



AL-TAFSIR AL-JAMI'

Juz' 1

Surah Al-Fatiha

Surah Al-Baqara (verses: 1-141)



AL-Sheikh Dr. Muhammad Abdul Sattar Assayed

PREFACE

The Holy Qur'an is an everlasting miracle for all times and places. Its gifts are ever-fresh and will never be exhausted. As the human intellect develops, it becomes more able to extract from the Holy Qur'an and its Sciences that which suits the scientific developments that it has reached during its time. It is a Book of Guidance which contains scientific indications that will not oppose the human intellect in any period of time.

This encyclopaedia is an attempt to contemplate upon the verses of the Book of Allah ﷻ in submission to His Command:

﴿أَفَلَا يَتَذَكَّرُونَ الْفُرَانَ أَمْ عَلَى قُلُوبِ أَفْقَالِهِمْ﴾

“Then do they not reflect upon the Qur'an, or are there locks upon [their] hearts?” [Surah Muhammad: 24]

While at the same time, holding on to the guidance of our Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. For he was the one, upon whom the Qur'an was revealed. He had held on to it and acted upon it. Furthermore, he had been the walking Qur'an who had reflected it in his ways, life, behaviour, guidance, sayings, actions and knowledge which he had been tasked to deliver.

Thus, this scientific encyclopaedia is a brief attempt to pick up the gifts of the Qur'an that had not been exhausted during the period of revelation. These gifts are extended to all the other periods while embracing the development of the human intellect and the information obtained from new sciences. The main objective will be to understand the text via thinking, reason and contemplation; the acts Allah ﷻ has commanded us to do when he says:

﴿أَفَلَا يَعْقلُونَ﴾ *“Do they not reason?”*;

﴿أَفَلَا يَتَفَكَّرُونَ﴾ “Do they not think?”;

﴿أَفَلَا يَتَدَبَّرُونَ﴾ “Do they not contemplate”;

﴿أَفَلَا يَنْظُرُونَ﴾ “Do they not see?”.

And Allah is the Possessor of Guidance.

AL-Sheikh Dr. Muhammad Abdul Sattar Assayed

In the name of Allah, Most Gracious, Most Merciful.

AN INTRODUCTION TO TAFSEER

All praises be to Allah.

May peace and salutations be upon our leader, The Prophet of Allah ﷺ. And may they be granted to his family, companions and those who follow him and continue his legacy.

Allah ﷻ has said in His Wise Book:

﴿كِتَابٌ أَنْزَلْنَاهُ إِلَيْكَ مُبَارَكٌ لِيَدَّبَّرُوا آيَاتِهِ وَلِيَتَذَكَّرَ أُولُوا الْأَلْبَابِ﴾

“This is a book which We have sent down to you, full of blessings, that they may ponder over its verses, and that men of understanding may receive admonition.” [Surah Sad: 29].

And our great Messenger ﷺ has said:

((حَيْرُكُمْ مَنْ تَعَلَّمَ الْقُرْآنَ وَعَلَّمَهُ))

“The best among you are those who learn the Qur’an and teach it”¹

Thus, this is an attempt to ponder on the verses of the Book of Allah ﷻ. It is not an interpretation of the Qur’an, as the Prophet ﷺ himself did not interpret the Qur’an, whereas it had been revealed upon his heart. Similarly, no contemplation, thorough study or recital and understanding of the Book of Allah ﷻ can be named an interpretation of it, as it had been sent down for every time and place, not only for a single specific period of time. If the Prophet ﷺ had wanted to interpret the Holy Qur’an, he could have done so, as he was the one who had first received it and acted upon it. However, explaining it and

¹ Sahih al-Bukhari: The Book of The Virtues of The Qur’an, Chapter: The best among you are those who learn the Qur’an and teach it, Hadith no. 5027

commenting on the *Muhkam* or Clear Verses was sufficient for him. And then, he left behind the Qur'anic gift wrapped up for the rest of the generations to discover its treasures and miracles according to their time and place. He had also been contented with interpreting the verses containing the necessary rulings for the people of his time and then left behind the rest of the verses wrapped up with scientific, intellectual and spiritual gifts, so that the human intellect in every time and place could obtain from them according to its needs and level of intellect.

If the Prophet ﷺ had interpreted the Qur'an, he would have exhausted the whole Qur'anic gift in one period, whereas the Qur'an is an everlasting miracle which keeps pace with the human intellect according to its time and place.

As such, he had been contented with explaining to people the rulings that they would need. This explanation was according to what their minds could comprehend in their time period. However, he had left out many of the verses linked to scientific knowledge and its secrets.

The verses related to scientific knowledge were revealed in general terms without explanations expounding on the scientific details, as these were things which had a possibility of being concluded or discovered by Man at some point in time. Examples are the verses concerning air, water, the creation of Man, the creation of the Heavens and Earth and the rules of Physics and Science.

Therefore, these verses were revealed via miraculous wordings which suited both that which the people in the revelation period knew and that which would only be known after hundreds of years. And this is something that none other than Allah ﷻ is capable of doing.

Thus, the Holy Qur'an is the miraculous Speech of Allah ﷻ which was revealed to His servant and Prophet ﷺ.

So, let us begin our journey from this point. We will take from the abundant flow of the Book of Allah ﷻ that which suits the period of time we are living in,

as the Qur’anic gift will never get exhausted over time. As the human intellect develops, he is able to obtain from the Holy Qur’an and its Sciences what corresponds to the level of development he has reached. It is impossible to imagine that there is any verse in the Book of Allah ﷻ which goes against knowledge which has been established and has had its truth verified.

As for the verses connected to the religious rulings, worship, that which is needed by human beings to carry out their servitude to Allah ﷻ and everything that is connected to the pillars of Islam, there are clear expressions and wordings and the Prophet ﷺ has offered their interpretation. Therefore, when the Prophet ﷺ has interpreted something, it is not permissible for anyone to add on to his interpretation.

From what has been said, we can figuratively say that this is a *Tafseer* which means an interpretation of the Holy Qur’an. However, in reality, it is a contemplation of the Qur’an.

It contains thoughts and flowing ideas regarding the verses, as it is not possible to limit the Words of Allah ﷻ to only one interpretation which is suitable for every time and place. This is because the interpretation might differ from one period to another.

To illustrate this point, let us look at this verse:

﴿وَالأَرْضَ مَدَدْنَا﴾

“And the Earth, we have spread it out...” [Surah Qaf: 7].

This is a verse concerning the universe that implies the sphericity of the Earth. It is a scientific verse which is permanent from the period of revelation till the Day of Judgement. No one other than Allah ﷻ is able to make a statement like this. Since the time of its revelation, the human mind had accepted it and had no issues in understanding it, as they could plainly see the Earth spread out in all directions. However, as the human intellect developed

and we discovered through knowledge that the Earth is viewed as spherical from space, we realised also that no geometrical shape could be spread out except the sphere. This is because; the square, rectangle, prism, triangle and pyramid are all shapes with borders and corners, thus not allowing them to be extended beyond a final point. Here, the miraculous nature of the Holy Qur'an can be seen. It brings a scientific fact while at the same time, did not conflict with the human mind during the time of revelation.

As new knowledge is discovered, it will never negate the Speech of Allah ﷻ, as He is The Creator and also The One who Originates the Speech. Therefore, as long as The Speaker Himself is The Creator, the affairs spoken of will conform exactly to creation.

In many of the verses which talk about the creation and human beings, Allah ﷻ has informed us with His Eternal Knowledge of the realities of creation which are related to Mankind. For example, He has told us about the fertilizing winds, the sun and the moon, the wrapping of the day and night and many other scientific realities unknown to Man during the period of revelation.

However, the Prophet ﷺ had wanted to keep people occupied with worship and the realities of the religion and not with these realities of creation. This is because, the Holy Qur'an is originally a Book of guidance which is miraculous and not a Maths, Physics or Chemistry book. It did not come to shock people with scientific facts which could not be accepted by the intellect during that first period of revelation.

So, since the Prophet ﷺ explained to people what their human minds needed during that period of revelation, it is incumbent too upon the *Mufasssirin* (Intepreters) which means the scholars of Interpretation, and also every person whom Allah ﷻ has honoured with this great honour in every time, to be fully aware of this Prophetic Methodology before they embark upon the *Tafseer* of any verse from the Holy Qur'an. They should also take everything which the

Prophet ﷺ had said as a basis, as he was the one who had been given the Holy Qur'an and had understood, practiced and taught it. He had been given this revelation from Allah ﷻ, as He says:

﴿إِنَّ هُوَ إِلَّا وَحْيٌ يُوحَىٰ (٤) عَلَّمَهُ شَدِيدُ الْقُوَىٰ (٥)﴾

“It is an inspiration (from Allah) that is inspired. He was taught by one mighty in power (Jibreel ؑ)” [Surah An-Najm: 4-5].

The Prophet ﷺ had interpreted the Holy Qur'an through his behaviour and actions, for he was the walking Qur'an on the Earth, as described by Sayyidatina Aishah ؓ. This means that he clearly embodied the Qur'an and its words in his methodology, paths, customs, guidance, behaviour, manners, sayings, actions and movements.

Therefore, if we find something in a *Tafseer* today which opposes the methodology of the Scholars of *Tafseer* of the past, such as the interpretation by those who accuse others of disbelief and the terrorists who interpret the Holy Qur'an according to their desires, we should not accept it but go back to the methodology, pathway and life of the Prophet ﷺ.

When the first revelation from the Holy Qur'an was revealed to the Prophet ﷺ, it called him with:

﴿اقْرَأْ﴾ *“Read”* [Surah An-'Alaq: 1].

He answered, *“I am not of those who can read.”* Sayyidina Jibril ؑ repeated the word three times, and each time, the Prophet ﷺ answered,

*“I am not of those who can read.”*²

It is necessary for a reciter to either have a book in front of him to read from, or he has something memorised so that he could recite it. However, the

² Sahih al-Bukhari: The Book of Revelation, Chapter: How the Divine Inspiration to Rasulullah (saw) started, Hadith no. 3

Prophet ﷺ was illiterate. Illiteracy for human beings is a handicap and deficiency. However, it is the peak of perfection and an honour for the Prophet ﷺ. This is because, Allah ﷻ did not Will for His Prophet to be taught by any human being, but instead, wanted his knowledge to be obtained solely from Him ﷻ. So, when the Divine Command for the Prophet ﷺ to read was issued, Allah ﷻ revealed the Holy Qur'an and its knowledge to his heart.

Thus, the imperative: ﴿اقْرَأْ﴾ *“Read”* from Allah ﷻ to His Prophet is not similar to the imperative اِقْرَأْ when it is issued from a human being to another. This is because, when I command you to read, you will read what both you and I know. However, when Allah ﷻ says: ﴿اقْرَأْ﴾ *“Read”*, it is issuing an order, and Allah's ﷻ orders are: ﴿كُنْ فَيَكُونُ﴾ *“Be! And it is”* [Surah Al-Baqarah: 117]. So, when Allah ﷻ commanded His Prophet ﷺ to read, he became the teacher of recitation and knowledge for all of Mankind. And over the successive years, people continued taking and taking from his knowledge.

Therefore, our methodology in interpreting the Holy Qur'an will depend principally on the behaviour and pathway of the Prophet ﷺ as to how he understood and interpreted it and how he did not comment on some of its verses to leave space for the development of the human intellect from the scientific aspect and for the discovering of the treasures found in the verses concerning the universe.

In the Holy Qur'an, Allah ﷻ has directed His Servants to the obligation of obeying the Prophet ﷺ in many verses, such as:

﴿مَا آتَاكُمُ الرَّسُولُ فَخُذُوهُ وَمَا نَهَاكُمْ عَنْهُ فَانْتَهُوا﴾

“Whatever the Messenger gives you, take it and whatever he forbids you, abstain from it.” [Surah Al-Hasyr: 7]

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا أَطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ﴾

“Oh you who believe, obey Allah and His Messenger” [Surah Al-Anfaal: 20]

and

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا أَطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُوا الرَّسُولَ﴾

“Oh you who believe, obey Allah and obey the Messenger” [Surah An-Nisaa’:

59].

In this third verse, the letter ‘و’ which is a conjunction that means ‘and’, is used to connect the obedience of the Prophet to the obedience of Allah ﷻ. This means that the obedience to Allah ﷻ is like the obedience to the Prophet ﷺ. This is as Allah ﷻ says:

﴿قُلْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تُحِبُّونَ اللَّهَ فَاتَّبِعُونِي﴾

“Say, if you love Allah, then follow me” [Surah Ali ‘Imran: 31].³

Therefore, whoever wants to understand the Words of Allah ﷻ should look at the Prophet’s application of them, his behaviour, manners and life. For these reflect the true *Tafseer* of the Book of Allah ﷻ.

This is the methodology that we will be following in interpretation, beginning from Surah Al-Fatihah to Surah An-Nas, if Allah ﷻ grants us the guidance to proceed in carrying out this greatest and most honourable task of interpreting the Book of Allah ﷻ, pondering over its verses and extracting from it that which suits the human intellect of this time and age.

As we have mentioned, the human intellect is unable to comprehend fully the Qur’anic Gift in one period of time. If it had been limited to one period, the miracle would be deemed useless thereafter.

³ The Prophet ﷺ has said in a narration from at-Tirmizi on the account of Abu Rafi’:

(لَا أَلْفِينًا أَحَدَكُمْ مُتَّكِنًا عَلَى أَرِيكْتِهِ يَقُولُ هَذَا كِتَابُ اللَّهِ مَا وَجَدْنَا فِيهِ حَلَالًا حَلَّلْنَاهُ وَمَا وَجَدْنَا فِيهِ حَرَامًا حَرَّمْنَاهُ. أَلَا وَإِنِّي أَوْتَيْتُ الْقُرْآنَ وَ مِثْلَهُ مَعَهُ)

(Let me not find one of you reclining on his couch saying: This is the Book of Allah, what we find is lawful in it, we make lawful, and what we find unlawful, we make unlawful. Behold! I have been given the Qur’an and something else like it.)

It is known that every single Messenger had his own teaching methodologies and was also provided with miracles to prove the truthfulness of his Prophethood, with the exception of our Prophet ﷺ. This is a central point in *Tafseer*.

Since the time of Prophet Adam ؑ to Prophets Nuh ؑ, Idris ؑ, Hud ؑ, Solih ؑ, Ibrahim ؑ, Musa ؑ, and Isa ؑ, humanity had not yet reached the peak of human reason. When the Torah was revealed, the staff was also given as a miracle of Prophet Musa ؑ. There was no link at all between the Torah, which was the Prophet Musa's ؑ directives and the staff. When the Bible was revealed to Prophet Isa ؑ, Allah ﷻ also supported him with the miracles of being able to give life to the dead and curing the blind and those with leprosy. However, these miracles were not connected to the directives that had been sent down in the Bible. The miracle of Prophet Ibrahim ؑ in rendering the fire unable to burn, was different from the *Suhuf* or sheets which were sent down to him. Similarly, all the Messengers had miracles which differed from the laws they had been given. These miracles were also limited to their people who lived in the same period as them.

However, the final of the Prophets, Muhammad ﷺ, had been sent at a time when the human intellect had reached full maturity. Thus, Allah ﷻ says:

﴿الْيَوْمَ أَكْمَلْتُ لَكُمْ دِينَكُمْ﴾

“This day, I have perfected your religion” [Surah Al-Ma'idah: 3].

There is no Messenger after Muhammad ﷺ and there is no religion after his, for the religion had reached the stage of completion whereby humanity would have no need for any other religion besides it.

All the tangible miracles that the Prophet ﷺ brought ended their roles during the period of revelation. However, Allah ﷻ made his main miracle in the law that he came with, the Holy Qur'an, this miracle will stand till the final day, as this religion is the final religion, as Allah ﷻ has said:

﴿مَا كَانَ مُحَمَّدٌ أَبَا أَحَدٍ مِنْ رِجَالِكُمْ وَلَكِنْ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ وَخَاتَمَ النَّبِيِّينَ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمًا﴾

“Muhammad ﷺ is not the father of any man among you, but he is the messenger of Allah and the last of the prophets. And Allah has full knowledge of everything.” [Surah Al-Ahzab: 40].

The relationship of the Prophet ﷺ with us is neither one of kinship nor of parentage. It is the relationship of conveying from Allah ﷻ the final message, as he is the final Prophet, as he has declared:

((لَا نَبِيَّ بَعْدِي))

“There is no Prophet after me.”⁴

Thus, no Messenger will come after him bringing another Speech from Allah ﷻ. The miracle of the Holy Qur’an will remain until the end of time, as it contains both the directives and the miracle. Whenever we recite the Holy Qur’an, we will find in it miracles suited to our time and the level our intellect has reached. No one will ever be able to challenge this miracle, as Allah ﷻ says:

﴿قُلْ لَئِنْ اجْتَمَعَتِ الْإِنْسُ وَالْجِنُّ عَلَى أَنْ يَأْتُوا بِمِثْلِ هَذَا الْقُرْآنِ لَا يَأْتُونَ بِمِثْلِهِ وَلَوْ كَانَ بَعْضُهُمْ لِبَعْضٍ ظَهِيرًا﴾

“Say, ‘If mankind and the jinn gathered in order to produce the like of this Qur’an, they could not produce the like of it, even if they were to each other assistants.’” [Surah Al-Isra’: 88].

This Holy Qur’an that we worship Allah ﷻ with is made up of the Arabic Language which consists of the Arabic Alphabet known to the Arabs from the letter *Alif* until the letter *Ya’*. **Where then, does the miracle lie?**

Is it a piece containing poetry, prose, literature or science? It is actually not a miracle due to all of these. It is a miracle because the one who it was revealed to was illiterate and was neither a poet, nor a writer. He was also not a magician

⁴ Sahih al-Bukhari: Book of Prophets, Chapter: What has been said about Bani Israel, Hadith no. 3268

nor could he have been taught by someone. He was illiterate, yet was able to convey the revelation from Allah ﷻ in three styles that no one on this Earth would be able to do, as we will see.

Thus, the revelation of the Holy Qur'an via Sayyidina Jibril ﷺ, who was of the angels, to our leader Muhammad ﷺ, who was a human being, was the greatest miracle, as Allah ﷻ says:

﴿قُلْ إِنَّمَا أَنَا بَشَرٌ مِّثْلُكُمْ يُوحَىٰ إِلَيَّ﴾

“Say, “I am only a man like you, to whom has been revealed...”

[Surah Al-Kahf: 110].

He was a human being who was able to transmit the Holy Qur'an to mankind through the Qur'anic style and expression. Other than this, he also transmitted the *Hadith Qudsi* and also the *Hadith Nabawi*. Each of these three portals had its own style of expression which was different from the others. No one on this Earth is able to give speeches or spread knowledge using three totally different styles to express himself.

The Holy Qur'an was revealed to the heart of Rasulullah ﷺ as Allah ﷻ says:

﴿عَلَىٰ قَلْبِكَ لِتَكُونَ مِنَ الْمُنذِرِينَ﴾

“Upon your heart, [O Muhammad] - that you may be of the warners” [Surah Asy-Syu'ara: 194].

This was while Sayyidina Jibril ﷺ taught it to him in his ears until it was implanted in his heart.

If a human being like us were to read a page in a book and was then asked to repeat it after two or three days, he would repeat it with a slightly different expression, even if he was the author. However, the Prophet ﷺ led the companions in prayer while reciting the verses of the Holy Qur'an without

changing even a single letter or vowel, no matter how many times he repeated them in different days. And it also did not differ at all from the speech that had been sent from Allah ﷻ via the angel Sayyidina Jibril عليه السلام. These verses were revealed unto his heart and his hearing, and Allah ﷻ guaranteed that He would compile it in his heart. Thus, Allah ﷻ says:

﴿لَا تُحْرِكْ بِهِ لِسَانَكَ لِتَعْجَلَ بِهِ (١٦) إِنَّ عَلَيْنَا جَمْعَهُ وَقُرْآنَهُ (١٧) فَإِذَا قَرَأْتَهُ فَاتَّبِعْ قُرْآنَهُ (١٨)
ثُمَّ إِنَّ عَلَيْنَا بَيَانَهُ (١٩)﴾

“Move not your tongue with it, [O Muhammad], to hasten with recitation of the Qur’an. Indeed, upon Us is its collection [in your heart] and [to make possible] its recitation. So when We have recited it [through Jibril], then follow its recitation. Then upon Us is its clarification [to you].

[Surah Al-Qiyamah: 16 -19].

Therefore, this is the secret of the Holy Qur’an. It is the miracle that no human being will ever be able to challenge in any era. It does not only contain the rhetoric, linguistic or scientific miracles. Rather, the miracles as a whole are all gathered and wrapped up in the Words of Allah ﷻ. Moreover, as long as the methodology itself is the miracle and the miracle itself is the methodology, the Holy Qur’an will remain beneficial for every time and place.

The quest now is for human beings to benefit from the Holy Qur’an in order to carry out Allah’s ﷻ Will and Commands in developing the Earth from the angles of creed, law, worship, behaviour and *Akhlaq (moral conduct)*. This is the foundation. And from here, we can commence the *Tafseer*.

It is not permissible for anyone to join between *Tafseer* of the Holy Qur’an and securing his own personal wishes or worldly goals. Whosoever does this has prepared his seat in the hellfire, as the Prophet ﷺ has said:

((وَمَنْ قَالَ فِي الْقُرْآنِ بَرَأَيْهِ فَلْيَتَّبِعْهُ مَقْعَدُهُ مِنَ النَّارِ))

*“Whosoever talks about the Qur’an using his own opinions should prepare his seat in the hellfire”.*⁵

Therefore, the Holy Qur’an cannot be explained through one’s own opinions. So, what are the fundamental rules which are used when interpreting the Qur’an?



⁵ Sunan at-Tirmizi: The Book of Tafseer, Chapter: The one who interprets the Qur’an with his own opinion, Hadith no. 2951

The Fundamental Principles used in this *Tafseer*

In this *Tafseer*, we will hold on to the following scholarly methodology which is employed by all *Tafseer* books:

Firstly: Interpreting the Holy Qur'an via the Qur'an.

Secondly: Interpreting the Holy Qur'an via the sayings, actions, behaviour and life of the Prophet ﷺ.

Thirdly: Interpreting the Holy Qur'an via the principles of interpretation observed by the great *Mufasssirin* or Scholars of *Tafseer*.

Although we will not stray from the scholarly methodology that we have employed, we will also observe that which suits this age in accordance to the scientific standards. This is because, the Holy Qur'an contains verses concerning science and creation, verses connected to the laws of worship, verses concerning *Akhlaq (morals)* and also verses containing Qur'anic stories. We will talk about the importance of all these topics when the time comes.

However, a question might arise:

'Why was the Qur'an sent in the form of "*Ayaat*" which means 'verses'?

Why are they called the clear verses?

Why are these miracles named the clear verses?

The answer is that the word "*Aayah*" linguistically means 'miracle'. Not only every single word but even every letter in the Holy Qur'an consists of a miracle. If the human intellect is unable to comprehend these miracles, it is due to its limitations, not to the limitations of the Holy Qur'an. This inability of comprehending the miracles could also be attributed to the limitations of the *Tafseer* or Scholars of *Tafseer*, but is not attributed whatsoever to the limitations of the Holy Qur'an.

Therefore, if a person exploits the Holy Qur'an and its verses to mean something that is not Willed by Allah ﷻ, it is actually a humanly deviation from understanding the pure and miraculous Divine Text that Allah ﷻ has described as:

﴿ لَا يَأْتِيهِ الْبَاطِلُ مِنْ بَيْنِ يَدَيْهِ وَلَا مِنْ خَلْفِهِ تَنْزِيلٌ مِنْ حَكِيمٍ حَمِيدٍ ﴾

“Falsehood cannot approach it from before it or from behind it; [it is] a revelation from a [Lord who is] All-Wise and worthy of all Praise.” [Surah Fussilat: 42].

It is also from a God Who is The Exalted and Praiseworthy, The All-Knowing and All-Powerful, The Most Gracious and Most Merciful, The One who possesses all the Perfect and Exalted Attributes. He is The absolute Perfection, thus His Words cannot be approached by falsehood. For falsehood comes from the deviation of the minds.

So, if someone in our time and age today tries to justify killing and destruction through the verses of the Holy Qur'an and claims that he is fighting the disbelievers, when in actual fact, he is the one who has accused them of disbelief based on his personal opinion and desires, we refute his accusation using the correct *Tafseer* or interpretation of the Qur'an.

As for the new religion that the enemies of the Arabs and of Islam have invented in dark rooms, it is totally invalid. This is because, we are not allowed to rely on anything in the interpretation of the Holy Qur'an except that which the Leader of Mankind ﷺ had explained.

The verses that were revealed regarding fighting, battles and the laws of *Jihad* have to be understood through the actions, interpretations and practices of the Prophet ﷺ. Next, they are to be understood by the approach and methodology used by his companions and family members in facing issues that cropped up after his ﷺ passing.

The question here is, who are the people who carry the task of speaking about the Islamic rulings? For these rulings are not heritage nor are they derived from any known culture.

To explain this point, we need to clarify that culture might be formed through the main principles of religion, such as *Aqeedah* or creed, *Shyari'ah* or laws, *'Ibadah* or worship, and *Akhlaq* or etiquette. However, the *Shyari'ah Islamiyyah* or Islamic law does not originate from any known culture nor are they derived from heritage. Indeed, they consist of basics and principles derived from religion itself. Subsequently, culture and heritage are then derived from these principles. This is an important concept which needs to be understood as a preface to the Sciences of *Tafseer* or that which is connected to *Tafseer*.

When the Holy Qur'an was revealed, it challenged the Arabs via its literary miracle, as they were the guardians of the vocabulary and the experts at both poetry and prose. It also challenged the non-Arabs, as the Holy Qur'an had not been revealed specifically for the Arabs, although it is a form of pride and honour for them. It was revealed for all of mankind. Allah ﷻ says:

﴿وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَاكَ إِلَّا كَافَّةً لِّلنَّاسِ بَشِيرًا وَنَذِيرًا﴾

“And We have not sent you except as a universal [messenger] to mankind, as a bringer of good tidings and a warner.” [Surah Saba': 28].

Allah ﷻ had sent His Prophet for all of mankind, not for the Arab nations only.

The Holy Qur'an became an honour for the Arabic Language when Allah ﷻ sent it down in the pure Arabian tongue. In this way, Allah ﷻ had made the Arabic Language the vessel for His Words. Thus, it gained its stature and sacredness from the sacredness of the Speech of Allah ﷻ. Allah ﷻ says:

﴿وَإِنَّهُ لَذِكْرٌ لَّكَ وَلِقَوْمِكَ وَسَوْفَ تُسْأَلُونَ﴾

“And indeed, it is a reminder for you and your people, and you [all] are going to be questioned.” [Surah Az-Zukhruf: 44].

This verse means that the Arabs will be questioned regarding this Book, because they were the most knowledgeable people regarding the secrets of the Arabic Language. Furthermore, the Holy Qur’an had been sent down in their language. Allah ﷻ says:

﴿الر تِلْكَ آيَاتُ الْكِتَابِ الْمُبِينِ (١) إِنَّا أَنْزَلْنَاهُ قُرْآنًا عَرَبِيًّا لَعَلَّكُمْ تَعْقِلُونَ (٢)﴾

“Alif, Lam, Ra. These are the verses of the clear Book. Indeed, We have sent it down as an Arabic Qur’an that you might understand.” [Surah Yusuf: 1-2].

Therefore, the responsibilities we have been commanded to carry out will not oppose the intellect, for our religion is a religion of intellect and knowledge, not a religion of backwardness, ignorance and *Takfeer* or ‘accusing others of disbelief’.

So, we have to begin our journey through *Tafseer* based on this principle, and always bring whatever we say back to the intellect and knowledge.

Today, we are facing a fierce attack on Islam, the Muslims, the Qur’an and everything connected to the religion. Therefore, it is upon us to explain the context of the verses and the reasons for revelation. We must not stop at interpreting the words literally only. This is because, it is not permissible to cut the verses from their context and time; the reasons for their revelation and their outcomes. Rather, it is compulsory to look at a big number of rulings, the *Massalih Al-Mursalah* or the public interests and the laws of Islamic Jurisprudence in general.

Thus, the one who does not know all of these should refer to those who are specialized in this fields, as Allah ﷻ says:

﴿فَاسْأَلُوا أَهْلَ الذِّكْرِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ﴾

“So ask the people who possess the message if you do not know.”

[Surah An-Nahl: 43].

It has been narrated that Syeikh Muhammad Abduh was in one of the western countries when a person asked him, “You say in your Qur’an:

﴿مَا فَرَطْنَا فِي الْكِتَابِ مِنْ شَيْءٍ ثُمَّ إِلَىٰ رَبِّهِمْ يُحْشَرُونَ﴾

“We have not neglected in the Book a single thing. Then unto their Lord they will be gathered.” [Surah Al-An’aam: 38].

So, tell us the exact amount of water in a loaf of bread!” The Syeikh said to them, “It is true. Allah ﷻ also says:

﴿فَاسْأَلُوا أَهْلَ الذِّكْرِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ﴾

“So ask the people who possess the message if you do not know.”

[Surah An-Nahl: 43].

So, the answer to your question can be obtained from the baker. This is because, based on this verse:

﴿مَا فَرَطْنَا فِي الْكِتَابِ مِنْ شَيْءٍ﴾

“We have not neglected in the Book a single thing.” [Surah Al-An’aam: 38],

Allah ﷻ is referring us back to the people of specialization.”

The Holy Qur’an did not bring Physics and Chemistry equations nor did it discuss Genetics. This is because, it is a Book of Guidance. However, when it does mention a scientific miracle, this miracle will suit any invention or miraculous scientific discovery.

The Holy Qur’an is Allah’s ﷻ firm rope. It’s revelation upon Rasulullah ﷺ began with the word:

﴿اقْرَأْ﴾ *“Recite”* [Surah Al-‘Alaq: 1].

The verbal noun for this verb is (قرآن). Therefore, the Qur'an is preserved in the hearts and written down in the lines. If a reciter in Damascus were to recite for example:

﴿اللَّهُ الصَّمَدُ﴾ *“Allah, the Eternal Refuge.”* [Surah Al-Ikhlās: 2]

with a *Fat’hah* on the letters *Ha’* and *Dal* (which makes it: *Allahas Somada*), the person with the least knowledge of the Book of Allah ﷻ from Indonesia or Australia, although he may not be an Arab, will correct him. This is a substantiation of the verse:

﴿إِنَّا نَحْنُ نَزَّلْنَا الذِّكْرَ وَإِنَّا لَهُ لَحَافِظُونَ﴾

“Indeed, it is We who sent down the Qur’an and indeed, We will be its guardian.” [Surah Al-Hijr: 9].

Therefore, the correct recitation is obtained through its proper preservation. The basis of our religion is knowledge, and the word Qur’an is the verbal noun of *Qira’ah* or recitation. If we were to look at these verses:

﴿اقْرَأْ بِاسْمِ رَبِّكَ الَّذِي خَلَقَ (١) خَلَقَ الْإِنْسَانَ مِنْ عَلَقٍ (٢) اقْرَأْ وَرَبُّكَ الْأَكْرَمُ (٣) الَّذِي عَلَّمَ بِالْقَلَمِ (٤) عَلَّمَ الْإِنْسَانَ مَا لَمْ يَعْلَمْ (٥)﴾

“Recite in the name of your Lord who created, Created man from a clinging clot. Recite, and your Lord is the most Generous, Who taught by the pen, Taught man that which he knew not.” [Surah Al-‘Alaq: 1-5],

we would find words such as *Allama* which means ‘he taught’, *Qalam* which means ‘pen’ and *Insan* which means ‘human being. We do not see words such as: *Qatl* which means ‘killing’, *Saif* which means ‘sword’, *Takhrib* which means ‘destruction’ and *Takfeer* which means ‘accusing others of disbelief’

Therefore, we have to set off from this point, the point of knowledge and reading, at the beginning of our journey through the Holy Qur’an.

There are some etiquettes that the reciter of the Holy Qur'an has to observe. The Holy Qur'an is not a book which a person skims through while lying down on his bed with legs outstretched. It is a Book of guidance with foundations and rules with regards to respecting and interacting with it.

The first of these rules and conditions is purity, for Allah ﷻ says:

﴿لَا يَمَسُّهُ إِلَّا الْمُطَهَّرُونَ﴾

“None touch it except the purified.” [Surah Al-Waqi'ah: 79].

We have to be in the state of external purity first for the internal purity to come. Thus, we have to take the ablution before reciting the Qur'an. Then, we have to have presence of the heart with Allah ﷻ the One who revealed the Holy Qur'an. This is because, the one who recites the Holy Qur'an is actually hearing from Allah ﷻ and speaking to Him. If a person enters upon one of the significant or notable men of wealth or authority in this world, how would his appearance be? What etiquettes would he hold while speaking to him? There is no doubt that Allah ﷻ is the Possessor of the whole Kingdom. He is the One who gives life and death. In His Hands belong the keys of every single thing. Therefore, we must be fully-prepared to receive the bestowments of the Holy Qur'an so that they will be granted to us. It has been narrated in the life-story of Sayyidina Umar Bin Al-Khattab ؓ that before he embraced Islam, he had gotten to know that his sister and brother-in-law had become Muslims. So, he went to them with the intention of disciplining them. He beat them until they bled. However, the throes of mercy moved in him while he was in that state of emotion and when he heard the recitation of the beginning of Surah Taha. He listened carefully to these words of Allah ﷻ:

﴿طه (١) مَا أَنْزَلْنَا عَلَيْكَ الْقُرْآنَ لِتَشْقَى (٢) إِلَّا تَذَكَّرَ لِمَنْ يَخْشَى (٣) تَنْزِيلًا مِمَّنْ خَلَقَ الْأَرْضَ وَالسَّمَوَاتِ الْعُلَا (٤) الرَّحْمَنُ عَلَى الْعَرْشِ اسْتَوَى (٥) لَهُ مَا فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَا وَمَا تَحْتَ الثَّرَى (٦) وَإِنْ تَجَهَّرَ بِالْقَوْلِ فَإِنَّهُ يَعْلَمُ السِّرَّ وَأَخْفَى (٧) اللَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ لَهُ الْأَسْمَاءُ الْحُسْنَى (٨)﴾

“Ta, Ha. We have not sent down to you the Qur’an that you be distressed, But only as a reminder for those who fear [Allah], A revelation from He who created the earth and highest heavens, The Most Merciful [who is] above the Throne established. To Him belongs what is in the heavens and what is on the earth and what is between them and what is under the soil. And if you speak aloud - then indeed, He knows the secret and what is [even] more hidden. Allah - there is no deity except Him. To Him belong the best names.”

[Surah Taha: 1-8].

Then he said, “Bring me to Muhammad!” So, he went and announced that he had embraced Islam in front of the Prophet ﷺ. Why had he been affected by the words of Allah ﷻ and his heart had softened in his sister’s house, whereas he had not been affected when he had been in the streets of Medina or near the Kaaba?

No doubt that this is the proof that the Holy Qur’an addresses the sentiments and thoughts of the internal self. It is not a book or literature or poetry nor is it a book of geography, physics or general knowledge. Rather, it is a book which through it, you speak to your God who is The Creator. Moreover, the One who has spoken these Words is the very One who had created the heart inside you. He is also the very One who put the brain in your head. Thus, there is a harmony. However, this harmony will not be realized except if the Qur’an is approached in the proper ways. So, there have to be some specific preparations so that when you recite the Holy Qur’an, you are able to benefit from it and receive its gifts.

Allah ﷻ has asked the believers to observe what He has taught them of the ways of interaction with the Holy Qur’an and getting on its recitation. He ﷻ says:

﴿فَإِذَا قَرَأْتَ الْقُرْآنَ فَاسْتَعِذْ بِاللَّهِ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ الرَّجِيمِ﴾

“So when you recite the Qur'an, [first] seek refuge in Allah from Satan, the expelled [from His mercy].” [Surah An-Nahl: 98].

Thus, anytime you want to begin reciting something from the Book of Allah ﷻ, you are required to say: (أَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ الرَّجِيمِ), “I seek refuge in Allah ﷻ from the cursed Satan”. This is because, the Qur'an is, as the Prophet ﷺ mentioned:

((وَهُوَ حَبْلُ اللَّهِ الْمَتِينُ وَهُوَ الذِّكْرُ الْحَكِيمُ وَهُوَ الصِّرَاطُ الْمُسْتَقِيمُ))

“It is the solid rope of Allah, the wise reminder and the right path”.⁶

One end of the rope is with Allah ﷻ and the other is in your Hands. Therefore, every time you want to take in these bestowments of the Qur'an, you have to firstly put a barrier between you and the one who is your enemy and also an enemy of the Qur'an. Allah ﷻ says:

﴿إِنَّ الشَّيْطَانَ لَكُمْ عَدُوٌّ فَاتَّخِذُوهُ عَدُوًّا﴾

“Indeed, Satan is an enemy to you; so take him as an enemy.”

[Surah Fatir: 6].

Satan has made a vow on himself that he will tempt the sons of Adam, lead them astray and take them away from their Creator, as Allah ﷻ has informed us:

﴿قَالَ فَبِعِزَّتِكَ لَأُغْوِيَنَّهُمْ أَجْمَعِينَ﴾

“[Iblees] said, ‘By your might, I will surely mislead them all.’” [Surah Sad: 82].

For this reason, we have to purify our heart's receiving system to accept the Qur'an by seeking refuge in Allah ﷻ and asking for His assistance.

⁶ Sunan at-Tirmizi: Chapters on The Virtues of The Qur'an, Chapter: The Virtue of The Qur'an, Hadith no. 2906

Since you are a created being and the Satan is also a created being, both of you are the creations of Allah ﷻ. Thus, when you seek assistance from the Creator to overcome the creation, you will be the stronger party.

Therefore, it is obligatory for you to seek refuge in Allah ﷻ if you begin recitation from any verse, although it is at the middle of the page. So you say: (أَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ الرَّجِيمِ).

The *Basmalah* or the ***Bismillahirrahmanirrahim*** however, is only recited at the beginning of the Surahs.

In summary, the first condition to start our meeting with the Holy Qur'an is the purification of the heart's receiving system by forming a barrier between us and the whisperings of the Satan. This is because he is the enemy who has vowed to himself to tempt us, as Allah ﷻ informs us:

﴿ قَالَ فَبِعِزَّتِكَ لأُغْوِيَنَّهُمْ أَجْمَعِينَ (٨٢) إِلاَّ عِبَادَكَ مِنْهُمُ الْمُخْلِصِينَ (٨٣) ﴾

“[Iblees] said, ‘By your might, I will surely mislead them all. Except, among them, Your chosen servants.’” [Surah Sad: 82-83].

The *Izzatullah* or ‘*Might of Allah*’ ﷻ means that He is not at all in need of His servants’ worship. Iblis had made a vow through it as he knew that Allah ﷻ is not in need of our worship. This is in line with that which is narrated in a *Hadith Qudsi*:

((يَا عِبَادِي، لَوْ أَنَّ أَوْلَكُمْ وَأَجْرَكُمْ وَإِنْسَكُمْ وَجِنَّكُمْ كَانُوا عَلَى أَتْقَى قَلْبِ رَجُلٍ وَاحِدٍ مِنْكُمْ مَا زَادَ ذَلِكَ

فِي مُلْكِي شَيْئاً))

*“Oh My slaves, if it were that the first of you and the last of you, the human of you and jinn of you are as pious as the most pious of heart of any man of you, that would not increase anything in My domain.”*⁷

⁷ Sahih Muslim: The Book of Virtue, Joining of the Ties of Kinship and Enjoining Good Manners, Chapter: The Prohibition Of Oppression, Hadith no. 2577

If all of us were to stand in front of Allah ﷻ in prayer day and night, it would not add a single thing to Allah's ﷻ Kingdom. On the contrary, our leaving of worship will not decrease even a bit of His Kingdom.

Therefore, Iblis – Allah's ﷻ curse be on him – had entered from this angle and had vowed, via the Might of Allah ﷻ, which is His Independence of our worship, to lead us astray, as Allah ﷻ informs us:

﴿قَالَ فَبِعِزَّتِكَ لأُغْوِيَنَّهُمْ أَجْمَعِينَ (٨٢) إِلاَّ عِبَادَكَ مِنْهُمُ الْمُخْلِصِينَ (٨٣)﴾

“[Iblees] said, ‘By your might, I will surely mislead them all. Except, among them, Your chosen servants.’” [Surah Sad: 82-83].

Thus, it is not possible for us to benefit from the Holy Qur'an except if we are by Allah's ﷻ side and He takes Satan away from our path. With this, we will be guided and will thread the straight path.

So, we should start with the *Ta'awwuz*, which means seeking refuge from the accursed Satan who is expelled from the mercy of Allah ﷻ. Then, we can start reciting the Surahs of the Holy Qur'an which begin from Surah Al-Fatihah and end with Surah An-Nas, there are a hundred and fourteen Surahs altogether.

All the Surahs begin with the *Basmalah: Bismillahirrahmanirrahim*, except Surah At-Tawbah as we will go through. The *Basmalah* is a part of Surah Al-Fatihah, and Surah Al-Fatihah is the first Surah in the Holy Qur'an. This means that the *Basmalah* is the first verse in the Holy Qur'an.

Although all the other Surahs start with the *Basmalah*, it is not a part of them. This is with the exception of Surah At-Tawbah, which does not commence with the *Basmalah*. This is because, it begins with declaring the freedom (from all obligations) to the polytheists. The *Basmalah* is also mentioned in its full form in the course of Surah An-Naml in verse 30:

﴿إِنَّهُ مِنْ سُلَيْمَانَ وَإِنَّهُ بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ﴾

“Indeed, it is from Sulaiman, and indeed, it reads: 'In the name of Allah, the Entirely Merciful, the Especially Merciful,’” [Surah An-Naml: 30].

This is in addition to the commencement of this Surah with the *Basmalah*. Hence the number of *Basmalah* in the Qur’an remain a hundred and fourteen, the same as the number of Surahs in the Holy Qur’an.

Why is the *Basmalah* used as the opening for the Surahs?

The reason is that when the Holy Qur’an was revealed by Allah ﷻ into the heart of Rasulullah ﷺ with the command (كُنْ) which means ‘Be!’, He said to him:

﴿اقْرَأْ بِاسْمِ رَبِّكَ الَّذِي خَلَقَ﴾

“Recite in the name of your Lord who created” [Surah Al-Alaq:1].

Thereupon, the entry of the Qur’an into the heart of the Prophet ﷺ was completed through the Divine Command. Therefore, it is not possible for there to be a Surah in the Holy Qur’an except that it starts with:

﴿بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ﴾

The *Basmalah* is counted as a verse in Surah Al-Fatihah as it the *Sab’ul Mathani*, which means ‘The Seven Oft-Repeated Verses’. However, that number of verses is not completed except if the *Basmalah* is included. The Fatihah is also known as the *Ummul Kitab* which means ‘The Mother of the Book’ and as the Prophet ﷺ said:

*“The Sab’ul Mathani and The Qur’anul ‘Azheem (The Great Qur’an) that I was given.”*⁸

The prayer is not accepted except if the *Ummul Kitab* is recited in it.

⁸ Sahih al-Bukhari: The Book of Tafseer, Chapter: The Opening Surah of the Book, Hadith no. 4204

The Prophet ﷺ had said:

((كُلُّ أَمْرٍ ذِي بَالٍ لَا يُبْدَأُ فِيهِ بِبِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ فَهُوَ أَقْطَعُ))

“Any matter of importance which is not begun with smillahirrahmanirrahim remains cut-off.”⁹

This means that it is cut-off from any results. For example, if you wanted to drink a glass of water, you could either start with a (Bismillah) or without it. If you had started drinking without a *Basmalah*, you would have been granted one gift, which was the quenching of your thirst. And this is a worldly gift, thus you will not get your portion of the hereafter. This is why the act is considered cut-off and deficient. However, if you had started with the *Basmalah* and then drank, you would gain the gift of the world and the gift of the hereafter.

Thus, any matter of importance which is not begun with the Name of Allah ﷻ is considered deficient. What more the Book of Allah ﷻ and the Words of Allah ﷻ ! Furthermore, revelation had begun and entered the heart of the Prophet ﷺ with His Words:

﴿أَفْرَأَ بِاسْمِ رَبِّكَ الَّذِي خَلَقَ﴾

“Recite in the name of your Lord who created” [Surah Al-‘Alaq:1].

The Fatihah begins with ﴿بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ﴾ which means *“In the Name of Allah, Most Gracious, Most Merciful”* and not ﴿بِاسْمِ رَبِّكَ﴾ which means ‘In the Name of Your God. This is because, the word (الله) is the Name which points to the Divine Essence. It cannot be used to name other than Him, as Allah ﷻ says:

﴿هَلْ تَعْلَمُ لَهُ سَمِيًّا﴾

“Do you know of any similarity to Him?” [Surah Maryam: 65].

⁹ Thobaqat As-Shafi’iyyah Al-Kubra: Hadith no. 3

The *Asma-ullah Al-Husna* or The Glorious Names of Allah ﷻ are names for His Attributes, Glorified is He. When you are about to perform a task, you say: *Yaa Qawiyy* which means “Oh The Almighty”. When you want to learn, you say: *Yaa ‘Aalim* which means “Oh The Most Knowledgeable”. When you want to plant, you say: *Yaa Mu’in* which means “Oh The Helper”. However, if you were to say: “Ya Allah”, you are calling Him by the Name which includes all of the His Attributes. So, you have included all the Attributes in one word. This is the reason the Fatihah is commenced with: ﴿بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ﴾.

Why is the ﴿بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ﴾ concluded by these two Names?

﴿الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ﴾ which means ‘*The Most Gracious, The Most Merciful*’ and not by other names such as (القَوِيُّ الْعَظِيمُ) which means ‘The Almighty, The Great’, (الْغَفُورُ الرَّحِيمُ) which means ‘The Most Forgiving, The Most Merciful’, (التَّوَّابُ الْحَكِيمُ) which means ‘The Ever-Receiver of Repentance, The Wise’ or (الْقَادِرُ الْمُقْتَدِرُ) which means ‘The Omnipotent, The All-Authoritative’?

Why did Allah ﷻ choose ﴿الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ﴾ to begin the Qur’an and the Fatihah and also to begin anything a person carries out?

The answer: This is the title of the message of Islam that Muhammad ﷺ The Prophet of Allah ﷻ had been sent with, as Allah ﷻ says:

﴿وَلَقَدْ كَتَبْنَا فِي الزَّبُورِ مِنْ بَعْدِ الذِّكْرِ أَنَّ الْأَرْضَ يَرِثُهَا عِبَادِيَ الصَّالِحُونَ﴾ (١٠٥) إِنَّ فِي هَذَا لَبَلَاغًا لِقَوْمٍ
عَابِدِينَ (١٠٦) وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَاكَ إِلَّا رَحْمَةً لِّلْعَالَمِينَ (١٠٧) ﴿

And We have already written in the book [of Zabur] after the [previous] mention that the land [of Paradise] is inherited by My righteous servants. Indeed, in this [Qur’an] is notification for a worshipping people. And We have not sent you, [O Muhammad], except as a mercy to the worlds.” [Surah Al-Anbiya’: 105-107].

Literally, the word *illa* which means ‘except’ indicates exclusivity. Therefore, the message of Islam exclusively brings mercy. Rasulullah ﷺ had

said: *“Verily, I am a gift of mercy.”*¹⁰ And when people said to him: “Why don’t you make a supplication against your people?” He ﷺ said: *“Oh Allah, guide my people to Faith, for they do not know.”*¹¹ Therefore, he ﷺ came as a mercy for mankind. He did not come to accuse people of disbelief, to terrorize them or to kill them. Neither did he come to spread malice, hatred or sectarianism. On the contrary, he came as a vast mercy for the human beings and the universe. He had been sent to connect with the obedient and the disobedient alike. He had also been tasked to connect with the believers, the hypocrites and the sinners. In short, he had been sent for everyone regardless of which group they belonged to. This is totally inconsistent with what we see today. For example, when a person sees someone who wants to recite the Holy Qur’an or perform the prayer, he says: “You used to commit so and so, and now you want to recite the Qur’an?” or “How dare you recite the Qur’an when you used to steal and commit adultery?” However, Allah ﷻ says, “Yes you can. Say:

﴿بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ﴾.” While saying it, he should remember The Most Gracious, The Most Merciful. He is the Most Gracious in this world and the next. He is the Most Merciful in the hereafter. He forgives sins, and calls His servant while promising him forgiveness: “Oh my servant, Come to Me and forget the sins you have committed, for My Mercy embraces all things.” Allah ﷻ says:

*﴿قُلْ يَا عِبَادِيَ الَّذِينَ أَسْرَفُوا عَلَىٰ أَنفُسِهِمْ لَا تَقْنَطُوا مِن رَّحْمَةِ اللَّهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَغْفِرُ الذُّنُوبَ جَمِيعًا إِنَّهُ هُوَ الْعَفُورُ
الرَّحِيمُ﴾*

“Say, ‘O My servants who have transgressed against themselves [by sinning], do not despair of the mercy of Allah. Indeed, Allah forgives all sins. Indeed, it is He who is the Forgiving, the Merciful.’” [Surah Az-Zumar: 53].

¹⁰ Sunan ad-Darimi: Foreword, Chapter: How the beginning of the matters of the Prophet ﷺ had been, Hadith no. 15

¹¹ Syu’abul Iman by Imam al-Baihaqi: 2/164, Hadith no. 1447

This is the religion of mercy which has its Book start every Surah with

﴿بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ﴾

“In the Name of Allah, Most Gracious, Most Merciful”.

It does not start with any of the other Glorious Names of Allah ﷻ as these two Names binds the human being towards the vastness of His Mercy and Forgiveness and His acceptance of repentance.

The word **Arrahman** is literally derived from the word *Rahim* which means the womb where the embryo receives its nutrition, water and all of the necessities of life without any effort. For the foetus receives the necessities of life in his mother’s womb without having to work for it. Here, he is depending totally on the One who provides the means and not his own effort. Therefore, the two Names ﴿الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ﴾ are derived from this word *Rahim*. Moreover, Rasulullah ﷺ has said:

((مَا مِنْكُمْ مِنْ أَحَدٍ يُدْخِلُهُ عَمَلُهُ الْجَنَّةَ. قَالُوا: وَلَا أَنْتَ يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ؟ قَالَ: وَلَا أَنَا إِلَّا أَنْ يَتَغَمَّدَنِي اللَّهُ مِنْهُ بِرَحْمَةٍ))

“None of you will enter Paradise because of his deeds alone. They said, ‘Not even you, O Messenger of Allah?’ He said, ‘Not even me, unless Allah grants me mercy from himself.’”¹²

So, if not for the Mercy of Allah ﷻ no one would enter Paradise due to his own deeds.

As for the difference between the Names *Arrahman* and *Arrahim*:

The Name *Arrahman* which means ‘The Most Gracious’ is more encompassing and comprehensive.

A question might arise: Do the Attributes of Allah ﷻ differ in comprehensiveness and scope?

¹² Al-Mu’jam al-Kabeer by Imam at-Thobrani: Chapter ‘ش’, Syarik Ibn Thoriq Ibn Sufyan, Hadith no. 7221

The answer: They do not, as Allah's ﷻ Attributes are not subject to increase or decrease. However, that which is related to them, do.

The Prophet ﷺ has said:

((جَعَلَ اللهُ الرَّحْمَةَ فِي مِائَةِ جُزْءٍ فَأَمْسَكَ عِنْدَهُ تِسْعَةً وَتِسْعِينَ جُزْءًا، وَأَنْزَلَ فِي الْأَرْضِ جُزْءًا وَاحِدًا، فَمِنْ ذَلِكَ الْجُزْءِ يَتَرَاحَمُ الْخَلْقُ حَتَّى تَرْفَعَ الْفَرَسُ حَافِرَهَا عَنْ وَلَدِهَا خَشْيَةً أَنْ تُصِيبَهُ))

“Allah has divided mercy into one hundred parts; and He retained with Him ninety-nine parts, and sent down to earth one part. Through this one part, creatures deal with one another with compassion, so much so that a horse lifts its hoof over its young lest it should hurt it.”¹³

Allah's ﷻ Mercy in the hereafter is vast. However, He has reserved it only for His believing servants, as He says:

(﴿وَرَحْمَتِي وَسِعَتْ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ فَسَأَكْتُبُهَا لِلَّذِينَ يَتَّقُونَ وَيُؤْتُونَ الزَّكَاةَ وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ بِآيَاتِنَا يُؤْمِنُونَ﴾)

“but My mercy encompasses all things.’ So I will decree it [especially] for those who fear Me and give zakah and those who believe in Our verses”

[Surah Al-A'raaf: 156].

However, His Mercy to His servants in this world encompasses all of His creations. In this world, He ﷻ gives to both the believer and the non-believer. Rain falls on everyone, and His blessings encompass all His servants. He says:

(﴿هُوَ الَّذِي جَعَلَ لَكُمْ الْأَرْضَ ذُلُولًا فَامْشُوا فِي مَنَاكِبِهَا وَكُلُوا مِنْ رِزْقِهِ وَإِلَيْهِ النُّشُورُ﴾)

“It is He who made the earth tame for you - so walk among its slopes and eat of His provision - and to Him is the resurrection.” [Surah Al-Mulk: 15].

This verse is not addressed specifically to the believers. Rather, He grants provision to both the believers and the non-believers. Therefore, He is The

¹³ Sahih al-Bukhari: The Book of Adab, Chapter: Allah divided mercy into one hundred parts Hadith no. 5654

Most Gracious in this world and The Most Merciful in the hereafter, as Paradise is only for the believers.

This does not mean the Attributes of Allah ﷻ are subject to increase and decrease, rather it is the qualities related to them that are.

There is also an opinion which states that Allah's ﷻ name *Arrahman* indicates the greater blessings, while His Name *Arrahim* indicates the delicate ones.

Let us return to pondering upon the Holy Qur'an. A question arises:

How is the Qur'an able to address humankind over the centuries?

Whereas there is a very long period between the revelation and our time today. The human mind today is also not like the human mind in the seventh century. We are also not in the same place and time. Thus, the time, place and people have changed.

The Holy Qur'an comprises 6236 verses. From amongst them, only 500 verses are connected to prayer, fasting, *Zakah*, pilgrimage, inheritance, fighting and *Jihad*. So, what are the topics covered by the rest of the 5700 or more verses?

They concern the universal norms and the laws that Allah ﷻ had arranged this universe upon. We can also conclude the historical norms from most of the verses containing stories. They also contain the laws of living, death, utilization of resources and many others.

Once, a scholar was talking about the norms of the universe in his lesson. One of those present stood up and said to him, "Oh Syeikh! Give us a lesson on purification, ablution and prayer. What is all this talk regarding the universal norms?" The Syeikh answered him, "For God's sake, come on! How many verses in the Qur'an speak about ablution? Verily, it is one verse:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِذَا قُمْتُمْ إِلَى الصَّلَاةِ فَاغْسِلُوا وُجُوهَكُمْ وَأَيْدِيَكُمْ إِلَى الْمَرَافِقِ وَامْسَحُوا بِرُءُوسِكُمْ وَأَرْجُلَكُمْ

إِلَى الْكَعْبَيْنِ

“Oh you who have believed, when you rise to [perform] prayer, wash your faces and your forearms to the elbows and wipe over your heads and wash your feet to the ankles.” [Surah Al-Ma'idah: 6].

Should we limit ourselves to this verse and leave the other verses?”

Thus it is, the problem of the nation is due to the ignorance of the Holy Qur'an and the Book.

Therefore, we have to take our share of contemplating all the verses of the Holy Qur'an as Allah ﷻ has intended us to, without confining ourselves to some of the verses and leaving out some others.

As for the verses concerning the worship and rulings, Rasulullah ﷺ has already interpreted them, and no one can add on to his interpretation. Therefore, a *Mufassir* or exegete of today cannot add on to the words of the Prophet ﷺ, as Allah ﷻ says:

يَوْمَا آتَاكُمْ الرَّسُولُ فَخُذُوهُ وَمَا نَهَاكُمْ عَنْهُ فَانْتَهُوا

“And whatever the Messenger has given you - take; and what he has forbidden you - refrain from.” [Surah Al-Hasyr: 7].

However, he ﷻ has left more than 5700 verses for the human intellect. They are the verses connected to the universal norms, the Qur'anic stories and science.

It is agreed upon that the Holy Qur'an is the Speech of Allah ﷻ which was revealed to the Prophet ﷺ and every single verse in it is miraculous. Its recitation is considered a form of worship and it begins with Surah Al-Fatihah and ends with Surah An-Nas.

The one who wants to embark upon an interpretation of the Holy Qur'an has to be well-versed in some specific sciences, especially the Arabic language. How can someone who is not familiar with even the letters of the Arabic Language from the *Alif* to the *Ya'* interpret the Qur'an? How can the foreign groups which charge others of disbelief interpret the Holy Qur'an when they do not even possess the first condition of *Tafseer* which is knowledge of the Arabic Language?

This is because, the Holy Qur'an was revealed in the Arabic Language. Whereas the nature of the Arabic Language is such that many of its words can have more than one meaning. For example, the word (عَيْنٌ) could mean the eye with which we see with, a spring and also a spy. Thus, a single word could have multiple implications. Therefore, not any Tom, Dick and Harry can set out to interpret the Holy Qur'an. It can only be carried out by someone who has a good grasp of the Arabic Language. Similarly, the one who goes on the rostrum to deliver the *Khutbah* whilst making grammatical mistakes in the "*dhabt*"(diacritical marks) of words cannot set off to interpret the Holy Qur'an.

A mistake in the diacritical marks of even one word in the Qur'an could be disastrous. For example, in this verse:

﴿ أَنْ اللَّهَ بَرِيءٌ مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ وَرَسُولُهُ ﴾

"that Allah is disassociated from the disbelievers, and [so is] His Messenger."

[Surah At-Tawbah: 3],

if you were to recite the word (وَرَسُولُهُ) with a *Kasrah* instead of a *Dhommah*, the whole meaning would change to mean: (that Allah is disassociated from the disbelievers, **and from** His Messenger.). Thus, knowledge of the Arabic Language is core in the *Tafseer* of the Holy Qur'an.

Another example is in the verse:

﴿إِنَّ رَحْمَةَ اللَّهِ قَرِيبٌ مِّنَ الْمُحْسِنِينَ﴾

“Indeed, the mercy of Allah is near to the doers of good.”

[Surah Al-A’raaf: 56].

A person might wonder why Allah ﷻ did not use the adjective ‘near’ in its feminine form, *Qareebah*, instead of its masculine form, *Qareeb*, as it is a description for a feminine noun, *Rahmatullah* or the mercy of Allah ﷻ.

The answer: This is because, the word *qareeb* refers to Allah ﷻ, not to the mercy.

Every verse in the Holy Qur’an has a significance. This is because, the Holy Qur’an does not contain any repetitions. Rather, it contains secrets. For example, Allah ﷻ says:

﴿وَالسَّارِقُ وَالسَّارِقَةُ﴾

“[As for] the thief, the male and the female” [Surah Al-Ma’idah: 38] and

﴿الزَّانِيَةُ وَالزَّانِي﴾

“The [unmarried] woman or [unmarried] man found guilty of sexual intercourse” [Surah An-Nuur: 2].

Why is the male thief mentioned before the female thief but the adulteress mentioned first before the adulterer?

Certainly, the one who has no knowledge of the Arabic Language and the purposes of the Holy Qur’an will not know the answer to this.

We will find that the perfections of the Arabic Language are ordered rhythmically in the Book of Allah ﷻ which is miraculous in its structure and meanings. The mention of the male thief precedes his female counterpart as theft carried out by males is more common than theft by females. However, the

female, in her immorality and seduction, is the reason for adultery. Thus, Allah ﷻ says:

﴿وَالسَّارِقُ وَالسَّارِقَةُ فَاقْطَعُوا أَيْدِيَهُمَا جِزَاءً بِمَا كَسَبَا نَكَالًا مِنَ اللَّهِ وَاللَّهُ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ﴾

“[As for] the thief, the male and the female, amputate their hands in recompense for what they committed as a deterrent [punishment] from Allah. And Allah is Exalted in Might and Wise.” [Al-Ma’idah:38].

Al-Asma’ee once said: One day, I was reciting this verse: ﴿وَالسَّارِقُ وَالسَّارِقَةُ﴾ while an Arab Bedouin was seated beside me. However, I had absent-mindedly recited the ending of the verse as (والله غفور رحيم). The Bedouin said, “Whose words are these?” I answered, “The Words of Allah ﷻ.” He said, “These are not the Words of Allah ﷻ. Repeat them!” I repeated them and realized my mistake, thus I read correctly: ﴿وَاللَّهُ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ﴾ Then he said, “Yes, these are the Words of Allah ﷻ.” I said to him, “Do you recite the Qur’an?” He replied, “No.” So I said, “Then, how did you know that I had made a mistake?” He said, “Oh my man! He has the Supreme Power; thus, He judges and then cuts off. If He had forgiven and had mercy, He would not have cut!”

Another example of the literary miracles in the Holy Qur’an is found in the verse:

﴿وَلَا تَقْتُلُوا أَوْلَادَكُمْ خَشْيَةَ إِمْلَاقٍ نَحْنُ نَرْزُقُهُمْ وَإِيَّاكُمْ﴾

“And do not kill your children for fear of poverty. We provide for them and for you.” [Surah Al-Isra’: 31] and

﴿وَلَا تَقْتُلُوا أَوْلَادَكُمْ مِنْ إِمْلَاقٍ نَحْنُ نَرْزُقُكُمْ وَإِيَّاهُمْ﴾

“and do not kill your children out of poverty; We will provide for you and them.” [Surah Al-An’aam: 151].

The difference between the two verses is that in the first one, poverty had not happened, but there is a fear of it happening. This is because, the Arabs used

to kill their children in fear of imminent poverty. Thus, Allah ﷻ had promised to grant the sustenance for their children first. In the second verse, poverty had struck them. Thus, Allah ﷻ guarantees their sustenance, and then their children's.

From this example and all those similar to it, it becomes apparent to us that the one who is ignorant of the Arabic language cannot embark on the *Tafseer* of the Holy Qur'an.

There are also other sciences that the one who is interpreting the Holy Qur'an should know, such as the Sciences of *Qiraat*, the *Nasikh* and *Mansukh* (The Abrogating and The Abrogated), the *Asbabun Nuzul* (the reasons for revelation), the verses connected to rulings, the verses connected to *Jihad*, the laws of business transactions and *Akhlaq*.

He is also required to be knowledgeable concerning the sciences of his age, as we are now in the time of science and development. We often hear of issues concerning transmitted knowledge and the intellect. Transmitted knowledge refers to the texts which are transmitted from Allah ﷻ and His Messenger ﷺ. The intellect becomes the reason a person is tasked with responsibilities. Therefore, does faith in Allah ﷻ depend on the texts or on the intellect? The intellect has to be firstly utilized to attain the faith in Allah ﷻ, and then the faith in the texts. Lastly, it has to be used to understand and apply these texts.

There is a fundamental connection between faith and knowledge, as the miracle of the Holy Qur'an is knowledge. The first verses that were revealed of the Qur'an were:

﴿اَفْرَأْ بِاسْمِ رَبِّكَ الَّذِي خَلَقَ (١) خَلَقَ الْإِنْسَانَ مِنْ عَلَقٍ (٢) اَفْرَأْ وَرَبُّكَ الْأَكْرَمُ (٣) الَّذِي عَلَّمَ بِالْقَلَمِ (٤) عَلَّمَ الْإِنْسَانَ مَا لَمْ يَعْلَمْ (٥)﴾

“Recite in the name of your Lord who created, Created man from a clinging substance. Recite, and your Lord is the most Generous, Who taught by the pen, Taught man that which he knew not.” [Surah Al-‘Alaq: 1-5].

The Fatihah is not the first Surah which was revealed.

Look at the words: *Iqra’* which means ‘read!’, *Allama* which means ‘to teach’, *Al-Insan* which means ‘the human being’ and *Al-Qalam* which means ‘the pen’. Allah ﷻ commences His address to mankind with them. This indicates the relationship between faith and knowledge.

When Allah ﷻ calls us to *Iman*, He requests us to think and use our intellects. We can find such a request among the ending verses of Surah Ali ‘Imran:

﴿ إِنَّ فِي خَلْقِ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَاخْتِلَافِ اللَّيْلِ وَالنَّهَارِ لآيَاتٍ لِّأُولِي الْأَلْبَابِ (١٩٠) الَّذِينَ يَذْكُرُونَ اللَّهَ قِيَامًا وَقُعُودًا وَعَلَىٰ جُنُوبِهِمْ وَيَتَفَكَّرُونَ فِي خَلْقِ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ رَبَّنَا مَا خَلَقْتَ هَذَا بَاطِلًا سُبْحَانَكَ فَقِنَا

عَذَابَ النَّارِ (١٩١)﴾

“Indeed, in the creation of the heavens and the earth and the alternation of the night and the day are signs for those of understanding. Who remember Allah while standing or sitting or [lying] on their sides and give thought to the creation of the heavens and the earth, [saying], “Our Lord, You did not create this aimlessly;exalted are You [above such a thing] then protect us from the punishment of the Fire [Surah Ali ‘Imran: 190-191].

These people think, remember and make inferences through the knowledge that they have, until they attain fear of Allah ﷻ and constant glorification of Him and are always seeking protection from the punishment of the hellfire. Thus, knowledge is the basis for faith.

