗ ذٰلِكَ خَیۡرٌۢ مِّنۡ ذٰلِكَ ۗ مِمَّنۡ ؕ اٰیٰتِ اللّٰهِ لَعَلَّهُمْ یَذَّكَّرُوۡنَ ﴿۝۱۷﴾ یٰۤاِبْنِیٓ اٰدَمَ لَا یَفۡتِنَنَّکُمُ الشَّیۡطٰنُ کَمَا اَخۡرَجَ اٰبَیۡۤاِیۡکُمۡ مِّنَ الْجَنَّةِ یَنۡزِعُ عَنْهُمَا لِبَاسَهُمَا¹"

Tr.: O children of Adam! We sent down to you clothing that cover your hidden parts and also raiment but the clothing of piety is better. This is one of the signs of Allah so as to make you remember. O children of Adam! The Devil may not cheat you as he ousted your fathers from the Paradise stripping them of their clothes.

And then it was clarified that it is Devil who incites them on making pure things impure and moving naked round the Ka'bah. After that He says:

¹ Al-A'rāf: 26-27

"يَبْنَیْ ءَادَمَ خُدُوْا زَیْنَتَکُمْ عِنْدَ کُلِّ مَسْجِدٍ وَکُلُوْا وَاشْرَبُوْا وَلَا تُسْرِفُوْا اِنَّهٗ لَا یُحِبُّ الْمُسْرِفِیْنَ ﴿۳۱﴾ فُلْ مَنْ حَرَّمَ زَیْنَةَ اللّٰهِ الَّتِیْ اَخْرَجَ لِعِبَادِهِۦ وَالطَّیِّبَاتِ مِنَ الرِّزْقِ" ¹

Tr.: O children of Adam! Adorn yourselves in every mosque, and eat and drink but don't spend extravagant. Verily, He does not like those who spend lavishly. Ask them who abandoned the adoration of Allah which He made for His servants and also the pure provisions.

Though it was possible to address them with 'یا أیها الناس' (O the Mankind) and 'یا أیها الذین کفروا' (O the Infidels), everywhere they were addressed by 'یا بني آدم' (O the Children of Ādam). And the rhetoric lies in this address is not hidden from those who have taste of the language so by addressing them with 'O the Children of Ādam' Allah warned them of their falling prey to Devil's cheating who deceived their father Ādam. Therefore, they should not accept any of his false advices.

The Story of Ādam and Devil in the Chapter of al-Ĥijr: The aim of narrating this story in this chapter is evident after a little pondering. The story is preceded by the following two verses:

"وَإِنَّا لَنَحْنُ نُحْيِیْهِ وَنُمِیْتُ وَنَحْنُ الْوَارِثُونَ ﴿۳۲﴾ وَلَقَدْ عَلِمْنَا الْمُسْتَقْدِمِیْنَ مِنْكُمْ وَلَقَدْ عَلِمْنَا الْمُسْتَخْرِیْنَ ﴿۳۳﴾ وَإِنَّ رَبَّكَ هُوَ یَحْشُرُهُمْ إِنَّهٗ حَکِیْمٌ عَلِیْمٌ" ²

Tr.: It is We Who give life and cause anyone to die, and it is We Who will be the heirs. And We know your ancestors as well as your past generations. And surly, your Lord will gather them, and He is All Wise and All-Knowing.

Then this story begins as follows:

¹ Al-A'rāf: 31-32

² Al-A'rāf: 23-25

"وَلَقَدْ خَلَقْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ مِنْ صَلْصَلٍ مِّنْ حَمَإٍ مَّسْنُونٍ ﴿٣١﴾"¹

Tr.: And surly, We created man from dry ringing clay.

Let's understand first what is the meaning of the two preceding verses, and then it will be easy for us to understand the aim of this story. The preceding verses prove the life after death. The Qur'ān generally cites virtues of knowledge and power of Allah to prove life after death. The Arab polytheists used to say:

"أءَذَا مِتْنَا وَكُنَّا تُرَابًا ذَلِكَ رَجْعٌ بَعِيدٌ ﴿٣٢﴾"²

Tr.: --- would it be when we have died and become dust. This rebirth is an impossible thing.

They were unable to understand how they would be revived when they are a moulded mud. Allah has mentioned this wonder of their in several places of the Qur'ān and then replied to it. So He said in the chapter of Qāf replying to the above wonder of their:

"قَدْ عَلِمْنَا مَا تَنْقُصُ الْأَرْضُ مِنْهُمْ وَعِنْدَنَا كِتَابٌ حَفِيظٌ ﴿٣٣﴾"³

Tr.: We know how much the earth diminishes of them and with Us is a book that preserves everything.

And then He said:

"أَفَلَمْ يَنْظُرُوا إِلَى السَّمَاءِ فَوْقَهُمْ كَيْفَ بَنَيْنَاهَا وَزَيَّنَّاهَا وَمَا لَهَا مِنْ فُرُوجٍ ﴿٣٤﴾"⁴

Tr.: Have they not looked at the sky above them how We have built it, adorned it and it has no splitting.

¹ Al-Hijr: 26

² Qāf:03

³ Qāf:04

⁴ Qāf:06

See how He presented His features of knowledge and power to reply to their question, and said that they should not wonder over recollection of the parts of their body. His knowledge encompasses each particle of the universe then how he cannot collect their scattered parts of the body. Then He pointed out to the creation of the sky and heaven and asked when He can create all these things then why can He not revive them after death?

To conclude: the Qur'ān generally cites these two features to prove the resurrection. Here He also wants to prove the resurrection so, as usual, He cited His feature of knowledge and said:

"وَلَقَدْ عَلِمْنَا الْمُسْتَخْرِينَ"¹

Tr.: We know their generations.

So it is easy for us to assemble them. And then He said:

"وَإِنَّ رَبَّكَ هُوَ يَجْشُرُهُمْ إِنَّهُ حَكِيمٌ عَلِيمٌ"²

Tr.: --- and your Lord will gather them. Surly, He is All Wise and All-Knowing.

Now, He showed His power that if He creates a complete human being by moulded mud then can He not recreate him when he has become a dust?

This kind of Qur'ānic citation is found in other chapters of the Qur'ān. Allah says in the chapter Yāsīn:

"أَوَلَمْ يَرِ الْإِنْسَانُ أَنَّا خَلَقْنَاهُ مِنْ نُطْفَةٍ فَإِذَا هُوَ خَصِيمٌ مُبِينٌ ﴿٧٧﴾ وَضَرَبَ لَنَا مَثَلًا وَنَسِيَ خَلْقَهُ ﴿٧٨﴾ قَالَ مَنْ يُعْظِمَ وَهِيَ رَمِيمٌ ﴿٧٩﴾ قُلْ يُحْيِيهَا الَّذِي أَنْشَأَهَا أَوَّلَ مَرَّةٍ وَهُوَ بِكُلِّ خَلْقٍ عَلِيمٌ ﴿٨٠﴾"

¹ Al-Hijr: 24

² Al-Hijr: 25

Tr.: Does not man see that We have created him from a mere sperm-drop? Yet lo! He is an open quarreler! And He coins similitudes for Us and forgets his own creation. He says, "Who can quicken the bones when they are decayed". Say, "He Who created them the first time, will quicken them, and He knows everything".

The same wonder of their is mentioned here except the order.

To conclude: the story mentioned here points out His power concerning the Resurrection. That's why though this story has been mentioned in seven chapters of the Qur'ān, no chapter points out creation of the man from moulded mud. Thus other chapters save Ṣād (71) do not indicate to his creation with dust except on the tongue of the Devil. Allah says in the chapter Ṣād:

"إِذْ قَالَ رَبُّكَ لِلْمَلٰئِكَةِ اِنِّيْ خَلِقُ بَشَرًا مِّنْ طِيْنٍ ﴿٧١﴾"

Tr.: --- when your Lord told the angels that He is going to create a man of clay.

But here there is no mention of moulded mud. It's because other chapters have other reasons for its mention but here proof of power demonstrates the creation of a complete man from moulded mud which is more indicating to the power of Allah.

This story is mentioned in this chapter to prove the Resurrection so all those things have been neglected which have been mentioned in other chapters and which were inappropriate to the context. He mentioned here only denial of the Devil to prostrate before Ādam and then he was ordered to get out of the Paradise. Then the Devil said:

¹ Yasīn: 77-79

² Ṣād: 71

"قَالَ رَبِّ بِمَا أَغْوَيْتَنِي لَأُزَيِّنَنَّ لَهُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَلَأُغْوِيَنَّهُمْ أَجْمَعِينَ ﴿٣٩﴾"¹

Tr.: He answered: MY Lord! Since you adjudged me, I will must adorn for them in the earth, and I will must misguide them all.

Then Allah replied to the Devil:

"إِنَّ عِبَادِي لَيْسَ لَكَ عَلَيْهِمْ سُلْطَانٌ إِلَّا مَنِ اتَّبَعَكَ مِنَ الْغَاوِينَ ﴿٤٢﴾"²

Tr.: As for My servants, you will have no control over them except those misguided who will follow you.

After this mention of Hell, Allah has elaborated about the Hell and the good reward of the righteous in the Resurrection. See how He cited this story to prove the Resurrection but how He ended it on the Resurrection all this proved to be an introduction to focus in detail on the conditions of the Resurrection.

The Story of Ādam and Devil in the Chapter of al-Isā':

Some great commentators stated that that this story has been mentioned here to console the Prophet of Islam (PBUH), and it is a fact that the first Prophet (Ādam) also faced different severe grievances from the Devil so bear (O Muḥammad!) with the harms you receive from your people. But this reason seems to be inappropriate and out of context here. Moreover, the wordings of the story do not indicate to this side, and also the same story came in other chapters contain how Ādam was deceived by the Devil, made naked and ousted from the Paradise etc. but here all such things are not found in the story. Here the story is much abbreviated and was told that when he (Devil) was ordered to prostrate, he denied it and threatened Allah that he would misguide His servants as much as he could. But Allah answered: you misguide My servants as much as you can. I will throw you and your followers into the Hell.

¹ Al-Ḥijr: 39

² Al-Ḥijr: 42

This is all what has been mentioned in the story. Now, you can decide whether the above mentioned reason has any relation with this story?

To me the reason behind mentioning the story of Ādam and Devil is to show the transgression and pride of the polytheists. That's why Allah said in the above verses after a server warning and invitation:

"وَنُحِوْفُهُمْ فَمَا يَزِيدُهُمْ إِلَّا طُغْيَانًا كَبِيرًا" ¹

Tr.: --- and we terrorize them so they will increase in a heinous transgression.

After this the story of Ādam and Devil begins as follows:

"وَإِذْ قُلْنَا لِلْمَلَائِكَةِ اسْجُدُوا لِآدَمَ" ²

Tr.: --- and remember when We told the angels to prostrate before Adam.

If you keep in your mind the above mentioned verse, it would be evident that this story has been mentioned here to reveal the consequence of the transgression. This opinion is supported by the wordings of the story because this story begins in other chapters with the intention to create Ādam or his creation with moulded mud but here Allah swept all this and started the story by *وَإِذْ قُلْنَا لِلْمَلَائِكَةِ اسْجُدُوا لِآدَمَ*.

So the story was started here with the order of prostration and the proud of denial by the Devil because here the consequence of the pride of Devil is wanted so mention of the creation of Ādam was useless here. Moreover, in this all those

¹ Al-Isrā': 60

² Al-Isrā': 61

things have been skipped keeping in view the target of the speech and mentioned only that the Devil had decided on that Day that he would deceive the children of Ādam through ways and promises full of cheating. After mentioning this Allah said:

"وَمَا يَعِدُهُمُ الشَّيْطَانُ إِلَّا غُرُورًا" ¹

Tr.: --- the Devil will not promise them except false.

Though this story was narrated to show the result of the pride, it was also mentioned that the Devil is only instrumental of this condition. See how the beginning and end of the story are related with the theme of the speech.

The Story of Ādam and Devil in the Chapter of al-Kahf':

The story has been mentioned in this chapter shorter than all the chapters. It's merely one verse wherein this story has been narrated containing the reason of the mention of the story of Ādam and Devil here. Allah says:

"وَإِذْ قُلْنَا لِلْمَلَائِكَةِ اسْجُدُوا لِآدَمَ فَسَجَدُوا إِلَّا إِبْلِيسَ كَانَ مِنَ الْجِنِّ فَفَسَقَ عَنْ أَمْرِ رَبِّهِ ۗ أَفَتَتَّخِذُونَهُ وَذُرِّيَّتَهُ أَوْلِيَاءَ مِنْ دُونِي وَهُمْ لَكُمْ عَدُوٌّ بِئْسَ لِلظَّالِمِينَ بَدَلًا" ²

Tr.: And remember when We told the angels to prostrate before Adam so they prostrated except Devil. He was of the Jinn so he denied to abide by the order of his Lord. After that do you make him and his followers as your protectors against Me while they are your enemies. What a bad return is for the oppressors!

This story has been mentioned in other chapters time and again though here it was quoted as much as was needed in

¹ Al-Isrā': 64

² Al-Kahaf: 50

respect of the reason. And it's a style of the Qur'ān where it narrates the story as much as is needed. There is also a reason behind shortness of the story here that the people were acquainted with the most part of this story.

The reason behind narration of this story here is as evident as we are wonderstruck how the commentators of the Qur'ān committed mistake in establishing the reason of its mention here. To us the reason to miss its aim of narration is their ignorance from the coherence of the Qur'ān. There are several commentators who think that mention of the stories in the Qur'ān is not at random, they don't take care of the coherence in fixation of the reason behind their mention. This is why they commit mistakes because care for the coherence is very necessary in fixation of the reasons behind mention of the stories. We commit mistakes if we do not take before us the verses mentioned before it and also after it even if we put before us only those verses which were mentioned before it, we might commit mistakes. So the commentators who put before them only those verses which have been mentioned before this story they think that this story was mentioned here to show the result of the pride as Imām Rāzī says:

“This story aims at what the previous verses mean whereas the proud people of Quraish have been answered who underestimated the poor for their pride of their wealth and degree. So this story was narrated here telling that pride on ethnic or monetary height is the habit of the Devil and they should avoid it”.

But after establishing this reason the following verses remain out of context. The first sentence of the following verses reads as follows:

"أَفَتَتَّخِذُونَهُ وَذُرِّيَّتَهُ أَوْلِيَاءَ مِنْ دُونِي وَهُمْ لَكُمْ عَدُوٌّ بِئْسَ لِلظَّالِمِينَ بَدَلًا" ¹

Tr.: --- after that do you make him and his followers as your protectors against Me while they are your enemies. What a bad return is for the oppressors!

Then come the following verses:

"مَا أَشْهَدْتُهُمْ خَلْقَ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَلَا خَلْقَ أَنْفُسِهِمْ وَمَا كُنْتُمْ تُخَدَّ الْمُنْظَلِينَ عَضَدًا
وَيَوْمَ يَقُولُ نَادُوا شُرَكَائِيَ الَّذِينَ زَعَمْتُمْ فَدَعَوْهُمْ فَلَمْ يَسْتَجِيبُوا لَهُمْ وَجَعَلْنَا بَيْنَهُمْ مَوْبِقًا" ²

Tr.: And you did not present at the time of the creation of the heavens and the earth nor at the time of your creation. And I do not befriend the misguided. And when He will say, "Call My associates whom you mistakenly made my partner, so call them then they would not respond to them. And We have made a barrier between them.

Everyone here believes that the first sentence after the story is in fact its aim. Generally the Qur'ān points out the aim of the stories in one or two verses. The same happened here. If, now, we suppose that the aim behind the mention of this story here is to indicate to the result of pride, the following sentence will be related to it if and when we consider that befriending the Devil is a kind of one's pride. As if Allah, through indicating to the result of the pride of the Devil, has warned the Arab polytheists of adopting the habit of the Devil. But in this condition befriending the Devil will be meaningless or at least it will be specified for a meaning. And also the sentence 'وَهُمْ لَكُمْ عَدُوٌّ بِئْسَ لِلظَّالِمِينَ بَدَلًا' will be useless.

Here this story, to me, was mentioned to reveal the enmity by the Devil that he is the mortal enemy of the human being, he

¹ Al-Kahaf: 50

² Al-Kahaf: 51-52

became zealous of your honour, denied to prostrate before your forefather Ādam, he caused him out from the Paradise and it is he who has challenged to misguide the whole human being. So it is your strange foolishness that you befriend that mortal enemy and deny the teachings of a true messenger being deceived with that enemy.

After fixation of this aim of the story here you will see that it is related to its preceding verse as well as it is related to the verse came later. The above mentioned verses discuss the pride, transgression, and denial of the Resurrection Day etc. It is obvious that all the misguidance of their is due to the deception of the Devil so Allah mentioned the story of enmity of Devil and warned through the verse 'أَفَتَتَّخِذُونَهُ --' that they should not destroy themselves being deceived by this mortal enemy.

Let's think here here that if Allah ended the sentence without adding 'من دوني وهو لكم عدو', it conveyed its meaning and aim but this addition added more to the warning. So befriending the Devil despite of his mortal enmity is itself a foolishness but if the friendship of Devil and his service is based on denial of Allah and disobedience to Him, while He is the Creator and Cherisher, there is no degree of foolishness upon it. So here mentioning 'من دوني' and 'بئس للظالمين بدلاً' mean indication to this severity of foolishness. Then Allah said to add more to the warning:

"مَا أَشْهَدْتُهُمْ خَلْقَ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَلَا خَلْقَ أَنْفُسِهِمْ --- ﴿٥١﴾"

Tr.: And you did not present at the time of the creation of the heavens and the earth nor at the time of your creation.

The preceding verses contained mere foolishness of a man through befriending the Devil. Now this verse points out that

¹ Al-Kahaf: 51

it is Allah who deserves obedience and worship, who created the whole universe not the Devil and his followers who have no role even in creating them.

Now, Allah wants to explain that the Devil will not help you when you need his support so your enthusiasm for his obedience is a mere foolishness. Allah said:

"وَيَوْمَ يَقُولُ نَادُوا شُرَكَائِيَ الَّذِينَ زَعَمْتُمْ فَدَعَوْهُمْ فَلَمْ يَسْتَجِيبُوا لَهُمْ وَجَعَلْنَا بَيْنَهُم مَّوْبِقًا ﴿٥٢﴾"¹

Tr.: --- and when He will say, "Call My associates whom you mistakenly made, so call them then they would not respond to them. And We have made a barrier between them.

The word 'شركاء' here means, to me, the Devil and his followers, and it may that meaning 'Devil and his followers' by 'شركاء' be strange for some people but the Qur'an has regarded Devils as 'شركاء' in several verses. It came in the chapter of al-An'am:

"وَكَذَلِكَ زَيْنَ لِكَثِيرٍ مِّنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ قَتَلَ أَوْلَادِهِمْ شُرَكَائِهِمْ لِيُرُدُّوهُمْ وَلِيَلْبِسُوا عَلَيْهِمْ دِينَهُمْ"²

Tr.: --- and thus their associates adorned numerous polytheists killing their sons so that they may destroy them and confuse their religion to them.

It also appears from several places in the Qur'an that the associates of the Jinn are called 'Shayātīn' and it is well known that the Arab polytheists associated the Jinn to Allah and also worshipped them. Here we must put before us the verse that points out the saying of the angels on the Day of Resurrection:

"قَالُوا سُبْحٰنَكَ اَنْتَ وَاٰلِئِنَّا مِن دُونِهِمْ بَلْ كَانُوْا يَعْبُدُوْنَ الْجِنَّ اَكْثَرَهُمْ بِهٖم مُّؤْمِنُوْنَ ﴿٤١﴾"³

Tr.: They said, "You are beyond this. You are our Protector against them while they were worshipping the Jinn. Most of them were believing in them.

¹ Al-Kahaf: 52

² Al-An'am: 137

³ Sabā': 41

So to mean 'Shayātīn' by 'شركاء' in this context is completely reasonable. The verse of the chapter of al-An'ām mentioned above proves through some indications that the 'شركاء' here means the Jinn because the same chapter explains before this verse:

"وَجَعَلُوا لِلَّهِ شُرَكَاءَ الْجِنَّ"¹

Tr.: --- and they made associates among the Jinn for Allah.

And after some verses the Jinn are addressed and blamed, while mentioning the conditions of the Day of Resurrection, that they misguided the human being. Allah said:

"يَمَعَشَرَ الْجِنَّ قَدْ اسْتَكْبَرْتُمْ مِنَ الْإِنْسِ"²

Tr.: O the Jinn! You have made subservient to yourselves a great number of the peoples.

It appears from these presumptions that those associates who provoked to kill the infants and to do other crimes are meant for the Jinn, and perhaps the meaning of 'أفتتخذونه', mentioned in the chapter of al-Kahf, is the Devils among the Jinn, and the men are warned of making them associates with Allah because one member of the Jinn 'Iblīs' deceived their forefather Ādam and caused him to be out of the Paradise. Despite this reality, the Arab polytheists made them friends and worshipped them, and that's why Allah, after pointing out their mortal enmity, rejected their being god on the basis of the reality that they have no role in creation of the heaven and the earth. But instead they are creatures of Allah. The same refutation has been mentioned in the chapter of al-An'ām where Allah says:

¹Al-An'ām: 100

²Al-An'ām: 128

"وَجَعَلُوا لِلَّهِ شُرَكَاءَ الْجِنَّ وَخَلَقَهُمْ"¹

Tr.: --- and they made associates among the Jinn for Allah while they were created by Him.

So what has been mentioned here in the verse ' ما أشهدتم خلق ' السماوات ' has been mentioned with utmost abbreviation by the word ' وخلقهم ' (Tr.: --- while they have been created by Allah). After this clarification if you think upon the verse, you will find the answer to the question (why the word ' وكان من الجن ' was prefixed specially to the mention of the Devils in this chapter *al-Kahf*?). In fact it is an indication that your obedience to the Jinn instead of Allah today is baseless because he was one of them who ousted you i.e. your forefather from the Paradise. So you should consider them your enemy and should refrain from their assurance but wonderfully you left Allah and started worshipping them. (بئس للظالمين بدلاً)

The Story of Ādam and Devil in the Chapter of Tāha: The reasons behind the mention of this story here stated by all the commentators, save one, seem to be irrelevant according to the context. This one can be accepted after a deep interpretation. But now we do not want to indulge in this discussion, and those who wish to know the details may refer to the *Tafsīr-i-Kabīr* wherein Imām Rāzī, as usual, has collected all opinions but their weakness will be known by a cursory look.

To understand the context in which this story has been mentioned, we must put before us the central theme of the chapter and its relation with its preceding and following chapters.

If you ponder upon this chapter, you will find that its central theme is to console the Prophet of Islam and to order him

¹Al-An'ām: 100

to be patient. That's why the chapter begins with the following verse:

"طه ﴿١﴾ مَا أَنْزَلْنَا عَلَيْكَ الْقُرْآنَ لِتَشْقَىٰ ﴿٢﴾" ¹

Tr.: Tāha. We did not reveal the Qur'ān to you so that you may be distressed.

And then Mūsá's story comes after a few verses which contains many verses. This story contains good tidings for the Prophet Muḥammad and warning to his opponents; though Mūsá suffered from problems and calamities, he was victorious while Pharaoh who was proud of his power and strength, was drowned for his denial. Also it contains repentance on haste and warning on impatience. See the verses (82-86).

The verses in which this story has been mentioned clarify that the Prophet should not be worried with the hasty claim of the deniers of the Punishment. The day of Resurrection is very close when they will see the consequences of their actions. Keeping in view this context the Resurrection was mentioned here and then their one question regarding the impossibility of the Resurrection was answered. After that the conditions of the Day of Resurrection was elaborated. As Allah said:

"وَكَذَلِكَ أَنْزَلْنَاهُ قُرْآنًا عَرَبِيًّا وَصَرَّفْنَا فِيهِ مِنَ الْوَعِيدِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَّقُونَ أَوْ يُحَدِّثُ لَهُمْ ذِكْرًا ﴿١١٣﴾ فَتَعَلَىٰ اللَّهُ الْمَمَلِكُ الْحَقُّ وَلَا تَعْجَلْ بِالْقُرْآنِ مِنْ قَبْلِ أَنْ يُقْضَىٰ إِلَيْكَ وَحْيُهُ وَقُل رَّبِّ زِدْنِي عِلْمًا ﴿١١٤﴾ وَلَقَدْ عَاهَدْنَا إِلَىٰ آدَمَ مِنْ قَبْلِ فَتَنَىٰ وَلَمْ يُخِدْ لَهُ عَزْمًا ﴿١١٥﴾" ²

Tr.: And thus We have revealed it as an Arabic reading and made therein warning in different ways so that they may be

¹ Tāha: 1-2

² Tāha: 113-115

righteous or it would cause a fresh remembrance so Allah the Owner and Right is beyond it. And do not haste regarding the Qur'ān before its revelation is stopped from you. And pray "O My Lord! Increase me in knowledge. And before it We have given Ādam covenant but he forgot it and We did not find with him determination.