Similarly, the intellect is also a basis for faith. If I were to hold a pen and write with it in front of you, you would be convinced that it was really ‘a pen’ through your knowledge, intellect and practice. However, if I said about the pen,

“This is a serpent.”, no one at all would believe me. If I were to give an amount of money to some of the people present or were to bring a weapon to force them to say that it was a serpent, they might say what I wanted them to say. However, it would still not be true. Thus, neither wealth nor strength is a way to attain faith. Rather, the only paths to faith are through knowledge and intellect. Allah ﷻ says:

﴿لَا إِكْرَاهَ فِي الدِّينِ﴾

“There shall be no compulsion in [acceptance of] the religion.” [Surah Al-Baqarah: 256] and

﴿فَذَكِّرْ إِنَّمَا أَنْتَ مُذَكِّرٌ (٢١) لَسْتَ عَلَيْهِمْ بِمُصَيِّرٍ (٢٢)﴾

“So remind, [Oh Muhammad]; you are only a reminder. You are not over them a controller.” [Surah Al-Ghashiyah: 21-22].

Our religion is not a religion of coercion but a religion of choice. The religion cannot be forced upon anyone as it consists of *Aqeedah*. The word *Aqeedah* literally comes from the word *Aqada* which means ‘to tie’. Therefore, the *Aqeedah* is the tying of something via the intellect. Allah ﷻ says:

﴿وَقُلِ الْحَقُّ مِنْ رَبِّكُمْ فَمَنْ شَاءَ فَلْيُؤْمِنْ وَمَنْ شَاءَ فَلْيُكْفُرْ﴾

“And say, ‘The truth is from your Lord, so whoever wills - let him believe; and whoever wills - let him disbelieve.’” [Surah Al-Kahf: 29].

Allah ﷻ has given us tools to obtain knowledge, as He says:

﴿إِنَّ السَّمْعَ وَالْبَصَرَ وَالْفُؤَادَ كُلُّ أُولَئِكَ كَانَ عَنْهُ مَسْئُولًا﴾

“Indeed, the hearing, the sight and the heart - about all those [one] will be questioned.” [Surah Al-Isra’: 36] and

﴿وَاللَّهُ أَحْرَجَكُمْ مِنْ بُطُونِ أُمَّهَاتِكُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ شَيْئًا وَجَعَلَ لَكُمُ السَّمْعَ وَالْأَبْصَارَ

وَالْأَفْئِدَةَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُونَ﴾

“And Allah has extracted you from the wombs of your mothers not knowing a thing, and He made for you hearing and vision and intellect that perhaps you would be grateful.” [Surah An-Nahl: 78].

These tools, namely, the intellect, hearing and sight, are the tools which the human being utilizes to derive at his faith. As the relationship between *Iman* and knowledge is a firm relationship, there is no *Iman* without knowledge. In the Holy Qur’an, there are more than a thousand verses concerning science and the universe. They are like treasures waiting for people who can extract them, and the extraction of treasure needs searching. Therefore, as the human intellect develops, it discovers more and more scientific matters present in the Book of Allah ﷻ. One such example are these verses in Surah Ar-Rahman:

﴿مَرَجَ الْبَحْرَيْنِ يَلْتَقِيَانِ (١٩) بَيْنَهُمَا بَرْزَخٌ لَا يَبْغِيَانِ (٢٠)﴾

“He released the two seas, meeting [side by side]; Between them is a barrier [so] neither of them transgresses.” [Surah Ar-Rahman: 19-20].

It is a scientific miracle hidden in the Holy Qur’an. Allah ﷻ has informed us of scientific realities of the universe which could not be comprehended by the human intellect during the period of revelation because they were not revealed for that period. Most of the *Mufasssirin* (Interpreters) of the past said: “The two seas are separated by a barrier made up of fog/mist.” However, in this age of the satellites, it becomes clear that the two seas do not differ in salinity, density and weight. However, they are separated by a barrier of water which is different in salinity, density and weight. Thus, this was a scientific matter which had been left undiscovered until the human intellect had developed enough to discover it. If Rasulullah ﷺ had tried to explain it to the people of his time, it would have distracted them from guidance. This is because, the human intellect was not ready to comprehend it at that time. Another example is the verse:

﴿لَا الشَّمْسُ يَنْبَغِي لَهَا أَنْ تُدْرِكَ الْقَمَرَ﴾

“It is not allowable for the sun to reach the moon” [Surah Yaaseen: 40].

The mind might be deceived when looking at the sun as it is bigger and think that the moon overtakes it. These celestial beings had not been discovered yet at that time. They had not known that each one of the sun and moon had their own orbits and paths, and that the rotation of the moon was smaller and faster. If the Holy Qur'an had been from the Prophet ﷺ himself, he would not have announced a statement that could be proven wrong over time. However, he was trustworthy in what he had conveyed, as he was conveying from Allah ﷻ. Allah ﷻ was the One who had supported him with the scientific miracles, the realities of the universe, the unseen from the historical happenings and the literary eloquence. He had also challenged humanity with news of the future and had challenged the Arabs with the very thing that they had excelled in during their time - eloquence and rhetorics-.

All of these were revealed to support Rasulallah ﷺ and to prove to people that he was sent from Allah ﷻ. Everything he said and did was non other than a revelation which was revealed to him. The Qur'anic verses were sent down to him through Jibril ﷺ. Then, he had conveyed them to mankind exactly as they had been revealed, with the mission of directing people towards guidance and worship.

The verses concerning creation will remain as miracles which people will continue discovering throughout the ages, as Allah ﷻ says:

﴿سَنُرِيهِمْ آيَاتِنَا فِي الْآفَاقِ وَفِي أَنْفُسِهِمْ حَتَّىٰ يَتَبَيَّنَ لَهُمْ أَنَّهُ الْحَقُّ أَوَلَمْ يَكْفِ بِرَبِّكَ
أَنَّهُ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ شَهِيدٌ﴾

“We will show them Our signs in the horizons and within themselves until it becomes clear to them that it is the truth. But is it not sufficient concerning your Lord that He is, over all things, a Witness?” [Surah Fussilat: 53].

The path will continue being protected by the miracle and the miracle will continue being protected by the path, until Allah ﷻ takes back the Earth and everyone on it.

Among the examples of the historical miracles are the verses in Surah Ar-Ruum:

﴿الم (١) غَلِبَتِ الرُّومُ (٢) فِي أَدْنَى الْأَرْضِ وَهُمْ مِنْ بَعْدِ غَلَبِهِمْ سَيَغْلِبُونَ (٣)﴾

“Alif, Lam, Meem. The Byzantines have been defeated, In the nearest land. But they, after their defeat, will overcome.” [Surah Ar-Ruum: 1-3].

This verse speaks about the battles between the Persians and the Romans. Why did the Prophet ﷺ inform people of the result of the battle before it had even happened, whereas the Romans might not even be the victorious? How could he have told people of a future event that would happen in the lowest land? How did you know, Oh my leader, Oh Rasulallah ﷺ, that the battle between these two parties would happen in the lowest point of the land? This is a clear miracle. Furthermore, that which the Prophet ﷺ had informed of had become a reality.

Among the verses in which we can find the scientific miracles is the verse:

﴿كُلَّمَا نَضِجَتْ جُلُودُهُمْ بَدَّلْنَاهُمْ جُلُودًا غَيْرَهَا لِيَذُوقُوا الْعَذَابَ﴾

“Every time their skins are roasted through We will replace them with other skins so they may taste the punishment.” [Surah An-Nisaa’: 56].

Why is the skin specified? This is because, the nerves are found below the skin, and the senses are felt through them.

From all these verses which have been discussed, we can deduce that having scientific knowledge is also a condition for the one who wants to embark on the *Tafseer* (Interpretation) of the Holy Qur’an. He also has to be well-versed in the sciences of his time. The contemporary *Mufasssir* (Interpreter) cannot be ignorant and not know, for example, astronomy or new technology.

However, it is not that the *Mufasssir* (Interpreter) is required to be an astronomer, for an instance. He is at least supposed to be knowledgeable and

understand what goes on around the Earth. He cannot appear on screen, like some of the Wahabis do, and declare, for example, that the Earth is not round. Moreover, he uses the verse which indicates the sphericity of the Earth to prove that it is not!! Some of them have even authored books to prove this. This is not due to anything except their ignorance of science.

Therefore, the one who wants to interpret the Holy Qur'an needs to strengthen himself with these sciences. He has to know the principles and meet the conditions of *Tafseer*. He also has to be well-versed in the Arabic Language and the Sciences of *Nasikh* and *Mansukh* (The Abrogating and The Abrogated), the *Asbabun Nuzul* (the reasons for revelation) and *Usul Fiqh* (The Principles of Islamic Jurisprudence). This last science is important as the Holy Qur'an contains many verses concerning rulings. Therefore, the one who does not know *Usul Fiqh* cannot embark on *Tafseer*.

It is narrated that Imam Abu Hanifah An-Nu'man visited Abu Yusuf when he was sick. When he had left, he said (as he knew who Abu Yusuf was), "If this young man passes away, he was the most knowledgeable person on this Earth. If we were to lose Abu Yusuf, the world will be at a great loss." Abu Yusuf was one of the most honourable and knowledgeable students of Abu Hanifah. He had kept by Abu Hanifah and studied Jurisprudence from him. He had also narrated from him two thirds of his *Mazhab* (The Hanafi School of Thought).

(*Mazahib Fiqhiyyah* or The Schools of Thought in Jurisprudence): It refers to the sciences of the methods of extraction from the texts pertaining to a specific occurrence which had occurred in order to conclude the ruling of Allah ﷻ .

Therefore, we are not supposed to sanctify the understanding of mankind (without the proper methodology), for verily, sanctity is only for the Speech of the God of mankind. These Schools of Thought are intellectual issues, not sectarian thoughts.

When Abu Yusuf had studied the The Hanafi School of Thought, he decided to conduct his own lesson in one of the mosques in Baghdad. When Imam Abu Hanifah learnt of this, he wanted to send to Abu Yusuf a message, not harshly but as a gentle reminder (as our religion is a religion of gentleness, not a religion of harshness). So, he sent someone to ask him the following question: (If you wanted to enter into the prayers, do you enter it with a *Fardh* (an obligatory action) or with a *Sunnah* (a supererogatory action)?) Abu Hanifah told the man, "If he answers that it is with a *Fardh*, tell him that he is wrong. And if he answers that it is with a *Sunnah*, tell him that he is wrong." So, the man went to Abu Yusuf and asked him, "If you wanted to enter into the prayers, do you enter it with a *Fardh* or with a *Sunnah*?" Abu Yusuf answered, "With a *Fardh*." The man said to him, "That is wrong." So, Abu Yusuf said, "With a *Sunnah* then." The man answered again, "That is wrong." At this point, Abu Yusuf understood that Abu Hanifah was the one who had sent this person to ask him the question. So, he went to meet Abu Hanifah and said, "I knew that this question was from you and could not be from other than you." Imam Abu Hanifah said to him, "How can you start teaching before you have mastered *Usul Fiqh*?"

Therefore, the one who wants to embark on teaching and *Tafseer* must be knowledgeable in *Usul Fiqh* (The Principles of Islamic Jurisprudence) and the *Qawa'id Syar'iyah* (The Canons of Islam).

The answer to the question posed by Imam Abu Hanifah An-Nu'man is: The Muslim enters into the prayers with both the *Fardh* and *Sunnah*. This is because, the *Takbiratul Ihram* is a *Fardh* while the lifting of the hands is a *Sunnah*, and you enter the prayers with both at once.

This story teaches us that a person has to know himself and the level of his knowledge. Therefore, the one who wants to embark on *Tafseer* has to ensure that he has all the necessary qualifications to carry it out.

The Fundamental principles and methodology of *Tafseer*:

Firstly: Interpreting the Qur'an with the Qur'an.

We do not interpret the Qur'an in the same way it is interpreted by those who falsely interpret the verses concerning the sword and fighting. They wrongfully claim that these verses call for every Muslim to kill the non-Muslims.

Since even the Hadith has to be linked to other Hadith when we want to explain it, what more the Book of Allah ﷻ? Thus, the Holy Qur'an is interpreted firstly through the Qur'an itself.

For example, when Allah ﷻ says:

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

“And [mention] when We said to the angels, ‘Prostrate before Adam’; so they prostrated, except for Iblees. He refused and was arrogant and became of the disbelievers.” [Surah Al-Baqarah: 34],

we will not know that Iblis is of the jinn without referring to the verse in Surah Al-Kahf:

﴿فَسَجَدُوا إِلَّا إِبْلِيسَ كَانَ مِنَ الْجِنِّ فَفَسَقَ عَنْ أَمْرِ رَبِّهِ﴾

“they prostrated, except for Iblees. He was of the jinn and departed from the command of his Lord” [Surah Al-Kahf: 50].

Therefore, the Mufassir (Interpreter) has to have a grasp of the whole Qur'an. A person who wants to interpret Surah Al-Fatihah cannot do so if he does not know the interpretation of the other Surahs. This is because, many of the verses interpret each other and some verses provide the meanings of some other verses.

For example, to interpret the following verses:

﴿وَأَقْتُلُواهُمْ حَيْثُ نَفَقْتُمْهُمْ﴾

“And kill them wherever you overtake them” [Surah Al-Baqarah: 191] and

﴿وَقَاتِلُوا الْمُشْرِكِينَ كَافَّةً كَمَا يُقَاتِلُونَكُمْ كَافَّةً﴾

“And fight against the disbelievers collectively as they fight against you collectively.” [Surah At-Tawbah: 36],

we cannot separate them from all the other verses. The one who wants to use these verses to conclude an intended point must also be knowledgeable of the circumstances that they were revealed in, the context that they came together with and the time and place of their revelation. There are other verses which say:

﴿مَنْ قَتَلَ نَفْسًا بِغَيْرِ نَفْسٍ أَوْ فَسَادٍ فِي الْأَرْضِ فَكَأَنَّمَا قَتَلَ النَّاسَ جَمِيعًا وَمَنْ أَحْيَاهَا

فَكَأَنَّمَا أَحْيَا النَّاسَ جَمِيعًا﴾

“whoever kills a soul unless for a soul or for corruption [done] in the land - it is as if he had slain mankind entirely. And whoever saves one - it is as if he had saved mankind entirely.” [Surah Al-Ma'idah: 32],

﴿لَا إِكْرَاهَ فِي الدِّينِ﴾

“There shall be no compulsion in [acceptance of] the religion.” [Surah Al-Baqarah: 256] and

﴿فَمَنْ شَاءَ فَلْيُؤْمِنْ وَمَنْ شَاءَ فَلْيُكْفُرْ﴾

“so whoever wills - let him believe; and whoever wills - let him disbelieve.”
[Surah Al-Kahf: 29].

Therefore, I cannot cut out this verse:

﴿وَقَاتِلُوا الْمُشْرِكِينَ كَافَّةً﴾

“And fight against the disbelievers collectively” [Surah At-Tawbah: 36]

and then say: “Verily, I have been commanded to kill all the disbelievers!” This is a distortion of *Tafseer* from its true direction, from the Objectives of the Islamic Law and from the essence of the Islamic Legislation. This happens when the Qur’an is not interpreted through the Qur’an.

Rasulullah ﷺ had also said:

((أَمَرْتُ أَنْ أَقَاتِلَ النَّاسَ حَتَّى يَشْهَدُوا أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَأَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا رَسُولُ اللَّهِ، وَيُقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَيُؤْتُوا الزَّكَاةَ، فَإِذَا فَعَلُوا ذَلِكَ، عَصَمُوا مِنِّي دِمَاءَهُمْ وَأَمْوَالَهُمْ إِلَّا بِحَقِّ الْإِسْلَامِ، وَجَسَابُهُمْ عَلَى اللَّهِ))

“I have been commanded to fight against the people till they testify La ilaha illAllah (There is no true god except Allah) and that Muhammad is His slave and Messenger, and to establish As-Salat (Iqamat-as-Salat), and to pay Zakat; and if they do this, then their blood and property are secured except by the rights of Islam, and their accountability is left to Allah.”¹⁴

Does this mean that the Prophet ﷺ had commanded us to fight with people? And that we are supposed to kill everyone of the non-Muslims whom we meet? And that we are supposed to raise our swords in his face until he says: “Laa Ilaha Illallah?” How can this be, when we say that Islam does not force people to believe? This is because, Iman is placed in the heart, as it is, as the Prophet ﷺ mentioned:

((مَا وَقَرَ فِي الْقَلْبِ وَصَدَّقَهُ الْعَمَلُ))

“That which is found in the heart and is certified by actions”¹⁵

Thus, it is an Aqeedah or belief. The word Aqeedah literally comes from the word Aqada, which means ‘to tie’. Therefore, the Aqeedah is tied and settles in the heart like a fastened knot. It is not possible for the Iman to be tied in the heart except if the intellect is convinced of it. Thus, Allah ﷻ has

¹⁴ Sahih al-Bukhari: The Book of Belief, Chapter: "But if they repent and perform the prayers and give Zakah, then leave their way free", Hadith no. 25

¹⁵ Musannaf Ibn Abi Syaibah: The Book of Belief and Dreams, Hadith no. 30351

made for us the hearing, sight and mind so that we can comprehend and then believe strongly as a result of the certainty that we have reached. The Holy Qur'an also says:

﴿إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَأْمُرُ بِالْعَدْلِ وَالْإِحْسَانِ وَإِيتَاءِ ذِي الْقُرْبَىٰ وَيَنْهَىٰ عَنِ الْفَحْشَاءِ وَالْمُنْكَرِ وَالْبَغْيِ يَعِظُكُم لَعَلَّكُمْ تَذَكَّرُونَ﴾

“Indeed, Allah orders justice and good conduct and giving to relatives and forbids immorality and bad conduct and oppression. He admonishes you that perhaps you will be reminded.” [Surah An-Nahl: 90], and

Allah ﷻ also says:

﴿وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَاكَ إِلَّا رَحْمَةً لِّلْعَالَمِينَ﴾

“And We have not sent you, [Oh Muhammad], except as a mercy to the worlds.” [Surah Al-Anbiya': 107] and

﴿فَبِمَا رَحْمَةٍ مِّنَ اللَّهِ لِنْتَ لَهُمْ وَلَوْ كُنْتَ فَظًّا غَلِيظَ الْقَلْبِ لَانفَضُّوا مِنْ حَوْلِكَ فَاعْفُ عَنْهُمْ وَاسْتَغْفِرْ لَهُمْ وَشَاوِرْهُمْ فِي الْأَمْرِ﴾

“So by mercy from Allah, [Oh Muhammad], you were lenient with them. And if you had been rude [in speech] and harsh in heart, they would have disbanded from about you. So pardon them and ask forgiveness for them and consult them in the matter.” [Surah Ali 'Imran: 159].

It did not say: “Kill them!”

If all of us understood that the Holy Qur'an is not interpreted except first through the Qur'an, those people who want to exploit religion for their political interests, such as the terrorist organizations, will never be able to convince anyone to follow their desired intentions. Furthermore, our Prophet ﷺ has said,

((مَا أَمَنَ بِي مَنْ بَاتَ شَبَعَانًا وَجَارُهُ جَانِعٌ إِلَىٰ جَنْبِهِ وَهُوَ يَعْلَمُ بِهِ))

“The person who sleeps with a full stomach whereas his neighbour next to him is hungry while he knows of this is not a believer in me.”¹⁶ and

((دَخَلَتْ امْرَأَةٌ النَّارَ فِي هِرَّةٍ رَبَطَتْهَا، فَلَمْ تُطْعِمَهَا، وَلَمْ تَدَعِهَا تَأْكُلْ مِنْ خَشَاشِ الْأَرْضِ))

“A woman entered the Fire because of a cat which she had tied, neither giving it food nor setting it free to eat from the vermin of the earth.”¹⁷

From here, we can see that this religion will not approve of the killing of an ant, what more the killing of a human being?! And moreover, for what reason is he killed? Due to his religion? The religion is faith, and the religion is obtained through guidance, as Allah ﷻ says:

﴿ادْعُ إِلَى سَبِيلِ رَبِّكَ بِالْحُكْمَةِ وَالْمَوْعِظَةِ الْحَسَنَةِ وَجَادِلْهُمْ بِلَّتِي هِيَ أَحْسَنُ﴾

“Call people to the Way of your Rabb with wisdom and the best advice, and reason with them, if you have to, in the most courteous manner”

[Surah An-Nahl: 125].

He did not say: “Reason with them through the sword” nor did He say: “Kill them!”.

Therefore, if we come across one verse, we cannot force its meaning on all the other verses. This is because; the first step in interpretation is to interpret the Holy Qur’an through the Qur’an. For the verses complete and interpret one another.

¹⁶ Al-Mu’jam al-Kabeer by Imam at-Thobrani: Chapter ‘أ’, Anas Bin Malik Al-Ansari, Hadith no. 751

¹⁷ Sahih al-Bukhari: The Book of the Beginning of Creation, Chapter: Five kinds of animals that are harmful and allowed to be killed in Haram, Hadith no. 3140

Secondly: Interpreting the Holy Qur'an via the Sunnah:

The Qur'an is firstly interpreted through the Qur'an and is secondly interpreted through the Sunnah (Hadith).

The Prophet ﷺ is the one who conveys from Allah ﷻ and he does not speak of his own desire. Allah ﷻ says:

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا أَطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ وَلَا تَوَلَّوْا عَنْهُ وَأَنْتُمْ تَسْمَعُونَ﴾

“Oh you who have faith! Obey Allah and His Apostle, and do not turn away from him while you hear [him].” [Surah Al-Anfaal: 20],

﴿وَأَطِيعُوا الرَّسُولَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُرْحَمُونَ﴾ *“and obey the Apostle so that you may receive [Allah’s] mercy.”* [Surah An-Nuur: 56] and

﴿وَمَا آتَاكُمُ الرَّسُولُ فَخُذُوهُ وَمَا نَهَاكُمْ عَنْهُ فَانْتَهُوا﴾, *“Take whatever the Apostle gives you, and relinquish whatever he forbids you”* [Surah Al-Hasyr: 7].

However, why do we need to obey the Prophet whereas Allah ﷻ says:

﴿مَا قَرَّطْنَا فِي الْكِتَابِ مِنْ شَيْءٍ﴾

“We have not omitted anything from the Book.” [Surah Al-An'aam: 38]?

The answer is: Allah ﷻ wants to teach us that Rasulallah ﷺ is not only one who conveys the revelation, but he is the messenger of the revelation of Allah ﷻ. He is also the one and only lawgiver for the Muslims.

The word Sunnah literally comes from the word *Sanna*, which means ‘to establish’. Therefore, we can say: “He has *Sanna* or established a good practice” when a person has started something good.

The Sunnah of the Prophet ﷺ refers to his sayings, actions, acknowledgements and all that is connected to him ﷺ. Allah ﷻ says:

﴿لَقَدْ كَانَ لَكُمْ فِي رَسُولِ اللَّهِ أُسْوَةٌ حَسَنَةٌ﴾

“You have indeed, in the life of Rasulallah, the 'Best Model'”

[Surah Al-Ahzab: 21].

Here, Allah ﷻ did not say:

(بِرَسُولِ اللَّهِ) with the preposition ‘Ba, as this preposition brings the meaning of division. If this preposition had been used, we would have to take from Rasulallah ﷺ only what comes through revelation. However, Allah ﷻ says:

﴿فِي رَسُولِ اللَّهِ﴾. Thus, every single thing that comes from the Prophet ﷺ, of his sayings, actions and acknowledgements, is a model for those who hope for Allah ﷻ and the Hereafter. He is thus not the model for those who request to rule and form political organizations and artillery groups and then kill people with the claim that they are spreading the religion. Whereas Allah ﷻ says:

﴿وَلَوْ شَاءَ رَبُّكَ لَأَمَنَّ مِنَ فِي الْأَرْضِ كُلَّهُمْ جَمِيعًا ۖ أَفَأَنْتَ تُكْرَهُ النَّاسَ حَتَّىٰ يَكُونُوا مُؤْمِنِينَ﴾

“And had your Lord wished, all those who are on earth would have believed. Would you then force people until they become faithful?” [Surah Yunus: 99].

This verse answers all questions raised. If Allah ﷻ had wanted their guidance, He would have guided them without having to command us to bring our swords to fight them.

The behaviour of the Prophet ﷺ is the practical proof, verbal witness and living example of all the commands and prohibitions in the Holy Qur’an. Therefore, his Sunnah is the best interpretation for the Book of Allah ﷻ

When carrying out interpretations of verses that have multiple meanings, or the verses which are of the Mutashabih (The Unclear) type, we have to firstly look in the Holy Qur’an for their interpretations. Next, we look in the Sunnah and the Seerah (Biography) of Rasulallah ﷺ .

The one who has not studied the Seerah of the Prophet ﷺ cannot interpret the Holy Qur'an. For the Qur'an was revealed unto him and he was the one who was responsible for transmitting it. Therefore, he is the best person to interpret it.

The Prophet ﷺ had interpreted the Holy Qur'an through his behaviour, personal disposition and practical day to day living. He had then raised the honourable companions to the level of the Holy Qur'an, bringing a complete elevating of the Muslim nation. However, there are people in our age today who want to bring the Holy Qur'an down to their level, such as the terrorists and extremists. This has brought about a degeneration of the Muslim nation.

The Muslim and Arab nations today are facing a serious crisis they have never faced the likes of before. They are facing a dangerous conspiracy against Islam generally, and against Syria and the Arabs specifically. Destruction, devastation and killing has occurred in our countries under slogans and pretexts of religion, which have been interpreted falsely according to the desires of the conspirators, with the argument that they want to regain an Islamic Caliphate. In the whole Qur'an, there is not even one verse which is connected to the rulings regarding a Caliphate. There is not even one Hadith of the Prophet ﷺ which talks about the conditions of a Caliphate, nor the conditions of the Caliph who is to replace him.

From all of the Prophet's ﷺ words and the positions he had adopted, we derive general rules and principles. However, he ﷺ has not laid down specific ones. For example, regarding the affairs of this world, he ﷺ had said, (أنتم أعلم) (بشؤون دنياكم) "You are more knowledgeable of your worldly affairs." As for the affairs connected to politics and governance, we can see that he had arranged general principles for the relationship between the ruler and his subjects, such as consultancy, desired etiquette, justice, goodness and Beneficence. He did not constrain us within one strict mould.

Therefore, if we want to interpret the Holy Qur'an, we have to refer for every single matter to the actions of the Prophet ﷺ. This is because the importance we place in issues should be of the same weight as the importance the Holy Qur'an and the Prophet ﷺ have given to them. To illustrate this point: There are some issues which can only be found in one or two verses in the Holy Qur'an while there are some issues which are given four thousand verses. An example of the latter are the issues related to science which have taken up a big space in the Holy Qur'an, as Allah ﷻ says:

﴿ قُلْ سِيرُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ فَانظُرُوا ﴾

“Say, ‘Travel over the land and then observe...’ [Surah Al-‘Ankabut: 20].

So, we have to give more importance to them too.

Let us now return to the discussion on interpreting the Holy Qur'an through the Biography (Seerah) of the Prophet ﷺ, which is a part of the Sunnah. Through the Seerah, we know, for example, how the Prophet ﷺ had behaved towards the people of Mecca when he had entered it during its Conquest; what he had done when he went to Medina; how the Islamic legislations in Mecca had been; what the Medinan verses had requested of the Muslims; how the gradual legislations had been carried out in the beginning stages of prohibition of issues such as alcohol, which had been prohibited gradually, and the methods and techniques that had been used by Rasulullah ﷺ that was guided by revelation from His God.

We have stated previously that the greatness of the Prophet ﷺ lies in his illiteracy. This is because, due to this characteristic, he had obtained knowledge directly from His God;

﴿ وَعَلَّمَكَ مَا لَمْ تَكُن تَعْلَمُ ﴾

“and He has taught you what you did not know” [Surah An-Nisaa’: 113].

While illiteracy is considered a disability in people as the illiterate person is criticized for it. It is a praiseworthy trait for the Prophet ﷺ, as Allah ﷻ says:

﴿الَّذِينَ يَتَّبِعُونَ الرَّسُولَ النَّبِيَّ الْأُمِّيَّ﴾

“those who follow the Apostle, the uninstructed prophet”

[Surah Al-A'raaf: 157].

He had not been taught except by His God, thus, no flaw had entered into his knowledge. Thus, he became the teacher for all the scholars on this Earth.

Oh, illiterate one, it suffices to prove your rank

In knowledge that all the scholars submit to you

He received the Holy Qur'an from his God and astounded the greatest people of eloquence of his time. We can see this from Al-Walid Bin Al-Mughirah's description the Holy Qur'an: ***“By Allah, verily the speech that he said had a sweetness to it. It is of a high level of beauty. Its top is fruitful while its bottom is abundant. It transcends and will never be transcended upon. And verily, it crushes what is beneath it.”***¹⁸

The Prophet ﷺ had said regarding the Holy Qur'an:

((هُوَ الَّذِي لَا تَزِيغُ بِهِ الْأَهْوَاءُ وَلَا تَلْتَبِسُ بِهِ الْأَلْسِنَةُ وَلَا يَنْبَغُ مِنْهُ الْعُلَمَاءُ وَلَا يَخْلُقُ عَلَى كَنْزَةِ الرَّدِّ وَلَا تَنْقُضِي عَجَائِبُهُ))

*“and it is the one that the desires cannot distort, nor can the tongues twist, nor can the scholars ever have enough of it, and it shall not become dreary from reciting it much, and the amazement of it does not diminish.”*¹⁹

¹⁸ Al-Mustadrak 'alas Sahihayn: The Book of Tafseer, Tafseer of Surah (Al-Muddaththir), Hadith no. 3800

¹⁹ Sunan at-Tirmizi: Chapters on The Virtues of The Qur'an, Chapter: The Virtue of The Qur'an, Hadith no. 2906

Thus, he ﷺ had managed to, in his illiteracy, drink from the perfection of the Divine Knowledge. And if not for this characteristic in him (being an illiterate), he would not have been able to do this.

And as Allah ﷻ had given the Prophet ﷺ the permission to legislate, there would also have been issues which had not been mentioned directly in the Holy Qur'an but were included in this verse:

﴿وَمَا آتَاكُمُ الرَّسُولُ فَخُذُوهُ وَمَا نَهَاكُمْ عَنْهُ فَانْتَهُوا﴾

“Take whatever the Apostle gives you, and relinquish whatever he forbids you” [Surah Al-Hasyr: 7].

For example, the command to perform the obligations came in a summarized way in this verse:

﴿وَأَقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَآتُوا الزَّكَاةَ﴾

“And maintain the prayer, and give the zakāt” [Surah Al-Baqarah: 43].

However, the details of the rulings such as the number of Rak'aahs (cycles in each prayer), the amounts which need to be given out for the Zakah, the rituals found in pilgrimage and the rules of fasting, are explained in the Sunnah of Rasulallah ﷺ. Therefore, it is not possible to separate the Holy Qur'an from the Prophet ﷺ, just as it is not possible to separate the message from the one it was sent to. Allah ﷻ says:

﴿وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ فِيكُمْ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ﴾

“Know that the Apostle of Allah is among you.” [Surah Al-Hujurat: 7].

This verse is true for all times, as Rasulallah ﷺ exists amidst us through his Sunnah and through his actions which are interpretations of the Holy Qur'an. These actions make up the religious law which complies with the spirit of the texts and the Purposes of Islamic Legislation which are: (Protection of

the self, protection of the mind, protection of the wealth, protection of the progeny and protection of the religion.)

Rasulullah ﷺ had reminded his Ummah in the Farwell Pilgrimage:

((فَإِنَّ دِمَاءَكُمْ وَأَمْوَالَكُمْ عَلَيْكُمْ حَرَامٌ، كَحُرْمَةِ يَوْمِكُمْ هَذَا فِي، شَهْرِكُمْ هَذَا، فِي بَلَدِكُمْ هَذَا، إِلَى يَوْمِ تَلْقَوْنَ رَبَّكُمْ،
أَلَا هَلْ بَلَّغْتُ))

“For verily, your blood and your property are sacred to one another, as sacred as this day of yours, in this month of yours in this city of yours, until the day you meet your God. Behold! Have I conveyed the Commandments (of Allah) to you.”²⁰

The Sunnah and Hadith of the Prophet ﷺ give indicators for the interpretation of the verses which can bear multiple meanings; giving details of concise verses and setting boundaries to the limitless verses found in the Book of Allah ﷻ.

A question might arise: Why do these verses come with general meanings and not specified details?

The answer is that if they had come with explanations for everything, during the period of revelation, the Qur’anic gift would have ceased for the rest of the times. Therefore, as long as the Qur’anic gift is continuous, the accumulated treasures in it will also remain. Each generation will extract the gift that is specifically for it, suitable for its time and beneficial for its worldly life.

In summary, the one who wants to embark on *Tafseer* must know

the Sunnah of Rasulallah ﷺ and everything it encompasses, such as his sayings, actions and acknowledgements. It is an integral part of *Tafseer*.

Next, the one who embarks on *Tafseer* must have knowledge of

²⁰ Sahih al-Bukhari: The Book of Pilgrimage, Chapter: The Sermon during The Days of Mina, Hadith no. 1654

the sayings of the companions. They formed the social environment which surrounded the Prophet ﷺ; the best generation. They had believed in him, studied under him and gone through the important occurrences with him day after day. They had also lived through the revelation of the verses of the Holy Qur'an, such as the verse:

﴿ إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يُبَايِعُونَكَ إِنَّمَا يُبَايِعُونَ اللَّهَ يَدُ اللَّهِ فَوْقَ أَيْدِيهِمْ ﴾

“Indeed those who swear allegiance to you, swear allegiance only to Allah: the hand of Allah is above their hands.” [Surah Al-Fath: 10].

This verse was revealed concerning the group of the Muhajirin and Ansar who had witnessed the Pledge of Allegiance at Ar-Ridhwan (Bai'ah Ar-Ridhwan) and they were mentioned in the Holy Qur'an. So, we have to grasp their understanding of the Book of Allah ﷻ.

Among the conditions of *Tafseer* is the knowledge of the sciences of the period. This is an important condition, as the way of addressing people in every period is different from the way of addressing people in the other periods. The God is One, the Qur'an is one and the Islamic law is one. However, the human intellect differs from period to period and the human understanding is progressive and evolutionary.

The perfections that are found in the Words of Allah ﷻ nourish the understanding and the minds in every period. They present them with that which is suitable to their situation and time, in order to increase the faith in them. For example, Allah ﷻ describes the sun as the burning lamp but the moon as luminous. The people of that time had not known the difference between these two characteristics. However, today, it is known that the moon belongs to the Earth, rotates around it and gets its light from the sun. However, the sun is a blazing mass of fire which lights itself. The one who had received this Speech during the period of revelation had not ascended to the moon, nor was he an astrologist. However, this miracle was discovered in the later times.

There are verses in Surah Al-Ahzab which speak of the principles of the relationship between us and Rasulallah ﷺ. Allah ﷻ says:

﴿مَا كَانَ مُحَمَّدٌ أَبَا أَحَدٍ مِنْ رِجَالِكُمْ وَلَكِنْ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ وَخَاتَمَ النَّبِيِّينَ ۗ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمًا﴾

“Muhammad is not the father of any of your men, but [he is] the Messenger of Allah and the last of the prophets. And ever is Allah, of all things, Knowing.”

[Surah Al-Ahzab: 40].

Therefore, the relationship is not one of lineage nor kinship. Rather, it is a relationship of message and Prophethood. If there had been a messenger after Rasulallah ﷺ, the message he brought would not be everlasting.

There is a simple miraculous point in this verse which is a miracle for the people of intellect. It speaks of a future event which will happen in front of their noses such that they will see it with certainty. Notice that in the verse, Allah ﷻ says ﴿مِنْ رِجَالِكُمْ﴾ which means *“of any of your men”* and not *Min Abnaaikum* which means *“of any of your sons”*. This is because, the Prophet ﷺ had been the father to his son Ibrahim who had passed away when he was young and had not yet become a man.

The Qur’anic explanation had not stopped at saying ﴿وَلَكِنْ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ﴾ *“but [he is] the Messenger of Allah”* but added: ﴿وَخَاتَمَ النَّبِيِّينَ﴾ *“and the last of the prophets”*.

What is the difference between a *Rasul* which means ‘Prophet’, and a *Nabi* which means ‘Messenger’?

The *Rasul* brings a message from Allah ﷻ to mankind and is ordered to convey it to them. However, the *Nabi* receives news from Allah ﷻ but is not tasked to convey it. Therefore, every *Rasul* is a *Nabi* but not every *Nabi* is a *Rasul*. As for the last of all the Messengers and Prophets - he is Muhammad ﷺ. There is totally no one other than him who has this characteristic. Thus, our relationship with him is a relationship of message and Prophethood. This in turn indicates the everlastingness of this message, which means that it will remain a miracle till the end of time.

﴿وَكَانَ اللَّهُ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمًا﴾

“And Allah is Ever Knowing of all things.”

The verse regarding the Prophet ﷺ:

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا النَّبِيُّ إِنَّا أَرْسَلْنَاكَ شَاهِدًا وَمُنذِرًا وَنَذِيرًا (٤٥) وَدَاعِيًا إِلَى اللَّهِ بِإِذْنِهِ وَسِرَاجًا مُنِيرًا (٤٦)﴾

“Oh Prophet, indeed We have sent you as a witness and a bringer of good tidings and a warner. And one who invites to Allah, by His permission, and an illuminating lamp.” [Surah Al-Ahzab: 45-46]

here, contains a scientific indication. In other verses, Allah ﷻ has described the sun as a *Siraj* which means ‘lamp’ and the moon as *Muneer* which means ‘luminous’. In this verse, Allah ﷻ has described the Prophet ﷺ with both of these characteristics. However, He ﷻ did not describe him as *Wahhaj* which means ‘blazing’. This is because this characteristic is one which hurts the eye. Whereas the light of the Prophet ﷺ will never cause any harm. Thus, this Speech cannot be from anyone other than the God of the worlds, as He has joined between the meaning and the structure of these words. The literary miracle can even be found in one word, such as when Allah ﷻ speaks of the Earth:

﴿وَالْأَرْضَ مَدَدْنَاهَا﴾

“And the earth - We have spread it” [Surah Al-Hijr: 19].

Since no other geometrical shape can be extended except the sphere, this word establishes the fact that the Earth is spherical. Therefore, the one who does not know these types of information cannot interpret the Holy Qur’an.

This Holy Qur’an is from Allah ﷻ and was revealed to Rasulullah ﷺ.

How do we verify that this Holy Qur'an is the very same one that was revealed to the Prophet ﷺ from Allah ﷻ ?

We answer by saying that Allah ﷻ has guaranteed the preservation of His Book:

﴿إِنَّا نَحْنُ نَزَّلْنَا الذِّكْرَ وَإِنَّا لَهُ لَحَافِظُونَ﴾

“Indeed, it is We who sent down the Qur'an and indeed, We will be its guardian.” [Surah Al-Hijr: 9].

However, if the person, we are having the dialogue with, is a non-believer, we have to go through two steps:

The first is to prove to him that the Holy Qur'an is really from Allah ﷻ.

Next, we have to prove to him that it is preserved by the command of Allah ﷻ which was revealed to Rasulullah ﷺ.

As for the first step, we lead him to it through explaining the miraculous nature of the Holy Qur'an in its meanings, language, legislation, historical information, science and the social conditions in which it was revealed. All these prove that it was not and will never be able to come from Mankind, as:

﴿وَلَوْ كَانَ مِنْ عِنْدِ غَيْرِ اللَّهِ لَوَجَدُوا فِيهِ اخْتِلَافًا كَثِيرًا﴾

“If it had been from [any] other than Allah, they would have found within it much contradiction.” [Surah An-Nisaa': 82].

A simple example of the miracles in the words used in the Holy Qur'an is, the word *Ibrahim* in Surah Al-Baqarah is written without the letter *Ya'*:

﴿وَإِذِ ابْتَلَىٰ إِبْرَاهِيمَ رَبُّهُ بِكَلِمَاتٍ فَأَتَمَّهُنَّ﴾

“And [mention, Oh Muhammad], when Ibrahim was tried by his Lord with commands and he fulfilled them.” [Surah Al-Baqarah: 124]

﴿وَإِذْ قَالَ إِبْرَاهِيمُ رَبِّ اجْعَلْ هَذَا بَلَدًا آمِنًا﴾

“And [mention] when Ibrahim said, ‘My Lord, make this a secure city’” [Surah Al-Baqarah: 126]

and all the other places where the name is mentioned in that Surah. However, in all the other Surahs in the Qur’an, the word *Ibrahim* is written with the letter *Ya’*. An example is this verse in Surah Ibrahim:

﴿وَإِذْ قَالَ إِبْرَاهِيمُ رَبِّ اجْعَلْ هَذَا الْبَلَدَ آمِنًا﴾

“And [mention, Oh Muhammad], when Ibrahim said, ‘My Lord, make this city [Makkah] secure’” [Surah Ibrahim: 35].

This is because the Arabs used to express foreign names in various forms. So, they would sometimes say: *Ibrahiim* (إِبْرَاهِيمَ), sometimes *Ibrahaam* (إِبْرَاهَامَ) and sometimes *Ibrahim* (إِبْرَاهِمَ). Therefore, the *Rasmul Mushaf* which means the ‘Qur’anic Script’ of that word in Surah Al-Baqarah came in a form which is able to fit all of its inflections. By there not being the letter *Ya’*, it could become *Ibrahiim* if a letter *Ya’* was inserted and *ibrahaam* if the letter *Alif* is inserted. This is an evidence for the pure genuine Arabs that the Holy Qur’an knows the minutest details of their language.²¹

Another example can be found in the word “*Shajaratun*” and all words which are similar to it. These words are written in the Qur’anic Script with the letter *Ta’* (ت) although they are originally with the *Ha’ Ta’nith* (ة).

The word “*Arrahman*” is also written without an *Alif* after *Miim* but is recited with it “*Arrahmaan*”.

²¹ Hisham Bin ‘Ammar recites as he narrates from the recitation of Abdullah Ibn ‘Amir Asy-Syami: *Ibraahaam* (إِبْرَاهَامَ) with an *Alif* instead of a *Ya’*. This is true for the whole of Surah Al-Baqarah. It is the recitation of the reciters of Sham.

The letters in word ﴿الم﴾ [Surah Al-Baqarah: 1] and ﴿كهيعص﴾ [Surah Maryam: 1] are written in a joined way but are recited as though they are disjointed alphabets.

The Prophet ﷺ had been sent to a people who were leaders in literature and language. They had hung the famous odes on the walls of the Kaaba. Thus, Allah ﷻ challenged them by saying:

﴿فَأْتُوا بِسُورَةٍ مِّثْلِهِ وَادْعُوا شُهَدَاءَكُمْ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ﴾

“then produce a surah the like thereof and call upon your witnesses other than Allah, if you should be truthful.” [Surah Al-Baqarah: 23].

The Prophet ﷺ had not changed even a bit of that which had been sent to him. Rather, he had instructed the scribes of the revelation to write the words in these forms that we had described to establish that they are from Allah ﷻ. These words have remained, as they had been revealed and written.

By the Grace of Allah ﷻ, the Qur’anic Script is still preserved to our day as it had been revealed to the heart of Muhammad ﷺ. If there had been any distortion, the standards would have been consolidated and the writing would have been standardized. Also, if it had been from the Prophet ﷺ himself, he would not have reproached himself as we can find in some verses, such as:

﴿عَفَا اللَّهُ عَنْكَ﴾

“May Allah pardon you, [Oh Muhammad];” [Surah At-Tawbah: 43]

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا النَّبِيُّ لِمَ تُحَرِّمُ مَا أَحَلَّ اللَّهُ لَكَ﴾

“Oh Prophet, why do you prohibit [yourself from] what Allah has made lawful for you” [Surah At-Tahrim: 1] and

﴿وَتُخْفِي فِي نَفْسِكَ مَا اللَّهُ مُبْدِيهِ وَتَخْشَى النَّاسَ وَاللَّهُ أَحَقُّ أَنْ تَخْشَاهُ﴾

“while you concealed within yourself that which Allah is to disclose. And you feared the people, while Allah has more right that you fear Him.” [Surah Al-Ahzab: 37].

All of this shows that we are in the midst of miracles in the arrangement, meanings, science and literature of the Holy Qur’an. And since the time of revelation until the end of time, the Holy Qur’an will remain miraculous via its recitation and meanings and will continue to be a challenge to everyone and especially all the Arabs.

Furthermore, as it is not possible for any human being on this Earth to write a book and claim:

﴿ذَلِكَ الْكِتَابُ لَا رَيْبَ فِيهِ هُدًى لِّلْمُتَّقِينَ﴾

“This is the Book about which there is no doubt, a guidance for those conscious of Allah” [Surah Al-Baqarah: 2].

No one would even dare to say such a thing regarding his own book. For all of these words are from a Divine Source. It has been established that this miracle will continue being preserved as time goes on, in hearts more than in writing, as hundreds of thousands continue committing it to memory, as a proof of the truth of Allah’s ﷻ words:

﴿إِنَّا نَحْنُ نَزَّلْنَا الذِّكْرَ وَإِنَّا لَهُ لَحَافِظُونَ﴾

“Indeed, it is We who sent down the Qur’an and indeed, We will be its guardian.” [Surah Al-Hijr: 9].



THE TAFSEER OF SURAH AL-FATIHAH

After laying the main principles and the methodologies used for understanding and contemplating the Holy Qur'an and adhering to the etiquettes of its recitation, its teachings and its interpretation, this then leads us to the verse, Allah ﷻ mentions:

﴿بَلْ هُوَ آيَاتٌ بَيِّنَاتٌ فِي صُدُورِ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْعِلْمَ﴾

“Rather it is (the Qur'an) of self-evident verses (from God, preserved) in the hearts of those (believers) who have been granted knowledge.”

[Surah Al-'Ankabut: 49.]

In this verse, Allah ﷻ focuses on the verse ﴿الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْعِلْمَ﴾.

It is because only those who are endowed with knowledge are authorized to explain and interpret the Holy Qur'an and internalise its meanings. Our Prophet ﷺ has warned us against those who might misinterpret it according to their own understanding and free will, thus deviating from its original message.

Our religion is a religion of knowledge and sciences. Islam was first introduced in accordance with the verse:

﴿اقْرَأْ﴾ *“Read!”* [Surah Al-'Alaq: 1]

and the testimony of faith, mentioned in the verse:

﴿قَاعْلَمُ أَنَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ﴾

“Know well then, that there is no God but Allah” [Surah Muhammad: 19].

This faith and belief will be attained solely through reading and acquiring its knowledge, not through force, coercion, nor intimidation.

The first chapter (surah) which is positioned and written in the Gracious Qur'an is Surah al-Fatihah (the opening), and not ﴿أَفْرَأَى﴾ [Surah Al-'Alaq: 1], the first revealed verse. These chapters are arranged based on the Heavenly message designed directly from Allah ﷻ via the greatest of the Archangels Jibril عليه السلام.

Thus, the Holy Qur'an contains the words of Allah ﷻ revealed to His noblest servant Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, divine and miraculous in its recitation, writings, compositions, arrangements, and its order.

The arrangements of the verses in the Holy Qur'an holds a sacred connection with its Speaker, and that is none other than the Lord of Majesty and Might, Allah ﷻ.

((... وَقَفْضُ كَلَامِ اللَّهِ عَلَى سَائِرِ الْكَلَامِ كَفَضْلِ اللَّهِ عَلَى خَلْقِهِ))

"... And the virtue of Allah's Speech over the speech of others is like the virtue of Allah over His creation"²².

Allah ﷻ mentions in the Holy Qur'an:

﴿لَوْ أَنْزَلْنَا هَذَا الْقُرْآنَ عَلَى جَبَلٍ لَرَأَيْتَهُ خَاشِعًا مُتَصَدِّعًا مِّنْ خَشْيَةِ اللَّهِ ۗ وَتِلْكَ الْأَمْثَالُ نَضْرِبُهَا لِلنَّاسِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ﴾

"Had We sent this Qur'an down upon a mountain, you would have most surely seen it utterly humbled, breaking apart, from the fear of God. And such are the parables we set forth for all people, so that they may reflect (on the power of divine guidance). [Surah Al-Hasyr: 21]."

When non-living things that are not endowed with life humble themselves to the words of Allah ﷻ, how then will the impact be in the hearts of man?

Man will experience the greatest of humility and benefit from its inevitable outcome.

²² Sunan at-Tirmizi: The Book of Virtues of the Qur'an, Chapter 25, Hadith no. 2926.

The arrangement of this chapter (Al-Fatihah) and its sacred meaning has a secret of its own. It is the chapter that nullifies a prayer when not recited. Speaking on this, a tradition of the Prophet ﷺ explains:

((لَا صَلَاةَ إِلَّا بِأُمِّ الْكِتَابِ))

“There is no prayer without the Mother of the Book (Al-Fatihah)”²³.

Recited in every *raka'a* of each prayer, this chapter is the Mother of the Holy Qur'an, and the mother is the origin or root of other things. Hence this chapter (Al-Fatihah), consisting of seven verses, is the origin of all other concepts found in the Holy Qur'an.

Verse 1:

﴿ بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ﴾

“In the name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful”

This verse is called the *Basmalah*, the first verse in the opening chapter (Al-Fatihah) and is a part of it. It is also written before each chapter of the Holy Qur'an though not considered as a part of these chapters.

Ar-Rahmah (الرَّحْمَةُ) is Mercy, derived from *Ar-Rahm* (الرَّحْم) which literally means the womb. While *Ar-Rahman* (الرَّحْمَن), the Most Gracious has a more intense meaning than the word *Ar-Rahim* (الرَّحِيم) the Most Merciful. His name *Ar-Rahman* (الرَّحْمَن), the Most Gracious suggests that His mercy encompasses both towards the believer and non-believer, for this world and also the hereafter. This attribute of Allah ﷻ is exclusive to Him and none other. When used as an adjective to describe a human, we do not say 'so and so is Rahman, rather, we describe them as the servant of Ar-Rahman (Abdur-Rahman). The

²³ Sunan al-Baihaqi Al-Kubra: Book of Menstruation, Chapter: Those who say: The Fatihah has to be recited by the one who prays behind an Imam who is reading aloud, Hadith no. 2762

word Ar-Rahim (الرَّحِيم) on the other hand, can be an adjective used for the believers as Allah ﷻ describes His Messenger ﷺ in the Holy Qur'an as:

﴿لَقَدْ جَاءَكُمْ رَسُولٌ مِّنْ أَنْفُسِكُمْ عَزِيزٌ عَلَيْهِ مَا عَنِتُّمْ حَرِيصٌ عَلَيْكُمْ بِالْمُؤْمِنِينَ رَءُوفٌ رَّحِيمٌ﴾

“Truly, (O believers), a Messenger has come to you from among yourselves. It grieves him that you should suffer (in this life or in the life to come.) Ardently anxious is he over you and towards the believers he is most kindness and merciful.” [Surah At-Tawbah: 128].

In this verse, the Messenger ﷺ is not described as Ar-Rahman, hence none amongst humans can be called as such. Instead, they can be partly merciful (Ar-Rahim).

Allah's ﷻ attributes do not increase nor decrease, as He is the absolute perfection, but what is bestowed increases and decreases. Allah's ﷻ graciousness in this worldly life encompasses everyone, the believers and non-believers, the disobedient and dissolute alike. He causes the sun to shine and benefit all of mankind and not particularly the believers. The rain falls for all humanity and not exclusively for those who prostrate to Allah ﷻ. Similarly, the air has been created for both believers and non-believers alike. Thus, Allah's ﷻ graciousness in this world is for all of his creation, while in the hereafter He ﷻ is the Most Merciful. There, the believers will enter His Paradise, while the non-believers enter Hell. For His Mercy is only entitled to the believers in the hereafter.

It is proven that all the divine words in the Holy book has its own linguistic miracles and secrets. From these are derived the rulings of rituals, transactions, doctrines, and behaviour. Every word is internalised and explained by the Prophet ﷺ, without adding nor reducing anything: For example, the daily prayers are five and none would interpret it as four... and none would decrease the hours of fasting during summer from the obligatory dawn till sunset to only thirteen hours daily... Allah ﷻ mentions in the Holy Qur'an:

﴿الْيَوْمَ أَكْمَلْتُ لَكُمْ دِينَكُمْ وَأَتَمَمْتُ وَعَلَيْكُمْ نِعْمَتِي وَرَضِيْتُ لَكُمُ الْإِسْلَامَ دِينًا﴾

“This day: I have perfected for you your religion! And I have completed My grace upon you! And I am pleased to choose Islam- (The Peace) as the religion for you!” [Surah Al-Ma’idah: 3].

Hence all the rulings have been completed and perfected, and none is able to surpass the knowledge of the Messenger ﷺ.

There are more than 5000 verses in the Holy Qur’an that explain and elaborate on many aspects of the universe and other sciences. There are indeed gems and treasures in the Holy Qur’an. Who then, are responsible and qualified to internalise and extract its messages? They are none other than the chosen people of knowledge.

As the words and verses of the Holy Qur’an are divine and contain miraculous meanings, they illuminate the hearts of the knowledgeable and the scholarly. The internalisation of the knowledge is in accordance with the development and growth of the human mind that facilitate its internalisation and hence the deliverance of the true messages of the Holy Qur’an. These miraculous works can only be done by scholars that are experts in the Arabic language and its literature and who are also well-versed in the sciences of the universe.

These knowledge has to fulfill the needs of mankind, be easily recognised and applicable throughout generations of mankind till the end of time. Such a complex task will inevitably give rise to misinterpretations, slips and errors in the hands of the ignorant, the non-competent and the non-experts, and those who follow their desire, those who have a personal agenda and those whose intention is not purely for the sake of Allah ﷻ. If they stray away from the actual divine message and the straight path due to their misguidance, they will henceforth mislead others.

Verse 2-3:

﴿ الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ (٢) الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ (٣) ﴾

“All praises is (due) to Allah, Lord of the worlds ○

The Most Gracious, The Most Merciful ○”

Here, some will question the repetition of verses in the Holy Qur’an, as repetitions may give rise to doubts in its linguistic authenticity.

The answer lies in the deep-rooted meanings and the secrets that lie within the repetitions itself. And this is indeed among the miracles of the words of Allah ﷻ. An example of this is when Allah ﷻ mentions:

﴿ قُلْ سِيرُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ ﴾

“Say to them: Travel throughout the earth” [Surah Al-An’aam: 11].

This verse was sent down to the illuminated heart of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. During the time it was revealed, when the Prophet read it to the people, they had no difficulty in understanding it due to their proficiency in the Arabic language. Nonetheless, the human mind still has its own limitations, while the Holy Qur’an is the limitless words of Allah ﷻ. It is a part of His Attributes. Due to this reason, al-Imam Ahmed Ibn Hanbal disagrees with the notion that the Holy Qur’an is a creation of Allah ﷻ as it is an Attribute of Allah ﷻ. And indeed, he is right in saying so.

Looking back at the above verse,

﴿ قُلْ سِيرُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ ﴾

“Say to them: Travel throughout (في) the earth” [Surah Al-An’aam: 11]

but not “on the earth” which will make it (على الأرض) as we travel on the ground (earth).” When the verse was revealed to the Arabs during that time, they listened and accepted it. The Arabs in the Arabian Peninsula back in the

7th century did not have any difficulty in understanding this as they are masters of eloquence of their language. They understood the intended language that is: travel 'in' all parts of the earth.

As for us, living in the 21st century, our understanding is that we travel 'on' the land. So why does the Holy Qur'an say 'through' the land? However, we now know that the Earth does not consist of the globe only, but it also includes the atmosphere around it and the elements buried deep within it. Therefore, traveling 'through' is the correct interpretation instead of 'on' earth. Thus, Allah's ﷻ word "في" is more apt than our word "على" as it has a lasting relevance.

Indeed, these words belong to Allah ﷻ, the Creator of the worlds and the All-Knowing. Every letter comes with a connotation, thus the importance of interpreting its literal meaning and its intended meaning. Thus understanding it necessitates a scholarly and also a scientific study of the whole divine book of Allah ﷻ together with the Arabic language.

Another example of its miracle is as Allah ﷻ describes in the Holy Qur'an:

﴿وَهُوَ الَّذِي يَقْبَلُ التَّوْبَةَ عَنْ عِبَادِهِ﴾

"Moreover, He (alone) is the One who accepts repentance on behalf (عَنْ) of His servants" [Surah Asy-Syuraa: 25].

In this verse, it is not translated as: "He is the one who accepts repentance 'from' (من) His servants. The Holy Qur'an is not just a mere construction of alphabets but within it lies an inspiration for the soul. Allah ﷻ mentions in another verse:

﴿وَكَذَلِكَ أَوْحَيْنَا إِلَيْكَ رُوحًا مِّنْ أَمْرِنَا﴾

"And so it is that We have revealed to you (Oh Prophet), a spirit (رُوحًا) by Our command." [Surah Asy-Syuraa: 52].

Here, Allah ﷻ mentions: ﴿رُوحًا﴾ meaning ‘spirit’ (inspiration) and not ‘كلمات’, meaning, ‘words’. Why is this so? This is because ‘words’, similar to mankind, animals and plants is used according to its relevance. It may become obsolete (as new words are constantly being generated and some rarely documented). But the verses of the Holy Qur’an, on the other hand, are everlasting and is applicable from when it was revealed up till now. Thus, it is an inspiration from Allah ﷻ, to be a continuing guide to mankind and jinns alike, across space and time till the end of time.

Hence, the One who accepts repentance ‘on behalf of’ and not ‘from’ His servants is Allah ﷻ the Almighty who is also the One who sends the inspirational Qur’an to guide mankind to His straight path. *“the One who accepts repentance on behalf of His servants”* is Allah ﷻ, the Lord of all humans. This verse calls all wrongdoers towards repentance, telling them that Allah ﷻ accepts repentance from His slaves who repented, and those who have not yet to repent. Their wrongdoings may be towards Allah ﷻ, other humans or themselves. They are urged to repent until they receive Allah’s ﷻ acceptance. Hence the aptness of the word عَنْ.

Indeed Allah ﷻ knows and we do not know.

And this is a clear proof that the Holy Qur’an does not come from the Messenger ﷺ himself nor is it the words of humans. Allah ﷻ says:

﴿فَأْتُوا بِسُورَةٍ مِّثْلِهِ وَادْعُوا شُهَدَاءَكُمْ مِّن دُونِ اللَّهِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ﴾

“Then bring forth a (single) surah of its like. Moreover, call all your witnesses, apart from Allah, (to prove your claim) if you are truthful.”

[Surah Al-Baqarah: 23].

For who can challenge the bestowments of the Holy Qur’an?

Another example of the miracle of the Holy Qur'an is Allah's ﷻ words regarding the conversation of Isa ﷺ (Jesus) with his Lord in the chapter of 'the Maedah' (المائدة):

﴿إِن تُعَذِّبَهُمْ فَإِنَّهُمْ عَبْدُكَ وَإِن تُغْفِرْ لَهُمْ فَإِنَّكَ أَنْتَ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ﴾

“If you punish them, they are Your slaves. And if you forgive them, indeed, it is You who are the Over-powering, the All-Wise.” [Surah Al-Ma'idah: 118].

In this verse Allah ﷻ does not say: “indeed, it is You who are the Most Forgiving, Most Merciful” (إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ الْغَفُورُ الرَّحِيمُ). Speaking in such a manner indicates that it is an obligation for Allah ﷻ to forgive and have mercy on them. This is a disrespectful and shameful manner to converse with Allah ﷻ.

Hence, the verse reads: “indeed, it is You who are the Over-powering, the All-Wise.” You are the Exalted in power, never in need of the worship of your slaves and You are All-Wise in your decision. Whether You put them in hell or You forgive and put them in heaven, Your decision is the wisest. This is the Holy Qur'an - the divine words of Allah ﷻ a holy and miraculous book with an inexhaustible meaning that no human eloquence nor the most celebrated linguist nor the greatest of scholars can yet succeed in encompassing the full infinitude of His final revelation to creation.

Yet in another example, Allah ﷻ says:

﴿الَّذِي خَلَقَنِي فَهُوَ يَهْدِينِ (٧٨) وَالَّذِي هُوَ يُطْعِمُنِي وَيَسْقِينِ (٧٩) وَإِذَا مَرِضْتُ فَهُوَ يَشْفِينِ (٨٠) وَالَّذِي

يُمِيتُنِي ثُمَّ يُحْيِينِ (٨١) وَالَّذِي أَطْمَعُ أَنْ يَغْفِرَ لِي خَطِيئَتِي يَوْمَ الدِّينِ (٨٢) رَبِّ هَبْ لِي حُكْمًا

وَأَلْحِقْنِي بِالصَّالِحِينَ (٨٣)﴾

“The One who has created me. For He (is the One who) guides me, And He is the One who feeds me and gives me drink, And when I become ill, He (is the One who) heals me, And it is He who will cause me to die, then will bring me (back to) life (in the Hereafter), And who I hope shall forgive me my faults

on the Day of Judgement, My Lord! Grant me wisdom, and unite me with the righteous (in Paradise).” [Surah Asy-Syu’ara: 78-83].

Thus, it is impossible for such simple, precise and miraculous pleasantries to spark from just about anyone’s mind in this world. For the verse, “*The **One** who has created me. For He (is the One who) guides me.*”, the word (One) here indicates and emphasises that guidance comes only from Allah ﷻ, the Creator. Many people claim that guidance come from them. This includes teachers, religious scholars, and preachers. While, Allah ﷻ says:

﴿وَمَا أَنْتَ بِهَادِي الْعُمْيِ عَنْ ضَلَالَتِهِمْ﴾

“Nor can you guide the blind (in the heart) out of their misguidance”

[Surah An-Naml: 81].

Here, Allah ﷻ stresses that the real guidance only comes from Him and none other. Allah ﷻ then emphasises “*And He is the **One** who feeds me and gives me drink*”. This clearly indicates that neither my father nor my mother are the ones who provide me with food, money and provisions. But the word (One) here implies that all provision comes from Allah ﷻ alone. Then: “*And when I become ill, He (is the **One** who) heals me*”, this verse explains that the Healer here is not doctors nor medications consumed by the sick. For doctors only try to diagnose and prescribe medications based on their level of knowledge, while the Healer here is the One and Only Allah ﷻ. A poet once described:

Doctor heals by the knowledge within him,

For when a man's death is about to reach him.

And when his end comes knocking on him,

The doctors are baffled, the drugs fail him.

Although we act according to the doctor’s prescription, we have full faith that the One who heals is none other than Allah ﷻ as the verse highlights.

While in the verse, “*And who will cause me to die, then will bring me (back to) life (in the Hereafter)*”, Allah ﷻ does not use ‘He’ here because life and death cannot be attributed to anyone. In the case of Namrood, as described in the verse:

﴿أَنَا أَحْيِي وَأُمِيتُ﴾

“*I give life and cause death*” [Surah Al-Baqarah: 258].

Prophet Ibrahim ؑ replied:

﴿وَإِنَّ اللَّهَ يَأْتِي بِالشَّمْسِ مِنَ الْمَشْرِقِ فَأْتِ بِهَا مِنَ الْمَغْرِبِ فَبُهِتَ الَّذِي كَفَرَ﴾ , “*Indeed, Allah brings up the sun from the east, so bring it up from the west. So, the disbeliever was utterly defeated.*” [Surah Al-Baqarah: 258].

This occurs once and applies to Namrood.

It is not within human nature to claim themselves as, “I give life and cause death - not our parents nor anyone else.” The same goes to the verse “*And who I hope shall forgive me my misdeeds on the Day of Judgement*”, Nobody can claim: “I forgive sins” as Allah ﷻ is the only One who forgives. So again, there is no need for the word ‘He’. Such is the precision of every Qur’anic expression. These are among the delicate matters which are nonetheless important and they are found throughout the Qur’an.

In the chapter (Ibrahim), Allah ﷻ says:

﴿وَإِنْ تَعُدُّوا نِعْمَتَ اللَّهِ لَا تَحْصُوهَا ۗ إِنَّ الْإِنْسَانَ لَظَلُومٌ كَفَّارٌ﴾

“*And if you count the favors of Allah, you will never be able to number them. Indeed, mankind is (generally) most unjust and ungrateful.*” [Surah Ibrahim:

34]

And in the chapter Al-Nahl, Allah ﷻ mentions:

﴿وَإِنْ تَعُدُّوا نِعْمَةَ اللَّهِ لَا تَحْصُوهَا ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَعَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ﴾

“And if you count the favors of Allah, you cannot enumerate them. Indeed, Allah is Most Forgiving and Merciful.” [Surah An-Nahl: 18].

The Holy Qur’an indeed is rich in its diversity and sacred secrets. In each repeated verse are specific interpretations and not mere repetitions. In the first verse, it ends with *“Indeed, mankind is (generally) most unjust and ungrateful.”* Despite the beneficence and gifts of the Giver, Allah ﷻ who endlessly provides. Mankind greedily takes, but sadly, at the same time, constantly deny His Grace. The second verse, however, describes Allah’s ﷻ attribute as the Giver Himself befitting the verse *“Indeed, Allah is Most Forgiving and Merciful.”*

In the chapter of repentance (Al-Tawbah), Allah ﷻ mentions:

﴿إِلَّا تَنْصُرُوهُ فَقَدْ نَصَرَهُ اللَّهُ إِذْ أَخْرَجَهُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا ثَانِيًا إِذْ هُمَا فِي الْغَارِ إِذْ يَقُولُ لِصَاحِبِهِ لَا تَحْزَنْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ مَعَنَا فَأَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ سَكِينَتَهُ عَلَيْهِ وَأَيَّدَهُ بِجُنُودٍ لَمْ تَرَوْهَا وَجَعَلَ كَلِمَةَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا السُّفْلَى ۗ وَكَلِمَةُ اللَّهِ هِيَ الْعُلْيَا ۗ وَاللَّهُ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ﴾

“If you do not help (the Prophet) - Allah has already helped him when those who disbelieved had driven him out (of Makkah) as one of two, when they were in the cave and he said to his companion, "Do not grieve; indeed, Allah is with us." And Allah sent down His tranquillity upon him and supported him with angels you did not see and made the word of those who disbelieved the lowest, while the word of Allah - that is the highest. And Allah (alone) is Exalted in Might and Wise.” [Surah At-Tawbah: 40].