What is the significance of these verses here and what is their relation to the central theme of the chapter-consolation and patience? Before moving forward let's understand it in detail because this detail will focus upon the aim of the story.

Discussing the verse 'لَا تُحْرِكْ بِهِ لِسَانَكَ لِتَعْجَلَ' of the chapter of al-Qiyāmah in its tafsīr Imām Farāhī presented very enlightening points with which we can easily understand the meanings of the above mentioned verses. The Maulānā has revealed the aim of this story in his discussion. It is proved by his speech that these verses also remove an especial inconvenience of the Prophet and he was told to be patient in the best way. And the Qur'ān was revealed with delay and in small parts because the people were weak in the beginning phase and they got worried and angry due to hearing it so that their anger and dislike could not reach to the extent they would leave heed to it. But this delay was very hard for the Prophet and resultantly he wished that no delay would be made in the revelation. This will of the Prophet had some reasons:

1. That period was very hard for the Prophet who was facing opposition from every side and the whole Arabia was becoming his enemy. In this condition there was the only means that is the console for him e.g. the Qur'ān and its revelation.
 2. The Prophet was anxious to complete the Shari'ah and to preach Islam so he wished the revelation may come
-

without delay. He also wished that these divine verses may satisfy them about the religion.

3. The polytheists used to say:

"لَوْلَا نُزِّلَ عَلَيْهِ الْقُرْآنُ جُمْلَةً وَاحِدَةً"¹

Tr.: --- why the Qur'ān would not be revealed to him once.

To reply their question the Prophet wished the revelation to be hastened lest they might revert from their claims and believe in Islam.

These were the basic reasons behind it so he wished the revelation should come without delay, and that's why any long gap between two revelations was hard upon him and for which he too became worried.

Allah has tried to remove his anxiety from different ways but He explained in some places that their transgression is not because of revelation of the Qur'ān in smaller parts but because they don't believe in the Resurrection. Allah said:

"فَمَا لَهُمْ عَنِ التَّذْكَرَةِ مُعْرِضِينَ ﴿١٩﴾ بَلْ يُرِيدُ كُلُّ امْرِئٍ مِّنْهُمْ أَنْ يُؤْتَىٰ صُحُفًا مُّنشَرَةً ﴿٢٠﴾ كَلَّا بَلْ لَا يَخَافُونَ الْآخِرَةَ ﴿٢١﴾"²

Tr.: --- but why do they ignore the remembrance? Nay, everyone wants that he would be given open scriptures, nay, they do not believe in the Hereafter.

And in some place He counted the world and worldly benefit as the reason for their denial 'لَا تَحْرِيكَ بِهِ لِسَانَكَ لِتَعْجَلَ بِهِ ﴿٢١﴾ إِنَّ عَلَيْنَا

جَمْعَهُ وَقُرْآنَهُ ﴿٢٢﴾ فَإِذَا قَرَأْتَهُ فَاتَّبِعْ قُرْآنَهُ ﴿٢٣﴾ ثُمَّ إِنَّ عَلَيْنَا بَيَانَهُ ﴿٢٤﴾ كَلَّا بَلْ تُحِبُّونَ الْعَاجِلَةَ

﴿٢٥﴾" (Tr.: Don't move your tongue with it that you may hasten.

¹ Al-Furqān

² Al-Muddaththir: 49,52-53

³ Al-Qiyāmah: 16-20

Surely its collection and reading rest in Us so when We read it, follow its reading then we have to explain it. Nay, you love the present life) and He advised the Prophet (PBUH) that the human nature requires graduality in reformation and training.

The above verses of the chapter of Ṭāha also aimed at removing the said anxieties which happened due to delay in revelation. So he was advised that the Qur'ān means here for making reminder (ويحدث لهم ذكراً) which requires revelation of the Qur'ān in smaller parts. And the most considerable thing is that the human being is the weakest creature as regards his determination so if the whole burden of the Sharī'ah is put upon him once, he will lose courage. To highlight this side of human being Ādam was quoted 'وَلَقَدْ عَاهَدْنَا إِلَىٰ آدَمَ مِنْ قَبْلِ فَتَسْبَىٰ وَلَمْ نَحْدُ لَهُ عَزْمًا ﴿١١٥﴾ طه: 115.

Then the whole story was narrated and specially highlighted that though We told Ādam that Devil is his mortal enemy and if he trusts him, he will be deprived of all blessings of the Paradise which he enjoys now but all precautions went in vain and he disobeyed Allah being deceived by this mortal enemy:

"فَقُلْنَا يَتَّعَادِمُ إِنَّ هَذَا عَدُوٌّ لَكَ وَلِزَوْجِكَ فَلَا يُخْرِجَنَّكُمَا مِنَ الْجَنَّةِ فَتَشْقَىٰ ﴿١١٧﴾ إِنَّ لَكَ أَلَّا تَجُوعَ فِيهَا وَلَا تَعْرَىٰ ﴿١١٨﴾ وَأَنَّكَ لَا تَظْمَأُ فِيهَا وَلَا تَصْحَىٰ ﴿١١٩﴾ فَوَسَّوَسَ إِلَيْهِ الشَّيْطَانُ قَالَ يَتَّعَادِمُ هَلْ أَدُلُّكَ عَلَىٰ شَجَرَةِ الْخُلْدِ وَمُلْكٍ لَّا يَبْلَىٰ ﴿١٢٠﴾ فَأَكَلَا مِنْهَا فَبَدَتَ لَهُمَا سَوْءَاتُهُمَا وَطَفِقَا يَخْصِفَانِ عَلَيْهِمَا مِنْ وَرَقِ الْجَنَّةِ وَعَصَىٰ آدَمُ رَبَّهُ فَغَوَىٰ ﴿١٢١﴾¹

Tr.: --- then We said to Adam: Surly, he is an enemy for you and your wife so let he not oust all of you from the Paradise and you would be distressed. Here you will neither hungry nor will you be naked. You will be here neither thirsty nor will you

¹ Ṭāha: 117-121

face heat. Then the Devil whispered to him (saying:) O Adam! Would I show you the tree of mortality and a kingdom which will never end. So they ate of it being naked of their secret parts, and then they started to put on them the leaves of the tree. And Adam disobeyed his Lord and was derailed.

After these details the reason of the mention of this story might be clear and also the relation of the preceding verses of the story with the central theme of the chapter ought to be apparent. But here there is another aspect in the story of Ādam; it is known that the central theme of this chapter is the advice of patience and forbearing so the result of the patience of Mūsá has been highlighted in his story to advise patience and consolation then the story of Ādam comes. Though this story has been mentioned mainly to cite on the human weakness, the consequence of impatience has been also indicates to. As if it is warning for the Prophet (PBUH). There arises another question: if the mention of this story here aims at the weakness of the determination of human being or their impatience, the both aims are achieved up to the verse ‘وَعَصَىٰ آدَمُ رَبَّهُ فَغَوَىٰ’. But why have the following verse ‘ثُمَّ اجْتَبَاهُ رَبُّهُ فَتَابَ عَلَيْهِ وَهَدَىٰ ۗ قَالَ أَهْبِطَا ۗ

ثُمَّ اجْتَبَاهُ رَبُّهُ فَتَابَ عَلَيْهِ وَهَدَىٰ ۗ قَالَ أَهْبِطَا ۗ مِنْهَا جَمِيعًا بَعْضُكُمْ لِبَعْضٍ عَدُوٌّ فَإِمَّا يَأْتِيَنَّكُمْ مِنِّي هُدًى فَمَنِ اتَّبَعَ هُدَايَ ۗ

(Tr.: --- then his Lord chose him and guided him. He said: Go down from it all of you. You are enemy of each other. So when My guidance comes to you so whoso follows My guidance ---) mentioned? Though this question is very important, it will be automatically solved if one put before him previous pages of this article. We have shown while discussing in the previous chapters that this story has been mentioned for different reasons in different chapters but there came some matters at the end of the story which although do not have any specific

¹ Tāha: 122-123

relations with the main reasons, they have strong relation with the chapter and the topic under discussion. The same condition is here. But this place has no room for detailed discussion so we write in short: though the main reason of the previous verses is to console the Prophet (PBUH), it also contains threat to the polytheists even this threat is apparent in some places. It means that the polytheists have not completely ignored in these verses so the concluding verses of the story have been put for this purpose. It was told in these verses that although Ādam committed a great sin, Allah blessed upon him after he did repentance. So if you also repent, you will be enveloped with our grace. As for the remaining verses it was clarified that Ādam and Devil were sent to the earth with this declaration:

"قَالَ أَهْبِطَا مِنْهَا جَمِيعًا بَعْضُكُمْ لِبَعْضٍ عَدُوٌّ فَإِمَّا يَأْتِيَنَّكُمْ مِنِّي هُدًى فَمَنِ اتَّبَعَ هُدَايَ فَلَا يَضِلُّ وَلَا يَشْقَى ﴿١٣٦﴾ وَمَنْ أَعْرَضَ عَن ذِكْرِي فَإِنَّ لَهُ مَعِيشَةً ضَنْكًا" ¹

Tr.: He said: Go down from it all of you. You are enemy of each other. So when My guidance comes to you so whoso follows My guidance, he will neither be misguided nor be distressed. And whoso ignores My remembrance, he will have a strait life. So if you befriend Devil after he had enmity with you and ignore the message of the Prophet after Allah has warned you, I will disgrace you, as I told, here and hereafter as well. And the sentence concluded at the following wrath:

"وَكَذَلِكَ نَجْزِي مَنْ أَسْرَفَ وَلَمْ يُؤْمِنِ بِآيَاتِ رَبِّهِ وَلَعَذَابُ الْآخِرَةِ أَشَدُّ وَأَبْقَى ﴿١٣٧﴾" ²

Tr.: --- thus We give in return one who transgressed and did not believe in the signs of his Lord. And the punishment of the Hereafter will be more severe and distressed.

¹ Tāha: 123-124

² Tāha: 127

See the miraculous beauty of the Qur'ān how it throws light on different things with one and only story. And if you continue thinking over it, you will find some more facts behind this story.

The Story of Ādam and Devil in the Chapter of Ṣād: The two conclusive verses came in this story as introduction that proves the prophethood, if we exclude them, we will find the other remaining verses discussing the Resurrection. It is shown in the beginning and the following verses that the polytheists denied the Resurrection on the basis of their ego and conflict so the story mentioned here contains the denial of the Resurrection as well as the reason behind this denial; on one hand the consequence of the pride has been focused on and on the other it was clarified for their reminder that the Resurrection you are denying is the day till which the Devil asked respite from Allah to derail you from the right path:

"قَالَ فَإِنَّكَ مِنَ الْمُنْظَرِينَ ﴿٨١﴾ إِلَى يَوْمِ الْوَقْتِ الْمَعْلُومِ ﴿٨٢﴾"¹

Tr.: He said: So you are of those who were given chance till the Day of certain period.

And it will be the day when the declaration of Allah will come into light which He gave to the Devil:

"قَالَ فَالْحَقُّ وَالْحَقُّ أَقُولُ ﴿٨٤﴾ لَأَمْلَأَنَّ جَهَنَّمَ مِنْكَ وَمِمَّن تَبِعَكَ مِنْهُمْ أَجْمَعِينَ ﴿٨٥﴾"²

Tr.: He said: it is truth, and I say tell the truth; I will fill the Hell with you and of all those who followed you among them.

Here both the things point out that the Devil is misguiding you and that you will be put into Hell for your obedience to the

¹ Ṣād: 80-81

² Ṣād: 84-85

Devil. And in the end He said: لتعلمنّ نبأه بعد حين (Tr.: You will come to know its reality after a certain time.)

Conclusion: If you put before you what I told in the beginning. I claimed that nothing in the Qur'ān is repeated. So whatever you see repeated in the Qur'ān is new and separate everywhere regarding its specific meaning. I also mentioned that the repetition has two kinds: repetition of words and repetition of meanings. I have also explained the both but due to repeated mention of some stories in the Qur'ān the mind automatically turns to its repetition so I selected for discussion the part of the Qur'ān which has been repeated more in comparison with the other stories so as to remove this misunderstanding.

I claim, regarding these stories, that they have been mentioned everywhere for a new reason though they look repeated. If you have before you the previous discussion, you will accept soon that the story of Ādam and Devil, though repeatedly mentioned in the Qur'ān, has been narrated in every chapter as fresh for a new aim and target. It may be that they look similar in some places as regards inclusive matters but the main reasons in every chapter are different to each other. To make easier we hereby describe the reasons of its mention in every chapter:

1. Al-Baqarah: To prove prophethood and viceroyship of Ādam
 2. Al-A'araf: To mention honour of Ādam under counting favours to invite for thanks
 3. Al-Hijr: To prove life after death
 4. Al-Isra: Consequence of transgression
 5. Al-Kahf: Enmity of Devil
-

6. Taha: Weakness of human determination
7. Şād: Proof of Resurrection including a glance at the pride of the polytheists

This story has mentioned in these chapters but you see that the reason of their mention in every chapter is different. It may be that you doubt that this story has been mentioned for life after death so it is repeated but this opinion is not correct. It is fact that this story has been mentioned in both the chapters regarding the Resurrection but in both the places it has come from two different ways so in the chapter of al-Ĥijr life after death has been proved by creation of Ādam from moulded mud while in the chapter Şād the matter of Devil and his dialogue has been quoted which indicates to remind and warn the deniers of the Resurrection apart from containing the Resurrection.

If you look at this story in the above discussion, you will find that the wordings and notions of every chapter is different from each other, and the reason behind this difference is the difference of their aims but when you take each part and apply it to its aim and also you compare it with other chapters, you will find out several facts in between the lines. I have already pointed out to the interpretation of 'كان من الجن' in the chapter of al-Kahf as well as I discussed the clarification of 'حمأ مسنون' in the chapter of al-Ĥijr apart from indicating to the difference of notions and wordings in some other chapters and the reasons behind them.

The Qur'ān and Sequence of the Prophets' Names

✎...Maulānā Abullaith Iṣlāḥī Nadwī¹

Tr.: Dr. Rizwān Aḥmad²

A famous Jewish scholar Geiger (Abraham) has objected on the Qur'ān and Islam in his book "Judaism and Islam".³ His objection regarding the Qur'ān précises that the Prophet Muḥammad (PBUH) was illiterate and was unaware of the holy Books of previous prophets, so he mentioned the names of the prophets, known to him, in the Qur'ān but he forgot to mention about many others. Concealing his unawareness about the prophets, he said concocting from Allah (we seek refuge in Allah) that we have mentioned the names of many prophets but we did not mention many of them intentionally. In fact, he relied on what he heard because of being an illiterate, so he committed many mistakes and the sequence of the prophets had been funny in the Qur'ān.⁴

Such objections by the Jews and Christians are not anew. Islam has always been a target of false objections and undue criticism. The idea, expressed by the author regarding the Qur'ān and the Prophet (PBUH), is obviously wrong. It is surprise to say that the European authors, who give evidence to their amazing research everywhere, when they pick up the pen to any issue, you will be astonished to hear their talks, which are full of ignorance. Such objections are not worthy to pay attention towards, but whatever views Geiger has expressed regarding the stories of the Qur'ān, often arise in the hearts of

¹ A great scholar of Arabic and Islamic Studies.

² A graduate from Jāmi'a-tul-Falāḥ and a freelance translator

³ Published from Madras, 1898

⁴ Abraham Geiger, *Judaism and Islam*, Madras, 1898, PP. 19-20.

the Muslims. Therefore, there is a need to discuss briefly about stories of the prophets and their sequence.

Qur'ān and Stories of the Prophets:

The ideas of the objector, which are presented above, consist of two things. The first is; the description of un-Qur'ānic prophets has been left due to unawareness as Geiger says. The second thing is; no sequence is considered while describing the prophets' stories, which is strongly objectionable for a book in addition to be a historical mistake. Although these are two different questions, but the answer to the both is the same. If the objector did not object due to prejudice, we can say that he could not understand the real purpose of the revelation of the Qur'ān and the description of the prophets and previous nations' conditions otherwise, a sensible man never had such type of objection on the Qur'ān. The people of the Book, especially Jews, always read the Qur'ān as a history book like the Torah; therefore they search for all parts of any incident in it. They want every detail of each story and search for chronological order in each description. They do not understand that the Qur'ān is the book of guidance. This book is not revealed to narrate the history, but it is revealed to the world to guide the people in darkness. This book is like a trumpet which wants to awake the sleeping nations. It is a light which wants to bring the misguided people to the right path. It is a message which wants to correct and rectify the beliefs and works of the people. The historical sequence of events is not more useful for this purpose. The condition of the prophets and previous nations is not described in the Qur'ān as a history, so that the chronological order and the explanation of all parts would be considered. They are described as an evidence, quotation, reminder or advice. Sometimes they are described

briefly and sometimes in detail according to the mode of conversation, context of expression and addressee. Sometimes a few prophets are mentioned and many are left. Sometimes anyone of them is mentioned before in a place and mentioned later in the other place. These preceding, deferment, summarization and detailing do not result in unawareness of the history or not used without a reason, but some wise things are hidden in it.

In this, addressee, mode of the conversation and topic of the chapter are considered much, which may be known only after thorough examination. In fact, the conversation, which does not care of the addressee and the situation, will never benefit, but it will be hazardous instead of being beneficial, which is a secret of rhetoric of the Qur'ān. Not only the Qur'ān but each wise man considers it in his conversation. If the information about the addressee, his beliefs, his feelings and his understanding is not kept in mind, the conversation will not be much effective. The Qur'ān considers things conscious evaluation. Addressees are illiterate, so the complicated method of inference is not used. If they ask any complicated question, they are told any other beneficial thing considering their understanding. Whose conditions they are aware of among the nations, for their reminder they are told about the stories of the prophets. Whom they understand as their leader and sacred, their conditions and teachings are told to them and urged to follow them. These are the things, described according to the mode of conversation and the topic of the chapter. The prophets or nations are mentioned, who are appropriate for inference, and the conditions and the events are described, which are needed. These types of examples are found in the Qur'ān frequently. When the conversation is held with the people of the Book, they are told about the events of Dāwūd (David) and Sulaimān (Solomon) and sometimes of

Mūsá (Moses) and Īsá (Jesus). In the same way their own history is repeated for their reminder. But when the addressees are the Arab polytheists; although the stories of some more prophets are mentioned on the basis of their less knowledge, the focus is put on the events of Ibrāhīm (Abraham) and the history of the Jews and Christians is not repeated for their lesson. However, the conditions of the peoples of Lūṭ (Lot), Thamūd and ‘Ād etc. are mentioned, because they were aware of their conditions which are known by their poetry. Even for their trade, they used to pass by the destroyed places of those communities, therefore Allah said in the chapter al-Şāffāt (137-138) (وَإِنَّكُمْ لَمُتْرُونَ عَلَيْهِمْ مُصْبِحِينَ ﴿١٣٧﴾) (Tr.: Verily, you pass by them in the morning, and at night; will you not then reflect?)

Allah said in al-Baqarah (87) (وَلَقَدْ ءَاتَيْنَا مُوسَى الْكِتَابَ وَقَفَّيْنَا مِنْ بَعْدِهِۦٓ ﴿٨٧﴾) (Tr.: And indeed, we gave Mūsá (Moses) the Book and followed him up with a succession of Messengers. And we gave Īsá (Jesus), the son of Maryam (Mary), clear sings”).

This chapter connotes mostly towards the people of the Book. Therefore, Mūsá (Moses) has been mentioned at first and suddenly it reached to Īsá (Jesus) overtaking all the prophets in the middle and covering a period of centuries in one moment. There is only one reason behind it that the addressees are the people for whom the citation of Mūsá (Moses) and Īsá (Jesus) will be more effective and beneficial. In the chapter al-Şāffāt, the condition of Nūḥ (Noah), Ibrāhīm (Abraham), Mūsá (Moses), Hārūn (Aaron), Ilyas (Alias), Lūṭ (Lot) and Yūnus (Jonah) (peace be upon them) has been described for the manner of the Arab polytheists and for the consolation of the

Prophet Muḥammad (PBUH), but the description of Ibrāhīm (Abraham) has been made in detail and of all remaining prophets has been completed in some verses. Because describing the event of Ibrāhīm (Abraham) here in detail was more appropriate. In the chapter al-Shu'arā, the conversation has been focused towards the Arab polytheists and the people of the Book, as it is being cleared through next coming verses, so only the names of Ibrāhīm (Abraham), Mūsá (Moses) and Īsá (Jesus) have been mentioned there after Nūḥ (Noah):

"شَرَعَ لَكُمْ مِنَ الدِّينِ مَا وَصَّى بِهِ نُوحًا وَالَّذِي أَوْحَيْنَا إِلَيْكَ وَمَا وَصَّيْنَا بِهِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَمُوسَى وَعِيسَى أَنْ أَقِيمُوا الدِّينَ".

Tr.: He (Allah) has ordained for you the same religion (Islamic Monotheism) which he ordained for Nūḥ (Noah), and that which we have revealed to you (O Muḥammad) (PBUH), and that which we ordained for Ibrāhīm (Abraham)), Mūsá (Moses) and Īsá (Jesus) saying you should establish religion (i.e. to do what it orders you to do practically)". (al-Shūrā: 13)

Here, Ibrāhīm (Abraham) has been mentioned according to the polytheists and Mūsá (Moses) and Īsá (Jesus) have been mentioned according to the people of the Book. These types of examples are frequently found in the Qur'ān.

Considering the topic of the chapter, as mentioned above, the destruction of the polytheists and the salvation of the believers have been described in two passages, which can be seen in the chapter al-Ṣāffāt. For example Allah said regarding Nūḥ (Noah):

"وَلَقَدْ نَادَيْنَا نُوْحًا فَلَنِعْمَ الْمُجِيبُونَ ﴿٦٥﴾ وَجَعَلْنَاهُ وَأَهْلَهُ مِنَ الْكَرْبِ الْعَظِيمِ ﴿٦٦﴾"

Tr.: And indeed Nūḥ (Noah) invoked us, and we are the best of those who answer (the request). And we rescued him and his family from the great distress (i.e. drowning). (al-Ṣāffāt: 75-76)

After two verses Allah concluded: "ثُمَّ أَعْرَفْنَا الْأَخْرِينَ ﴿٨٢﴾" Tr.: Then we drowned the others (disbelievers and polytheists). (al-Şāffāt: 82)

Because the topic of the chapter and the context of the diction required this brevity, but in the chapter of Nūḥ (Noah), the detail of Du'ā' (prayer) by Nūḥ (Noah) expanded between twenty to twenty eight verses, and the detail of drowning of the nation and the salvation of the believers has been described in three big chapters.

Similarly, the event of Mūsá (Moses) and Hārūn (Aaron) has been mentioned in many places in the Qur'ān, somewhere very detailed, somewhere very précised but a new thing has been presented everywhere. According to the situation, which is required to be presented, they were brought to light effectively and other parts of the event have been described as these appear to be tacit. The stories of Ādam and Satan often mentioned in many places but the expression is changed everywhere. Where the bad result of arrogance is required to be shown, the arrogance of Satan has been focused there other than any other thing. Wherever the lasting enmity between human being and Satan is required to be mentioned, the conversation is quoted mostly, which was delivered between Satan and Allah regarding misguiding the people of the world. The point is that there is a huge difference between the style of declaration, mode of conversation and the details of the event itself. It is not possible to mention in detail here. It will be discussed in a separate article (God willing).¹

¹ The article of the author entitled "Qur'ān mein takrār kī nau'iyat aur qişsa-i-Ādam wa Şhaitān" (The nature of repetition in the Qur'ān and story of Ādam and Satan), published in al-Işlāḥ on this topic; is the beauty of this collection

Different Ways of Mentioning Prophets in the Qur'ān:

After this preface, think about both the objections of the objector, the reality itself would be apparent. No doubt, mention of many prophets has been ignored in the Qur'ān, but it did not happen due to unawareness. There are many places in the Qur'ān where prophets are mentioned but no one is named. For example:

"وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَا فِي قَرْيَةٍ مِّن نَّبِيٍّ إِلَّا أَخَذْنَا أَهْلَهَا بِالْبَأْسَاءِ وَالصَّرَاءِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَضُرَّعُونَ ﴿٩٤﴾"

Tr.: And We sent no prophet to any town (and they denied him), but we seized its people with suffering from extreme poverty (or loss in wealth) and loss of health (and calamities), so that they might humiliate themselves (and repent to Allah). (al-A'rāf: 94)

In other place:

"وَكَذَلِكَ جَعَلْنَا لِكُلِّ نَبِيٍّ عَدُوًّا شَيْطِينِ الْإِنسِ وَالْجِنِّ يُوحِي بَعْضُهُمْ إِلَى بَعْضٍ زُخْرَفَ الْقَوْلِ غُرُورًا وَلَوْ شَاءَ رَبُّكَ مَا فَعَلُوهُ فَذُرَّهُمْ وَمَا يَقْتُرُونَ ﴿١١٢﴾"

Tr.: And We have appointed for every prophet enemies – shaitin (devils) among mankind and jinn, inspiring one another with adorned speech as delusion (or by way of deception)". (al-An'ām: 112)

There are many places, where some of them are mentioned considering the addressee and motif of the chapter while the others are ignored, as the examples are mentioned above, the two verses are also included orderly within these two types of conversation, which are objected by the objector to conceal the unawareness.