The two words (كَلِمَةً [word]) are pronounced differently, though, connected by the conjunction (وَ). Had the Holy Qur’an been from a human, they would have the same pronunciation.

The first (كَلِمَةً [word]) is the word of the unbelievers, whereas, the second (كَلِمَةً [word]) is the word of Allah ﷻ. The divine word of Allah ﷻ is surely not

equivalent to that of the unbelievers. So, the (word of Allah ﷻ is nominative and a start of a new sentence.²⁴

In the Surah TaHa, Allah ﷻ mentions:

﴿إِنَّ هَٰذَانِ لَسَٰحِرَٰنِ﴾

“Indeed, these are, most surely, two sorcerers.” [Surah Taha: 63].

In this verse, the article (إِنَّ) does not carry the meaning of the article (إِن) as the sorcerers' magic had not afflicted Prophet Moses ﷺ, hence consequently does not affect the pronunciation of the words after it. However, in another narration, (إِنَّ) here carries the meaning of an action; therefore, it is recited as (إِنَّ هَٰذِينَ لَسَٰحِرَانَ)²⁵.

The Holy Qur'an mentions two verses on sorcery. First in the chapter (Al-A'raaf),

﴿قَالُوا آمَنَّا بِرَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ (١٢١) رَبِّ مُوسَىٰ وَهَارُونَ (١٢٢)﴾

“They said: We believe in the Lord of (All) the Worlds, the Lord of Musa and Harun!” [Surah Al-A'raaf: 121-122].

And in another verse:

﴿فَأَلْقَى السَّحْرَةَ سُجَّدًا قَالُوا آمَنَّا بِرَبِّ هَارُونَ وَمُوسَىٰ﴾

“So the sorcerers fell (to the ground in astonishment) bowing (their faces) down (in willing submission). They said: We believe in the Lord of Harun and Musa!” [Surah Taha: 70].

²⁴ Therefore, *Waqf* (stopping) is *Awla* (prioritized) at ﴿وَجَعَلَ كَلِمَةَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا السُّفْلَىٰ﴾. Subsequently, the recitation will commence from ﴿وَكَلِمَةُ اللَّهِ هِيَ الْعُلْيَا﴾.

²⁵ Abu 'Amr al-Basri recites it as ﴿إِنَّ هَٰذِينَ لَسَٰحِرَانَ﴾, while the rest, besides Hafs and Ibn Kathir, recite it as ﴿إِنَّ هَٰذَانِ لَسَٰحِرَانَ﴾. Hafs and Ibn Kathir recite it as ﴿إِنَّ﴾ with the *noon sukoon mukhaffaf* (light Nun Sukoon).

In the second verse, why is Prophet Harun's ﷺ name mentioned first instead of Prophet Musa ﷺ when Musa ﷺ was the messenger, a carrier and deliverer of the revelations of Allah ﷻ. He is one of the Prophets and one of the messengers of firm resolve for their tenacity in preaching God's message. While Harun ﷺ is just a Prophet, so why is he mentioned once before Prophet Moses ﷺ and once after him?

This is because the word sorcerers here refer to a huge group, it is impossible for all of them to utter the same word. Hence, one part of them said: *"We believe in the Lord of Harun and Musa"*, and another part said: *"We believe in the Lord of Musa and Harun"*. These two verses, *"Harun and Musa"* and *"Musa and Harun"* indicate separate verses.

After all this illuminating explanation, we are still at the beginning of the chapter (Al-Fatihah). Our thoughts have been aroused to the invaluable wisdom and the full beauty of the Qur'an. We have been given the opportunity to dive into the ocean of the meanings of the Qur'an, to study its sciences and to experience the accuracy and balance of its information that is relevant to our generation. To attain from Allah's ﷻ revelation what guides us towards goodness before Allah ﷻ and goodness towards humanity Allah ﷻ mentions:

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا ارْكَعُوا وَاسْجُدُوا وَاعْبُدُوا رَبَّكُمْ وَافْعَلُوا الْخَيْرَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ﴾

"O you who believe! Bow down and prostrate yourselves and worship your Lord (alone) and do (much) good (in life), so that you may be successful."

[Surah Al-Hajj: 77].

Allah's ﷻ message is a guidance towards our worship of Him alone as our true God and a guidance towards righteousness towards others, and empathy, love, and tolerance towards all humanity.

Allah ﷻ sends His guidance in the form of His Heavenly message to every chosen Prophet and for a specific community. His guidance is sent to treat their specific disease. There might be a certain period of time where there might be

multiple diseases, so more Prophets will be sent at the same time. For example, The Prophet Ibrahim ﷺ together with Prophet Lut ﷺ were sent within the same period but to a different community. While Prophet Isa ﷺ and his cousin, Prophet Yahya ﷺ (John the Baptist), the son of Prophet Zakariah ﷺ were sent during the same period of time. Multiple diseases require multiple revelations to treat them due to the lack of mobility, telecommunications and transportation networks during that era. For Prophet Lut ﷺ, he was sent to treat and purify the etiquette and morals of his community while Prophet Ibrahim ﷺ treated issues concerning the community's creed and matters of faith.

The Glorious Qur'an surpassed all era and within it is the cure to all of mankind's diseases combined. Hence it is by itself the cure to all diseases, Allah ﷻ mentions this:

﴿وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَاكَ إِلَّا كَافَّةً لِّلنَّاسِ بَشِيرًا وَنَذِيرًا﴾

“And thus it is, (Oh Prophet,) that We have sent you to all humanity as none other than a bearer of glad tidings (of Paradise) and (as) a forewarner (of their nearing Judgment.)” [Surah Saba': 28].

As technology advances and modern telecommunications and information sources are made easily available, the universe now seems like a small accessible village, and all diseases band together - from atheism to moral corruption, usury (interest), monopoly, bribery, adultery and homosexuality. The Glorious Qur'an addresses all these issues and provide a cure for all of them. It remains so as it is the final and absolute revelation that is always applicable and relevant in every situation, geographical location and era.

The opening chapter (Al-Fatihah) is so important that it nullifies a prayer when not recited. It is recited for the deceased, during sermons, when performing marriage vows and during supplications with a multitude of intentions. It is recited at the cemetery, in a mosque, at the beginning and end

of lessons and ceremonies. In fact, it is recited in happiness as well as in sadness. It is the most superior chapter revealed in the Holy Qur'an, as Allah ﷻ mentions:

﴿وَلَقَدْ آتَيْنَاكَ سَبْعًا مِّنَ الْمَثَانِي وَالْقُرْآنَ الْعَظِيمَ﴾

“For very truly, We have granted you (Oh Prophet, the unrivalled blessing of) seven of the (most) often repeated (verses of God) and the magnificent Qur'an (as a whole).” [Surah al-Hijr: 87].

And this is a characteristic attributed to none other but this chapter (Al-Fatihah).

In a sacred narration (Hadith Qudsi): The Prophet ﷺ said,

“Allah Almighty said: I have divided prayer between myself and my servant into two halves, and my servant shall have what he has asked for. When the servant says ‘all praise is due to Allah the Lord of the worlds,’ Allah says: My servant has praised me. When he says ‘the Gracious, the Merciful,’ Allah says: My servant has exalted me. When he says ‘the Master of the Day of Judgment,’ Allah says: My servant has glorified me and my servant has submitted to me. When he says ‘you alone we worship, you alone we ask for help,’ Allah says: This is between me and my servant, and my servant will have what he has asked for. When he says ‘guide us to the straight path, the path of those whom you have favoured, not those who went astray,’ Allah says: This is for my servant, and my servant will have what he has asked for.”²⁶

It is said that this recitation (Al-Fatihah) is considered as “the Prayer” because Allah ﷻ does not say: “I have divided Al-Fatihah”, instead He says: “I have divided the prayer”. Therefore, Al-Fatihah is the basis of the prayer: This is why we constantly repeat it in every *raka'ah* of our prayers, whereas after it

²⁶ Sahih Muslim: The Book of Prayer, Chapter: The importance of reciting *al-Fatihah* in every *rakaah*, Hadith no. 395.

we recite different verses from all the other chapters. And it is the essence of the whole meaning of the Holy Qur'an and the religion. In it are praises, a declaration of loyalty and a supplication.

For saying “Alhamdulillah” is our praises to Him ﷻ, and the declaration of our loyalty lies in answering His call and executing His commands. For the answer towards the muezzin’s call, “Hayya ‘ala As-Solah” (Hurry to the prayer) and “Hayya ‘ala Al-Falah” (hurry to success), five times a day shows our consistency in being a loyal servant to Allah ﷻ.

By reciting the chapter Al-Fatihah, we are constantly renewing our covenant to Allah ﷻ to perform all His commandments. Next comes our beseeching of Allah ﷻ to guide us on His right path. This is the ultimate supplication.

The chapter Al-Fatihah is often taken to be a synthesis of our religion. Some scholars reported that everything that revolves around the religion can be found in this chapter, and it comes from just one verse from the Holy Qur'an that is

﴿إِيَّاكَ نَعْبُدُ وَإِيَّاكَ نَسْتَعِينُ﴾

“It is You (alone) we worship, and it is You (alone) we ask for help”

[Surah Al-Fatihah: 5].

In Islam, a life of worship is not only about praying and supplicating.

Worship does not only mean the observance of certain rituals in the pillars of Islam. However, worship is much more. It is one’s entire conduct in life. Besides rituals, worship is the goodness which is done in obedience to Allah's ﷻ will, this includes personal contributions to oneself, one’s spouses, family, neighbours, country, society, and fellow human beings. Allah ﷻ mentions:

﴿وَمَا خَلَقْتُ الْجِنَّ وَالْإِنْسَ إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُونِ (٥٦) مَا أُرِيدُ مِنْهُمْ مِنْ رِزْقٍ وَمَا أُرِيدُ أَنْ يُطْعَمُوا (٥٧)﴾

“And (know that) I have not created (either) jinn or human beings (for any

other reason) other than to (know and) worship Me (alone), I do not desire from them any provision. Nor do I desire that they feed Me.” [Surah Az-zariyat: 56-57].

Is the purpose of us being created just to observe our prayer, fasting, giving charity, and performing the pilgrimage?

The answer is definitely, no. It is in our nature that we need to eat, drink, enjoy the gifts of life and to work for it and Islam does not go against our nature. Allah ﷻ and His Prophet ﷺ encourage us to work. In a narration: The Prophet ﷺ said:

((الإيمان بضْعٌ وَسَبْعُونَ، أَوْ بَضْعٌ وَسِتُّونَ شُعْبَةً، فَأَفْضَلُهَا قَوْلُ: لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللهُ، وَأَدْنَاهَا إِمَاطَةُ الْأَذَى عَنِ الطَّرِيقِ))

“Iman (faith) has over seventy branches – or over sixty branches – the uppermost of which is the declaration, ‘None has the right to be worshipped but Allah’ and the least of which is the removal of a harmful object from the road, and modesty is a branch of Iman.”²⁷

Hence, worship revolves around every kind deed that contributes kindness to all of mankind. This includes strengthening family ties, giving charity, helping others and reconciling those in disputes and many more. But first and foremost, one must strive to be the best and to be just to oneself in the worship of the One true God.

When a believer extends his act of kindness towards others, these acts are considered as the best of worship and submission towards Allah ﷻ. Islam looks at the human community as a whole, thus to serve others for the sake of Allah ﷻ is the best act of worship.

And when we say:

²⁷ Sahih Muslim: The Book of Faith, Chapter: Explaining the number of the Branches of Iman, Hadith no. 35

(إِيَّاكَ نَعْبُدُ)

“It is You (alone) we worship”

We mean that Worship is an all-inclusive term for those internal and external sayings and actions of a person. These include bringing prosperity to the world and universe, justice, advancement of technology, and inventions that basically leads to serving and providing the needs of humanity. Thus, worship is not solely based on the five pillars as what the Prophet ﷺ explained:

((بُنِيَ الْإِسْلَامُ عَلَى خَمْسٍ: شَهَادَةِ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَأَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا رَسُولُ اللَّهِ، وَإِقَامِ الصَّلَاةِ، وَإِيتَاءِ الزَّكَاةِ، وَالْحَجِّ، وَصَوْمِ رَمَضَانَ))

“Islam was built on five: declaring that there is no God but Allah and Mohammad is his messenger, performing prayer, paying alms, performing pilgrimage and fasting Ramadan”²⁸

We do not say that Islam is the above five only, but they are the fundamental precepts of Islam. Pillars are firm upright support for a superstructure or a building. For example, the pillars of a mosque form its foundation in upholding the building but the pillars do not complete the mosque. Thus, the pillars of the religion give it the structure but they do not make up the whole religion.

When Allah ﷻ says

(وَمَا خَلَقْتُ الْجِنَّ وَالْإِنْسَ إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُونِ)

“And (know that) I have not created (either) jinn or human beings except to (know and) worship Me (alone)” [Surah Az-zariyat: 56],

If he is limiting the meaning of worship, then He is all-Powerful to create mankind who totally obey Him and worship Him without giving them any

²⁸ Sahih al-Bukhari :The Book of Faith, Chapter: The *Iman* and the saying of the Prophet (saw): (Islam is built upon five...), Hadith no. 8

options. But the concept of worship in Islam is a comprehensive concept that includes all acts of kindness, positive and righteous actions, that lead towards happiness, development and the good of mankind.

Allah ﷻ mentions at the beginning of the chapter (Al-Fatihah):

﴿الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ﴾

“All praises is (due) to Allah, Lord of the worlds”

Praises here is giving tribute and also gratitude towards Allah ﷻ, in another chapter Allah ﷻ says:

﴿لَئِن شَكَرْتُمْ لَأَزِيدَنَّكُمْ﴾

“If you give thanks (for My Blessings), I shall, most surely, increase (them for) you.” [Surah Ibrahim: 7].

The chapter Al-Fatihah begins with praises and not gratitude. What is the difference between these?

The word *“al Hamd”* or praises here, is broader in meaning than *“Ash-Shukr”* or thanking, we praise both during contentment and affliction. When one is inflicted with a tribulation, one should overcome it with *“al-Hamdulillah Rabbil ‘Alamin”*. For it has a very profound meaning and a tribute to Allah ﷻ. As for thanking, it usually applies during the time of blessings only. Hence during afflictions and ordeals, we’ll say *“al-Hamdulillah”*.

In this life, mankind is exposed to afflictions and ordeals, Allah ﷻ explains this clearly:

﴿الَّذِي خَلَقَ الْمَوْتَ وَالْحَيَاةَ لِيَبْلُوَكُمْ أَيُّكُمْ أَحْسَنُ عَمَلًا﴾

“the One who created death and life to test you, which of you is best in deeds.” [Surah Al-Mulk: 2].

To be tested and to react to it with gratitude is a praise towards Allah ﷻ. It includes both being grateful for the blessings that one has been given, towards one's destiny and fate and even towards the ordeals that one is inflicted with. We always say "Praise be to Allah ﷻ for the praising of Allah ﷻ". Why is this so?

This is because Allah ﷻ makes all his creations similar in praising Him, although we might have our differences in our testimony, our understanding, our talent and potential, as in, this person is knowledgeable while the other is ignorant, and this person is rich while the other is poor.

If you were confronted by a man of power and position and received from him favors and wanted to thank him for his generosity, how then do you show your gratitude towards him?

The rich will grace him with wealth, while a poet with his poem. Thus, this is how one will return the favors he receives, that is, according to one's status and state. While Allah ﷻ on the other hand makes praising Him easy for all of His creation and unified it with just one simple way that is by saying *Alhamdulillah*. The Scholars explained that the meaning of "All praise be to Allah ﷻ for the Praises" is that Allah ﷻ in His benevolence, has taught us the right and best way to praise Him ﷻ and with a common phrase. With this He does not neglect any of His creations.

As for the verse ﴿الْعَالَمِينَ﴾ it refers to the universe as a whole, from among mankind, jinns, angels, birds, animals and also vegetations.

And when we start with the verse:

﴿بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ﴾

"In the name of God, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful"

we are looking, asking and hoping with His attributes of Graciousness and Mercy that He forgives us. It is inevitable for us humans to fall into sins and

wrongdoings. Thus, by holding on and believing that Allah ﷻ is the most Gracious and Merciful, we will put ourselves at ease and reassure our hearts and hopes for His forgiveness.

A part of Allah's ﷻ mercy is that He taught us the best way and words to praise Him ﷻ, by saying ﴿الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ﴾ "All praises is (due) to Allah." And the first thing that we praise Allah ﷻ for, is His Mercy. We survive and live due to His mercy and protection even before we were born.

While we were still a fetus in our mother's womb, how then were we nurtured and fed? Who protected us? Who gave us life while we were helpless inside a hollow womb?

Then, when we were born, who blessed us and bestowed His grace upon us by providing for us from inconceivable means?

Who then guides a baby to suckle from his mother's breast then gives it sustenance in the form of water and air to breath?

Hence, all of the blessings that we receive and are surrounded with have been bestowed upon us by none other than Allah ﷻ Himself. His bounties are for us even before we are matured enough to become accountable for all our actions - before we are able to obey or to sin. All these are none other than His compassion towards all of His creations and indeed for both the believers and non-believers alike.

Regarding the first phrase used to praise and show gratitude towards Allah ﷻ, the reference to His attributes, the All-Merciful in this world and the Compassionate in the hereafter, the Messenger ﷺ said:

"There is none whose deeds alone would entitle him to get into Paradise."

It was then said to him, "And, Oh, Rasulullah, not even you?" Thereupon he said:

“Not even I, but that my Lord wraps me in His Mercy.”²⁹

This Hadith explains that it is Allah ﷻ who teaches us which acts of worship would bring us to heaven, and which acts will lead us towards hellfire. It is He ﷻ who decides that the believers will enter paradise while the sinners would enter hell, and it is He ﷻ who has the will and power to put us into paradise due to our righteous deeds or otherwise. Therefore, it is Allah’s ﷻ mercy that actually leads us to heaven and makes it a reward for our deeds.

Verse 4:

﴿ مَالِكِ يَوْمِ الدِّينِ ﴾

“Master of the Day of Judgement.”

Allah ﷻ is the Master of the Day of Judgement, and the believe in the hereafter is one of the basis in ensuring a balanced life. Without this belief, man would live a life of chaos and like savages, the strong will consume the poor. Even with the belief in the hereafter there are still those who are stronger who step on the poor and the weak. The strong still controls the poor, and the monopolists consume all the goodness of life for themselves and act unjustly towards others and women are being forbidden of their rights to inheritance. If there were no day of judgment nor an Owner of that day in which people are judged for their works in life, evil would be unrestrained, injustice would spread and life will then be disastrous.

All praises be to Allah ﷻ for He ﷻ is the Master of the Day of Judgment. Allah ﷻ will bring us forth from death to stand in perfect judgment before Him. Injustice and false judgments may be rampant in this world and the oppressors and criminals may live a life of luxury at the expense of others. They do not believe that they are accountable before anyone. The believer, on the other

²⁹ Al-Mu’jam al-Awsat of Imam at-Tabari, Chapter ‘م’, No: 6727

hand, believes that Allah ﷻ is the Master of the Day of Judgment, the Most Gracious and Most Merciful. His infinite justice is absolute and perfect and never is Allah ﷻ an oppressor, nor does He ever wrong anyone.

In another narration, this verse is read as ﴿مَلِكِ يَوْمِ الدِّينِ﴾ *Maliki Yaumid-din*, without the *alif* (ألف).³⁰ For the owner ﴿مَالِكِ﴾ owns something, while the King ﴿مَلِكِ﴾ owns both the owner and everything that he owns. For example, I own something and you own something too hence we are all owners.

As the Holy Qur'an is from Allah ﷻ, it is only natural that He is the sole Owner of the Day of Judgment, Allah ﷻ is the one who judges, and he is the King who owns every creation in this world. Both recitations are correct and agreed upon by many scholars as authentic. Some scholars in Sham (Syria) recite it as ﴿مَلِكِ يَوْمِ الدِّينِ﴾ *“The King of the Day of Judgement”*. It was told that a scholar in Sham (Syria) used to read *“the King of the Day of Judgement”*. One day he saw in his dream a man saying to him: “Why do you read *the King of the Day of Judgement* with one letter less. Didn't you know that for every letter you read from the Book of Allah ﷻ you get ten rewards? and that the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ said,

((لَا أَقُولُ الْم حَرْفٌ، وَلَكِنْ أَلِفٌ حَرْفٌ وَلاَمٌ حَرْفٌ وَمِيمٌ حَرْفٌ))

*“I do not say that Alif-Lam-Mim is one letter, but Alif is a letter, Lam is a letter and Mim is a letter.”*³¹

Hence, by reciting ﴿مَالِكِ﴾ you gain ten extra rewards.” The scholars then began reading ﴿مَالِكِ يَوْمِ الدِّينِ﴾.

³⁰ This is the recitation of Imams Nafi' ibn Abi Nu'aim, Abdullah Ibn Katheer, Abu 'Amr al-Basri, Abdullah ibn 'Amir Asy-Syami, Hamzah ibn Habib and Abu Ja'far. And the verse ﴿مَالِكِ يَوْمِ الدِّينِ﴾ is recited with an *alif* (ألف) by Imams 'Asim ibn Abi an-Najud, Ali ibn Hamzah al-Kisaaii, Ya'qub al-Hadhrami, and Khalaf ibn Hisham.

³¹ Sunan at-Tirmizi: Chapters on The Virtues of The Qur'an, Chapter: What is mentioned regarding the rewards of the one who recites a letter from the Qur'an, Hadith no. 2910.

Verse 5:

﴿إِيَّاكَ نَعْبُدُ وَإِيَّاكَ نَسْتَعِينُ﴾

“It is You (alone) we worship, and it is you (alone) we ask for help.”

Had the Holy Qur’an been written by the Prophet ﷺ or any human, he would have begun with *“to you we seek help”* instead of mentioning ‘worship’ first because worship requires the seeking of help. But as these are the words of Allah ﷻ He presents the act of worship first before the seeking for help. This is so in order to teach us that it is important for a servant to first announce the reason for him seeking help from Allah ﷻ, and that is, his complete submission to Allah ﷻ. He will then be awarded Allah’s ﷻ help.

It is within the etiquettes and good manners that one should first declare his submission then the aid from Allah ﷻ will come to him. There are many examples that clarify this act. In the story of the Prophet Ayyub ؑ, his conversation with Allah ﷻ was:

﴿أَتَىٰ مَسْنَىٰ الضُّرِّ وَأَنْتَ أَرْحَمُ الرَّاحِمِينَ﴾

“He cried out to his Lord: Indeed (an unbearable) ailment has touched me, and You are the most Merciful of the merciful” [Surah Al-Anbiya’: 83].

Prophet Ayyub ؑ did not cry: “Oh Lord, cure me”. And the same happened to the man of the whale, Prophet Yunus ؑ while he was trapped inside the whale’s stomach within three veils of darkness, he did not cry: “Oh Lord release me from this whale’s stomach” instead he called out in repentance:

﴿لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا أَنْتَ سُبْحَانَكَ إِنِّي كُنْتُ مِنَ الظَّالِمِينَ﴾

“There is no God but You! Highly exalted are You! Indeed, I was of the wrongdoers!” [Surah Al-Anbiya’: 87].

The reason was first presented (the act of worship), then Allah’s ﷻ aid came right after.

In the verse: ﴿إِيَّاكَ نَعْبُدُ وَإِيَّاكَ نَسْتَعِينُ﴾, Allah ﷻ first describes the object, before the subject. This means that the act of submission (worshipping) is restricted to Allah ﷻ alone (the One being worshipped), and that help does not come except only from Allah ﷻ.

It is written in many books, such as *Madarij as-Salikin*, that the verse

﴿إِيَّاكَ نَعْبُدُ وَإِيَّاكَ نَسْتَعِينُ﴾ explains the religion in a holistic way. Religion as a whole, encompasses both acts of worship and seeking aid from Allah ﷻ. None can harm or give benefit, connect or disconnect, gather or separate and raise or debase except Allah ﷻ.

And the act of worship is encompassing all acts of kindness, thus this verse summarises the total meaning of the religion.

Verse 6:

﴿الْهُدَىٰ الصِّرَاطَ الْمُسْتَقِيمَ﴾

“Guide us along the straight way.”

The Holy Qur’an is a book of pure guidance, and by seeking guidance we hope to be guided upon the straight path. And the straight path is indeed the shortest path towards the main aim and the shortest path that will bring us to paradise and happiness in this world and the hereafter.

Verse 7:

﴿صِرَاطَ الَّذِينَ أَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيْهِمْ غَيْرِ الْمَغْضُوبِ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا الضَّالِّينَ﴾

“The way of those upon whom You have bestowed Your grace, not the way of those who earned Your anger, nor of those who went astray.”

Those who earned Allah's ﷻ anger are those who go astray and take others astray with them. These are much worse than the obstinate who are satisfied with their obstinacy. This is because, for those who went astray, there might come to them the people of righteousness who will help guide them back to the straight path. We pray that Allah ﷻ save and protect us from being with those who go astray and lead others astray too. Instead, we pray that Allah ﷻ make us be amongst those upon whom He bestowed His grace and guidance towards the straight path, Ameen.

After the end of this chapter (al-Fatihah), we recite 'Ameen' (أمين), a word that does not originate from the Arabic Language nor is it Latin in origin. Rather, it is the language of the Angles that means: "Oh Allah, please accept our prayers." The angles support and ratify the prayers of the children of Adam. It is explained in one of the prophetic traditions, that the Messenger ﷺ said:

((إِذَا قَالَ أَحَدُكُمْ آمِينَ، وَقَالَتِ الْمَلَائِكَةُ فِي السَّمَاءِ آمِينَ، فَوَافَقَتْ إِحْدَاهُمَا الْأُخْرَى، غُفِرَ لَهُ مَا تَقَدَّمَ مِنْ ذَنْبِهِ))

*"If anyone of you says: 'Ameen and the angles in Heaven say 'Ameen', and the one coincides with the other, his previous sins will be forgiven."*³²

The word 'Ameen' (أمين) is not written in the Qur'an, and it is a universal word used by many other religions besides Islam. Like us, the Christians also utter it after every prayer, this is because the only God is Allah and religion belongs to Him and Allah ﷻ mentions,

﴿شَرَعَ لَكُمْ مِنَ الدِّينِ مَا وَصَّى بِهِ نُوحًا وَالَّذِي أَوْحَيْنَا إِلَيْكَ وَمَا وَصَّيْنَا بِهِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَمُوسَى وَعِيسَى أَنْ أَقِيمُوا الدِّينَ وَلَا تَتَفَرَّقُوا فِيهِ﴾

"He has established for you the same religion which He established for Nuh and that which We have inspired in you (Oh Muhammad ﷺ) and that which

³² Sunan an-Nasai, The Book of the Characteristics of the Prayer, Chapter: The virtue of saying Ameen, No: 930

we enjoined on Ibrahim, Musa and Isa (as) saying you should remain steadfast in religion and make no divisions therein” [Surah Asy-Syuraa: 13].

This verse explains that the religion brought by all the prophets comes from Allah ﷻ, and this chapter (Al-Fatihah) represents the whole of religion. The Caliph Umar ibn al-Khattab ؓ recited it as a form of treatment for the sick. However, the effectiveness of this treatment depends on the reciter himself. Once a scholar did the same thing, that is, he tried to treat a sick person but the impact is different. Hence some scholars say: “Here is the Fatiha, but where is Omar? ”We, on the other hand, say: Here is the chapter (Al-Fatihah), so where is the man who recites, understands and acts upon it, hoping that what was bestowed upon Caliph Umar ؓ will also be awarded to us when we recite it.



**THE TAFSEER OF
SURAH AL-BAQARAH**

THE TAFSEER OF SURAH AL-BAQARAH

The first surah (chapter) in the Holy Qur'an after Al-Fatihah is Al-Baqarah. It is the surah that Rasulullah ﷺ recommends to be read in houses, as he ﷺ has said:

((لَا تَجْعَلُوا بُيُوتَكُمْ مَقَابِرَ إِنَّ الشَّيْطَانَ يَنْفِرُ مِنَ الْبَيْتِ الَّذِي تُقْرَأُ فِيهِ سُورَةُ الْبَقَرَةِ))

“Do not make your houses like graves. Verily, satan runs away from houses which have Surah Al-Baqarah recited in them.”³³

It is the canopy of the Holy Qur'an, the longest surah and it is Medinan in nature.

The difference between the surahs which are Meccan and Medinan are that the Meccan surahs give a lot of attention to Aqeedah (Creed). This is because, they were revealed during the years that the Prophet ﷺ was facing the polytheists of Mecca whom he strived to call to believe in Allah, the Hereafter, the paradise and hellfire. On the other hand, the Medinan surahs focus more on the establishing of the new community. As such, they contain many verses of legislative nature.

Another difference is that the Meccan surahs were facing the illiterate and ignorant enemies of Islam in Mecca. However, the Medinan surahs faced the Jews who had the Torah and were knowledgeable. The surahs also confronted hypocrisy, the most dangerous disease that can inflict a community.

A hypocrite is a person who conceals something but shows another. This disease did not arise in Mecca, as the polytheists of Mecca had the dominance there and harmed and oppressed every single person who followed Muhammad ﷺ. On the contrary, in Medina, Islam prevailed and many people

³³ Sahih Muslim: The Book of Prayer for Travellers and Shortening it, Chapter: The recommendation to offer voluntary prayers in one's house and the permissibility to offer them in the mosque, Hadith no. 780

embraced it. Among these people were those who concealed their hatred and enmity towards Islam. They are known as the hypocrites.

Surah Al-Baqarah is Medinan in nature. It contains the story of Prophet Adam عليه السلام, the story of Prophet Ibrahim عليه السلام building the Kaaba and also the rulings regarding fasting, pilgrimage, the prohibition of usury and the way of handling wealth in the community.

As for the reason for its name, it is called Surah Al-Baqarah (The cow) in conjunction with the story of the cow of the Israelites, which are told in it.

Every single name, word, letter and vowel in the Holy Qur'an has its secret. Because the Speaker is Allah ﷻ.

The attributes of perfection that Allah ﷻ possesses are perfect and complete without any flaws like those found in human beings. Therefore, it is impossible that there are any redundancies in the Holy Qur'an.

There are many surahs in the Holy Qur'an which have names linked to some creations of Allah ﷻ, such as Al-An'aam (The Cattle), An-Naml (The Ant), An-Nahl (The Bee), Al-'Ankabut (The Spider) and Al-Fil (The Elephant). The reason is either Allah ﷻ willed for each name to serve the purpose of faith or the purpose of scientific knowledge. The latter also leads to the former as faith is also achieved via the scientific miracles of the Holy Qur'an.

An example is Surah An-Naml (The Ant). In the following verse:

﴿حَتَّىٰ إِذَا أَتَوْا عَلَىٰ وَادِي النَّمْلِ قَالَتْ نَمْلَةٌ يَا أَيُّهَا النَّمْلُ ادْخُلُوا مَسَاكِنَكُمْ لَا يَحْطِمَنَّكُمْ سُلَيْمَانُ وَجُنُودُهُ وَهُمْ لَا يَشْعُرُونَ﴾

“Until, when they came upon the valley of the ants, an ant said, "O ants, enter your dwellings that you not be crushed by Solomon and his soldiers while they perceive not.” [Surah An-Naml: 18]

How could the word **﴿لَا يَحْطِمَنَّكُمْ﴾** be used when an ant is a soft creature? However, it has been discovered recently that more than a third of the ant is actually made up of vitreous substances capable of being crushed. Therefore, we can witness here a scientific purpose serving a faith purpose.

Similarly, all the animals mentioned in the Holy Qur'an such as the locusts, lice, frogs, mosquitoes and flies have communal or scientific characteristics used to serve intended meanings.

Therefore, Surah Al-Baqarah (The Cow) was given this name according to Allah's ﷺ Will in order to establish the idea of resurrection in the hereafter. There will be a reckoning, punishment and rewards as life would be meaningless without them. The divine messages would also be deemed purposeless in the absence of a last day where deeds are reckoned for.

The cow had specific features and it belonged to an Israelite boy. It happened that a person was killed and his murderer was unknown. So, Allah ﷻ told them to slaughter a cow with the said features. Then Allah ﷻ told them to strike the dead person with a part of the cow. Allah ﷻ then caused him to come alive, name his murderer and die again. This story will be elaborated when we reach this verse:

﴿وَإِذْ قَالَ مُوسَىٰ لِقَوْمِهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَأْمُرُكُمْ أَنْ تَذْبَحُوا بَقْرَةً﴾

“And [recall] when Moses said to his people, “Indeed, Allah commands you to slaughter a cow.” [Surah Al-Baqarah: 67].

The cow was not an animal which was normally found among the cattle in the Arabian Peninsula during the revelation of this surah. However, the name served a great faith purpose which is the issue of resurrection.

Verse 1:

﴿الْم﴾

“Alif, Lam, Meem.”

Surah Al-Baqarah commences with this verse of Allah ﷻ : ﴿الْم﴾

What is the meaning of these letters? There is not another book on this earth which starts with letters in this manner.

These are structural letters, not significant letters. The significant letters signify meanings, such as (في, in) which signifies an adverbial meaning, (على, on) which signifies superiority, (من, from) which signifies beginning and (إلى, to) which signifies ending. However, ﴿الْم﴾ consists of structural letters that we will not be asked about their meanings. There is not a single book which begins with letters which do not have a meaning.

If the Holy Qur'an had been from the Prophet ﷺ or humans and jinns had gathered to author the book, it would have never occurred to any of them to write a book intended for human beings except with words and letters which contain meanings, so that no problems will arise.

Therefore, why are these *Ahruf Muqat'ta'ah* (الأحرف المقطعة) (Disjointed Letters) found in the Holy Qur'an, when there is not a single letter, word or vowel except that it has a meaning?

Although meanings of these letters are not apparent to us, they contain great meanings known only to The One who sent them. They are of the *Ayat Mutashabihat* (الآيات المتشابهات) (The Unclear Verses) which show the miracle of the Holy Qur'an the most. They prove that the Holy Qur'an is indeed from Allah ﷻ and not from the Prophet ﷺ.

These letters are similar to secret codes which soldiers in the army make up to be used among themselves. Everyone else would not know their

meanings if they were to hear them. However, for those who made them up, these secret meanings could lead to a battle or a great affair.

By these letters, it is as if the Qur'an is saying to us, "Recite the Qur'an with Allah's secrets in you, and with His secrets in it. Recite it with your soul as these letters are its keys. Recite it with Allah's ﷻ secrets in it, whether you know the meanings of these letters or you don't." This is why Rasulullah ﷺ said,

((...فَمَا كَانَ مِنْ مُحْكَمِهِ فَأَعْمَلُوا بِهِ, وَمَا كَانَ مِنْ مُتَشَابِهِهِ فَأَمِنُوا بِهِ))

*"...Whichever parts of it are clear, act upon them. And whichever parts are unclear, believe in them."*³⁴

We do not know the meanings of these letters to the present day, and there are differing opinions in interpreting the *Ahruf Muqat'ta'ah* (Disjointed Letters) found at the Openings of Surahs. However, the important thing is that they are one of the secrets of Allah ﷻ and that it is not true to think that you do not benefit from things that you cannot comprehend. You benefit from electricity whereas you do not really comprehend its essence. It is as if Allah ﷻ is saying to you, "Recite the Qur'an with Allah's secret which He has placed in it." So, these letters are among the secrets that have been placed in the Holy Qur'an and they are the keys to the soul.

The Holy Qur'an has not been revealed according to one particular mode. If it were all revealed in a single mode, the *Basmalah* would be disjointed too. Whereas we read and write (بِسْمِ) in ﴿بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ﴾ with three letters without an Alif in between the letters Ba' and Sin but it is written with an Alif this way ﴿بِاسْمِ﴾ in Surah Al-'Alaq. The word ﴿تَبَارَكَ﴾ [Surah Al-Furqan: 1] is also written once with an Alif and once without an Alif in this way ﴿تَبْرَكَ﴾ [Surah Al-Mulk: 1].

³⁴ اتحاف الخيرة المهرة بزوائد المسانيد العشرة 34: The Book of Tafseer, Chapter: The Prohibition of disputing and arguing about the Qur'an, Hadith no. 5935.

Therefore, we should not recite the Holy Qur'an like any other ordinary books, as The One who sends it is Allah ﷻ, the Most High, not an ordinary person like us whom we can learn from.

These *Ahruf Muqat'ta'ah* (Disjoined Letters) found at the beginnings of many surahs in the Holy Qur'an are recited disjointedly and not as a word. However, the rest of the Holy Qur'an is recited as words in sentences. A vowel is found at the last word of every verse. This vowel is only recited if we recite the verse continuously with the next one. For example, in the following verse,

﴿لَعَلَّهُمْ يَرْشُدُونَ﴾

“that they may be [rightly] guided” [Surah Al-Baqarah: 186],

the last word (يَرْشُدُونَ) ends with a *Fathah* and not a *Sukoon*. So, if the recitation is paused there, it is recited with a *Sukoon* but if the recitation continues, it is recited with the *Fathah*. This is the same for the rest of the verses, as the *Waqf* (pause or stopping) can only be done with a *Sukoon* and not a vowel.

The whole Qur'an is recited as words in sentences except the *Ahruf Muqat'ta'ah* (Disjoined Letters), for example, (Alif, Laam, Meem).

Who taught us that they have to be recited in this way?

The Holy Qur'an is transmitted through *Talaqqi* (Direct Learning). It was named The *Qur'an* (The Recited) before it was named The *Kitab* (The Book) to signify it is not possible to recite the Holy Qur'an unless we have heard it first.

Who taught you, Oh Muhammad, that ﴿الْم﴾ in Surah Al-Baqarah is recited as (Alif, Laam, Meem) whereas the very same letters with the same writing, in:

﴿الْم تَنْشُرْخ لَكَ صَدْرَكَ﴾ [Surah Ash-Sharh] and

﴿الْم تَرَى كَيْفَ فَعَلَ رَبُّكَ بِأَصْحَابِ الْفِيلِ﴾ [Surah Al-Fil: 1] are recited as (الْم)?

This shows that you listened to the Qur'an being recited to you before you were told to write it down. Therefore, it is incumbent on a person who wants to

learn the Holy Qur'an to listen to it first, as the Holy Qur'an is received through *Talaqqi* (Direct Learning) from the Qur'anic teachers.

The Prophet ﷺ had received the Holy Qur'an directly from the angel Sayyidina Jibreel عليه السلام who said to him, ﴿ اقْرَأْ ﴾ [Surah Al-'Alaq: 1] although he was illiterate.

Illiteracy for the Prophet ﷺ is a form of perfection whereas it is considered a deficiency for others. This is because, this illiteracy proves that what he did was not taught except by Allah ﷻ.

People who are illiterate might know how to pronounce the letters but not their names. For example, an illiterate person might know that (ا) is pronounced as (A) but not that its name is *Alif*. There is a vast difference between pronouncing the letters and their names.

So, who taught the Prophet ﷺ that some letters are pronounced and some letters are pronounced using their names?

All that has been mentioned are among the secrets connected to the topic of ﴿ اَلَمْ ﴾, as the Holy Qur'an differs from other books. Some scholars opine that these letters are used as an inspiration. Some others say that they are used as a challenge and to show the miraculous nature of the Holy Qur'an. Though these letters are among the letters of the Arabic Language used in the Holy Qur'an, no one is able to compose even a Surah or verse similar to the Holy Qur'an using them. All these opinions are correct. However, the spiritual miracles and secrets of these letters remain unknown.

The following *Ahruf Muqat'ta'ah* (Disjointed Letters) can be found in the Holy Qur'an beginning from Surah Al-Baqarah:

﴿ طَسَمَ ﴾ ، ﴿ طَسَّ ﴾ ، ﴿ يَسَّ ﴾ ،
 ﴿ قَفَّ ﴾ ، ﴿ تَفَّ ﴾ ، ﴿ التَّرَفَّ ﴾ ، ﴿ التَّمَصَّ ﴾ ، ﴿ الرَّفَّ ﴾ ، ﴿ التَّمَرَفَّ ﴾ ، ﴿ كَتَمَ ﴾ ، ﴿ طَهَّ ﴾ ،
 ﴿ صَفَّ ﴾ ، ﴿ حَمَّ ﴾ ، ﴿ حَمَّ ﴾ ، ﴿ حَمَّ ﴾

All these letters can be found among the Arabic Alphabet. Out of the twenty-eight letters in the Alphabet, fourteen of them come as the *Ahruf Muqat'ta'ah* (Disjoined Letters) at the Openings of Surahs. This is exactly half of the total. This cannot be a random arrangement. How then were they chosen in such a precise manner? When compiled, these letters can make up this phrase (نصّ حكيم له سرّ قاطع) which means 'A wise text with a definite secret'. They were selected from the Alphabet via an amazing order!

If we were to take the first nine letters of the Arabic Alphabet, we would find that Allah, the Most Wise selected 2 letters (أ and ح) from them and left out seven letters (ب, ت, ث, ج, خ, د, ذ):

From the following set of ten letters, He selected them alternately, such that He ﷻ took one and left the next then took the next one and left the next, and so on. It is interesting that the letters selected were the non-dotted ones (ع, ر, س, ص, ط, ظ) and the ones left out were the dotted ones (غ, ش, ض, ظ, ع).

From the third set, seven letters were selected (ق, ك, ل, م, ن, ه, ي) and two were not (ف, و).

In summary, 2 letters were selected from the first set of 9 and 7 were not. On the contrary, 7 were selected from the third set and 2 were not. In the middle set of 10 letters, the letters without dots were selected and the ones with dots were left out.

Do you think it could have been a random or haphazard selection? Of course not!

Allah (سبحانه وتعالى) says,

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

“Then do they not reflect upon the Qur’an? If it had been from [any] other than Allah, they would have found within it much contradiction.”

[Surah An-Nisaa’: 82]

The *Ahruf Muqat’ta’ah* (Disjointed Letters) in the Holy Qur’an

They consist of 14 out of the 28 letters of the Arabic Alphabet which can be compiled to form this phrase with miraculous structure and beneficial meaning: (نص حكيم له سر قاطع) **(A wise text with a definite secret)**

	ذ	د	خ	ح	ج	ث	ت	ب	ا
غ	ع	ظ	ط	ض	ص	ش	س	ز	ر
	ي	و	هـ	ن	م	ل	ك	ق	ف

They are not arranged randomly but in this astounding manner:

From the first set of 9 letters: 2 were taken, 7 were not

From the last set of 9 letters: 7 were taken, 2 were not

From the middle 10 letters: The letters without dots were taken and those with dots were not

Therefore, the selected letters make up half of the Arabic Alphabet

This is not a case of Mathematics, Numeracy or Engineering. Nor is it linked to the work of the computer. Verily, it is a matter connected to the Arabic Language and is among the secrets of ‘**A wise text with a definite secret**’.

So, let’s now enter Surah Al-Baqarah using its keys, ﴿الْم﴾.

Verse 2:

﴿ذَلِكَ الْكِتَابُ لَا رَيْبَ فِيهِ هُدًى لِّلْمُتَّقِينَ﴾

“This is the Book which has no doubt in it, a guidance to those who are pious.”

(ذَا): A determiner that introduces the noun *(in English, a determiner is required before introducing a singular noun to specify the noun it is referring to), which is the Holy Qur’an.

(الْأَلَام): Used to show elevation. It indicates nearness yet superiority. Thus, the Holy Qur’an is near to you yet from an exalted source.

(الْكَاف): Used to address all people or everyone.

﴿الْكِتَابُ﴾: The word “Qur’an” is not used here, as the Holy Qur’an is memorised in hearts and written down on lines. Therefore, it is considered a book after it has been written down. The Prophet ﷺ used to hurriedly repeat the verses after the Angel Jibreel عليه السلام until His God told him:

﴿لَا تُحْرَكْ بِهِ لِسَانُكَ لِتَعْجَلَ بِهِ (١٦) إِنَّ عَلَيْنَا جَمْعَهُ وَقُرْآنَهُ (١٧) فَإِذَا قَرَأْتَهُ فَاتَّبِعْ قُرْآنَهُ (١٨)

ثُمَّ إِنَّ عَلَيْنَا بَيَانَهُ (١٩)﴾

“Move not your tongue with it, O Muhammad, to hasten with recitation of the Qur’an. Indeed, upon Us is its collection [in your heart] and [to make possible] its recitation. So when We have recited it [through Jibril], then follow its recitation. Then upon Us is its clarification [to you]” [Surah Al-Qiyamah: 16 - 19]

After this verse was revealed, the Holy Qur’an entered his heart and he had it memorised. Then, he would ask for it to be written down on lines.

Then, Allah ﷻ says:

﴿لَا رَيْبَ فِيهِ﴾.

(Whereof there is no doubt)

There is not a single person on this Earth who would dare to compose something and then claim that there is no doubt in what he has written. This is because, he is a human being and the state of human beings is ever-changing. He could be in one state today and in a totally different one tomorrow. He is young in a certain period and will become old in another period. He might even be alive today and be dead tomorrow. Therefore, he is not able to say that his book contains no doubt in it. However, the One who is not subject to change is able to say, “Wherein there is no doubt”. This means that no matter what new conditions happen, there will never be a doubt in this Book nor in any of its words.

It is acceptable to pause at ﴿لَا رَيْبَ﴾ “No doubt” and commence from

﴿فِيهِ﴾ “In it” which will mean, “...There is no doubt – (pause) - In it is a guidance...”

It is also acceptable to pause at ﴿فِيهِ﴾ “In it” and commence from ﴿هُدًى﴾

“a guidance” which will mean, “...There is no doubt in it- (pause) - a guidance...).

Therefore, the verse has two meanings.

﴿فِيهِ هُدًى لِّلْمُتَّقِينَ﴾ “In it is a guidance to those who are pious”

Is the Holy Qur’an only a guidance for the pious or for all of mankind?

To answer this question, we have to go back to the Principles of Interpretation we talked about before, which is that the Holy Qur’an is interpreted by other parts of the Qur’an. So, let’s look at the following verse from Surah Al-Baqarah:

﴿شَهْرُ رَمَضَانَ الَّذِي أُنزِلَ فِيهِ الْقُرْآنُ هُدًى لِّلنَّاسِ وَبَيِّنَاتٍ مِّنَ الْهُدَىٰ وَالْفُرْقَانِ﴾

“The month of Ramadhan [is that] in which was revealed the Qur’an, a guidance for the people and clear proofs of guidance and criterion.

”[Surah Al-Baqarah: 185]

Here, we can see that the Qur’an is a guidance for all of mankind, not only for the pious.

Therefore, it is not permissible for a person to interpret the Holy Qur’an based on their own opinions, nor cut off the verses from their context. Those who quote verses from the Book of Allah to prove their arguments falsely and tyrannically actually do not know anything at all about the Principles of Interpretation!

So, the Holy Qur’an is a guidance for all of mankind and specifically for the pious.

However, we will firstly have to understand what the meaning of guidance is and who are considered the *Muttaqun* (pious).

There are two types of guidance: Directional Guidance and Supportive Guidance.

Directional Guidance is the showing of people to the correct path, such as the signs put on streets to indicate the way for travellers.

This Directional Guidance leads you to the goal or purpose. Therefore, there is no meaning for this guidance if there is no goal or purpose.

So, what is the goal?

It is the straight path which leads to felicity in both worlds and ultimately to paradise. The One who defines the purpose for the creation of man has to be The One who created man.

Supportive Guidance is the granting of support and assistance for travel after the road has been chosen.

The Holy Qur'an contains evidences for those who have chosen the road and accepted the Directional Guidance. Therefore, whoever has accepted the Directional Guidance will be granted the Supportive Guidance.

Allah ﷻ has addressed His Prophet ﷺ by saying:

﴿إِنَّكَ لَا تَهْدِي مَنْ أَحْبَبْتَ وَلَكِنَّ اللَّهَ يَهْدِي مَنْ يَشَاءُ﴾

“Indeed, [O Muhammad], you do not guide whom you like, but Allah guides whom He wills.” [Surah Al-Qasas: 56]

In another verse, He says:

﴿وَإِنَّكَ لَتَهْدِي إِلَى صِرَاطٍ مُسْتَقِيمٍ﴾

“And indeed, [O Muhammad], you guide to a straight path.” [Surah Asy-Syuraa: 52].

These verses mean that: ‘You, Oh Muhammad, can guide people to the straight path. However, you cannot insert guidance into their hearts. Only Allah ﷻ can do this.’ The guidance that comes from Allah ﷻ is the Supportive Guidance, whereas the Prophet ﷺ guides with the Directional Guidance, as explained in these verses:

﴿فَذَكِّرْ إِنَّمَا أَنْتَ مُذَكِّرٌ (٢١) لَسْتَ عَلَيْهِمْ بِمُصَيِّرٍ (٢٢) إِلَّا مَنْ تَوَلَّى وَكَفَرَ (٢٣) فَيُعَذِّبُهُ اللَّهُ الْعَذَابَ الْأَكْبَرَ (٢٤) إِنَّ إِلَيْنَا إِيَابَهُمْ (٢٥) ثُمَّ إِنَّ عَلَيْنَا حِسَابَهُمْ (٢٦)﴾

“So remind, [O Muhammad]; you are only a reminder. You are not over them a controller. However, he who turns away and disbelieves - Then Allah will punish him with the greatest punishment. Indeed, to Us is their return. Then indeed, upon Us is their account.” [Surah Al-Ghashiyah: 21-26].

This means that we do not use the whip on people to force them to embrace Islam, nor do we hold swords to instil fear in people regarding the punishment of the grave and the hellfire. Rather, we guide people with the Directional Guidance as indicated by the Holy Qur'an.

From here, we can understand that the guidance in ﴿هُدًى لِّلْمُتَّقِينَ﴾ “a guidance to those who are pious” means the Supportive Guidance.

Who then are the *Al-Muttaqin* (The pious)?

The word *Taqwa* is mentioned many times in the Holy Qur’an. It means that you make a barrier between you and something, as Allah ﷻ has said,

﴿وَاتَّقُوا النَّارَ الَّتِي أُعِدَّتْ لِلْكَافِرِينَ﴾

“And fear the Fire, which has been prepared for the disbelievers.” [Surah Ali ‘Imran: 131] and

﴿اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ﴾

“fear Allah” [Surah Al-Baqarah: 278].

The difference between these two verses is that in the first verse, you are commanded to make a barrier between yourself and the hellfire. This is by abiding by Allah’s ﷻ commands.

In the second verse, you are told to have *Taqwa* of Allah ﷻ. Here, you are supposed to make a barrier between yourself and the Attributes of Omnipotence of Allah ﷻ, such as *Al-Muntaqim* (The Avenger), *Al-Jabbar* (The Almighty) and *Al-Qahhar* (The Subduer).

In the latter instance, the barrier is to be made up of the Characteristics of Allah ﷻ such as *Al-Ghafur* (The Most Forgiving), *Ar-Rahim* (The Most Merciful) and *At-Tawwab* (The accepter of repentance), namely attributes that show Allah’s forgiveness, mercy and accepting of repentance.

Imam Ali (May Allah honour his face) – was once asked regarding *Taqwa*. He said: *Taqwa* is having fear of The Exalted, acting upon the revelation, contentment with the little that we possess and readiness for the day of departure. The departure day here is the hereafter. His definition here is based on the Holy Qur’an.

Verse 3:

﴿الَّذِينَ يُؤْمِنُونَ بِالْغَيْبِ وَيُقِيمُونَ الصَّلَاةَ وَمِمَّا رَزَقْنَاهُمْ يُنْفِقُونَ﴾

“Who believe in the unseen, establish prayer, and spend out of what We have provided for them.”

The first characteristic of the pious is believing in the unseen.

The unseen is everything which cannot be perceived by your senses.

These senses are: The sight, the hearing, the smell, the touch and the taste.

The unseen refers to the things which are hidden from you. The existence of a thing is different from perceiving the thing. Therefore, it is untrue that everything that your senses do not perceive is non-existent. For example, bacteria cannot be perceived by the senses. The people alive during the period of revelation fell sick with high temperatures and illnesses such as malaria, typhoid and other diseases. And, they were cured without knowledge of germs nor of the causes of their illness. However, these germs were present, albeit them not knowing of them. Thus, ignorance of the existence of germs did not negate their existence.

Belief in the unseen is the first component of belief. **There are three types of the unseen:**

- That which is hidden from you but there are ways of finding out about them, such as meteorology which can inform us of the weather. This is not considered among the unseen.
- That which is hidden from you but is known to others. This is not considered as the unseen.
- That which is absolutely hidden and there are no means of finding out about them.

For example, there are some people who deny the existence of jinn because they are unable to see them. Why then do they not deny the existence of germs?

The jinns do not have knowledge of the unseen. If they claim that they do, it is actually a thing which exists in another part of the Earth that they have access to. Allah ﷻ has says:

﴿فَلَمَّا حَرَ تَبَيَّنَتْ الْجِنُّ أَنْ لَوْ كَانُوا يَعْلَمُونَ الْغَيْبَ مَا لَبِثُوا فِي الْعَذَابِ الْمُهِينِ﴾

“But when he fell, it became clear to the jinn that if they had known the unseen, they would not have remained in humiliating punishment.”

[Surah Saba': 14].

From here, it is clear that they do not know the unseen. Similarly, the angels do not have knowledge of the unseen. The proof is the verse:

﴿قَالُوا سُبْحَانَكَ لَا عِلْمَ لَنَا إِلَّا مَا عَلَّمْتَنَا إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ الْعَلِيمُ الْحَكِيمُ﴾

“They said, "Exalted are You; we have no knowledge except what You have taught us. Indeed, it is You who is the Knowing, the Wise.”

[Surah Al-Baqarah: 32].

The Messengers too do not have knowledge of the unseen.

There is an exception however, that is if Allah ﷻ Wills to inform His angels or messengers of something from the unseen. He has informed The Prophet ﷺ of many affairs, as evident in this verse:

﴿عَالِمُ الْغَيْبِ فَلَا يُظْهِرُ عَلَى غَيْبِهِ أَحَدًا (٢٦) إِلَّا مَنْ ارْتَضَى مِنْ رَسُولٍ (٢٧)﴾

“[He is] Knower of the unseen, and He does not disclose His [knowledge of the] unseen to anyone, except whom He has approved of messengers.”

[Surah Al-Jinn: 26-27].

Thus, believing in the unseen is the peak of belief and is the first characteristic of the pious.

﴿وَيُقِيمُونَ الصَّلَاةَ﴾

“and establish prayer”:

The prayer is linked to the belief in the unseen. Believing in the unseen means to believe in Allah ﷻ, the Angels and the Prophets. We did not see the Prophet ﷺ ourselves. However, even those who saw him during the period of revelation did not know that he was sent the message except through their own belief in the unseen. This was because, they themselves did not see Jibril ﷺ when the angel came upon him with revelation.

The prayers signify continuous allegiance to Allah ﷻ. Hence, it is the most important pillar of faith in Allah.

﴿وَمِمَّا رَزَقْنَاهُمْ يُنْفِقُونَ﴾

“and spend out of what We have provided for them,”

Spending in the way of Allah ﷻ is one of the characteristics of the pious. The *Rizq* (Provision) here refers to everything that can bring benefit.

Therefore, it is as if Allah ﷻ wants us to understand that belief in the unseen brings goodness for the aqeedah, carrying out the prayers brings goodness for the individual as it is his connection to Allah ﷻ which will stop him from evil and abominable acts, and spending from his provision brings goodness for the community.

﴿الَّذِينَ يُؤْمِنُونَ بِالْغَيْبِ وَيُقِيمُونَ الصَّلَاةَ وَمِمَّا رَزَقْنَاهُمْ يُنْفِقُونَ﴾

“Who believe in the unseen, establish prayer, and spend out of what We have provided for them.”

Therefore, from this verse, Allah ﷻ wants us to understand that belief in the unseen encompasses all the tenets of Iman and that prayers encompasses all the tenets of Islam. This is because, in prayers we bear witness to the Oneness of Allah ﷻ and that our leader Muhammad ﷺ is the Prophet and

Messenger of Allah ﷺ. Fasting is implied when we abstain from eating and drinking throughout the prayers and the pilgrimage is implied when we face the Kaaba in our prayers and sadaqah (charity) is when we give out a part of our time to perform the prayers because the product of time is deeds, and the product of deeds is provision.

When the Muezzin calls us to prayer with the words: Allah ﷻ is The Greatest, Allah ﷻ is The Greatest, we come because Allah ﷻ is greater than the world and everything in it. We pray five times in a day. Therefore, as we can see, performing the prayers contains the embodiment of Islam.

There are conditions to fulfil when carrying out the prayers, such as being in a state of purity, covering the body and facing the Kaaba. The word *Adaa'* means to perform or carry out something. Here, Allah ﷻ does not say (يُودُونَ) (الصَّلَاةِ) meaning they carry out the prayers but He says ﴿وَيُقِيمُونَ الصَّلَاةَ﴾, which brings the meaning of standing up to establish or perform the prayers.

Islam also comes to bring felicity to mankind by calling people to do good to one another. Therefore, when Allah says:

﴿وَمِمَّا رَزَقْنَاهُمْ يُنْفِقُونَ﴾

“and spend out of what We have provided for them,”

Infaq (giving out of the provision) can be through wealth, knowledge or anything which could bring benefit to others. The Holy Qur'an says:

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا ارْكَعُوا وَاسْجُدُوا وَاعْبُدُوا رَبَّكُمْ وَافْعَلُوا الْخَيْرَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ﴾

“O you who have believed, bow and prostrate and worship your Lord and do good - that you may succeed.” [Surah Al-Hajj: 77].

From here, we can see that the message in the Holy Qur'an is one which calls towards doing good to others and to not harm, kill, shame, curse, beat or annihilate people. These are among the meanings of:

﴿وَمِمَّا رَزَقْنَاهُمْ يُنْفِقُونَ﴾

“and spend out of what We have provided for them”

Verse 4:

﴿وَالَّذِينَ يُؤْمِنُونَ بِمَا أُنزِلَ إِلَيْكَ وَمَا أُنزِلَ مِنْ قَبْلِكَ وَبِالْآخِرَةِ هُمْ يُوقِنُونَ﴾

“And who believe in what has been revealed to you, [O Muhammad], and what was revealed before you, and of the Hereafter they are certain [in faith].”

The final divine message encompasses all the previous divine messages. We believe in them all. Thus, we do not reject the Christians as they are people of the book. Allah ﷻ has said:

﴿شَرَعَ لَكُمْ مِنَ الدِّينِ مَا وَصَّى بِهِ نُوحًا وَالَّذِي أَوْحَيْنَا إِلَيْكَ وَمَا وَصَّيْنَا بِهِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَمُوسَى وَعِيسَى أَنْ أَقِيمُوا الدِّينَ وَلَا تَتَفَرَّقُوا فِيهِ﴾

“He has ordained for you of religion what He enjoined upon Noah and that which We have revealed to you, [O Muhammad], and what We enjoined upon Abraham and Moses and Jesus - to establish the religion and not be divided therein.” [Surah Asy-Syuraa: 13].

Therefore, every call containing separatism in the name of religion is invalid and religion is free of it. This is because, the religion gathers and does not separate as Allah is One and He was The One who sent Ibrahim ؑ, Musa ؑ, Isa ؑ and concluded them with the leader of the Messengers, Muhammad ﷺ.

﴿وَبِالْآخِرَةِ هُمْ يُوقِنُونَ﴾

“and of the Hereafter they are certain [in faith].”

A sense of responsibility in this world is due to the presence of accounting for one's deeds in the hereafter. This is because the life of this world is transitory whereas the life of the hereafter is everlasting. This life is low (as indicated by the literal meaning of *Dunyaa* and that life is high. If there was no accounting, transgression and evil would prevail.

In the hereafter, the transgressor would receive punishment for his transgression. Therefore, when a person has a strong certainty that the hereafter, accounting, reward and punishment exist, he will increase in good acts.

Someone might say: Some people in the western communities do not believe in the hereafter, but they still do good acts! The answer is that: They do good acts in this world to attain happiness here. For example: We know that the most important acts of goodness are due to one's parents. We can see how much importance they place in caring for the community and orphans in those lands. However, what is the state of the parents? How are the relationships between the sons and their fathers and mothers? The relationships are not as what Allah ﷻ has Willed!

We also very often hear of suicide in their communities. This shows a lack of true happiness. True happiness belongs to those who believe in the hereafter and those who believe that there will be accounting, reward and punishment.

Verse 5:

﴿أُولَٰئِكَ عَلَىٰ هُدًى مِّن رَّبِّهِمْ وَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ﴾

“Those are upon [right] guidance from their Lord, and it is those who are the successful.”

Those who perform their prayers, believe in what was sent down to Prophet Muhammad ﷺ and what was sent down before him, believe in the hereafter,

believe in all the revealed religions and do not commit crimes such as stealing, bribery, fornication, lying, backbiting and disobeying parents, are the truly the pious. This is the religion that they hold on to, as Rasulullah ﷺ has said:

((إِنَّمَا بُعِثْتُ لِأَتَمِّمَ مَكَارِمَ الْأَخْلَاقِ))

*“I have been divinely sent to perfect good character.”*³⁵

﴿الْمُفْلِحُونَ﴾ *“who are successful.”*: The word (الْمُفْلِحُونَ) comes from the word *Al-Falaah* which means success and prosperity. Hence, they are the successful. The word has the same origin as *Al-Falaahah* which means growing of crops. The *Al-Fallaah*, which means the farmer, harvests the plantations from the soil after sowing and caring for them. Allah ﷻ has said:

﴿مَثَلُ الَّذِينَ يُنْفِقُونَ أَمْوَالَهُمْ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ كَمَثَلِ حَبَّةٍ أَنْبَتَتْ سَبْعَ سَنَابِلٍ فِي كُلِّ سُنْبُلَةٍ مِائَةُ حَبَّةٍ وَاللَّهُ يُضَاعِفُ لِمَنْ يَشَاءُ﴾

“The example of those who spend their wealth in the way of Allah is like a seed [of grain] which grows seven spikes; in each spike is a hundred grains. And Allah multiplies [His reward] for whom He wills.” [Surah Al-Baqarah: 261].

The seed which is thrown to the Earth will eventually produce 700 seeds. This is where the issue of *Al-Falaah* which means success, comes in. Allah ﷻ multiplies His gifts for whoever He Wills.

Verse 6:

﴿إِنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا سَوَاءٌ عَلَيْهِمْ ءَأَنْذَرْتَهُمْ أَمْ لَمْ تُنذِرْهُمْ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ﴾

“Indeed, those who disbelieve - it is all the same for them whether you warn them or do not warn them - they will not believe.”

³⁵ Sunan al-Baihaqi al-Kubra: The Book of Testimony, Chapter: Explaining the Good Character and its Excellence, Hadith no. 20571.

Disbelief in the Arabic Language means ‘to conceal’. There is no implication whatsoever in the word which justifies the crimes done towards disbelievers by some people, such as killing, terrorising and manslaughtering. There is no link between the word *kufr* which means disbelief, and killing.

Disbelief is an action of the mind, as Allah ﷻ has says:

﴿قُلْ يَا أَيُّهَا الْكَافِرُونَ (١) لَا أَعْبُدُ مَا تَعْبُدُونَ (٢) وَلَا أَنْتُمْ عَابِدُونَ مَا أَعْبُدُ (٣) وَلَا أَنَا عَابِدٌ مَّا عَبَدْتُمْ (٤) وَلَا أَنْتُمْ عَابِدُونَ مَا أَعْبُدُ (٥) لَكُمْ دِينُكُمْ وَلِيَ دِينِ (٦)﴾

“Say, “O disbelievers, I do not worship what you worship. Nor are you worshippers of what I worship. Nor will I be a worshipper of what you worship. Nor will you be worshippers of what I worship. For you is your religion, and for me is my religion.” [Surah Al-Kafirun: 1-6]

So, the disbelievers conceal (the belief in Allah), that is my belief and they do not believe in what I believe.

That is the meaning of the word. Therefore, those who label people as disbelievers and practice killing, terrorism and crimes on them and then name themselves as true Muslims are actually not linked to Islam at all! This is because, the word *kufr* means ‘to conceal’ and not ‘to kill’.

It is important to point out that the opening of Surah Al-Baqarah mentions the characteristics of the believers in three verses, the characteristics of the disbelievers in two verses and the characteristics of the hypocrites in thirteen successive verses. Hence, this big number of verses talking about the hypocrites shows us the great danger of hypocrisy and its effects on the community, religion and the followers of religion. Hypocrisy is a dangerous disease which befalls the community. It is more dangerous than clear open enmity as it is hidden enmity.

There are people who exploit the terms disbelief (Al-Kafir) and very easily accuse others of disbelief. This is dangerous as it justifies the claim of the

enemies of Islam such as the Zionists that Islam is a religion of accusation of disbelief and killing. Therefore, we have to be aware so that this issue will not be one which confuses people, especially the youngsters in the future generations.

The danger is not in changing the meaning of the term. It actually lies at the hands of those who claim knowledge and religion yet do not know the interpretation of the verses linked to disbelief and thus leave the issue ambiguous.

Indeed, among the characteristics of the pious are things that bring goodness for the religion, individual and community. Goodness for the community includes accepting others and respecting their views.

Also, among their characteristics are that they believe in the divine message revealed to Prophet Muhammad ﷺ and all the previous divine messages. This means that they accept others and this shows us how we should interact with people of other beliefs such as the Christians.