- 1- وَقَدْ أَرْسَلْنَا رُسُلًا مِّن قَبْلِكَ مِنْهُمْ مَّن قَصَصْنَا عَلَيْكَ وَمِنْهُمْ مَّن لَّمْ نَقْضُصْ عَلَيْكَ وَمَا كَانَ (لِرَسُولٍ أَنْ يَأْتِيَ بِآيَةٍ إِلَّا بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ فَإِذَا جَاءَ أَمْرُ اللَّهِ فُضِيَ بِالْحَقِّ وَخَسِرَ هُنَالِكَ الْمُبْطِلُونَ ﴿٧٨﴾
(Tr.: And, indeed We have sent messengers before you (O

Muḥammad) (PBUH): of some of them we have related to you their story. And of some we have not related to you their story and it was not given to any messenger that he should bring a sign except by the leave of Allah". (Ghāfir: 78)

- 2- ﴿إِنَّا أَوْحَيْنَا إِلَيْكَ كَمَا أَوْحَيْنَا إِلَى نُوحٍ وَالنَّبِيِّينَ مِنْ بَعْدِهِ وَأَوْحَيْنَا إِلَى إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَإِسْمَاعِيلَ وَإِسْحَاقَ وَيَعْقُوبَ وَالْأَسْبَاطِ وَعِيسَى وَأَيُّوبَ وَيُونُسَ وَهَارُونَ وَسُلَيْمَانَ وَءَاتَيْنَا دَاوُدَ زَبُورًا ﴿١٣١﴾ وَرُسُلًا قَدْ قَصَصْنَاهُمْ عَلَيْكَ مِنْ قَبْلُ وَرُسُلًا لَمْ نَقْصُصْهُمْ عَلَيْكَ وَكَلَّمَ اللَّهُ مُوسَى تَكْلِيمًا ﴿١٣٢﴾﴾ (Tr.: Verily, We have sent the revelation to you (O Muḥammad) (PBUH) as We sent the revelation to Nūḥ (Noah) and the prophets after him; we (also) sent the revelation to Ibrāhīm (Abraham), Ismā'īl (Ishmael), Ishaq (Isaac), Yāqūb (Jacob), Īsá (Jesus), Ayyūb (Job), Yūnus (Jonah), Hārūn (Aaron) and Sulaimān (Solomon); and to Dāwūd (David) We gave the Zabūr (Psalm). And the messengers We have mentioned to you before, and messenger We have not mentioned to you, - and to Mūsá (Moses) Allah spoke directly". (al-Nisā': 163-164)

In the first verse, the prophets are only referred without naming them considering the brevity and shortness. There was no need to mention their names and to detail their events. After mentioning many prophets in the second verse and leaving unrelated prophets, only their reference is made sufficient. This is the general rule of the Qur'ān, whose examples mentioned above, whose clear example indicated in above verses that how many prophets were available after Nūḥ (Noah) and before Ibrāhīm (Abraham), He has indicated towards them saying "والنبيين من بعده" (the prophets after him). As you do not understand by ignoring the prophets in the first section and mentioning some of them along with ignoring some others in the second section, that the conditions of all

prophets in the first section and conditions of a few in the second section have been left due to incognisance, we should also understand that those whose mention is completely skipped among the prophets, it was not done due to unawareness. In fact, the most of the first addressees of the Qur'ān were aware of those prophets mentioned by the Qur'ān. So if other prophets were mentioned before them, whom they were not aware of, it would not be beneficial rather than being inflammatory, and the purpose of narrating the stories in the Qur'ān would have been missed.

As mentioned above, generally the events are narrated in the Qur'ān for reminder or inference. Therefore, if the name of any prophet is mentioned before them, whom they are completely unaware of; their mind might have gone towards enquiring into the personality of the prophet and his condition, instead of the real purpose for which the story is narrated. And the real purpose would have been missed and a fruitless discussion and objection may happen, from which the Qur'ān used to abstain.

In a place, Allah has mentioned a believing man from the period of Mūsá (Moses). He said in an advice addressing his nation:

"وَلَقَدْ جَاءَكُمْ يُوسُفُ مِنْ قَبْلُ بِالْبَيِّنَاتِ فَمَا زِلْتُمْ فِي شَكٍّ مِمَّا جَاءَكُمْ بِهِ حَتَّى إِذَا هَلَكَ قُلْتُمْ لَنْ نَبْعَثَ اللَّهَ مِنْ بَعْدِهِ رَسُولًا كَذَلِكَ يُضِلُّ اللَّهُ مَنْ هُوَ مُسْرِفٌ مُرْتَابٌ ﴿٣٤﴾"

Tr.: And indeed Yūsuf (Joseph) did come to you, in times gone by, with clear signs, but you ceased not to doubt in that which he did bring to you". (Ghāfir: 34)

Yūsuf (Joseph) had lived in Egypt for a long time. The people of Egypt were well aware of his personality. If that person would take any other's name instead of Yūsuf (Joseph), whom

the addressees were unaware of, the conversation would be entirely inappropriate.

The Historical Sequence is not considered in the Qur'ānic Stories:

The second objection of the objector is regarding the historical mistakes of the Qur'ān and its inordinate stories of the prophets. Regarding the historical mistakes, it is enough to say that the people of the Book could not prove any historical mistake in spite of making much effort, even after the passage of a long period. The things, they used to see doubtfully, the latest researches and discoveries have also proved its trueness and authenticity. But there is no cure of biasness. The objection regarding dis-order is also based on unawareness only. The stories and the conditions of the prophets and nations, mentioned in the Qur'ān, its chronological order is not required.

Its sequence is relied on other important reasons. Bringing them before or later is required as per the motif of the chapter and context of conversation. The historical order is considered very less, therefore knowing the reason of its bringing before or later is the act of delicacy. Its wisdoms are cleared after thinking deeply. There are many places in the Qur'ān where the chronological order is not considered in the mention of the prophets. Seemingly it is striking to the eyes. It is needed to discuss these types of verses and to clear the wisdoms of its order. It is difficult to discuss all verses in one time, so we should discuss here only the chapter al-Anbiyā'. In future, other verses will be discussed (God willing).

The Sequence of the Prophets' Names in the Chapter al-Anbiyā':

Many prophets have been mentioned in chapter al-Anbiyā'. Their names are below in sequence: Mūsá (Moses), Hārūn

(Aaron), Lūṭ (Lot), Iṣḥāq (Isaac), Yāqūb (Jacob), Nūḥ (Noah), Dāwūd (David), Sulaimān (Solomon), Ayyūb (Job), Ismā'īl (Ishmael), Idrīs (Enoch), Dhul-Kifl (Ezekiel), Dhun-Nun (Jonah), Zakarīyyā (Zechariah), Yaḥyā' (John) (PBUH) and in the end Maryam (Mary) is mentioned. It is very clear that the chronological order is not considered here. Then we should think that which wisdom is hidden in this order? We should read entire chapter attentively to understand it. The wisdoms of the sequence in the Qur'ān could not be cleared without understanding the mode of conversation.

It has been known that the purpose of narrating the stories of prophets is inference or reminder or consolation. Study these stories with attention; its purpose gets cleared itself after having a look on previous and next verses. If we think about chapter under discussion, we will know that the three types of prophets are mentioned here. At first, there are the prophets who are mentioned here for the evidence of the divine revelation. Mūsá (Moses) and Hārūn (Aaron) are included in it. The prophet Muḥammad (PBUH) is ordered:

"قُلْ إِنَّمَا أَنذِرُكُمْ بِالْوَحْيِ وَلَا يَسْمَعُ الصُّمُّ الدُّعَاءَ إِذَا مَا يُنذِرُونَ ﴿٤٥﴾"

Tr.: Say (O Muḥammad) (PBUH): "I warn you only by the revelation (from Allah and not by the opinion of the religious scholars and others)". (al-Anbiyā': 45)

Who are denier of divine revelation, it is said by showing their bad result in the Hereafter:

"وَلَقَدْ آتَيْنَا مُوسَىٰ وَهَارُونَ الْفُرْقَانَ وَضِيَاءً وَذِكْرًا لِّلْمُتَّقِينَ ﴿٤٦﴾ الَّذِينَ يَخْشَوْنَ رَبَّهُم بِالْغَيْبِ وَهُمْ مِّنَ السَّاعَةِ مُشْفِقُونَ ﴿٤٧﴾ وَهَذَا ذِكْرٌ مُّبَارَكٌ أَنزَلْنَاهُ أَفَأَنْتُمْ لَهُ مُنْكَرُونَ ﴿٤٨﴾"

Tr.: And indeed We granted to Mūsá (Moses) and Hārūn (Aaron) the criterion (of right and wrong), and a shining light

[i.e. the Taurāt (Torah)] and a reminder for al-Muttaqūn (the pious). Those who fear their Lord without seeing Him, and they are afraid of the Hour. And this is a blessed reminder (the Qur'ān) which We have sent down: will you then (dare to) deny it"? (al-Anbiyā': 48-50)

It has been cleared from the last verse that Mūsá (Moses) and Hārūn (Aaron) are mentioned here for emphasis of "إنما أُنذركم بالوحي" (Tr.: I warn you only by the revelation) stating that the divine revelation, descended on you, so there is no reason for its denial. That is not a new thing for you. It has been forever that the books have been sent down for the guidance of people.

The other prophets are inclusively mentioned here to enlighten the rewards of Ibrāhīm (Abraham) and Zakarīyyā (Zechariah). Ishāq (Isaac), Yāqūb (Jacob) and Yaḥyā' (John) included among them. Lūṭ (Lot) is also mentioned inclusively at the first time. The Qur'ān says:

"وَنَجَّيْنَاهُ وَلُوطًا إِلَى الْأَرْضِ الَّتِي بَارَكْنَا فِيهَا لِلْعَالَمِينَ ﴿٧١﴾ وَوَهَبْنَا لَهُ إِسْحَاقَ وَيَعْقُوبَ نَافِلَةً وَكُلًّا جَعَلْنَا صَالِحِينَ ﴿٧٢﴾"

Tr.: And We rescued him and Lūṭ (Lot) to the land which We have blessed for the 'Ālamīn (mankind and jinn). And We bestowed upon him Ishāq (Isaac), and (a grandson) Yāqūb (Jacob). Each one We made righteous". (al-Anbiyā': 71-72)

It is very clear from these words that the mention of these three people is only inclusive. The real purpose is to describe the salvation of Ibrāhīm (Abraham) and his special rewards. Similarly He said after the prayer of Zakarīyyā (Zechariah): "فَأَسْتَجَبْنَا لَهُ وَوَهَبْنَا لَهُ يَحْيَىٰ" (Tr.: So We answered his call, and We bestowed upon him Yaḥyā' (John)). It has also to be known that Yaḥyā' (John) is mentioned here to enlighten the reward

of Zakarīyyā (Zechariah). The events of other prophets, the third type of prophets, are mentioned here for the consolation of Muḥammad (PBUH). The all remaining prophets are included in this type of prophets, but it should be cleared that there could be three more categories of the third type of prophets for the purpose of consolation despite of unity. There is a separate call of having patience and message of consolation for Muḥammad (PBUH) within each category. The first category consists of the prophets, who suffered from severe difficulties and troubles in preaching the religion. Those nations had rejected their teachings, laughed at them and adopted each and every type of tactics to defeat them but Allah has helped them, made them successful and ruined their opponents. Ibrāhīm (Abraham), Lūṭ (Lot) and Nūḥ (Noah) are included in this category. So while stating about them, the obduracy of their nations and their ruin and salvation of the believers has been highlighted more.

The Qur'ān says while narrating the story of Ibrāhīm (Abraham):

"قَالُوا حَرِّقُوهُ وَانصُرُوا آلِهَتَكُمْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ فَاعِلِينَ ﴿٦٨﴾ قُلْنَا يَا نَارُ كُونِي بَرْدًا وَسَلَامًا عَلَىٰ إِبْرَاهِيمَ ﴿٦٩﴾ وَأَرَادُوا بِهِ كَيْدًا فَجَعَلْنَاهُمُ الْأَخْسَرِينَ ﴿٧٠﴾ وَجَجَيْنَاهُ وَلُوطًا إِلَى الْأَرْضِ الَّتِي بَارَكْنَا فِيهَا لِلْعَالَمِينَ ﴿٧١﴾"

Tr.: They said: "burn him and help your ālihah (Gods), if you will be doing". We (Allah) said: "O fire! Be you coolness and safety for Ibrāhīm (Abraham)!" And they wanted to harm him, but We made them worst losers. And We rescued him and Lūṭ (Lot) to the land which We have blessed for the 'Ālamīn (mankind and jinn)". (al-Anbiyā': 68-71)

In the story of Lūṭ (Lot):

"وَلَوْطًا ءَاتَيْنَاهُ حُكْمًا وَعِلْمًا وَنَجَّيْنَاهُ مِنَ الْقَرْيَةِ الَّتِي كَانَتْ تَعْمَلُ الْخَبِيثَاتِ إِنَّهُمْ كَانُوا قَوْمَ سَوْءٍ فَاسِقِينَ ﴿٧٥﴾ وَأَدْخَلْنَاهُ فِي رَحْمَتِنَا إِنَّهُ مِنَ الصَّالِحِينَ ﴿٧٦﴾"

Tr.: And (remember) Lūṭ (Lot), We gave him Ḥukm (right judgment of the affairs and Prophet Hūd (Eber)) and (religious) knowledge, and We saved from the town (folk) who practiced Al-Khabā'ith (evil, wicked and filthy deeds). Verily, they were a people given to evil, and were Fāsiqūn (rebellious, disobedient to Allah). And We admitted him to our mercy; truly, he was of the righteous". (al-Anbiyā': 74-75)

In the story of Nūḥ (Noah):

"وَنُوحًا إِذْ نَادَىٰ مِن قَبْلُ فَاسْتَجَبْنَا لَهُ فَنَجَّيْنَاهُ وَأَهْلَهُ مِنَ الْكَرْبِ الْعَظِيمِ ﴿٧٦﴾ وَنَصَرْنَاهُ مِنَ الْقَوْمِ الَّذِينَ كَذَّبُوا بِآيَاتِنَا إِنَّهُمْ كَانُوا قَوْمَ سَوْءٍ فَأَغْرَقْنَاهُمْ أَجْمَعِينَ ﴿٧٧﴾"

Tr.: And (remember) Nūḥ (Noah), when he cried (to us) a foretime. We answered his invocation and saved him and his family from the great distress. We helped him against the people who denied Our Āyāt (proofs, evidences, verses, lessons, signs, revelations, etc.). Verily, they were a people given to evil. So We drowned them all". (al-Anbiyā': 76-77)

After that, the second category consists of the prophets who are described in the beginning with their incapacity and helplessness but their dignity becomes higher later. Allah makes them sovereign of the land and sea and jinn and human beings by His grace and kindness. They could see a lot from the magnificence of Allah's triumph in this world. Dāwūd (David) and Sulaimān (Solomon) are included in this category. The words, came here about them, do not mention that they have been suffered by their nations but they are mentioned as:

"فَفَهَّمْنَاهَا سُلَيْمَانَ ۖ وَكُلًّا ءَاتَيْنَا حُكْمًا وَعِلْمًا وَسَخَرْنَا مَعَ دَاوُدَ الْجِبَالَ يُسَبِّحْنَ وَالطَّيْرَ وَكُنَّا فَاعِلِينَ ﴿٨١﴾ وَعَلَّمْنَاهُ صَنْعَةَ لَبُوسٍ لَّكُمْ لِيُحْصِنَكُمْ مِن بَأْسِكُمْ ۖ فَهَلْ أَنْتُمْ شَاكِرُونَ ﴿٨٢﴾"

وَلَسَلِيمَنَّ الرِّيحَ عَاصِفَةً تَجْرِي بِأَمْرِي إِلَى الْأَرْضِ الَّتِي بَارَكْنَا فِيهَا وَكُنَّا بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمِينَ ﴿٨١﴾
 وَمِنَ الشَّيَاطِينِ مَنْ يَغُوصُونَ لَهُ وَيَعْمَلُونَ عَمَلًا دُونَ ذَلِكَ وَكُنَّا لَهُمْ حَافِظِينَ ﴿٨٢﴾"

Tr.: And We made Sulaimān (Solomon) to understand (the case); and to each of them We gave Ḥukm (right judgement of the affairs and prophethood) and knowledge. And We subjected the mountains and the birds to glorify Our praises along with Dāwūd (David). And it was We who were the doer (of all these things). And We taught him the making of metal coats of mail (for battles), to protect you in your fighting. Are you then grateful? And to Sulaimān (Solomon) (We subjected) the wind strongly ragging, running by his command towards the land which We had blessed. And of everything We are all-knower. And of the Shayātīn (devils from the jinn) were some who dived for him, and did other work besides that; and it was We who guarded them". (al-Anbiyā': 79-82)

This is utmost limit of their magnificence and greatness. Its beginning should be seen in the chapter of Samuel Sani:

"God says to the prophet as: Say to my servant Dāwūd (David) that God of armies says that I have picked you from pasture where you used to graze sheep and made you the ruler of your nation Israel and wherever you went I remained with you".

Whatever we have written above supports it word by word. See Sulaimān's (Solomon's) appearance and throne of magnificence and greatness and the pasture of Dāwūd (David) on other side. How much distance is between them but when that maker wants to make them together, he makes them together and nobody can stop him.

The third category consists of the prophets who have presented astonishing examples of patience and trust in Allah while suffering from difficulties and examinations. Their

names are below in order: Ayyūb (Job), Ismā'īl (Ishmael), Idrīs (Enoch), Dhul-Kifl (Ezekiel), Dhun-Nun (Jonah) and Zakarīyyā (Zechariah). Maryam (Mary) is also included among them.

In the mention of those prophets, their patience and uprightness and their trust in Allah and turning repentantly to Allah have been highlighted and then described that why Allah had listened to their prayers and patronised them. As if Allah has invited the prophet Muḥammad (PBUH) towards patience and trust in Allah by describing the events of the prophets of all three categories. He said that many prophets came before you whose nation had treated them as your nation is doing with you but they had worked with patience. It resulted as these prophets had been remained overcoming and victorious and their rebel nations had been destroyed forever. The same result is going to happen with your opponents, so do not worry. Similarly, he has been consoled by showing the power and influence of Dāwūd (David) and Sulaimān (Solomon), that when Allah bestows the throne of greatness and magnificence, why do you worry about your current poverty and loneliness? Similarly, it is shown through describing the events of other prophets, that how many prophets came before you, all of them suffered from difficulties and they bear every misfortune with patience, so have patience, Allah will surely succeed you.

Mutual Sequence of the Prophets:

This was a brief study on the order of prophets. Now think about their mutual sequence in detail.

Here, Mūsá (Moses) and Hārūn (Aaron) are out of our discussion because they are mentioned here in other context, as we discussed above. As for those who are mentioned there

after them, their sequence should be known. But among them the mention of Yaḥyā' (John), Iṣḥāq (Isaac), Yāqūb (Jacob) and Lūṭ (Lot) at the first time is absolutely inclusive as discussed above, therefore the sequence of the following prophets is to be highlighted: Ibrāhīm (Abraham), Lūṭ (Lot), Nūḥ (Noah), Dāwūd (David), Sulaimān (Solomon), Ayyūb (Job), Ismā'īl (Ishmael), Idrīs (Enoch), Dhul-Kifl (Ezekiel), Dhun-Nun (Jonah), Zakarīyyā (Zechariah), Yaḥyā' (John) and Maryam (Mary). It has been known that the three categories of the prophets are exposed here through the mode of conversation and words. In the first category Ibrāhīm (Abraham), Lūṭ (Lot) and Nūḥ (Noah) are included. It is not intended here to write much about their sequence; although Nūḥ (Noah) has been mentioned first in many places in the Qur'ān, because he was the first according to the period of time. But Ibrāhīm (Abraham) has been mentioned first here considering the special condition of addressees and some characteristics and Lūṭ (Lot) has been mentioned with him due to being his relative and contemporary, then this series of prophets has been ended on Nūḥ (Noah) according to ascending order.

After that, there is the second category in which Dāwūd (David) and Sulaimān (Solomon) are included. Their sequence is clear; hence the father has been mentioned first and the son later but one question remains that which special wisdom is hidden in mentioning Ibrāhīm (Abraham) first and Dāwūd (David) and Sulaimān (Solomon) later. Its answer is that here it is to remove the trouble from him (PBUH), which occurred to him due to denial and laugh by the Quraish rebels and their mischiefs. The demand of wisdom was to state the things at first which could remove his specific trouble and anxiety, after that to state the things which start after the removal of troubles. You can understand, for example, that if any person

is suffering from any painful disease, it will not be satisfactory for him to mention about ministers, emperors and conquerors or winners, rather it will be beneficial for him to mention the people got recovered after suffering that painful disease. That is the reason that those people have been mentioned here at first who suffered by their nations then those people have been mentioned who became the owners of big power and sovereignty by the grace of Allah. It means that there are two gospels for him (PBUH), one is salvation from current troubles and the other is big power and sovereignty.

After that, those people have been mentioned who have suffered from gruelling troubles in their lives, but they have had patience and uprightness. They have had trust in Allah, so Allah has provided each type of help and support. At this place the names of those prophets are mentioned, whose sequence is not happened due to the time period, but their sequence happened according to strength and weakness of the patience and trust in Allah. Those whose level of patience and trust is stronger, they have been mentioned first. Therefore, Ayyūb (Job) has been mentioned at first and everybody knows that the example of patience found in the life of Ayyūb (Job), is not found in any others' life. After Ayyūb (Job), the names of Ismā'īl (Ishmael), Idrīs (Enoch) and Dhul-Kifl (Ezekiel) are taken and it is said regarding them: (وَأَسْمَعِيلَ وَإِدْرِيسَ وَذَا الْكِفْلِ كُلٌّ مِنَ الصَّابِرِينَ)

Ⓜ (Tr.: All were from among al-Ṣābirūn (the patient)”) (al-Anbiyā': 85) They were among patients. The patience of Ismā'īl (Ishmael) is very apparent, as he did not care of sacrificing his life for the consent of Allah and he offered himself in the way of Allah. Although that is a very big example of patience but the life of Ayyūb (Job) was absolutely full of patience and uprightness. There is also a difference between them that to

die for the consent of Allah is not an art/miracle as living in troubles and difficulties. Although the examination of Ismā'īl (Ishmael) was very tough, it was for a moment while Ayyūb (Job) had to live the big part of his life in hardship and examinations. So his name should have been mentioned at first and it happened. After Ismā'īl (Ishmael), the names of Idrīs (Enoch) and Dhul-Kifl (Ezekiel) are mentioned. Their special characteristic is also patience "وكل من الصابرين" (Tr.: All were from among al-Ṣābirūn (the patient)). But their detailed condition is unknown. Therefore, we could not highlight their patience more than this shortness and précis.