There are two issues concerning disbelief:

- The problem of accusing others of disbelief.

The word *Kufr* which means disbelief, means concealment in the Arabic Language. What is concealed here? They actually conceal the existence of Allah ﷻ. A person cannot conceal something which is non-existent. Therefore, this shows that there was belief preceding the disbelief. If not for the belief, the *Kufr* or concealing would not occur.

Prophet Adam ﷺ was brought down to Earth as a believer. After a period of time, and after Qabeel (Cain) killed Habeel (Abel), disbelief surfaced.

The usage of the word *Kufr* which means disbelief, to mean *Satr* which means concealment, does not at all mean killing. In the Holy Qur'an, Allah ﷻ says:

﴿كَمَثَلِ غَيْثٍ أَعْجَبَ الْكُفَّارَ نَبَاهُ﴾

“like the example of a rain whose [resulting] plant growth pleases the cultivators” [Surah Al-Hadid: 20].

In this verse, the word *Kuffar* which means disbelievers is used to mean the cultivator. The cultivator is a *Kafir* because he conceals the seed in the Earth. Thus, the Holy Qur’an uses the word *Kuffar* to mean the cultivators.

Therefore, the word *Kufr* here means the concealment of Allah’s existence.

- Disbelief is a doctrinal matter, not a behavioural one.

Islam is a religion, not just a culture. When we say it is a religion, it has to contain a creed, rulings, worship and codes of conduct. Therefore, there has to be two parties, one that believes in the religion and one that does not.

The word *Kufr* or disbelief is not only used for religion but it is also used to mean those who disbelieve in favours and blessings of Allah ﷻ, as Allah ﷻ, says:

﴿وَإِذْ تَأَذَّنَ رَبُّكُمْ لَئِن شَكَرْتُمْ لَأَزِيدَنَّكُمْ وَلَئِن كَفَرْتُمْ إِنَّ عَذَابِي لَشَدِيدٌ﴾

“And [remember] when your Lord proclaimed, 'If you are grateful, I will surely increase you [in favor]; but if you deny, indeed, My punishment is severe.’”

[Surah Ibrahim: 7].

The word *Kufr*, in this verse means ingratitude towards blessings.

This shows that actually, disbelief is a matter connected to doctrine, not behaviour. Punishments are issued based on behaviour and not doctrines and beliefs, as said in the Holy Qur’an:

﴿لَا إِكْرَاهَ فِي الدِّينِ﴾

“There shall be no compulsion in [acceptance of] the religion.”

[Surah Al-Baqarah: 256] and

﴿وَقُلْ الْحَقُّ مِنْ رَبِّكُمْ فَمَنْ شَاءَ فَلْيُؤْمِنْ وَمَنْ شَاءَ فَلْيُكْفُرْ﴾

“And say, ‘The truth is from your Lord, so whoever wills - let him believe; and whoever wills - let him disbelieve.’” [Surah Al-Kahf: 29].

From these verses, we see that we do not punish anyone for their beliefs, religion nor choice, as Allah ﷻ, left human beings to their own freedom of choice, as He says:

﴿فَذَكِّرْ إِنَّمَا أَنْتَ مُذَكِّرٌ (٢١) لَسْتَ عَلَيْهِمْ بِمُصَيِّرٍ (٢٢) إِلَّا مَنْ تَوَلَّى وَكَفَرَ (٢٣)
فَيُعَذِّبُهُ اللَّهُ الْعَذَابَ الْأَكْبَرَ (٢٤) إِنَّ إِلَيْنَا إِيَابُهُمْ (٢٥) ثُمَّ إِنَّ عَلَيْنَا حِسَابَهُمْ (٢٦)﴾

“So remind, [O Muhammad]; you are only a reminder. You are not over them a controller. However, he who turns away and disbelieves - Then Allah will punish him with the greatest punishment. Indeed, to Us is their return. Then indeed, upon Us is their account.” [Surah Al-Ghashiyah: 21-26].

Religion is thus a matter of doctrine and the intellect, not a matter of killing, massacre and compulsion.

The Muslims fought the polytheists because they were aggressors, not because of their polytheism. The proof is found in this verse:

﴿لَا يَنْهَاكُمْ اللَّهُ عَنِ الَّذِينَ لَمْ يُقَاتِلُوكُمْ فِي الدِّينِ وَلَمْ يُخْرِجُوكُمْ مِنْ دِيَارِكُمْ أَنْ تَبَرُّوهُمْ وَتُقْسِطُوا إِلَيْهِمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ
الْمُقْسِطِينَ﴾

“Allah does not forbid you from those who do not fight you because of religion and do not expel you from your homes - from being righteous toward them and acting justly toward them. Indeed, Allah loves those who act justly.”

[Surah Al-Mumtahanah: 8].

In this verse, we are asked to do *Birr* to them. *Birr* or righteousness, is bigger than goodness. It is in fact the highest component of goodness, as in this verse:

﴿لَيْسَ الْبِرَّ أَنْ تُوَلُّوا وُجُوهَكُمْ قِبَلَ الْمَشْرِقِ وَالْمَغْرِبِ وَلَكِنَّ الْبِرَّ مَنْ آمَنَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ وَالْمَلَائِكَةِ وَالْكِتَابِ وَالنَّبِيِّينَ وَآتَى الْمَالَ عَلَى حُبِّهِ ذَوِي الْقُرْبَىٰ وَالْيَتَامَىٰ وَالْمَسَاكِينَ وَابْنَ السَّبِيلِ وَالسَّائِلِينَ وَفِي الرِّقَابِ وَأَقَامَ الصَّلَاةَ وَآتَى الزَّكَاةَ وَالْمُوفُونَ بِعَهْدِهِمْ إِذَا عَاهَدُوا وَالصَّابِرِينَ فِي الْبَأْسَاءِ وَالضَّرَّاءِ وَحِينَ الْبَأْسِ أُولَٰئِكَ الَّذِينَ صَدَقُوا وَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْمُتَّقُونَ﴾

“Righteousness is not that you turn your faces toward the east or the west, but [true] righteousness is [in] one who believes in Allah, the Last Day, the angels, the Book, and the prophets and gives wealth, in spite of love for it, to relatives, orphans, the needy, the traveler, those who ask [for help], and for freeing slaves; [and who] establishes prayer and gives zakah; [those who] fulfill their promise when they promise; and [those who] are patient in poverty and hardship and during battle. Those are the ones who have been true, and it is those who are the righteous.” [Surah Al-Baqarah: 177].

Therefore, *Birr* includes all of these acts and *Qist* means to be just and fair.

Allah ﷻ also says:

﴿وَإِنْ أَحَدٌ مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ اسْتَجَارَكَ فَأَجِرْهُ﴾

“And if any one of the polytheists seeks your protection, then grant him protection” [Surah At-Tawbah: 6].

Here, Allah ﷻ does not say, ‘kill him’ but instead, ‘grant him protection’. This shows that killing is only for the aggressors, as in this verse:

﴿وَقَاتِلُوا الْمُشْرِكِينَ كَافَّةً كَمَا يُقَاتِلُونَكُمْ كَافَّةً﴾

“And fight against the disbelievers collectively as they fight against you collectively.” [Surah At-Tawbah: 36].

Allah ﷻ also says:

﴿فَإِنْ اعْتَرَفْتُمْ فَلَمْ يُقَاتِلُوكُمْ وَالْفَوَا إِلَى اللَّهِ لَكُمْ عَلَيْهِمْ سَبِيلًا﴾

“So if they remove themselves from you and do not fight you and offer you peace, then Allah has not made for you a cause [for fighting] against them.”

[Surah An-Nisaa’: 90].

This shows that You do not have the right to kill anyone because he is a polytheist or disbeliever.

These are Qur’anic texts. Therefore, if a group of people at any period of time come up with any opinions or thoughts which equates disbelief to killing, issue orders to kill every polytheist and disbeliever and adopt a negative attitude towards disbelievers, it is totally not of this religion!

Our religion has commanded us to fight the aggressors and repel aggression. So, *Jihad* is permissible in the way of repelling aggression and not to spread the Islamic call through force and compulsion. Our proof regarding this, in addition to the Qur’anic verses, is the life and history of the Prophet ﷺ . Do keep in mind, the Holy Qur’an is interpreted through other verses of the Holy Qur’an and also through the life and actions of the Prophet ﷺ .

When the Prophet ﷺ entered Mecca during the Conquest of Mecca he said to the polytheists of Mecca:

((إِذْهَبُوا فَأَنْتُمْ الْأَطْفَاءُ))

“Go, for you are freed”³⁶.

He did not fight them nor did he ask his army to kill anyone.

Also, in the last Arafat sermon which is called the Farewell Sermon or Farewell Bequest, he said:

((فَلَا تَرْجِعُوا بَعْدِي كُفَّارًا يَضْرِبُ بَعْضُكُمْ رِقَابَ بَعْضٍ))

³⁶ Seerah Ibn Hisham, Volume: 4, page: 32.

“Do not return to being disbelievers after my passing, beating up each other’s necks”³⁷.

Thus, the one who beats up necks is not considered a believer. A Muslim cannot kill except with a right. And the right is to repel aggression and aggressors.

When the Muslim army conquered Iraq, Syria, Cairo and Morocco, they did not use the sword to force people to accept Islam but left them to their own religions.

Allah ﷻ has says:

﴿ادْعُ إِلَى سَبِيلِ رَبِّكَ بِالْحُكْمَةِ وَالْمَوْعِظَةِ الْحَسَنَةِ﴾

“Invite to the way of your Lord with wisdom and good instruction, and argue with them in a way that is best.” [Surah An-Nahl: 125].

This is because, the religion is a creed which is embraced through intellect and thinking, not through force, compulsion and killing, as He says also:

﴿وَإِنْ عَاقَبْتُمْ فَعَاقِبُوا بِمِثْلِ مَا عُوقِبْتُمْ بِهِ وَلَئِنْ صَبَرْتُمْ لَهُوَ خَيْرٌ لِلصَّابِرِينَ﴾

“And if you punish [an enemy, O believers], punish with an equivalent of that with which you were harmed. But if you are patient - it is better for those who are patient.” [Surah An-Nahl: 126].

All these are proofs which negate the cause of killing and massacre taken by those who have changed the terminologies of religion. It is now upon us to explain and clarify the real meanings of these terminologies.

There are also non-Islamic groups who identify themselves as Islam. They divide the community into two: The believing community and the ignorant disbelieving community.

³⁷ Sahih al-Bukhari: The Book of Pilgrimage, Chapter: The Sermon during the Days of Mina, Hadith no. 1654.

This is a division which was not present during the time of the Prophet ﷺ. The Prophet ﷺ migrated to Medina and laid down new constitutional rules which unified everyone, namely the Muslims, People of the Book and Polytheists. He unified them for the sake of protecting the country and did not tear them apart into groups. Therefore, we do not kill except the aggressors. It is not allowed for a Muslim to fight anyone except if he is assaulted, that is the assault is on his self, his honour or his country. Therefore, disbelief with regard to religion should be explained clearly.

Someone might say: These people are called *Takfiri* because they changed the meaning of accusation of disbelief, to killing and crime. In actual fact, the problem does not lie in the words *Kufr* or *Takfir* but in those who use these words in ways other than what Allah ﷻ and His Messenger ﷺ wanted.

An example is the word Freedom. There are people who raise its flag as it is a great matter which is needed for everyone. However, if freedom has been changed to chaos and aggression towards others, is it still called Freedom?

There are some people who oppress and assault others and say: "I am free to do this." Is it then permissible for me to kill, steal and fornicate just by stating, "This is freedom"?

Here, the problem is not with the word freedom itself, but in those who change the term freedom to mean chaos and legalisation of aggression. This is similar to those who change the word *Kafir* which in essence means the concealer who conceals the belief in Allah, to mean those whose killing becomes permissible. Thus, we use our religion to oppose the people who justify killing others due to their disbelief, as Allah ﷻ says

﴿وَلَوْ شَاءَ رَبُّكَ لَأَمَنَّ مَنْ فِي الْأَرْضِ كُلَّهُمْ جَمِيعاً أَفَأَنْتَ تُكْرَهُ النَّاسَ حَتَّى يَكُونُوا مُؤْمِنِينَ﴾

"And had your Lord willed, those on earth would have believed - all of them entirely. Then, [O Muhammad], would you compel the people in order that they become believers?" [Surah Yunus: 99].

In summary, fighting, killing, crime and accusation of disbelief which leads to massacre is not at all legalised for the *Takfiri* and the terrorists.

When we talk about disbelief and accusation of disbelief, we have to differentiate between whether the speaker is Allah ﷻ or human beings.

When a human being says that another human being is a *Kafir*, does he really know?

It could be that he performs an Islamic act although he is not a Muslim or he could become a believer a few seconds before his death.

However, when Allah ﷻ talks about the disbelievers, He talks via His Infinite Knowledge, not through your knowledge and according to His Infinite Standards, not according to yours. So, when Allah ﷻ says:

﴿ إِنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا سَوَاءٌ عَلَيْهِمْ ءَأَنذَرْتَهُمْ أَمْ لَمْ تُنذِرْهُمْ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ ﴾

“Indeed, those who disbelieve - it is all the same for them whether you warn them or do not warn them - they will not believe.”

He is Speaking with His Knowledge. You will never be able to encompass His Knowledge of things that happen. This is why, when He ﷻ gave the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ the task of calling and warning, He also says:

﴿ فَلَا تَذْهَبْ نَفْسُكَ عَلَيْهِمْ حَسْرَاتٍ ﴾

“So do not let yourself perish over them in regret.” [Surah Fatir: 8],

because He knows that they will never believe.

We can find a similar case in Surah Al-Masad: ﴿ تَبَّتْ يَدَا أَبِي لَهَبٍ وَتَبَّ ﴾

“May the hands of Abu Lahab be ruined, and ruined is he.”

[Surah Al-Masad: 1].

The verse is referring to the uncle of the Prophet ﷺ. Allah ﷻ has said regarding him:

﴿سَيَصْلَىٰ نَارًا ذَاتَ لَهَبٍ﴾

“He will [enter to] burn in a Fire of [blazing] flame” [Surah Al-Masad: 3].

What if he became a Muslim after the revelation of this verse? But, Allah knows, he did not.

Thus, Allah ﷻ in His Eternal Knowledge knew that Abu Lahab would never bear witness to the Oneness of Allah ﷻ although he had the freedom to do it if he wanted to.

Allah ﷻ will hold you accountable for your actions and not His Knowledge, as He says:

﴿وَأَنْ لَّيْسَ لِلْإِنْسَانِ إِلَّا مَا سَعَىٰ (٣٩) وَأَنَّ سَعْيَهُ سَوْفَ يُرَىٰ (٤٠) ثُمَّ يُجْزَاهُ الْجَزَاءَ الْأَوْفَىٰ (٤١)﴾

And that there is not for man except that [good] for which he strives, And that his effort is going to be seen, Then he will be recompensed for it with the fullest recompense.” [Surah An-Najm: 39-41].

A person might say: If it has been destined that I will be a bad person or a disbeliever, why does Allah ﷻ hold me accountable?

This is an invalid question, as we cannot compare Allah ﷻ with His servants nor can we compare The Creator with the creations, Most Exalted is He above all things. This question would be valid if the one who is holding you accountable is your peer or counterpart.

Allah ﷻ has perfect attributes which you cannot perceive, as He says:

﴿لَا تُدْرِكُهُ الْأَبْصَارُ وَهُوَ يُدْرِكُ الْأَبْصَارَ وَهُوَ اللَّطِيفُ الْخَبِيرُ﴾

“Vision perceives Him not, but He perceives [all] vision; and He is the Subtle, the Acquainted.” [Surah An-An’aam: 103].

Allah ﷻ The Most Exalted Knows with His Knowledge the future of things. However, the human being does not know the unseen. So, his God tells him:

‘This is the road to goodness. Go into it, and I will reward you with paradise. This is the road to evil. If you follow it, you will go to the hellfire.’

We as creations are not able to perceive the perfect attributes of Allah ﷻ. We do not understand fully that He knows the future. So, when we carry out our actions, we will be held accountable for them, not for the Knowledge of Allah ﷻ which manifests things, as it is of His perfect attributes which human beings cannot understand.

Thus, when Allah ﷻ talks about a certain characteristic of the disbelievers, He did not say to the Prophet ﷺ, “You do not have to warn them, Oh Muhammad!” On the contrary, He says:

﴿فَذَكِّرْ إِنَّمَا أَنْتَ مُذَكِّرٌ﴾

“So remind, [O Muhammad]; you are only a reminder.”

[Surah Al-Ghashiyah: 21].

This means that: ‘You are tasked to give reminders, give warnings and give glad tidings to them. However, only I know those disbelievers and what will be their fate.’

This discussion is linked to the Ta’mim (generalization) and *Takhsis* (specification) found in the Holy Qur’an.

Interpretation of the Holy Qur’an is a science which is precise, important and weighty. It is not permissible for someone to embark upon interpreting the Holy Qur’an except if he is qualified to do so. So, when Allah ﷻ says:

﴿إِنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا سَوَاءٌ عَلَيْهِمْ ءَأَنْذَرْتَهُمْ أَمْ لَمْ تُنذِرْهُمْ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ﴾

“Indeed, those who disbelieve - it is all the same for them whether you warn them or do not warn them - they will not believe.”,

it could be generalised for a certain group, but not for all the disbelievers. This is because, many of those who disbelieved became believers

subsequently. This verse is thus specifying a certain group of people whom Allah ﷻ Knows, in His Omniscience, are disbelievers. It is not through your knowledge nor their knowledge, and not through your sight that you look through in this world. The speaker here is Allah ﷻ. So, attribute the speech to the speaker and the action to the doer.

Verse 7:

﴿خَتَمَ اللَّهُ عَلَى قُلُوبِهِمْ وَعَلَى سَمْعِهِمْ وَعَلَى أَبْصَارِهِمْ غِشَاوَةً وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ عَظِيمٌ﴾

“Allah has set a seal upon their hearts and upon their hearing, and over their vision is a veil. And for them is a great punishment.”

The word *Al-Khatm* means the closing of the passageways to the heart and understanding.

The medium of understanding are the senses, as Allah ﷻ says:

﴿وَاللَّهُ أَخْرَجَكُمْ مِنْ بُطُونِ أُمَّهَاتِكُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ شَيْئاً وَجَعَلَ لَكُمُ السَّمْعَ وَالْأَبْصَارَ وَالْأَفْئِدَةَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَشْكُرُونَ﴾

“And Allah has extracted you from the wombs of your mothers not knowing a thing, and He made for you hearing and vision and intellect that perhaps you would be grateful.” [Surah An-Nahl: 78].

The heart, hearing and sight are the tools of understanding. Through them, you hear and see the signs of Allah ﷻ, hear the call to Allah ﷻ and hear the Holy Qur’an and Hadeeth of Rasulullah ﷺ. These are the tools that human beings use to understand and attain belief.

However, why does the verse say heart and not mind? Can the heart comprehend?

This is because, the heart accepts everything that the mind comprehends, confirms it strongly, and fastens it. It therefore becomes a belief in the heart.

So, the mind will think according to what is conveyed to it through the senses. After it has made conclusions, believed and arrived at the facts, it will settle in the heart as the belief.

The mind is therefore a preface for the heart, as Allah ﷻ says,

﴿فَإِنَّهَا لَا تَعْمَى الْأَبْصَارُ وَلَكِنْ تَعْمَى الْقُلُوبُ الَّتِي فِي الصُّدُورِ﴾

“For indeed, it is not eyes that are blinded, but blinded are the hearts which are within the breasts.” [Surah Al-Hajj: 46].

From here, we can see that everything will pass by the mind first.

Those people who conceal their beliefs, and Allah ﷻ knows this through His Omniscience, were shown the road by Allah ﷻ and the clear line between guidance and going astray. However, as they chose to go astray, Allah ﷻ sealed up their hearts and hearing and put a covering over their sight.

The Holy Qur’an normally prioritises the hearing over the sight in mention, like in the following verse:

﴿إِنَّ السَّمْعَ وَالْبَصَرَ وَالْفُؤَادَ كُلُّ أُولَئِكَ كَانَ عَنْهُ مَسْئُولًا﴾

“Indeed, the hearing, the sight and the heart - about all those [one] will be questioned.” [Surah Al-Isra’: 36].

It also normally uses the word *Sama’* which means hearing, in the singular form but uses the word *Absar* which is the plural form of sight.

The reason for this second norm is that hearing only comes from one source and cannot be received all at once from multiple sources, as hearing only operates through air vibration. On the contrary, sight can be obtained from many means.

The reasons for the first norm:

The hearing does not necessarily need the sight, but the sight cannot suffice without the hearing.

During sleep, the sight is put to rest but the hearing is still able to work.

When the human being is born, the hearing starts working first. The sight, however will only work perfectly after 40 days.

The Holy Qur'an also uses the word ﴿حَتَمَ﴾ "to seal" for the hearts and hearing but the word ﴿غَشَاوَةٌ﴾ "a veil" for the sight. This is from the precision of the Holy Qur'an. This is because, the seal is a cover which stops the entrance of faith. So, faith does not even enter their hearts and hearing. As for the sight, it still sees all the signs of Allah ﷻ in the creation. However, as there is a veil covering it, things are not seen in their reality but through a fog. The images of Allah's ﷻ Existence such as the sun rising and setting, the moon, the stars, the sky, the Earth and gravity are seen all the time. However, due to the veil, these pictures do not lead to the Creator. Those who are in this state have chosen misguidance for themselves, as Allah The Almighty states in the Holy Qur'an:

﴿وَأَمَّا ثَمُودُ فَهَدَيْنَاهُمْ فَاسْتَحَبُّوا الْعَمَىٰ عَلَى الْهُدَىٰ﴾

"And as for Thamud, We guided them, but they preferred blindness over guidance" [Surah Fussilat: 17].

From here, Allah ﷻ says that we guided them, but they preferred misguidance. So, Allah ﷻ put a seal on their hearts and hearing and a veil over their sight. For them is thus, a great torment.

Throughout the Holy Qur'an, torment is described in various ways. It is described as painful, great, severe and disgraceful.

This shows that there are a variety of torments. As actions are attributed to its doer, similarly, the torment will be suited to the person it is meant for. When Allah ﷻ says, ﴿عَذَابٌ عَظِيمٌ﴾ "a great punishment", it is great according to Allah's ﷻ degree of measurement. When He says: ﴿عَذَابٌ مُّهِينٌ﴾ "a humiliating

punishment”, it means that the human being who had a status in the worldly life would be disgraced in the hereafter in front of everyone.

We have now reached the 13 verses regarding hypocrisy. There is not a thing which causes destruction in the community like hypocrisy does. We have mentioned that hypocrisy surfaced in Medina. In Mecca, it was not present as the Muslims were weak and oppressed. In Medina however, Islam dominated. Thus, Islam witnessed the surfacing of people who pretended to be Muslims but concealed their disbelief. These are the hypocrites.

So, in Medina, a third issue other than faith and disbelief came about, namely hypocrisy.

The hypocrites are swaying aimlessly, belonging neither to the Muslims nor to the disbelievers. Rather, they go where their interests are.

Verse 8:

﴿وَمِنَ النَّاسِ مَنْ يَقُولُ آمَنَّا بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ وَمَا هُمْ بِمُؤْمِنِينَ﴾

“And of the people are some who say, “We believe in Allah and the Last Day,” but they are not believers.”

This is the first of their characteristics. There are two types of hypocrisy: Hypocrisy in belief and hypocrisy in conduct or behavioural hypocrisy.

Hypocrisy in belief is when a person conceals his disbelief and acts as a believer in front of others.

Whereas hypocrisy in conduct is presented as the two-faced person. And the two-faced person will not be a person of distinction with Allah ﷻ.

Allah ﷻ says:

﴿إِنَّ الْمُنَافِقِينَ فِي الدَّرَكِ الْأَسْفَلِ مِنَ النَّارِ وَلَنْ تَجِدَ لَهُمْ نَصِيرًا﴾

“Indeed, the hypocrites will be in the lowest depths of the Fire - and never will you find for them a helper” [Surah An-Nisaa’: 145].

The Prophet ﷺ said:

((أَرْبَعٌ مَنْ كُنَّ فِيهِ كَانَ مُنَافِقًا خَالِصًا، وَمَنْ كَانَتْ فِيهِ خَصْلَةٌ مِنْهُنَّ كَانَتْ فِيهِ خَصْلَةٌ مِنَ النِّفَاقِ حَتَّى يَدْعَهَا: إِذَا أُؤْتِمِنَ خَانَ، وَإِذَا حَدَّثَ كَذَبَ، وَإِذَا عَاهَدَ غَدَرَ، وَإِذَا خَاصَمَ فَجَرَ))

“Whoever has the following four (characteristics) will be a pure hypocrite and whoever has one of the following four characteristics will have one characteristic of hypocrisy unless and until he gives it up. Whenever he is entrusted, he betrays. Whenever he speaks, he tells a lie. Whenever he makes a covenant, he proves treacherous. Whenever he quarrels, he behaves in a very imprudent, evil and insulting manner.”³⁸

This Hadith describes behavioural hypocrisy. Allah ﷻ says,

(وَمِنَ النَّاسِ مَنْ يَقُولُ آمَنَّا بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ وَمَا هُمْ بِمُؤْمِنِينَ)

“And of the people are some who say, “We believe in Allah and the Last Day,” but they are not believers.”.

Who can expose that they are non-believers?

Only Allah’s ﷻ Eternal Knowledge can expose them, for He Knows of those who present belief but conceal disbelief.

In Medina, the head of the hypocrites was Abdullah Bin Ubayy Bin Salul.

The Holy Qur’an has designated a full Surah concerning the hypocrites, *Surah Al-Munafiqun*. This indicates the danger of hypocrisy in communities.

At the beginning of *Surah Al-Munafiqun*, Allah says,

(إِذَا جَاءَكَ الْمُنَافِقُونَ قَالُوا نَشْهَدُ إِنَّكَ لَرَسُولُ اللَّهِ وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ إِنَّكَ لَرَسُولُهُ وَاللَّهُ يَشْهَدُ إِنَّ الْمُنَافِقِينَ لَكَاذِبُونَ)

³⁸ Sahih al-Bukhari: The Book of Belief, Chapter: The Signs of Hypocrisy, Hadith no. 34.

“When the hypocrites come to you, [O Muhammad], they say, “We testify that you are the Messenger of Allah .” And Allah knows that you are His Messenger, and Allah testifies that the hypocrites are liars.”

[Surah Al-Munafiqun: 1].

Thus, the hypocrites bear witness that he ﷺ is the Prophet of Allah ﷻ, and Allah ﷻ bears witness that they are liars.

When the orientalist read these types of verses, they become confused and do not understand who the verses refer to.

The hypocrites are actually those who say what they do not believe in. Whereas truthfulness is achieved when words correspond to the beliefs present in the heart. Thus, those whose words oppose their beliefs are considered liars, and the only One who can uncover the lies is Allah ﷻ. So, when He speaks of them, He speaks with His Eternal Knowledge and says, ‘They are liars’. He says this not because they lie in their speech, but in their beliefs. Thus, they are liars because they say what they do not believe in.

Verse 9:

﴿يُخَادِعُونَ اللَّهَ وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَمَا يَخْدَعُونَ إِلَّا أَنفُسَهُمْ وَمَا يَشْعُرُونَ﴾

“They [think to] deceive Allah and those who believe, but they deceive not except themselves and perceive [it] not.”

In the book Lisanul Arab by Ibn Manzhur, deceit is defined as portraying something which is different from that which you hide.

How do we understand the meaning of this verse and the following verse:

﴿يُخَادِعُونَ اللَّهَ وَهُوَ خَادِعُهُمْ﴾

“[the hypocrites think to] deceive Allah, but He is deceiving them”

[Surah An-Nisaa': 142]

And similar to this verse too is the following verse:

﴿وَمَكَرُوا وَمَكَرَ اللَّهُ وَاللَّهُ خَيْرُ الْمَاكِرِينَ﴾

“And the disbelievers planned, but Allah planned. And Allah is the best of planners.” [Surah Ali 'Imran: 54]

whereas Allah ﷻ does not need to deceive nor to plot?

Proficiency in the Arabic Language is a must for the interpreter of the Holy Qur'an as understanding these type of verses needs full command of the language.

In the third verse above, the first plotting mentioned is the plotting carried out by the people mentioned. The second plotting actually describes the uncovering of their plotting by Allah ﷻ and then making void its effects.

In the verse in Surah Al-Baqarah, Allah ﷻ says:

﴿وَمَا يَخْدَعُونَ إِلَّا أَنْفُسَهُمْ﴾

“but they deceive not except themselves”.

This is because they might be able to deceive the believers, but will never be able to deceive Allah ﷻ, as Allah ﷻ Knows all the secrets and that which is yet more hidden, as He says,

﴿وَإِنْ تَجْهَرُ بِالْقَوْلِ فَإِنَّهُ يَعْلَمُ السِّرَّ وَأَخْفَى﴾

“And if you speak aloud - then indeed, He knows the secret and what is [even] more hidden.” [Surah Taha: 7].

Secrets are normally between two people. What then, is more hidden than a secret? It is what you conceal in yourself that no other person knows of. Hence, you will never be able to deceive Allah ﷻ, as the Holy Qur'an says:

﴿وَمَا يَخْدَعُونَ إِلَّا أَنْفُسَهُمْ وَمَا يَشْعُرُونَ﴾

“but they deceive not except themselves and perceive [it] not.”

And in another verse:

﴿لَا يَعْلَمُونَ﴾

“they know [it] not.” [Surah Al-Baqarah: 13].

The difference between these two verses is that when the topic discussed is faith, Allah ﷻ says: ﴿لَا يَعْلَمُونَ﴾ *“they know [it] not.”* but when hypocrisy is discussed, Allah ﷻ says: ﴿وَمَا يَشْعُرُونَ﴾ *“and perceive [it] not”*. This is because, faith is an unseen matter which needs knowledge, whereas hypocrisy and deception are things which are tangible and can be perceived, so the phrase: ﴿وَمَا يَشْعُرُونَ﴾ *“and perceive [it] not”* is most suited to them.

Verse 10:

﴿فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ مَرَضٌ فَزَادَهُمُ اللَّهُ مَرَضًا وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ بِمَا كَانُوا يَكْذِبُونَ﴾

“In their hearts is disease, so Allah has increased their disease; and for them is a painful punishment because they [habitually] used to lie.”

The diseases of the heart differ from the diseases of the organs. Diseases of the organs present symptoms to alert people of the pain felt, whereas diseases of the heart do not.

Thus, a person might be corrupted but thinks himself virtuous, or he might be miserly but says “No one is more generous than me!”, or he might be a wrong-doer but says, “No one is more guided than me!” or he might say: “I do not feel envy towards anyone!” when in reality, he is of the most envious people of all.

Therefore, the diseases of the heart such as conceit, arrogance, spite and rancour do not show symptoms of their presence.

As such, the hypocrites have diseases in their hearts but they do not perceive them. The first reason for this is the lack of harmony between their faculties. Among the faculties a person has are the speech faculty and the belief faculty. If he portrays a picture but conceals another, it indicates that there is a lack of harmony between these faculties. This lack of harmony is actually a disease of the heart.

When Allah ﷻ increases their disease, it is not injustice from Him. This is because, they are the ones who chose straying from the right path, lying, wrong-doing and infidelity. Allah ﷻ says:

﴿وَهَدَيْنَاهُ النَّجْدَيْنِ﴾

“And have shown him the two ways” [Surah Al-Balad: 10] and

﴿إِنَّا هَدَيْنَاهُ السَّبِيلَ إِمَّا شَاكِرًا وَإِمَّا كَفُورًا﴾

“Indeed, We guided him to the way, be he grateful or be he ungrateful.”

[Surah Al-Insan: 3].

He gave the human being a choice. It is either he chooses the choice of disease and Allah ﷻ will add on to his disease due to his own choice, or he chooses health and safety and Allah ﷻ will guide him to achieve them.

If a doctor advises a sick person not to eat sugary foods so that the amount of sugar in his blood will not increase, but he continues eating it. He is the one at fault if anything happens as he is the one who chose to do so without being forced by anyone. This is exactly the case for the person who chooses to have the disease, thus Allah ﷻ will increase it in him.

﴿وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ بِمَا كَانُوا يَكْذِبُونَ﴾

“and for them is a painful punishment because they [habitually] used to lie.”

Lying is the worst of characteristics. Rasulullah ﷺ was asked, “Oh Messenger of Allah, does a believer fornicate?” He answered, *“This might*

happen.” He was asked again, “Does a believer steal?” He answered, “*This might happen.*” He was asked again, “Does a believer lie?” He answered, “*No.*” Then he continued with this verse: ﴿إِنَّمَا يَفْتَرِي الْكٰذِبَ الَّذِيْنَ لَا يُؤْمِنُ﴾ “*They only invent falsehood who do not believe in the verses of Allah, and it is those who are the liars.*” [Surah An-Nahl: 105]³⁹

Therefore, lying is the most dangerous characteristic and it comes together with hypocrisy.

Verse 11:

﴿وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُمْ لَا تُفْسِدُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ قَالُوا إِنَّمَا نَحْنُ مُصْلِحُونَ﴾

“And when it is said to them, ‘Do not cause corruption on the earth,’ they say, ‘We are but reformers.’”

This is the problem of the hypocrites. They perceive themselves to be promoters of peace.

Corruption is of a few types, namely corruption in values, corruption towards blessings and corruption of the body.

Corruption in values is present when people have hypocrisy, act immorally, or commit crimes such as stealing, lying or bribery.

Corruption towards blessings happens when a person uses the blessings, which Allah ﷻ has granted him, wrongly. For example, Allah ﷻ gave him a well, but instead of maintaining it and benefitting from it, he fills it up with soil! Here, he has corrupted something which has a practical use in creation.

An example of corruption of the body is when it is said to a person: “Do not eat too much, or you will fall sick!” However, he still continues to eat a lot of food which will harm his body. Another example is the person who is told: “Do

³⁹ Kanz al-Ummal: Volume 3, No: 8995.

not drink alcohol as it will lead to cirrhosis of the liver.” However, he still continues drinking.

The corruption of values and the corruption towards blessings are the more dangerous types of corruption. This is because, both of them are connected to the society as a whole. When corruption surfaces in a group of people, they have actually laid down for themselves the torment of Allah ﷻ. Also, when vices, which are also included in the corruption of values, such as fornication and usury are widespread, they will cause harm to the community. Corruption is among the characteristics of the hypocrites.

They corrupt with the claim that they are creating peace and with the belief that they are promoters of peace. Hence, they corrupt values, blessings and their own selves.

Verse 12:

﴿أَلَا إِنَّهُمْ هُمُ الْمُفْسِدُونَ وَلَكِن لَّا يَشْعُرُونَ﴾

“Unquestionably, it is they who are the corrupters, but they perceive [it] not.”

The hypocrites are corrupters. This is one of their characteristics yet they do not perceive that they are corrupted. Therefore, the Holy Qur’an uses the description ﴿لَا يَشْعُرُونَ﴾ which means ‘they do not realize it’, because corruption is something clear and tangible.

Verse 13:

﴿وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُمْ آمَنُوا كَمَا آمَنَ النَّاسُ قَالُوا أَنُؤْمِنُ كَمَا آمَنَ السُّفَهَاءُ أَلَا إِنَّهُمْ هُمُ السُّفَهَاءُ وَلَكِن لَّا يَعْلَمُونَ﴾

“And when it is said to them, ‘Believe as the people have believed,’ they say, ‘Should we believe as the foolish have believed?’ Unquestionably, it is they who are the foolish, but they know [it] not.”

Here, the hypocrites are described with ﴿لَا يَعْلَمُونَ﴾ which means ‘they do not know’. This is because, the matter in this verse is connected to faith, as we have mentioned. When they are told to believe as many other people have believed, that is, in the correct and sound way, they said, “Are we to believe just as the fools believed?” The fools they are referring to here, are the poor. The word *Safiih* which means ‘fool’, linguistically means ‘the person with a weak intellect.’

Verse 14 - 15:

﴿وَإِذَا لَفُوا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا قَالُوا آمَنَّا وَإِذَا خَلَوْا إِلَىٰ شَيَاطِينِهِمْ قَالُوا إِنَّا مَعَكُمْ إِنَّمَا نَحْنُ مُسْتَهْزِئُونَ (١٤)

﴿اللَّهُ يَسْتَهْزِئُ بِهِمْ وَيَمُدُّهُمْ فِي طُغْيَانِهِمْ يَعْمَهُونَ (١٥)﴾

“And when they meet those who believe, they say, ‘We believe’; but when they are alone with their evil ones, they say, ‘Indeed, we are with you; we were only mockers.’ [But] Allah mocks them and prolongs them in their transgression [while] they wander blindly.”

Hypocrisy is one of the most dangerous diseases which could befall a community. It is a disease which is present in every community in every period of time. Due to this, the Holy Qur’an discusses this great evil and dangerous disease of the heart in which a person portrays a picture different than what is actually inside. It is a danger which destroys the community from within. This is because, the external or clear enemy clearly shows his enmity. Whereas the

one who conceals his enmity falsely portrays friendship. This latter is the hypocrite.

Verse 16:

﴿أُولَئِكَ الَّذِينَ اشْتَرُوا الضَّلَالََةَ بِالْهُدَىٰ فَمَا رَبِحَت تِّجَارَتُهُمْ وَمَا كَانُوا مُهْتَدِينَ﴾

“Those are the ones who have purchased error [in exchange] for guidance, so their transaction has brought no profit, nor were they guided.”

This word: ﴿أُولَئِكَ﴾ “Those” refers to the hypocrites who say,

﴿أَمَنَّا بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ وَمَا هُمْ بِمُؤْمِنِينَ﴾ *“We believe in Allah and the Last Day,’ but they are not believers.”*

The opposite of the word *Shara'*, meaning ‘to buy’, in business terms, is *Bai'* ‘to sell’. The letter ‘ب’ is affixed to the thing which is left (or sold), and in this case, guidance.

These people have taken misguidance and left guidance. This is a business transaction which is non-profitable as they have used guidance as a payment in their transaction.

A question might arise here: What guidance did they possess that they could give in exchange for misguidance?

We have explained that there is the directional guidance that the Messengers used to guide people with to the existence of Allah ﷻ, His Messages, the Hereafter and the Reckoning. Those who have accepted the Directional Guidance will be granted Supportive Guidance.

Therefore, the guidance that the hypocrites sold off to buy misguidance is the initial guidance, the natural guidance that Allah ﷻ created mankind with, as mentioned in this verse

﴿وَإِذْ أَخَذَ رَبُّكَ مِنْ بَنِي آدَمَ مِنْ ظُهُورِهِمْ ذُرِّيَّتَهُمْ وَأَشْهَدَهُمْ عَلَىٰ أَنفُسِهِمْ أَلَسْتُ بِرَبِّكُمْ قَالُوا بَلَىٰ شَهِدْنَا أَنْ تَقُولُوا يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ إِنَّا كُنَّا عَنْ هَذَا غَافِلِينَ﴾

“And [mention] when your Lord took from the children of Adam - from their loins - their descendants and made them testify of themselves, [saying to them], ‘Am I not your Lord?’ They said, ‘Yes, we have testified.’ [This] - lest you should say on the day of Resurrection, ‘Indeed, we were of this unaware.’” [Surah Al-A’raaf: 172].

This scene happened in the spiritual realm when Allah ﷻ received testimonies of the sons of Adam ﷺ upon themselves. This is the natural guidance found in the innate disposition of human beings, as said by the Prophet ﷺ:

((مَا مِنْ مَوْلُودٍ إِلَّا يُولَدُ عَلَى الْفِطْرَةِ، فَأَبَوَاهُ يُهَوِّدَانِهِ أَوْ يُنَصِّرَانِهِ أَوْ يُمَجِّسَانِهِ...))

“Every child is born with a true faith of Islam (i.e. to worship none but Allah Alone) and his parents convert him to Judaism or Christianity or Magianism...”⁴⁰.

So, their parents will bring them this way or that. This innate disposition is a guidance from Allah ﷻ.

The hypocrites sold off this innate disposition in return for misguidance, so,

﴿فَمَا رِبْحَتْ تِجَارَتُهُمْ وَمَا كَانُوا مُهْتَدِينَ﴾

“so their transaction has brought no profit, nor were they guided.”.

Hence the Directional guidance and Supportive Guidance ceased to benefit them.

⁴⁰ Sahih al-Bukhari: The Book of Funeral, Chapter: If a boy becomes a Muslim and then dies, should a funeral prayer be offered for him? Should Islam be offered to a boy?, Hadith no. 1292.

Furthermore, no one is able to insert this Supportive Guidance into their hearts as they themselves have chosen misguidance. So, when Allah ﷻ says to His Prophet ﷺ:

﴿وَأِنَّكَ لَتَهْدِي إِلَى صِرَاطٍ مُسْتَقِيمٍ﴾

“And indeed, [O Muhammad], you guide to a straight path” [Surah Asy-Syuraa: 52],

it is referring to the Directional Guidance. When He says:

﴿إِنَّكَ لَا تَهْدِي مَنْ أَحْبَبْتَ وَلَكِنَّ اللَّهَ يَهْدِي مَنْ يَشَاءُ﴾

“Indeed, [O Muhammad], you do not guide whom you like, but Allah guides whom He wills.” [Surah Al-Qasas: 56]

He means: Indeed, you will not be able to insert Supportive Guidance into the hearts of whoever has chosen misguidance over guidance.

Verse 17:

﴿مَثَلُهُمْ كَمَثَلِ الَّذِي اسْتَوْفَدَ نَارًا فَلَمَّا أَضَاءَتْ مَا حَوْلَهُ ذَهَبَ اللَّهُ بِنُورِهِمْ وَتَرَكَهُمْ فِي ظُلُمَاتٍ لَا يُبْصِرُونَ﴾

“Their example is that of one who kindled a fire, but when it illuminated what was around him, Allah took away their light and left them in darkness [so] they could not see.”

This is one of the parables found in the Holy Qur’an. Allah ﷻ says:

﴿وَتِلْكَ الْأَمْثَالُ نَضْرِبُهَا لِلنَّاسِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ﴾

“And these examples We present to the people that perhaps they will give thought.” [Surah Al-Hasyr: 21], and

﴿وَتِلْكَ الْأَمْثَالُ نَضْرِبُهَا لِلنَّاسِ وَمَا يَعْقِلُهَا إِلَّا الْعَالِمُونَ﴾

“And these examples We present to the people, but none will understand them except those of knowledge.” [Surah Al-‘Ankabut: 43], and

﴿إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَسْتَحْيِي أَنْ يَضْرِبَ مَثَلًا مَّا بَعُوضَةً فَمَا فَوْقَهَا﴾

“Indeed, Allah is not timid to present an example - that of a mosquito or what is smaller than it.” [Surah Al-Baqarah: 26], and

﴿مَثَلُ نُورِهِ كَمِشْكَاةٍ فِيهَا مِصْبَاحٌ﴾

“The example of His light is like a niche within which is a lamp” [Surah An-Nuur: 35]

Allah ﷻ gives parables by likening non-tangible things to tangible things in order to bring them closer to our minds so that we can understand them. The following verses are concerning hypocrisy. Since hypocrisy is something which we cannot perceive, Allah ﷻ provides for it a tangible analogy.

Allah ﷻ has provided tangible analogies for the Light of Allah ﷻ, the Belief in Allah ﷻ and the Oneness of Him. However, He ﷻ did not give an analogy for His Essence, because He is:

﴿لَيْسَ كَمِثْلِهِ شَيْءٌ وَهُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْبَصِيرُ﴾

“There is nothing like unto Him, and He is the Hearing, the Seeing.” [Surah Asy-Syuraa: 11]. He also says

﴿فَلَا تَضْرِبُوا لِلَّهِ الْأَمْثَالَ﴾

“So do not assert similarities to Allah.” [Surah An-Nahl; 74],

as you will never be able to measure the greatness of Allah’s Attributes and Actions using the measurements of the human mind.

Giving analogies is in actual fact making comparisons. With Islam comes the first instance that teaches people to make comparisons. Analogies is in fact, also a type of knowledge.

The Arabic Language is rich in analogies and expressions. These analogies or expressions could mean a whole story or incident but would be

expressed in only a few words, such as the expression, (وافق شَنَّ طَبِقَهُ) (Shann suits Thobaqah). The story behind this expression is the story of two men who were travelling together. One of them was fat and the other was thin. The thin man was named Shann. So Shann said to the fat man: “Do I carry you or do you carry me?” The fat man looked at him in disdain and did not answer him. As they continued their journey, they passed by a piece of fertile land. The crops were ready to be harvested. Shann said to the fat man: “Do you think these crops have been eaten or not?” The fat man answered: “Oh you ignorant fool! You see the crops all ready to be harvested and you ask if they have been eaten or not?!” Shann remained silent. Soon they entered a village where there was a funeral procession. Shann said: “Do you think the person in this coffin is alive or dead?” The fat man said: “I have never seen a person more foolish than you! You see a coffin and you ask whether the person in it is alive or dead?!” Shann remained silent and wanted to part ways with the fat man. However, the man did not agree to leave him until they reached his home, so they continued together. The fat man had a daughter named Tabaqah. When her father reached home, she asked him about his guest. So, he told her that he was his travel companion and went on to complain to her about his ignorance and all that he had said. She answered: “My dear father, that is not ignorance! When he asked you if he would carry you or would you carry him, he meant, while you were both on your way, would he make the conversation or would you. When he asked if you think the crops have been eaten or not, he meant to ask you if the owners had sold the crops off and used the profit’. And what he meant when he asked regarding the funeral was whether the deceased had left behind things with which he could be commemorated or not. The fat man went out, sat with Shann and conversed with him. Then he said: “Would you like me to interpret all that you asked me about?” Shann said: “Yes”. So, he did. Shann then said: “All that you have said is not from yourself. Do tell me who said it.” He answered: “My daughter.” So Shann asked for her hand in marriage and the fat man agreed. Shann then brought her to his family. When

they saw her, they said, (وافق شئ طبقة) (Shann suits Thobqah). So, it became an expression which means the cover fits its pot.

In this verse, we are witnessing the first analogy in the Holy Qur'an according to the Qur'anic arrangement of Surahs. Through it, Allah ﷻ wants to bring closer to our human intellect the concept of hypocrisy which is very dangerous to the community and is one of the biggest reasons for the corruption of society, especially hypocrisy in conduct which has as its signs:

((آيَةُ الْمُنَافِقِ ثَلَاثٌ، إِذَا حَدَّثَ كَذَبَ، وَإِذَا وَعَدَ أَخْلَفَ، وَإِذَا أُؤْتِمِنَ خَانَ))

*“The signs of a hypocrite are three: Whenever he speaks, he tells a lie. Whenever he promises, he always breaks it. If you trust him, he proves to be dishonest.”*⁴¹

and in another hadith:

((وَإِذَا خَاصَمَ فَجَرَ)), *“Whenever he quarrels, he behaves in a very imprudent, evil and insulting manner.”*⁴²

In this verse, Allah ﷻ likens the hypocrite to the one who:

﴿الَّذِي اسْتَوْفَدَ نَارًا فَلَمَّا أَضَاءَتْ مَا حَوْلَهُ ذَهَبَ اللَّهُ بِنُورِهِمْ وَتَرَكَهُمْ فِي ظُلُمَاتٍ لَا يُبْصِرُونَ﴾

“kindled a fire, but when it illuminated what was around him, Allah took away their light and left them in darkness [so] they could not see.”

This is a similarity which would not occur to a human being's mind. The one who kindles a fire will normally do it to get a specific benefit, such as to get light, to utilise it for cooking or to obtain heat. So, this person is similar to the hypocrite who tries to obtain something which will bring benefit for himself. The hypocrites, and especially the Jews among them, were looking out for the promised Prophet whose approach was near and who would bring them

⁴¹ Sahih al-Bukhari: The Book of Belief, Chapter: The Signs of Hypocrisy, Hadith no. 33.

⁴² Sahih al-Bukhari: The Book of Belief, Chapter: The Signs of Hypocrisy, Hadith no. 34.

guidance from Allah ﷻ. However, when the final divine message arrived in the form of Islam, Allah ﷻ took away their light and left them in utter darkness, unable to see. This is because, their sight did not see the light which came to their brain through the eyes.

Allah ﷻ used the word *Nur* which means the rays of light as we are able to see through them and not *Dhou'* which means the physical light itself (like the lamp which gives out the light rays). In some instances, 'dhou' could even be harmful. Hence, this is a scientifically accurate word used by the Holy Qur'an which precedes the human knowledge.

﴿وَتَرَكَهُمْ فِي ظُلُمَاتٍ لَا يُبْصِرُونَ﴾

“and left them in darkness [so] they could not see.”

How does utter darkness occur? When there is no light, there is darkness. When there is light and the light goes off, there is utter darkness.

Hypocrisy contains utter darkness, the darkness of lying, envy, dishonesty and other vices.

In summary, this verse talks about the hypocrites who try to kindle a fire, that is, they try to work towards a benefit. However, when the world has been lit up with the light of this fire, they are not guided and do not take benefit from it. Rather, they left its benefits totally due to some difficulties present, such as thunder and lightning. They are therefore like those who wish for guidance without wanting to go through any trials and tribulations, or want success without getting tired, or want provision without working for it, or want to be given without giving.

Verse 18:

﴿صُمُّ بُكْمٌ عُمَىٰ فَهُمْ لَا يَرْجِعُونَ﴾

“Deaf, dumb and blind - so they will not return [to the right path].”

They do not hear the Words of Allah ﷻ, they do not speak of the signs of Allah ﷻ and they are blind and do not see these signs. Thus, their senses are not of any benefit to them.

Verse 19:

﴿أَوْ كَصَيْبٍ مِّنَ السَّمَاءِ فِيهِ ظُلُمَاتٌ وَرَعْدٌ وَبَرْقٌ يَجْعَلُونَ أَصَابِعَهُمْ فِي آذَانِهِمْ مِنَ الصَّوَاعِقِ حَذَرَ الْمَوْتِ وَاللَّهُ مُحِيطٌ بِالْكَافِرِينَ﴾

“Or [it is] like a rainstorm from the sky within which is darkness, thunder and lightning. They put their fingers in their ears against the thunderclaps in dread of death. But Allah is encompassing of the disbelievers.”

They ﷻ ﴿يَجْعَلُونَ أَصَابِعَهُمْ فِي آذَانِهِمْ﴾ *“They put their fingers in their ears”*:

This means that they do not look at the rain that, with it, Allah ﷻ gives life to the Earth after its death, nor do they look at the goodness which surrounds them. Rather, they thrust their fingers into their ears due to extreme fear. And Allah ﷻ encompasses all around the disbelievers.

As-Soyyib: The rain that brings goodness. It is also called *Al-Ghaith*.

However, this rain also brings with it, utter darkness, lightning and thunder. So, the goodness comes from the rain, but fear can arise from the darkness, thunder and lightning.

At the same time as goodness is being granted, a person could also be afflicted with some trials. The rain gives life to the Earth and people. Thus, it is among the greatest blessings that Allah ﷻ has bestowed on mankind, despite

the fact that it normally comes with thunder and darkness. However, some people might totally ignore the goodness because they are occupied with looking at the small things surrounding this goodness. They are those who wish for guidance without afflictions and success without getting tired.

﴿يَجْعَلُونَ أَصَابِعَهُمْ فِي آذَانِهِمْ﴾

“They put their fingers in their ears”:

Allah ﷻ does not say that they thrust their **fingertips** in their ears, but instead He uses the word **fingers**. Here, Allah ﷻ illustrates their extreme fear. It is as if they had inserted their whole fingers into their ears due to their fear of the thunderclaps. And Allah ﷻ encompasses the disbelievers.

Verse 20:

﴿يَكَادُ الْبَرْقُ يَخْطَفُ أَبْصَارَهُمْ كُلَّمَا أَضَاءَ لَهُمْ مَشَوْا فِيهِ وَإِذَا أَظْلَمَ عَلَيْهِمْ قَامُوا وَلَوْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ لَذَهَبَ بِسَمْعِهِمْ وَأَبْصَارِهِمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ﴾

“The lightning almost snatches away their sight. Every time it lights [the way] for them, they walk therein; but when darkness comes over them, they stand [still]. And if Allah had willed, He could have taken away their hearing and their sight. Indeed, Allah is over all things competent.”

This verse is still discussing the analogy that Allah ﷻ used for the hypocrites. They want true goodness without difficulties and tribulations. Whereas the rain brings along with it lightning, thunder and utter darkness. It is inevitable that difficulty is shouldered in order to receive goodness.

There is no religion that does not have responsibilities. If a person wishes to hold on to a religion without responsibilities, then that is not a religion in reality.

The religious responsibilities are actually not only a form of worship. They are not only dos and don't or 'This is permissible' and 'That is not permissible'.

There is no religion which does not have responsibilities and tasks. This is because, faith has to be translated by actions, and there has to be patience in going through tribulations.

The hypocrite wants to get goodness without carrying a burden and to receive his wages without giving anything in return. He does not want to shoulder any responsibilities in return for the wages that he wishes to obtain.

Due to this characteristic, Allah ﷻ gives this analogy of rain which signifies goodness which comes down from the sky which brings along with it utter darkness, lightning and thunder.

﴿يَكَادُ الْبَرْقُ يَخْطَفُ أَبْصَارَهُمْ﴾

“The lightning almost snatches away their sight.”:

This verse suggests that the hypocrites can see, whereas the previous verse:

﴿صُمٌّ بُكْمٌ عُمْيٌ فَهُمْ﴾

“Deaf, dumb and blind”

says that they do not hear, speak nor see.

﴿يَكَادُ الْبَرْقُ يَخْطَفُ أَبْصَارَهُمْ كُلَّمَا أَضَاءَ لَهُمْ مَشَوْا فِيهِ وَإِذَا أَظْلَمَ عَلَيْهِمْ قَامُوا وَلَوْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ لَذَهَبَ بِسَمْعِهِمْ وَأَبْصَارِهِمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ﴾

“The lightning almost snatches away their sight. Every time it lights [the way] for them, they walk therein; but when darkness comes over them, they stand [still]. And if Allah had willed, He could have taken away their hearing and their sight. Indeed, Allah is over all things competent.”

In this verse, Allah ﷻ says:

﴿يَكَادُ الْبَرْقُ يَخْطَفُ أَبْصَارَهُمْ﴾

The lightning almost snatches away their sight”.

This abundant goodness which comes with lightning, strikes for only a few seconds, almost taking away their sight. Their sight is directed towards it. However:

﴿كُلَّمَا أَضَاءَ لَهُمْ مَشَوْا فِيهِ وَإِذَا أَظْلَمَ عَلَيْهِمْ قَامُوا﴾

“Every time it lights [the way] for them, they walk therein; but when darkness comes over them, they stand [still].”:

They only go after perceived benefits but do not focus on to the true nature of things.

﴿وَلَوْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ لَذَهَبَ بِسَمْعِهِمْ وَأَبْصَارِهِمْ﴾

“And if Allah had willed, He could have taken away their hearing and their sight.”

Their senses are paralyzed metaphorically. The sense organs remain but they are not of benefit, such that the ears can be used for hearing but the hypocrites do not take lessons from what they hear and the eyes can be used for seeing but they do not learn from what they see. They thus become like the deaf and blind person, as described by Allah ﷻ, ﴿صُمٌّ بُكْمٌ عُمْيٌ﴾ *“Deaf, dumb and blind”*. They are deaf, dumb and blind from perceiving the realities and from deriving lessons.

If a specific benefit appears, they will go for it. If Allah ﷻ wishes, He could take away their real hearing and sight, and not only their figurative senses.

Therefore, in the previous verse, Allah ﷻ speaks regarding their sight, hearing and speech figuratively, whereas in this verse, Allah ﷻ speaks regarding their real senses. For there is a figurative blindness and a real blindness, as Allah ﷻ The Almighty says:

﴿وَمَنْ أَعْرَضَ عَن ذِكْرِي فَإِنَّ لَهُ مَعِيشَةً ضَنْكاً وَنَحْشُرُهُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ أَعْمَى (١٢٤) قَالَ رَبِّ لِمَ حَشَرْتَنِي أَعْمَى
وَقَدْ كُنْتُ بَصِيرًا (١٢٥) قَالَ كَذَلِكَ أَتَتْكَ آيَاتُنَا فَنَسِيْتَهَا وَكَذَلِكَ الْيَوْمَ تُنْسَى (١٢٦)﴾

“And whoever turns away from My remembrance - indeed, he will have a depressed life, and We will gather him on the Day of Resurrection blind. He will say, ‘My Lord, why have you raised me blind while I was [once] seeing?’ [Allah] will say, ‘Thus did Our signs come to you, and you forgot them; and thus will you this Day be forgotten.’” [Surah Taha: 124-126], and

﴿فَإِنَّهَا لَا تَعْمَى الْأَبْصَارُ وَلَكِنْ تَعْمَى الْقُلُوبُ الَّتِي فِي الصُّدُورِ﴾

“For indeed, it is not eyes that are blinded, but blinded are the hearts which are within the breasts.” [Surah Al-Hajj: 46].

These are the characteristics of the hypocrites in Surah al-Baqarah. The surah first speaks about the characteristics of the pious believers, then the characteristics of the disbelievers and lastly about the hypocrites.

These differences in the positions adopted by people is of the nature of Allah’s ﷻ creation, for Allah ﷻ created human beings with vast differences and did not make all of them with one disposition and a single attitude, as Allah ﷻ says,

﴿وَلَوْ شَاءَ رَبُّكَ لَجَعَلَ النَّاسَ أُمَّةً وَاحِدَةً وَلَا يَزَالُونَ مُخْتَلِفِينَ (١١٨) إِلَّا مَن رَّحِمَ رَبُّكَ وَلِذَلِكَ خَلَقَهُمْ﴾

“And if your Lord had willed, He could have made mankind one community; but they will not cease to differ. Except whom your Lord has given mercy, and for that He created them.” [Surah Hud: 118-119].

Verse 21:

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ اعْبُدُوا رَبَّكُمُ الَّذِي خَلَقَكُمْ وَالَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ﴾

“O mankind, worship your Lord, who created you and those before you, that you may become righteous”

This verse addresses all of mankind. In some other places, Allah ﷻ addresses them through:

﴿ يَا بَنِي آدَمَ ﴾

“O children of Adam” [Surah Al-A’raaf: 26]

to remind them of their father Adam ﷺ. In others, He uses:

﴿ يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا ﴾

“Oh you who have believed” [Surah Al-Baqarah: 104].

This third way of addressing, which specifically calls on the believers, is always followed by responsibilities and tasks. This is because, the one who has believed is bound to a contract and agreement with Allah ﷻ. Thus, he is given the obligations of prayer, fasting, paying of alms as well as all the other responsibilities. An example is found in the following vers:

﴿ يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمُ الصِّيَامُ ﴾

“O you who have believed, fasting has been decreed upon you.”

[Surah Al-Baqarah: 183].

The one who has not believed is not obliged to fast, pray and perform all the other responsibilities. Hence, these obligations are a result of entering into the contract with Allah ﷻ. It is not made by coercion but rather, it is a voluntary contract. Therefore, the one who has chosen to believe will have to abide by the do’s and don’ts. You are not forced to believe, for you are free to choose your religion, as Allah ﷻ states:

﴿ لَا إِكْرَاهَ فِي الدِّينِ ﴾

“There is no compulsion in religion” [Surah Al-Baqarah: 256].

However, it is not acceptable for you to say things such as: “I am a believer but I want to steal, lie and fornicate. I also do not want to pray.” This is because,

freedom was present before you chose to accept the responsibilities. Allah ﷻ says:

﴿إِنَّا عَرَضْنَا الْأَمَانَةَ عَلَى السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَالْجِبَالِ فَأَبَيْنَ أَنْ يَحْمِلْنَهَا وَأَشْفَقْنَ مِنْهَا وَحَمَلَهَا الْإِنْسَانُ إِنَّهُ كَانَ ظَلُومًا جَهُولًا﴾

“Indeed, we offered the Trust to the heavens and the earth and the mountains, and they declined to bear it and feared it; but man [undertook to] bear it. Indeed, he was unjust and ignorant.” [Surah Al-Ahzab: 72].

The *Amanah* (trust) mentioned in this verse is the choice to accept responsibilities.

Allah ﷻ has given human beings intellect for him to make informed choices by employing the use of his intellect. Thus, if he has chosen *Iman*, then responsibilities are an obligatory part of it.

The one who claims to have *Iman* but does not observe the obligations without valid excuses becomes a *Fitnah* or trial on others. Therefore, those who commit atrocities, accuse others of disbelief, murder, terrorize, abduct women, perform sexual jihad, steal the wealth of people, carry out highway robberies and commit abominations, are actually doing wrong to the religion. He is also not connected at all to the religion, as the injunctions and responsibilities found in the religion are plain and clear-cut and do not accept any peculiar interpretation. For example, the *Sslah* or prayer is prayer and cannot be interpreted to mean other than this. I cannot say, by way of example, that prayer is in the heart. Similarly, fasting has conditions which are known. The verses containing the rulings found in religion are crystal clear for all of mankind.

Allah ﷻ has explained in the previous verses the characteristics of the believers and disbelievers. However, when we say: “This is a disbeliever”, it does not mean that he has to be killed. Allah ﷻ has ordered us to fight the aggressors, but not the disbelievers or polytheists. Our Prophet ﷺ never fought people due to their religion, but because of their aggression. Allah ﷻ says:

﴿أَذِنَ لِلَّذِينَ يُقَاتَلُونَ بِأَنَّهُمْ ظَلِمُوا وَإِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَىٰ نَصْرِهِمْ لَقَدِيرٌ (٣٩) الَّذِينَ أُخْرِجُوا مِنْ دِيَارِهِمْ بِغَيْرِ حَقٍّ إِلَّا أَنْ يَقُولُوا رَبُّنَا اللَّهُ﴾

“Permission [to fight] has been given to those who are being fought, because they were wronged. And indeed, Allah is able to give them victory. [They are] those who have been evicted from their homes without right - only because they say, ‘Our Lord is Allah.’” [Surah Al-Hajj: 39-40].

Here, the permission to fight was given due to the oppression done towards the believers.

In the verse we are talking about and in other similar verses where Allah ﷻ addresses all of mankind with: ﴿يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ﴾ *“O mankind”*, the commands which follow are general commands for all human beings, the believers among them and the disbelievers.

﴿اعْبُدُوا رَبَّكُمْ﴾ *“Worship your Lord”*: The word *U’budu* is an imperative which has the word *Al-‘Ibadah* as its noun. *Al-‘Ibadah* which means worship, is the obedience of the servant to the One he worships. Obedience to Allah ﷻ means abiding by the commands of Allah ﷻ and abstaining from what he forbids.

﴿الَّذِي خَلَقَكُمْ وَالَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ﴾ *“who created you and those before you, so that you may become righteous”*: Obedience to Allah is due as he is the One who created us. This is an indication that the Holy Qur’an interacts with faith intellectually, as it explains to us the reason for obedience and addresses the intellect before anything else.

The Creator is the cause for all the blessings that human beings live in. Allah ﷻ has listed down some of these blessings that He has given to us in a way that proves to us that He is the One who created them, and via words that are concise yet decisive which will remain forever until Allah ﷻ takes back the Earth and everyone who is within it.

They are in the form of verses that establish the Oneness of Allah ﷻ and that He is the One and only Creator. Since the time Allah says: ﴿الَّذِي خَلَقَكُمْ﴾ “*who created you*”, over the generations that have passed and up to this moment, no one has come forward to claim that he is the creator. If anyone was to claim this, he would be charged with insanity. No state or great person too has ever said: “I created mankind”. Therefore, according to logic, Allah ﷻ will remain The Creator until someone is able to prove otherwise.

To illustrate this point: if I were to say in front of a group of people, “This pen is mine!” Logically, the pen will be considered mine as long as someone does not come to challenge me for its ownership. Thus, Allah ﷻ has provided proofs and evidences from the universe that He is The Creator and The Maker and that there is no God but Him in many verses. Here, He says:

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ اعْبُدُوا رَبَّكُمُ الَّذِي خَلَقَكُمْ وَالَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ﴾

“O mankind, worship your Lord, who created you and those before you, that you may become righteous”.

Taqwa, as mentioned, is defined as: Making a barrier between yourself and the Attributes of Exaltedness of Allah ﷻ.

We have mentioned that Allah ﷻ possesses the Attributes of Exaltedness and the Attributes of Beauty. Among the Attributes of Exaltedness are: The Avenger, The One who gives severe Punishments, The Compeller and The Subduer. And among the Attributes of Beauty are: The Forgiving, The Loving, The Affectionate and The Merciful.

Taqwa is thus making a barrier between yourself and the Attributes of Allah ﷻ which shows His Anger, that is to avoid earning His anger.

Verse 22:

﴿الَّذِي جَعَلَ لَكُمُ الْأَرْضَ فِرَاشًا وَالسَّمَاءَ بِنَاءً وَأَنْزَلَ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ مَاءً فَأَخْرَجَ بِهِ مِنَ الثَّمَرَاتِ رِزْقًا لَكُمْ فَلَا تَجْعَلُوا لِلَّهِ أَنْدَادًا وَأَنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ﴾

“[He] who made for you the earth a bed [spread out] and the sky a ceiling and sent down from the sky, rain and brought forth thereby fruits as provision for you. So do not attribute to Allah equals while you know [that there is nothing similar to Him].”

This verse ﴿جَعَلَ لَكُمُ الْأَرْضَ فِرَاشًا﴾ *“made for you the earth as a bed [spread out]”* means that Allah ﷻ had prepared for human beings from before they were born the means of their living, comfort and happiness. Thus, He made the Earth wide like a bed and manageable for human beings, to enable them to live on it.

Al-Firash: It is the place that a human being rests on, like a bed

Al-Mahd: It is the place that a child rests in.

This means that He prepared all the components which would make the lives of human beings on this Earth possible. He makes it spherical, rotating on its own axis and also revolving around the sun. He puts the right amount of gases in the air. He put rivers on Earth and an ozone layer surrounding it. In short, He made the Earth and everything on it suitable for the dwelling of human beings and to provide them comfort.

﴿وَأَنْزَلَ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ مَاءً﴾ *“and sent down from the sky rain”*: Water is the source of life. Allah ﷻ created the Earth with water covering three quarters of its area. This is so that water from the surface of large water masses can evaporate, form clouds and eventually fall as rain. To demonstrate this, when we put water in a glass with a small surface area and leave it for 5 days, the amount of water will decrease a little. However, if we were to pour the whole glass of water on the ground, we would find that it evaporates faster, as the surface area is bigger. Allah ﷻ says:

﴿وَجَعَلْنَا مِنَ الْمَاءِ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ حَيٍّ أَفَلَا يُؤْمِنُونَ﴾

“and We made from water every living thing? Then will they not believe?”

[Surah Al-Anbiya’: 30].

Allah ﷻ has made on the Earth all the essentials of life. He also created the sky. Everything which is above you and gives you shade is considered a sky for you. Allah ﷻ says:

﴿وَالسَّمَاءَ بَنَيْنَاهَا بِأَيْدٍ وَإِنَّا لَمُوسِعُونَ﴾

“And the heaven We constructed with strength, and indeed, We are [its] expander.” [Surah Adz-Dzariyat: 47].

This means He ﷻ built it to be strong and solid, as He also says:

﴿إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُمَسِّكُ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ أَنْ تَزُولَا﴾

“Indeed, Allah holds the heavens and the earth, lest they cease.”

[Surah Fatir: 41].

The human being is confident of this strong solid structure.

Allah ﷻ is the One who created the universe and this Earth. In the past, there was a theory which stated that the Earth had no beginning. Then, it was established through definite knowledge that the universe came about suddenly more than 13 million years ago when the big bang happened. Hence, the universe and everything in it such as the Earth, sky, sun, water and air is not eternal. Rather, it was created at a certain point in time. So, there has to be a Creator for it, as it could not have come about coincidentally. The Holy Qur’an has described this idea simply in this verse:

﴿أَوَلَمْ يَرَى الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا أَنَّ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ كَانَتَا رَتْقًا فَفَتَقْنَاهُمَا وَجَعَلْنَا مِنَ الْمَاءِ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ حَيٍّ أَفَلَا يُؤْمِنُونَ﴾

“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?” [Surah Al-Anbiya’: 30].

Here, we can see that Allah ﷻ mentions the water while speaking about the big bang.

All the galaxies in the universe were created and are not eternal. They were created at a specific time, more than a million years ago. And when humankind was created, the rest of creation was ready to welcome them.

All these things could not have happened by chance; the galaxies, the extreme precision and the equity in ranges. If the sun was a bit nearer to the Earth, the latter would be burnt. If it were a bit further, it would freeze. Everything is calculated and everything is according to due measure. When Allah ﷻ created human beings, He made them in due proportion and suited to the elements on the Earth. When He created the air, He also created for human beings’ lungs by which they could breathe in that air. When He created light, He also created for them two eyes which reflect images and send signals to the brain to see and interpret these images. When He created the fruits from the ground, He also created for them teeth in their mouths and also a stomach to digest food.

All of these indicate that Allah ﷻ made the universe ready to welcome the human beings. For He created Man in the best of stature and fashioned them to be suited to all that is on the Earth such as the air, water, energy, sun and fruits. When Allah ﷻ says:

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ اعْبُدُوا رَبَّكُم﴾

“Oh mankind, worship your Lord” [Surah Al-Baqarah: 21]

it means He is saying: ‘Obey Him, for He is the One who grants you provision.’ Provision includes everything that a person benefits from.

Knowledge, health and wealth are all forms of provision as they can benefit a person. Then Allah ﷻ continues by saying: ﴿فَلَا تَجْعَلُوا لِلَّهِ أَنْدَاداً وَأَنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ﴾ *“So do not attribute to Allah equals while you know [that there is nothing similar to Him]”*. This speech addresses the intellect, as Islam is a religion which places importance in using the intellect, not a religion of terrorism, killing, coercion, ignorance and backwardness.

The verses of the Holy Qur’an used one method when addressing human beings, which is through knowledge. Allah ﷻ has says:

﴿اقْرَأْ بِاسْمِ رَبِّكَ الَّذِي خَلَقَ﴾

“Recite in the name of your Lord who created” [Surah Al-‘Alaq: 1] and

﴿بِالنِّقْمِ وَالْقَلَمِ وَمَا يَسْطُرُونَ﴾

“Nun. By the pen and what they inscribe” [Surah Al-Qalam: 1].

From here, we can conclude that seeking knowledge is an obligation on every male and female Muslim, as the Prophet ﷺ had said:

﴿طَلَبُ الْعِلْمِ فَرِيضَةٌ عَلَى كُلِّ مُسْلِمٍ﴾

*“Seeking knowledge is obligatory for every Muslim...”*⁴³.

The verses address the intellect. Allah ﷻ does not force people to belief, as, if He wants, He could have done so. However, He addresses them through their intellect by convincing them and by listing down His blessings and His signs. Every single creation obeys Allah ﷻ without a choice except human beings, whom Allah ﷻ has honoured with intellect and given the power to think.

It is a thinking intellect, not an intellect used to accuse people of disbelief. Thus, the human being is tasked to think and to obey Allah ﷻ through his own

⁴³ Sunan Ibn Majah: From the Foreword of the book in the topic of Belief and Merits of the Companions and Knowledge, Hadith no. 224.

choice and freewill. As for the non-living things, Allah ﷻ has made them subjugate to Him via His Divine Will, as He says:

﴿ثُمَّ اسْتَوَىٰ إِلَى السَّمَاءِ وَهِيَ دُخَانٌ فَقَالَ لَهَا وَلِلْأَرْضِ ائْتِيَا طَوْعًا أَوْ كَرْهًا قَالَتَا أَتَيْنَا طَائِعِينَ﴾

“Then He directed Himself to the heaven while it was smoke and said to it and to the earth, “Come [into being], willingly or by compulsion.” They said, “We have come willingly.” [Surah Fussilat: 11].

The human beings, on the other hand, have been tasked to belief and have been given the path to belief through knowledge and their senses.

﴿فَلَا تَجْعَلُوا لِلَّهِ أَنْدَادًا﴾ *“So do not attribute to Allah equals”*: An-Nadd here means the counterpart or the parallel.

That is to say, do not worship man, stone, the sun, the moon, satan or your desires.

﴿وَأَنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ﴾ *“while you know [that there is nothing similar to Him]”*:

This means that the path through knowledge will lead you to the belief in Allah alone.

Verse 23:

﴿وَإِنْ كُنْتُمْ فِي رَيْبٍ مِّمَّا نَزَّلْنَا عَلَىٰ عَبْدِنَا فَأْتُوا بِسُورَةٍ مِّنْ مِّثْلِهِ وَادْعُوا شُهَدَاءَكُمْ مِّنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ﴾

“And if you are in doubt about what We have sent down upon Our Servant, then produce a surah the like thereof and call upon your witnesses other than Allah, if you should be truthful.”

Ar-Raib: It is the doubt. This is actually a Divine challenge, as Allah ﷻ says to mankind:

﴿ وَإِنْ كُنْتُمْ فِي رَيْبٍ مِّمَّا نَزَّلْنَا عَلَىٰ عَبْدِنَا فَأْتُوا ﴾ *“And if you are in doubt about what We have sent down upon Our Servant, then produce”*. Allah ﷻ has sent down the Holy Qur’an from the *Lauh Mahfuz* to the *House of Honour* in the nearest heaven all at once in *Laylatul Qadr* (Night of Decree) in the month of Ramadan, as He ﷻ tells us:

﴿ شَهْرُ رَمَضَانَ الَّذِي أُنزِلَ فِيهِ الْقُرْآنُ ﴾

“The month of Ramadhan [is that] in which was revealed the Qur’an” [Surah Al-Baqarah: 185] and

﴿ إِنَّا أَنْزَلْنَاهُ فِي لَيْلَةِ الْقَدْرِ ﴾

“Indeed, We sent the Qur’an down during the Night of Decree.

”[Surah Al-Qadr: 1].

The phrase ﴿ عَلَىٰ عَبْدِنَا ﴾ *“upon Our Servant”* is referring to the Prophet ﷺ, as an honour for him.

The greatest miracle given to the Prophet of Allah ﷻ is the Holy Qur’an. He was also given some other visible miracles such as the *Issra’ and Mi’raj*, the splitting of the moon, the increasing of a little amount of food in front of him, the gushing of water from between his fingers, the yearning of the date palm for him and the giving of *Salam* of stones upon him. In Surah Al-Isra’, Allah ﷻ says:

﴿ سُبْحَانَ الَّذِي أَسْرَىٰ بِعَبْدِهِ لَيْلًا مِّنَ الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ إِلَى الْمَسْجِدِ الْأَقْصَىٰ ﴾

“Exalted is He who took His Servant by night from al-Masjid al-Haram to al-Masjid al- Aqsa” [Surah Al-Isra’: 1]

And here in Surah Al-Baqarah, Allah ﷻ says:

﴿ مِمَّا نَزَّلْنَا عَلَىٰ عَبْدِنَا ﴾ *“about what We have sent down upon Our Servant”*. This

shows that servitude to Allah is not a form of disgrace, like one of the poets said:

It is sufficient honour for me that I am a servant

Whom my God welcomes without any appointed timing

What great honour it is that a person is able to enter upon the King of the Kings, Who is in complete control of the Heavens and the Earth and has in His Hands every single thing such as death, life, provision, prevention and granting at any time that he wishes and He can end the meeting any time he wishes! Is this not an honour?! It is actually the peak of honour as you have left servitude towards other man and made your servitude solely for Allah ﷻ. This is also the peak of freedom, as you have freed yourself from your counterparts from among mankind and do not worship except the God of mankind.

In this verse, Allah ﷻ has challenged those who have doubts regarding the verses and surahs of the Holy Qur'an to produce something similar to it. A challenge is normally posed towards someone who has something which is of the same type that the person who is giving the challenge has. For example, a person is not able to pose a challenge to a doctor if he is not in the same specialization as him, as this is a paralogism. Therefore, if a challenge has to be posed, the two parties must have the same product of be of the same specialization.

In this verse, the Holy Qur'an poses a challenge to all of mankind, and especially the people who were present when the Holy Qur'an was revealed. This is because, they were distinguished by their eloquence. They used to compete in poetry and odes and memorised thousands of lines of poetry and prose. They were the Arabs who were the Keepers of the Vocabulary in the pure desert environment. So, this verse challenged them especially, and all of mankind generally, up to this moment and until Allah ﷻ takes back the Earth and all of what is on it.

And as Allah ﷻ uses the phrase: ﴿يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ﴾ “O mankind”. This challenge is specifically for the Arabs as this is a field that they excel in and is generally for everyone else.

He challenges them with their eloquence, knowledge and any other thing that a human being could use to try to rival the Holy Qur’an.

During the time of Prophet Musa ﷺ, his people were experts in black magic. So, he challenged them by doing something similar to their expertise, although it was not exactly black magic.

During the time of Prophet Isa ﷺ, his people were proficient in the field of medicine. So, he came to them with the miracles of healing the blind and the leper and bringing the dead to life.

During the time of the revelation of the Holy Qur’an, the Arabs excelled in their eloquence. So, they were challenged with the miracle of the Qur’an. And although they were the greatest poets, linguists and keepers of the vocabulary of their time, they were unable to face up to the challenge, because the Holy Qur’an contains the rhetorical miracle. Thus, Allah ﷻ says to them:

﴿وَإِنْ كُنْتُمْ فِي رَيْبٍ مِّمَّا نَزَّلْنَا عَلَىٰ عَبْدِنَا فَأْتُوا بِسُورَةٍ مِّثْلِهِ وَادْعُوا شُهَدَاءَكُمْ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ
(٢٣) فَإِنْ لَمْ تَفْعَلُوا وَلَنْ تَفْعَلُوا﴾

“And if you are in doubt about what We have sent down upon Our Servant, then produce a surah the like thereof and call upon your witnesses other than Allah, if you should be truthful. But if you do not – and you will never be able to”.

So: ‘You will not be able to carry this out during the revelation period, nor in the future.

Allah ﷻ has decreed that they will not be able to face up to the challenge as He is the One who revealed the Holy Qur’an. He is also the Creator of mankind. The Holy Qur’an is the Speech of Allah ﷻ, thus it is not a creation.

This theory that it is a creation is an affliction which afflicted the Muslims in the past. Imam Ahmad Bin Hanbal ﷺ defended the Holy Qur'an from this false theory and confronted those who said it, until he was tortured for doing this. The Holy Qur'an is the Speech of Allah ﷻ. As The Speech is attributed to the All-Speaking, we cannot say that it is a creation. An intellectual war happened due to this theory. Imam Ahmad Bin Hanbal managed to prove to everyone that the Holy Qur'an is the Speech of Allah ﷻ, and is thus, one of His perfect Attributes. Hence it is not a creation.

In this verse, Allah ﷻ challenges the Arabs with something that they have the skill for. The Arabs were people who savoured every single word. If there had been a single gap in the Holy Qur'an, they would have pointed it out. If they could have composed a Holy Qur'an, they would have done it.

Musailamah Al-Kazzab, Tulaihah Al-Asadi and Sujah were among those who tried to compose something like a Qur'an. However, they failed totally. This was because, though eloquent, they were not up to the level of the challenge.

When the polytheists of Mecca wanted to tell the Prophet ﷺ to stop spreading the Islamic call, Utbah Bin Rabi'ah, who was a patient leader, came to talk to him. One day, Utbah was sitting in the meeting place of the Quraish, whilst the Prophet ﷺ was sitting alone in the mosque. Utbah said: "Oh people of Quraish, Should I approach Muhammad and talk to him to offer a few things, in the hope that he will accept some of them? If he wants to have any of them, we can give it to him, with the condition that he stops what he is doing." They said, "Yes, Oh Father of Walid. Go and speak to him!" So, Utbah went and sat with the Prophet ﷺ. He said, "Oh my nephew! As you well know, you belong to a family of authority and of a good lineage. Verily, you have brought to your people a great affair. You have disunited with it their community, discredited the elderly, dishonoured their gods and religion and accused their forefathers of disbelief. So, do listen to me as I offer you a few things for you to consider, perhaps you might accept some of them." The Prophet ﷺ answered, *"Please*

say them, Oh Father of Walid, I will listen” So Utbah said, “Oh my nephew! If what you are looking for, when you brought this affair, is wealth, we will gather for you from our wealth until you will be the wealthiest of us. If what you are looking for is honour, we will make you our leader such that we will not make any decisions without you. If what you are looking for is authority, we will give it to you....” After he had finished speaking with the Prophet ﷺ listening intently, the Prophet ﷺ said *“Have you finished, Oh Father of Walid?”* He said, “Yes.” The Prophet ﷺ then said, *“Now listen to me.”* He said, “I will.” The Prophet ﷺ then read:

﴿حَم (١) تَنْزِيلٌ مِنَ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ (٢) كِتَابٌ فُصِّلَتْ آيَاتُهُ قُرْآنًا عَرَبِيًّا لِقَوْمٍ يَعْلَمُونَ (٣) بَشِيرًا وَنَذِيرًا فَأَعْرَضَ أَكْثَرُهُمْ فَهُمْ لَا يَسْمَعُونَ (٤) وَقَالُوا فُلُونَا فِي أَكْنِئَةٍ مِمَّا تَدْعُونَا إِلَيْهِ وَفِي آذَانِنَا وَقْرٌ وَمِنْ بَيْنِنَا وَبَيْنِكَ حِجَابٌ فَاعْمَلْ إِنَّا عَامِلُونَ (٥)﴾

“Ha, Meem. [This is] a revelation from the Entirely Merciful, the Especially Merciful. A Book whose verses have been detailed, an Arabic Qur'an for a people who know, as a giver of good tidings and a warner; but most of them turn away, so they do not hear. And they say, ‘Our hearts are within coverings from that to which you invite us, and in our ears is deafness, and between us and you is a partition, so work; indeed, we are working” [Surah Fussilat: 1-5].

Utbah listened intently with his hands behind his back to lean on them. When the Prophet ﷺ reached the place of the verse enjoining prostration, he ﷺ prostrated. Then he ﷺ said, *“Oh Father of Walid, you have heard what you have heard, so that is the answer.”* In another narration, Utbah listened until the Prophet ﷺ reached the verse

﴿فَإِنْ أَعْرَضُوا فَقُلْ أَنْذَرْتُكُمْ صَاعِقَةً مِثْلَ صَاعِقَةِ عَادٍ وَثَمُودَ (١٣)﴾

“But if they turn away, then say, ‘I have warned you of a thunderbolt like the thunderbolt [that struck] 'Aad and Thamud.’” [Surah Fussilat: 13].

He got up in terror and clamped his hand over the Prophet's ﷺ mouth, pleading him by Allah and by their familial ties to stop. This was due to his fright

that this warning would really happen. Utbah then got up and returned to his friends. They said to each other, “We swear by Allah, the Father of Walid has come to you looking different from how he looked when he went.” When he sat down with them, they asked, “What did you find, Oh Father of Walid?” He said, “I found that I heard a speech which I swear By God, I have never heard anything like it before. I did not know how to refute it. By Allah, it was not poetry, nor was it black magic or foretelling. Oh people of Quraish, Obey me and accept this from me! Leave this man and what he is saying! Isolate yourselves from him. By Allah, the speech that I heard from him will surely be a great news.”⁴⁴

Here, we can see that the Prophet ﷺ brought him the miraculous Holy Qur’an and read it to him. He did not say to him, “You better believe, or you will be burnt in hell by Allah!” He was just challenged by the Holy Qur’an.

There are many examples of the eloquence and miraculous nature of the Holy Qur’an. In Surah Yusuf, the verses illustrate a specific occurrence which happened to the brothers of Prophet Yusuf. It mentions their dialogue:

﴿قَالُوا يَا أَيُّهَا الْعَزِيزُ إِنَّ لَهُ أَبًا شَيْخًا كَبِيرًا فَخُذْ أَحَدَنَا مَكَانَهُ إِنَّا نَرَاكَ مِنَ الْمُحْسِنِينَ﴾

“They said, ‘O 'Azeez, indeed he has a father [who is] an old man, so take one of us in place of him. Indeed, we see you as a doer of good.’”

[Surah Yusuf: 78].

Even if all the language experts in the world were to come together, they would not have been able to summarize this scene in three sentences. Allah ﷻ then says:

﴿فَلَمَّا اسْتَيْسَسُوا مِنْهُ خَلَصُوا نَجِيًّا﴾

⁴⁴ Seerah Ibn Hisyam: Volume 1, page: 313, The word *Sathah* means: He was of those with the best lineage and the highest honour among his people.

“So when they had despaired of him, they secluded themselves in private consultation.” [Surah Yusuf: 80].

This means that they lost hope, were undecided and were overcome by despair more than once. They tried and gave up hope, then wanted to withdraw but did not know how to save themselves from the situation.

So, they kept on discussing. The Holy Qur’an illustrates a full scene in three concise verses which contain a variety of meanings and motions.

You will feel, as you are reciting the Holy Qur’an, that it is alive.

One of the orientalist said, “I wanted to read the Qur’an but it turned out that it read me.”

The Holy Qur’an is moving and alive and the Prophet ﷺ was a walking Qur’an on the Earth.

This means that the Holy Qur’an enters all the faculties of a human being owing to its great original miraculous rhetorical style.

Another example is in the verse:

﴿قَالَتْ نَمْلَةٌ يَا أَيُّهَا النَّمْلُ ادْخُلُوا مَسَاكِنَكُمْ لَا يَحْطِمَنَّكُمْ سُلَيْمَانُ وَجُنُودُهُ وَهُمْ لَا يَشْعُرُونَ﴾

“An ant said, “O ants, enter your dwellings that you not be crushed by Solomon and his soldiers while they perceive not.” [Surah An-Naml: 18].

This small ant spoke, gave orders, stated a prohibition, generalized and gave a reasoning, all in one sentence.

This miraculous nature of the Holy Qur’an is clear in every surah.

We see the following verses:

﴿وَاللَّيْلِ إِذَا عَسْعَسَ (١٧) وَالصُّبْحِ إِذَا تَنَفَّسَ (١٨) إِنَّهُ لَقَوْلُ رَسُولٍ كَرِيمٍ (١٩) ذِي قُوَّةٍ عِنْدَ ذِي الْعَرْشِ مَكِينٍ (٢٠) مُطَاعٍ ثَمَّ أَمِينٍ (٢١) وَمَا صَاحِبُكُمْ بِمَجْنُونٍ (٢٢)﴾

“And by the night as it closes in; And by the dawn when it breathes; Indeed, the Qur'an is a word [conveyed by] a noble messenger, [Who is] possessed of power and with the Owner of the Throne, secure, obeyed there [in the heavens] and trustworthy. And your companion is not mad.”

[Surah At-Takwir: 17-22].

Who, other than Allah ﷻ, is able to come up with sentences like these?

When Allah ﷻ wishes to speak about the size and width of the hellfire, He says:

﴿يَوْمَ نَقُولُ لِجَهَنَّمَ هَلْ امْتَلَأْتَ وَتَقُولُ هَلْ مِنْ مَزِيدٍ﴾

“On the Day We will say to Hell, ‘Have you been filled?’ and it will say, ‘Are there some more?’” [Surah Qaf: 30].

Will it ever occur to a human being, who wants to describe the size of a space, to describe it like this?

When Allah ﷻ talks about the last moments when death is upon a person, He says:

﴿فَلَوْلَا إِذَا بَلَغَتِ الْحُلُقُومَ (٨٣) وَأَنْتُمْ حِينِيذٍ تَنْظُرُونَ (٨٤)﴾

“Then why, when the soul at death reaches the throat, And you are at that time looking on” [Surah Al-Waqi'ah: 83-84].

Notice the accuracy of the verses. And in Surah Al-Qiyamah, Allah says:

﴿لَا أُفْسِمُ بِيَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ (١) وَلَا أُفْسِمُ بِالنَّفْسِ اللَّوَّامَةِ (٢) أَيَحْسَبُ الْإِنْسَانُ أَلَّنْ نَجْمَعُ عِظَامَهُ (٣) بَلَى قَادِرِينَ عَلَى أَنْ نُسَوِّيَ بَنَانَهُ (٤) بَلْ يُرِيدُ الْإِنْسَانُ لِيَفْجُرَ أَمَامَهُ (٥) يَسْأَلُ أَيَّانَ يَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ (٦) فَإِذَا بَرَقَ الْبَصَرُ (٧) وَخَسَفَ الْقَمَرُ (٨) وَجُمِعَ الشَّمْسُ وَالْقَمَرُ (٩) يَقُولُ الْإِنْسَانُ يَوْمَئِذٍ أَيُّنَ الْمَعْرُ (١٠) كَلَّا لَا وَزَرَ (١١) إِلَى رَبِّكَ يَوْمَئِذٍ الْمُسْتَقَرُّ (١٢) يُنَبِّأُ الْإِنْسَانُ يَوْمَئِذٍ بِمَا قَدَّمَ وَأَخَّرَ (١٣) بَلْ الْإِنْسَانُ عَلَى نَفْسِهِ بَصِيرَةٌ (١٤) وَلَوْ أَلْفَى مَعَاذِيرَهُ (١٥) لَا تُحَرِّكْ بِهِ لِسَانَكَ لِتَعْجَلَ بِهِ (١٦) إِنَّ عَلَيْنَا جَمْعَهُ وَقُرْآنَهُ (١٧) فَإِذَا قَرَأَهُ فَاتَّبِعْ قُرْآنَهُ (١٨) ثُمَّ إِنَّ عَلَيْنَا بَيَانَهُ (١٩) كَلَّا بَلْ تُحِبُّونَ الْعَاجِلَةَ (٢٠) وَتَذَرُونَ الْآخِرَةَ (٢١) وَجُوهٌ يَوْمَئِذٍ نَاصِرَةٌ (٢٢) إِلَى رَبِّهَا نَاظِرَةٌ (٢٣) وَوُجُوهٌ يَوْمَئِذٍ بَاسِرَةٌ (٢٤) تَتَّظُنُّ أَنْ يُفْعَلَ بِهَا فَاقِرَةٌ (٢٥) كَلَّا إِذَا بَلَغَتِ النَّرَاقِي (٢٦) وَقِيلَ مَنْ رَاقِي (٢٧)﴾

وَوَظَنَّ أَنَّهُ الْفِرَاقُ (٢٨) وَالتَّقَنُّتُ السَّاقُ بِالسَّاقِ (٢٩) إِلَى رَبِّكَ يَوْمَئِذٍ الْمَسَاقُ (٣٠) فَلَا صَدَقَ وَلَا صَلَّى (٣١)
وَلَكِنْ كَذَّبَ وَتَوَلَّى (٣٢) ثُمَّ ذَهَبَ إِلَى أَهْلِهِ يَتَمَطَّى (٣٣) أَوْلَى لَكَ فَأَوْلَى (٣٤) ثُمَّ أَوْلَى لَكَ فَأَوْلَى (٣٥) ﴿

“I swear by the Day of Resurrection. And I swear by the reproaching soul [to the certainty of resurrection]. Does man think that We will not assemble his bones? Yes. [We are] Able [even] to proportion his fingertips. But man desires to continue in sin. He asks, "When is the Day of Resurrection?" So when vision is dazzled, and the moon darkens, and the sun and the moon are joined, Man will say on that Day, "Where is the [place of] escape?" No! There is no refuge. To your Lord, that Day, is the [place of] permanence. Man will be informed that Day of what he sent ahead and kept back. Rather, man, against himself, will be a witness, even if he presents his excuses. Move not your tongue with it, [O Muhammad], to hasten with recitation of the Qur'an. Indeed, upon Us is its collection [in your heart] and [to make possible] its recitation. So when We have recited it [through Jibril], then follow its recitation. Then upon Us is its clarification [to you]. No! But you love the immediate, and leave the Hereafter. [Some] faces, that Day, will be radiant, looking at their Lord. And [some] faces, that Day, will be contorted, expecting that there will be done to them [something] backbreaking. No! When the soul has reached the collar bones, and it is said, "Who will cure [him]?" And the dying one is certain that it is the [time of] separation, and the leg is wound about the leg, to your Lord, that Day, will be the procession. And the disbeliever had not believed, nor had he prayed. But [instead], he denied and turned away. And then he went to his people, swaggering [in pride]. Woe to you, and woe! Then woe to you, and woe!” [Surah Al-Qiyamah: 1-35].

Do you wonder then, that the polytheists prostrated along with the Muslims due to the greatness of this speech and its eloquence?!

Verse 24:

﴿فَإِنْ لَمْ تَفْعَلُوا وَلَنْ تَفْعَلُوا فَاتَّقُوا النَّارَ الَّتِي وَقُودُهَا النَّاسُ وَالْحِجَارَةُ أُعِدَّتْ لِلْكَافِرِينَ﴾

“But if you do not - and you will never be able to - then fear the Fire, whose fuel is men and stones, prepared for the disbelievers.”

The stones mentioned here are the idols that they used to worship.

Every time the Holy Qur’an speaks about the hellfire, it will be followed by that on paradise. Thus, the warnings are followed by the glad tidings.

Verse 25:

﴿وَيَسِّرْ لِلَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ أَنْ لَهُمْ جَنَّاتٍ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ كُلَّمَا رُزِقُوا مِنْهَا مِنْ ثَمَرَةٍ رِزْقًا قَالُوا هَذَا الَّذِي رُزِقْنَا مِنْ قَبْلُ وَأَنْتُمْ بِه مُتَشَابِهًا وَلَهُمْ فِيهَا أَزْوَاجٌ مُطَهَّرَةٌ وَهُمْ فِيهَا خَالِدُونَ﴾

“And give good tidings to those who believe and do righteous deeds that they will have gardens [in Paradise] beneath which rivers flow. Whenever they are provided with a provision of fruit therefrom, they will say, "This is what we were provided with before." And it is given to them in likeness. And they will have therein purified spouses, and they will abide therein eternally.”

Al-Bisharah or glad tidings mean good news which is told to a person. The Holy Qur’an gives glad tidings to those who believe and do good deeds. Faith alone does not suffice. This is because belief can be translated in the behaviour of a human being.

We express our beliefs through our behaviour.

When the Muslims separated their behaviour from their beliefs, they ruined their religion. Thus, you can find someone who prays, fasts, goes for pilgrimage and sends salutations on the Prophet ﷺ but also lies, gossips, tattles, bribes

and kills. This is of course not permissible, as belief is the behavioural account of the heart. Faith is:

((مَا وَقَرَ فِي الْقَلْبِ وَ صَدَّقَهُ الْعَمَلُ))

*“What is revered in the heart and certified by actions,”*⁴⁵

as what the Prophet ﷺ has said. So, there is no belief without actions which translate it.

True belief reflects the *Akhlaq* (morality) of a person. Allah ﷻ has praised his Prophet ﷺ by saying:

((وَإِنَّكَ لَعَلَىٰ خُلُقٍ عَظِيمٍ))

“And indeed, you are of a great moral character.” [Surah Al-Qalam: 4].

The elements of perfection are embodied in him, since *Akhlaq* is the greatest characteristic a human being could possess. It is as if Allah ﷻ expresses the religion and all the previous Divine Messages in the *Akhlaq* of the Prophet ﷺ, as the Prophet ﷺ himself said:

((إِنَّمَا بُعِثْتُ لِأَتَمِّمَ مَكَارِمَ الْأَخْلَاقِ))

*“Verily, I was sent to complete honourable character”*⁴⁶.

Therefore, since our religion is a religion of *Akhlaq* and behaviour, it is necessary that the behaviour corresponds with the beliefs.

Just as having belief without good deeds does not suffice, calling people towards good *Akhlaq* without religion makes it of no benefit.

Therefore, belief is the behavioural account of the heart which a human being will be accounted for, as the Prophet ﷺ said:

⁴⁵ Musannaf Ibn Abi Syaibah: The Book of Belief and Vision, Hadith no. 30351.

⁴⁶ Sunan al-Baihaqi al-Kubra: The Book of Testimony, Chapter: Explaining Good Character and its Excellence Hadith no. 20571.

((الإيمان بضع وسبعون، أو بضع وستون شعبة، فأفضلها قول: لا إله إلا الله، وأدناها إماطة الأذى عن الطريق))

“Iman has sixty odd or seventy odd branches. The uppermost of all these is the Testimony of Faith: 'La ilaha illallah' (there is no true god except Allah) while the least of them is the removal of a harmful object from the road.”⁴⁷

The companions of the Prophet ﷺ, his family and the first generation of Muslims understood well the real meaning of this. We hear of Sayyidina Umar ؓ, who was a tyrant who worshipped idols before he became a Muslim, say after he had embraced Islam and later became the *Khalifah*: (By Allah, if I came across a sheep on the way to the Euphrates River, I would be afraid that Allah ﷻ would ask me about it on The Day of Judgement, “Oh Umar, why did you not pave for it a road?) And we hear of Sayyidina Abu Bakr ؓ reminding his army before the conquest of *Sham*, (Oh people, stop and let me remind you of ten things that you have to memorize from me: Do not betray, do not grudge, do not be treacherous, do not mutilate, do not kill small children, the elderly and women, do not strip palm trees and do not burn them down, do not cut fruit-bearing trees and do not slaughter sheep, cows or camels except to be eaten. You will also pass by a group of people who seclude themselves in monasteries. Leave them and what they are secluding themselves for.)

These words make us understand that Islam is a religion of goodness and giving and contains messages of *Akhlaq* and values for humanity and kindness towards animals, plants and non-living things. It is not a religion of killing, destruction and accusing others of disbelief. The early Muslims understood Islam in this way and were thus able to conquer countries, develop architecture and bring progress to humanity.

﴿وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ﴾ *“and do righteous deeds”*: What is the meaning of *Salihaat*?

⁴⁷ Sahih Muslim: The Book of Faith, Chapter: Explaining the number of Branches of Iman, Hadith no. 54.

It is the plural form of the word *Salihah* (goodnees).

The opposite of *Salihah* or good deeds is *Fasad* which means bad deeds or corruption.

It is our obligation to battle and struggle to combat corruption.

All the nations from the developed and undeveloped countries, whether they are first, second or third world countries, should hold on to the slogan of combatting corruption. Islam has preceded them in this when it tied belief with doing good deeds which is the opposite of corruption.

What is the meaning of *Fasad* or corruption?

It means upsetting the balance and liberation of the desires. For example, liberating the desire to possess leads to stealing and liberating the sexual desire leads to fornication. Islam comes to control the desire, not to liberate it, as claimed by those who talk about the permissibility of having multiple wives which we will talk about when the time comes.

Islam has the most progressive legislation. As the human legislation progresses, it gets nearer and nearer to the Islamic legislation.

Types of Corruption:

There are a few types of corruption. They are the corruption of values, the corruption of blessings and the corruption of the body. It is an obligation to fight all these types of corruption, especially corruption of values. This is because, the upsetting of the balance and values leads to widespread corruption, as Allah ﷻ says:

﴿ظَهَرَ الْفَسَادُ فِي الْبَرِّ وَالْبَحْرِ بِمَا كَسَبَتْ أَيْدِي النَّاسِ﴾

“Corruption has appeared throughout the land and sea by what the hands of people have earned” [Surah Ar-Ruum: 41].

Allah ﷻ has made subservient the Earth, sky, air, oceans, rivers, wells and everything that He has given us and made them in the best condition. However, human beings have corrupted them when they gave full rein to his desires.

For this, the Islamic legislation came to control the movements of human beings in their lives so that they would not oppress others and become people who are tyrannical, invidious, malicious, thieves, fornicators, venal, talebearers or liars. How would it be possible then, for a person to perform the prayers but at the same time, slander, lie and kill?!! A person like this cannot be perceived as holding on to Islam, as Allah ﷻ says in Surah Yunus:

﴿ رَبَّنَا لَا تَجْعَلْنَا فِتْنَةً لِّلْقَوْمِ الظَّالِمِينَ ﴾

“Our Lord, make us not [objects of] trial for the wrongdoing people”

[Surah Yunus: 85].

The *Fitnah* or trial here is when we say the opposite of what we do, Allah ﷻ also says:

﴿ يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لِمَ تَقُولُونَ مَا لَا تَفْعَلُونَ (٢) كَبِيرَ مَقْتًا عِنْدَ اللَّهِ أَنْ تَقُولُوا مَا لَا تَفْعَلُونَ (٣) ﴾

“O you who have believed, why do you say what you do not do? Great is hatred in the sight of Allah that you say what you do not do.”

[Surah As-Saf: 2-3].

We become a trial on people when our behaviour does not tally with our belief, the belief in Allah ﷻ and the Hereafter.

Islam is a religion and not only a culture. When the behaviour goes in line with the belief, we do not become a trial on people. This is because, a person whose behaviour opposes his belief portrays to people an inconsistent picture of Islam. An example of such people are the terrorists who hide under the curtain of Islam. They cause confusion as they carry the Islamic slogan but conceal crimes, terrorism and lies against Allah ﷻ and His Prophet ﷺ. This

leads to a distortion of the greatness of this religion, which in actual fact must be taken from its original sources, as Allah ﷻ says in His Holy Book:

﴿فَاسْأَلُوا أَهْلَ الذِّكْرِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ﴾

“So ask the people of the message if you do not know.” [Surah An-Nahl: 43].

﴿أَنَّ لَهُمْ جَنَّاتٍ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ﴾ *“that they will have gardens [in Paradise] beneath which rivers flow”*: This is a description of the Paradise.

The word *Jannaat* is the plural of *Jannah*. It refers to trees and gardens.

When Allah ﷻ speaks of the Paradise, He says:

﴿مِثْلَ الْجَنَّةِ الَّتِي وَعَدَ الْمُتَّقُونَ﴾

“The example of Paradise, which the righteous have been promised” [Surah Ar-Ra’d: 35].

He likens it to the gardens of this world which contain trees, rivers and fruits.

We are not able to describe something which does not exist in our life today.

For example, if someone used the word ‘television’ before it was invented, no one would be able to imagine it. Similarly, if the word ‘electricity’ was said before it was discovered, no one would be able to know what it is. The human being is an adversary of what he does not know of.

Rasulullah ﷺ had described for us the Paradise in his saying:

((قَالَ اللهُ تَعَالَى: أَعَدَدْتُ لِعِبَادِي الصَّالِحِينَ مَا لَا عَيْنَ رَأَتْ، وَلَا أُذُنَ سَمِعَتْ وَلَا خَطَرَ عَلَى قَلْبِ بَشَرٍ))

“Allah (سبحانه وتعالى) has said: I have prepared for my pious servants that which no eye has ever seen, no ear has ever heard and that which has never occurred to a person’s heart.”⁴⁸

When Allah ﷻ describes to us the Paradise, He precedes it with the word *Mithl* which means ‘an example’.

This is because, as the topic is concerning the unseen, He brings it closer to our minds by comparing it to something we know. For example, He tells us that there is wine in Paradise, but it is not like the wine that we know of in this world.

Therefore, when Allah ﷻ tells us of the news of the unseen, we accept it as it is without humanly possible interpretations as we do not know of it.

﴿تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ﴾ “beneath which rivers flow”: This similar phrase is found in Surah At-Tawbah in the verse:

﴿ جَنَّاتٍ تَجْرِي تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ ﴾

“beneath which rivers flow” [Surah At-Tawbah: 100]

without the preposition (مِنْ) *Min* which means ‘from’. There are many prepositions in the Arabic Language, such as (مِنْ, إِلَى, عَنْ, عَلَى).

We have mentioned that there is no redundancy in the verses of the Holy Qur’an. Rather, they contain the secrets of the Holy Qur’an.

The word *Min* which means ‘from’ in the rest of the Holy Qur’an always brings an additional meaning. Therefore, in this verse, this phrase:

﴿تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ﴾ “beneath which rivers flow”: means that the rivers spring out from below them.

⁴⁸ Sahih al-Bukhari: The Book of The Beginning of Creation, Chapter: The characteristics of Paradise, and the fact that it has already been created, Hadith no. 3072.

﴿كُلَّمَا رُزِقُوا مِنْهَا مِنْ ثَمَرَةٍ رِزْقًا قَالُوا هَذَا الَّذِي رُزِقْنَا مِنْ قَبْلُ وَأَنْتُوا بِهِ مُتَشَابِهًا وَلَهُمْ فِيهَا أَزْوَاجٌ مُطَهَّرَةٌ وَهُمْ فِيهَا خَالِدُونَ﴾

“Whenever they are provided with a provision of fruit therefrom, they will say, “This is what we were provided with before.” And it is given to them in likeness. And they will have therein purified spouses, and they will abide therein eternally.”:

A question might arise regarding this phrase ﴿أَزْوَاجٌ مُطَهَّرَةٌ﴾ “purified spouses”.

How would it be possible that we will be in the Paradise together with our offspring and grandchildren?

Similarly, when the Holy Qur’an talks about the *Al-Hur ‘lin* which means ‘the fair maidens with large lustrous eyes’, some people might ridicule this without understanding it first, so Allah ﷻ mocks them, as He says:

﴿إِنْ تَسَخَّرُوا مِنَّا فَإِنَّا نَسَخَرُ مِنْكُمْ كَمَا تَسَخَّرُونَ (٣٨) فَسَوْفَ تَعْلَمُونَ مَنْ يَأْتِيهِ عَذَابٌ يُخْزِيهِ وَيَجِلُّ عَلَيْهِ عَذَابٌ مُقِيمٌ (٣٩)﴾

“If you ridicule us, then we will ridicule you just as you ridicule. And you are going to know who will get a punishment that will disgrace him [on earth] and upon whom will descend an enduring punishment [in the Hereafter].” [Surah Hud: 38-39].

When the Holy Qur’an talks about the ‘pure spouses’ and ‘the fair maidens with large lustrous eyes’, there is no link whatsoever to what occurs to a human being’s mind in this world. This is because, the form of a human being when he is in another world differs from his form in the life of this world, in order to enable him to be of the dwellers of Paradise.

If anything crosses his mind there, it will come to him instantly. However, his physical and psychological readiness also differs there.

Therefore, we do not ask why such phrases are found in the Holy Qur'an. This is because, our non-understanding of any word in the Holy Qur'an does not mean we do not benefit from it. Thus, we accept it as it is. An example is the verse:

﴿الرَّحْمَنُ عَلَى الْعَرْشِ اسْتَوَى﴾

“The Most Merciful [who is] above the Throne established.” [Surah Taha: 5].

We should not stop at it for an extended period of time, as it concerns matters of the unseen that we should accept without interpreting. Similar to this idea, Imam Malik رحمته الله has said: ‘The *Istiwa*’ or settling is known, but its manner is not unknown’.

The word *Azwaj* in this verse is in the plural form, its singular being *Zawj*. Thus, a person in the Hereafter is granted another spouse, and the one who is unmarried is granted a spouse. The Paradise is filled with various blessings.

The Holy Qur'an and the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم give answers to questions posed according to what will be of benefit. When the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was asked about the *Ahillah* meaning ‘the phases of the moon’, with the intention of embarrassing him as he did not have any knowledge of physics or of space, the Holy Qur'an answers for him:

﴿أُولَئِكَ هِيَ مَوَاقِيْتُ لِلنَّاسِ وَالْحَجِّ﴾

“Say, ‘They are measurements of time for the people and for Hajj.’”

[Surah Al-Baqarah:189].

This verse contains an answer with an information that will also be of benefit to them.

Verse 26:

﴿إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَسْتَحْيِي أَنْ يَضْرِبَ مَثَلًا مَا بَعُوضَةٌ فَمَا فَوْقَهَا فَأَمَّا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا فَيَعْلَمُونَ أَنَّهُ الْحَقُّ مِنْ رَبِّهِمْ وَأَمَّا الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا فَيَقُولُونَ مَاذَا أَرَادَ اللَّهُ بِهَذَا مَثَلًا يُضِلُّ بِهِ كَثِيرًا وَيَهْدِي بِهِ كَثِيرًا وَمَا يُضِلُّ بِهِ إِلَّا الْفَاسِقِينَ﴾

“Indeed, Allah is not timid to present an example - that of a mosquito or what is smaller than it. And those who have believed know that it is the truth from their Lord. But as for those who disbelieve, they say, "What did Allah intend by this as an example?" He misleads many thereby and guides many thereby. And He misleads not except the defiantly disobedient,”

Why does Allah ﷻ give the parable of a mosquito and not an elephant, which is the biggest and greatest animal? The people of that time belittled the mosquito because their human intellect at that period had not yet seen the importance of the parable of a mosquito. However, the companions of the Prophet ﷺ accepted the Holy Qur’an exactly as it was recited unto them by the Prophet ﷺ and believed in it because it was from Allah ﷻ. The disbelievers, on the other hand, debated and questioned without real understanding.

As knowledge advances, things get smaller and inventions get more delicate. To illustrate this point, when the watch was first invented, it was large. As knowledge got more advanced, it got smaller and smaller as they became more and more capable of fitting more complex systems into smaller spaces.

The mosquito consists of a most delicate system which all the dwellers of Earth fall short of comprehending it.

It has a marvellous blood cycle, a needle which can prick, draw blood and then analyse it and, amazing reproductive and digestive systems. It is one of the most delicate creations, thus it is given as a parable from the Omniscient.

To this day, new discoveries regarding the mosquito are being found. Thus, Allah ﷻ says:

﴿إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَسْتَحْيِي أَنْ يَضْرِبَ مَثَلًا مَّا بَعُوضَةً فَمَا فَوْقَهَا﴾ *“Indeed, Allah is not timid to present an example - that of a mosquito or what is smaller than it”.*

Fama Fauqaha which means ‘that which is above it’ here means everything which is smaller and more delicate than it, not that which is higher than it.

﴿فَأَمَّا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا فَيَعْلَمُونَ أَنَّهُ الْحَقُّ مِنْ رَبِّهِمْ﴾ *“And those who have believed know that it is the truth from their Lord.”.*

This is because, the believer knows that Allah ﷻ has wisdom in everything.

﴿وَأَمَّا الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا فَيَقُولُونَ مَاذَا أَرَادَ اللَّهُ بِهَذَا مَثَلًا يُضِلُّ بِهِ كَثِيرًا وَيَهْدِي بِهِ كَثِيرًا وَمَا يُضِلُّ بِهِ إِلَّا الْفَاسِقِينَ﴾

“But as for those who disbelieve, they say, “What did Allah intend by this as an example?” He misleads many thereby and guides many thereby. And He misleads not except the defiantly disobedient”: *Al-Fasiq* which means ‘the disobedient’ is the person who separates himself from the principles set by Allah ﷻ. In its linguistic usage however, when the verb *Fasaqa* is used for a fruit, it refers to the fruit that separates itself from its skin easily. Thus, the one who leaves the order set by Allah ﷻ is named a *Fasiq*.

Verse 27:

﴿الَّذِينَ يَنْفُضُونَ عَهْدَ اللَّهِ مِنْ بَعْدِ مِيثَاقِهِ وَيَقْطَعُونَ مَا أَمَرَ اللَّهُ بِهِ أَنْ يُوصَلَ وَيُفْسِدُونَ فِي الْأَرْضِ أُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْخَاسِرُونَ﴾

“Who break the covenant of Allah after contracting it and sever that which Allah has ordered to be joined and cause corruption on earth. It is those who are the losers.”

Among the characteristics of the *Fasiq*: He breaks the covenant of Allah ﷻ after he has pledged to keep it. The one who breaks the covenant of Allah ﷻ will also break the covenant of human beings nonchalantly.

The covenant of Allah ﷻ is the *fitrah* or the innate belief and the observance of Islam. This belief has existed in human beings since they existed in the spiritual world, as Allah ﷻ tells us:

﴿وَإِذْ أَخَذَ رَبُّكَ مِنْ بَنِي آدَمَ مِنْ ظُهُورِهِمْ ذُرِّيَّتَهُمْ وَأَشْهَدَهُمْ عَلَىٰ أَنفُسِهِمْ أَلَسْتُ بِرَبِّكُمْ قَالُوا بَلَىٰ شَهِدْنَا﴾

“And [mention] when your Lord took from the children of Adam - from their loins - their descendants and made them testify of themselves, [saying to them], "Am I not your Lord?" They said, "Yes, we have testified."”

[Surah Al-A'raaf: 172].

This covenant was taken naturally, thus, the nature of human beings is to have belief in Allah ﷻ, as Allah ﷻ says:

﴿فِطْرَةَ اللَّهِ الَّتِي فَطَرَ النَّاسَ عَلَيْهَا لَا تَبْدِيلَ لِخَلْقِ اللَّهِ ذَلِكَ الدِّينُ الْقَائِمُ﴾

“[Adhere to] the fitrah of Allah upon which He has created [all] people. No change should there be in the creation of Allah. That is the correct religion”

[Surah Ar-Ruum: 30].

The *Fasiq* breaks this covenant. He also severs family ties that Allah ﷻ has ordered to be joined. Maintaining family ties is an important matter as it is connected to the social solidarity and the building of communities.

All of the commands and responsibilities that are found in the Book of Allah ﷻ are guidelines from the Creator of Man for his benefit in this worldly life and the next.

The first of the family ties which has to be maintained is the bond with ones' parents. A person has to do good towards his parents, as Allah ﷻ says:

﴿وَقَضَىٰ رَبُّكَ أَلَّا تَعْبُدُوا إِلَّا إِيَّاهُ وَبِالْوَالِدَيْنِ إِحْسَانًا﴾

“And your Lord has decreed that you not worship except Him, and to parents, good treatment.” [Surah Al-Isra': 23].

Maintaining family ties is like the incubator for social solidarity. With it, the family is strong and united, there are strong ties between fathers, mothers and siblings and each family becomes like one single body, when one of the limbs suffers, the whole body responds to it with wakefulness and fever.

Islam has also reminded Muslims to be good to their neighbours. The Prophet ﷺ had said: (

((مَا زَالَ جِبْرِيلُ يُوصِينِي بِالْجَارِ حَتَّى ظَنَنْتُ أَنَّهُ سَيُورَثُهُ))

“Jibril kept recommending treating neighbours with kindness until I thought he would assign them a share of inheritance.”⁴⁹

He also said:

((مَا أَمَنَ بِي مَنْ بَاتَ شَبَعَانًا وَجَارُهُ جَائِعٌ إِلَى جَنْبِهِ وَهُوَ يَعْلَمُ بِهِ))

“The person who sleeps with a full stomach whereas his neighbour next to him is hungry, while he knows of this, is not a believer in me.”⁵⁰

These foundations are brought by Islam to build a society which is going towards advancement and human civilisation. It is a civilisation which contains constructive values which will bring good consequences to human beings. It is totally not a civilisation with destructive knowledge like what we witness in the European and American civilisations.

Whilst we are building our societies and setting up our civilisation, we do not exclude knowledge nor do we leave it for others to take. This is because, our religion is a religion of knowledge. At the same time, we do not tread on our values in our pursuit for knowledge.

⁴⁹ Sahih al-Bukhari: The Book of Adab, Chapter: The recommendation to be kind to one's neighbour, Hadith no. 5669.

⁵⁰ Al-Mu'jam Al-Kabeer by Imam at-Thobrani: Chapter 'أ', Anas Bin Malik Al-Ansari, Hadith no. 751

When family ties are maintained, each family unit is united. When the family units are united, the neighbourhood is united. When the neighbourhood is united, the village is united. And this goes on.

This will eventually lead to the unity of the community and the country.

Allah ﷻ calls to everything which will benefit mankind and to the doing of good deeds. The *Fasiq* however, is a corruptor of the Earth.

Allah ﷻ has made subservient the Earth and everything in it for human beings. He has made it suitable for Man to make their living. He then asks of them to be good. Thus, the one who strays from the principles He has set is a corruptor on this Earth who does not mind lying, talebearing, fornicating, stealing, bribing, cutting down trees and polluting oceans. All these actions show corruption in values and corruption of blessings. These are the people who are the losers.

Verse 28:

﴿كَيْفَ تَكْفُرُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَكُنْتُمْ أَمْوَاتًا فَأَحْيَاكُمْ ثُمَّ يُمِيتُكُمْ ثُمَّ يُحْيِيكُمْ ثُمَّ إِلَيْهِ تُرْجَعُونَ﴾

“How can you disbelieve in Allah when you were lifeless and He brought you to life; then He will cause you to die, then He will bring you [back] to life, and then to Him you will be returned.”

This is a rhetorical question. How could you disbelieve in Allah ﷻ?! Think of Allah’s ﷻ existence, through His giving you life and putting you to death, for He is the One who created death and life.

Death is mentioned before life because death is the evidence that life existed.

The subject of death is the way to approach atheism, as the claims of atheism cannot be refuted except through knowledge and proofs. Therefore,

the subject of death can be used to refute the atheists who say: “The intellect alone suffices in managing our lives” and “Do not talk to us about the unseen.” We refute their allegations by saying: “Verily, the One who is in control of giving life to creation is the very One who controls their death. Allah ﷻ has demonstrated to us death in its reality and told us all that we have forgotten about our creation:

﴿مَا أَشْهَدْتُهُمْ خَلْقَ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَلَا خَلْقَ أَنْفُسِهِمْ﴾

“I did not make them witness to the creation of the heavens and the earth or to the creation of themselves” [Surah Al-Kahf: 51].

No one witnessed his own creation, nor was anyone present during the creation of Adam ﷺ.

So, Allah ﷻ tells us what we have forgotten in the Holy Qur’an and demonstrates to us death through observation and sensation.”

Here, we are facing these atheists with an intellectual and scientific subject. So, we have to converse with them in an intellectual and scientific way which can be accepted by their logic.

For us, creation is proven through evidences. However, death is proven through observation and sensation. When we discuss with atheists regarding any issue, we can only resort to that which can be observed, perceived or touched.

This is because, they refute the unseen and only accept something if it has been established through experiments and tangible proofs. Therefore, if you were to tell them that Adam ﷺ was created from dust, they would ridicule and mock at this piece of information saying, “Prove this to us!”. This is because, creation can only be discussed through evidences, while death happens and can be observed and felt.

Death is the opposite of life. If you were to look at death, you would see the stages of creation. When a person dies, the first thing which happens is that his soul will leave him. Whereas this soul was the last thing which was inserted into his body when he was created. After he is buried, the stages of his cessation begin. If we were to watch the corpse and see what happens to it, we would find that it will change to moulded mud. Then, it would turn to dry clay. Next, the remaining water will evaporate. In the last stage, it will turn to dust. We can notice here that it follows a sequence which goes in the opposite direction from its creation. These are the stages of the cessation of a human being, as Allah ﷻ describes:

﴿كَمَا بَدَأَكُمْ تَعُودُونَ﴾

“Just as He originated you, you will return [to life]” [Surah Al-A’raaf: 29].

Verse 29:

﴿هُوَ الَّذِي خَلَقَ لَكُمْ مَا فِي الْأَرْضِ جَمِيعاً ثُمَّ اسْتَوَىٰ إِلَى السَّمَاءِ فَسَوَّاهُنَّ سَبْعَ سَمَاوَاتٍ وَهُوَ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمٌ﴾

“It is He who created for you all of that which is on the earth. Then He directed Himself to the heaven, [His being above all creation], and made them seven heavens, and He is Knowing of all things.”

Some of the atheists might deny that Allah ﷻ created everything that is on Earth, and say: “We are the ones who build structures, plant seeds by putting them in the Earth with fertilizers to become trees and produce fruits, manufacture goods, and invent machines, electricity, cars and aeroplanes. How is it that Allah ﷻ says that He is the One who created everything on this Earth?”

There is no doubt that this verse is valid.

However, they have not understood the meanings of the Holy Qur'an due to the limitations of their minds. Allah ﷻ is the Creator of all things. Go back in the sequence, beginning from the wheat grain. Where did the first grain come from?

You were created as Adam ﷺ was created. And you used the means that Allah ﷻ has laid down. Thus, the beginning of everything in life can be traced to Allah creating it in the beginning. Then, means and materials were put in place to be utilised. Even the one who wants to manufacture an aeroplane, for example, needs the knowledge to do it and also the laws of nature that Allah ﷻ has created in elements, for it to be possible. For example, who created electricity? It has actually existed all along, but human beings discovered it and brought it to light. Therefore, Allah is the One who created everything on this Earth.

﴿ثُمَّ اسْتَوَىٰ إِلَى السَّمَاءِ﴾ *“Then He directed Himself to the heaven”.*

Linguistically, the word *Istawaa* is used as such:

When a human being *Istawa*, it means that he straightens up after he was slanting. When a king *Istawa* on his throne, it means that he sits firmly on his throne.

The word *Istiwa'* in this verse is one of the attributes of Allah ﷻ, and nothing can be compared to Him. He is purified from having any parallels or counterparts. A verb has to be ascribed to the one who does it. Since we know that our sight is unlike Allah's Sight and our knowledge is nothing like Allah's Knowledge, we conclude that Allah ﷻ is attributed with *Istiwa'* that is suitable to His Greatness.

The verses that contain the attributes, actions and speech of Allah ﷻ might be challenging for us to understand. Therefore, we should leave it to Allah ﷻ, the One who

﴿لَيْسَ كَمِثْلِهِ شَيْءٌ وَهُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْبَصِيرُ﴾

“There is nothing like unto Him, and He is the Hearing, the Seeing.”

[Surah Asy-Syuraa: 11]

The *Sama'* or sky: It is everything which is above you and gives you shelter.

﴿فَسَوَّاهُنَّ سَبْعَ سَمَاوَاتٍ﴾ *“and made them seven heavens”*

During period of revelation, the human intellect did not yet understand the meaning of the seven skies.

Today, we know of the spherical shape of the earth and the rotation of the sun. Therefore, there is surely a wisdom for the mention of the seven skies which we have not yet discovered. Hence, we leave it for the time when it will be discovered. However, there is also the possibility that it might never get discovered.

﴿وَهُوَ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمٌ﴾ *“and He is Knowing of all things”*

Allah ﷻ attributes everything to His Knowledge. The difference between your knowledge and His Knowledge is similar to the difference between you and Him and also the difference between your *Istiwa'* and His *Istiwa'*.

Verse 30:

﴿وَإِذْ قَالَ رَبُّكَ لِلْمَلَائِكَةِ إِنِّي جَاعِلٌ فِي الْأَرْضِ خَلِيفَةً قَالُوا أَتَجْعَلُ فِيهَا مَنْ يُفْسِدُ فِيهَا وَيَسْفِكُ الدِّمَاءَ وَنَحْنُ نُسَبِّحُ بِحَمْدِكَ وَنُقَدِّسُ لَكَ قَالَ إِنِّي أَعْلَمُ مَا لَا تَعْلَمُونَ﴾

“And [mention, O Muhammad], when your Lord said to the angels, ‘Indeed, I will make upon the earth a successive authority.’ They said, ‘Will You place upon it one who causes corruption therein and sheds blood, while we declare Your praise and sanctify You?’ Allah said, ‘Indeed, I know that which you do not know.’”

This is the first story in the Holy Qur'an. It is the story of the first creation, the creation of Sayyidina Adam ﷺ The Father of Mankind.

Stories form three quarters of the holy Qur'an. The purpose of the stories is not just for entertainment. This differs from the purpose of the stories of human beings which are usually for amusement and entertainment or to give some information or as a culture.

However, the Qur'anic stories does not have a purpose other than to trace happenings. This is because, there is a link between the meanings of the Words of Allah ﷻ and the understanding of the Arabic Language. There is also a link between the Arabic Language and Islam, as Allah says:

﴿إِنَّا أَنْزَلْنَاهُ قُرْآنًا عَرَبِيًّا لَعَلَّكُمْ تَعْقِلُونَ﴾

“Indeed, We have sent it down as an Arabic Qur'an that you might understand.” [Surah Yusuf: 2].

Allah ﷻ says:

﴿إِنَّ هَذَا لَهُوَ الْقَصَصُ الْحَقُّ﴾

“Indeed, this is the true narration.” [Surah Ali 'Imran: 62].

This means that every single word in these stories is true. They apply to the truth, they do not come except from The One who is The Truth, they lead to the truth and they contain the message of truth. Thus, they do not contain any figment of imagination nor are they fictitious narratives of happenings. Rather, they are stories which contain true narratives. When human beings narrate a happening, each of them will narrate it in his own way. However, the God of human beings does not narrate except the absolute truth, as He says: ﴿لَقَدْ كَانَ

فِي قَصَصِهِمْ عِبْرَةٌ لِّأُولِي الْأَلْبَابِ﴾

“There was certainly in their stories a lesson for those of understanding.”

[Surah Yusuf: 111].

He says this because lessons are for people who have intellect.

The happenings described in stories found in the Holy Qur'an often repeat themselves throughout the years. For example, in every era, people similar to Pharaoh can be found. Likewise, people like Qarun, the monopolizer of wealth, the people of Prophet Shu'aib عليه السلام, the people of Prophet Salih عليه السلام, and the young men who believed and fled with their religion to the cave and people who gave short measures on the scale, can be found all the time. The important thing here is drawing the lessons from them.

However, some incidents described in stories in the Holy Qur'an will never repeat themselves. An example of such a story is the story of Sayyidah Maryam عليها السلام, the mother of Prophet Isa عليه السلام (Jesus). She gave birth to a child without a husband and without the means and prerequisites of marriage. Here, the means have been erased for her, thus it is an incident which will not repeat itself. Because of this, Allah سبحانه وتعالى specifies her by name in the Holy Qur'an:

﴿وَمَرْيَمَ ابْنَتَ عِمْرَانَ﴾

“And Mary, the daughter of 'Imran,” [Surah At-Tahrim: 12].

The Qur'anic stories are distributed throughout the whole Qur'an. If you want to read the story of Prophet Musa عليه السلام, you would not find it in one particular surah. It is also the story which is mentioned the most in the Holy Qur'an, as he was sent to the worst people on Earth who carried all the diseases of the nations, the Israelites. We too suffer from their doings till today, as all the afflictions and wars in Syria and its neighbouring countries are from the doings of the Zionists.

The Holy Qur'an also contains the story of Prophet Ibrahim عليه السلام. There is also a surah with his name as the title. His story is however, found in multiple Surahs.

The story of Prophet Yusuf عليه السلام however, is only found in Surah Yusuf. Other than this, his name is only mentioned once in Surah Ghafir.

The story of Prophet Adam عليه السلام can be found in Surahs Al-Baqarah, Al-A'raaf, Al-Isra', Al-Kahf, and Taha. This is because, the guidelines and reminders that Allah عز وجل mentions at every place in the Holy Qur'an serves a purpose of faith.

Thus, if I wanted to read the whole of the story of Prophet Musa عليه السلام, I would have to search for all the verses concerning Musa عليه السلام, gather them and then arrange them.

The reason why Allah عز وجل did not do this is so that the story would not become humanly, as the main purpose of the stories, is, as He says to His Messenger ﷺ :

﴿وَكُلًّا نَقُصُّ عَلَيْكَ مِنْ أَنْبَاءِ الرُّسُلِ مَا نُثَبِّتُ بِهِ فُؤَادَكَ﴾

“And each [story] We relate to you from the news of the messengers is that by which We make firm your heart” [Surah Hud: 120],

as lessons that carry out a mission of faith.

Qur'anic stories focus at times on the person, at times on the happening and at times on the period. For it is of the revelation of the All-Wise, the One worthy of all praise. So, we have to attribute the story to the One who narrates it to us, as Allah عز وجل says:

﴿نَحْنُ نَقُصُّ عَلَيْكَ أَحْسَنَ الْقَصَصِ﴾

“We relate to you, [O Muhammad], the best of stories” [Surah Yusuf: 3].

The story of Prophet Adam عليه السلام begins with Allah عز وجل informing his angels that He will be making a vicegerent on the Earth. Some people might ask, “How can Allah عز وجل ask permission from the angels when Iblis is amongst them?” The answer is that Allah's words here are not intended as a consultation but rather

as a notification. This is because, the angels would be dealing with the human beings in the future, so they had to be informed so that they would be able to carry out the tasks assigned to them. Otherwise, the matter had been decided and no space was given for discussions or dialogues. It was a Divine decision.

﴿قَالُوا أَتَجْعَلُ فِيهَا مَنْ يُفْسِدُ فِيهَا وَيَسْفِكُ الدِّمَاءَ وَنَحْنُ نُسَبِّحُ بِحَمْدِكَ وَنُقَدِّسُ لَكَ﴾

“They said, ‘Will You place upon it one who causes corruption therein and sheds blood, while we declare Your praise and sanctify You?’”:

The angels here were not arguing but actually asking.

How did the angels know that the children of Adam would cause corruption on the Earth and shed blood? Humanity today suffers from these two main problems, corruption of the Earth and the shedding of blood. All other problems arise from them. The question is, how did the angels know this before it happened?

The answer is, Allah ﷻ had revealed to them that the human beings would possess the freedom of choice. As Allah ﷻ mentions:

﴿إِنَّا عَرَضْنَا الْأَمَانَةَ عَلَى السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَالْجِبَالِ فَأَبَيْنَ أَنْ يَحْمِلْنَهَا وَأَشْفَقْنَ مِنْهَا وَحَمَلَهَا الْإِنْسَانُ ۗ

﴿إِنَّهُ كَانَ ظَلُومًا جَهُولًا﴾

“Indeed, we offered the Trust to the heavens and the earth and the mountains, and they declined to bear it and feared it; but man [undertook to] bear it. Indeed, he was unjust and ignorant.” [Surah Al-Ahzab: 72].

The *Amanah* or responsibility mentioned here is the possession of choice. Thus, human beings can choose whether they want to obey or disobey, to believe or disbelieve. Allah says:

﴿فَمَنْ شَاءَ فَلْيُؤْمِنْ وَمَنْ شَاءَ فَلْيُكْفُرْ﴾

“so whoever wills - let him believe; and whoever wills - let him disbelieve.”

[Surah Al-Kahf: 29].

If Allah ﷻ had Willed, He could have made the children of Adam ﷺ never disobey His commands and promptly follow his orders.

This is because, disobedience arises from the freedom of choice that was given. With it, you can choose belief or disbelief, constancy or uncertainty.

Therefore, the angels knew that Allah ﷻ was going to make the human being as the *Khalifah*.

The first meaning of the word *Khalifah*: The representative of Allah ﷻ on the Earth. Allah ﷻ created him, assisted him and prepared for him the means of existence.

The second meaning of the word *Khalifah*: They succeed each other, generation after generation. So, they are named *Khalifah* or the successor.

This is the interpretation of the word *Khalifah*. It does not mean the Caliphate of the terrorist organisations which have no connection whatsoever to the real Caliphate nor with Islam.

The angels had known from the word *Khalifah*, that the human beings would be granted the freedom of choice. Thus, they feared that they would spread corruption on the Earth and commit bloodshed.

On the other hand, the angels were obedient to Allah ﷻ and glorified Him with His Praise.

The *Tasbeeh* which means glorification, is for non-other but Allah ﷻ.