After that Yūnus (Jonah) has been mentioned. His mention starts as below:

"وَدَا الْنُّونَ إِذْ ذَهَبَ مُغْضِبًا فَظَنَّ أَنْ لَنْ نَقْدِرَ عَلَيْهِ فَنَادَى فِي الظُّلُمَاتِ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا أَنْتَ سُبْحَانَكَ إِنِّي كُنْتُ مِنَ الظَّالِمِينَ ﴿۸۷﴾ فَاسْتَجَبْنَا لَهُ وَنَجَّيْنَاهُ مِنَ الْعَمَمِ وَكَذَلِكَ نُسَجِّى الْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿۸۸﴾"

Tr.: And (remember) Dhun-Nun [Yūnus (Jonah)], when he went off in anger, and imagined that We shall not punish him (i.e. the calamities which had befallen him)! But he cried through the darkness (saying): La ilaha illa Anta [none has the right to be worshipped but You (O, Allah)], Glorified (and Exalted) are you [above all that (evil) they associate with You]! Truly, I have been of the wrong-doers." So We answered his call, and delivered him from the distress. And thus We do deliver the believers (who believe in the Oneness of Allah, abstain from evil and work righteousness)." (al-Anbiyā': 87-88)

Here, Yūnus (Jonah) has been mentioned after Ismā'īl (Ishmael), Idrīs (Enoch) and Dhul-Kifl (Ezekiel), because the patience-level of Yūnus (Jonah) is lower than their patience. He had migrated by leaving his people before Allah's permission; therefore it is said to the Prophet (PBUH):

"وَلَا تَكُن كَصَاحِبِ الْخُوْتِ إِذْ نَادَىٰ وَهُوَ مَكْظُومٌ ﴿٤٨﴾"

Tr.: And be not like the Companion of the Fish". (al-Qalam: 48)

But the regret he had for this small mistake and the sorrow he felt; could be evaluated through his prayers, which he performed before Allah. He had also been put in sever examination due to this hurry, and it had been continued till a long period, until he succeeded in the examination of patience and uprightness and Allah has accepted his prayers and rescued from the sorrow. (فَاسْتَجَبْنَا لَهُ وَخَجَلْنَاهُ مِنَ الْعَمَىٰ وَكَذَلِكَ نُجِي الْمُؤْمِنِينَ)

﴿٤٨﴾ (Tr.: So we answered his call, and delivered him from the distress". (al-Anbiyā': 88)

After that, Zakarīyyā (Zechariah) has been mentioned. He has also presented a good example of turn repentantly to Allah and trust in Him. But he has been preferred on the prophets mentioned prior due to some different merits, which could not be mentioned in detail here. Therefore he is mentioned in the end. This big reason of mentioning preceding prophets at first or later; is that they were suffering from troubles and difficulties, which were very difficult to have patience on them. In contradiction, Zakarīyyā (Zechariah) was suffering from a mental trouble in spite of a physical pain and difficulty. It means that he was feeling sorrow that his relatives were bad people and there was nobody to hold up the post of preaching and reform, so he whinged to Allah:

"وَإِنِّي خِفْتُ الْمَوَالِيَ مِنْ وَرَائِي وَكَانَتِ امْرَأَتِي عَاقِرًا فَهَبْ لِي مِنْ لَدُنْكَ وَلِيًّا ﴿٦٧﴾ يَرِثُنِي وَيَرِثُ مِنْ آلِ يَعْقُوبَ وَأَجْعَلْهُ رَبِّ رَضِيًّا ﴿٦٨﴾ بِنُزُكْرٍ يَا إِنَّا نُنَبِّئُكَ بِعَلْمٍ آسَمُهُ يَحْيَىٰ لَمْ نَجْعَلْ لَهُ مِنْ قَبْلُ سَمِيًّا ﴿٦٩﴾"

Tr.: And verily, I fear my relatives after me, and my wife is barren. So give me from Yourself an heir. "Who shall inherit

me, and inherit (also) the posterity of Yāqūb (Jacob) (inheritance of the religious knowledge and prophethood, not of wealth.). And make him, my Lord, one with whom You are Well-Pleased!"" (Maryam: 5-6)

He has prayed same prayer in this chapter too:

"وَرَكْرَكًا إِذْ نَادَى رَبَّهُ رَبِّ لَا تَذَرْنِي فَرْدًا وَأَنْتَ خَيْرُ الْوَارِثِينَ ﴿٨٩﴾"

Tr.: And (remember) Zakarīyyā (Zechariah), when he cried to his Lord: "O My Lord! Leave me not single (childless), while You are the Best of the inheritors."" (al-Anbiyā': 89)

This trouble of Zakarīyyā (Zechariah) was although mental and hard, there is a huge difference between this trouble and the physical trouble and hard examinations of the prophets mentioned before. Therefore they are mentioned later.

After the mention of these prophets, Maryam (Mary) has been mentioned in the end, and this series has been completed on her. She is mentioned as below:

"وَالَّتِي أَحْصَنَتْ فَرْجَهَا فَنَفَخْنَا فِيهَا مِنْ رُوحِنَا وَجَعَلْنَاهَا آيَةً لِلْعَالَمِينَ ﴿٩١﴾"

Tr.: And she who guarded her chastity We breathed into her, and We made her and her son a sign for the whole world. (al-Anbiyā': 91)

As I think, Maryam (Mary) has been mentioned to describe the patience and uprightness. In spite of being pious, she was alleged, cursed and rebuked. It is mentioned in the Qur'ān as well that the people said to her:

"يَتْلُحَّتْ هُرُونَ مَا كَانَ أَبِيكَ أَمْرًا سَوْءًا وَمَا كَانَتْ أُمُّكَ بَغِيًّا ﴿٢٨﴾"

Tr.: O sister (i.e. the like) of Hārūn (Aaron)! Your father was not a man who used to commit adultery, nor was your mother an unchaste woman."" (Maryam: 28)

How gruelling thing is this for an innocent and inerrant woman but Maryam (Mary) has confronted all these things for the consent of Allah. Although she worried in the beginning due to fear of censure and irony of the people but she showed abundant uprightness in this way after having known about the desire of Allah. So Allah has made the new born child able to speak to show her innocence and candour.

There is also a consolation message in a different way for the Prophet (PBUH) in the event of Zakarīyyā (Zechariah) and Maryam (Mary); which requires to be mentioned in the end. It is seen that the biggest hindrance in the way of consolation is this world. Who is consoled, usually does not accept the consoler's suggestions at any cost considering his/her atmosphere and current visible conditions. For the consolation of the prophet and the believers, it has been cleared by narrating the events of the prophets that you will must get riddance from current difficulties. It is told by showing the glory and magnificence of Dāwūd (David) that giving the highest standing and designation is in our hand. But the prophet (PBUH) and Muslims, the condition they were facing and the poverty and inability they were living in, how it could be trusted that these people, who were seemingly needy of breads at that time, will own the throne of Caesar and Kisrá and they will see the lustre of Sulaimān (Solomon) and Dāwūd (David)'s magnificence and glory in their lives. Therefore Allah has narrated the events of the both in the end to prove that there are no reasons and causes in front of our desire and will. What could be impossible more than that the wife and husband become the possessors of a baby after being old and infertile and a baby get born without intercourse of man and woman?

If all these things are not impossible before our power and will, they should not be disappointed and hopeless from emergence of our promises, although they seem to be very impossible considering the visible conditions.

The reasons of mentioning Zakariyyā (Zechariah) and Maryam (Mary) later have been known. The reason of mentioning Maryam (Mary) later among both is very apparent and distinct. There are some more things need to be presented regarding this sequence but there is no space to present them in detail here.

The Story of Ibrāhīm in the Qur'ān

and

Objections of the Orientalists

✎...Maulānā Ḍiyā'uddīn Iṣlāhī¹

Tr.: Dr. Heifā' Shākrī²

Ibrāhīm (Abraham) was the ancestor and spiritual leader of both the Children of Ismā'īl and Children of Isrā'īl. That's why all the Jews, Christians and Muslims regard him as their spiritual guide and religious leader.

The Torah, in its several places, has repeatedly narrated the story of his glory, piety, grace and increase in his generation. Some quotations are given below from the book of the Genesis:

“Now the Lord said to Abraham, “Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you. I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you, and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and the one who curses you I will curse: and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed”. (The Genesis: 12/1-3)

In another place it came:

“The Lord said to Abraham, after Lot had separated from him, “Raise your eyes now, and look from the place where you are,

¹ Great Muslim scholar of India and author of different books on Arabic and Islamic Studies.

² Assistant Editor and Assistant Professor, Department of Arabic, Jāmia Millia Islāmia, New Delhi

northward and southward and eastward and westward; for all the land that you see I will give to you and to your offspring forever. I will make your offspring like the dust of the earth: so that if one can count the dust of the earth, your offspring also can be counted". (The Genesis, 13/14-16)

In another chapter of this book it came:

"The angel of the Lord called to Abraham a second time from heaven, and said, "By myself I have sworn, says the Lord: Because you have done this, and have not withheld your son, your only son. I will indeed bless you, and I will make your offspring as numerous as the stars of heaven and as the sand that is on the seashore. And your offspring shall possess the gate of their enemies, and by your offspring shall all the nations of the earth gain blessing for themselves, because you have obeyed my voice" (The Genesis, 22/15-18)

In another place it came:

"Abraham shall become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him for I have chosen him, that he may charge his children and his household after him to keep the way of the Lord by doing righteousness and justice: so that the Lord may bring about for Abraham what he has promised him" (The Genesis, 18/18-19)

The Qur'ān has also mentioned the alone spiritual leadership of Ibrāhīm in the following eloquent words:

قَالَ إِنِّي جَاعِلُكَ لِلنَّاسِ إِمَامًا^ط.¹

Tr.: He said, "Verily, I am going to make you a leader for mankind.

It also mentioned:

¹ Al-Baqarah: 124

"وَلَقَدْ اصْطَفَيْنَاهُ فِي الدُّنْيَا وَإِنَّهُ فِي الْآخِرَةِ لَمِنَ الصَّالِحِينَ"¹

Tr.: Truly, We chose him in this world and verily, in the Hereafter he will be among the righteous.

The literal meaning of Ibrāhīm is 'the father of the nations'. In Torah he was called as 'Abū al-Anbiyā' (Father of the Prophets) which is supported by the Qur'ān that Allah made increase in his family and all the branches of his generation flourished much.

With this glory and preference of Ibrāhīm (over all the prophets), the Qur'ān emphasized upon following the path of Ibrāhīm and cursed the one who deviated from it and transgressed the bounds of obedience. Hence it called out the pagans of the Quraish, the Jews and Christians to leave the wrong paths which they had chosen to follow and advised them to follow the guided path which Ibrāhīm showed them. Allah says:

"وَقَالُوا كُونُوا هُودًا أَوْ نَصَارَى تَهْتَدُوا قُلْ بَلْ مِلَّةَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ حَنِيفًا وَمَا كَانَ مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ"²

Tr.: And they say, "Be Jews or Christian, then you will be guided." Say, "Nay, (we follow) only the religion of Ibrāhīm who was sincere to worship Allah, and he was not of the polytheists.

The Qur'ān narrates very clearly that Ibrāhīm and Yāqūb the both advised their own sons at the time of their last breathe to embrace the Ibrāhīmi path. Allah says:

"وَوَصَّىٰ بِهَا إِبْرَاهِيمُ بَنِيهِ وَيَعْقُوبُ بَنِيَّ إِنَّ اللَّهَ اصْطَفَىٰ لَكُمُ الدِّينَ فَلَا تَمُوتُنَّ إِلَّا وَأَنتُمْ مُسْلِمُونَ"³ أَمْ كُنْتُمْ شُهَدَاءَ إِذْ حَضَرَ يَعْقُوبَ الْمَوْتُ إِذْ قَالَ لِبَنِيهِ مَا تَعْبُدُونَ مِن بَعْدِي قَالُوا نَعْبُدُ إِلَهَكَ وَالآلَةَ عَابَائِكَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَإِسْمَاعِيلَ وَإِسْحَاقَ إِلَهُهَا وَاجِدًا وَنَحْنُ لَهُ مُسْلِمُونَ"³

¹ Al-Baqarah: 130

² Al-Baqarah: 135

³ Al-Baqarah: 132-133

Tr.: And this was enjoined by Ibrāhīm upon his sons and by Yāqūb (saying,) “O my sons! Allah has chosen for you the (true) religion, then die not except in the faith of Islam”. Or were you witnesses when death approached Yāqūb? When he said to his sons, “What will you worship after me?” They said, “We shall worship your God and God of your fathers, Ibrāhīm and Ismā’īl, and Ishāq, One God and to Him we submit.

The Qur’ān specially mentioned the last and final testament of Yāqūb while mentioning Ibrāhīm because the Children of Isrā’īl were their real sons, and when Yāqūb advised his own sons at the time of his last breathe to adopt the path of Ibrāhīm and monotheism instead of Judaism or Christianity. He said: So you must be careful while you call Ibrāhīm and Isrā’īl (Yāqūb) as the Jews and Christians, is an open injustice and blame on Allah the Almighty. He says:

”أَمْ تَقُولُونَ إِنَّ إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَإِسْمَاعِيلَ وَإِسْحَاقَ وَيَعْقُوبَ وَالْأَسْبَاطَ كَانُوا هُودًا أَوْ نَصَارَى قُلْ ءَأَنْتُمْ
أَعْلَمُ أَمْ اللَّهُ وَمَنْ أَظْلَمُ مِمَّنْ كَتَمَ شَهَادَةً عِنْدَهُ مِنَ اللَّهِ”¹

Tr.: Or you say that Ibrāhīm, Ismā’īl, Ishāq and the off-spring of the twelve sons of Yāqūb were Jews or Christians?” Say, “Do you know better or does Allah (knows better). And who is more unjust than he who conceals the testimony for Allah?

The Qur’ān considers the annoyance and revolt against the Ibrāhīmi faith as an act of foolishness and mockery. It says:

”وَمَنْ يَرْغَبْ عَنِ مِلَّةِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ إِلَّا مَنْ سَفِهَ نَفْسَهُ”²

Tr.: And who turns away from the religion of Ibrāhīm except the one who befools himself.

¹ Al-Baqarah: 140

² Al-Baqarah: 130

It severely reproached the wordings of the polytheists, the Jews and the Christians and admonished them that why they cited Ibrāhīm for their wrong opinions and views. He was neither Jew or Christian nor polytheist but he was a sincere Muslim. As for the Judaism and Christianity, they are the creations of later periods. Then why do you cite Ibrāhīm for the support of these two religions. Only those who are adherents to his religious faith, they are indeed deserved to be attributed to him so as to establish relation with him. Torah and Gospel were revealed centuries after Ibrāhīm then how can you consider him as the supporter and adherent of Judaism and Christianity.

Ismā'īl was the elder son of Ibrāhīm who was born to Hājir. The both were inhabited by him in the desert and unfertile valley of Makkah and prayed to Allah to increase his generation. It was the sign of acceptance of the prayer of Ibrāhīm that the generation of Ismā'īl grew very much.

But the sons of Isrā'īl (Yāqūb) who were their cousins always felt zealous of them. Therefore, they did not bear their honour, glory, superiority, leadership and increase in number.

Though the last prophet was sent according to the prophecies of the scriptures of the Jews who waited anxiously for his arrival but when he arrived they denied him.

In fact arrival of the Prophet Muḥammad was proclaim of the end of the religious leadership and political power of the Children of Isrā'īl. And then thereafter all kinds of honour and dignity were withdrawn from them after his arrival and the Children of Ismā'īl were granted the honour of leadership. That's why the feeling of hate and annoyance grew in the Children of Isrā'īl who plotted to destroy the reputation of their dignity and glory; (a) they raised silly and baseless objections to

the generation of Ismā'īl, (b) attempted to prove that Isrā'īl (Ishāq) was slaughtered instead of Ismā'īl, (c) considered Bait-ul-Maqdis as the direction of Ibrāhīm instead of the Ka'bah, (d) removed different signs of pilgrimage and sacrifice and (e) even regarded Ibrāhīm himself as the supporter of the Judaism and Christianity. The Qur'ān has mentioned, in several places, such kind of their alteration and misguidance.

By this prelude we intended to explain this point that from the beginning Ibrāhīm and the generation of the Ismā'īl, in respect of Arab-Muslim faith affairs, had been prey to the enmity of the People of the Book. But now some so-called orientalist, having followed their footsteps, start to produce unauthentic and baseless points against the same Ibrāhīmi faith affairs related to the Arab-Muslim religion. The aim behind this attempt is to break relations of Ismā'īl, the Arabs, the Muslims and above all of Ibrāhīm from the Ka'bah so Springer says: It appeared from the study of the way the prophet Abraham was mentioned in the Qur'ān that he passed through stages before becoming the Founder of the Ka'bah.¹

Wensink has elaborated this claim of Springer in the following words:

It appears from the mention of the prophet Abraham in the early revelations like al-Dhāriyāt, al-Hijr, al-Ṣāffāt, al-An'ām, Maryam, al-Anbiyā' and al-'Ankabūt etc. that he was simply a messenger like the other prophets, who was sent to his nation to warn them. There is no clear mention of the relation between Ismā'īl and Ibrāhīm but it seems from these sources that God did not send any prophet to the Arabs before Muḥammad so God said in one place, “ وَمَا آتَيْنَاهُمْ مِّنْ كُتُبٍ يَدْرُسُونَهَا ” (Saba': 44) (And We did not reveal وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَا إِلَيْهِمْ قَبْلَكَ مِنْ نَذِيرٍ

¹ Life of Muḥammad, 2/276

upon them any book which they might read and We did not send any warner to them before you). In another place He said, “لِيُنذِرَ قَوْمًا مَّا أُنذِرَ آبَاؤُهُمْ فَهُمْ غَافِلُونَ” (Yāsīn: 6) (--- so that you may warn them because they are such nation as their fathers were not warned so they are ignorant.). That’s why it was not mentioned in these chapters that Ibrāhīm was the founder of the Ka’bah and the first Muslim. But the matter is totally different in Madanī chapters because we find in them some aspects of the personality of Ibrāhīm which do not find place in Makkan chapters. For instance, he was called as a true Muslim and it was said that he was founder and supporter of Ibrāhīmi religion and he built the Ka’bah with the help of his son Ismā’īl. Such verses are numerous in Madanī chapters. For example, it came in the chapter of al-Baqarah, “وَإِذْ يَرْفَعُ إِبْرَاهِيمُ” (al-Baqarah: 127) (And when Ibrāhīm and Ismā’īl were building the House of Allah). The reason behind this difference is that the Prophet (PBUH) trusted in the Jews very much but when he called them to profess Islam in Madīnah, they became declined to embrace it but unlike this they became tyrant and arrogant and directly started to oppose his mission and became his enemy. In this condition the Prophet looked for other supporters in place of them to uphold his missionary work so he decided by his sharp intellect to present a new aspect of the personality of Ibrāhīm the father of the Arabs so having distanced from the Judaism of his period he related it to the Judaism of Abraham. So when the whole Arabia responded to his call, Ibrāhīm was considered the builder of the Ka’bah.¹

In the course of these biased objections the Qur’ān and the Prophet Muḥammad were also targeted to be cursed, and

¹ Dā’irah al-Ma’ārif al-Islāmiyyah, Egypt, 1933, 1/28

several other false and baseless things grew in this regard, but our discussion will be confined to the matters which are directly related to Ibrāhīm and Ismā'īl.

The main target of this objection is that the Arabs including the Muslims had any family relations with Ibrāhīm nor they had any religious relations with him. So belief of the Muslims in his religious and spiritual readership or consideration of the Arabs as their ancestor is a wrong notion because the Qur'ān never pointed out the relation of the Prophet Muḥammad and his religion (Islam) with Ibrāhīm and his religion during his Makkan period.

Similarly, there is no evidence in the Makkan chapters about Ibrāhīm that he was the builder of the Ka'bah and that the Ka'bah itself was the centre of all religions so the Prophet (PBUH) thought to be related to Ibrāhīm's family and religion during his Madani period because they (Jews) started to oppose him severely.

Both the Oriental scholars attempted to create the gross mistake that the Prophet was totally dependent upon the Jews during his Makkan period while he acted upon the laws of the Jews regarding those matters about which nothing was revealed to him during his life in Makkah and Madīnah because they were the People of the Book. The fact of the matter is that Allah has ordered him to act upon their laws in such cases so he used to offer Ṣalāh towards the direction of Bait-ul-Maqdis unless he was ordered to change his direction towards the Ka'bah because Bait-ul-Maqdis was the direction of the Jews whereas the Muslims also considered it sacred.

But such few examples do not prove that the Prophet trusted in the Jews in respect of religious affairs during his Makkan period. Such claim cannot be made even by the worst enemy

of the Muslims that the Prophet depended upon the Jews in his propagation of Islamic mission or he believed in them a little. But the events are contrary to this fact that the Prophet and his followers did not have any kind of relation with the Jews during the Makkan period. They only came in contact to them in the Madani period. During this period he made the brotherhood and friendship agreement so that he, being contented with them, may reply to the attacks of the polytheists of Makkah but unlike this when they did not fulfill the agreement, started to oppose him secretly and openly and even intrigued with the polytheists to make the Islamic mission unsuccessful, but the Prophet fortunately was destined to be aware and cautious from them.

As far as the Makkan life is concerned there is no evidence that the Prophet did any agreement with them or trusted in them, and what was the consequence of his Madani agreement, is open to all which is why the Qur'ān pointed out this natural characteristic of the Jews in the following verse:

"لَتَجِدَنَّ أَشَدَّ النَّاسِ عَدَاوَةً لِلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا الْيَهُودَ وَالَّذِينَ أَشْرَكُوا"¹

Tr.: Verily, you will find the strongest among men in enmity to the believers the Jews and those who are polytheists.

Not only this but the Arabs themselves never relied upon the Jews as it appears from the study of their history that they before the arrival of the Prophet hated to have any kind of relations and neighbourhood with the Jews. So they often fought against them so as to exile them from their land. It also seems clear from the study of the Qur'ān that the wars were waged between the Arabs and the Jews in the pre-Islamic period. It says that the Jews were anxiously waiting for the

¹ Al-Mā'idah: 82

arrival of the prophet so that they may get victory over the polytheists of the Arabs. Allah says:

"وَلَمَّا جَاءَهُمْ كِتَابٌ مِّنْ عِندِ اللَّهِ مُصَدِّقٌ لِّمَا مَعَهُمْ وَكَانُوا مِن قَبْلُ يَسْتَفْتِحُونَ عَلَى الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا فَلَمَّا جَاءَهُمْ مَا عَرَفُوا كَفَرُوا بِهِ فَلَعْنَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَى الْكَافِرِينَ ﴿٨٨﴾"¹

Tr.: And when there came to them a Book from Allah confirming what is with them, although aforesaid they had invoked Allah in order to gain victory over those who disbelieved, then when there came to them that which they had recognized, they disbelieved in it. So let the curse of Allah be on the disbelievers.

'Allāmah Ibn Jarīr has narrated the following event from Abū al-'Āliyah in the explanation of this verse:

"The Jews before the arrival of the Prophet wished to be victorious upon the pagans of the Arabs through Muḥammad and they said, 'O Allah: Send this prophet whom we find in Torah so that he may punish them and kill them. When Allah sent Muḥammad as prophet they denied his prophethood because he was not sent among them and moreover they denied him in their zeal to the Arabs. However, they knew that he was the Messenger of Allah whose description is available in the Torah but when he was sent, they denied him."²

The famous Egyptian scholar Farīd Wajdī says:

"The Messenger of Allah Muḥammad might think to be related to Ibrāhīm in Makkah other than in Madīnah because every tribe of Makkah wished to relate it to him. On the other hand most of the tribes of Madīnah were from Yemen who did not relate themselves to Ibrāhīm".³

¹ Al-Baqarah: 89

² Tafsīr Ibn Jarīr, 1/210

³ Dā'irah al-Ma'ārif al-Islāmiyyah, 1/29

In this connection Wensik has written another ugly and baseless thing and that is that he (Muḥammad) replaced the Judaism of his period by a new Judaism and attributed it to Ibrāhīm while the Judaism as a whole is related to Isrā'īl (Jacob) to whom the Jews relate their religion not to Ibrāhīm, that's why they preferred themselves to be called as the Children of Isrā'īl, then how can the existing Judaism be related to Ibrāhīm? And considering Ibrāhīm as Jew is so strange and ironic. Yāqūb was indeed his grandson and in this condition how can the religion of Ibrāhīm be the religion of his grandson? Hence the Qur'ān said very clearly:

"مَا كَانَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ يَهُودِيًّا وَلَا نَصْرَانِيًّا وَلَكِنْ كَانَ حَنِيفًا مُسْلِمًا وَمَا كَانَ مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ ﴿١٦١﴾"

Tr.: Ibrāhīm was neither a Jew nor a Christian, but he was a true Muslim and he was not of the polytheists.

The Judaism and Christianity both came into existence after Ibrāhīm, Allah says:

"لِمَ تُمَاجِدُونَ فِي إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَمَا أُنزِلَتْ التَّوْرَةُ وَالْإِنْجِيلَ إِلَّا مِنْ بَعْدِهِ أَفَلَا تَعْقِلُونَ ﴿١٦٢﴾"

Tr.: Why do you dispute about Ibrāhīm, while the Torah and the Gospel were not revealed till after him? Have you then no sense?

In fact the Prophet never thought to be related to the Judaism in any period nor he established any new Judaism because the Qur'ān says that Islam is the ancient religion which was propagated by Nūḥ, Ibrāhīm, Mūsá, 'Isá and all other prophets and for which the Prophet (Muḥammad) was sent. Allah says:

"تَمَرَعَ لَكُمْ مِنَ الدِّينِ مَا وَضَعُ بِهِ نُوْحًا وَالَّذِي أُوحِيَآ إِلَيْكَ وَمَا وَضَعْنَا بِهِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَمُوسَى وَعِيسَى أَنْ أَقِيمُوا الدِّينَ وَلَا تَتَفَرَّقُوا فِيهِ كَبُرَ --- ﴿١٦٣﴾"

¹ Āli 'Imrān: 67

² Āli 'Imrān: 65

³ Al-Shu'arā': 13

Tr.: He has ordained for you the same religion which He ordained for Nūḥ, and that which We have revealed to you and that which We revealed for Ibrāhīm, Musa and Isa saying you should establish religion and make no division in it.