A variety of expressions of *Tasbeeh* have been mentioned in the Holy Qur'an. All of them are miraculous. Among them are:

﴿سُبْحَانَ الَّذِي خَلَقَ الْأَزْوَاجَ كُلَّهَا﴾

“Exalted is He who created all pairs” [Surah Yaaseen: 36]

﴿فَسُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ حِينَ تُمْسُونَ وَحِينَ تُصْبِحُونَ﴾

“So exalted is Allah when you reach the evening and when you reach the morning.” [Surah Ar-Ruum: 17]

﴿سُبْحَانَ الَّذِي أَسْرَى بِعَبْدِهِ لَيْلًا﴾

“Exalted is He who took His Servant by night” [Surah Al-Isra’: 1]

When the word *Subhan* is mentioned in the Holy Qur’an, it is preceded by a miraculous matter that cannot be performed by mankind. This word contains the exaltation of Allah ﷻ, nothing can be compared with Him.

The mission of the angels is to live in the states of praise, glorification and exaltation of Allah ﷻ. They are constantly praising Allah ﷻ for His blessings and exalting Allah ﷻ above all of His creations. Rasulullah ﷺ had said:

((... وَسُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ وَالْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ تَمْلَأُنِ أَوْ تَمْلَأُ مَا بَيْنَ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ))

“... and Subhan Allah (Glory be to Allah) and al-Hamdu Lillah

(Praise be to Allah) fill up what is between the heavens and the earth...”⁵¹

So here, we have to understand the concepts. The angles said:

﴿وَنَحْنُ نُسَبِّحُ بِحَمْدِكَ وَنُقَدِّسُ لَكَ﴾ *“while we declare Your praise and sanctify You?”*.

The word *Taqdis* means ‘purification’. It comes from the word *Al-Quds* which is a cup which they used to purify themselves with.

Allah ﷻ had answered the query of the angels with:

﴿قَالَ إِنِّي أَعْلَمُ مَا لَا تَعْلَمُونَ﴾ *“Allah said, ‘Indeed, I know that which you do not know’*”.

He used knowledge as his argument, and did not say to them: “I am the Strong, The Powerful, The God who created. They spread corruption and bloodshed, but you do not do this.” Rather, He said to them:

⁵¹ Sahih Muslim: The Book of Purification, Chapter: The Virtue of Ablution, Hadith no. 223.

﴿إِنِّي أَعْلَمُ مَا لَا تَعْلَمُونَ﴾ *“Indeed, I know that which you do not know”*

Therefore, He wanted to establish to the angels the reason He will make this creation the *Khalifah* and prove to them that He knew what they did not know.

Verse 31:

﴿وَعَلَّمَ آدَمَ الْأَسْمَاءَ كُلَّهَا ثُمَّ عَرَضَهُمْ عَلَى الْمَلَائِكَةِ فَقَالَ أَنْبِئُونِي بِأَسْمَاءِ هَؤُلَاءِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ﴾

“And He taught Adam the names - all of them. Then He showed them to the angels and said, ‘Inform Me of the names of these, if you are truthful’”

Allah ﷻ taught Adam ﷺ the things along with their names. These were the keys to the means.

Language is learnt through listening. Adam ﷺ had heard from Allah ﷻ directly, as in this verse:

﴿وَقُلْنَا يَا آدَمُ اسْكُنْ أَنْتَ وَزَوْجُكَ الْجَنَّةَ وَكُلَا مِنْهَا رَغَدًا حَيْثُ شِئْتُمَا وَلَا تَقْرَبَا هَذِهِ الشَّجَرَةَ فَتَكُونَا مِنَ الظَّالِمِينَ﴾

“And We said, ‘O Adam, dwell, you and your wife, in Paradise and eat therefrom in [ease and] abundance from wherever you will. But do not approach this tree, lest you be among the wrongdoers.’”

[Surah Al-Baqarah: 35].

His God gave him the keys to the means and taught him all the names of things. This means that Allah ﷻ granted him knowledge. This was the greatest Divine gift which led to the Divine order for the angels to prostrate to him upon Allah’s ﷻ command.

Although Adam ﷺ was not able to fly, his children after him tried to fly. Their God gave them the intellect with which they manufactured aeroplanes,

tanks and many other things which He subjugated to them. This led to the Divine command to honour Adam ﷺ and his children who were raised due to their intellect and knowledge.

﴿قَالَ أَنْبِئُونِي بِأَسْمَاءِ هَؤُلَاءِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ﴾

“and [He] said, ‘Inform Me of the names of these, if you are truthful.’”

Verse 32:

﴿قَالُوا سُبْحَانَكَ لَا عِلْمَ لَنَا إِلَّا مَا عَلَّمْتَنَا إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ الْعَلِيمُ الْحَكِيمُ﴾

“They said, ‘Exalted are You; we have no knowledge except what You have taught us. Indeed, it is You who is the Knowing, the Wise.’”

The first word said by the angels was: *Subhanak* which means ‘Glory be to you’. This was followed by: *Laa ilma lana* which means ‘We have no knowledge’. Then: *Innaka Antal Aleemul Hakeem* which means You are the All-Knowing, All-Wise’.

All that they said to Allah ﷻ is connected to knowledge.

Verse 33:

﴿قَالَ يَا آدَمُ أَنْبِئْهُمْ بِأَسْمَائِهِمْ فَلَمَّا أَنْبَأَهُمْ بِأَسْمَائِهِمْ قَالَ أَلَمْ أَقُلْ لَكُمْ إِنِّي أَعْلَمُ غَيْبَ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَأَعْلَمُ مَا تُبْدُونَ وَمَا كُنْتُمْ تَكْتُمُونَ﴾

“He said, ‘O Adam, inform them of their names.’ And when he had informed them of their names, He said, ‘Did I not tell you that I know the unseen [aspects] of the heavens and the earth? And I know what you reveal and what you have concealed.’”

Allah ﷻ wanted to demonstrate to the angels why he had made Adam ﷺ as the *Khalifah* and the merits of the intellect that He has honoured him with.

So, He said: *﴿قَالَ يَا آدَمُ أَنْبِئْهُمْ﴾* “He said, ‘O Adam, inform them of their names.’” that is, these things and their names.

If someone says: “These things had not been created or had not existed yet then.” We answer: “The origins of these things had already existed.”

﴿فَلَمَّا أَنْبَأَهُمْ بِأَسْمَائِهِمْ قَالَ أَلَمْ أَقُلْ لَكُمْ إِنِّي أَعْلَمُ الْغَيْبَ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَأَعْلَمُ مَا تُبْدُونَ وَمَا كُنْتُمْ تَكْتُمُونَ﴾

And when he had informed them of their names, He said, ‘Did I not tell you that I know the unseen [aspects] of the heavens and the earth? And I know what you reveal and what you have concealed.’”

Some of the exegetes say that the angels did not say these things out. Rather, they occurred in their souls. Therefore, it was an internal dialogue. However, since Allah *ﷻ*:

﴿يَعْلَمُ خَائِنَةَ الْأَعْيُنِ وَمَا تُخْفِي الصُّدُورُ﴾

“He knows that which deceives the eyes and what the breasts conceal.”

[Surah Ghafir: 19], and

﴿فَإِنَّهُ يَعْلَمُ السِّرَّ وَأَخْفَى﴾

“He knows the secret and what is [even] more hidden.” [Surah Taha: 7],

He knew that these thoughts had occurred to the angels. So, He made them apparent and answered them while addressing the angels through them.

We cannot determine whether this interpretation or that interpretation is the correct one. However, the important thing here are the purposes and concepts found in these verses.

Verse 34:

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

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

There is another verse connected to this prostration. Allah ﷻ says:

﴿وَلَقَدْ خَلَقْنَاكُمْ ثُمَّ صَوَّرْنَاكُمْ ثُمَّ قُلْنَا لِلْمَلَائِكَةِ اسْجُدُوا لِآدَمَ فَسَجَدُوا إِلَّا إِبْلِيسَ لَمْ يَكُنْ مِنَ السَّاجِدِينَ﴾

“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, except for Iblees. He was not of those who prostrated.”

[Surah Al-A’raaf: 11].

The human intellect might wonder: Were we created together with Adam ?

The answer is, Yes, we were. The verse is addressing all the children of Adam ﷺ, from the time of Prophet Adam ﷺ until all who remain of his offspring when the Hour of Resurrection occurs.

This is because, we, the children of Adam ﷺ, carry a part of him genetically. Allah ﷻ addressed Adam ﷺ with all his parts because He is Allah. When He had given Adam ﷺ the covenant, the testimonies from his offspring were concealed in him, and every reproduction among mankind gets a part of Adam ﷺ. So, when Allah ﷻ says:

﴿وَلَقَدْ خَلَقْنَاكُمْ﴾ **“And We have certainly created you”**, it means that He created you from the spine of Adam ﷺ. There is an indication here of the D.N.A and the genes.

﴿وَإِذْ قُلْنَا لِلْمَلَائِكَةِ اسْجُدُوا لِآدَمَ﴾ **“And [mention] when We said to the angels, ‘Prostrate before Adam’**: How could they prostrate to Adam, when prostration should only be to Allah ﷻ?

In answer, we say: “Who is the one who gives the command here?”

Prostration due to a command is actually prostration to the One who issues the command. The prostration here is a prostration of welcome and aggrandizement. It might also possibly not be in the form of the prostration that we know of.

He says: ﴿فَسَجَدُوا﴾ *“so they prostrated”* and did not say “They prostrated to him.” It is clear here that they prostrated due to the command of the One who issued the command, Allah ﷻ and not to Adam عليه السلام.

This is similar to Allah’s ﷻ command for us to pray facing the Kaaba. We do not pray for the Kaaba nor do we prostrate or bow down to it. We prostrate to Allah ﷻ. What value would the Kaaba hold if Allah ﷻ did not command us to turn our faces towards it in prayer?

The meaning of prostration is submission to the command of the One who commands. Allah ﷻ says: ﴿وَإِذْ قُلْنَا لِلْمَلَائِكَةِ اسْجُدُوا﴾

“And [mention] when We said to the angels, ‘Prostrate’”.

Was the command to prostrate general for all the angels or only for a group of angels?

The command was for a group of angels who had tasks which were connected to Adam عليه السلام.

We can conclude this from other verses in the Holy Qur’an, for example:

﴿وَإِنَّ عَلَيْكُمْ لَحَافِظِينَ (١٠) كِرَامًا كَاتِبِينَ (١١) يَعْلَمُونَ مَا تَفْعَلُونَ (١٢)﴾

“And indeed, [appointed] over you are keepers, Noble and recording; They know whatever you do.” [Surah Al-Infitar: 10-12], and

﴿فَالْمُدَبِّرَاتِ أَمْرًا﴾

“And those who arrange [each] matter,” [Surah An-Nazi’at: 5].

Thus, there are angels who have tasks related to the offspring of Adam ﷺ on the Earth.

In this verse, the group of angels mentioned are those in the heavens, who are connected to Adam ﷺ and his offspring after him.

There are also angels who have other tasks, such as The Bearers of the Throne who have no connection to the children of Adam ﷺ. They are also described as *Al-'Aaliin*, as in this verse:

﴿قَالَ يَا إِبْلِيسُ مَا مَنَعَكَ أَنْ تَسْجُدَ لِمَا خَلَقْتُ بِيَدَيَّ أَسْتَكْبِرْتَ أَمْ كُنْتَ مِنَ الْعَالِينَ﴾

“[Allah] said, ‘O Iblees, what prevented you from prostrating to that which I created with My hands? Were you arrogant [then], or were you [already] among the haughty?’” [Surah Sad: 75].

The angels who were commanded to prostrate had prostrated in obedience to Allah ﷻ.

Allah ﷻ has honoured Adam ﷺ with knowledge and made the message of Islam a message of knowledge and belief, as He says:

﴿يَرْفَعُ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا مِنْكُمْ وَالَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْعِلْمَ دَرَجَاتٍ﴾

“Allah will raise those who have believed among you and those who were given knowledge, by degrees” [Surah Al-Mujadilah: 11].

Therefore, the person who is ignorant of the knowledge of religion and also the knowledge of the world is not worthy of interpreting and expounding the verses of the Holy Qur’an.

Allah ﷻ commanded the angels to prostrate to Adam ﷺ in honour of the knowledge that he had been given and also the freedom of choice that he had been favoured with.

The angels are a creation made up of light, who never disobey Allah's commands and perform what they are commanded. They are not given a choice.

However, mankind and jinn are given the choice to be obedient or disobedient or to disbelieve altogether. Allah ﷻ says:

﴿فَمَنْ شَاءَ فَلْيُؤْمِنْ وَمَنْ شَاءَ فَلْيُكْفُرْ﴾

“so whoever wills - let him believe; and whoever wills - let him disbelieve.”

[Surah Al-Kahf: 29].

Therefore, every call to Islam with coercion or force is a false calling, and every movement of terrorism and accusation of disbelief which claims that it is affiliated to Islam has no relation whatsoever to the Qur'anic texts nor to the Islamic Jurisprudence and to what the Prophet of Islam ﷺ brought with him.

Allah ﷻ left for mankind the freedom of choice when He says:

﴿إِنَّا عَرَضْنَا الْأَمَانَةَ عَلَى السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَالْجِبَالِ فَأَبَيْنَ أَنْ يَحْمِلْنَهَا وَأَشْفَقْنَ مِنْهَا وَحَمَلَهَا الْإِنْسَانُ﴾

“Indeed, we offered the Trust to the heavens and the earth and the mountains, and they declined to bear it and feared it; but man [undertook to] bear it” [Surah Al-Ahzab: 72].

The *Amanah* or responsibility mentioned here is the choice between disbelief or belief and obedience or disobedience.

When the Divine command to the angels to prostrate was issued, it comes to light that Iblis was together with the angels. The angels are beings who never disobey their God's commands. The exception of Iblis from the angels is an *Istithna' Munqati'* or 'interrupted exception'. This is because, Iblis is not of their species. This is the way Allah mentions this news, and the speech of Allah ﷻ is the speech of The Creator of the universe since eternity, The One who discloses happenings,

﴿لَيْسَ كَمِثْلِهِ شَيْءٌ﴾

“There is nothing like Him” [Surah Asy-Syuraa: 11].

The scope of our mind can never encompass the perfection of Allah’s ﷻ Greatness and His Attributes.

As Iblis was there together with the angels who would be tasked with the affairs of creation on the Earth such as the guardians and the scribes, he too would have a task. He chose this task himself with his choice, as Allah’s ﷻ Knowledge is Eternal, Pre-Existent and Disclosing and is thus not preventive of choice.

Iblis was there together with the group of angels who would carry out tasks connected to human beings. A question might arise here, ‘Why did Allah only address the angels in: ﴿وَإِذْ قُلْنَا لِلْمَلَائِكَةِ اسْجُدُوا لِآدَمَ﴾

“And [mention] when We said to the angels, ‘Prostrate before Adam’” whereas Iblis was there too and he was of a lower status than them?

The answer: During a speech to a group of people, the addressee will usually be the person with the highest status. For example, if we were to address a group of ministers who also have their assistants together with them, the norm will be that we address them as: “Dear ministers....”. Therefore, when a command is issued to the higher party, it is enforced on the lower party too, as the command includes all of them.

The angels are of a higher status than Iblis, as he was of the jinn. At that time, he was obedient as he had not yet disobeyed. However, he

﴿أَبَىٰ وَاسْتَكْبَرَ﴾ “He refused and was arrogant” when he was commanded to prostrate, as he had the freedom of choice.

We know that he is of the jinn from the verse in Surah Al-Kahf:

﴿إِلَّا إِبْلِيسَ كَانَ مِنَ الْجِنِّ فَفَسَقَ عَنْ أَمْرِ رَبِّهِ﴾

“except for Iblees. He was of the jinn and departed from the command of his Lord.” [Surah Al-Kahf: 50].

Thus, we cannot have any other interpretation in this matter as this Qur’anic text regarding it exists.

Iblis disobeyed and Adam ﷺ too disobeyed, as Allah ﷻ says:

﴿وَعَصَى آدَمُ رَبَّهُ فَغَوَى﴾

“And Adam disobeyed his Lord and erred.” [Surah Taha: 121].

Then, Allah ﷻ accepted Adam’s repentance, as in this verse:

﴿ثُمَّ اجْتَبَاهُ رَبُّهُ فَتَابَ عَلَيْهِ وَهَدَى﴾

“Then his Lord chose him and turned to him in forgiveness and guided [him].” [Surah Taha: 122].

However, Allah ﷻ said of Iblis that he was the damned:

﴿قَالَ فَاحْرُجْ مِنْهَا فَإِنَّكَ رَجِيمٌ (٣٤) وَإِنَّ عَلَيْكَ اللَّعْنَةَ إِلَى يَوْمِ الدِّينِ (٣٥)﴾

“[Allah] said, ‘Then get out of it, for indeed, you are expelled. And indeed, upon you is the curse until the Day of Recompense’

[Surah Al-Hijr: 34-35].

What is the difference between the disobedience of Iblis-whom Allah ﷻ has cursed- and the disobedience of Sayyidina Adam ﷺ.

The disobedience of Iblis was due to arrogance, whereas the disobedience of Adam ﷺ was due to weakness. Iblis had tried to throw back the blame to Allah ﷻ. Thus, the reason for his disobedience is arrogance, whereas arrogance is the key to disbelief, as Allah ﷻ says:

﴿إِنَّ الَّذِينَ كَذَّبُوا بِآيَاتِنَا وَاسْتَكْبَرُوا عَنْهَا لَا تُفْتُحُ لَهُمُ أَبْوَابُ السَّمَاءِ وَلَا يَدْخُلُونَ الْجَنَّةَ حَتَّى يَلِجَ الْجَمَلُ فِي سَمِّ الْخِيَاطِ وَكَذَلِكَ نَجْزِي الْمُجْرِمِينَ﴾

“Indeed, those who deny Our verses and are arrogant toward them - the gates of Heaven will not be opened for them, nor will they enter Paradise until a camel enters into the eye of a needle. And thus do We recompense the criminals.” [Surah Al-A’raaf: 40].

On the other hand, Allah ﷻ says:

﴿وَوُحِّلِقَ الْإِنْسَانَ ضَعِيفًا﴾

“and mankind was created weak.” [Surah An-Nisaa’: 28].

Allah ﷻ excuses those who commit sins due to their weakness. For example, if I say to you: “Go and pray.” And you answered: “I would like to, but my time, shift and situation do not permit it..” This is called a weakness. However, if you were to say: “There is no such thing as prayer!” This is called throwing back the command to the One who had commanded it, and it is arrogance towards Allah ﷻ.

This is the difference between the disobedience of Iblis and the disobedience of Adam ﷺ. Iblis had thrown back the command to the One who had commanded it, as Allah ﷻ tells us in His Wise Book:

﴿قَالَ أَنَا خَيْرٌ مِنْهُ خَلَقْتَنِي مِنْ نَارٍ وَخَلَقْتَهُ مِنْ طِينٍ﴾

“[Satan] said, ‘I am better than him. You created me from fire and created him from clay” [Surah Al-A’raaf, 12].

For this, he was described as this: ﴿أَبَىٰ وَاسْتَكْبَرَ وَكَانَ مِنَ الْكَافِرِينَ﴾

“He refused and was arrogant and became of the disbelievers.”

This is a great difference, as Imam Ghazali once said, (There is a great difference between the one who has a weak desire towards the truth and the one who has a strong desire towards falsehood). Therefore, the one who has a weak desire towards the truth and thus commits sins can be excused, but the one who is obstinate and arrogant will not be.

This is where the word Iblis is derived. It is from *Ablasa* which means ‘to despair of the mercy of Allah’.

Verse 35:

﴿وَقُلْنَا يَا آدَمُ اسْكُنْ أَنْتَ وَزَوْجُكَ الْجَنَّةَ وَكُلَا مِنْهَا رَغَدًا حَيْثُ شِئْتُمَا وَلَا تَقْرَبَا هَذِهِ الشَّجَرَةَ فَتَكُونَا مِنَ
الظَّالِمِينَ﴾

“And We said, ‘O Adam, dwell, you and your wife, in Paradise and eat therefrom in [ease and] abundance from wherever you will. But do not approach this tree, lest you be among the wrongdoers.’”

The Paradise mentioned here is not the eternal Paradise. This is because, whoever enters the eternal Paradise will never leave it, and disobedience will never be committed in it.

Allah ﷻ had accommodated Adam ﷺ and his wife Eve in the Trial Paradise, the trial of its system. Furthermore, the verse mentions the word ﴿الْجَنَّةَ﴾ *“Paradise”* but does not say that it is *Jannatu ‘Adn* which means ‘The Paradise of Eden’, *Jannatul Khlood* which means ‘The Eternal Paradise’ or *Jannatul Firdaus* which means ‘The Paradise of Firdaus’. The word *Janna* means to cover or hide. Therefore, the word *Jannah* in the Arabic Language means ‘a garden or forest surrounded by thick tress which conceal what is in it’. Allah ﷻ talks about the gardens in the Holy Qur’an:

﴿لَقَدْ كَانَ لِسَبَإٍ فِي مَسْكَنِهِمْ آيَةٌ جَنَّتَانِ عَنْ يَمِينٍ وَشِمَالٍ﴾

“There was for [the tribe of] Saba’ in their dwelling place a sign: two [fields of] gardens on the right and on the left” [Surah Saba’: 15], and

﴿إِنَّا بَلَوْنَاهُمْ كَمَا بَلَوْنَا أَصْحَابَ الْجَنَّةِ إِذْ أَقْسَمُوا لَيَصْرِمُنَّهَا مُصْبِحِينَ﴾

“Indeed, We have tried them as We tried the companions of the garden, when they swore to cut its fruit in the [early] morning” [Surah Al-Qalam: 17], and
﴿وَأَضْرَبَ لَهُمْ مَثَلًا رَجُلَيْنِ جَعَلْنَا لِأَحَدِهِمَا جَنَّتَيْنِ مِنْ أَعْنَابٍ وَحَفَفْنَاهُمَا بِنَخْلٍ وَجَعَلْنَا بَيْنَهُمَا زُرْعًا﴾

“And present to them an example of two men: We granted to one of them two gardens of grapevines, and We bordered them with palm trees and placed between them [fields of] crops.” [Surah Al-Kahf: 32].

The verses in the Holy Qur’an do not indicate that the Paradise that Adam lived in was The Eternal Paradise. Rather, it was one of the gardens until Allah ﷻ had supplied Adam and Eve الطَّيِّبَاتِ with provisions, given them practice to go through the system and through the life on the Earth.

Allah ﷻ had created them originally to dwell on the Earth, as indicated by this verse:

﴿إِنِّي جَاعِلٌ فِي الْأَرْضِ خَلِيفَةً﴾

“Indeed, I will make upon the earth a successive authority”

[Surah Al-Baqarah: 30].

However, The Trial Paradise was like a practice of living on the Earth. Allah ﷻ had made in it the *Halal and Haram* or the lawful and unlawful and the commands and prohibitions. So Allah ﷻ says:

﴿وَقُلْنَا يَا آدَمُ اسْكُنْ أَنْتَ وَزَوْجُكَ الْجَنَّةَ وَكُلَا مِنْهَا رَغَدًا حَيْثُ شِئْتُمَا وَلَا تَقْرَبَا هَذِهِ الشَّجَرَةَ﴾

“And We said, ‘O Adam, dwell, you and your wife, in Paradise and eat therefrom in [ease and] abundance from wherever you will. But do not approach this tree”.

In this verse, the word *Uskun* which means ‘live!’ is a *command*, the word *Kula* which means ‘eat!’ is a *command concerning the lawful* and the word *Wa la taqrabaa* which means ‘do not approach!’ is a *prohibition concerning the*

unlawful. Therefore, the system that they will descend to Earth with is a Divine system which contains: ‘do’ and ‘do not do’ and ‘lawful and unlawful’.

Why did Allah ﷻ say ﴿أَنْتَ وَزَوْجُكَ﴾ “*you and your wife*”

and not *zawjatuka*? Why did He not insert the feminine suffix *Ta*’?

This is because, Islam equalizes between the two spouses. She is his *Zawj* or wife and he is her *Zawj* or husband. This is also to inform every person who claims that Islam oppresses the woman and does not give her the due rights that every one of the Divine religions which are culminated in Islam put the man and woman on the same level. They are equal in commandments and responsibilities. Allah has said,

﴿مَنْ عَمِلَ صَالِحًا مِنْ ذَكَرٍ أَوْ أَنْثَىٰ وَهُوَ مُؤْمِنٌ فَلَنُحْيِيَنَّهٗ حَيَاةً طَيِّبَةً﴾

“Whoever does righteousness, whether male or female, while he is a believer - We will surely cause him to live a good life”

[Surah An-Nahl: 97].

In the Arabic Language, the word *Zawj* means ‘the counterpart or parallel’. We can see this usage in the verse:

﴿ادْخُلُوا الْجَنَّةَ أَنْتُمْ وَأَزْوَاجُكُمْ تُحْبَرُونَ﴾

“Enter Paradise, you and your kinds, delighted.” [Surah Az-Zukhruf: 70].

This shows equality and the rights of women in Islam.

However, for those who call to the *Jihadun Nikah* which means Sexual Jihad, or any other similar terminologies which are not connected whatsoever to the religion, *Akhlaq* or Islamic law, we have to decide on their status through the Holy Qur’an. This is because, we do not hold on to anything except to the Holy Qur’an and do not tread except behind the Holy Qur’an.

In the Trial Paradise, Allah ﷻ made the lawful extremely wide, as he says:

﴿ وَكُلَا مِنْهَا رَعْدًا حَيْثُ شِئْتُمَا ﴾ *“and eat therefrom in [ease and] abundance from wherever you will”* and made the unlawful limited, as he says: ﴿ وَلَا تَقْرَبَا هَذِهِ الشَّجَرَةَ ﴾

“But do not approach this tree”.

This is a refutation for those who say: “You Muslims make the goods of this world and its pleasures unlawful for yourselves!” We say to them in refutation: “The lawful in our religion is extremely wide. Allah ﷻ has made permissible for us all drinks, such as water, milk, juices and many others. On the contrary, He has made unlawful for us only one drink which is wine (it is what has changed from juices). He has also made permissible for us all food, such as the meat of cattle, chicken and fish and vegetables and many others. On the contrary, he has made unlawful only carrion and pork. Thus, everything has been made lawful but the unlawful is only specific to one thing or a small part of something.”

In The Trial Paradise, there had been only one prohibition, which was one tree: ﴿ وَلَا تَقْرَبَا هَذِهِ الشَّجَرَةَ ﴾ *“But do not approach this tree”.*

﴿ وَلَا تَقْرَبَا هَذِهِ الشَّجَرَةَ فَتَكُونَا مِنَ الظَّالِمِينَ ﴾

“But do not approach this tree, lest you be among the wrongdoers.”: Oppression is normally done by one person towards another. This is with the exception of the person who grants to himself the immediate desires of this worldly life whilst denying himself of the delayed blessings of the hereafter which are permanent and lasting, for he has oppressed himself.

The one who seizes for himself the immediate desires such as drinking wine, fornicating, stealing, gambling, backbiting or lying, has secured for himself a temporary enjoyment. However, at the same time, he is oppressing himself as he is denying himself of the everlasting and permanent blessings in paradise. This will have bad consequences on him, his family, offspring, country and society. This is the one who oppresses himself, ﴿ فَتَكُونَا مِنَ الظَّالِمِينَ ﴾ *“lest you be among the wrongdoers.”.*

Thus, the one who goes against Allah’s commands has oppressed himself. This is because, Allah ﷻ is The Creator of Mankind and He knows what is good for him. Similar, the manufacturer of a product will provide along with it an instruction manual to direct users to the correct usage, Allah ﷻ has laid down for human beings the principles which will be good for him and make him happy.

Verse 36:

﴿فَأَزَلَّهُمَا الشَّيْطَانُ عَنْهَا فَأَخْرَجَهُمَا مِمَّا كَانَا فِيهِ وَقُلْنَا اهْبِطُوا بَعْضُكُمْ لِبَعْضٍ عَدُوٌّ وَلَكُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ مُسْتَقَرٌّ وَمَتَاعٌ إِلَىٰ حِينٍ﴾

“But Satan caused them to slip out of it and removed them from that [condition] in which they had been. And We said, ‘Go down, [all of you], as enemies to one another, and you will have upon the earth a place of settlement and provision for a time.’”

Allah ﷻ gave Adam ﷺ and his wife a trial period in The Trial Paradise. However, both of them had succumbed to their weakness and ate from the forbidden tree. The result of this disobedience was that Allah ﷻ said to them: ﴿اهْبِطُوا﴾ *“Go down”*.

This disobedience is the direct cause for their descending. In the Trial Paradise, happenings are linked to their visual causes. On the other hand, the Knowledge of Allah ﷻ is Eternal and Disclosing, thus, Allah ﷻ had known that Satan would do so and so and that Adam ﷻ would disobey due to his weakness.

Therefore, did Adam ﷺ disobey according to Allah’s ﷻ Divine Will, or was it against Allah’s ﷻ Divine Will?

The answer: He disobeyed according to Allah’s ﷻ Divine Will. This is because, Allah ﷻ Willed for him to be given a choice and to hold him

accountable for it. Hence, he is not held accountable for the Will of Allah ﷻ but for the choice he made. Allah says:

﴿وَهَدَيْنَاهُ النَّجْدَيْنِ﴾

“And have shown him the two ways?” [Surah Al-Balad: 10] and

﴿إِنَّا هَدَيْنَاهُ السَّبِيلَ إِمَّا شَاكِرًا وَإِمَّا كَفُورًا﴾

“Indeed, We guided him to the way, be he grateful or be he ungrateful.”

[Surah Al-Insan: 3].

﴿فَأَزَلَّهُمَا الشَّيْطَانُ﴾ *“But Satan caused them to slip”*: The word *Zalla* means stumbling and slipping. Satan said to both of them as Allah ﷻ tells us:

﴿مَا نَهَاكُمَا رَبُّكُمَا عَنْ هَذِهِ الشَّجَرَةِ إِلَّا أَنْ تَكُونَا مَلَكَيْنِ أَوْ تَكُونَا مِنَ الْخَالِدِينَ﴾

“Your Lord did not forbid you this tree except that you become angels or become of the immortal.” [Surah Al-A'raaf: 20].

Iblis said to them: “If you eat from this tree, you will attain possession that never declines and also become immortal”.

These are the aspirations of human beings in this worldly life. They wish to be immortal and never to leave the world and they wish for possessions including wealth and other things which will never perish.

If we were to check all of the people on Earth, we would find that they have the desire for possessions and immortality in this life. Every human being works as if he will remain forever in this world and he works to remain forever. This is the point which Iblis uses to reach Adam عليه السلام. He uses two factors: Possessions that will never decline and life that will never perish. This is the nature of the sons of Adam عليهم السلام, as Allah ﷻ says:

﴿كَلَّا بَلْ تُحِبُّونَ الْعَاجِلَةَ (٢٠) وَتَذُرُونَ الْآخِرَةَ (٢١)﴾

“No! But you love the immediate, And leave the Hereafter.”

[Surah Al-Qiyamah: 20-21].

This is the manner Iblis caused Adam ﷺ and his wife to slip and thus brought about a loss of their former state. In Surah Taha, Allah ﷻ says:

﴿فَوَسْوَسَ إِلَيْهِ الشَّيْطَانُ قَالَ يَا آدَمُ هَلْ أَدُلُّكَ عَلَى شَجَرَةِ الْخُلْدِ وَمُلْكٍ لَّا يَبْلَىٰ﴾

“Then Satan whispered to him; he said, ‘O Adam, shall I direct you to the tree of eternity and possession that will not deteriorate?’” [Surah Taha: 120].

So, Iblis showed Adam ﷺ the forbidden tree and said: “Oh Adam, eat from this tree and you will remain forever and not die. You will also attain possessions that will never decline. This demonstrates the human being’s strong desire for this worldly life.

Adam ﷺ had become weak due to this longing that is ‘to remain forever in his Paradise,’ thus he disobeyed Allah ﷻ. This is due to weakness of willpower and weakness of memory. Allah ﷻ says:

﴿وَلَقَدْ عَاهَدْنَا إِلَىٰ آدَمَ مِن قَبْلُ فَنَسِيَ وَلَمْ نَجِدْ لَهُ عَزْمًا﴾

“And We had already taken a promise from Adam before, but he forgot; and We found not in him determination.” [Surah Taha: 115].

This shows that Adam ﷺ forgot what Allah ﷻ had said to him:

﴿وَلَا تَقْرَبَا هَذِهِ الشَّجَرَةَ فَتَكُونَا مِنَ الظَّالِمِينَ﴾

“But do not approach this tree, lest you be among the wrongdoers.”

[Surah Al-Baqarah: 35].

Allah ﷻ has made **repentance** the cure for disobedience. However, the disobedience that is caused by arrogance is considered disbelief in Allah ﷻ .

This is the difference between the disobedience of Adam ﷺ and the disobedience of Iblis who:

﴿أَبَىٰ وَاسْتَكْبَرَ وَكَانَ مِنَ الْكَافِرِينَ﴾

“He refused and was arrogant and became of the disbelievers.”

[Surah Al-Baqarah: 34].

Because Allah ﷻ had damned Iblis and expelled him from His Mercy, he wanted to mislead Adam ﷺ and his wife; tempting them by adorning disobedience for them so that they would deviate from obedience.

﴿فَأَخْرَجَهُمَا مِمَّا كَانَا فِيهِ﴾ *“and removed them from that [condition] in which they had been.”* :Iblis removed them from bliss and the comforts of living and residence. This is because, before this, Allah ﷻ says:

﴿اسْكُنْ أَنْتَ وَزَوْجُكَ﴾ *“dwell, you and your wife,”*.

The word *Uskun* is an imperative which has the word *As-Sakan* as its noun. This noun contains the meanings of calmness, tranquility and rest.

In another surah, Allah ﷻ says:

﴿وَمِنْ آيَاتِهِ أَنْ خَلَقَ لَكُمْ مِنْ أَنْفُسِكُمْ أَزْوَاجًا لِتَسْكُنُوا إِلَيْهَا وَجَعَلَ بَيْنَكُمْ مَوَدَّةً وَرَحْمَةً إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَاتٍ لِقَوْمٍ
يَتَفَكَّرُونَ﴾

“And of His signs is that He created for you from yourselves mates that you may find tranquillity in them; and He placed between you affection and mercy. Indeed in that are signs for a people who give thought.” [Surah Ar-Ruum: 21].

Here, we can see that the Holy Qur’an speaks of marriage with the highest description. It also raises the value of women on the face of the Earth and honours the marital life.

All these blessings existed in The Trial Paradise. However, when there was seduction and disobedience, they were removed from their former state.

﴿وَقُلْنَا اهْبِطُوا بَعْضُكُمْ لِبَعْضٍ عَدُوٌّ وَلَكُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ مُسْتَقَرٌّ وَمَتَاعٌ إِلَىٰ حِينٍ﴾

“And We said, ‘Go down, [all of you], as enemies to one another, and you will have upon the earth a place of settlement and provision for a time.’”

The Divine Order to descend was issued. It was addressed to Adam ﷺ, Eve and Iblis. Therefore, the descending was for everyone, as all of the children of Adam carry a part of Adam and they were all present in him. Adam ﷺ got married to Eve and she gave birth to children. Her children in turn got married and gave birth to children, and so on and so forth.

From here, we can derive that the offspring of Adam ﷺ were present in him and participated in the descending.

During the period of revelation, the knowledge of genes, embryology and the stages of the development of the foetus had not yet been discovered. With the discovery of these scientific concepts, the verse regarding the natural covenant that human beings were born with becomes clear. This is because, Adam ﷺ believed via the visual faith, as he was formerly in The Trial Paradise where he received orders directly from Allah ﷻ before he became a Prophet. And as was mentioned before, the word *Kufr* means the 'concealing of faith'. This shows that faith existed before disbelief came about.

In Surah Taha, Allah ﷻ says:

﴿قَالَ اهْبِثَا مِنْهَا جَمِيعًا﴾

[Allah] said, "Descend from Paradise – all" [Surah Taha: 123].

The dual form in the word *Ihbitha* is used to address two parties. They are:

The first party: Adam ﷺ and Eve.

The second party: Iblis.

Hence, all of them descended.

The jinn are connected to Iblis and mankind is connected to Adam ﷺ.

Verse 37:

﴿فَتَلَقَّى آدَمُ مِنْ رَبِّهِ كَلِمَاتٍ فَتَابَ عَلَيْهِ إِنَّهُ هُوَ التَّوَّابُ الرَّحِيمُ﴾

“Then Adam received from his Lord [some] words, and He accepted his repentance. Indeed, it is He who is the Accepting of repentance, the Merciful.”

Allah ﷻ opened for Adam ﷺ the doors of repentance and legislated for him and his offspring the method of repentance after sinning as a form of reformative legislation.

As long as the human being is given a choice and possesses desires, he will inevitably err and follow his desires. He might lie, backbite, steal, take bribes, take inheritance unlawfully or even kill. If Allah ﷻ had not opened for His servants the door of repentance, they and their whole community will become miserable. The believer will be miserable due to the disobedience of the disbeliever, wrong-doer and all those who stray from the directives set by Allah ﷻ.

Therefore, the believer is required to live in the midst of the *Halal* (lawful) and have in him the fragrance from the beauty and radiance of the soul which diffuses in the universe. For he represents truthfulness, faith and *Akhlaq*. He does not backbite, kill, nor commit other bad acts. This is the true *Mu'min* and the true *Muslim*. Rasulullah ﷺ said:

((الْمُسْلِمُ مَنْ سَلِمَ الْمُسْلِمُونَ مِنْ لِسَانِهِ، وَيَدِهِ، وَالْمُهَاجِرُ مَنْ هَجَرَ مَا نَهَى اللَّهُ عَنْهُ))

“A Muslim is the one from whose tongue and hands the Muslims are safe; and a Muhajir (Emigrant) is the one who refrains from what Allah has forbidden.”⁵²

⁵² Sahih al-Bukhari: The Book of Belief, Chapter: A Muslim is the one who avoids harming Muslims with his tongue and hands, Hadith no. 10.

((الْمُسْلِمُ مَنْ سَلِمَ النَّاسُ مِنْ لِسَانِهِ وَيَدَيْهِ، وَالْمُؤْمِنُ مَنْ أَمِنَهُ النَّاسُ عَلَى دِمَائِهِمْ وَأَمْوَالِهِمْ))

“A Muslim is the one from whose tongue and hands the human beings are safe; and a Mu’min is the one whom the people feel safe with (to entrust) their selves and wealth.”⁵³

Therefore, the *Mu’min* or believer has to be the fragrance of beauty which diffuses into the universe. He is cheerful, calm-hearted and contented with Allah’s ﷻ Decree. He harmonizes with the universe through the *Tasbeeh* which means ‘the glorification of Allah ﷻ and with himself through peace with his God and peace with his fellow human beings.

The true believer is not a murderer nor a criminal. He does not accuse others of disbelief nor does he bear grudges against them. He is also not sectarian, hateful, malicious or invidious.

Allah ﷻ has established the door of repentance to enable people to abstain from wrong-doing and return to the right path. There is no reformative call similar to the law of repentance. Due to this, Allah says:

﴿فَتَلَقَىٰ آدَمُ مِنْ رَبِّهِ كَلِمَاتٍ فَتَابَ عَلَيْهِ﴾ *“Then Adam received from his Lord [some] words, and He accepted his repentance.”*

The words that Adam ﷺ received were:

﴿رَبَّنَا ظَلَمْنَا أَنفُسَنَا وَإِن لَّمْ تَغْفِرْ لَنَا وَتَرْحَمْنَا لَنَكُونَنَّ مِنَ الْخَاسِرِينَ﴾

“Our Lord, we have wronged ourselves, and if You do not forgive us and have mercy upon us, we will surely be among the losers.” [Surah Al-A’raaf: 23].

Here, Allah ﷻ taught him the law of repentance and the acknowledgment of sins. So, he was sent down to Earth with the directives that showed the lawful and the unlawful and also the law of repentance for those who had done wrong.

⁵³ Sunan an-Nasai as-Sughra: The Book of Belief and its Signs, Chapter: The Description of The Believer, Hadith no. 4995.

Thus, repentance is actually the call to abstain from wrong-doing, as Allah ﷻ says: *إِنَّهُ هُوَ التَّوَّابُ الرَّحِيمُ*

“Indeed, it is He who is the Accepting of repentance, the Merciful.”.

Here, the word *At-Tawwab* which means The Most Forgiving, is in the intense form. So, Allah ﷻ gives repentance for a big number of sins and accepts the repentance of a large number of people; in fact, he accepts repentance from everyone who seeks repentance.

He even accepts the repeated repentance from the individual who sins repeatedly.

Sayyidah Aishah ؓ narrated:

Habib Bin Al-Harith came to the Prophet ﷺ and said, “Oh Rasulallah, I am a man who commits too many sins.” The Prophet said, *“Repent to Allah, Oh Habib.”* He said, “Oh Rasulallah, I repent, then I return (to committing sins).” The Prophet said, *“Every time you sin, repent.”* He said, “If it is that way, my sins will multiply.” The Prophet ﷺ said, *“Allah’s Forgiveness is greater than your sins, Oh Habib Bin Al-Harith!”*⁵⁴

Therefore, no one can act as an executioner or a judge on people and accuse them of disbelief, as Allah’s ﷻ Mercy encompasses all things.

Abdullah Bin Abbas ؓ narrated that the Prophet ﷺ dispatched someone to Wahshi, the killer of Hamzah ؓ (uncle of the Prophet ﷺ), to invite him to Islam. Wahshi replied, “Oh Muhammad, how can you call me to your religion, whereas you profess that whoever kills, associates others with Allah ﷻ and fornicates shall face punishment. He shall have his suffering doubled on the Day of

⁵⁴ Majma’ az-Zawaid wa Manba’ al-Fawaid: Volume 10, No: 17531. The word مقاراف is an exaggerated form (صيغة مُبالغة) of قارف. Therefore, when we say: قارف الخطيئة, it means: The one who does a mixture of various sins.

Judgement and he will abide forever in disgrace. I have committed all those sins, so is there way out for me?” So Allah ﷻ revealed this verse:

﴿إِلَّا مَنْ تَابَ وَآمَنَ وَعَمِلَ عَمَلًا صَالِحًا فَأُولَئِكَ يُبَدِّلُ اللَّهُ سَيِّئَاتِهِمْ حَسَنَاتٍ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ غَفُورًا رَحِيمًا﴾

“Except for those who repent, believe and do righteous work. For them Allah will replace their evil deeds with good. And ever is Allah Forgiving and Merciful.” [Surah Al-Furqan: 70].

Wahshi then said, “Oh Muhammad, this is a heavy condition: (Except for those who repent and believe and do good deeds.). Perhaps I might not be able to fulfil it.” So Allah ﷻ revealed:

﴿إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَغْفِرُ أَنْ يُشْرَكَ بِهِ وَيَغْفِرُ مَا دُونَ ذَلِكَ لِمَنْ يَشَاءُ﴾

“Indeed, Allah does not forgive association with Him, but He forgives what is less than that for whom He wills.” [Surah An-Nisaa’: 48].

Wahshi then said, “I see (in the verse that Allah forgives) whom He Wills. I do not know whether I will be forgiven or not. Is there any other (verse)?” So Allah ﷻ revealed:

﴿قُلْ يَا عِبَادِيَ الَّذِينَ أَسْرَفُوا عَلَىٰ أَنفُسِهِمْ لَا تَقْنَطُوا مِن رَّحْمَةِ اللَّهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَغْفِرُ الذُّنُوبَ جَمِيعًا
إِنَّهُ هُوَ الْغَفُورُ الرَّحِيمُ﴾

“Say, ‘O My servants who have transgressed against themselves [by sinning], do not despair of the mercy of Allah . Indeed, Allah forgives all sins. Indeed, it is He who is the Forgiving, the Merciful.’” [Surah Az-Zumar: 53].

Wahshi said, “This is it.” He then came and embraced Islam. People then queried, “Oh Rasulullah, even if we do what Wahshi did?” He replied, *“It is general for all Muslims.”*⁵⁵

⁵⁵ Al-Mu’jam al-Kabeer by Imam at-Thobrani: Chapter *Ain* (العين), The collection of Hadiths of Abdullah Ibn Abbas, Hadith no. 11480.

Therefore, Islam is a religion of repentance, mercy and forgiveness.

Allah ﷻ had taught Adam ؑ the laws of repentance so that human beings would abstain from repeating their mistakes.

The sensible person should pay attention to the issue of repentance. He should fix a firm resolution to not repeat committing the sin after repentance. If the sin that he has committed is connected to the rights of other people, he has to return the rights to their owners before repenting. For example, a thief's repentance does not suffice unless he returns the goods he stole, which are now in his possession, to their rightful owners. Allah The Most High can never be fooled. So, the rights have to be returned together with seeking forgiveness from Allah ﷻ and repenting. In addition to that, a firm resolution to never returning to committing the sin should be fixed. Upon the fulfilment of all these, the repentance is considered *Nasuh* or sincere.

Allah ﷻ says:

﴿وَهُوَ الَّذِي يَقْبَلُ التَّوْبَةَ عَنْ عِبَادِهِ﴾

“And it is He who accepts repentance from his servants”

[Surah Asy-Syuraa: 25].

Here, Allah ﷻ uses the preposition ‘An’ which means ‘of’ instead of *Min* which means ‘from’. This means that Allah ﷻ also accepts the repentance of His servants who have not come to repent. It is as if He is calling them to abstain from the wrong that they are committing and is encouraging them to repent and not repeat committing the sin. For He ﷻ accepts the repentance from His servants and the repentance of His servants. He also calls those, who have not yet repented, to repentance. This is similar to the narration related by An-Nu'man Bin Bashir ؓ. He reported that he heard Rasulullah ﷺ say:

((الْحَلَالُ بَيِّنٌ، وَالْحَرَامُ بَيِّنٌ، وَبَيْنَهُمَا مُشَبَّهَاتٌ لَا يَعْلَمُهَا كَثِيرٌ مِّنَ النَّاسِ، فَمَن اتَّقَى الْمَشَبَّهَاتِ اسْتَبْرَأَ لِدِينِهِ وَعَرْضِهِ، وَمَنْ وَقَعَ فِي الشُّبُهَاتِ: كَرَاعٍ يَزْعَى حَوْلَ الْجَمَى، أَوْ شَاكَ أَنْ يُوَاقِعُهُ، أَلَا وَإِنَّ لِكُلِّ مَلِكٍ جَمَى، أَلَا وَإِنَّ جَمَى اللَّهِ فِي أَرْضِهِ مَحَارِمُهُ))

“What is lawful is clear and what is unlawful is clear, but between them are certain doubtful things which many people do not know. So, he who guards against doubtful things keeps his religion and his honour blameless. But he who falls into doubtful things falls into that which is unlawful, just as a shepherd who grazes his cattle in the vicinity of a pasture declared prohibited (by the king); he is likely to stray into the pasture. Mind you, every king has a protected pasture and Allah's involved limits is that which He has declared unlawful on His Earth.”⁵⁶

When Allah ﷻ says: “Do not approach or go near this tree, or do not fornicate, or do not drink wine.....”, He is actually forbidding you to come near so that the prohibition does not become close to you, such that you do not fall into the vicinity declared prohibited. Regarding the prohibition of wine, Allah ﷻ says:

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِنَّمَا الْخَمْرُ وَالْمَيْسِرُ وَالْأَنْصَابُ وَالْأَزْلَامُ رَجْسٌ مِّنْ عَمَلِ الشَّيْطَانِ فَاجْتَنِبُوهُ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ﴾

“O you who have believed, indeed, intoxicants, gambling, [sacrificing on] stone alters [to other than Allah], and divining arrows are but defilement from the work of Satan, so avoid it that you may be successful.”

[Surah Al-Ma'idah: 90].

He did not only prohibit it, He also prohibited coming near to it. and sitting in a place where alcohol is circulated. And the prohibition in the latter is stronger.

⁵⁶ Sahih al-Bukhari: The Book of Belief, The superiority of that person who leaves all doubtful (unclear) things for the sake of his religion, Hadith no. 52

Similarly, Allah ﷻ says:

﴿وَلَا تَقْرُبُوا الزَّوْجَىٰ إِنَّهُ كَانَ فَاحِشَةً وَسَاءَ سَبِيلًا﴾

“And do not approach unlawful sexual intercourse. Indeed, it is ever an immorality and is evil as a way.” [Surah Al-Isra’: 32].

This means, “Do not approach the premises of fornication so that you do not fall into it.” Thus Allah ﷻ forbids, everything that becomes a means to getting close to it, such as free-looking, and many other things.

That is the way Allah ﷻ had said it to Adam عليه السلام and Eve too in The Trial Paradise:

﴿وَلَا تَقْرَبَا هَذِهِ الشَّجَرَةَ﴾

“but do not approach this tree” [Surah Al-A’raaf: 19].

That is, they were not to look at it, go near to it, sit beneath it or even look at its fruits!”

As a summary, repentance is a legislation put in place to help man in abstaining from wrong-doing. It is a reformative call. This is because, when we lay the foundation of repentance in our society and often talk about it, we open the doors of hope for the stragglng criminal so that he does not go to extremes of wrong-doing. His continuance in crime poses a danger towards the community, and his repentance brings benefit to the whole community.

Verse 38:

﴿فَلَنَّا أَهْبَطُوا مِنْهَا جَمِيعًا فِيمَا يَأْتِيَنَّكُمْ مِنِّي هُدًى فَمَنْ تَبِعَ هُدَايَ فَلَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ﴾

“We said, ‘Go down from it, all of you. And when guidance comes to you from Me, whoever follows My guidance - there will be no fear concerning them, nor will they grieve.’”

Allah ﷻ promised to grant them guidance, which is the showing of the straight path and the guidance to the path of the Prophets and Messengers.

Although Allah ﷻ says: ﴿أَهْبِطُوا﴾ “Go down”, He also reassured them by saying: ﴿فَمَنْ تَبِعَ هُدَايَ فَلَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ﴾

“whoever follows My guidance - there will be no fear concerning them, nor will they grieve.”. This means that their descending to the Earth was not the end of them. For whoever follows Allah’s guidance while on Earth, will have no fear, nor will they grieve.

The difference between fear and grief: Fear is towards something which will happen, while grief is towards something that has already happened.

Verse 39:

﴿وَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَكَذَّبُوا بِآيَاتِنَا أُولَٰئِكَ أَصْحَابُ النَّارِ هُمْ فِيهَا خَالِدُونَ﴾

“And those who disbelieve and deny Our signs - those will be companions of the Fire; they will abide therein eternally.”

There will be two groups in the Hereafter:

A group in Paradise: They are the guided ones who followed the guidance of the Prophets and Messengers and all that they brought with them in the Divine Messages.

A group in the Hellfire: They are the ones who disbelieved in and rejected the signs of Allah ﷻ.

Therefore, there will be rewards and punishments based on what has been revealed of the commands and prohibitions.

In the human-made laws, there must be deterrents such as punishments to stop people from committing things which are prohibited. For example, the

pilferer is jailed, the one who is late for work gets a part of his salary cut and the one who is always absent from work is sacked.

In the same way, Allah ﷻ has laid down punishments for the violation of His laws. And as long as there are punishments, there will inevitably be: “Do this!” and “Do not do that!” Thus, Allah ﷻ says:

﴿وَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَكَذَّبُوا بِآيَاتِنَا أُولَٰئِكَ أَصْحَابُ النَّارِ هُمْ فِيهَا خَالِدُونَ﴾

“And those who disbelieve and deny Our signs - those will be companions of the Fire; they will abide therein eternally.”

The word “ayah” which means a “sign” implies a miracle. Every single verse in the Holy Qur’an is also a miracle.

There are “ayah” which are scientific signs and also “ayat” which are signs that lead to Allah ﷻ, such as in this verse:

﴿إِنَّ فِي خَلْقِ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَاخْتِلَافِ اللَّيْلِ وَالنَّهَارِ لآيَاتٍ لِّأُولِي الْأَلْبَابِ﴾

“Indeed, in the creation of the heavens and the earth and the alternation of the night and the day are signs for those of understanding.”

[Surah Ali ‘Imran: 190].

Therefore, the word “ayah” is used for things which are wondrous. This is as Allah ﷻ tells us regarding what went on between Musa عليه السلام and Pharaoh:

﴿قَالَ إِنْ كُنْتَ جئتَ بِآيَةٍ فَأْتِ بِهَا إِنْ كُنْتَ مِنَ الصَّادِقِينَ (١٠٦) فَأَلْقَى عَصَاهُ فَإِذَا هِيَ ثُعْبَانٌ مُّبِينٌ (١٠٧) وَنَزَعَ يَدَهُ فَإِذَا هِيَ بَيْضَاءُ لِلنَّاظِرِينَ (١٠٨)﴾

[Pharaoh] said, "If you have come with a sign, then bring it forth, if you should be of the truthful." So Moses threw his staff, and suddenly it was a serpent, manifest. And he drew out his hand; thereupon it was white [with radiance] for the observers.” [Surah Al-A’raaf: 106-108].

The word *Aayah* is also used to mean the verses of the Holy Qur’an.

Allah ﷻ has warned those who reject His signs/verses and do not follow his directives that they shall be the inhabitants of the fire, where they will abide forever.

Verse 40:

﴿يَا بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ اذْكُرُوا نِعْمَتِيَ الَّتِي أَنْعَمْتُ عَلَيْكُمْ وَأَوْفُوا بِعَهْدِي أُوفِ بِعَهْدِكُمْ وَإِيَّايَ فَارْهَبُون﴾

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

Allah ﷻ has informed us that he sent Adam ﷺ and Eve down to Earth from The Trial Paradise. In that Paradise, He had given them a practical test through the tree that He had forbidden them from. However, Satan had caused them to slip and removed them from the former condition that they had been in. Allah ﷻ went on to explain to them that Iblis will be an enemy for them and for their children. He also assured them that He would send to them messages to guide and show them the straight path which would lead them to the Paradise that would be their eternal abode.

Suddenly, after this scene (Adam ﷺ and Eve and their descending to the Earth), the verses switch directly to addressing the Children of Israel, overtaking in mention of all the Messengers and nations that preceded them.

This is of the miraculous nature and greatness of the Holy Qur’an. Allah ﷻ has Willed to give the people of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ the best lesson through the succession of messages.

In addition to this, the enmity that they would face from the Children of Israel would be similar to the enmity of Iblis towards the children of Adam.

The stories of the Children of Israel are distributed in many places in the Holy Qur'an due to the grave lessons found in them. In their stories, we will find injustice, corruption, shedding of blood, love of wealth, taking usury, spite, distortion of words from their original places, a variety of diseases and ingratitude.

Therefore, Allah ﷻ Willed to give these lessons and reminders to the people of Muhammad ﷺ through the examples shown by this group of people.

From this nation, the nation of the *Bani* Israel, enmity and corruption will surface. They had built their racist state disguising under the name of Ya'qub ﷺ the Messenger of Allah ﷻ, whereas he is free of them. Thus, they named their state (Israel). This state has spread its spite and poison onto the Muslims and occupied Masjidil Aqsa, the first Qiblah or direction of prayer and the third of the noble sacred places in Islam.

In our Islamic history, since the Battle of Khaibar and until today, we can see their fingerprints behind every affliction which befalls our people. We can also see their hands behind all the happenings that we face. They are the disease on the face of this earth.

Therefore, when Allah ﷻ wanted to provide us with an example regarding the topic of revealed messages, He used the *Bani* Israel as the example. Who then, are the children of Israel? And why does Allah ﷻ say:

﴿يَا بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ﴾ *“O Children of Israel”*?

Israel is actually the Prophet Ya'qub ﷺ. The meaning of his name in Hebrew is 'the chosen servant of God, as Isra means 'the chosen servant', and Eil means 'The God'.

Ya'qub ﷺ is the son of Ishaq ﷺ who was the son of Ibrahim ﷺ as Prophet Ibrahim ﷺ has been granted two sons. They are:

1) Ismail عليه السلام: Of his descendants is the Prophet of the Arabs, Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم
And

2) Ishaq عليه السلام . Ya'qub عليه السلام is his son. And of his descendants are Yusuf عليه السلام
and his brothers. And of their descendants are Musa, Harun, Dawud, Sulaiman,
Isa, Zakariyya and Yahya عليه السلام

Therefore, why did Allah address them as:

﴿يَا بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ﴾ “O Children of Israel”?

Whereas when He is addressing all of Mankind, He says:

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ﴾ “O mankind”

and when he wants to assign a responsibility to the believers, He says:

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا﴾ “Oh you believe”?

When Allah ﷻ addresses us as: *﴿يَا بَنِي آدَمَ﴾* “O children of Adam”, He is reminding us of the repentance of Adam عليه السلام and His favour upon him in granting the repentance. Thereafter, He has made the door of repentance open for us, so that the communities will become well-established and the lives will improve. This is because, if the door of repentance in front of a criminal is shut, he will go to extremes in his crime and even commits more crimes. Thus, Allah ﷻ legislates repentance in order to enable His Servants to return to the path of truth and goodness.

Similarly, when Allah ﷻ says: *﴿يَا بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ﴾* “O Children of Israel”, He is actually reminding the Israelites of the counsel their father Ya'qub عليه السلام had left for his sons when he was about to leave the world. He had reminded them to hold on to the correct religion:

﴿أَمْ كُنْتُمْ شُهَدَاءَ إِذْ حَضَرَ يَعْقُوبَ الْمَوْتُ إِذْ قَالَ لِبَنِيهِ مَا تَعْبُدُونَ مِنْ بَعْدِي قَالُوا نَعْبُدُ إِلَهَكَ وَإِلَهَ آبَائِكَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَإِسْمَاعِيلَ وَإِسْحَاقَ إِلَهًا وَاحِدًا وَنَحْنُ لَهُ مُسْلِمُونَ﴾

“Or were you witnesses when death approached Ya’qub, when he said to his sons, ‘What will you worship after me?’ They said, ‘We will worship your God and the God of your fathers, Ibrahim and Isma’il and Ishaq - one God. And we are Muslims [in submission] to Him.” [Surah Al-Baqarah: 133].

The sincerest counsel a person leaves is when he is lying on his death bed. Here, he will inevitably share the summary of his experiences. He will also be sincere and truthful as he would soon be going towards his God and the hereafter. Hence, he will not utter except the most sincere, well-spoken and accurate of expressions.

The counsel was for them to hold on tightly to Islam:

﴿يَا بَنِيَّ إِنَّ اللَّهَ اصْطَفَىٰ لَكُمُ الدِّينَ فَلَا تَمُوتُنَّ إِلَّا وَأَنتُمْ مُسْلِمُونَ﴾

“O my sons, indeed Allah has chosen for you this religion, so do not die except while you are Muslims.” [Surah Al-Baqarah: 132].

Through addressing them as the sons of Israel, Allah ﷻ wanted to remind them of this great Prophet, the father of Prophet Yusuf عليه السلام. This is because, they had made him as a slogan for their racist, terrorist and criminal state, and as a cover for their crimes and corruption. This is similar to what the terrorists, who use Islam as a slogan for themselves, are doing. Islam is free from them, and they are actually anti-Islam, as Islam is a religion of reason and moderation, as Allah ﷻ says:

﴿وَكَذَٰلِكَ جَعَلْنَاكُمْ أُمَّةً وَسَطًا﴾

“And thus we have made you a just community” [Surah Al-Baqarah: 143].

These extremists are enemies of Islam, just as the Jews today, in their extremism, racism and enmity, are enemies of Ya’qub عليه السلام. So, Allah ﷻ addresses them in this way to remind them of their fore-father Ya’qub عليه السلام, and also to remind them of His favours upon them.

The Divine Speech addressing this people are in accordance to what they are inclined to and like. The children of Israel is a materialist nation which loves the blessing of things. Therefore, Allah ﷻ reminds them of their blessings before He reminds them of The One who bestows these blessings. He says:

﴿يَا بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ اذْكُرُوا نِعْمَتِيَ الَّتِي أَنْعَمْتُ عَلَيْكُمْ﴾ *“O Children of Israel, remember My favor which I have bestowed upon you”.*

On the contrary, when He addresses us, he reminds us of The One who bestows on us our blessings first before He reminds us of the blessings themselves. He says:

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اذْكُرُوا اللَّهَ ذِكْرًا كَثِيرًا﴾

“O you who have believed, remember Allah with much remembrance”

[Surah Al-Ahzab: 41].

There is a great difference between remembering blessings because you are attached to them, and remembering The One who bestows them because you are attached to Him. For the remembrance of Allah ﷻ is a medicine, while remembrance of other than Him is a disease. There is a Hadith Qudsi as narrated by Muslim in which the Prophet ﷺ said:

((إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ يَقُولُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ: يَا ابْنَ آدَمَ، مَرَضْتُ فَلَمْ تَعُدْنِي، قَالَ: يَا رَبِّ، كَيْفَ أَعُودُكَ وَأَنْتَ رَبُّ الْعَالَمِينَ؟ قَالَ: أَمَا عَلِمْتَ أَنَّ عَبْدِي فُلَانًا مَرَضَ فَلَمْ تَعُدْهُ؟ أَمَا عَلِمْتَ أَنَّكَ لَوْ عُدْتَهُ لَوَجَدْتَنِي عِنْدَهُ...))

“Verily, Allah, the Exalted, and Glorious will say on the Day of Resurrection: ‘Oh son of Adam, I was ill but you did not visit Me.’ He would say: ‘Oh my God, how could I visit you and You are the God of the worlds?’ Thereupon He would say: ‘Did you not know that such and such a slave of Mine was ill but you did

not visit him? Did you not realize that if you had visited him, you would have found Me with him?”⁵⁷.

The purpose of this Hadith is to amuse the sick person. This is because, the heart of the one who has lost the blessing of health is softened, thus he is in constant remembrance of Allah ﷻ. We are required to be attached to The One who bestows the blessings, Allah ﷻ, and remember Him before we remember the blessings.

What is a Ni'mah or blessing?

The word Ni'mah is in the singular form. Its plural form is Ni'am. It is sometimes used in the Holy Qur'an in its singular form, but refers to something which conceals a great number of blessings, as Allah ﷻ says:

﴿وَإِنْ تَعُدُّوا نِعْمَةَ اللَّهِ لَا تُحْصُوهَا﴾

“And if you should count the favor of Allah, you could not enumerate them.”

[Surah Ibrahim: 34].

An example is water. It is one blessing, but what a great blessing it is! All blessings are connected to it, such as the giving of life to the Earth, the germination, the production of fruits and quenching the thirsty.

So, what were the blessings that Allah ﷻ bestowed on the Israelites?

They were a big number of a variety of blessings, the greatest and most important of them being the many Prophets and Messengers who had been sent to them. They were in need of this big number of Messengers not because they were the greatest nation, nor because they were the chosen people of Allah ﷻ. However, it was due to their stubbornness and their diseases and their

⁵⁷ Sahih Muslim: The Book of Virtue, Joining of the Ties of Kinship and Enjoining Good Manners, Chapter: The Virtue of Visiting the Sick, Hadith no. 2569.

big number of sins. Therefore, this blessing was not considered a virtue for them.

A great number of diseases calls for a great number of medications. Thus, this appalling number of Messengers who had been sent to them is similar to the situation of the sick person whose sickness is so terrible that he had a whole group of doctors to treat him.

﴿أَوْفُوا بِعَهْدِي أُوفِ بِعَهْدِكُمْ﴾ *“and fulfill My covenant [upon you] that I will fulfill your covenant.”*: The covenant that Allah ﷻ had taken from them in the Torah was for them to follow the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, who was mentioned in their Book, as Allah ﷻ tells us:

﴿وَلَمَّا جَاءَهُمْ كِتَابٌ مِنْ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ مُصَدِّقٌ لِمَا مَعَهُمْ وَكَانُوا مِنْ قَبْلُ يَسْتَفْتِحُونَ عَلَى الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا فَلَمَّا جَاءَهُمْ مَا عَرَفُوا كَفَرُوا بِهِ فَلَعْنَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَى الْكَافِرِينَ﴾

“And when there came to them a Book from Allah confirming that which was with them - although before they used to pray for victory against those who disbelieved - but [then] when there came to them that which they recognized, they disbelieved in it; so the curse of Allah will be upon the disbelievers.”

[Surah Al-Baqarah: 89].

Sayyidina Umar ؓ had asked Abdullah Bin Salam- one of the learned men among the Jews who had embraced Islam: “Do you know the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ as you know your son?” He said, “Yes, and more than my son.” Thus, this covenant was found in the Torah.

It could also be that the covenant mentioned here is the first innate covenant, the one that Allah ﷻ took from Sayyidina Adam ؑ when all of his offspring were in his spine, as every child is born in the state of Fitrah:

﴿وَإِذْ أَخَذَ رَبُّكَ مِنْ بَنِي آدَمَ مِنْ ظُهُورِهِمْ ذُرِّيَّتَهُمْ وَأَشْهَدَهُمْ عَلَى أَنْفُسِهِمْ أَلَسْتُ بِرَبِّكُمْ قَالُوا بَلَى شَهِدْنَا﴾

“And [mention] when your Lord took from the children of Adam - from their loins - their descendants and made them testify of themselves, [saying to them], "Am I not your Lord?" They said, "Yes, we have testified."”

[Surah Al-A'raaf: 172].

This verse: ﴿أَوْفُوا بِعَهْدِي أُوفِ بِعَهْدِكُمْ﴾ *“and fulfill My covenant [upon you] that I will fulfill your covenant”* shows that matters are always in our own hands, as Allah ﷻ The Most High says:

﴿فَاذْكُرُونِي أَذْكُرْكُمْ وَاشْكُرُوا لِي وَلَا تَكْفُرُونَ﴾

“So remember Me; I will remember you. And be grateful to Me and do not deny Me.” [Surah Al-Baqarah: 152] and

﴿إِنْ تَنْصُرُوا اللَّهَ يَنْصُرْكُمْ﴾

“if you support Allah, He will support you” [Surah Muhammad: 7].