Then how can the Prophet, in this condition, might leave Islam and prefer to be related to Judaism?

Ibrāhīm was, in fact, the ancestor and spiritual leader of both the Children of Ismā'īl and Children of Isrā'īl so all the Jews, Christians and polytheists used his name to prove their religion to be linked to him. Everyone among them considered himself to be remained on his path and said that he was the real follower of the religion of Ibrāhīm but Muḥammad wanted to misguide the people by having deviated from its original religion. Unlike this the Qur'ān aimed at refuting their wrong and false propagandas. It says that the Torah and Gospel were revealed centuries after Ibrāhīm then how can he be Jew or Christian? It is merely an act of foolishness that Judaism and Christianity might be attributed to him while their religions came into existence after a long period of his death. Ibrāhīm was indeed neither a Jew or a Christian nor a polytheist but he was a sincere Muslim.

Now we will analyze their objections that the sketch of Ibrāhīm is not same in Makkan and Madani chapters of the Qur'ān because he was mentioned as a general prophet in the Makkan chapters whereas in the Madani chapters he was regarded as the preacher of the true religion and builder of the Ka'bah.

There is a little difference between the styles and mode of expressions of the Makkan and Madani chapters of the Qur'ān that the discussion about him in the Makkan chapters, is short and concise while in the Madani chapters it is long and in detail.

In the Makkan chapters basics of religion have been mentioned and the mode of arguments has been given accordingly. On the contrary the Madani chapters mention decrees, related matters and even minute things for which different peculiar way of arguments and reasons has been adopted.

In the Makkan chapters the pagans of Quraish are addressed chiefly while in the Madani chapters the Jews and Christians are addressed.

One of the distinctive features of the styles of the Qur'ān is that the mode of context, situation, nature and temperament of the addressee has been carefully rendered. That's why its every chapter differs according to its theme and context.

Different parts of the story of Ibrāhīm have been mentioned in different chapters of the Qur'ān, and everywhere some additions and omissions have been made or some differences happened according to the context, situation and theme. It is the common style of the Qur'ān that it mentions one story in different places but everywhere its condition changes and which is why it mentions of the parts of the story as much as it requires or suits and leaves unwanted details and proceeds so that the addressee may not indulge in unnecessary things and miss the main target. This style has been taken into account in the stories of Ibrāhīm and other messengers too. If one does not keep in view the above style, he may lose this difference and variation.

Due to not keeping in view the above said Qur'ānic style these Orientalists knowingly created this misunderstanding that the personality of Ibrāhīm has been clearly described in the Madani chapters while we do not find it in the Makkan chapters.

It is also not correct and worthy of reason that the Makkan chapters neither explain the relation of Ibrāhīm to the Ka'bah

and Ismā'īl nor he was called as the preacher of Ibrāhīmi faith and as the sincere Muslim. There is one chapter in the Qur'ān which was named after him and it is not but Makkan chapter but these Orientalists did not mention the chapter of Ibrāhīm in their discussion. In this chapter one prayer of Ibrāhīm has been mentioned which highlights the following aspects of his personality:

1. Ibrāhīm prays to Allah to make Makkah as the peaceful land. The same has been mentioned in the chapter of al-Baqarah which is a Madanī chapter. Allah says:

"رَبِّ اجْعَلْ هَذَا الْبَلَدَ آمِنًا"¹.

Tr.: O my Lord: Make this city peaceful.

2. He implores Allah to keep him and his generation away from polytheism and idol-worship. The same has been mentioned in the chapter of al-Ḥajj which is a Madanī chapter:

"وَأَجْنُبْنِي وَبَنِيَّ أَنْ نَعْبُدَ الْأَصْنَامَ"².

Tr.: And keep me and my son away from worshiping idols.

3. Ibrāhīm mentions to make his son Ismā'īl inhabit in a desert and unfertile valley near the Ka'bah to worship Him, to slaughter for Him and to perform pilgrimage to His House. He also prays to Allah for the provision of their livelihood:

"رَبَّنَا إِنِّي أَسْكَنْتُ مِنْ ذُرِّيَّتِي بِوَادٍ غَيْرِ ذِي زَرْعٍ عِنْدَ بَيْتِكَ الْمُحَرَّمِ رَبَّنَا لِيُقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ

فَأَجْعَلْ آفِدَةً مِنَ النَّاسِ تَهْوِي إِلَيْهِمْ وَأَرْزُقْهُمْ مِنْ الثَّمَرَاتِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَشْكُرُونَ"³.

Tr.: O our Lord: I have made some of my offspring to dwell in an uncultivable valley by Your Sacred House in order, O our Lord!, that they may perform Ṣalāh. So fill some hearts

¹ Ibrāhīm: 35

² Ibrāhīm: 35

³ Ibrāhīm: 37

among men with love towards them, and provide them with fruits so that they may give thanks.

The same has been mentioned in al-Baqarah, Āl-i-Imrān and al-Ḥajj which are Madanī chapters.

4. Ibrāhīm praises Allah that He bestowed upon him two sons in his old age to complete his mission:

"الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي وَهَبَ لِي عَلَى الْكِبَرِ إِسْمَاعِيلَ وَإِسْحَاقَ إِنَّ رَبِّي لَسَمِيعُ الدُّعَاءِ ﴿٣٩﴾"¹

Tr.: All praise and thanks be to Allah Who has given me in old age Ismā'īl and Ishāq. Verily, my Lord is indeed the All-Hearer of invocation.

5. He prays to Allah to bestow upon him and his generation the guidance to establish Ṣalāh as the special sign of the Ibrāhīmi faith which was completely lost by the Jews while the Christians removed its spirit:

"رَبِّ اجْعَلْنِي مُقِيمَ الصَّلَاةِ وَمِنْ ذُرِّيَّتِي رَبَّنَا وَتَقَبَّلْ دُعَاءِ ﴿٤٠﴾"²

Tr.: O my Lord! Make me one who performs Ṣalāh, and (also) from my offspring, our Lord! And accept my invocation.

It is crystal clear from this discussion that the Makkan chapters have clearly mentioned the relation of Ibrāhīm to the Ka'bah and his son Ismā'īl. And avoiding to include the chapter of Ibrāhīm in the Makkan chapters, is a blunder and the worst academic deception.

Similarly, it is also not correct that Ibrāhīm's being sincere worshipper is only mentioned in Madanī chapters whereas the chapter of al-Naḥl is Makkan in which it came about him:

"إِبْرَاهِيمَ كَانَ أُمَّةً قَانِتًا لِلَّهِ حَنِيفًا وَلَمْ يَكُ مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ ﴿٣١﴾"³

Tr.: Verily, Ibrāhīm was an obedient leader to Allah sincere in worship, and he was not of the polytheists.

¹ Ibrāhīm: 39

² Ibrāhīm: 40

³ Al-Naḥl: 120

In the same chapter the Prophet Muḥammad and his followers have been advised to follow the path of Ibrāhīm:

"ثُمَّ أَوْحَيْنَا إِلَيْكَ أَنْ اتَّبِعْ مِلَّةَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ حَنِيفًا وَمَا كَانَ مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ ﴿١٢٢﴾"¹

Tr.: Then, We have sent the revelation to you "Follow the religion of Ibrāhīm who was sincere to worship Allah and he was not of the polytheists.

Among the Makkan chapters listed by these Orientalists is al-An'ām which is Makkan and in which it was mentioned that he was sincere worshipper of Allah and hated polytheism. He said:

"إِنِّي وَجَّهْتُ وَجْهِيَ لِلَّذِي فَطَرَ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ حَنِيفًا وَمَا أَنَا مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ ﴿٧٨﴾"²

Tr.: Verily, I have turned my face towards Him Who has created the heavens and the earth being sincere in worship of Allah, and I am not of the polytheists.

In another verse of this chapter it came:

"قُلْ إِنِّي هَدَانِي رَبِّي إِلَى صِرَاطٍ مُسْتَقِيمٍ دِينًا قِيمًا مِلَّةَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ حَنِيفًا"³

Tr.: Say, "Truly, my Lord has guided me to a straight path, a right religion, the religion of Ibrāhīm who was sincere in his worship of Allah.

It appeared from this detail that the difference between the styles of the Makkan and Madanī chapters of the Qur'ān is the result of their contexts and care for the nature of the addressees and we find in the Makkan chapters such aspects of the life and personality of Ibrāhīm that have been regarded as the distinctive feature of the Madani chapters by the Orientalists.

¹ Al-Naḥl: 122

² Al-An'ām: 79

³ Al-An'ām: 161

These Orientalists have also denied the relation of the Muslims, Arabs and Ismā'īl to Ibrāhīm while this matter is so clear that it does not need any proof and that it is not only proved by the Qur'ān and the sayings of the Arabs but also Torah mentions clearly that Ismā'īl who is the ancestor of the Arabs was the son of Ibrāhīm. He made his beloved son Ismā'īl and his mother Hājir inhabit at Bakkah (Makkah) and thus Ismā'īli Arabs were supposed to be brought up here who settled down in the land of al-Ḥijāz.

There are details of such things in the chapter of Genesis of the Torah. For instance, "Return to your mistress,¹ and submit to her, I will so greatly multiply your offspring that they cannot be counted for multitude". (The Genesis, 16/9-10)

The relation and sincere love Ibrāhīm had for Ismā'īl are also clear from the Torah. It says that when Ibrāhīm was given good tidings of the birth of Ishāq he was not happy as usual but even he said:

"Would that Ismā'īl live for you" (The Genesis, 18/17)

Then God said:

"And as for Ismā'īl, I have heard you: Behold, I have blessed him, and will make him fruitful, and will multiply him exceedingly; twelve princes shall he beget, and I will make him a great nation (The Genesis, 17/20)

Then it was mentioned that Sārah compelled Ibrāhīm to distance Ismā'īl and his mother (from him) thinking that Ismā'īl will be inherited by him so Ibrāhīm became grieved then God said:

¹ This is the translation of the translators of the Torah because the Children of Isrā'īl called Hājir as the slave girl of Sārah so they thought that they (Children of Isrā'īl) were prior to the Children of Ismā'īl. Here there is no suitable place for its refutation. Maulānā 'Ināyat Rasūl Chirayyākotī has written one book on this topic with the title of 'al-Nuṣūṣ al-Bāhirah fī Ḥurriyyat-i-Hājirah'.

“Do not be distressed because of the boy and because of your slave woman: whatever Sārah says to you, do as she tells you, for it is through Isaac that offspring shall be named for you. As for the son of the slave woman, I will make a nation of his also, because he is your offspring” (The Genesis, 21/12-13)

Then it mentioned their journey and their settlement in Arabia:

“So Abraham rose early in the morning, and took bread and a skin of water, and gave it to Hagar, putting it on her shoulder, along with the child, and sent her away. And she departed, and wandered about in the wilderness of Beer-sheba. When the water in the skin was gone, she cast the child under one of the bushes. Then she went and sat down opposite him a good way off about the distance of a bowshot: for she said, “Do not let me look on the death of the child”. And as she sat opposite him, she lifted up her voice and wept. And God heard the voice of the boy: and the angel of God called to Hagar from heaven, and said to her, “What troubles you, Hagar? Do not be afraid: for God has heard the voice of the boy where he is. Come lit up the boy and hold him fast with your hand, for I will make a great nation of him”. Then God opened her eyes and she was a well of water. She went, and filled the skin with water, and gave the boy a drink. God was with the boy, and he grew up: he lived in the wilderness, and became an expert with the bow. He lived in the wilderness of Paran: and his mother got a wife for him from the land of Egypt”. (The Genesis, 21/14-21)

After these clear explanations who dare to deny that Ismāʿīl was not the son of Ibrāhīm except that there is a clear contradiction between the above mentioned statements of the Qurʾān and Torah and that is that though the above mentioned statement of the Torah indicates that Ibrāhīm had love and passion for his son Ismāʿīl but in spite of that he looks

the cruelest father who drove his son and wife with a little provision of some breads and water-skin and deserted them in the desert of Fārān and did not remember to meet them while the Qur'ān says that he himself went to Makkah and settled his family to serve the Ka'bah.

But this is not suitable place to discuss this difference. Our intention here is merely to show that Ismā'īl was the son of Ibrāhīm, he and his mother were made inhabit by him in a desert and unfertile valley and he was dedicated to serve the Ka'bah, is proven by the Qur'ān and Torah.

We have discussed in the beginning that the Qur'ān and the Torah both indicate clearly to the increase in the generation of Ismā'īl. Here we want to clarify that the generation of Ismā'īl increased more than the generation of Ishāq. This is elaborated below:

Allah regarded the personality of Ibrāhīm as the fountain of grace. He was the heir of all heavenly books after Nūḥ. Allah says:

"إِنَّ اللَّهَ اصْطَفَىٰ آدَمَ وَنُوحًا وَآلَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَآلَ عِمْرَانَ عَلَى الْعَالَمِينَ ﴿٥١﴾"

Tr.: Allah chose Ādam, Nūḥ, the family of Ibrāhīm and the family of 'Imrān above the mankind.

Imām 'Abd-ul-Ḥamīd Farāhī writes:

"Āl-i-'Imrān are also included to the generation of Ibrāhīm. Thus perhaps Ibrāhīm was selected in the whole world for the grace and mercy of Allah to be blessed. Then it was promised to bestow grace upon the whole world through Ibrāhīm".²

The references of the Genesis of the Torah quoted above make clear that the promise of grace made by Allah with

¹ Āli 'Imrān: 33

² The Commentary of the Chapter of al-Kauthar by 'Abd-ul-Ḥamīd al-Farāhī

Ibrāhīm was fulfilled through his generation. Though this grace also spread through the generation of Ishāq too, its main reason was Ismā'īl and his generation. The birth of the Prophet Muḥammad among his generation was the result of this grace because he was sent in the land which was the fountain of all grace and Allah made him the heir of this land and the religion of Ibrāhīm too. Due to his arrival the promise of common grace for the world was fulfilled because his arrival was meant for the whole world:

"وما أرسلناك إلا كافة للناس بشيرًا ونذيرًا"¹

Tr.: And We have not sent you except as a giver of glad tidings and a warner to all mankind.

He was also destined to be boon for the whole world:

"وما أرسلناك إلا رحمة للعالمين"²

Tr.: And We have not sent you except as a mercy for the mankind.

It was also stated with reference to the scriptures of the Jews that the Children of Ismā'īl and the Children of Ishāq were separated only because when Allah bestowed upon Ibrāhīm Ismā'īl through Hājir, Sārah became zealous and resultantly she misbehaved with Hājir but she (Hājir) faced it bravely so Allah increased her. Sārah used to call her as slave girl and similarly the Children of Ishāq called the Children of Ismā'īl as slave boys while it is against the reality. The sons of Sārah were sold in Egypt through Isrā'īlis then they were arrested by the Persians, Egyptians and Romans and finally they were made slaves. In spite of that the sons of Hājir were never enslaved throughout their history.

¹ Saba': 28

² Al-Anbiyā': 107

It appears from the above characteristics of Children of Ismā'īl that they excelled the Children of Ishāq from every aspect and the Qur'ān and Torah the both point out clearly his relation with Ibrāhīm. And if we accept, for a while, that the Makkan chapters of the Qur'ān do not explain the relation of Ismā'īl with Ibrāhīm and being Ibrāhīm as the builder of the Ka'bah, then what would one say about the above explanations and evidences of the Torah?

Among the objections of these learned Orientalists was that no messenger was sent to the Arabs except Muḥammad bin 'Abdullāh (PBUH).

The verses of the Qur'ān they quoted in this regard their contexts were avoided so either they could not understand their meanings and styles or they did so knowingly otherwise apart from Ismā'īl and Muḥammad, Hūd, Ṣāliḥ and Shu'aib were also related to this area and the Qur'ān has given their details.

Contribution of non-Muslim Indian Scholars to the Qur'ānic Studies

✎...**Prof. Vazeer Hasan¹**

It is a matter of pride that a number of non-Muslim Indian scholars have not only paid the regard but also have proved their interest and inclination to acquaint themselves with the concepts and contents of the Qur'ān. Out of them some, being well informed, have dealt with various topics of this holy book and included its discussion in their respective works on different allied subjects and some, having profound knowledge have produced a complete work related to the Qur'ān, to be fair and impartial.

The main aim of this article has been to give an account of the books directly related to the Qur'ān, produced by non-Muslim Indian scholars so that the scholars may know specifically about those non-Muslim Indians who have shown their special interest in the Qur'ān to the extent of writing a book. It seems worthwhile to bring into proper focus separately the sufficient information as well as an assessment and evaluation of these books.

At this place it is worth mentioning that this work is restricted to covering only those books which have been produced with an honest intention; having academic approach and making efforts to strengthen the humanistic values in the society through the Qur'ān even though they have the difference of opinion. On the contrary the works produced to prove the Qur'ān inferior with a malign intention, and seem damaging to

¹ Professor, Department of Arabic, Banaras Hindu University, U.P. India

the purpose of integration of the society, have not been included in this work.

No doubt, the effort made by our non-Muslim Indian scholars encourages the spirit of knowing the religion of each other. This is a wonderful contribution to the secular tradition of India. Besides, the works produced by them may play a dynamic and creative role for natural understanding, particularly in the present situation. It is besides the point that these works have not been given as much attention as required, nevertheless their importance, cannot be ignored. Certainly this article will bring them into proper focus for a ready at hand information.

(a) Books and Pamphlets

1. Chandra Bali Pāndey, Qur'ān Mein Hindi:

(Hindi in the Qur'ān), Saraswati Mandir, Banāras, 1945, Pages: 59)

This book is in Hindi. The author asserts in the preface that through this work he has tried to exhibit the relations between Prophet Muḥammad (PBUH) and the people of this land i.e. India. In his opinion it is quite necessary to be acquainted with the favorable points of agreement between our religious book and the Qur'ān, as well as to see to what extent they disagree with each other. According to the author, this was the principal objective of writing this book. Actually this is an attempt to bring Hindus and Muslims closer.

The author quotes Sayyid Sulaimān Nadwī's statement regarding three Hindi words i.e. Musk, Camphor, and Ginger which find place in the Qur'ān. Then he informs that there are many other words in the Qur'ān, whose roots are Sanskrit and which have been used in Sanskrit books Shrūtī or the

Upnishad; e.g. he argues the word 'Taubah' (Repentance) in the Qur'ān is analogous with the word 'Ashwattha Soma Sawnahu' in Chandogopnished; and the word 'Namariq' in the Qur'ān (the cloth spread over the carpet) is the transformation of Sanskrit word 'Namra'; similarly the word 'Istabraq' (brocade) in the Qur'ān is similar to Sanskrit word 'Sthavir'. Thus he has produced the example of many other words he argues are Hindi words included in the Qur'ān.

The author has discussed extensively 'Dahr Vidya' and advocated that the 'Sūrah Dahr' in the Qur'ān is similar to 'Dahr Vidya' as described in the Upnishad. He admits that the meaning of 'Dahr' as described in Upnishad does not have similarity with the meaning of the word 'Dahr' in the Qur'ān, but he argues that both the books contain similar statement under the description of this word; therefore, it may be inferred that the word 'Dahr' used in the Qur'ān is similar to 'Dahr' of the Upnishad. In his support, the author has quoted the Sanskrit and Arabic scholars at appropriate places. In fact the author wants to explain that the Qur'ānic contents are based on the contents and discussions of the Upnishad. He has mentioned this point at several places. In other words he wants to suggest that the Qur'ān has nothing new but it has reproduced the contents of the Upnishad. He says that the masses among whom the Prophet of Arabia was to preach were different from the Indian masses. This as well as the difference of the circumstances, are the main factor responsible for the difference in the contents of both the books; otherwise the Qur'ān undoubtedly would have contained the same material for the Arabs as the Upnishad contains for India.

The description of 'Arsh' (Throne) in the Qur'ān and the word 'Asandi' used in the 'Shrūtī' have been discussed by the

author. He argues that the 'Asandi' is the Throne of Brahma, as mentioned in 'Atharva Veda' and 'Arsh' of the Qur'ān is similar to the word Asandi; because in both the books it is indicated that this throne has been lifted by eight persons. In support of this, the author has referred to the description of Indirā's joining of royal office, as included in the book 'Aitreya Brahman' as well as the 17th verse of Sūrah al-Ḥāqqah from the Hindi translation of the Qur'ān, translated by Khwājah Ḥasan Niẓāmī.

Mr. Pāndey fails to explain the word 'Kursī' (chair) in the Qur'ān but he tries to prove logically that the word 'Paryank' in Hindu scriptures may be analogous with the Qur'ānic word. Many contentions from the Hindu scriptures have been referred to in support of this argument.

Ultimately it has been claimed in this book that the contents of the Qur'ān have been actually taken from the Upanishad. In the support of this he discussed the word 'Maknūn' (Hidden) used in the 78th verse of Sūrah al-Wāqī'ah of the Qur'ān. Referring to the argument of Dārā Shikoh, he refutes the explanation given by Muslim scholar that the hidden book (Kitāb-i-Maknūn) means *Lauh-i-Mahfūz* (A tablet preserved).

At the last the author asserts that the description of the Upanishad and the name of some Indian tribes also find place in the Ḥadīth literature i.e. traditions (the sayings of the Prophet). He has produced the arguments given by the Hindu and Muslim scholars to clarify the technicalities of the subject.

The language used in this book is not powerful and has a lack of flow. The title of the book gives the impression that the author is talking about the usage of Hindi language in the Qur'ān; he even starts the book in the same style, but after a while he discusses the similarity of the Qur'ānic description

and thought with that of the Upanishad and ultimately he projects the Upanishad as a source of the Qur'ān. Though his claim and arguments have not been so powerfully presented as to be accepted fully, nevertheless, he has succeeded to some extent in indicating the similarity of some words and some thinking in both the religions i.e. Hinduism and Islam.

2. Pandit Sunder Lāl, The Gītā and the Qur'ān:

(Institute of Indo-Middle East Cultural Studies, Hyderabad, 1957, Pages: 146)

This book was written basically in Hindi by Pandit Sunderlāl, and was rendered into English later on by Sayyid Asadullāh. In this book the author has epitomized the essential teachings of the Gītā as well as the Qur'ān, besides, attempt has been made to show how closely they resemble each other in their basic teachings. This has been actually a noble attempt to develop cordial relations between two different cultural units and to point the way to the universal outlook on life among mankind.

The purpose of the English rendering seems to reach a wider readership as well as brings parallelism of the two books into increasing focus. In all the seven chapters of this book, the author has succinctly covered the introduction, the religion and the essence of the Gīta and the Qur'ān.

Pandit Sunderlāl begins with the forceful arguments that all religions are at the base but one. He points out that anything which keeps society together or prevents disintegration is *dharma*. In order to strengthen his arguments he has quoted the excerpts from the Gīta, the Qur'ān and the Prophetic traditions. He wants to restore the religion to its original form, the form which guides the straight path. He is of the view that to keep mankind on the straight path, all religions of the world

have enjoyed the belief in one supreme God. He asserts that there has been no force stronger than religion which could bind the hearts of man, because at least the praise of God has been flashed in the books of all the major religions. He has derived some words of parallel meaning from the Qur'ān and the Rigveda concerning the praise of God.

The author, Pandit Sunderlāl, has discussed the circumstances in which both the books were delivered. He has dealt with the identify of principles which both the books have propounded making illustrations from the Qur'ān, the Gīta as well as other works held in high regard in Hinduism and Islam respectively; and also quoted from the sayings and writings of saints and seers, Bhakts and Sufis to establish the basic oneness between the two religions. The topics of description range from the concept of Iswara, the Divine attributes, rebirth, Prophets, service of others, prevention from evil desires and self realization to the Yoga or Sulūk.

The author has produced the passages from the writing of the great spiritual men to show what great part they have played in bringing happiness to society. These passages will give to the reader an idea of the chains with which evil customs have bound man and how they should be cut asunder. The great men who have inspired Pandit Sunderlāl and whose passages have been referred to by him are Kabīr, Dāwūd, Guru Nānak, and Guru Govind; besides, the passages from the Vedas and the Bible, and the sayings of the Chinese scholar Kung Futze and Lord Buddha have also been produced.

Pandit Sunderlāl has produced at length the discussion considering the Gītā as the highly regarded book of Hindu religion, probably the oldest religion in the world; but the fact stands that among the scriptures available today, the Rigveda

is the oldest and held in the highest esteem. The Upanishads are considered as the concluding portions as well as the cream of the Vedas and are, therefore, rightly called Vedanta. In fact the Upanishads are not intelligible to the common reader, only scholars can understand them. And next to the Upanishads, the most popular book with the Hindus is the Srimad Bhagvad Gītā. This is one of the imperishable works of the world.

There has always been a chain of conflict in the history of man. Religion comes in to prevent this conflict furnishing a code of morals for man. So far as the Gītā is concerned critics have doubted its prolongation but ultimately it has been considered that the entire picture of the war is an allegory portraying the eternal conflict in the mind of man between good and evil.