And in a Hadith Qudsi, Rasulullah ﷺ said:

((يَقُولُ اللَّهُ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ: " مَنْ جَاءَ بِالْحَسَنَةِ، فَلَهُ عَشْرُ أَمْثَالِهَا وَأَزِيدُ، وَمَنْ جَاءَ بِالسَّيِّئَةِ، فَجَزَاؤُهُ سَيِّئَةٌ مِثْلَهَا أَوْ أَغْفِرُ. وَمَنْ تَقَرَّبَ مِنِّي شِبْرًا تَقَرَّبْتُ مِنْهُ ذِرَاعًا، وَمَنْ تَقَرَّبَ مِنِّي ذِرَاعًا تَقَرَّبْتُ مِنْهُ بَاعًا، وَمَنْ أَتَانِي بِمِثْبَئِي أَتَيْتُهُ هَرَوَلَةً، وَمَنْ لَقِينِي بِقُرَابِ الْأَرْضِ حَطِيبَةً لَا يُشْرِكُ بِي شَيْئًا لَقِينَهُ بِمِثْلِهَا مَغْفِرَةً"))

“Allah The Almighty says: ‘Whosoever does a good deed, will have (reward) ten times like it and I add more; and whosoever does an evil, will have the punishment like it or I will forgive (him); and whosoever approaches Me by one span, I will approach him by one cubit; and whosoever approaches Me by one cubit, I approach him by one fathom, and whosoever comes to Me walking, I go to him running; and whosoever meets Me with an earth-load of

sins without associating anything with Me, I meet him with forgiveness like that.”⁵⁸

In this verse, Allah ﷻ says to the Israelites: ﴿أَوْفُوا بِعَهْدِكُمْ﴾ *“and fulfill My covenant [upon you] that I will fulfill your covenant,”* and your reward will be Paradise. That is, believe in Muhammad ﷺ, and follow the light that was revealed with him. If your Prophet Musa ﷺ was alive during the time of Muhammad ﷺ, he too, without a shadow of doubt, follow him.

The Jews in Medina and the Arabian Peninsula during the revelation period of the Holy Qur’an were the people who had the greatest animosity towards Islam and the Muslims. They were the reason for the trials, conspiracies, harm and all that the Muslims were subjected to throughout history. They were the ones who had incited the Ahzab or The Combined Forces during the Battle of the Trench. They had breached their covenant with the Prophet of Allah ﷻ as the Jews of Medina, Banu Qaynuqa’, Banu Nadhir and Banu Quraizah, and those of Khaibar had done, and there were so many other such conspiracies. It goes on up till today.

Follow the trials, provocation, falsification and crime throughout history, and you will find the Israelites behind them. And now too, they have their own state today, which considers Islam and the Muslims as its first enemy.

﴿وَيَايَ قَارِهَبُونَ﴾ *“and be afraid of [only] Me.”*: Here, the object is brought forward before the verb, to mean exclusivity. That is, do not fear other than Me. This is to demonstrate the importance of the One who is brought forward here, Allah ﷻ.

The word Farhabuun is an imperative which has the word Ar-Rahbah as its noun. Ar-Rahbah mean fear, and fear should not be of anything or anyone

⁵⁸ Sahih Muslim: The Book of The Remembrance of Allah, Supplication, Repentance and Seeking Forgiveness, Chapter: The Virtue of Remembrance, Supplication and Drawing Close to Allah, Hadith no. 2687.

except Allah ﷻ. In life, a human being may fear what will happen, or be sad due to what has happened. This is with the exception of those who believe and do good deeds, for no fear will there be concerning them, nor will they grieve.

The heart of the believer cannot contain 2 concerns at one time. So, it is either he fears Allah ﷻ, or he fears the creation of Allah ﷻ.

If you fear Allah ﷻ, everything will fear you. However, if you fear Mankind, you will fear everything.

Verse 41:

﴿وَأْمِنُوا بِمَا أَنْزَلْتُ مُصَدِّقًا لِّمَا مَعَكُمْ وَلَا تَكُونُوا أَوَّلَ كَافِرٍ بِهِ ۗ وَلَا تَشْتَرُوا بِآيَاتِي ثَمَنًا قَلِيلًا وَإِنِّي فَاتَتْهُنَّ﴾

“And believe in what I have sent down confirming that which is [already] with you, and be not the first to disbelieve in it. And do not exchange My signs for a small price, and fear [only] Me.”

﴿مُصَدِّقًا لِّمَا مَعَكُمْ﴾ *“Affirming what is with you”*: referring to the Torah. And what is intended here is that they believe in the Noble Qur’an that came to affirm all the previous divine scriptures.

And that Sayyiduna Isa عليه السلام gave the glad tidings of this last scripture, as Allah ﷻ said in the Holy Qur’an:

﴿وَإِذْ قَالَ عِيسَى ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ يَا بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ إِنِّي رَسُولُ اللَّهِ إِلَيْكُمْ مُصَدِّقًا لِّمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيَّ مِنَ التَّوْرَةِ وَمُبَشِّرًا بِرَسُولٍ يَأْتِي مِنْ بَعْدِي اسْمُهُ أَحْمَدُ فَلَمَّا جَاءَهُمْ بِالْبَيِّنَاتِ قَالُوا هَذَا سِحْرٌ مُّبِينٌ﴾

“And [mention] when Isa, the son of Maryam, said, “O children of Israel, indeed I am the messenger of Allah to you confirming what came before me of the Torah and bringing glad tidings of a messenger to come after me, whose name is Ahmad.” But when he came to them with clear evidences, they said, ‘This is obvious magic.’” [Surah As-Saf: 6].

Hence, they disbelieved in all the prophets and have come out against all the prophets.

The main message of all the scriptures is one as Allah ﷻ most high says:

﴿شَرَعَ لَكُمْ مِنَ الدِّينِ مَا وَصَّىٰ بِهِ نُوحًا وَالَّذِي أَوْحَيْنَا إِلَيْكَ وَمَا وَصَّيْنَا بِهِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَمُوسَىٰ وَعِيسَىٰ أَنْ أَقِيمُوا الدِّينَ وَلَا تَتَفَرَّقُوا فِيهِ ۚ كَبُرَ عَلَى الْمُشْرِكِينَ مَا تَدْعُوهُمْ إِلَيْهِ﴾

“He has ordained for you of religion what He enjoined upon Nuh and that which We have revealed to you, [O Muhammad], and what We enjoined upon Ibrahim and Musa and Eesa - to establish the religion and not be divided therein. It is heavy on polytheists that which you are inviting them to.”

[Surah Asy-Syura: 13].

And that it is not possible that the Religion is the cause of division as the religion is one and the Lord is one, and that God is one.

And that Allah ﷻ wants mercy for all of mankind, hence He said,

﴿وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَاكَ إِلَّا رَحْمَةً لِّلْعَالَمِينَ﴾

“And We have not sent you, [O Muhammad], except as a mercy to the worlds.” [Surah Al-Anbiya’: 107].

And any da’wah that incites one against the rest of human beings by looking down on their adherence, there is no basis in that as this religion calls towards unity, love and goodness for all.

﴿وَلَا تَكُونُوا أُولَٰ كَافِرٍ بِهِ ۗ وَلَا تَشْتَرُوا بِآيَاتِي ثَمَنًا قَلِيلًا وَإِنِّي فَاتِنُونَ﴾

“And do not be the first to disbelieve in it. And do not trade, My signs/verses for a small price and fear Me”: The Qur’anic speech used the term ﴿وَلَا تَشْتَرُوا﴾ *“and do not buy/trade”* because the children of Israel are a materialistic nation and can only understand materialistic terms like buying and selling. Hence the concept was brought closer to their minds from the angle by which they understand. And that all of this world is a paltry price in relation to going against

the commandments of Allah ﷻ. This is due to man being a creature of change and that he never stays in one state. Hence today he might be healthy and tomorrow he will be sick, or today he is alive and tomorrow he is dead. This world will end, hence no matter what is the price of it, it is little as compared to the eternal bliss in the next world. The lifespan of a person is short compared to eternity in the hereafter. Hence who would venture into this trade of loss. For surely Allah ﷻ says:

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا هَلْ أَدُلُّكُمْ عَلَىٰ تِجَارَةٍ تُنْجِيكُمْ مِنْ عَذَابِ أَلِيمٍ﴾

“O you who have believed, shall I guide you to a transaction that will save you from a painful punishment?” [Surah As-Saf: 10].

A profitable trade is one that a person builds on for increase and plants so as to harvest, and not to build so as to lose everything. And the reality is that in this world, you are building so as to lose everything, yourself and your wealth. And that Sayyiduna Ali, may Allah ennoble his face, said, “The best servant is wealth, and the worst master is wealth” hence do not become a servant to wealth. It is wealth that is supposed to serve you.

﴿وَإِيَّايَ فَاتَّقُونِ﴾ *“And fear Me”*: Here too we see that the object of the sentence is brought before the subject as taqwa is only and exclusively for Allah ﷻ and that taqwa encompasses all of goodness.

Sayyiduna Ali (May Allah honour his face) gave an explanation on what is taqwa: “Taqwa is fear from the Glorious, acting on what was sent down, having contentment with little, and preparation for the day you leave”

And when we say “have taqwa of Allah!” it means, have fear of the glorious traits of Allah ﷻ, have fear of the traits of His wrath so that you will not enter the fire, and so that you will be amongst the blissful victorious ones!

Verse 42:

﴿وَلَا تَلْبِسُوا الْحَقَّ بِالْبَاطِلِ وَتَكْتُمُوا الْحَقَّ وَأَنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ﴾

“And do not clothe truth with falsehood nor cover up truth knowingly.”

We continue to follow Allah’s ﷺ address to the children of Israel.

This nation (*Bani Israel*) transgressed against the rights of the prophets and other nations. This is from the miracles of the Noble Qur’an that it sheds light on their creed, their attitudes, their adherence, their movements and their transgressions, as well as all that is connected to them as they will be the source of all humanly trials throughout all ages and eras till this day of ours.

Hence, they are the reason for every trial that has afflicted the Muslims and the Arabs and the world altogether. Allah ﷺ addresses them and says:

﴿وَلَا تَلْبِسُوا الْحَقَّ بِالْبَاطِلِ وَتَكْتُمُوا الْحَقَّ وَأَنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ﴾

“And do not clothe truth with falsehood nor cover up truth knowingly.”

as this is their mission; they cover up the truth and mix it up with falsehood and they cover the truth intentionally.

The word *Al-Labs*, that is to clothe or to cover. *Al-Khalat* to mix, means to cover something part by part.

Al-Haqq is the truth. It is something that is firm and correct that is not exposed to change

Al-Batil is falsehood. It has angles and doors that are numerous and it is from falsity and deviation. As for truth, it only has one door and one angle to it.

This divine address is directed to the nation of the children of Israel, however it is compulsory for us to pay attention to a particular principle: (specification by reason, generalisation by meaning) hence the speech is directed to all of us and to all who believe in divine scriptures.

And clothing truth with falsehood involves covering the truth and changing its objective

﴿وَأَنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ﴾ “*knowingly*”

that is, you know the truth; that this religion is true.

And don't the nation of children of Israel today know that Palestine is not their land?

And that Masjidil Aqsa is for the Muslims and it is the first of the two Qiblahs?

And that they came from every other part of the earth and they transgressed and terrorized and legalised the seizure of land belonging to others for themselves?

Rather, they cover truth with falsehood.

Verse 43:

﴿وَأَقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَآتُوا الزَّكَاةَ وَارْكَعُوا مَعَ الرَّاكِعِينَ﴾

“And establish the prayer and give the zakat and bow with those who bow”

These three commandments are directed to the nation of the children of Israel who lived in the time when the Holy Qur'an was revealed in the Arabian Peninsula, and this Holy Qur'an is a scripture that is directed to all of mankind.

All divine religions command to the prayer and zakat and we find this in verses such as where Allah ﷻ says:

﴿وَأْمُرْ أَهْلَكَ بِالصَّلَاةِ وَاصْطَبِرْ عَلَيْهَا﴾

“and command your family to the prayer and persevere with it”

[Surah Taha: 132].

And in the supplication of the Prophet Ibrahim عليه السلام:

﴿رَبِّ اجْعَلْنِي مُقِيمَ الصَّلَاةِ وَمِنْ ذُرِّيَّتِي﴾

“My Lord, make me one who establishes the prayer, and many from among my descendants.” [Surah Ibrahim: 40].

Also as in the words of Sayyidina Isa عليه السلام as stated in the Holy Qur’an:

﴿وَأَوْصَانِي بِالصَّلَاةِ وَالزَّكَاةِ مَا دُمْتُ حَيًّا﴾

“And He has enjoined on me the Prayer and Zakat, as long as I live.”

[Surah Maryam: 31].

Prayer and Zakat are two fundamental pillars of the pillars of Islam and that the pillars of Islam are five as narrated from the authentic hadith:

((بُنِيَ الْإِسْلَامُ عَلَى خَمْسٍ: شَهَادَةِ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَأَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا رَسُولُ اللَّهِ، وَإِقَامِ الصَّلَاةِ، وَإِيتَاءِ الزَّكَاةِ، وَالْحَجِّ، وَصَوْمِ رَمَضَانَ))

“Islam is built upon five. Witnessing that there is no god except Allah, and that Muhammad is the messenger of Allah, establishing the prayer, giving the zakat, hajj and fasting in Ramadan”⁵⁹.

Meaning that the pillars on which Islam is built upon are five but Islam isn't just these five only.

Pillars are supporting structures and they are not the whole building. And that the building cannot be complete without the pillars. However, the pillars themselves are not the only parts of the building as the building would be larger

⁵⁹ Sahih al-Bukhari: The Book of Belief, Chapter: The Belief and The statement of The Prophet (saw) “Islam is based on five principles”, Hadith no. 8.

and would comprise of more things. Just like that, Islam is wider and comprises many other matters than just its pillars.

And that worship comprises of more things than prayer, fasting, zakat and hajj. Allah ﷻ says:

﴿وَمَا خَلَقْتُ الْجِنَّ وَالْإِنْسَ إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُونِ﴾

“And I did not create the jinn and mankind except to worship Me.”

[Surah Adz-Dzariyat: 56].

Hence, it is not possible that we were created for just prayer, fasting, zakat and hajj, as we eat, think, study, work, marry, have progeny, love, hate and travel through the earth.

And worship is anything that comes back to the human being and those around him with goodness. Worship brings benefit to the individual, the community and to humanity as a whole, hence worship is a gift to humanity and the worshiper is one who gives a good gift to the community if his worship and acts of obedience are valid in accordance with the commands of Allah ﷻ. Do not look at the inclinations of man, or at deviations or distortions, rather look at what is original.

The pillars of Islam are the pillars of all sacred laws sent by Allah ﷻ. Prayer and Zakat, on the other hand, are two of the pillars that always come together. This is so because prayer is a person's connection to Allah ﷻ while zakat is a person's connection to the creations of Allah ﷻ.

So, show me the effects of your prayer with your connection and show me the effects of your prayer in your community. The effects of prayer will be seen in zakat because charity is a proof of faith.

And there are those whom if you say to him to pray four cycles of the prayer (rakaat), he will pray 40 as it is easier on him than zakat and charity. And if you

say to him to give charity to the poor, be good to people and give of his wealth to those in need, who would find that he is reluctant to do it.

Hence zakat is the proof of the truthfulness of his faith or the lack of it.

Prayer is supplication and connection to Allah ﷻ, and zakat is to encompass the movements of human beings in this life. It is a deed done for others, and that is while you are working you intend to earn wealth which you would put aside a portion of it for zakat.

So, zakat is a communal movement and it is a call to rectification and joint responsibility in the community as it is in essence a portion of time set aside to work for the sake of others.

And similarly, the prayer is in essence a portion of time set aside for supplication and worship.

In conclusion, the prayer and the zakat are two fundamental pillars in the life of a human being for the continuation of life with a healthy connection between human beings, as well as a healthy connection with the Lord of human beings.

﴿وَأَرْكَعُوا مَعَ الرَّاكِعِينَ﴾ *“and bow with those who bow”*: We could be asking here why is bowing emphasised again considering that prayer already consists of bowing?

The reason is that bowing here carries the meaning of general humbling of the self to Allah ﷻ, just as the sujud or prostration may at times take the meaning of glorification and exaltation of Allah ﷻ and greeting and obedience to His commandments.

As for the literal definition of prostration, it is to place the forehead on the ground in prayer and the literal definition for bowing it is to bend at the waist in prayer.

Hence, those who bow are those who hold on to the religion, practising it and are obedient to the commands of Allah ﷻ.

So, this is not an address that is specifically directed to the children of Israel only. Rather, it is directed to all people. A specific reason for the revelation of the verse does not negate a general meaning for all.

Verse 44:

﴿اتَّأْمُرُونَ النَّاسَ بِالْبِرِّ وَتَنْسَوْنَ أَنْفُسَكُمْ وَأَنْتُمْ تَتْلُونَ الْكِتَابَ ۗ أَفَلَا تَعْقِلُونَ﴾

“Do you command the people towards righteousness and forget your own selves while you recite the scripture? Do you not think?”

The specific reason for this verse is for the children of Israel who used to boast in front of the Arab polytheists saying that a prophet will come and that they will believe in this prophet and they will kill them like what was done to Aad and Iram.

They did not know that the prophet will not be from them, rather he will come from the Arabs. Hence when he came to them, they disbelieved in him while they were the very ones who used to command the people on righteousness.

As for the general meaning, it is intended for all people, and for every caller to goodness amongst the scholars, the preachers, the leaders on the spiritual path and those who warn others and remind...

It is on these people to also do and remain steadfast on what they call others towards, as has been said by a poet:

“Do not prevent the creation (from something) while you do just like it,

The blame on you if you do so is immense”

As for the scholars of mathematics, physics, chemistry and astronomy, people only take from them their expertise and do not ask them about their way of life. However, as for the scholar of the religion, if his way of life is separate from his speech, his call to Allah ﷺ will fall that is, fail. Just as a poet has said,

“Oh One who teaches others!

Be wary over yourself the one who is educating,

You prescribe medication to the one of illness and weakness,

How can they ever get better when you yourself are sick?”

So, whoever goes up a rostrum and warn people against backbiting and gives Qur’anic proofs and recites Allah’s ﷺ word:

﴿أَيُّجِبُّ أَحَدُكُمْ أَنْ يَأْكُلَ لَحْمَ أَخِيهِ مَيْتًا فَكَرِهْتُمُوهُ﴾

“Would one of you like to eat the flesh of his brother when dead? You would detest it.” [Surah Al-Hujurat: 12],

then after a few minutes he goes off and says, “so-and-so did this and so-and-so did that” hence his conduct is contrary to his words.

The religion is a word that is said and the way (suluk) is actions. Hence, if a person’s way is separate from his words, his preaching falls.

Religion is by example, as Allah ﷺ has said:

﴿لَقَدْ كَانَ لَكُمْ فِي رَسُولِ اللَّهِ أُسْوَةٌ حَسَنَةٌ لِمَنْ كَانَ يَرْجُو اللَّهَ وَالْيَوْمَ الْآخِرَ وَذَكَرَ اللَّهَ كَثِيرًا﴾

“There has certainly been for you in the Messenger of Allah an excellent example for anyone whose hope is in Allah and the Last Day and [who] remembers Allah often” [Surah Al-Ahzab:21],

hence if there is no example in deed and path, then there is no preaching towards Allah ﷺ.

And there will never be any reformer during any era for as long as the reformer is not the source of good ethics and neither does he guides towards the exemplary way.

Hence, whosoever speaks to the people then does contrary to what he said, it is not possible that he is a caller to Allah ﷻ, like someone who speaks about inheritance then consumes the inheritance of others, or one who says “Do not drink alcohol!” while he drinks it, or the one who prevents others from tale-bearing and he goes around doing it.

And ‘birr’ (righteousness) is all about goodness; by every direction and path, it will lead to goodness.

﴿وَتَنْسَوْنَ أَنْفُسَكُمْ وَأَنْتُمْ تَتْلُونَ الْكِتَابَ﴾ *“and you forget yourselves while you recite the book?”*: What is intended here is that every divine revelation came as a mercy and guidance for man.

And guidance cannot manifest itself except with a perfect example in practice, and that it is necessary to pair calling to goodness with right conduct. So, it is not right to say, take my words but not my actions and leave the fire for wood.

Rather, it is necessary that calling to goodness and reform be paired with good deeds, otherwise the call to Allah ﷻ will be completely wasted.

Verse 45:

﴿وَاسْتَعِينُوا بِالصَّبْرِ وَالصَّلَاةِ ۚ وَإِنَّهَا لَكَبِيرَةٌ إِلَّا عَلَى الْخَاشِعِينَ﴾

“And seek help with patience and prayer, for surely it is heavy except on those with deep fear (of Allah and submit totally to Him)”

In the 2 verses before this, Allah ﷻ says, ﴿وَأَقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ﴾ *“and establish the prayer”* and that the Holy Qur’an, whenever it speaks about the prayer it speaks

about establishing it (*iqamah*) and does not speak about just doing it (*adaa*). This is a very important instruction, as some people will say, "I have prayed with my heart!" so we say to him, "Pray! What you have done is not establishing the prayer, as establishing the prayer involves conditions, pillars, compulsory acts that are known, such as cleansing, covering a person's 'aurah' that is specific parts of body, facing the Qiblah and bowing and prostrating... and this is the meaning of establishing the prayer"

And Allah ﷻ says, ﴿وَأَقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ﴾ *"and establish the prayer"*

It is a command, and in this case, it means to seek for help. It is as if Allah ﷻ is saying to us: In this life there will be tests and man living on this earth is not protected from these tests such as illness, death, poverty, worry and depression. Nobody is free of this. Whoever claims that he is protected from illness and death, then let him stop it from coming to himself. However, nobody is able to stop these from coming to themselves as the human being is always changing and he is exposed to changes and many different situations. As Allah ﷻ says:

﴿وَلَنَبْلُوَنَّكُمْ بِشَيْءٍ مِّنَ الْخَوْفِ وَالْجُوعِ وَنَقْصٍ مِّنَ الْأَمْوَالِ وَالْأَنْفُسِ وَالثَّمَرَاتِ ۗ وَبَشِّرِ الصَّابِرِينَ﴾

"And We will surely test you with something of fear and hunger and loss of wealth and lives and fruits, but give good tidings to the patient." [Surah Al-

Baqarah: 155].

Seeking help in prayer is not the same as establishing the prayer. It is as if Allah ﷻ is saying to us in this verse: There will be numerous tests in life, and I have given you 2 weapons that fulfil one role. Seek aid from these 2 against the appearance of the 2 trials, and it is on you to use both of them together as it is not right to take one and leave the other. The 2 weapons are prayer and patience.

There isn't a person who is protected in this existence. Hence, for as long as a person is a human being, he will be exposed to trials such as illness,

worries, disabilities and so on. So, seek help by these 2 weapons against what would come against them.

Patience (*sabr*) is mentioned before prayer (*salat*) due to its importance, and that Sayyidina Ali (may Allah ennoble his face) said, “Patience to faith is like the head to the body” because patience involves striving within the self and this difficulty is greater than prayer.

There is patience abstaining from the prohibitions of Allah ﷻ, patience doing what is commanded by Him and patience with what is decreed.

And there are commandments that Allah ﷻ wants us to fulfil them with patience, such as fasting and leaving our evil desires, and then there are commandments that we fear falling into and we are wary of.

And then there are situations that have been decreed by Allah ﷻ on us, and it is on us to be patient in bearing with them.

As such, Allah ﷻ says:

﴿إِنَّمَا يُوفَى الصَّابِرُونَ أَجْرَهُمْ بِغَيْرِ حِسَابٍ﴾

“Indeed, the patient will be given their reward without account”

[Surah Az-Zumar:10].

Hence, every good deed is rewarded 10 times its like except patience, for surely it is rewarded without limit, because it is a sign of true faith.

And perhaps a person might say, “Surely seeking help can only be from Allah ﷻ, so how can you say that we seek help with patience and prayer?”

In an authentic hadith from Ibn Abbas رضي الله عنه, he said, “I was behind the Messenger of Allah ﷺ one day when he said:

((يَا غُلَامُ، إِنِّي أُعَلِّمُكَ كَلِمَاتٍ: احْفَظِ اللَّهَ يَحْفَظَكَ، احْفَظِ اللَّهَ تَجِدْهُ تُجَاهَكَ، إِذَا سَأَلْتَ فَاسْأَلِ اللَّهَ وَإِذَا اسْتَعْنَيْتَ فَاسْتَعِنْ بِاللَّهِ، وَاعْلَمْ أَنَّ الْأُمَّةَ لَوِ اجْتَمَعَتْ عَلَىٰ أَنْ يَنْفَعُوكَ بِشَيْءٍ لَّمْ يَنْفَعُوكَ إِلَّا بِشَيْءٍ قَدْ كَتَبَهُ اللَّهُ لَكَ، وَلَوْ اجْتَمَعُوا عَلَىٰ أَنْ يَضُرُّوكَ بِشَيْءٍ لَّمْ يَضُرُّوكَ إِلَّا بِشَيْءٍ قَدْ كَتَبَهُ اللَّهُ عَلَيْكَ، رُفِعَتِ الْأَقْلَامُ وَجَفَّتِ الصُّحُفُ))

“O young boy, for surely I will teach you some words. Guard over the rights of Allah and Allah will protect you, guard the rights of Allah and you will find Him facing you. If you ask, ask from Allah. And if you seek help, seek help from Allah. And know, that if the nation was to gather to benefit you with one thing, they would not benefit you by anything unless Allah has written it for you. And if they gathered to harm you by one thing, they would not harm you by anything except what Allah has written against you. The pens have been lifted and the pages have dried.”⁶⁰

This is an authentic hadith. However, we have also been commanded not to prostrate to anything other than Allah ﷻ, yet Allah ﷻ has informed us to face the Qiblah in our prayer hence we face the direction as Allah ﷻ has commanded us. Thus, this is exactly the case. For surely Allah ﷻ has commanded us to seek help in patience and prayer, as the path to seek help from Allah ﷻ comes by using what Allah ﷻ has commanded us with, and that seeking help in patience and prayer is in fact seeking help with Allah ﷻ.

Prayer is connection to Allah ﷻ. With any important person that you wish to meet with in this world, when you need to set an appointment in advance. The time for the meeting will be limited for you and that the person will be the one who speaks, and he is able to cancel the appointment whenever he wants. As for Allah ﷻ, you are able to meet Him whenever you want, and wherever you like, and He will never prevent any meeting from taking place, rather it is you who prevents it whenever you want.

⁶⁰ Jami' at-Tirmizi: The Book of the Description of the Day of Judgement, ar-Riqaq, and al-Wara', Chapter: What is mentioned of the vessels of the *Haudh*, Hadith no. 2453.

The gifts of Allah ﷻ will never be exhausted, while the gifts of human beings get exhausted.

﴿مَا عِنْدَكُمْ يَنْفَدُ وَمَا عِنْدَ اللَّهِ بَاقٍ﴾

“Whatever you have will end, but what Allah has is lasting.”

[Surah An-Nahl: 96].

Hence seeking aid with prayer is seeking aid from Allah ﷻ. And this is what was said by one of the ardent worshippers of Allah ﷻ:

“It is enough for myself as an honour that I am a slave,

The Lord welcomes me without any appointment,

He in His glory and sanctity most honoured,

Yet I meet Him whenever and wherever I like”

Hence, here lies the greatness of prayer and seeking help by it, as well as zakat.

﴿وإِنَّهَا لَكَبِيرَةٌ إِلَّا عَلَى الْخَاشِعِينَ﴾ *“And for surely it is heavy except on those with deep fear”*. Allah did not say “they are both heavy” because the goal for the both of these deeds is one and the same. This is like the word of Allah: ﴿وَإِذَا رَأَوْا تِجَارَةً أَوْ

لَهُؤَا انْفَصُّوا إِلَيْهَا وَتَرَكَوكَ فَايْمًا﴾

“and when they see some merchandise or amusement, they flood towards it and left you standing...” [Surah Al-Jumu’ah:11],

and Allah ﷻ did not say “they flood towards them both” as the purpose is one and the same, even if fun is one thing and trade is another. This is the way of speech in the Great Qur’an.

So, who are those with deep fear (khashi’uun)?

When Imam Zainal Abideen عليه السلام began the prayer, his face would turn pale and he would tremble. When he was asked for the reason for it, he said, “Do you know who I am standing in front of?”

He was someone of deep fear, one who renounced this world. While we today, we pray and we get distracted, our thoughts drown us, we glance here and there and this is not at all a form of khushu’ (deep fear), rather khushu’ is that we know who we are standing before.

Verse 46:

﴿الَّذِينَ يَظُنُّونَ أَنَّهُمْ مُلَاقُوا رَبِّهِمْ وَأَنَّهُمْ إِلَيْهِ رَاجِعُونَ﴾

“Those who think that they will meet their Lord and that they will return to Him”

Those with deep fear (khashi’uun) are those who think that they will meet their Lord and that they will return to Him.

Allah ﷻ says ﴿يَظُنُّونَ﴾ *“think”* and He did not say ﴿مَتَيْقِنُونَ﴾ *“are certain”* while the word *“think”* in this case actually means *“are certain”* so why did Allah ﷻ use the word *“think”* while these people have certainty?

This is a great sign in the Holy Qur’an. If it was a man who wrote this Qur’an, it would never occur to him to write *“think”* for as long as the intended meaning is *“are certain”*.

The meaning is that they are certain. However, for them, just to think about it causes them to rush to obedience. An example for this would be if you were on a path and you came to a fork in the road. And you can choose which way you want to follow. If someone says to you, while pointing to one of the paths, *“I think there might be highway robbers on this path”* you would immediately take the other path simply by assumption, that is, you think it is safer.

And this is what the commandments of Allah ﷻ are like. As for the *khashi'uun*, just by simply thinking that they will meet their Lord, they begin to have completely deep fear of Him. As for you, if you could be focused and fearful in your prayer simply by thoughts or assumptions, how then would it be if you were certain?

﴿وَأَنَّهُمْ إِلَيْهِ رَاجِعُونَ﴾ *“and that they will return to Him”*

going back to Allah ﷻ is the nature of this world, as Allah ﷻ says:

﴿مِنهَا خَلَقْنَاكُمْ وَفِيهَا نُعِيدُكُمْ وَمِنْهَا نُخْرِجُكُمْ تَارَةً أُخْرَى﴾

“From the earth We created you, and into it We will return you, and from it We will bring you forth another time.” [Surah Taha: 55].

There isn't a human being on earth who will not die, as everything on it will be extinguished. Allah ﷻ has said to His Prophet ﷺ who is the greatest human being to live on this earth:

﴿إِنَّكَ مَيِّتٌ وَإِنَّهُمْ مَّيِّتُونَ﴾

“For surely you will die and for surely they will die” [Surah Az-Zumar: 30].

The strength of this earth, in spite of all the advancements, is not able to stop a human being from facing death nor delay it from its appointed time.

And the righteous believing Muslims will say, “Praise be to Allah for death.”

If we were to speak about this topic of death without consideration as to our beliefs and our religion, then I will ask every preacher of peace, freedom and advancement, which of these two is better: To say to people, do as you wish, you have freedom! Or to say to people, for surely you will die, and you will be raised up and you will be questioned.

And people today, despite having certainty that they will die, and that they see people dying, and that one who will die carries the dead to their graves –

despite all that, they still kill each other and cause each other's blood to be spilt and devour each other's wealth.

If there was no death, this world would be like a jungle, so praises be to Allah ﷻ for death, for faith and for Islam.

Verse 47:

﴿يَا بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ اذْكُرُوا نِعْمَتِيَ الَّتِي أَنْعَمْتُ عَلَيْكُمْ وَأَنِّي فَضَّلْتُكُمْ عَلَى الْعَالَمِينَ﴾

“O Children of Israel remember My blessings that I placed onto you and that I preferred you over the worlds.”

The story of children of Israel appears in the Holy Qur'an distributed over many different surahs and it is the most mentioned of the stories in the Holy Qur'an because the Prophet Musa عليه السلام is the sheikh (spiritual leader) of all the prophets of the children of Israel, and he suffered from the children of Israel more than what the Arabs and Muslims are suffering today out of their crimes, terrorism and conspiracy with regards to their country which claim that it is originally belongs to Israel.

The verses prior to this spoke about the covenant and the promises that Allah ﷻ took from the children of Israel. As for this verse, it speaks directly about the blessings that Allah ﷻ bestows on them, addressing them by calling onto them saying: ﴿يَا بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ﴾ ***“O children of Israel!”*** so as to cause the Jews who lived in the time where the Holy Qur'an was revealed and in the Arabian peninsula to shake and pay attention. Special emphasis was on those who were in Al-Madinah Al-Munawarrah where they opposed, fought and conspired against the Prophet of Allah ﷻ.

And the intended lesson here is on a general basis, not for a specific reason.

Hence, this verse reminds the children of Israel of their father whom they are named after, that is Israel, who is Prophet Ya'qub ﷺ. Their naming of themselves, that is their country, after him is simply a false claim and a slander and by it they built their country and terrorist state that is planted in the heart of the Muslim Arab Nations under the cover of the name of this prophet. They seek cover under this name and use it as a symbol for their crimes. Just like some of those who claim themselves believers but are actually disbelievers who use the symbol of Islam to cover up their own crimes. And Allah ﷻ says:

﴿وَلَا تَلْبِسُوا الْحَقَّ بِالْبَاطِلِ وَتَكْتُمُوا الْحَقَّ وَأَنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ﴾

“And do not mix the truth with falsehood or conceal the truth while you know [it].” [Surah al-Baqarah: 42].

And the religion of Allah ﷻ does not command to attribute disbelief to believers nor does it command to kill others, nor does it command towards hatred, disgust and dislike. Rather it commands to mutual assistance towards goodness and piety:

﴿وَتَعَاوَنُوا عَلَى الْبِرِّ وَالتَّقْوَىٰ وَلَا تَعَاوَنُوا عَلَى الْإِثْمِ وَالْعُدْوَانِ﴾ *“And help one another in righteousness and piety”* [Surah Al-Ma'idah: 2] and our religion says:

﴿مَنْ قَتَلَ نَفْسًا بِغَيْرِ نَفْسٍ أَوْ فَسَادٍ فِي الْأَرْضِ فَكَأَنَّمَا قَتَلَ النَّاسَ جَمِيعًا﴾

“whoever kills a soul not in retaliation of murder or for corruption [done] in the land - it is as if he had slain mankind entirely.” [Surah Al-Ma'idah: 32].

And Allah ﷻ did not specify that it be a Muslim soul or otherwise, nor the affiliations of this soul, nor his nationality, nor his religion, nor his beliefs - rather the word “soul” was used by itself.

As for what the Jews are doing today, it is the corruption and the mixing of truth with falsehood. The story of the children of Israel in the Holy Qur'an is of the longest of stories and the conversation between Rasulullah ﷺ and Prophet

Musa عليه السلام during the mi'raj or night ascension of the Prophet ﷺ to the heavens is of the longest of conversations.

This is because majority of what will afflict the Muslims and humanity as a whole, in the form of tribulations, problems and crimes will be brought about by the children of Israel. And Allah ﷻ, by His All-encompassing knowledge, knows what will come to be and what will happen.

So, when Allah ﷻ informs us about past occurrences, surely that is a warning and lesson for every era.

And by addressing them by the name of their father Ya'qub عليه السلام, Allah ﷻ shakes them, just like when a boy gets shaken when he is reminded of his righteous father and what he advised him. There is no doubt here that the advice that a person gives for his children while he is on his deathbed will be of the purest and most sincere words he would ever say, and it would contain the summary of all his experiences in life. Thus, when Allah ﷻ says to them:

﴿يَا بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ﴾ “*Oh children of Israel!*”

He reminds them about the advice their father Ya'qub عليه السلام who is Israel, gave them as mentioned in:

﴿وَوَصَّىٰ بِهَا إِبْرَاهِيمُ بَنِيهِ وَيَعْقُوبُ﴾

“And Ibrahim and Ya'qub advised his children...” [Surah Al-Baqarah: 132].

Thus, when the Holy Qur'an addresses the children of Israel, it reminds them about the advice of their father that did not consist of any hatred, nor dislike, nor animosity, nor crime nor terrorism, nor conspiracies, nor love of wealth, nor love of this world and things. So this is a reminder for the children of Israel about the favours of Allah ﷻ onto them, as He has favoured them with sending prophets to them in great numbers, but they deny and go against the favours of Allah ﷻ on them. So Allah ﷻ cursed them:

﴿لَعْنَةُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِنْ بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ عَلَى لِسَانِ دَاوُدَ وَعِيسَى ابْنِ مَرْيَمَ ۗ ذَلِكَ بِمَا عَصَوْا وَكَانُوا يَعْتَدُونَ﴾

“Cursed were those who disbelieved among the Children of Israel, by the tongue of Dawud and of Isa, the son of Maryam. That was because they disobeyed and persisted in transgression.” [Surah Al-Ma’idah: 78].

The Holy Qur’an explains parts of itself with other parts. Hence it is not possible to split up the Holy Qur’an or alienate a surah or cut it off from other surahs. The word ‘*tafdeel*’ which means ‘preferred’ takes on the meanings of being tested and questioned more than anyone due to the abundant blessings that Allah ﷻ has given to them especially. And yet, they deny these blessings and kill the prophets.

And that blessings do not continue if the (beneficiaries) are arrogant. This is regardless of what people they are from and what community they are in, as blessings are secured with gratitude and not with arrogance.

Allah ﷻ addresses the children of Israel by reminding them of their fathers from among the prophets. So Prophet Ya’qub ﷺ is Israel. He is the son of Prophet Ishaq ﷺ, who is the son of Prophet Ibrahim ﷺ, who is the father of prophets, who got Prophet Ismail ﷺ before Prophet Ishaq ﷺ. And from the line of Ismael ﷺ, came our Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. Hence Prophet Ya’qub ﷺ is the son of Prophet Ishaq ﷺ and the ‘Asbaat’ are the descendants of Ya’qub.

Verse 48:

﴿وَاتَّقُوا يَوْمًا لَا تَجْزِي نَفْسٌ عَنْ نَفْسٍ شَيْئًا وَلَا يُقْبَلُ مِنْهَا شَفَاعَةٌ وَلَا يُؤْخَذُ مِنْهَا عَدْلٌ وَلَا هُمْ يُنصَرُونَ﴾

“And fear a Day when no soul will suffice for another soul at all, nor will intercession be accepted from it, nor will compensation be taken from it, nor will they be aided.”

Though this is addressed to the Children of Israel, it is intended for all of humanity, because the last day, that Allah ﷻ has promised us with, is when all of humanity will be raised, the children of Israel and others besides them.

However, Allah ﷻ emphasizes the children of Israel in His address here and He says to them: ﴿وَاتَّقُوا يَوْمًا﴾ *“And fear a Day”*

meaning, make a barrier between yourselves and the punishment of that Day, which is the day of standing, a day of reckoning and recompense. A person might be able to run away from the reckoning in this world, but he will not be able to escape from the reckoning in the next world. If there were no reckoning in the next world, people would transgress and oppressors will oppress much more than the transgression and oppression that they are already doing now.

﴿وَاتَّقُوا يَوْمًا تُرْجَعُونَ فِيهِ إِلَى اللَّهِ ۖ ثُمَّ تُوَفَّى كُلُّ نَفْسٍ مَّا كَسَبَتْ وَهُمْ لَا يُظْلَمُونَ﴾

“And fear a Day when you will be returned to Allah . Then every soul will be compensated for what it earned, and they will not be treated unjustly.” [Surah Al-Baqarah: 281].

It is a day where none will carry the sins or burdens of another.

﴿وَلَا يُقْبَلُ مِنْهَا شَفَاعَةٌ﴾ *“nor will intercession be accepted from it”*

‘Ash-Shafa’ah’ means intercession, from the word ‘Ash-Shaf’ which means companionship or even numbers, as Allah ﷻ says:

﴿وَالشَّفْعَ وَالْوَتْرَ﴾

“by the even and the odd” [Surah Al-Fajr: 3].

Hence, intercession is to bring others to yourself, using influence and specific means. However, on the day of Judgement, a person is not benefited by the deeds of others:

﴿وَأَنْ لَّيْسَ لِلْإِنْسَانِ إِلَّا مَا سَعَى﴾

“And that there is not for man except that [good] for which he strives” [Surah An-Najm:39] and

﴿وَإِخْشَاؤُا يَوْمًا لَا يَجْزِي وَالِدٌ عَنْ وَلَدِهِ وَلَا مَوْلُودٌ هُوَ جَازٍ عَنِ وَالِدِهِ شَيْئًا﴾

“and fear a Day when no father will avail his son, nor will a son avail his father at all.” [Surah Luqman: 33].

On the day of standing, none will intercede for another except by Allah’s ﷻ permission and none will intercede except if Allah ﷻ is pleased with him.

﴿مَنْ ذَا الَّذِي يَشْفَعُ عِنْدَهُ إِلَّا بِإِذْنِهِ﴾

“Who is it that can intercede with Him except by His permission?”

[Surah Al-Baqarah: 255].

Nobody is able to carry the sins of another, hence it is on us to work for that Day and nothing will benefit anyone except their own deeds.

﴿وَلَا يُؤْخَذُ مِنْهَا عَدْلٌ﴾ “nor will compensation be taken from it”

‘Adl’ is intercession, and giving an equivalent payment, while ‘idl’ means exchanging something with what is exactly like it in its exact amount. So, we say to exchange wheat with wheat. As for ‘adl, it is justice, rights, and equality, hence it is a fixed thing that does not change.

Allah ﷻ says, ﴿وَاتَّقُوا يَوْمًا لَا تَجْزِي نَفْسٌ عَنْ نَفْسٍ شَيْئًا﴾

“And fear a Day when no soul will suffice for another soul” and the ‘nafs’ is the soul and the physical body. The foetus becomes a ‘nafs’ if the soul is blown into it, that is when the soul is infused with the physical. The soul is a secret from the secrets of Allah ﷻ as Allah ﷻ says:

﴿قُلِ الرُّوحُ مِنْ أَمْرِ رَبِّي﴾

”Say, ‘The soul is of the affair of my Lord.’” [Surah Al-Isra’: 85].

And Allah ﷻ says with regards to the creation of Adam ﷺ:

﴿فَإِذَا سَوَّيْتُهُ وَنَفَخْتُ فِيهِ مِنْ رُوحِي﴾

“And when I have proportioned him and breathed into him of My [created] soul” [Surah Al-Hijr: 29].

Hence the soul glorifies Allah ﷻ, and the physical body also glorifies Allah:

﴿وَإِنْ مِنْ شَيْءٍ إِلَّا يُسَبِّحُ بِحَمْدِهِ﴾

“And there is not a thing except that it exalts Him by His praise”

[Surah Al-Isra': 44].

So, the meeting of the physical with the soul results in the *nafs*, and with the *nafs* comes lower desires and choices, so a human being is able to choose something and be influenced by something else. As Allah ﷻ says

﴿وَنَفْسٍ وَمَا سَوَّاهَا (٧) فَأَلْهَمَهَا فُجُورَهَا وَتَقْوَاهَا (٨)﴾

“And [by] the soul and He who proportioned it.

And inspired it [with discernment of] its wickedness and its righteousness,”

[Surah Asy-Syams: 7-8].

Allah ﷻ continues His address to the children of Israel, and that specification in the reason for revelation does not negate the general meaning for all. What is mentioned here is regarding the Jews who were present in Madinah during the time of revelation and those who conspire against the Muslims, and they were the ones who urged the Arab tribes to fight the Muslims in the Battle of the Trench despite there being a treaty between them and the Prophet of Allah ﷺ. In the constitutional laws that Rasulullah ﷺ put in place for them when he migrated to Madinah, he made the Muslims, the polytheists and the people of the Book as one nation; and in their unity they had an advantage over others.

Hence Islam recognises other communities and grants them their full rights and freedom, and there is not any divine law, other than Islam, that places such equality and justice between people.

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنَّا خَلَقْنَاكُمْ مِنْ ذَكَرٍ وَأُنْثَىٰ وَجَعَلْنَاكُمْ شُعُوبًا وَقَبَائِلَ لِتَعَارَفُوا ۗ إِنَّ أَكْرَمَكُمْ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ أَتْقَاكُمْ ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلِيمٌ خَبِيرٌ﴾

“O mankind, indeed We have created you from male and female and made you peoples and tribes that you may know one another. Indeed, the most noble of you in the sight of Allah is the most righteous of you. Indeed, Allah is Knowing and Acquainted.” [Surah A-Hujurat:13].

This is the religion that raised Bilal رضي الله عنه, the black Abyssinian, to ascend, by his own feet, up the walls of the Ka’bah, those same feet that used to peel and scrape due to the desert sands of Makkah by the deeds of the rich nobles of Quraysh. He climbed up the wall of the Ka’bah and called out “Allah is the greatest! Allah is the greatest!”

And in the farewell pilgrimage, Rasulullah صلى الله عليه وسلم stood and announced his final advice to his nation and to mankind altogether, saying:

((أَنْتُمْ بَنُو آدَمَ وَآدَمُ مِنْ تُرَابٍ...))

*“You are all from Adam and Adam is from dust...”*⁶¹

What equality, what justice, what fairness, what rights for others has our magnanimous sacred law set forth, the sacred law of Islam! So, in these verses, we find that the address is directed to the Jews who used to hurt the Muslims and transgress against them in the time when the Holy Qur’an was being revealed.

⁶¹ Sunan Abi Dawud: The Book of Adab, Chapter: Boasting about one's lineage, Hadith no. 5116.

And our animosity with the Jews does not have any relation to their religion, rather it is due to their plotting and conspiring. These were the Jews in Madinah and the Jews in the Arabian Peninsula.

For surely, Islam has instituted Jihad, that is struggling in the way of Allah ﷻ in opposition to enemies, as Allah ﷻ says:

﴿أُذِنَ لِلَّذِينَ يُقَاتَلُونَ بِأَنَّهُمْ ظَلَمُوا ۖ وَإِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَىٰ نَصْرِهِمْ لَقَدِيرٌ﴾

“Permission [to fight] has been given to those who are being fought, because they were wronged. And indeed, Allah is competent to give them victory.”

[Surah Al-Hajj: 39]

and that Rasulallah ﷺ fought the disbelievers due to them transgressing against the believers, and not due to them simply being disbelievers.

﴿فَمَنْ اعْتَدَىٰ عَلَيْكُمْ فَاعْتَدُوا عَلَيْهِ بِمِثْلِ مَا اعْتَدَىٰ عَلَيْكُمْ﴾

“So whoever has assaulted you, then assault him in the same way that he has assaulted you.” [Surah Al-Baqarah:194].

This means, defend yourselves against transgression and animosity, hence jihad in this case is for the sake of protection of the state and country from any transgression, and none can carry it out except a structured official army that is from a country that is run by the sacred law. So, none should speak about jihad for a purpose or goal that is hidden, using Islam to achieve it. For the Islam that was revealed into the heart of Rasulallah ﷺ is clear with no doubt in it.

Hence these verses are to do with the animosity of the children of Israel and their conspiracies, and not about their beliefs in Prophet Ya’qub ﷺ or Prophet Musa ﷺ.

Verse 49:

﴿وَإِذْ نَجَّيْنَاكُمْ مِنَ آلِ فِرْعَوْنَ يَسُومُونَكُمْ سُوءَ الْعَذَابِ يُدَبِّحُونَ أَبْنَاءَكُمْ وَيَسْتَحْيُونَ نِسَاءَكُمْ ۗ وَفِي ذَلِكُمْ بَلَاءٌ مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ عَظِيمٌ﴾

“And remember when We saved your forefathers from the people of Pharaoh, who afflicted you with the worst torment, slaughtering your [newborn] sons and keeping your females alive. And in that was a great trial from your Lord.”

‘iz’, which means ‘when’, is a term used for the past tense. Every occurrence requires a time and place for it to happen in, and ‘iz’ here refers to such and such a time, meaning, “remember the time We saved you”

The word ‘iz’ is repeated in the Holy Qur’an a number of times and it is a high form of language. Look at Allah’s ﷻ word:

﴿إِلَّا تَنْصُرُوهُ فَقَدْ نَصَرَهُ اللَّهُ إِذْ أَخْرَجَهُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا ثَانِيًا إِذْ هُمَا فِي الْغَارِ إِذْ يَقُولُ لِصَاحِبِهِ لَا تَحْزَنْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ مَعَنَا﴾

“If you do not aid the Prophet - Allah has already aided him when those who disbelieved had driven him out [of Makkah] as one of two, when they were in the cave and he said to his companion, "Do not grieve; indeed, Allah is with us." [Surah At-Tawbah: 40]

Look at how the word ‘iz’ is used 3 times, hence the aid of Allah ﷻ came at 3 different times at 3 different situations.

In this verse in Surah Baqarah, the word ‘iz’ is used to refer to a time of success for the children of Israel, so is this simply a repetition or are there secrets in it?

Naturally there are secrets. ‘anjaa’ and ‘najjaa’, both means to save, but there is a difference between their usage. We say, ‘najjaa’ from a punishment that has already occurred as Allah ﷻ says here:

﴿إِذْ نَجَّيْنَاكُمْ مِّنْ آلِ فِرْعَوْنَ﴾

“and when We saved you from the people of Pharaoh”

[Surah Al-Baqarah: 49].

In this case the punishment was already occurring. However, in the verse:

﴿وَإِذْ فَرَقْنَا بِكُمُ الْبَحْرَ فَأَنجَيْنَاكُمْ وَأَغْرَقْنَا آلَ فِرْعَوْنَ﴾

“And remember when We parted the sea for you and saved you and drowned the people of Pharaoh” [Surah Al-Baqarah: 50],

in it is the meaning of preventing the very occurrence of the punishment that would have afflicted them had they drowned or had they fallen into the hands of Pharaoh and his army. So, Allah ﷻ sent His favours on the children of Israel twice, the first time because He saved them from a punishment that had afflicted them and the second time that He saved them from a punishment that was about to afflict them. And for this reason, Allah ﷻ says:

﴿وَأَنِّي فَضَّلْتُكُمْ عَلَى الْعَالَمِينَ﴾

“And that I favoured you over all the worlds” [Surah Al-Baqarah: 47].

Hence Allah ﷻ reminds the children of Israel of His bounties. As for us Muslims, He also reminds us about His bounties and He distinguishes between those whose hearts are attached to blessings and those who are drowning in the glorifications of the Giver of blessings, and He instructs those from the nation of The Prophet ﷺ to be consistent in remembering Him:

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اذْكُرُوا اللَّهَ ذِكْرًا كَثِيرًا﴾

“Oh you who have believed, remember Allah with much remembrance.”

[Surah Al-Ahzab: 41].

Hence the believer does not get distracted or busied by his blessings from the Giver of blessings, rather he lives with the Giver of blessings and his tongue is in a state that announces this as the gnosis (those of inward purity) say:

“To affirm other than You is to ascribe partners (in worship) according to our creed,

To erase out others is our religion, Oh delight of the eye!”

Allah ﷻ reminds the children of Israel to remember His favours onto them. He saved them from the people of Pharaoh and what they used to afflict them with of torture and punishment. It is a freedom from a punishment that used to be afflicted on them. And this is a blessing. Similarly, their being saved from drowning in the sea prevented punishment from afflicting them and this is a blessing as well.

And Allah’s ﷻ word, ﴿آلِ فِرْعَوْنَ﴾ *“the people of Pharaoh”*

means the family of Pharaoh. So, who is Pharaoh?

The Noble Qur’an narrates to us the stories of Pharaoh with the Prophet Musa ﷺ. There is no reliable historical document that is affirmed in its truthfulness, as those who wrote history are human beings who fill it with passion, influence and emotion of what would afflict a human being. Hence those who witness an event in a place, will not narrate it in different narrations and in completely different ways.

As for what is narrated by the Noble Qur’an, they are true stories and there isn’t a word in the Noble Qur’an except that it is exactly the truth. And this is the Noble Qur’an that was revealed to the heart of our Prophet Muhammad ﷺ 1400 years ago. Two pages of handwritten Qur’an has been discovered recently in the University of Birmingham in Britain, and after undergoing chemical analysis, it has been found that these two pages are from the time of

the first three caliphs, and this is of the proofs that this Holy Qur'an is indeed from Allah ﷻ.

The Holy Qur'an speaks about Pharaoh and his people and Pharaoh is a term that is used to refer to the ruler of Egypt during a specific time in history. It is not the name of a person, rather it is a title. Some of the pharaohs' names are known, such as Thutmose the First and Ramses the Second and others.

As for what we see in Surah Yusuf, the Holy Qur'an refers to the ruler of Egypt as a king and not a Pharaoh as in Allah's ﷻ word:

﴿وَقَالَ الْمَلِكُ ائْتُونِي بِهِ اَسْتَخْلِصْهُ لِنَفْسِي﴾

“And the king said, ‘Bring him to me; I will appoint him exclusively for myself.’”

[Surah Yusuf: 54],

while all the other surahs refer to the ruler of Egypt by the term Pharaoh. It has been revealed three or four decades ago when the Rosetta Stone was discovered in Egypt leading to the deciphering of ancient Egyptian hieroglyphics that the period of time during which Prophet Yusuf ﷺ lived was the only period of time in history whereby the rule over Egypt was held by kings who watched over the nation called Hyksos. These kings used to favour the children of Israel because of Prophet Yusuf ﷺ. However, when the pharaohs took over and overthrew the Hyksos and freed Egypt from them, they oppressed the children of Israel due to their previous alliance with the Hyksos. As such we see a historical miracle of the Noble Qur'an, a proof that it is revelation, sent down by the Lord of the Worlds.

﴿وَإِذْ نَجَّيْنَاكُمْ مِنْ آلِ فِرْعَوْنَ يَسُومُونَكُمْ سُوءَ الْعَذَابِ يُدَبِّحُونَ أَبْنَاءَكُمْ وَيَسْتَحْيُونَ نِسَاءَكُمْ ۗ وَفِي ذَلِكُمْ بَلَاءٌ مِّنْ رَبِّكُمْ عَظِيمٌ﴾

“And remember when We saved your forefathers from the people of Pharaoh, who afflicted you with the worst torment, slaughtering your

[newborn] sons and keeping your females alive. And in that was a great trial from your Lord.”:

“Sama” is to afflict a human being with the worst punishment - to punish and humiliate deeply and intensely. This was what Pharaoh and his people did to the children of Israel.

Allah ﷻ has given the children of Israel abundant blessings, of which is numerous prophets, yet all that was seen of them was rebellion, animosity and oppression.

And the numerous prophets sent to the children of Israel is due to their diseases, for if a person was suffering from only one type of disease, he would only require one doctor. However, if he is suffering from a variety of diseases, then he would need a group of doctors. Similarly, the children of Israel have a lot of diseases, hence they require a number of prophets.

Allah ﷻ also favoured them by saving them from Pharaoh, who used to torture the children of Israel and slaughter their sons while leaving their daughters to live for reasons that are not mentioned in the Holy Qur’an.

There is in the science of Qur’anic exegesis (*tafseer*) something called the *Israeliyat*, which are basically stories and fables that have been inserted and infused into some of the *tafseers* in order to change the features of Qur’anic exegesis (*tafseer*).

Exegesis of the Holy Qur’an is a work by human beings, and what is known is that nobody is really able to give a full exegesis of the Noble Qur’an, rather all that is done is that lessons and warnings are derived. Nothing can be called an exegesis except what came authentically from the Prophet of Allah ﷺ, that was sent to his noble heart and he was affected by it and he acted on it.

And we, in “At-Tafseer Al Jaami”, we do not take anything unless it is from the Holy Qur’an- the Holy Qur’an is explained by the Holy Qur’an, what has

been authenticated by the Prophet ﷺ that is connected to *tafseer*, and what is found in the main established books of *tafseer*.

There are narrations which say that Pharaoh has a dream that his kingship will be ended by a boy who will be from the children of Israel, so he commanded that every boy from the children of Israel be slaughtered so that he would be free. Slaughtering would involve cutting through the jugular vein and causing a person to bleed to death. As for killing, it could be done by other means, such as drowning, strangling, and stoning. Any form of killing, regardless of the method, is a crime and a form of terrorism, done only by those far removed from the way of Allah ﷻ. As for those who follow the way of Allah ﷻ, they would not harm a human being, nor an animal, nor a plant, so how can they be made to kill?

And they said to Pharaoh that if we slaughtered every boy, there would not be anyone left to serve us! At that time, the people of Egypt had forced the children of Israel to do lowly humiliating tasks in their community. So, Pharaoh decided to kill the boys every other year, and Prophet Harun ؑ, the brother of Musa ؑ was born in the year where they did not slaughter the boys hence he was saved. As for Musa ؑ, he was born in the year whereby they were slaughtering the boys so his mother threw him into a river and saved him from being killed. Then Allah ﷻ favoured the children of Israel by saving them from this torture that had afflicted them, and the Holy Qur'an at this point is addressing the Jews who were present in the time of its revelation which is the time of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. And that Allah ﷻ had favoured them by saving their ancestors from the torture of Pharaoh, and if Allah ﷻ had not saved them, their descendants would not have reached Madinah al Munawwarah as we see in the tribes that were in Al Madinah - The Bani An-Nadheer, Bani Qaynuqa' and others.

So the Noble Qur'an addresses the grandchildren of the Jews who lived in the time of Prophet Musa ؑ and those of the Jews who were present in

Madinah during revelation, and reminded them of the torment that afflicted their grandfathers ﴿يَذَّبِحُونَ أَبْنَاءَكُمْ﴾ *“slaughtering your sons”*

the word ‘ibn’ only refers to male children, while the word ‘walad’ could encompass males and females, which is why Allah ﷻ says here:

﴿أَبْنَاءَكُمْ﴾ *“your sons”*

﴿وَيَسْتَحْيُونَ نِسَاءَكُمْ﴾ *“and let your women live”*

meaning they allowed the women to remain alive for service and enjoyment and for other purposes.

And Allah ﷻ reminded them of these great blessings and His favours onto them, addressing these words to the Jews who were living in the Arabian Peninsula during the time of revelation, of the tribe Bani An-Nadheer and the Jews of Khaybar and others besides them. If it was not for this favour onto their grandfathers, they would not have lived and they would not have reached anywhere.

﴿وَفِي ذَلِكَ بَلَاءٌ مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ عَظِيمٌ﴾ *“and in it is a great test from your Lord”*

A test can be good or bad, as Allah ﷻ says:

﴿وَنَبَلُوكُم بِالشَّرِّ وَالْخَيْرِ فِتْنَةً﴾

“And We tested you with evil and with good by way of trial” [Surah Al-Anbiya’: 35].

A trial is a test, hence it can be in goodness, that is, the apparent image of the affair is good but it is in fact istidraj, that is, it brings a person to destruction slowly. Allah ﷻ says:

﴿وَأْمُرِي لَهُمْ ۚ إِنَّ كَيْدِي مَتِينٌ﴾

“And I will give them time. Indeed, my plan is firm.” [Surah Al-A’raaf:183], and

﴿سَنَسَنَدِرْهُمْ مِّنْ حَيْثُ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ﴾

“We will progressively lead them [to destruction] from ways they do not know.” [Surah Al-A’raaf: 182]

and there are many verses that affirm that tests can be by giving, preventing and torment. As what Allah ﷻ says:

﴿تَبَارَكَ الَّذِي بِيَدِهِ الْمُلْكُ وَهُوَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ (١) الَّذِي خَلَقَ الْمَوْتَ وَالْحَيَاةَ لِيَبْلُوَكُمْ أَيُّكُمْ أَحْسَنُ عَمَلًا ۗ وَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الْعَفُورُ (٢)﴾

“Blessed is He in whose hand is the dominion, and He has power over all things. Who created death and life to test you [as to] which of you is best in deed - and He is the Exalted in Might, the Forgiving.” [Surah Al-Mulk: 1-2].

This means, He tests you, as this world is not a place to settle in permanently, rather it is a place where you cannot settle, it is a place of trials and tribulation.

And that the believer must have the firm belief that he might not see any of the rewards of his good deeds in this worldly life. Instead, he needs to attach his heart to the next world and the day of reckoning.

And that Allah ﷻ has promised him (the believer) a good life in this world by His word,

﴿مَنْ عَمِلَ صَالِحًا مِّنْ ذَكَرٍ أَوْ أُنْثَىٰ وَهُوَ مُؤْمِنٌ فَلَنُحْيِيَنَّهٗ حَيَاةً طَيِّبَةً وَلَنَجْزِيَنَّهُمْ أَجْرَهُمْ بِأَحْسَنِ مَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ﴾

“Whoever does righteousness, whether male or female, while he is a believer - We will surely cause him to live a good life, and We will surely give them their reward [in the Hereafter] according to the best of what they used to do.”

[Surah An-Nahl: 97].

Verse 50:

﴿وَإِذْ فَرَقْنَا بِكُمْ الْبَحْرَ فَأَنْجَيْنَاكُمْ وَأَغْرَقْنَا آلَ فِرْعَوْنَ وَأَنْتُمْ تَنْظُرُونَ﴾

“And remember when We parted the sea for you and saved you and drowned the people of Pharaoh while you were looking on.”

Allah ﷻ says ﴿وَإِذْ﴾ which means, ‘and when’, to refer to a specific time frame in which the incident happened.

﴿فَأَنْجَيْنَاكُمْ﴾ *“so We saved you”* from drowning, and it was a calamity that did not take place, and if Allah ﷻ had said, ﴿نَجَّيْنَاكُمْ﴾ *“we saved you”* it would have meant that they were indeed drowned but later saved.

In the previous verse, the torture happened, so the term used is ﴿نَجَّيْنَاكُمْ﴾ *“we saved you”*

and here ﴿فَأَنْجَيْنَاكُمْ﴾ *“so We saved you”* is used as the calamity did not strike.

The word ‘*Bahr*’ means, sea. It generally refers to salt water seas, and could sometimes refer to rivers. Allah ﷻ saved the children of Israel and drowned Pharaoh by the same means. And none is able to do this except Allah ﷻ. He is able to save and destroy by the same means.

As for splitting the sea, there will come verses that will speak about it in detail and mention the stories of Pharaoh catching up with the children of Israel, and there isn’t repetition in the Noble Qur’an, rather it is to shine more light on a story in different places in the Holy Qur’an.

﴿فَأَنْجَيْنَاكُمْ﴾ *“so We saved you”*: meaning we saved you from a torment that almost afflicted you, which is drowning. And the story here did not expand on more than just drowning. This story of the drowning is expanded further in other surahs such as surah Yunus and others.

The stories in the Holy Qur'an come in different narrations in accordance to what needs to be highlighted and from what angle and in accordance to the faith-related lessons that Allah ﷻ wants to teach us - this is not at all repetition.

Here, Allah ﷻ speaks about the fleeing of Prophet Musa عليه السلام with his people and Pharaoh and his army catching up with them. It came to the point where the sea was in front of them and Pharaoh and his army behind them. In another surah, Allah ﷻ says:

﴿فَلَمَّا تَرَأَى الْجَمْعَانِ﴾

“And when the two groups saw one another” [Surah Asy-Syu'ara: 61]

meaning they literally saw each other with their own eyes.

﴿قَالَ أَصْحَابُ مُوسَى إِنَّا لَمُدْرَكُونَ﴾

“the companions of Musa said, "Indeed, we are to be overtaken!"

[Surah Asy-Syu'ara: 61]

meaning they have caught up with us. And Prophet Musa عليه السلام said, with full tranquillity:

﴿كَلَّا﴾

“never!” [Surah Asy-Syu'ara: 62]

by worldly judgement, the answer should have been “yes” as they saw Pharaoh and his army with their own eyes, however Prophet Musa عليه السلام said with all conviction and reliance on Allah ﷻ.

﴿كَلَّا إِنَّ مَعِيَ رَبِّي سَيَهْدِينِ﴾

“For surely my Lord is with me, He will guide me” [Surah Asy-Syu'ara: 62].

Hence, he admitted himself into a state of togetherness with Allah ﷻ. And this reminds us of the story of Rasulullah ﷺ with Sayyiduna Abi Bakr رضي الله عنه on the day of migration when they were completely surrounded while they were in the

cave and Abu Bakr ﷺ said, “Oh Rasulallah! If one of them were to look at his feet, he would surely see us!” So Rasulallah ﷺ said to him,

((مَا ظَنُّكَ بِاِثْنَيْنِ اللهُ تَالِثُهُمَا؟))

*“What do you think of two, when Allah is their third?”*⁶²

And the Holy Qur’an recorded it and Allah ﷻ revealed

﴿إِذْ أَخْرَجَهُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا ثَانِيَيْنِ إِذْ هُمَا فِي الْعَارِ إِذْ يَقُولُ لِصَاحِبِهِ لَا تَحْزَنْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ مَعَنَا﴾

“when those who disbelieved had driven him out [of Makkah] as one of two, when they were in the cave and he said to his companion, "Do not grieve; indeed Allah is with us.” [Surah At-Tawbah: 40].

So, for as long as Allah ﷻ is with us, they will never see us, because Allah ﷻ will cause them to go blind to seeing the Prophet ﷺ and his companion, for surely, Allah ﷻ is the Subtly Kind, the Knowing.

And whosoever is with Allah ﷻ, there is no fear for him nor will he grieve. He will not fear for what could possibly happen and will not grieve over what has happened. And with this Allah ﷻ gives advice to the believers to remember Him always.

﴿فَاذْكُرُونِي أَذْكَرُكُمْ﴾

“So remember Me and I will remember you” [Surah Al-Baqarah: 152].

This is because the remembrance of Allah ﷻ is medication while remembering others besides Him is a disease, and that our Prophet ﷺ said to Sayyidina Ibn Abbas ﷺ:

((احْفَظِ اللهُ بِحَفْظِكَ))

⁶² Sahih al-Bukhari: The Book of Tafseer, Chapter: Surah Bara’ah (At-Tawbah), Hadith no. 4386.