Under the title of the Religion of Gītā, Pandit Sundarlāl has furnished chapter-wise discussions. The first chapter consists of the pleading of Arjuna for not fighting with Kauravas. The second chapter contains Shri Krishnā's reply, who tries at first to dispel Arjunā's fears by telling him that they did not deserve to be entertained seriously, and then Shri Krishnā described the philosophy of life in detail. Again Arjun is confronted with another question. He asks himself why should he not renounce the world when he has to suppress himself in order to achieve salvation. In reply to this query, an explanation has been offered in the third chapter. In the fourth chapter it has been stated that whenever people forget the true faith and take false faiths as true and adopt them, great souls are born who once again show the path of true faith. In the fifth chapter, Arjunā repeats the same question. He asks which one of the two ways is better, the way of the recluse who depends upon his own wisdom for his guidance, or that of the one who performs all worldly duties and strives to seek the

welfare of his soul. In reply to the above, the Gītā states that both the paths adopted by man are in essence one and the same, and it therefore tries to reconcile the one with the other. In the sixth chapter once again *Sankhyā* and *Karmā* have been shown as one. To those who want to know *Parameshwarā*, it has been explained in the seventh chapter that He is found everywhere and in each and everything. Besides, the difference between *Parmeshwarā* and demi-gods has also been indicated. Stress is laid in this chapter on the worship of one God, *Parmeshwarā* or Allah. Chapter eight contains the arguments that it is *Parmeshwarā* who has such a vision that one should worship it. In the beginning of the ninth chapter, it is said that the secret of ultimate Reality is that he alone can comprehend it who hates none. And it is only such kind of man who can sustain *Dharmā* in his life. In the tenth and eleventh chapters an attempt has been made to give an idea of *Permeshwarā* who is Reality, before whom everything else is unreal, who is free from the limitations of personality, and personal individuality, who is above duality and separatism, who is beyond the human vision, who pervades the entire universe, who is intelligible only through his countless manifestations and who is all embracing. In the twelfth chapter which is captioned *Bhakti Yogā*, Arjunā once again takes up the question whether the devotee who worships *Permeshwarā's* attributes represented by various deities is better than the one who adores Him in His absolute state of the imperishable unmanifest. Gītā's reply is the subject matter of this chapter. The thirteenth chapter of the Gītā is most philosophical in its treatment. The name of Vedāntā Sāstrā (Brahmā Sutrā) appears in the Gītā only once and it is in this chapter alone that the same is mentioned in it. In chapter fourteen a description is given of three Gunas (attributes) – Sattwā (Peace), Rajas (motion), and Tamas (laziness). In chapter fifteen the world is compared with the *pīpal* tree. Chapter sixteen

classifies men under two different categories, viz. *Daivi Sampat* (the divine) and *Asuri Sampat* (the demoniac). The divine lot leads to the release of the soul and the demoniac to bondage. In chapter seventeen Arjunā once again puts a question that: what do you think of those person who offer sacrifices to God in accordance with their own personal conviction without following the instructions of the scriptures? Shrī Krishnā's reply is the subject matter of this chapter. In chapter eighteen i.e. the last chapter of the section 'Gītā' of this book, the outward show of the observance of rituals is exposed.

The last portion of this section embodies a brief description of the essence of the Gītā.

In the second part of the book, Pandit Sunderlāl has dealt with the Qur'ān in the same style as he has done in the section of Gītā. This section begins with a brief introduction of the Qur'ān.

Pandit Sunderlāl says that the literary meaning of the Qur'ān is 'that which is announced or read out'. In fact the Qur'ān calls each of the scriptures delivered before it as Qur'ān. The sayings of the Prophet and the first-hand accounts of his work are called Ḥadīth. The style of the Qur'ān, as regarded unanimously by the Arab and non-Arab scholars is exalted, highly melodious and sweet but the manners of reciting the Qur'ān are as diverse as the manners of reciting the Vedas.

The author has produced a fleeting view of the state of affairs among the Arabs when the Qur'ān came to be delivered among them. A number of vices were prevalent, besides, usury was also rampant in the Arab land. The Qur'ān rooted out the Arab life a good number of their poisonous vices such as drunkenness, gambling, usury, and the burying alive of female children.

Under the title, "The Qur'ān and its Teaching", the author begins with the opening verses of the Qur'ān and then describes the basic doctrines of Islam. He has produced the Qur'ānic verses under the headings, "The Praise of God", "Mankind but One Community", "Message of Divine Unity delivered to all", "No Compulsion in Religion", "God is all-Pervading", "Prophet Muḥammad and Miracles", "Permission to take up arms", "Propagation of Faith", "Doing Good to Others", "Return Good for Evil", "Concerning Women", "Jihād", "The Life hereafter", and in the end he has produced some more Qur'ānic verses of his own choice. The book has been concluded with a short information regarding the basic principles of Islam and its teachings.

This work of Pandit Sunderlāl has a high value not only for producing an account of comparative and parallel elements in the Gītā and the Qur'ān but also for clearing the many misconceptions prevalent in Hindu society regarding the Qur'ānic teachings, like forcible conversion or the order to kill Hindus wherever it be possible easily. He has given the real meaning of Jihād.

The reader is certainly impressed by the two-fold work of the author, 'The Gītā and The Qur'ān'. The author emerges as secular and independent in his approach to the subject highly significant to the existing milieu of the nation. The translation has not impaired the lucidity of the original work.

3. Vinobā Bhāve, the Essence of Qur'ān:

(Akhil Bhārat Sevā Sangh, Vārānasī, 1962, Pages: 255)

Achārya Vinobā Bhāve studied the Qur'ān for twenty five years and then he decided to compile a book, 'The Essence of Qur'ān', a valuable addition to the spiritual lore of humanity. The selections have been made from the original Arabic. The

English rendering is adopted from the 'Glorious Qur'ān' by Mr. Muḥammad Mārmāduke Pickthāll. Vinobaji has grouped these verses under appropriate captions to highlight the message of the Qur'ān. Originally he gave these headings in Marāthī, his mother-tongue, which have subsequently been translated into English by some other person. His object behind its compilation is, as stated by Shrī Vinoba himself in his foreword, 'to unite the hearts of men'.

The book consists of nine parts, each part contains various topics. The first part begins with the opening verses of the Qur'ān, then an introduction of the Qur'ān has been made referring to various Qur'ānic verses. The second part related to God. It contains the concepts of the Unity of God and negation of polytheism by virtue of the Qur'ānic verses. Besides, the nature of God has been described as God been Light, the Omniscient and the Merciful. The verses regarding the gifts of God, God as Creator of the universe, the beauty manifests in God's creation, Sign of God etc, have been produced. Another attribute of God, which has been referred by Vinobaji, is that God is Omnipotent, the Powerful, the Master of supreme Will and inexpressibly Great. The verses regarding the remembrance of God, revelation, and prayer have also been collected by Vinobaji.

Part three of the book deals with devotion. The subjects included in this part are, an exhortation for prayer, worship of God by the whole creation, conviction, sacrifice & dedication, test & assurance and patience. The other things which he has preferred to produce are the company of the righteous, the cognition of manifested existence as transient and dispassion.

Part four covers under various headings the description of the devotee and the unbeliever, the characteristics of devotee

and characteristic of unbeliever through the Qur'ānic verses. Part five has been devoted to the religious faith. The verses related to religious principles, religious tolerance, rites and rituals have been referred to in this part. Part six consists of the moral disciplines. It covers the commandments regarding the discrimination between the real and unreal, the truthful, graceful speech, non-slandering, justice, creed of non-violence, sense of togetherness, and non-cooperation with evil. Control over the palate, chastity, honest livelihood, charity, ethical teachings, moral advice and good conduct are the subjects of special interest to Vinobaji, and the Qur'ānic verses concerning these topics have been referred to in detail. Besides, man and his nature have been regarded of so much significance by Vinobaji that a full part i.e. part seven of this book has been devoted to this subject.

Part eight includes the statements regarding the apostles. A general characteristic of the apostles as well as the special features regarding Noah, Abraham, Moses and Jesus Christ have been mentioned. Besides, a detailed description regarding Prophet Muḥammad, through the Qur'ānic verses, is also an important portion of this part.

The last chapter i.e. chapter nine contains the initiation into the mysteries. It has various topics like the philosophy of the world, the individual and the inner sanctuary of soul, law of causation, law of cause and effect, the theory that the effect of action does not cease even after death, and life after death.

Vinobā Bhāve does not mention any explanation of the Qur'ānic verses mentioned by him. Actually he has tried to produce the Qur'ānic ideas that have appealed to his intellect and have been regarded by him so beneficial that they must be known by everyone. Besides, he has tried to highlight the

message and the teachings of the Qur'ān so that peace and cordiality could be maintained, which is of the most important requirements for the integrity of the nation.

4. Bandi Sreenivas Rao, Christ in the Qur'ān and Bible:

(Bandi Brothers, Godāvary, 1975)

This study is an attempt to prove the veracity of the Christian religion through the Qur'ān as the author himself has stated that, 'my idea in attempting this short study is to enlighten those who do not know the Qur'ān and its close relationship with the Bible, and the reason why the Qur'ān was revealed to the Prophet Muḥammad (PBUH) when there is the Bible, a previous revelation of God, in existence'.

The author has described the Qur'ān view of Unity of Allah and after that he has furnished the view of Trinity as described in the Bible and many other scriptures. He regards the Bible's view as true as it has got support even by the Qur'ān. He says that, 'the Qur'ān declares the Taurāt as a revelation sent down by God to Moses'. Are we to believe in the Taurāt or not? Let us see the Injīl which was sent to the Messiah (who is designated as the word of God) 'Kalimatullāh'. The Qur'ān strictly declares that those who disregard the words of Jesus shall come before God on the Day of Judgment. (The Bible's view of Trinity cannot be proved true in the light of the Qur'ān).

Bandi Sreenivasa Rao admits that Islam has many aspects common with the Christian faith and that the Qur'ān also is a revelation. He has produced a number of verses from the Qur'ān to prove the validity of the Bible, as to whether it was written with the knowledge and wisdom of the authors or by revelation of God (Allah). Similarly, he has produced the Qur'ānic verses in support of the fact that the Taurāt of Moses, the Zabūr of David, the Ṣaḥā'if-e-Ambiyā (Writings

of the Prophets) are the revelations of God. Besides, the author has raised a question that the whole previous revelations of God are already existing, why the Qur'ān was revealed on Muḥammad; answering this he has produced a number of Qur'ānic verses in order to throw much more light on the subject. He infers that the Qur'ān was revealed to the Prophet in order to confirm the previous revelations as true and valid.

It is also argued by the author that the Qur'ān gave discerning power to man in order to distinguish between bad and good, so he who commits wicked deeds is responsible for his sins. God knows everything, angels know, to some extent, what will happen to man. Even before the creation of man the angels predicted that man will go astray. So God is not responsible for the sin of man.

A considerable portion of the book has been devoted to introduce Jesus Christ and that he will come again. The author concludes the book by producing a list of the chapters (Sūrahs) of the Qur'ān.

Though the purpose of the book has been merely to introduce Christianity as a true religion by virtue of the Qur'ānic verses, the discussion itself discloses and focuses upon many other Qur'ānic theories. The knowledge of the author regarding the Qur'ān is appreciable. (Christianity as it exists today with its concept of Trinity cannot be proved a true religion in the light of the Qur'ān).

5. Maganlāl A. Buch, Ethics of the Korān:

(published by the author himself from Baroda in 1977,
Pages: 129)

The author has a long experience of writing books on various religious topics. Besides the book under evaluation, he has

produced 'Zoroastrian Ethics', 'The Spirit of Ancient Hindu Culture', 'The Philosophy of Shankara' and 'The Principles of Hindu Ethics'.

This book begins with a foreword written by M.A. Buch, the author of this book. In this forward he discloses that this work is based on the English version of the Qur'ān. The sole object to write this book, as he describes, is to understand the true essentials of the creed of Islam. The author declares that he agrees with all the fundamentals of all the Muslim beliefs. In his words, "I therefore, make bold to make the results of my labor public with the explicit view that the Hindus will honestly try to understand the spirit of Islam and appreciate the remarkable harmony of the Korānic doctrine with the one with which they are so familiar in their own Shāstras."

This book consists of two parts. The first part describes the philosophical aspects of the Qur'ān. It relates the existence and Unity of God and describes the advantage of this Qur'ānic principle. This has been reckoned as the central thesis of the Qur'ān around which it turns all its various thoughts and teachings. Besides, the spiritual nature of God has also been explained referring to the Qur'ānic verses particularly His Personal character. The next items which have been dealt with in this part are the Qur'ānic instructions regarding the prayers and pilgrimage, the importance of fasting etc. the Qur'ānic philosophy of 'Believe and do right' has also been elaborated upon giving quotations from the Qur'ān, and it has been realized that the most powerful sanction in the ethics of the Qur'ān is the love or fear of God. It emphasizes the purity of intention and shows that because of this, a man who sincerely believes in God and the sacred teachings is a truer Muslim than the man who may be outwardly moral, but who

has no faith in the existence of God. A person who does not have faith in the existence of God is not a Muslim at all.

Revelation has also been described and the references have been made to the Qur'ān to prove that the Qur'ān is a revealed book and every Muslim has to have faith in the Prophet sent by God and the books revealed to them. Besides, they should have faith that the destinies of men are entirely in God's hands and that the universe is not governed by chance but by its own laws. It is one of the laws of this universe that good actions are followed by good results and evil ones by evil consequences.

The doctrine of reward and punishment, repentance, belief, the life hereafter, the Day of Judgment, are the other conceptual items presented by the author in the first part of his book.

The second part contains seven sub sections. The first section is concerned with the doctrines related to the aspect of practical life. It relates the doctrine of the golden mean which covers the condemnation of excessive indulgence of physical pleasure. So the worship of wealth or institution of interest is prohibited in the Qur'ān, and a formula has been framed that all good things of life are good when they are accepted as symbols of God's favour.

The emotional aspect has also been discussed and it is mentioned that a certain measure of self-control is absolutely necessary for preserving one's equanimity of mind. Enjoyment of anything as such is not evil. The Qur'ān fully grants the legitimacy of pleasures within certain well marked limits.

The significance of the dignity of labour and the importance to keep patience have also been proved through the Qur'ānic verses.

The next sub section of the second part is related to human conduct; and the codes related to truthfulness, hypocrisy,

fidelity of engagements, fulfillment of promises, payment of debt, theft and robbery etc, have been extracted from the Qur'ān. Besides, the rights of property and the matters related to the distribution of property also find place in this part.

Justice and its process, the Qur'ānic evidence regarding the theocratic system of government, a responsible administration etc. have been discussed at length.

The third section of the second part is concerned with the individual life. The laws of marriage, its object, duties of wife and husband, remarriage of widows, the ethics of marriage and the values of marital life are the part of this section.

The forth sub section of the second part of this book contains the material regarding the humanistic aspect of life. How to treat parents, children, wife and other persons of society is the subject matter of this part.

The fifth sub section of the second part is related to the educational and cultural aspect of the Qur'ān and the sixth sub section explains the Muslims' attitude towards the infidels, which is, in general, characterized by tolerance. The author has pointed out the fact that the situation may be changed when the infidels are active antagonists of the faithful and a source of oppression to them or when the circumstances of adverse nature emerge and the holy war or Jihād becomes inevitable. The conditions and the ethics of war have been described at length. The concluding seventh sub section explains the two forces working in this world e.g. the power of God and the force of Saitan. So the persons who are attached to God can be highly moral and can control their activities with His commandments. This part emphasizes the need of charity, courtesy, humility etc. and says that all forms of ill-will such as malice, slander, intriguing are hateful to the Muslims; that there is no meaning in

belief or piety if it is divorced from humanity to the poor. The Qur'ān has directed the Muslims to avoid carefully extravagance as well as stinginess. Above all what is the most important thing is the motive behind all these activities, which the Qur'ān says, should be the love of Allah. The author has relevantly opined in this part about one more well-known theory i.e. Ahimsa. He says that the doctrine of Ahimsa in a modified form is an essential part of the teaching of the Koran. He gives many examples from the Qur'ān to prove many aspects of Ahimsa.

This book manifests the deep knowledge of the author related to the ethical teachings of the Qur'ān. He has made a valuable effort to highlight faithfully almost each and every ethical principle concerning human beings. This covers not only the ethics of practices but the ethics and philosophy also of the faith which can bring man closer to his creator as well as lead him towards a successful life. The thing which can be highly appreciated is that every item has been recorded with such a confidence and with a number of suitable references of the Qur'ānic verses that there is no place of any kind of doubt or ambiguity in understanding the ideas that the author wants to express. In fact this book provides not only the Qur'ānic ethics but a complete information and an exact message of Islam.

In the foreword of the book the author has declared that he agrees with all the moral and ethical teachings of the Qur'ān; may be this is the reason why he does not make any arguments or any evaluation or word of appreciation during the recording of the rules. He mentions only the rules or the teachings embodied in the Qur'ān and produces the Qur'ānic verses abundantly. Sometimes it seems that the author wants to record only the Qur'ānic verses and has given a minor direction only to indicate what subject these particular verses cover.

In spite of that, his fine thinking about the psychological aspect of each and every area of human life cannot be ignored. There may be some shortcomings in style to present the things effectively but the author has maintained the interest of the reader and the content is complete in all respects.

It is a general perception that this kind of books does not have the critical analysis. The reason may be two-fold. The first is that the Qur'ānic ideas and its verses are so perfect in themselves that an honest author does not find room to produce a criticism of it; and the second reason is that if anybody has something in his mind to say critically he does not dare to do so to prevent himself from being the subject of criticism. With this author the second possibility does not seem applicable for he is highly influenced by the Qur'ānic ethics.

The author has tried to incorporate certain special features like Ahimsa and attempted to justify the behavior with the infidels or the killings of animals if it is done for the sake of Allah in the love of Allah.

The author has quoted the English version of the Qur'ānic verses but he has failed to produce the exact reference of the same, and put only the number of the Sūrah i.e. chapter, while he should have produced also the number of verses so that a reader can approach easily the same verse in the original text of the Qur'ān.

Certainly, this kind of book will serve not only the Muslims who are already acquainted with all these directly from the Qur'ān or from the books of their religious studies which are generally imparted to every Muslim, but it will serve the entire nation in particular and even the entire world in general. In this sense this book is a great service of the author to the world and humanity.

6. R.B.Harishchandra, Khudā-Qur'ānic Philosophy:

(published by Parichaya Overseas, Rita Press, New Delhi, 1979, Pages: 77)

This work, as the author claims, is an outcome of long hours of labour devoted to philosophical thinking sustained by love for the Almighty Khudā. R.B. Harishchandra presents the most philosophical survey of the various Qur'ānic concepts. He discusses the creation of the soul, the nature of Allah, wisdom, knowledge, Unity of Allah, His attributes etc. and examines all these topics through his personal free thinking, besides, he has referred to a large number of Qur'ānic verses in the support of his observations.

The author believes that according to the Qur'ān everything whether mental or material is part of God or as the Qur'ān says 'belongs to God'. Out of His grace Allah spreads his volition out and creates other beings endowed with a finite portion of His infinite will. Besides, the author nullifies the idea of static God and proves Him as ever active. Talking about the wisdom he tells that the beginning of all wisdom is the education of self and its end is self-realization. Besides, he has tried to argue that the different stages of the creation of a human being is just same as the theory of evolution of man.

R.B. Harishchandra is of the view that man, at the time of birth, has no real knowledge either of the universe or of himself. He has the capacity to acquire knowledge, and it is the last thing coming through the last senses. So it is knowledge through which a man can know the laws of God and be prepared to meet them. Regarding the soul he propounds the idea that souls are not brought into existence as perfect beings or as independent 'monads' but each comes into being with a history and heredity

which is its own, and each soul has the gift of God-the gift of choice or freedom within limits. Therefore man is responsible for his behaviour during hours of conscious exertion. It is the soul that tastes death not the body. Death means stoppage of activity, of consciousness, of self movement, of will. One more interesting idea which Harishchandra has formed is, that the sun is the immediate source of life and the matter in the solar system. The soul itself was sleeping for acons in the sun till the earth separated from it and cooled down sufficiently for water to form and life to appear on this earth.

With reference to the Unity of Allah the author enlightens us with his view. He says that the Reality is one and the Qur'ān calls it by the pronoun 'Hua' or 'He'. All the verses in the Qur'ān referring to this existence begin with this 'Hua' or 'He'. So for as His recognition is concerned man is always found of conceiving God after his own image and thus lands himself in trouble from which there is no escape. Regarding the Unity of Allah Harishchandra's idea is quite different to the spirit of the Qur'ānic monotheism. He argues about God's volition that it means God releases so much of His will to expand itself that unity divided by itself remains unity.

R.B. Harishchandra is convinced that man has been given the liberty of choice. Man has many falls and many rises and each fall and each rise is in proportion to his faith in the goodness of God working through his own soul.

Defining the word 'Rabbul 'Ālamīn' he maintains that 'Ālam' means all that which is cognized. The word 'Ālamīn' is plural, it not only refers to many stellar and nebular universes but the universe of the mind which is a universe by itself. In fact, each reality cognized by the mind of man is a world or universe. The word 'Rabb' means the vital principle. Thus the whole

universe and each part thereof has its vital principle supplied therewith which accompanies it to its term or duration.

Man has been given Benevolence, which means the gift of choice; the choice of how he is going to dispose of the free services of all created things. Besides, God has given man the gift of becoming conscious of His own being. Is man going to become conscious of God or is he going to deny Him. Man has the choice. But angels and devils have not understood it. The devils are openly hostile and the angels have been obliged by God to serve man; “be ready to bow down to him”.

Defending the Qur’ān against the accusation that the Qur’ān is a rigid system and not suitable for all nations, the author says, the Qur’ān is suitable to all times and all people; to all stages of civilization and to all individuals highly civilized and less highly civilized. This is specially so with regard to morality. Those who assert to the contrary have not given due attention to the philosophy of the Qur’ān. The philosophy of the Qur’ān is entirely rational. Its ethics are based on the sound principle that everything that is injurious to human welfare is immoral.

The philosopher of the Qur’ān does not say this philosophy applies only to his faith and not to his occupations. His principle of life and death; his eating and drinking; his working and playing, his domestic life and public service; his private conversations and public utterances; his borrowing, and healings; his helping others and being helped by them are all part of reality. He does not boast of his possessions for they are part of the Real; he does not despair on account of his losses for he has nothing to lose except the choice given to him by God.

The author has concluded the book by giving Qur’ānic passages which are meant for the disclosure of the various attributes of Allah so that the intuitive vision of Reality can be developed. He

invites the personal comment and opinion of the reader with a remark that it is the rain of God's blessings. Let each one drink of its pure water of spiritual blessings and be satisfied.

As the Qur'ānic verses referred to by the author do not bear the indication of the serial number and the chapter to which they belong, it creates difficulty in searching out their actual place in the Qur'ān. The English translations of the Qur'ān the author has consulted are of the Palmer and Sales.

In short, it can be said that this book is actually a free thinking on the Qur'ān without any deep and careful study of the actual theme that the Qur'ān itself aims at to relay. The author seems influenced with the Vedantic Philosophy and he has probably made an effort to search the same also in the Qur'ān, but being extremely influenced with many good concepts and with the contents of the Qur'ān, he has preferred to collect these verses in the end of his book without comment, which shows his agreement with all these Qur'ānic ideas.

7. Mukundan, Congruencies of Fundamentals in the Qur'ān and Bhagvat Gītā:

(Samkālīn Prakāshan, New Delhi, 1990, Pages: 42)

This book, as appears from its title, has been produced to bring into focus the similarity of the basic principle laid down by the Qur'ān and the Gītā. The fact reveals from this work that both the books i.e. the Gītā and the Qur'ān intend to establish religion on a footing for the protection of the virtuous, for destruction of the evil-doers and for restoring order and peace in the society. The fundamental principles of religion and ethics provided by these two books are quite similar in all respects.

The author has produced a detailed description of the specific points of similarity. He asserts that the similarity between

both the books extends on a larger scale as most of the verses of the Qur'ān were preached under similar circumstances in which the Gītā was preached. The Unity of God, the concept of soul, the ways of salvation, creation, death, the world hereafter, doomsday etc. are some of the important topics which have parallelism in some respect or the other. For instance, laying stress on the oneness of the supreme worshipable deity Lord Shrī Krishnā announces in the Gītā, 'Casting away all religions, seek refuge in God alone'; and the Qur'ān also says the same thing by declaring- 'your God is one God, there is no God save Him, the Beneficent, the Merciful'. Thus, a detailed description of the points of agreement has been furnished by the author.

Actually, in the changing atmosphere while religion is being demanded to maintain order in the society, this kind of work seems extremely required. The author has done really an appreciable task, and he seems fully conscious of the problem of the present age, which has resulted in the work of this nature.

8. O.P. Ghai, Selection from the Qur'ān:

(Institute of Personal Development, Sterling Publishers, New Delhi, 1992)

The book begins with a foreword written by Prof. Rashīduddīn Khān, Prof. Khān explains the importance of religious and philosophical thinking and focuses the requirements of its study, He says, "For the promotion of enlightenment in contemporary Society, a study not merely of contemporary knowledge is adequate, but a critical and rational study of the classics of religion, philosophy, science and literature is imperative".

He emphasizes the requirements of scientific interpretation and of the religious traditions in order to fulfill the changing climate of the world society. Prof. Rashīduddīn Khān stresses

the need of mutual understanding and mutual appraisal of the varied religious and cultural traditions particularly for India, which have a history of the composite culture based on humanity, in the form of Bhaktī and Sufi movements. He further says that in India, religion can be used for maintenance of either unity or diversity and very often it is being used for political motives, whatever aspect of it is needed by politicians at a particular time.

Prof. Khān appreciates the contribution of the author of this book Mr. O.P. Ghai, who in spite of the critical circumstances has attempted to write the books on many religious scriptures of the world, He praises him specifically for rendering the selections of the Qur'ānic verses into simple English which is very useful for common readers.

Prof. Rashīduddīn Khān has also furnished a brief information of the contribution that the early Muslims extended in the field of science and humanities; then he describes the role of Islam towards human liberty. He says, "It is now commonly realized that two values have been continuously emphasized in the Qur'ān, namely the value of 'Adl' (Justice) and 'Ilm' (knowledge)... And it is instructive to note that while 250 verses of the Qur'ān deal with the question of law and justice, some 750 verses, almost one eighth of the entire book focus attention on knowledge". In continuation, to emphasize the necessity of knowledge, about six saying of the Prophet Muḥammad (PBUH) have also been furnished by him.

The foreword has been concluded with the hope that this work of Mr. O.P. Ghai would develop a sense of unity and a better understanding of the Qur'ān among the common masses.

The foreword is followed by a note of Prof. S.A. 'Alī, Director, Institute of Islamic Studies, Hamdard University, New Delhi.

He has admired the attempt of Mr. O.P. Ghai and says that “the selection carries with it a high degree of subjectivity, but Mr. Ghai has done the selection with such a way that the border line between subjectivity and objectivity has virtually disappeared”. He regards this work of Mr. Ghai as one of the best possible works on this line.

A preface has been furnished by Mr. O.P. Ghai, the compiler, editor and transcreator of this book. He discloses in it: while he was a student in 1930, since then he has interest in sacred writings. In 1940 he was given by his friend a book viz. Selections from the Holy Qur’ān by Maulānā Muḥammad ‘Alī; This created an urge in him to study the whole Qur’ān. During the course of time Mr. Ghai read many books regarding various religions and then he started writing on religion. His first book “Unity in Diversity”, as he asserts, is a guide to the underlying principles of ethics and morals of the great religions of the world. This book has already been published in thirteen Indian and foreign languages; and is under the process of publication in twelve more Indian and foreign languages including Braille. Being encouraged by this success he began working on a project of simplifying the scriptures, consequently, Bhagvad Gītā, The Japji and selections from the Qur’ān came into existence.

The original work begins with an introduction, in which a brief account of the life of Prophet Muḥammad (PBUH), and how he received the revelation from angel Gabriel has been produced.

The author has furnished also a table showing the order of revelation of the chapters of the Qur’ān (Sūrahs) with a remark that this order has a few differences of opinion among the established authorities.

Next, the author deals with the word “Islam” and its fundamentals in a couple of paragraphs. He says that, “The birth of the Qur’ān and the life of Muḥammad , the Prophet (PBUH), have influenced the lives of millions of people and according to the Muslim faith, both will continue to do so in even large number”. He produces five principles of Islam declaring them as Islamic pillars which have to be followed by every literate Muslim. The pillars are as under:

1. Faith in Allah and absolute submission of His will and the recognition of Muḥammad as the messenger of Allah.
2. Prayer, after proper ablution, five times a day. The first sūrah constitutes the essence of the Qur’ān and of every prayer.
3. Charity, giving a part of one’s income to help the poor and other worthy causes. The principle of charity is further extended to do good to parents, orphans, neighbors’ and strangers.
4. Fasting for the full month of Ramaḍān, daily from dawn to dusk. It is considered a sacred month as the first revelation is believed to have been received by the Prophet from Gabriel during this month.
5. Performance of Ḥajj- Pilgrimage to Mecca at least once in a life time, if possible.

Besides, he says, that use of wine and other intoxicating drinks and worship of images is forbidden. He has concluded the preface with his comment that, like many other religions, the Qur’ān accepts the reality of the unseen world of spiritual beings, recognizes the sublimity of Allah, His presence, and advocates ready resignation to His will.

Followed by the introduction, the author produced selected verses extracting from the first to 114th chapter of the Qur’ān.

The first chapter of the Qur’ān, the opening one; has been furnished entirely, and from the subsequent chapters highly

selected verses have been taken out. These verses are related to the functions of daily life and the general philosophy regarding the Creator's (Allah) existence, His unity, His attributes, justice, peace, love & compassion, equality, brotherhood etc.

At the end of the book a note entitled, "afterword" by Aṣḡhar 'Alī Engineer, a well known scholar of Islamism in modern India, has been produced; in which Aṣḡhar 'Alī laments about the rising communalism in India, and the conspiracy to portray Islam as a religion of aggression and fanaticism. He negates the charges and says that Islam like other religion contributes towards promotion of love, justice and peace. There are some verses in the Qur'ān which advocate retaliatory violence against the aggressive kuffār of Mecca and those Jews and Christians who collaborated with them. These verses should be seen in their historical context. Their applicability was strictly contextual, not normative, unlike what is often made out.

He appreciates Mr. O.P. Ghai's efforts and makes a remark that, 'Shrī Ghai's contribution is the most valuable in these days of religious and communal strife. This compilation should lead to a proper understanding of the Qur'ān. It will certainly promote interfaith peace and dialogue'.

In fact, this work of Mr. Ghai is a pious effort to put the Qur'ān in a nutshell. It was the need of the time which has been fulfilled by him. Really it was a tough job to select good from among the treasure where everything is good, but he has done it, keeping in view the existing busy life where a common man does not have ample time to go through entirely the Islamic scripture i.e. the Qur'ān. This book is capable of providing the things that should be known necessarily by all, and thus it is beyond doubt that this book has a great importance.

9. C.E. Mudirāj, Qur'ān Sharīf ki 'Azmat (The Greatness of the Qur'ān):

(Abul Kalām Āzād Oriental Research Institute, Hyderābād, n.d. Pages: 60)

This book is a collection of the Qur'ānic verses concerning various topics of the author's choice. The book has been compiled in Urdu. The author Mr. C.E. Mudirāj is a retired Engineer of South India.

In the preface of the book Mr. Mudirāj has expressed his remark regarding the Qur'ān. He says that the majority of the people are ignorant of the significance of its grandeur, for they have neither read the Qur'ān with discernment nor did they try to understand it with the purity and sincerity of heart, while the fact is that there has not been a single department of life or the mystery of the world which would not be enlightened by the study of the Qur'ān. The Qur'ān emphasized at various places the importance of thinking rationally with deep insight; and it leads the people towards making a judgment independently and it develops a sense of mediation; consequently the heart and soul both are enlightened. He further says, that the teachings of the Qur'ān are universal and do not concern only a particular group.

The book begins with the Qur'ānic verses related to the Creator i.e. Allah, under the title 'Ḥamd', the praise of God. After that the concept of Unity of Allah, his attributes, His power etc, have been dealt through Qur'ānic verses.

The next portion bears the title, "The codes under the light of the Qur'ān". It has three subtitles:

- i. Army codes
 - ii. Law codes
-

iii. Social welfare codes.

Under all the three codes, Qur'ānic verses giving information and revealing principles for that particular field have been quoted.

The book, as its title speaks, has been compiled in order to disclose the greatness of the Qur'ān, but the compiler has confined himself to covering only four topics. It seems that he regards these four topics i.e. the praise of Allah, Army codes, Law codes and social welfare codes enough to perceive the greatness of the Qur'ān. Besides, Mr. Mudirāj regards the Qur'ānic verses self explanatory and therefore, does produce any comment, remark or argument from his own side; nevertheless, this work may be appreciated, for besides the religious aspect it manifests the requirement of other departments of life too, and provides rules and regulations applicable during the time of war as well as of peace. In fact this kind of book has its own importance because of having a ready solution for the problems of daily life, and making man steadfast on the straight path of righteousness.

(b) Translations and Interpretations

As it is well-known that the Islamic world is predominantly non-Arab by every quantitative measure and all those multitudes possess the faith of the Qur'ān without native Arabic, and for the most part without Arabic at all, so their religious existence highly requires the Qur'ān to be translated. Besides, the translation has been made also for the reason of intelligent discussion by the persons having different religious faiths. Therefore, the Qur'ān has been translated into almost all the languages of the world.

India is also credited to have translations of the Qur'ān in many of its languages. Since this study restricts itself to

covering the works of non-Muslim Indians, therefore, the translations of the Qur'ān made by non-Muslim Indian scholars, whichever were accessible, are being focused on the following pages.

1. Translation of the Qur'ān by Satya Deoji:

This is the Hindi translation of the Qur'ān. The first part of this translation is of access in the library of Pandini Kanya Mahā Vidyālay, Vārānasī. It covers the opening verses of the Qur'ān i.e. Sūrat al-Fātiḥah, and some parts of the second chapter of the Qur'ān i.e. Sūrat al-Baqarah. The copy which is available is in decaying condition. The language used in this translation is easy and pure Hindi. This translation had been published from Tāra Yantrālaya, Banāras, in 1914.

2. Translation of the Qur'ān by Dr. Chilukūrī Narāyan Rāo. (1890-1951 A.D.):

This is a Telugu translation of the Qur'ān. Dr. Chilukūrī Narāyan Rāo, who was the originator of Telugu translation, translated the Qur'ān into Telugu in 1930 A.D. He was a Professor of Linguistics at the Government college, Ananthāpūr, Āndhra Prādeśh. In the introduction he gives full information about his work, when, how, and why he made such an unusual attempt. He started the translation work in 1915 A.D. which was completed after fifteen years' hard work. The first edition was published in 1930 and the second in 1938 A.D. He did not do the work all alone but wisely took the help of Muslims who know Arabic and the Traditions of Prophet Muḥammad (PBUH). He writes, "I have selected two Maulvis who have sound knowledge of the Arabic language. They took the Arabic Qur'ān in their hands. On my side, I kept English versions for reference. At every stage I had discussion with these Maulvis. During the

course of my work I tried my best to retain the original meaning of the text as far as possible. After the completion of the work I read the translated copy to my Muslim friends who were well acquainted with the traditions and they made corrections wherever necessary. Thus I ventured to print and present the Qur'ān in Telugu to the Andhras".

He acknowledges that there might be some defects in his work, and admits that it was not easy to bring out the original spirit from one language to another. The style of Arabic differs from Telugu, sometimes the Telugu words may not convey the spirit of the Arabic words. In such cases the nearest Telugu word was used which would convey the original meaning. Regarding the Arabic language he wrote, "This is the language in which Prophet Muḥammad (PBUH) understood the revelations of the Qur'ān through the medium of the angel Gabriel. Also this was the language he used for the propagation of the New Faith with great zeal and enthusiasm. There is no equivalent language to Arabic in Arabia. Thus it is needless to say that while the translation is made into foreign languages it loses its flavor. We are mainly concerned with its spirit, which, if properly understood can go a long way in making all human beings live peacefully in this world".

He writes to the effect that, "If Muslims and Hindus alike understand the Qur'ān and live together amicably then I consider that my labors are bearing fruit". He gladly reports the completion of his work in these words. 'The first edition of the Qur'ān in Telugu was printed in 1930 and in the same year all the copies were exhausted'.

Dr. Chilukūrī Nārāyan Rāo states that he would have run into financial loss, had some people not come forward to buy the remaining copies to distribute among their friends. Thus some

people bought the copies and supported him financially. It seems that libraries did not cooperate with him in buying copies. He further said that the public did not encourage him financially for its printing and publication. Yet he did not lose courage and even in such difficult circumstances, ventured to print the second edition with a hope and faith that Andhra Pradesh has a bright future ahead.

Now, let us observe the reason that prompted him to undertake this uphill task. He says that in India the Hindus and Muslims have been living side by side for centuries. To some extent they have copied each others' practices in their day to day life. They have also borrowed from each other some ordinary things of daily use, such as dress, ornaments and such other things. It was, however, very unfortunate that they never tried to understand each others' religion. Unless they study each others' religion the communal rivalry and hatred will not end and a complete harmony of brotherhood might not be established. The reason for such ill feelings was that the sacred books were not available in other languages. Therefore, he has started the Telugu translation of Qur'ān Sharīf in 1915 to eradicate such feelings.

Due to public demand the second edition of the book was published in 1938 A.D. by Aathreyāhramamu, Ananthpūr, A.P. printed at Shāradā Press, Madrās. The translator described the importance of this project eight years after its first publication in these words, 'Many a time during the Hindu-Muslim riots it appeared as if danger is ahead for these two communities. In such critical circumstances the Telugu translation has paved the way for communal harmony and brotherhood between the followers of these two faiths. If such friendly relations prevail, then the translator and publishers acknowledge that

the creation of such friendly atmosphere is enough reward of their efforts in producing this book’.

The translator has observed that the most widespread problem was that of Hindu-Muslim communal hatred. The only solution he has prescribed is that, ‘Unless and until these two faiths are clearly understood by each other, the problem cannot be solved effectively. The translator in a humble way takes pride in stating that his Telugu translation has reduced the communal riots in Andhra Pradesh. In his words, ‘Compared to other parts in India, the Hindu-Muslim riots are far less in Andhra Pradesh due to the availability of Qur’ān Sharif in Telugu language’.

At the close of the introductory part the translator has written words of appreciation and gratitude to the two Maulvies, Ḥājī Muḥammad Ismā’īl, Munshī of the Arabic, Persian and Urdu languages, lectures, Presidency College, Ananthapūr, Āndhrā Pradesh and Afḍal-ul-‘Ulamā’, K.M. Fārūq, Lecturer, Government College, Ananthapūr, Āndhra Pradesh who assisted him in many ways especially in translating the Qur’ān. It is single volume and covers 754 pages excluding an introduction of 26 pages. The size of the book is 8.5 X 5.5 X 1.5 inches. He has translated the whole Qur’ān into Telugu verse by verse. All copies were sold like hot cakes. The introduction is informative and interesting. It has three sections:

1. Pre-Islamic Arabs, an early history and practices.
2. A life history of Prophet Muḥammad.
3. Islam

In the last section he has written Arabic sentences in Telugu script explaining the meaning in Telugu of the Muslim faith and practices.

The Telugu language used is old and belongs to the early 20th century. Compared to the first edition the language in the second edition is more improved. The errors in printing and the mistakes in translation are duly attended to. In the introduction he has exhorted Hindus and Muslims to live amicably in a friendly atmosphere in mutual understanding and in religious tolerance.

It is observed that Dr. Chilukūrī Nārāyan Rāo bore the entire financial burden all alone and to some extent the publishers, Aathreyāhramamu gave cooperation. He was the first man to move and inspire the future generations to go forward in this field.¹

3. Translation of the Qur'ān by Prem Saran Pranat:

This is the Hindi translation. Only two parts of this translation, the first and the third, are available in Kāshī Ārya Samāj Library at Vārānasī. The first part consists of the translation of the sūrat al-Fātiḥah and Sūrat al-Baqarah and the third part contains Sūrat al-Mā'idah and Sūrat al-An'ām. Though the translator has made a statement in the preface of the first part, that he was desirous to get the entire Qur'ān published part wise, but at present no other parts except these two are available in the libraries nor has its mention been found in the anthology of Ārya Samāj Publications which covers the entire collection of the books published and made available by Ārya Samājists anywhere in India. So it seems that probably its second part had been published in short number and destroyed in the course of time and after publication of the third part, further publication was not possible. This has been guessed on the ground of the statement of the translator-cum-publisher Mr. Prem Saran, as he

¹ Chinniah T.I., *Literature on Islam in Telugu Language (1925-75)*, published M.Litt Thesis, Osmania University, Hyderabad 1976, PP. 1-5

has made a complaint in the preface of the third part entitled 'Vinamra Nivedan' i.e. humble request, that since the number of customers was not satisfactory, the third part could not be published timely and suffered a delay. So it seems that though the Ārya Samājists as well as the religiously liberal class of every community, realizing the requirements of the Hindi translation of the Qur'ān, welcomed its publication as reported by the translator and publisher, it could not attract the common customers and therefore, probably owing to the lack of finances the publication of its remaining parts was suspended.

This translation has been published by Prem Pustakālay, Āgrah. The year of publication has not been mentioned in either of the available parts but probably this is the publication of around 1940.

This translation has been dedicated to Seth Jugal Kishor ji Birla. It has been disclosed in the beginning of the translation that this translation has been prepared being motivated by the thoughts of Mahātmā Gāndhī and by the decision of Swāmī Brahmānand Saraswatī, and the sole object is to introduce the teachings of the Qur'ān among Hindu masses. The translator claims that he was desirous from the very beginning to do a translation of the Qur'ān with the verses written in Devanāgrī script in such a manner that it could be read correctly as well as its Hindi translation with the explanatory notes of Muslim translations, references of Traditions (Ḥadīth), the exegesis produced by Muslim scholars, a detailed commentary and with a comparative study of Muslim and Vedic religions. But he did not do so because it was suggested to him by Pandit Rām Chandra, (a suggestion which he felt appropriate) that this idea of criticizing the contents of the Qur'ān or making any commentary on it would not fulfill any object and would be untimely. So abiding by his

suggestions only this form of Hindi translation of the Qur'ān was presented before the common masses, so that everybody could be acquainted with the real thinking of the Qur'ān.

Before starting the original work, a description regarding the vowel signs and transliteration as well as how to pronounce the Arabic letters with the correct sound has been produced and efforts have been made that a fresh reader who does not know the Arabic language should be able to read the Qur'ānic verses with correct pronunciation.

The translation has been made with a Qur'ānic division system of Manzil (one of the seven stages in to which the Qur'ān is sub divided), *Pāra* i.e. part and *Rukū''* –i.e. section. First the Qur'ānic verse has been written in Devanāgrī script and then its Hindi translation has been produced. The language used is fluent and idiomatic. On most of the pages, footnotes have been given explaining the tough and technical words. The source of these explanations is unknown as to which book has been used for producing these explanations.

The first part contains 160 pages and the third part is from page 353 to 510.

4. Translation of the Qur'ān by Pandit Rām Chandra of Delhi:

This is a Hindi translation of the Qur'ān. The translator Pandit Rām Chandra of Delhi was a high ranked scholar of Arabic. He has done the translation of only those parts of the Qur'ān the critical study of which has been made by Swāmī Dayānand Saraswātī in his famous book entitled *Satyārth Prakāsh*.

Pandit Rām Chandra, expressing the reason why he had decided to translate this portion of the Qur'ān discloses that it was asserted by our Muslim brethren that the translation

included in *Satyārth Prakāsh* is erroneous and unreasoned, and the numbers showing the order of verses have also been dubious at many places.¹ Therefore, he himself made a translation with accuracy, free from all kind of previous mistakes. He opined about the translation included in *Satyārth Prakāsh* that, of course there are minor mistakes regarding the numbering, but so far as the mistakes regarding the meaning is concerned, these are not of such a nature which may seem hampering the Islamic principles. According to him, the translation included in *Satyārth Prakāsh* seems made to be based on the Urdu translation of the Qur'ān of Shāh Rafī'uddīn Dehlawī. This is without punctuation marks and therefore incoherent. That is why Pandit Rām Chandra decided to prepare a separate translation to be careful of the punctuation marks as well as include the translation also of those parts of the Qur'ānic verses which were left by the translator who had done the translation for *Satyārth Prakāsh*. Pandit Rām Chandra did not change the style of the translation as adopted in *Satyārth Prakāsh* except replacing a few words so that the flavor of Shāh Rafī'uddīn's Urdu translation may remain as before. Since he himself was a scholar of the Arabic language, it seems that he had done the translation in order to authenticate the translation included in *Satyārth Prakāsh*.

This translation was published in 1943; and since the cover page is not available, the name of publisher could not be traced. It has 36 pages. After introduction, Pandit Rām Chandra has produced a corrigenda. The total translation has been distributed in to 159 parts. Arabic verses have been produced in Devanāgrī script at one side of the pages and its translation has been written in front of the respective verse

¹ Pandit Ram Chandra of Delhi, *Hindi Translation of the Verses of the Qur'ān*, 1943, introduction.

on the other side. The language used is not tough and Hindi words have been used frequently. This is available in Pandinī Kanya Mahāvidyālayā, Vārānasī.

5. Translation of the Qur'ān by Vinay Kumār Awāsthī:

This translation, entitled, 'Qur'ān Sharīf-Tafsīr Mājīdī is a Hindi translation of the Qur'ān. As appears from its title, it has the Qur'ānic exegesis of Maulānā 'Abdul Mājīd of Daryābād. This book has been published from Lucknow Kitābghar. Its first volume from chapter one to five which was published in 1983, contains 512 pages, and was printed in Vānī Press Lucknow.

This translation begins with a preface by Maulānā Sayyid Abul Ḥasan 'Alī Nadwī which is in both the languages i.e. Urdu and Hindi. He has made a commendation for Maulānā 'Abdul Mājīd of Daryābād and regarded him as the most distinctive man among the translators and commentators of the Qur'ān in contemporary age. Commenting upon the exegesis of the Qur'ān produced by Maulānā 'Abdul Mājīd, he says that it is like a mirror of the Qur'ānic ideology and understanding of the Sunnite sect as well as those having correct faith among the Muslims. This is because Maulānā 'Abdul Mājīd has referred to the best and selected collections of Arabic exegesis and has given importance to the opinion of his predecessors. Besides, he has had an access to the contemporary knowledge and utilized appropriately the modern geographical, historical, cultural, religious and philosophical researches in explaining the Qur'ānic ideas. In addition to this, 'Abdul Mājīd has clarified the misunderstandings of the orientalist.

Maulānā Abul Ḥasan 'Alī Nadwī has concluded the preface showing his pleasure and greeting the attempt of Vinay Kumār Awāsthī of translating in Hindi 'Abdul Mājīd's exegesis of the Qur'ān.

The preface is followed by a note of Ḥakīm ‘Abdul Qawī of Daryābād. It discloses that prior to the present exegesis Maulānā ‘Abdul Mājīd had written an exegesis in English.

Mr. Vinay Kumār Awāsthī was very much impressed with the exegesis of Maulānā ‘Abdul Mājīd and he realized its importance, so he decided to translate this interpretation of the Qur’ān. Actually his father, Mr. Nand Kumār Awāsthī had published a valuable Hindi edition of the Qur’ān in 1969. In this unparalleled edition, he had produced the text in Devanāgrī script along with the Arabic text and its Hindi translation, which was based on those English and Urdu translations of the Qur’ān which were regarded as authentic. It was commended highly by the scholars of repute. Therefore, being encouraged by this work of his father and using the experience, Vinay Kumār decided to do the present translation.

The main characteristics of this translation are as under:

1. It has the Qur’ānic text in Arabic script.
 2. It has the Qur’ānic text also in Devanāgrī script, besides, the invention of the words having the similar sound of pronunciation as in the Arabic language.
 3. The direction and knowledge about the reading and setting of the Qur’ānic text have been provided so that the Hindi knowing persons may pick-up the reading correctly.
 4. An index of the subjects and chapters etc. has also been included.
 5. A description of Arabic grammar, in brief, has been provided.
- This is a valuable effort of the translator, Mr. Vinay Kumār Awāsthī. The language used is easy and understandable by common Hindi knowing people. Some of the Urdu words have also been used in the exegesis but are commonly spoken e.g. *Miqdār* (quantity) *Maqṣad* (objective) etc. Thus, the translation is
-

perfect in all respects, and it can be safely said that no translation maintaining this standard, taking all the precautions and arranging in such a good style has come into existence up to now.

6. Translation of the Qur'ān by Girīsh Chandra Sen:

This translation of the Qur'ān is in modern Bengali language. Mr. Girīsh Chandra Sen (1834-1910) rendered the Divine Book into Bengālī and published it in three volumes during 1881-1886. The translation does not contain the Arabic text.

Girīsh Chandra Sen was a preacher from the Brahmo Samāj, when Keshab Chandra Sen decided to make a synthesis of major religions, he deputed Girīsh Chandra to study Islam. At the age of 42 he went to Lucknow to study classical Arabic and Persian. Later he came to be known as Maulvi Girīsh.¹

7. Translation of the Qur'ān by Ummethala Keshava Rāo:

This is also a Telugu translation of 1065 Qur'ānic verses. These are the same verses which had been produced by Vinoba Bhāve in his book entitled, 'Qur'ān Sār'. This work was printed in 1974. The Telugu title of this book is 'Qur'ān Saeramu'. This work has been published by Gandhi Sahitya Pracharanalayamu, Chikadapally, Hyderābād. All these 1065 verses are divided into 400 sections and subsections.²

8. Translation of the Qur'ān by Satya Devo Vermā:

This is the Sanskrit translation of the Qur'ān entitled Sanskritam Kurānam. This has been published from Laxmī Publication, New Delhi in 1990.

In the preface of this translation, the translator, Mr. Verma, has produced a list of various religious topics, such as the

¹ Radiance, 6-12- Dec. 1992, P. 5.

² Ibid., PP. 13, 14.

Unity of Allah, His attributes, the rise of religion and the end of the unrighteousness, the ethics of punishment, transmigration of soul etc. these subjects have been described in the Qur'ān as well as in a religious scripture of Hinduism i.e. Veda. Referring to the quotations from both the scriptures, Mr. Vermā has produced the statements side by side.

As the translator discloses, this Sanskrit translation is based on the Hindi translation of the Qur'ān by Muḥammad Fārūq Khān of al-Ḥasnāt, Rāmpūr, as well as the English translation of Pickthāll.

9. Translation of the Qur'ān by Mr. Venkata:

This is also the Telugu translation of the Qur'ān by Mr. Venkata who is a Marāthī scholar and belongs to Madrās. The book is out of access, therefore, the detailed information about it could not be made available.

10. Translation of the Qur'ān by Raghunāth Prasād Mishrā:

This is a Hindi translation of the Qur'ān published by Pandit Raghunāth Prasād Mishrā from Chchīpatī; Itāwah.

It is not known whether Panditji was acquainted with the Arabic language and he himself did this translation of the Qur'ān directly from Arabic or consulted any other source. The translation is good to a great extent but the preface written by Panditji is so confusing and includes comments at various places full of hatred that it loses all its attraction and charm. It appears that this translation has been made to criticize the Islamic faith enunciated by the Qur'ān. The translator has suggested to the readers of this translation to go through his book entitled 'Qur'ān kā Ādarsh', (The ideal of the Qur'ān) prior to making study of this translation.¹

¹ Abū Muḥammad 'Imāmuddīn, *Islām aur Ghair Muslim Vidwan*, Benaras, P. Ma.

11. Translation of the Qur'ān by S.N. Krishnan Rāo:

This is the Malyālam translation of the Qur'ān. The translator was the editor of a monthly journal 'Sadguru'. He belongs to Kochin. This translation is also beyond approach.¹

12. Translation of the Qur'ān by Konniyūr Reghavan Nair:

This is also a Malyālam translation of the Qur'ān. The translator admittedly follows Yūsuf 'Alī's English translation. Being a scholar in Malyālam and Sanskrit, he renders the Qur'ān into Malyālam in verses form. His lack of knowledge of Arabic weighs heavily against the worth of his work. Besides, in his works the characteristic precision of the Qur'ānic text is lost. Whether a glaring mistake like al-Kabara for al-Baqarah, the second and the longest chapter of the Qur'ān, is to be ascribed to bad printing or to ignorance, is hard to determine.²

13. Others: Some scholars have translated the 20th chapter or a few sūrahs specially Sūrat Yāsīn, al-Raḥmān, al-Mulk etc. into Bengālī and published with or without interpretation and commentaries. Their names are as following:

- | | |
|------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| a. Rev. Tara Charan Banerjee | Published in 1882. |
| b. Phillip Biswas | Published in 1991. |
| c. Dvijdas Dutta | Published in 1926. |
| d. Basanta Kumār Banerjee | Published in 1937 |
| e. Rājendra Nāth Mitra | Published in 1997 ³ |

Conclusion: It is obvious that most of the translators of the Qur'ān in different Indian languages were not acquainted with the Arabic language except a few, and that is why they have translated the Qur'ān through its English or Urdu rendering.

¹ Abū Muḥammad 'Imāmuddīn, op.cit., P.Bha.

² Christian W. Troll, *Islam in India*, Vol. 2nd. 1985, P. 232.

³ Ibid, P. 10

Naturally this was a challenging task because the Qur'ān involves a very special relation of language to meaning and to transform the exact sense which an Arabic word wants to express or to elucidate intention of crucial terms and phrases is possible merely through the direct translation from Arabic and not through the translation from other languages, even then the scholars have tried their best to convey the same thing as intended by the Qur'ān and so much care has been taken in exploring the alternate words. It is hoped, in future, further improved translations could be made into various Indian languages by non-Muslim Indians.

These translations will have been functioning not only to promote the religious interaction between the people of the regions of different languages but to help the scholars limited to their regional languages and desirous to work on the Qur'ān.

Munshī Naval Kishore and Printing of the Qur’ān

✎ Prof. Md. Sa’ūd ‘Ālam Qāsmī¹

Tr.: Dr. Aurang Zeb A’zmi²

Among the builders of the Indian culture who gave a high example of the favor for humanity, open-mindedness, high-heartedness, love for knowledge and promotion of literature Munshī Naval Kishore (d. 1895) deserves to be written with bold letters. Investing time, ability and money in preservation and promotion of the academic and cultural heritage of India Munshī Jee lit such a candle of good deed and international fame whose light is still guiding to the right path. Being far from bias and distinction he made his life’s mission printing and publishing of the academic, literary and religious heritage of each and every religion and nation. His religious tolerance and love for knowledge are an example to be followed almost by all the circles; the political leaders as well as intellectuals etc even today. Munshī Jee left Lāhore for Lucknow in 1858 and established his Press from which he issued a daily newspaper “Avadh Akhbār”. He, from this printing institution, published the religious, literary and historical books of Islam with keen interest and full respect as well as he gave new life to the religious and historical books of Hindu religion. He also printed a good number of hand-written manuscripts and published numerous rare books making them accessible to the

¹ Professor, Department of Theology, ‘Alīgarh Muslim University, ‘Alīgarh, U.P. India

² Editor of the IJAIS and Assistant Professor of Arabic, Department of Arabic, Jāmia Millia Islāmīa, New Delhi

common people. He developed interest in Islamic books so much that his press became the centre for the publication of Islamic studies as Maulānā Sayyid Abul Ḥasan ‘Alī Nadawī said: “The way he devoted his press to Islamic studies and Arabic, Persian and Urdu literatures and the way he made rare and out of print books available to all, are his favors upon the Muslims and the scholars too”.¹

The books published by Naval Kishore Press reached thousands in number. And as far as Islamic studies are concerned they are excellent publications.² He started this work at a time when the struggle of 1857 for independence had failed and the Muslims faced destruction of themselves and their culture too. As a result they were psychologically defeated in politics, society, economy and culture. Then Munshī Jee took interest and showed courage in preservation and promotion of their culture and civilization as well as their religious and academic works.

Besides this he employed a number of Muslim scholars, *ḥāfiẓs* (memorizers of the Qur’ān), historians, literary men, calligraphers and artists in his press and secured them economically. Although main office of his press was in Lucknow its branches were spread in different cities of India including Kānpūr, Delhi, Lāhore and Kapurthālā. It was not only a press but also an institution to which were attached departments of composing books, their translation into other languages, their editing and others and a big number of scholars, literary men and intellectuals were attached to it. Nazīr Kākorwī said:

“It was well-known in Lucknow that the number of the *ḥāfiẓs* of the Qur’ān, and compilers of the Prophetic traditions,

¹ Nayā Daur, monthly, Lucknow, Nov-Dec 1980, P.9

² Al-Raṣhād, monthly, Azamgarh, Aug-Sep 1981

historians and literary men which is found here is not enjoyed with by any other press of India”.¹

If we examine the role of Naval Kishore Press, we come to conclusion that it was not an ordinary press but an institution, an organization and an academy in itself.

Though Naval Kishore Press published the important books of other religions of India with full care, he published religious books of Islam especially the Qur’ān, its translations and commentaries with such glory, respect and care that cannot be found anywhere even with the Muslim publishers of India. Accepting Islamic services of the Press Munshī Wajāhat ‘Alī, the Editor of “*Akḥbār-i-‘Ālam*”, Mīrut wrote in 1870:

“We cannot express the pomp and show of the Press. He prepared more books in this Press than other printing presses of India printed in span of years. He printed such bulky and voluminous books which could not be printed in the printing presses of Asia, Africa and Europe in such a smooth, beautiful and empty of printing mistakes as gives light to the eyes and pleasure to the hearts”.²

It is to be noted that people generally needed religious books at that time but unfortunately there was no suitable arrangement to meet their need. Munshī Jee felt this need, provided for it and was benefited by it commercially. In the beginning printing of Islamic books was related to commercial purpose. We cannot exclude printing of the Qur’ān too. That is why when Munshī Jee’s friend Maulānā Md. Aḥsan Kākorwī advised him to print Islamic books especially different parts of the Qur’ān and extended financial assistance to him, he got

¹ Nazīr Kākorvī: *Urdu kay Hindu Adīb* (The Hindu Literary men of Urdu), Lucknow, P. 184

² *Nayā Daur*, ibd P.94

courage¹ and began to print different parts of the Qur'ān. Munshī Jee got a huge benefit from it but this commercial purpose was overcome by the love of knowledge and the service of religion and he did not look for only business in printing the Qur'ān but also took utmost care for the glory of the Qur'ān, its sacredness and respect beside raising the level of typing and printing high to the sky.

He took services of the most famous calligraphers for the Qur'ān e.g. he appointed Maulwī Hādī 'Alī Aṣḥk, the first Editor of "Avadh Akhbār" in 1881, who had mastery over Arabic, Persian and Urdu besides being poet in these languages. Apart from this quality he was the best calligrapher of his time because he had command over *Naskh* style of calligraphy. Munshī Jee asked him to copy the Qur'ān in a beautiful style.²

Similarly the Naval Kishore Press hired one of the best calligraphers Maulwī Hādī 'Alī to copy the Qur'ān. Introducing the printing programs of Naval Kishore Press, the Editor of "Avadh Akhbār" said:

"In these days the valuable books have been published and these are still being published. One of the best examples is printing of the Qur'ān which has been printed in such a good way as could not be introduced so far. It is the last memory of Late Maulwī Hādī 'Alī, which has no compare as regards calligraphy. It has made reciting the Qur'ān easy for the women and children".³

Munshī Naval Kishore Press printed the Qur'ān in every shape and size according to the need of the Muslims. So it was printed in different parts- in simple way, with marginal

¹ Later Munshī Jee wanted to return this sum but he denied to accept. Munshī Jee published his book "Aḥwāl-ul-Anbiyā" in two volumes.

² Nayā Daur, ibd P.44

³ Ibd, P.50

notes, with translation, with voluminous commentaries and with the art of reciting the Qur'ān even he published books on this very topic. The copies of the Qur'ān printed from this Press had the standard printing, the utmost care and respect and in so much abundance as could not be competed by other printing presses. Amīn Slaunwī who was employed in "Avadh Akhbār" said:

"Naval Kishore did favor not only upon Urdu but also upon the Muslims. He printed several translations of the Qur'ān and its many commentaries. He printed them in abundance so that one can see their many copies available in every library of India while other printing presses have no mention except a little. Some of such commentaries and translations comprise of one thousand pages. He also printed thousands of copies of the Qur'ān on the demand from different countries and sent them in time".¹

In 1869 when Khān 'Abdul Ghaffār Khān Sarhadī came to Lucknow Rāj Kumār Najit Bhārgva, the heir of Munshī Naval Kishore presented a beautiful copy of the Press, which was the 18th edition. Munshī Jee printed the Qur'ān in a very different way from the other publishers with the emotion of respect and faith and with full arrangement of oral purity. Maulānā Ziāuddīn Iṣlāhī says:

"Munshī Naval Kishore did as much care for sacredness and respect for the Qur'ān as the Muslims do not. He has ordered that the Fitter, Pressman, Machineman and the Helper should be neat and clean with ablution and then should start printing the Qur'ān. He himself did bathe, put on clean dress, sat on neat and clean chair then put a white and cleansed sheet on his legs after that read the proof of the Qur'ān. He ordered to wash the machine before him and to cleanse its parts then the

¹ Ibd, P.162

Qur'ān was printed on that. Firstly he did not allow any paper to fall below and secondly for utmost care he ordered to spread cleansed sheets around the machine".¹

In 1870 when Sālār Jang the Nawāb of Ḥyderābād came to Lucknow Munshī Naval Kishore hosted him along with the Rājā of Maḥmūdābād. The Nawāb visited his Press too. It is said that Munshī Jee showed him the room where useless papers were piled up. Munshī Jee used to pile them up in the room in order to prevent paper from wastage. The Nawāb was so much influenced with this respect of the Qur'ān as he paid Munshī Jee huge money for these useless papers.

The water with which printing plates of the Qur'ān were washed, as it was famous, was not drained in common gutter but it was saved in a pool.

These days several editions of the Qur'ān came into light with seven or ten styles of its reciting (*Qir'at-i-Sab'ah* or '*Ashra*') but in the last century it was only Naval Kishore Press that printed the Qur'ān with its seven or ten *Qir'ats* besides publishing separate books on this topic among them "Rumūz-ul-Qur'ān", "Maqṣūd-ul-Qāri'" and "Zīnat-ul-Qāri'" are very famous.

Munshī Naval Kishore paid especial attention to print the translations and commentaries of the Qur'ān. It was he who published the famous undotted commentary of the Qur'ān "Sawāṭi-ul-Ilhām" by the *King of the poets* Faizī of the period of Akbar the Great the first and perhaps the last time. Before printing this great work he asked Maulānā Amīr 'Alī Malīḥābādī, the eminent personality of Nadwat-ul-'Ulamā' and the then Principal of this institution to write its preface. He also wrote the whole preface without dots. By printing this work Munshī Jee established his prestige of love for knowledge and service of the Qur'ān in the hearts of the

¹ Ibd, P.67

people especially the Muslims. “al-Kash.shāf ‘an Ḥaqā’iq-i-Ghawā^hmiz-i-Tanzīl” of ‘Allāmah Ja’rullāh Zamakhsharī (d.538 A.H) is the most important commentary of the Qur’ān from the view point of Grammar and Rhetorics. The Naval Kishore Press also published it and made it available for the scholars, students and institutions. Each of the students of the exegesis is indeed dependent on it.

The detailed exegesis of ‘Allāmah Nāṣiruddīn Qāḍī Baiḍāwī (d.568 A.H) “Tafsīr-i-Baiḍāwī” and the second class exegesis of ‘Allāmah Jalāluddīn Suyūṭī (d. 916 A.H) and Jalāluddīn Maḥallī (d. 864 A.H) “Tafsīr-i-Jalālāin” which occupies a great place among the commentaries of the Qur’ān prescribed in the Madrasa curriculum, were published from this Press. Apart from this the latter’s “Kashful Maḥjūbain ‘alā Tafsīr-i-Jalālāin” was printed separately from this Press. It was authored by Maulānā Sa’dullāh bin Ghulām Ḥaḍrat Qindhārī. Similarly “Tafsīr al-Sirāj al-Munīr” of Md. Al-Shirbīnī, the Speaker of the Damascus Jama Mosque was also published in four volumes and made available for the scholars.

Among the Arabic commentaries of the Qur’ān “‘Arā’is-ul-Bayān fi Ḥaqā’iq al-Qur’ān” was printed in two volumes in full size in 1301 A.H. The author of this exegesis is Sheikh Abū Muḥammad Rauzbahān Abū Naṣr Bāqlī Shīrāzī (d. 609 A.H). Along with this exegesis the commentary of Ibn-i-‘Arabī (d. 638 A.H) was printed on its footnotes¹ but the researchers claim that relation of this exegesis to him is incorrect.²

Among the Persian translations and commentaries of the Qur’ān published from this Press are the eminent exegesis of Qāḍī Shahābuddīn Daulatābādī “Baḥr-i-Mawwāj” deserves

¹ At the end of the book some sentences have been written in praise of Munshī Jee which are handiwork of any Indian scholar. See “‘Ar ā’is-ul-Bayān” edition of 1301 A.H.

² Al-Rashād, monthly, ibd, Sep. P.29

special mention, which is regarded as the equivalent of “Al-Kash-shāf ‘an Ḥaqā’iq-i-Ghawāmir-i-Tanzīl” of ‘Allāmah Ja’rullāh Zamakhsharī by the scholars of the Islamic world¹. Likewise the most famous exegesis of ‘Allāmah Kamāluddīn Wā’iz Kashfī “Mawāhib-i-‘Āliyah” which is also known as “Tafsār-i-Ḥusainī” was published from this Press but even its several editions came out. Munshī Jee asked Maulānā Fakhruddīn to render it into Urdu, which was published in two volumes by the name of “Tafsīr-i-Qādirī”.²

Among the Persian translations he published “Fathur Raḥmān” by Shāh Walīullāh Muḥaddith Dehlawī (d.1176 A.H). This translation was very famous due to its classics, fluency and ideality.³

Similarly he published another translation of the Qur’ān related to Sheikh Sa`adī. In 1954 when the King of Irān visited India he watched this Press during his stay at Lucknow. Apart from Persian books he presented the copy of the Qur’ān which has two Persian translations; one by Shāh Walīullāh and the other by Sheikh Sa`adī. In 1985 I saw it in one of the printing presses of Raudgrān, Delhi, which was going to publish it. It is to be noted that the translation related to Sa`adī and published by this Press is not his own but of Sharīf Jurjānī.⁴

Apart from Arabic and Persian translations the Naval Kishore Press printed Urdu translations and commentaries of the Qur’ān. It includes the exegesis of different parts as well as the

¹ For the introduction of this exegesis see my article “A Study of Baḥr-i-Mawwāj” published in “Ulūm-ul-Qur’ān”, bi-annual, Jan-Jun 1992

² For detail see my book in Urdu “Shāh Walīullāh kay Qur’ānī Fikr ka Mutāla’ah” (The Study of Shāh Walīullāh’s Approach to the Qur’ān), N Delhi 1994, P.20

³ Ibd

⁴ Ibd, P.19

whole Qur'ān e.g. "Silsilat-ul-Marjān" (the exegesis of the chapter of al-Fātiḥah) and the exegesis of the chapter of Yūsuf. Similarly "Asrār-ul-Fātiḥah" of Mulla Mu'īnuddīn Harawī, "Tuḥfat-ul-Islām bi Sharḥ-i-Tafsīr-i-Sūrat-i-Fātiḥah" of Maulawī Ikrāmuddīn Dehlawī, "Tafsīr-i-Murādiyah", "Pārah 'Amm", "Izā Zulzilāt" and "Panj Sūrah Mutarjam" of Shāh Murādullāh Anṣārī were published by this press that helped the common people to read all source books. He also published some poetic commentaries of the parts of the Qur'ān among these "Tafsīr Sūrah Fātiḥah Manẓūm" and Maulānā Md. Aṣhrāf Kāndhelwī's "Tafsīr Sūrah Yūsuf Manẓūm" are worth mentioning.

Among the complete translations and commentaries of the Qur'ān "Tafsīr-i-Qādrī", "Tafsīr-i-Ḥaqqānī", "Mawāhib-ur-Raḥmān" and the translation of Maulawī Nazīr Aḥmad Dehlawī are worth mentioning. The latter translation is simple and easy. Its language and expression are free from any complication as the colloquial language of Delhi has intermingled with the classical language. On this ground its publication will be very much beneficial to make the common people understand the Qur'ān. Tafsīr-i-Ḥaqqānī is considered authentic in perspective of the Qur'ān, the Ḥadīth, Islamic jurisprudence and Islamic sciences while "Tafsīr Mawāhib-ur-Raḥmān" is a unique detailed Urdu exegesis which has been published in thirty volumes. Its author is Maulānā Amīr 'Alī Malīḥābādī (d.1330 A.H) the ex-Principal of Dār-ul-'Ulūm Nadwat-ul-'Ulamā', Lucknow.

In this exegesis he has benefited from the Arabic and Persian commentaries and the current books of the Prophetic traditions and Islamic jurisprudence adding a new and valuable thing to the exegesis literature. In the beginning he has written a lengthy preface on the recitation of the Qur'ān, its exegesis

and its sciences, which contains 104 pages of full escape size. Printing a lengthy and detailed commentary like this is a work which deserves much appreciation, praise and respect. In spite of this commentary Malīḥābādī translated “Fatāwā ‘Ālamgīrī” in ten volumes and wrote the commentary of “Hidāyah” in four volumes. The latter is a very famous work of Hanfite *fiqh*. These both have been published from this Press.¹

Apart from these kinds of publications the Press printed very valuable books on the Qur’ānic sciences e.g. “Al-Itqān fi ‘Ulūm al-Qur’ān” of ‘Allāmah Jalāluddīn Suyūṭī, “Fath-ul-Khabīr bima la budda Ḥifẓuhu fi ‘Ilm al-Tafsīr” of Shāh Walīullāh Muḥaddith Dehlawī and “Jalā’-ul-Azhān fi ‘Ulūm al-Qur’ān” of Maulānā Mu’īnuddīn Ḥussainī Karawī on the Qur’ānic sciences, “al-Durr al-Nazīm fi Khawāṣṣ al-Qur’ān al-‘Aẓīm” of Abū Muḥammad ‘Abdullāh Shāfa’ī (d.1304 A.H) on qualities of the Qur’ān, “al-Tibyān fi l’rāb al-Qur’ān” of ‘Abdullāh bin Ḥussain (d.616A.H) and “Umdat-ul-Qur’ān” of Maulānā Karāmat ‘Alī (d.1290A.H) on vowel points of the Qur’ān.

It is worth mentioning that when today’s publishers print any book they estimate first its market value and rate and then fix its price three times more than the real price. It is pertinent that none can spend huge money without any reasonable benefit. But Naval Kīshore cared for human service than for benefit and for mission than for money as regards the Qur’ān and its commentaries. Munshī Rām Jee Dās Bhārgva, the Editor of Avadh Akhbār wrote an article in 1895 after the death of Munshī Jee, in which he said:

“Showing his courage Munshī Jee published several types of the Qur’ān, its commentaries and its translations and sold them in so low price as its many copies might have been seen

¹ See the preface of “Mawāhib-ur-Raḥmān”, edition of Naval Kīshore Press

in every house and that's how everyone became fortunate to have the collections of his religion.¹

The very large size of the Qur'ān which is now put in the libraries for show is one of the publications of the Naval Kishore Press. Now printing of this size of the Qur'ān has been stopped and replaced by pocket size in abundance.

Besides printing the Qur'ān with full respect and sacredness, he gave due respect and honor to the experts of the Qur'ān and the composers of its commentaries e.g. when Maulānā Amīr 'Alī Malīḥābādī, the author of "Mawāhib-ur-Raḥmān" left the Press due to old age and began to live in his village Malīḥābād, Munshī Jee visited him weekly at that village and presented him the famous *Khamīra* of Lucknow which Maulānā liked much.²

He also respected the month of Ramaḍān in which the Qur'ān was revealed. It is written in the Register of the Press (28/04/1889) that Munshī Jee did especial care on the occasion of the month of Ramaḍān and gave a concession of Rs. 04/- on the purchase of the books in this month as well as on the purchase of essence on musk willow which was sold especially in this month.³

It was the favor of publishing the Qur'ān with full respect and honor that the publications of Naval Kishore became adoration of the schools, libraries, institutions, organizations and houses in India and abroad. In this regard name of Naval Kishore is alive in the Muslim society particularly and will be alive forever.

¹ Amīr Ḥasan Nūrānī: Munshī Naval Kishore, Delhi 1982, P.59

² Nayā Daur, ibd, P.165

³ Ibd, P.166

This servant of knowledge, literature and Islamic sciences will be eternally memorized and paid homage by the Muslims. To conclude I hereby note the English translation of the Urdu poem composed by Nāṣir Nāṭiqī regarding the services of Naval Kishore Press:

The good voice was raised in the atmosphere that the hearts wished printing of the Qur'ān.

The good smell of purity spread everywhere. He ordered to copy the Qur'ān with ablution.

Wonderful! Nicety of Munshī Naval Kishore. How beautiful was the nature of Munshī Naval Kishore!

Bibliography

1. Nazīr Kākorvī: Urdu kay Hindu Adīb (The Hindu Literary men of Urdu), Lucknow, n.d.
 2. Md. Sa'ūd 'Ālam Qāsmī Shāh Walīullāh kay Qur'ānī Fikr ka Mutāla'ah" (The Study of Shāh Walīullāh's Approach to the Qur'ān), Ned Delhi, 1994
 3. Amīr Ḥasan Nūrānī: Munshī Naval Kishore, Delhi, 1982
 4. Nayā Daur, monthly, Lucknow
 5. Al-Rashād, monthly, Azamgarh
 6. Ulūm-ul-Qur'ān", bi-annual
-