“Guard over the rights of Allah, and Allah will guard over you”⁶³.

Hence it is compulsory to always be present with Allah ﷻ.

And that was how Prophet Musa’s heart was attached to Allah ﷻ, and by this a miracle happened: ﴿وَأِذْ فَرَقْنَا بُكُومَ الْبَحْرِ﴾ *“And when We split the sea for you”*. The drops of water in the sea held together till they became like two enormous mountains on two sides and Allah ﷻ opened up for them a way right in the heart of the sea. So, when the sea split, the traces of the water would have remained making the path in it muddy and barren, however Allah ﷻ made it dry ﴿يَبَسًا﴾ *“dry”* [Surah Taha: 77].

A wind came and made the ground dry for them so that they were able to walk on it. And this only happened when Allah ﷻ commanded Prophet Musa ﷺ to strike the sea with his staff, so he struck it and it split. The doer of the splitting is not the staff, rather it was simply the means, and that Allah ﷻ did not say to the sea “split!” rather He commanded Musa ﷺ to strike the sea with his staff. And this is a lesson - tying together the means with the One who causes - teaching humanity to always seek the means.

Similarly, in the story of Sayyidatina Maryam the chaste, when her Lord said to her:

﴿وَهَزِي إِلَيْكَ بِجِدْعِ النَّخْلَةِ تُسَاقِطُ عَلَيْكَ رُطْبًا حَنِينًا﴾

“And shake towards you the trunk of the palm tree; it will drop upon you ripe, fresh dates.” [Surah Maryam: 25].

Shaking the trunk of a palm tree is not easy, even ten men are not able to do it. However, Allah ﷻ commands her to take the means. So, take the means to achieve something, because this world is a world of means, but live with the One who causes, be present with Allah ﷻ and connect your heart to Him.

⁶³ Sunan at-Tirmizi: Chapters on the Description of the Day of Judgement, ar-Riqaq, and al-Wara’, Hadith no. 2516.

So, the means was to shake the palm tree, and the Causer is Allah ﷻ most high. Hence what is required of you, Oh believer, is to take by the means, and if you do not do so, then you have not obeyed Allah ﷻ, rather you have gone against His commands, as a poet said,

“For surely the doctor has knowledge by which he treats others,

If the death of a person is able to be delayed,

So, if his days of respite are not exhausted,

The doctor will return and the medication has betrayed him”

And the One who cures is Allah ﷻ:

﴿وَإِذَا مَرَضْتُ فَبِهِوَ يَشْفِين﴾

“And when I am ill, it is He who cures me.” [Surah Asy-Syu’ara: 80].

Hence it is on us to take the means, this is the principle that Allah ﷻ has made for life. Allah ﷻ has informed us that He created the heavens and the earth and whatever is between them in 6 days, and this is to show means as He is definitely able to create by the word ﴿كُن﴾ “be”. For Allah ﷻ says:

﴿إِنَّمَا أَمْرُهُ إِذَا أَرَادَ شَيْئًا أَنْ يَقُولَ لَهُ كُنْ فَيَكُونُ﴾

“His command is only when He intends a thing that He says to it, ‘Be,’ and it is.” [Surah Yaaseen:82].

However, He has created means for us to take them, and what is expected is that we be with The Causer of everything.

So, when Pharaoh and his army wanted to catch up with Musa ﷺ and those with him by the same path, Musa ﷺ considered striking the sea again with his staff so as to drown Pharaoh and his army, but his Lord said to him:

﴿وَاتْرِكِ الْبَحْرَ رَهْوًا إِنَّهُمْ جُنْدٌ مُّعْرِضُونَ﴾

“And leave the sea in stillness. Indeed, they are an army to be drowned.”

[Surah Ad-Dukhan: 24]

meaning leave the sea as it is as Allah ﷻ wanted to save them and destroy their enemy by the same means: by the single strike of the staff. Hence, they were saved and the people of Pharaoh were destroyed by the same means:

Musa ﷺ and his people were saved by the striking of the staff

Pharaoh and his army were destroyed by the same striking of the staff

And it was not the staff that struck, rather it was Allah’s ﷻ word ‘kun’ that struck it.

Hence the gifts were doubled: The gift of Musa ﷺ and those with him being saved, and the gift of Pharaoh and his army being destroyed, these are 2 blessings.

Verse 51:

﴿وَإِذْ وَاَعَدْنَا مُوسَىٰ اَرْبَعِيْنَ لَيْلَةً ثُمَّ اتَّخَذْتُمُ الْعِجْلَ مِنْ بَعْدِهِ وَاَنْتُمْ ظَالِمُوْنَ﴾

“And remember when We made an appointment with Musa for forty nights. Then you took [for worship] the calf after him, while you were wrongdoers.”

Why did Allah ﷻ make an appointment with Prophet Musa ﷺ for 40 nights?

Did He not speak to him when he was on the side of the mountain of Tur? So why did Allah ﷻ make an appointment with him a 2nd time in the same place that He spoke to him?

He made a 2nd appointment because in the first meeting, Allah ﷻ did not give him a *Manhaj*, ie a guided way. There are other surahs in which the first

conversation at Tur was described with more elaboration for example in surah Taha:

﴿طه (١) مَا أَنْزَلْنَا عَلَيْكَ الْقُرْآنَ لِتَشْقَىٰ (٢)﴾

“Ta, Ha. We have not sent down to you the Qur'an so that you be distressed”
[Surah Taha:1-2].

And we are delighted with the Holy Qur'an by the bounty of Allah ﷻ, and never will we be distressed, and we will be delighted by its *tafseer* and never will we be distressed by the permission of Allah ﷻ.

﴿إِلَّا تَذِكْرَةً لِّمَن يَخْشَىٰ (٣) تَنْزِيلًا مِّمَّنْ خَلَقَ الْأَرْضَ وَالسَّمَاوَاتِ الْعُلَىٰ (٤) الرَّحْمَنُ عَلَى الْعَرْشِ اسْتَوَىٰ (٥) لَهُ مَا فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَا وَمَا تَحْتَ الثَّرَىٰ (٦) وَإِن تَجَهَّرْ بِالْقَوْلِ فَإِنَّهُ يَعْلَمُ السِّرَّ وَأَخْفَىٰ (٧) اللَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ ۚ لَهُ الْأَسْمَاءُ الْحُسْنَىٰ (٨) وَهَلْ أَتَاكَ حَدِيثُ مُوسَىٰ (٩) إِذْ رَأَىٰ نَارًا فَقَالَ لِأَهْلِهِ امْكُثُوا إِنِّي آنَسْتُ نَارًا لَّعَلِّي آتِيكُم مِّنْهَا بِقَبَسٍ أَوْ أَجْدُ عَلَى النَّارِ هُدًى (١٠) فَلَمَّا أَتَاهَا نُودِيَ يَا مُوسَىٰ (١١) إِنِّي أَنَا رَبُّكَ فَاخْلَعْ نَعْلَيْكَ ۚ إِنَّكَ بِالْوَادِ الْمُقَدَّسِ طُوًى (١٢)﴾

“But only as a reminder for those who fear [Allah] - A revelation from He who created the earth and highest heavens, The Most Merciful [who is] above the Throne established. To Him belongs what is in the heavens and what is on the earth and what is between them and what is under the soil. And if you speak aloud - then indeed, He knows the secret and what is [even] more hidden. Allah - there is no deity except Him. To Him belongs the best names. And has the story of Musa reached you? - When he saw a fire and said to his family, "Stay here; indeed, I perceived a fire; perhaps I can bring you a torch or find at the fire some guidance." And when he came to it, he was called, "Oh Musa, Indeed, I am your Lord, so remove your sandals. Indeed, you are in the sacred valley of Tuwa.” [Surah Taha: 3-12].

And all of these conversations are not associated with a *Manhaj*, which is the Torah, rather in these conversations there was the placing of obligation on Musa ﷺ, support for him, and informing him of his prophethood. And shifting the gaze to his staff which will have a great role in what was to come, such as

striking the rock, and striking the sea. For this 2nd time, it is to place the obligations on him as he had not been given a guided way at that time. Rather, Allah ﷻ informed him of his prophethood, and obligated him to go to Pharaoh and to request that he send the children of Israel with him.

As for this instance, Allah ﷻ gave Musa ﷺ an appointment to meet Him so as to give him a guided way (*Manhaj*), which is the Torah, which Allah ﷻ has favoured them with after saving them from Pharaoh, just as Allah ﷻ has favoured us Muslims with the Holy Qur'an.

And that the appointment was 40 nights and not days and majority of the divine appointments from Allah ﷻ came by Allah's word ﴿لَيْلَةً﴾ "night"

and not day, for example:

﴿إِنَّا أَنْزَلْنَاهُ فِي لَيْلَةِ الْقَدْرِ﴾

"Indeed, We sent the Qur'an down during the Night of Decree."

[Surah Al-Qadr: 1], and

﴿إِنَّا أَنْزَلْنَاهُ فِي لَيْلَةٍ مُبَارَكَةٍ﴾

"Indeed, We sent it down during a blessed night." [Surah Ad-Dukhan: 3]

except for the day of Arafah. And night is used so that divine appointments will be distributed over the course of the passing of years and the distribution of worship will be in accordance to the moon timings. The moon manifests and sets in the night. Hence Ramadan can come in winter for some years and come in the summer for other years. If it was fixed on the sun, it would come yearly at a specific time (for example August), however Ramadan can come in every season.

So, Musa ﷺ went to the meeting with his Lord to receive the divine guidance (*Manhaj*). He left his people with his brother Harun ﷺ. When Musa ﷺ was away, the children of Israel saw some people worshipping idols and

requested that Harun عليه السلام make for them a physical god that they can see like the idols.

The children of Israel had seen so many miracles yet they denied them while they were certain about it themselves. Then they took the jewellery that was with them and made:

﴿عَجَلًا جَسَدًا لَهُ خُورًا﴾

“a calf that had a sound” [Surah Al-A'raaf: 148]

for them to worship. The women of the children of Israel had taken the jewellery of the people they served thinking that these things were their rights while this was forbidden wealth. And forbidden wealth is cursed in all things. We Muslims do not reward those who disobey Allah ﷻ for our sake; instead we obey Allah ﷻ totally for his sake. So, let those people of crime, hatred and murder listen to this!

It has been narrated that Abu Darda' رضي الله عنه was informed of a man who insulted him so he wrote to him saying, “O my brother! Do not go overboard in insulting us, and make a space for reconciliation, for surely we do not repay those who disobey Allah because of us except that we obey Allah because of them”. Hence a believer obeys Allah ﷻ even when he is in a dispute - he does not kill, nor deceive, nor transgress nor take captive nor steal from... all of these are completely forbidden in our religion.

And what is forbidden will never ever bring any goodness. This is why Allah ﷻ mentioned this story to us for us to take lessons. And Rasulullah ﷺ said:

((إِنَّ اللَّهَ طَيِّبٌ لَا يَقْبَلُ إِلَّا طَيِّبًا، وَإِنَّ اللَّهَ أَمَرَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ بِمَا أَمَرَ بِهِ الْمُرْسَلِينَ، فَقَالَ (سبحانه وتعالى):

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الرُّسُلُ كُلُوا مِنَ الطَّيِّبَاتِ وَاعْمَلُوا صَالِحًا إِنِّي بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ عَلِيمٌ﴾

“For surely, Allah is pure, He does not accept except what is pure, and surely Allah has commanded the believers with what He has commanded the

prophets, Allah said, “O messengers, eat from the good foods and work righteousness. Indeed, I am all- Knowing of what you do.’

[Surah Al-Mu’minun:51]⁶⁴

He has commanded us to only eat what is pure, hence what is forbidden will bring evil consequences onto the human being, and just as how it would bring negative consequences onto him, it will bring negative consequences onto his descendants.

The children of Israel wronged their own selves by wanting to make Allah ﷻ into something physical, while belief in Allah ﷻ is belief in the unseen, as Allah ﷻ cannot be encompassed by sight nor can anyone see Him. However, the children of Israel want to make a god in accordance to their own desires because they are people of materialism, that is, they do not believe unless they see it in front of them such that they can perceive it with their senses and touch it. For this reason, they requested Harun عليه السلام to make for them a god that they can see for them to worship. They do not understand the meaning of worship, in that worship is obedience. This idol does not command nor prohibit, so how can it be worshipped? This was the apex of sin, to ask that a physical god be made for them.

Verse 52:

﴿ثُمَّ عَفَوْنَا عَنْكُمْ مِّنْ بَعْدِ ذَلِكَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُونَ﴾

“Then We forgave you after that so perhaps you would be grateful.”

They committed a great sin another time, but Allah ﷻ forgave them as Allah ﷻ wants to preserve the essence of goodness in man, and open for them the door of repentance. So, they repented then they disobeyed then they

⁶⁴ Sahih Muslim: The Book of Zakat, Chapter: The Acceptance of charity that comes from the earnestly earned money, Hadith no. 1015.

repented and disobeyed. Every grave sin requires repentance from it as repentance will make a person stop doing the wrong action, and will repeatedly encourage him to rectify himself and to abandon the acts of disobedience. These acts lead to evil in the society, like stealing and taking the rights of others and killing and fornication and every evil did that harms people. Repentance is the key to the rectification of society and Allah ﷻ says:

﴿إِنَّ الْحَسَنَاتِ يُذْهِبْنَ السَّيِّئَاتِ﴾

“For surely, good deeds remove evil deeds.” [Surah Hud: 114]

and this is a really great matter, hence it is not enough for a believer to simply repent, rather he should do good acts to cover over his bad acts.

As how Rasulullah ﷺ said:

﴿وَأَتْبِعِ السَّيِّئَةَ الْحَسَنَةَ تَمْحُهَا﴾

*“Follow up bad deeds with good deeds, it will wipe it away”.*⁶⁵

And the community will be pleased with you if you turn away from your wrong doings. If you had stayed on with your sins, you will be wretched and the community will be harmed by you. Just as how Allah ﷻ has forbidden you from stealing the wealth of others, He has forbidden others from taking your wealth, hence the guided way from God is always for the benefit and happiness of humanity. For Allah ﷻ has says:

﴿قُلْ يَا عِبَادِيَ الَّذِينَ أَسْرَفُوا عَلَىٰ أَنفُسِهِمْ لَا تَقْنَطُوا مِن رَّحْمَةِ اللَّهِ﴾

“Say, ‘O My servants who have transgressed against themselves [by sinning], do not despair of the mercy of Allah’” [Surah Az-Zumar: 53].

Allah ﷻ opened the door of repentance for the children of Israel and said,

⁶⁵ Sunan at-Tirmizi: The Book of Righteousness and Joining of the Ties of Kinship, Chapter: Having Good Relations with People, Hadith no. 1987.

﴿لَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُونَ﴾ “so perhaps you would be grateful”, that is, perhaps you might be grateful, and He did not say, perhaps you might deny.

It is by gratitude that blessings are preserved, rather they are increased, as Allah says:

﴿لَئِن شَكَرْتُمْ لَأَزِيدَنَّكُمْ﴾

“If you are grateful, for surely I will indeed increase you” [Surah Ibrahim: 7]

and that Prophet Isa عليه السلام said to his Lord:

﴿إِن تُعَذِّبُهُمْ فَإِنَّهُمْ عَبْدُكَ وَإِن تَغْفِرْ لَهُمْ فَإِنَّكَ أَنْتَ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ﴾

“If You should punish them - indeed they are Your servants; but if You forgive them - indeed it is You who is the Exalted in Might, the Wise.”

[Surah Al-Ma'idah: 118].

And he said “Exalted in Might, the Wise” because Allah ﷻ is independent of having to punish His servants, but He opens the door of repentance so that they will be grateful and not deny (the blessings).

Verse 53:

﴿وَإِذْ آتَيْنَا مُوسَى الْكِتَابَ وَالْفُرْقَانَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَهْتَدُونَ﴾

“And remember when We gave Musa the Scripture and criterion that perhaps you would be guided.”

Allah ﷻ reminds the children of Israel of the miracle of the book which is the Torah. The *Furqan* here is what is in the Torah that separates between truth and falsehood. This is why the battle of Badr is called *Furqan* as it separated between truth and falsehood.

So, is the rejection of the children of Israel of all of these blessings due to faith, or worship, or affirmation of what our Prophet Muhammad ﷺ came with?

And they knew what he ﷺ came with is true, but they turned away from this truth. Indeed, Allah ﷻ has mentioned the description of the Prophet ﷺ in the Torah but they rejected him.

Allah ﷻ sent books to His prophets so as to rectify society and guide mankind and to bring them bliss in this world and the hereafter. Hence the divine guidance of Allah ﷻ is sent for the rectification of this world and for bliss and success in the hereafter. In the guidance is bliss for humans, in this world and the next.

And this religion does not seek anything other than gifts and goodness and bliss for all of man.

Verse 54:

﴿وَإِذْ قَالَ مُوسَىٰ لِقَوْمِهِ يَا قَوْمِ إِنَّكُمْ ظَلَمْتُمْ أَنفُسَكُمْ بِاتِّخَاذِكُمُ الْعِجَلَ فَنُوبُوا إِلَىٰ بَارِئِكُمْ فَاقْتُلُوا أَنفُسَكُمْ ذَٰلِكُمْ خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ عِنْدَ بَارِئِكُمْ فَتَابَ عَلَيْكُمْ ۗ إِنَّهُ هُوَ التَّوَّابُ الرَّحِيمُ ۝﴾

“And remember when Musa said to his people, ‘Oh my people, indeed you have wronged yourselves by your taking of the calf [for worship]. So, repent to your Creator and kill yourselves. That is best for [all of] you in the sight of your Creator.’ Then He accepted your repentance; indeed, He is the Accepting of repentance, the Merciful.”

These snippets from the stories in the Holy Qur’an takes up a large portion of the Holy Qur’an about ¼ of it. These stories are told so as to make firm the heart of the Prophet ﷺ.

﴿وَكُلًّا نَّقُصُّ عَلَيْكَ مِنْ أَنبَاءِ الرُّسُلِ مَا نُثَبِّتُ بِهِ فُؤَادَكَ ۗ وَجَاءَكَ فِي هَذِهِ الْحَقُّ وَمَوْعِظَةٌ وَذِكْرٌ لِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ﴾

“And each [story] We relate to you from the news of the messengers is that by which We make firm your heart. And there has come to you, in this, the truth and an instruction and a reminder for the believers.” [Surah Hud: 120].

It is also to derive lessons from history, lessons for community living, lessons in government and lessons in economy and anything that has to do with human activities in life. And these are the true stories in the Holy Qur'an.

After the Holy Qur'an narrated to us the story of Prophet Adam عليه السلام the father of mankind, and his wife in Surah Baqarah, the procession of divine revelation onto earth moved to the story of Prophet Musa عليه السلام with the children of Israel because they were the worst in denying the favours of Allah عز وجل and in spreading corruption on earth and spilling blood. And also, because the diseases in them are recurring and persistent over the passage of time.

From the miracles of the Noble Qur'an is that it focuses on the spiritual leader of the prophets of the children of Israel (Musa عليه السلام) and on his people, as there will be important principles and lessons for the future, for the nation of Muhammad ﷺ in their interactions with the children of Israel. This is what we are seeing today from the violation of the sanctity of Masjidil Aqsa and claiming for themselves land in the heart of the Arab Nations (Palestine).

And these instances that Allah عز وجل is presenting to us are the experiences between the children of Israel and Prophet Musa عليه السلام, beginning with the term ﴿وَإِذْ﴾, which means, "*and when*".

﴿وَإِذْ﴾ "*and when*", referring to a time period, as every occurrence requires a place and time to occur in. And Allah عز وجل says ﴿وَإِذْ﴾ "*and when*", that is, remember in such-and-such a time, addressing the children of Israel who lived in the time of the Prophet ﷺ in the Arabian Peninsula.

Allah عز وجل addresses all of the following generations by just addressing the ancestors of those who lived in the time of revelation. And the lessons hold a general meaning and not a specific reason. The word of Allah عز وجل encompasses all eras, places, races, and human beings with their different beliefs and thoughts. So, in going through this *tafseer*, we address the minds of human beings directly, with proofs and evidence and *tafseer* based on knowledge.

So, after Allah ﷻ bestowed His blessings on the children of Israel and saved them from the torment of Pharaoh and saved them from drowning, they sought to have a god who was physical.

Apostasy in this world developed from the thinking of the Jews. They wanted a god who was physical, that they could see with their own eyes and touch with their own hands. Thus, when Prophet Musa ﷺ was absent while he went to receive the Torah from his Lord, and he left his brother Prophet Harun ﷺ in charge, they began to worship the golden calf. So, Prophet Musa ﷺ said to them: ﴿إِنَّكُمْ ظَلَمْتُمْ أَنْفُسَكُمْ﴾ *“For surely you have wronged yourselves”* because when a human being does not worship Allah ﷻ, he does not wrong Allah ﷻ, rather he wrongs himself. That is because Allah ﷻ is in no need of human worship, rather He commanded human beings to worship Him so that He can give them (of His gifts). This is so because if you worship Allah ﷻ, you will not worship others besides Him. The height of freedom and the nobility of man is in the worship of Allah ﷻ alone so that man does not become enslaved to others. “Why do you enslave the people when their mothers gave birth to them in freedom?” The apex of freedom and the nobility of man is when his faith is such that the One who brings harm, and benefit, the One who gives and prevents, the One who brings life and causes death and that the King of the kingdom is Allah ﷻ, and none amongst man is equal to him.

So indeed, Prophet Musa ﷺ beseeched Allah ﷻ by calling onto Him to accept the repentance of the children of Israel even though their sin was major, like the sin of Iblis, may Allah ﷻ curse him, who argued with his Lord saying:

﴿أَنَا خَيْرٌ مِنْهُ﴾

“I am better than him!” [Surah Al-A’raaf: 12].

As for the sin of Prophet Adam ﷺ, it was not major, because he disobeyed the commandment due to his weakness then he repented, hence Allah ﷻ institutionalised repentance in this religion.

As for the children of Israel, they disobeyed Allah ﷻ by their arrogance when they worshipped the calf that they moulded from jewellery, hence Prophet Musa ﷺ said to them:

﴿إِنَّكُمْ ظَلَمْتُمْ أَنْفُسَكُمْ بِاتِّخَاذِكُمُ الْعِجْلَ فَتُوبُوا إِلَىٰ بَارئِكُمْ فَاقْتُلُوا أَنْفُسَكُمْ﴾ *“And remember when Musa said to his people, ‘O my people, indeed you have wronged yourselves by your taking of the calf [for worship]. So, repent to your Creator and kill yourselves...’* and the word “Barī”, which means, Originator of creation that never had the likeness of it before. The word “bara as-sahm”, means to create even the finest detail with a lot of precision and measurement. It is similar to proportioning. As Allah ﷻ says:

﴿فَإِذَا سَوَّيْتُهُ وَنَفَخْتُ فِيهِ مِنْ رُوحِي فَقَعُوا لَهُ سَاجِدِينَ﴾

“And when I have proportioned him and breathed into him of My [created] soul, then fall down to him in prostration.” [Surah Al-Hijr: 29].

And Musa ﷺ said to his people, ﴿فَتُوبُوا إِلَىٰ بَارئِكُمْ﴾ *“So repent to your Creator”* and he instituted for them a way of atoning for their sins which was to kill themselves so that their repentance would be accepted, and what this means is that those who did not worship the calf are to kill those who did and it was not a command to commit suicide. This was their atonement for the sin, and if they did this, Allah ﷻ would accept their repentance and not cast them into the fire of hell. So, Allah ﷻ turned to them and accepted their repentance by His mercy and not their deeds.

Human beings enter paradise by the mercy of Allah ﷻ and not by his deeds. It has reached us in a hadith, that Rasulullah ﷺ said:

“None of you will enter paradise by his deeds”. They said, “Not even you, Oh Rasulullah?” He said, *“Not even me. Unless Allah immerses me in His mercy and bounty”*⁶⁶. And Allah ﷻ says:

⁶⁶ Musnad Ahmed Ibn Hambal: Musnad Abi Hurairah, Hadith no. 7473.

﴿وَأَنْ لَّيْسَ لِلْإِنْسَانِ إِلَّا مَا سَعَى (٣٩) وَأَنَّ سَعْيَهُ سَوْفَ يُرَى (٤٠) ثُمَّ يُجْزَاهُ الْجَزَاءَ الْأَوْفَى (٤١)﴾

“And that there is not for man except that [good] for which he strives. And that his effort is going to be seen - Then he will be recompensed for it with the fullest recompense” [Surah An-Najm: 39-41].

Hence the human being is held to account by his deeds. And if Allah ﷻ had not placed paradise as a reward for good deeds, we would not be able to force ourselves to do it. So, by that Allah ﷻ makes paradise a reward for good deeds, this means that we do not enter paradise except by Allah’s ﷻ mercy. Hence it is true that entrance into paradise is built upon deeds, however it is from the mercy of Allah ﷻ that He made the reward of good deeds paradise. Also from His mercy, He instituted repentance from sin. Hence for the human being, whenever he falls into sin, he must take the way of repentance so that Allah ﷻ will turn to him.

And this is how Allah ﷻ bestowed His favours on the children of Israel, He instituted for them repentance and renewed for them atonement for their sins and accepted their repentance from them. And He turned to them, for surely, He is the oft-returning, the merciful.

These stories are not in chronological order, that is, they do not follow the sequence in time, rather they are scenes and incidences that Allah ﷻ highlights for nations and for humanity to gain from them enlightenment from these experiences. We see how the children of Israel left the paths of faith and how Allah ﷻ had given them of His bounties.

Verse 55:

﴿وَإِذْ قُلْتُمْ يَا مُوسَىٰ لَنْ نُؤْمِنَ لَكَ حَتَّىٰ نَرَى اللَّهَ جَهْرَةً فَأَخَذَتْكُمُ الصَّاعِقَةُ وَأَنْتُمْ تَنْظُرُونَ﴾

“And remember when you said, “Oh Musa, we will never believe you until we see Allah clearly”; so the thunderbolt took you while you were looking on.”

After all these favours and blessings from Allah ﷻ, and after Allah ﷻ turned to them and accepted their repentance, they said to Prophet Musa ﷺ:

﴿لَنْ نُؤْمِنَ لَكَ حَتَّىٰ نَرَى اللَّهَ جَهْرَةً﴾ *“we will never believe you until we see Allah clearly”* and this was the literal physical gaze that they had.

From the greatness of Allah ﷻ is that He is not seen:

﴿لَا تُدْرِكُهُ الْأَبْصَارُ وَهُوَ يُدْرِكُ الْأَبْصَارَ وَهُوَ اللَّطِيفُ الْخَبِيرُ﴾

“Vision perceives Him not, but He perceives [all] vision; and He is the Subtle, the Acquainted.” [Surah Al-An’aam: 103].

And that faith is not by seeing something physically, it cannot be called faith if it is something physical, we cannot say we *believe* in something that is physically perceivable. For example, I cannot say, “I believe that this pen that is in my hand exists.” This is real. However, if it was said to me that there is a pen outside of this place, I could possibly believe that even though it is absent from my senses as I am able to see writings and touch products that point towards the existence of the pen. And for Allah ﷻ is the highest example, that is, none can be likened to Him. However, these examples are simply to allow the mind to understand better.

Hence, faith or belief is not by seeing something present in front of me, this is knowledge. Faith is believeng something that is unperceivable by my five senses.

Allah ﷻ says to us:

﴿وَفِي أَنْفُسِكُمْ أَفَلَا تُبْصِرُونَ﴾

“And in yourselves. Then will you not see?” [Surah Adz-Dzariyat: 21].

This verse points to a lot of things, among which is this soul that we do not perceive nor see.

﴿وَيَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ الرُّوحِ قُلِ الرُّوحُ مِنْ أَمْرِ رَبِّي﴾

“And they ask you, [O Muhammad], about the soul. Say, ‘The soul is of the affair of my Lord.’” [Surah Al-Isra’: 85].

There are many things in existence that we do not see nor perceive, and this does not mean that these things do not exist. Consider the air around us. There are many germs that we do not see but they exist. We feel their effects and we might be able to see them through a microscope.

And these people wanted a god with a physical body in front of them that they can see with their own eyes. Hence, they requested to see Allah ﷻ clearly, physically. So, Allah ﷻ says:

﴿فَأَخَذَتْكُمُ الصَّاعِقَةُ وَأَنْتُمْ تَنْظُرُونَ﴾ “so the thunderbolt took you while you were looking on”. A person might say, Prophet Musa ﷺ, too, asked to see Allah ﷻ:

﴿قَالَ رَبِّ ارْنِي أَنْظُرْ إِلَيْكَ ۗ قَالَ لَنْ تَرَانِي وَلَكِنْ انظُرْ إِلَى الْجَبَلِ فَإِنِ اسْتَقَرَّ مَكَانَهُ فَسَوْفَ تَرَانِي﴾

“he said, ‘My Lord, show me [Yourself] that I may look at You.’ [Allah] said, ‘You will not see Me, but look at the mountain; if it should remain in its place, then you will see Me.’” [Surah Al-A’raaf: 143].

So, what is the difference between his request and the request of the children of Israel?

The answer: Musa ﷺ actually said: ﴿رَبِّ ارْنِي أَنْظُرْ إِلَيْكَ﴾ “My Lord, show me [Yourself] that I may look at You.”

which means he sought the vision from Allah ﷻ, hence he is a believer in Him and he did not make this vision a condition for his belief in Allah ﷻ.

It is not possible to see Allah ﷻ in this world, because the body of the human being and his senses have limited perception. And the capability of the body in this world is different from the magnitude of a person's vision of Allah ﷻ in the hereafter. And Allah ﷻ says in describing the people of paradise,

﴿وُجُوهُ يَوْمَئِذٍ تَأْضِرُّهُ (٢٢) إِلَىٰ رَبِّهَا نَاطِرَةٌ (٢٣)﴾

“[Some] faces, that Day, will be radiant, Looking at their Lord.”

[Surah Al-Qiyamah: 22-23].

A human being could invent devices that will allow him to see what he cannot see with his own eyes, like spectacles which are used when eyesight is poor, hence a person can see well through it. Glory be to Allah ﷻ. Allah ﷻ has power over everything.

He was able to show Musa ﷺ His noble countenance but He wanted to teach Musa ﷺ etiquette so He ﷻ says:

﴿لَنْ تَرَانِي وَلَكِنْ انظُرْ إِلَى الْجَبَلِ فَإِنِ اسْتَقَرَّ مَكَانَهُ فَسَوْفَ تَرَانِي﴾

“You will not see Me, but look at the mountain; if it should remain in place, then you will see Me.” [Surah Al-A'raaf, 143].

“لَنْ تَرَانِي” (you will never see Me) meaning so do not seek to see Me, but look at the effect of the manifestation of My Greatness:

﴿فَلَمَّا تَجَلَّىٰ رَبُّهُ لِلْجَبَلِ جَعَلَهُ دَكًّا وَخَرَّ مُوسَىٰ صَعِقًا﴾

“But when his Lord appeared to the mountain, He rendered it level, and Musa fell unconscious.” [Surah Al-A'raaf: 143].

The mountain was not able to remain in place. By just the manifestation of the greatness of Allah ﷻ on the mountain, it collapsed to dust and Musa ﷺ fell unconscious.

As for the children of Israel, they said: ﴿يَا مُوسَىٰ لَنْ نُؤْمِنَ لَكَ حَتَّىٰ نَرَى اللَّهَ جَهْرَةً﴾

“O Musa, we will never believe you until we see Allah clearly.”

while Prophet Musa ﷺ did not deny his belief in Allah ﷻ when he said:

﴿رَبِّ أَرِنِي أَنْظُرْ إِلَيْكَ﴾ *“My Lord, show me [Yourself] that I may look at You.”* He

believed in the existence of Allah ﷻ but due to his love for Allah ﷻ, he wanted to honour himself. And Allah ﷻ had honoured him by making him the one whom Allah ﷻ spoke to (kaleem), so he longed for the vision. And he asked for it with immense etiquette and was very precise and careful in his asking as if saying, “if you would like for it, Oh Lord!” and he did not say, “Let me see you!” He knows that this vision will not happen unless Allah ﷻ allowed for it and by His word “Be!”. However, this affair is settled in that none will see Allah ﷻ in this world, not even the prophets.

Verse 56:

﴿ثُمَّ بَعَثْنَاكُمْ مِن بَعْدِ مَوْتِكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُونَ﴾

“Then We revived you after your death that perhaps you would be grateful.”

The thunderclap seized the children of Israel and they died. Then Allah ﷻ brought them back to life after their death.

As for Musa ﷺ, he did not die. Rather, he fell unconscious due to the great glory of Allah ﷻ manifested onto the mountain. When he regained consciousness:

﴿فَلَمَّا أَفَاقَ قَالَ سُبْحَانَكَ تُبْتُ إِلَيْكَ وَأَنَا أَوَّلُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ﴾

“And when he awoke, he said, "Exalted are You! I have repented to You, and I am the first of the believers.” [Surah Al-A'raaf: 143]

He ﷺ repented from ever asking this again.

Physical miracles were repeated in their time. For example, Allah ﷻ would cause some people to die in front of them then bring them back to life so as to make it firm in them the reality of the resurrection. And we find this in several examples such as the story of:

﴿مَرَّ عَلَى قَرْيَةٍ وَهِيَ خَاوِيَةٌ عَلَى عُرُوشِهَا قَالَ أَنَّى يُحْيِي هَذِهِ اللَّهُ بَعْدَ مَوْتِهَا فَأَمَاتَهُ اللَّهُ مِائَةَ عَامٍ ثُمَّ بَعَثَهُ﴾

“the one who passed by a township which had fallen into ruin. He said, ‘How will Allah bring this to life after its death?’ So, Allah caused him to die for a hundred years; then He revived him.” [Surah Al-Baqarah: 259].

The majority opinion is that this was Prophet Uzair. Similar to this was Prophet Isa ﷺ, who used to bring the dead back to life by the permission of Allah ﷻ, meaning by the divine command of Allah ﷻ, “Be!”

Just like this, Allah ﷻ raised the children of Israel after their deaths due to the request and beseeching of Prophet Musa ﷺ. who feared the discontinuation of their lineage if they all died.

Verse 57:

﴿وَوَهَبْنَا لَكُمْ أَلْمَامَ وَأَنْزَلْنَا عَلَيْكُمُ الْمَنَّاءَ وَالسَّلْوىَ كُلُوا مِنْ طَيِّبَاتِ مَا رَزَقْنَاكُمْ وَمَا ظَلَمُونَا وَلَكِنْ كَانُوا أَنْفُسَهُمْ يَظْلِمُونَ﴾

“And We shaded you with clouds and sent down to you manna and quails, [saying], ‘Eat from the good things with which We have provided you.’ And they wronged Us not - but they were [only] wronging themselves.”

Then, Allah ﷻ reminds the children of Israel of His blessings and favours and His preference onto them, and that He preferred them not because they are the chosen people of Allah ﷻ as they have claimed, rather it is because of how much they were tested and how Allah ﷻ keeps accepting their repentance and the great number of prophets sent down to them.

They were with Prophet Musa ﷺ in the desert where there was no water nor vegetation, so Allah ﷻ shaded them with clouds to protect them from the scorching heat of the sun when there was nothing around them to shade them. So, the clouds came as a mercy from Allah ﷻ, just as how He sent to them ‘mann’ and ‘salwa’ as food for them without any effort on their part.

Mann: It is a type of sweet that looks like red specks that gathers in the morning on the leaves of trees and they can be found mainly in Iraq. The people would come early in the morning and spread a white sheet under the tree then they shake the tree until the mann would fall off. The taste of it is sweet like honey and it is easily digested.

As for *Salwa*, it is a type of bird. It is said that it is a fleshy type of bird and it was said that it would gather in front of them. They would take it and slaughter it and eat it.

And this nourishment from what is pure came to them by the word ‘Be!’ and not by the command ‘Do!’ while Allah ﷻ usually gives us favours by commandments using imperatives such as ‘plant’, ‘spend’, ‘harvest’, and these are from the gifts of Allah ﷻ as well. As for mann and salwa, Allah ﷻ granted them these by the word “be!”, without requesting that they do anything at all to attain this. They were given all this without any effort on their part.

﴿كُلُوا مِنْ طَيِّبَاتِ مَا رَزَقْنَاكُمْ وَمَا ظَلَمُونَا وَلَكِنْ كَانُوا أَنْفُسَهُمْ يَظْلِمُونَ﴾

“Eat from the good things with which We have provided you.” And they wronged Us not - but they were [only] wronging themselves.”:

For surely, those who deny the blessings they get, they do not wrong Allah ﷻ, rather they wrong themselves. With human beings, you will wrong others when you deny the favours that they have done for you, but with Allah ﷻ, you do not wrong Him with your denial, rather you only wrong yourself. This is because Allah ﷻ is in no need of you, rather you are in need of Him in this world and in the next world. The human being lives in an existence that is constantly changing - today he is healthy and the next he is sick; today he is rich and the next he is poor; today he is young and the next day he is old; today he is alive and the next day he is dead; hence blessings too are not permanent on a person, so either he leaves it or it leaves him and there is no other way around it. There is no human being ever, who has a blessing that lasts forever (in this world). Are you able to stay young, or alive or healthy all the time? No, you are not able to. Hence you are always changing, and you are not able to wrong Allah ﷻ by your denial, rather you are just harming yourself if you disobey.

Verse 58:

﴿وَإِذْ قُلْنَا ادْخُلُوا هَذِهِ الْقَرْيَةَ فَكُلُوا مِنْهَا حَيْثُ شِئْتُمْ رَغَدًا وَاَدْخُلُوا الْبَابَ سُجَّدًا وَقُولُوا حِطَّةٌ نَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ خَطَايَاكُمْ ۗ وَسَنَزِيدُ الْمُحْسِنِينَ﴾

“And [recall] when We said, "Enter this city and eat from it wherever you will in [ease and] abundance, and enter the gate bowing humbly and say, 'Relieve us of our burdens.' We will [then] forgive your sins for you, and We will increase the doers of good [in goodness and reward].”

So when the children of Israel refused provision from the sky of the manna and the salwa, and they were not impressed by what Allah ﷻ has bestowed and favoured them with, rather they arrogantly rejected them, their Lord said to them, ﴿ادْخُلُوا هَذِهِ الْقَرْيَةَ فَكُلُوا مِنْهَا حَيْثُ شِئْتُمْ رَغَدًا﴾

“Enter this city and eat from it wherever you will in [ease and] abundance,”, meaning, enter in bliss and peace.

﴿وَادْخُلُوا الْبَابَ سُجَّدًا﴾ *“and enter the gate bowing humbly”*, meaning humbling yourselves to Allah ﷻ, being obedient and grateful to Him most high.

﴿وَقُولُوا حِطَّةً﴾ *“and say, 'Relieve us of our burdens.'”*: meaning ask Allah ﷻ to remove from you your sins by His forgiveness.

﴿نَغْفِرَ لَكُمْ خَطَايَاكُمْ ۗ وَسَنَزِيدُ الْمُحْسِنِينَ﴾ *“We will [then] forgive your sins for you, and We will increase the doers of good [in goodness and reward].”*

Ihsan, which means to show excellence to someone, also means to do more of something. For example, when giving *zakat*, to give more than the compulsory is *ihsan*. Hence the extra that you give in addition to the *zakat* is charity and charity is a type of *ihsan*. And *ihsan* in its general meaning as said by Rasulullah ﷺ is; To worship Allah as if you see Him and if you do not see Him then, for sure, He sees you. And he ﷺ did not say, ‘as if He sees you’ because He sees you, literally. As for you, it was said, “as if you see Him” because you do not see Him. Like if you were in the presence of your father in your home, you would honour him because he is in front of you as you can see him! Or if a person of high esteem is in front of you and he is a person of importance and value to you, how would you behave in front of him? And for Allah ﷻ is the highest example.

Ihsan is to worship Allah ﷻ . And worship it is not confined to prayer, fasting, *zakat* and *hajj* only. Rather, it is the every action of man in this world.

Verse 59:

﴿فَبَدَّلَ الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا قَوْلًا غَيْرَ الَّذِي قِيلَ لَهُمْ فَأَنْزَلْنَا عَلَى الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا رِجْزًا مِّنَ السَّمَاءِ بِمَا كَانُوا يَفْسُقُونَ﴾

“But those who did wrong changed [those words] to a statement other than that which had been said to them, so We sent down upon the wrong-doers a punishment from the sky because they were defiantly disobeying.”

Allah ﷻ commanded them to enter the door of the city bowing and saying “*remove our burdens*”, hence whoever did that, Allah ﷻ forgave them, and who did more in excellence, Allah ﷻ increased for them of His goodness. Allah ﷻ always increases a person in goodness as He is the most giving, the best in showing excellence. And He also punishes man if he does evil and corrupts.

The worshipping of Allah ﷻ on this earth is for the rectification of the human being and it encompasses every movement of the human being in life. Meaning that all good beneficial acts go back to himself, his family and his relatives, his neighbours, his neighbourhood, his city, his country and all of humanity altogether. And this is the message of religion.

Allah ﷻ speaks to us in these verses about the children of Israel from the angle of their behaviour, their actions and their dwellings, specifying everything that has to do with the animosity of these people who will be the people of illegal terrorism, who will force Masjidil Aqsa to be theirs in the future and dishonour it.

Allah ﷻ showed favours onto them, but they denied them. And instead of saying “*hittah*” (remove our burdens) they said “*hintah*” or wheat as all they think about is food. And instead of entering the door bowing, they entered it disobeying and in a manner that was not required of them. It is said that they entered backwards but this is not affirmed. All of these happened to them in the desert.

Verse 60:

﴿وَإِذِ اسْتَسْقَىٰ مُوسَىٰ لِقَوْمِهِ فَقُلْنَا اضْرِبْ بِعَصَاكَ الْحَجَرَ ۖ فَانْفَجَرَتْ مِنْهُ اثْنَا عَشَرَ عَيْنًا ۖ قَدْ عَلِمَ كُلُّ أُنَاسٍ مَّشْرِبَهُمْ ۖ كُلُوا وَاشْرَبُوا مِن رِّزْقِ اللَّهِ وَلَا تَعْنُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ مُفْسِدِينَ﴾

“And [recall] when Moses prayed for water for his people, so We said, “Strike with your staff the stone.” And there gushed forth from it twelve springs, and every people knew its watering place. “Eat and drink from the provision of Allah, and do not commit abuse on the earth, spreading corruption.”

﴿وَإِذِ﴾ “and when” referring to a time frame, meaning “and remember when...”

Allah ﷻ always speaks to them on what causes corruption:

﴿لُعِنَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِن بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ عَلَىٰ لِسَانِ دَاوُدَ وَعِيسَى ابْنِ مَرْيَمَ ۚ ذَلِكَ بِمَا عَصَوْا وَكَانُوا يَعْتَدُونَ (٧٨)
كَانُوا لَا يَتَنَاهَوْنَ عَن مُّنْكَرٍ فَعَلُوهُ ۚ لَبِئْسَ مَا كَانُوا يَفْعَلُونَ (٧٩)﴾

“Cursed were those who disbelieved among the Children of Israel by the tongue of Daud and of Isa, the son of Mariam. That was because they disobeyed and [habitually] transgressed. They used not to prevent one another from wrongdoing that they did. How wretched was that which they were doing.” [Surah Al-Ma'idah: 78-79]

And corruption is one of the traits of the children of Israel, and everything we see today affirms how Allah ﷻ has described them.

They were afflicted with drought and had no water for drinking, farming and other activities. The term “*istisqaa*” means to seek drink or water. When all means fail, the human being runs to Allah ﷻ by the way of *istisqaa*, that is, seeking water.

The provision from the sky is of the most magnificent blessing that Allah ﷻ honours us with. Allah ﷻ has made $\frac{3}{4}$ of the planet earth covered in water, in

the form of seas and rivers so that the water will evaporate and form clouds by the heat of the sun, then it will be blown by the cold winds. Thereafter it will form heavier droplets and the rain will fall. If we were to try to cause numerous tiny condensations from the water in the sea, it would require a lot of energy and resources as well as complicated and bulky machinery.

So, observe these showers of rain that fall onto the planet earth. And us human beings, whenever the rain is late, we will seek a way to plead from Allah ﷻ via our prophet ﷺ and his immaculate family, and ask for water.

Indeed, the *Wahabbis* have attacked the celebrations of the birth of the Prophet ﷺ and the seeking of rain. They have destroyed the Islamic legacy and stopped it so as to cut this nation off from its own history. They flattened graves and shrines and attacked most of the correct Islamic teachings. And they have invented a religion that is running parallel to the religion of truth (that is imitating it) to the point that even to seek a way through the Prophet of Allah ﷺ has been made forbidden. So, now we are not allowed to stand near the grave of the Prophet ﷺ nor seek a way for our *doas* to be answered through him. And these are the people who have invented the idea of proclaiming others as disbelievers and murdering them hence they use this method to legalise these killings and the chopping off of heads.

While Sayyiduna Umar ؓ sought to ask for rain by making the uncle of the Prophet ﷺ to intercede during the drought that occurred during his reign as *khalifah*.

Hence to seek a way through the Prophet ﷺ and his family is a part that cannot be severed from our faith in this religion. In fact, the children of Israel sought water by the means of Prophet Musa ؑ so he turned to his Lord as the one whom the Lord spoke to. Hence Allah ﷻ accepted his supplication and commanded him to strike the rock with his staff. Usually when one seeks water from Allah ﷻ, the water will come from the sky not from the earth, however for

these people, the water came to them from a huge boulder, to increase their witnessing of the miracles and in accordance to their materialism. Had the water come from the sky, they would have said “Oh it is simply a rain cloud”. However, Allah ﷻ commanded Prophet Musa ﷺ to strike the rock with his staff. Is there any effect in hitting a rock with a staff? Or is it that the rock is the one that should strike the staff? Usually, if a staff is used to hit a rock, the staff will break, not the rock!

*Oh the one who mocks at the different types of decree,
you are simply mocking yourself, not the decree.*

*And O the one who strikes the boulder with a staff to weaken it,
are you striking the staff or are you striking the boulder?”*

However, Allah ﷻ caused water to come out to them by the word, “be!” hence 12 springs sprung forth from it according to the number of tribes in the children of Israel. The tribes of the children of Israel are 12, from Prophet Yusuf ﷺ and his brothers. Prophet Musa ﷺ was from the lineage of Prophet Ya’qub ﷺ who himself was known as ‘Israel’. Before this, Prophet Musa ﷺ was told to strike the sea with his staff, and indeed, the deed was not done by the staff, rather it was done by the Lord of Musa ﷺ via the staff!

Verse 61:

﴿وَإِذْ قُلْتُمْ يَا مُوسَىٰ لَنْ نَصْبِرَ عَلَىٰ طَعَامٍ وَاحِدٍ فَادْعُ لَنَا رَبَّكَ يُخْرِجْ لَنَا مِمَّا تُثَبِتُ الْأَرْضُ مِنْ بَقْلِهَا وَقِثَّائِهَا
وَفُومِهَا وَعَدَسِيهَا وَبَصِلِهَا ۗ قَالَ آتَسْتَبِدُّونَ الَّذِي هُوَ أَدْنَىٰ بِالَّذِي هُوَ خَيْرٌ ۗ اهْبِطُوا مِصْرًا فَإِنَّ لَكُمْ مَّا سَأَلْتُمْ ۗ
وَضُرِبَتْ عَلَيْهِمُ الذِّلَّةُ وَالْمَسْكَنَةُ وَبَاءُوا بِغَضَبٍ مِّنَ اللَّهِ ۗ ذَلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ كَانُوا يَكْفُرُونَ بِآيَاتِ اللَّهِ وَيَقْتُلُونَ النَّبِيِّينَ
بِغَيْرِ الْحَقِّ ۗ ذَلِكَ بِمَا عَصَوْا وَكَانُوا يَعْتَدُونَ﴾

“And remember when you said, ‘Oh Musa, we can never endure one [kind of] food. So, call upon your Lord to bring forth for us from the earth its green herbs and its cucumbers and its garlic and its lentils and its onions.’ He said, ‘Would you exchange what is better for what is less? Go into any settlement and indeed, you will have what you have asked for.’ And they were afflicted with humiliation and poverty and returned with anger from Allah [upon them]. That was because they [repeatedly] disbelieved in the signs of Allah and killed the prophets without right. That was because they disobeyed and were [habitually] transgressing.”

Indeed, causing harm and corruption on earth, as well as disobedience and animosity are deeply-rooted traits in the selves of the children of Israel throughout history, despite the blessings they enjoy from Allah ﷻ. We see in this verse, how they object having to bear with one type of food, and what is meant by one type of food is *mann* and *salwa* even though there were actually 2 types of food, namely, meat and sweets and not one type. However, they simply grouped them as one type of food because they get the food every day. So they requested from Allah ﷻ to bring forth for them:

(مِنْ بَقْلِهَا وَقِثَّائِهَا وَفُومِهَا وَعَدَسِيهَا وَبَصَلِهَا) “its green herbs and its cucumbers and its garlic and its lentils and its onions.”

بَقْلٌ: green herbs, but what is meant is not just green herbs. It refers to every plant that does not have a trunk or stalk like cabbage and lettuce.

قِثَاءٌ: It is a type of cucumber

فُومٌ: It is garlic

عَدَسٍ (lentils) and **بَصَلٍ** (onions) are known.

They were used to these food types when they were being enslaved by Pharaoh.

﴿قَالَ أَتَسْتَبْدِلُونَ الَّذِي هُوَ أَدْنَىٰ بِالَّذِي هُوَ خَيْرٌ﴾ [Musa] said, "Would you exchange what is better for what is less?", the letter "ba" ب is used for what is left. So, are they leaving what is better for something that is lower? It is not the intended meaning that what they are asking for of greens, cucumber, garlic, lentils and onions (which are the food of the poor) is lower than meat and sweets (which are the food of the rich), for Allah ﷻ does not differentiate between the rich and the poor when He gives them. Rather what is meant here is that they preferred what grows from the earth over what was sent down to them from the sky by the word "be!". So *mann* and *salwa* is better as they came from the sky and by the commandment of Allah ﷻ without a means. But these people are materialistic, they want what comes out from the earth of what they see and touch. They were actually afraid that this blessing would be stopped so they sought to grow and harvest food by themselves and eat them. This is their obsession with material things and causes. So, Musa ﷺ said to them:

﴿اهْبِطُوا مِصْرًا﴾ "Go down to the town!" the word "Misr" appears in the Holy Qur'an 4 times but they are not subject to the usual grammatical rules as the words are used to refer to the country Egypt in the Nile valley. As Allah ﷻ says:

﴿وَنَادَىٰ فِرْعَوْنُ فِي قَوْمِهِ قَالَ يَا قَوْمِ أَلَيْسَ لِي مُلْكُ مِصْرَ وَهَذِهِ الْأَنْهَارُ تَجْرِي مِن تَحْتِي﴾

"And Pharaoh called out among his people; he said, "O my people, does not the kingdom of Egypt belong to me, and these rivers flowing beneath me"

[Surah Az-Zukhruf: 51],

and in Surah Yusuf:

﴿وَقَالَ الَّذِي اشْتَرَاهُ مِن مِصْرَ لِامْرَأَتِهِ أَكْرِمِي مَثْوَاهُ﴾

"And the one from Egypt who bought him said to his wife, 'Make his residence comfortable.'" [Surah Yusuf: 21],

and Allah ﷻ said:

﴿ادْخُلُوا مِصْرَ إِن شَاءَ اللَّهُ آمِنِينَ﴾

“Enter Egypt, Allah willing, safe and secure.” [Surah Yusuf: 99].

So, if the word “*Misr*” appears without a tanween (double vowel) it is the country Egypt that is known in the Nile valley, and if it appears with a tanween (double vowel) then it simply means a town in Arabic, made up of people, a government, plantations and so on. And it is not referring to a specific town. So here it means, go down to the town, which is simply a town amongst many towns.

﴿وَضُرِبَتْ عَلَيْهِمُ الذِّلَّةُ وَالْمَسْكَنَةُ وَبَاءُوا بِغَضَبٍ مِّنَ اللَّهِ﴾

“And they were afflicted with humiliation and poverty and returned with anger from Allah.”

All of what they did were the reasons for them being covered in humility and poverty and being cursed by Allah ﷻ. The word “afflict” implies that it was embossed like a seal. This is because they sought to replace something higher with something lower, and because they denied the blessings from Allah ﷻ on them and that they worshipped the calf, and also that they refused to believe until they could see Allah ﷻ clearly. All of these resulted in them being cast in humiliation and poverty.

﴿الذِّلَّةُ﴾ “humiliation” means to be constantly broken and in need of others as how we see the Zionists today panting like dogs behind America and other than them here and there.

A reflection on these verses regarding the children of Israel gives us an idea of them and how they have been over a long period of time. It also shows us the factors that led them to this state, such as, being materialistic, denying the blessings of Allah ﷻ, assassinating the prophets, not having any contentment with the decree of Allah ﷻ and always looking at what is physical.

Verse 62:

﴿إِنَّ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَالَّذِينَ هَادُوا وَالنَّصَارَى وَالصَّابِئِينَ مَنْ آمَنَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ وَعَمِلَ صَالِحًا فَلَهُمْ أَجْرُهُمْ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ وَلَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ﴾

“Indeed, those who believed and those who were Jews or Christians or Sabeans [before Prophet Muhammad] - those [among them] who believed in Allah and the Last Day and did righteousness - will have their reward with their Lord, and no fear will there be concerning them, nor will they grieve.”

This refers to every message that came before Islam and to every person who believed in Allah ﷻ and followed up this belief with righteous deeds.

And faith is always tied together with good deeds, because faith is what is held in the heart and deeds affirm it. It (faith) is not just a word that is said, rather it is essential to follow it up with good deeds.

Every time the word faith is mentioned in the Noble Qur’an, it is followed up with good deeds:

﴿إِنَّ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ كَانَتْ لَهُمْ جَنَّاتُ الْفِرْدَوْسِ نُزُلًا﴾

“Indeed, those who believe and do righteous deeds - they will have the Gardens of Paradise for their pleasure,” [Surah Al-Kahf: 107] and

﴿وَالْعَصْرِ (١) إِنَّ الْإِنْسَانَ لَفِي خُسْرٍ (٢) إِلَّا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ وَتَوَاصَوْا بِالْحَقِّ

﴿وَتَوَاصَوْا بِالصَّبْرِ (٣)﴾

“By time. Indeed, mankind is in loss. Except for those who believe and do righteous deeds and advise each other to truth and advise each other to patience.” [Surah Al-‘Asr: 1-3].

Hence the believer is always the source of goodness.

﴿وَالَّذِينَ هَادُوا﴾ *“And those who are Jews”* This word ‘haadu’ is from the distinguishing term used by the children of Israel :

﴿إِنَّا هَدْنَا إِلَيْكَ﴾

“Indeed we have turned back to You” [Surah Al-A’raaf: 156],
meaning we have repented and we have returned.

And these are the people who have repented and walked with Prophet Musa ﷺ .

﴿وَالنَّصَارَى﴾ *“And the Christians”*: They are called as such because they followed Prophet Isa ﷺ the Messiah as Allah ﷻ says:

﴿قَلَّمَا أَحْسَنَ عِيسَىٰ مِنْهُمْ الْكُفْرَ قَالَ مَنْ أَنْصَارِي إِلَى اللَّهِ قَالَ الْحَوَارِيُّونَ نَحْنُ أَنْصَارُ اللَّهِ آمَنَّا بِاللَّهِ وَاشْهَدْ بِأَنَّا مُسْلِمُونَ﴾

“But when Isa came to know of their disbelief, he said, “Who are my supporters for the cause of Allah?” The disciples said, “We are supporters for Allah. We believe in Allah and testify that we are Muslims (submitting to Him).” [Surah Ali ‘Imran: 52].

Or it could be because they are of those who grant help.

﴿وَالصَّابِئِينَ﴾ *“The Sabeans”*: Previously, in the time of ignorance before Islam, the disbelievers in the Arabian Peninsula used to say to those who entered into Islam in the early days of the call to Islam “sab’a” meaning one who has left the belief of their forefathers and have refused to worship the idols and images.

Hence all those who have believed in Allah ﷻ and followed the messages that came from before, they are all encompassed in Allah’s ﷻ words:

﴿قَلَّهُمْ أَجْرُهُمْ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ وَلَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ﴾

“will have their reward with their Lord, and no fear will there be concerning them, nor will they grieve”.

Verse 63:

﴿وَإِذْ أَخَذْنَا مِيثَاقَكُمْ وَرَفَعْنَا فَوْقَكُمُ الطُّورَ خُذُوا مَا آتَيْنَاكُمْ بِقُوَّةٍ وَاذْكُرُوا مَا فِيهِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ﴾

“And remember when We took your covenant, (Oh Children of Israel, to abide by the Torah) and We raised over you the mount, saying, hold firmly to what We have given you with determination and remember what is in it that perhaps you may become righteous.”

When the Torah was sent down and Allah ﷻ gave Prophet Musa ﷺ divine guidance, Prophet Musa ﷺ chose 70 men from his people and took a covenant from them. However, they broke the covenant so Allah ﷻ shook the mountain Tur and lifted it over them and threatened them that they will be crushed by the mountain if they do not believe. So, they got frightened, and returned and prostrated with their eyes looking up at the mountain Tur out of fear that it would fall on them. And till today, we find the Jews making prostration with a section of their face on the ground and their eyes looking sideward. This way of prostration was taken from this prostration that was done when they were in fear of the mountain falling on them and they do not know that the origins of this *sujud* is from this story.

It is on the human being to accept obedience to Allah ﷻ with firmness, without trying to escape nor feeling undecided between coming forward and turning away as the children of Israel did. Rasulullah ﷺ used to say:

((يَا بِلَالُ، أَقِمِ الصَّلَاةَ، أَرْحْنَا بِهَا))

“Oh Bilal! Call for the prayer! Give us rest by it!”⁶⁷

because the believer finds rest in obeying Allah ﷻ and faces Him by his entire self. Loving to carry out obligations and finding comfort in worship develops *taqwa* (piety) in a person. These will also plant goodness in society,

⁶⁷ Sunan Abi Dawud: The Book of Adab, Chapter: Prayer in the Darkness of the Night, Hadith no. 4985

and bring others towards all forms of good. *Taqwa*, which is piety, encompasses all forms of goodness. So, for example, you are like a believer who finds comfort in prayer and wishes to plant goodness and love in every place. This is the affair of the believer who desires and longs for the establishing of obligations. As for the children of Israel, they denied and argued, despite all the gifts that Allah ﷻ has given them, and they turned away and were arrogant.

Verse 64:

﴿ثُمَّ تَوَلَّيْتُمْ مِّنْ بَعْدِ ذَلِكَ فَكُلُوا فَفَلَوْلَا فَضْلُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ وَرَحْمَتُهُ لَكُنْتُمْ مِنَ الْخَاسِرِينَ﴾

“Then you turned away after that. And if not for the favour of Allah upon you and His mercy, you would have been among the losers.”

﴿فَضْلُ اللَّهِ﴾ *“The favour of Allah”*

The word favour means increase, meaning what is above the norm, as Allah ﷻ has said about the righteous martyrs, and this is good news from Allah:

﴿وَلَا تَحْسَبَنَّ الَّذِينَ قُتِلُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ أَمْوَاتًا ۚ بَلْ أَحْيَاءٌ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ يُرْزَقُونَ (١٦٩) فَرِحِينَ بِمَا آتَاهُمُ اللَّهُ مِنْ فَضْلِهِ وَيَسْتَبْشِرُونَ بِالَّذِينَ لَمْ يَلْحَقُوا بِهِمْ مِنْ خَلْفِهِمْ أَلَّا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ (١٧٠)﴾

“And never think of those who have been killed in the cause of Allah as dead. Rather, they are alive with their Lord, receiving provision, Rejoicing in what Allah has bestowed upon them of His bounty, and they receive good tidings about those [to be martyred] after them who have not yet joined them - that there will be no fear concerning them, nor will they grieve.” [Surah Ali ‘Imran: 169 -170].

This means that they are pleased by the bounty of Allah ﷻ and not by His justice, and that bounty is above justice. Justice is to take exactly in the same measure to what you did while bounty it is to take more than what a person did.

Verse 65:

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

“And you had already known about those who transgressed among you concerning the sabbath (Saturday), and We said to them, ‘Be apes, despised.’”

Allah ﷻ is directing this speech to the Jews who were in the Arabian Peninsula in Al-Madinah Al-Munawwarah during the time of revelation.

The names of only two days of the week are mentioned in the Holy Qur’an - Friday and Saturday.

The word Friday was mentioned in the Surah Al-Jumu’ah:

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِذَا نُودِيَ لِلصَّلَاةِ مِنْ يَوْمِ الْجُمُعَةِ فَاسْعَوْا إِلَىٰ ذِكْرِ اللَّهِ وَذَرُوا الْبَيْعَ﴾

“Oh you who have believed, when [the adhan] is called for the prayer on the day of Jumu’ah (Friday), then proceed to the remembrance of Allah and leave trade. That is better for you, if you only knew.” [Surah Al-Jumu’ah: 9]

And the word Saturday was mentioned here and in Surah Al-A’raaf.

The days of the week are 7, starting with Sunday, Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, and the 6th is Friday and the 7th is Saturday. And the word *Jumu’ah* and *Sabt* are words that are not derived from numbers nor connected to them. The scholars differ as to what caused these words to develop.

And that the creation was created in six days by Allah ﷻ. Then, He gathered them on Friday hence it is called *Al-Jumu’ah* (The day of gathering). The affair of the creation continues thereafter to Saturday. Saturday, originally from the word “*Assobat*” hence it was made to be the day of celebration and rest for the Jews and they were not allowed to work on this day. Then, Allah ﷻ wanted to test them and test their faith and obedience. These group of Jews

lived by the sea and they were fishermen. Then, Allah ﷻ caused the fish and sea creatures to be plentiful on Saturday but it was not permissible for them to work on Saturday. They used to have parties and they leave their nets (to trap the fish) on Saturday, the day the fish gathered. Then, they would take their nets on Sunday. And Allah ﷻ most High would not be tricked or mocked. It has been narrated that this story also appears in Surah Al-'Araf in which Allah says:

﴿وَأَسْأَلُهُمْ عَنِ الْقَرْيَةِ الَّتِي كَانَتْ حَاضِرَةَ الْبَحْرِ إِذْ يَعْدُونَ فِي السَّبْتِ إِذْ تَأْتِيهِمْ حِيتَانُهُمْ يَوْمَ سَبْتِهِمْ شُرَّعًا وَيَوْمَ لَا يَسْبِتُونَ لَا تَأْتِيهِمْ كَذَلِكَ نَبْلُوهُمْ بِمَا كَانُوا يَفْسُقُونَ﴾

“And ask them about the town that was by the sea - when they transgressed in [the matter of] the sabbath - when their fish came to them openly on their sabbath day, and the day they had no sabbath they did not come to them. Thus, did We give them trial because they were defiantly disobedient.” [Surah Al-A'raaf: 163]

They went against the commandments of Allah ﷻ, thus Allah ﷻ said to them:

﴿كُونُوا قِرَدَةً خَاسِئِينَ﴾ *“Be, all of you apes, despised!”* A human being is not transformed into an ape by his own will, rather it is by the divine word *“be!”* and by the word *“be, all of you”*, that is all those who went against the law of the *Sabat* and disobeyed Allah ﷻ were transformed into apes and pigs. This commandment was not afflicted onto all of them, rather just those who disobeyed and transgressed.

This story is well known amongst the children of Israel as it has been narrated through the generations. For this reason, Allah ﷻ says, ﴿وَلَقَدْ عَلِمْتُمْ﴾ *“for surely you knew”*. Some of the scholars of *tafseer* have said that they were transformed in their physical bodies and in their characters, so their character became like the character of apes and pigs. In another verse, Allah ﷻ says:

﴿وَجَعَلَ مِنْهُمْ الْفِرْدَاةَ وَالْخَنَازِيرَ وَعَبَدَ الطَّاغُوتِ﴾

“And He made of them apes and pigs and slaves of Taghut”

[Surah Al-Ma'idah: 60]

due to their excessive rebellion and disobedience. And this was the recompense to whoever behaved like them from nations long ago.

Verse 66:

﴿فَجَعَلْنَاهَا نَكَالًا لِّمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيْهَا وَمَا خَلْفَهَا وَمَوْعِظَةً لِّلْمُتَّقِينَ﴾

“And We made it a deterrent punishment for those who were present and those who succeeded [them] and a lesson for those who fear Allah.”

﴿نَكَالًا﴾ “a severe punishment”, and this punishment is the most severe punishment to afflict them as it came after all that have been witnessed of the disobedience of the children of Israel, the stages that they fell into and every event that they had gone through. And this punishment will be for whoever that does as they did of disobedience and it is a warning to those with *taqwa* (fear of God).

النُّكُول : It is to go back or return. This means so that you will repent and return from this crime and you will not go back to it again.

There is no punishment without crime, and there is no crime without textual evidence indicating that this is a crime. And this is the original situation, meaning there has to be textual evidence proving that such and such a crime results in such and such a punishment. The Noble Qur'an has put in place punishments so as to prevent the occurrence of the crime, and it is not so much for the punishment to be carried out, meaning that when the legal punishment of chopping of the hands of the thief was put down, it is more for prevention and deterrence rather than the chopping itself.

And whoever tries to distort the principles of Islam and its laws, and alters its foundations has doubted the enforcement of punishment in Islam. While it is, in reality, simply to prevent the occurrence of crime.

﴿لَمَّا بَيْنَ يَدَيْهَا﴾ *“Of what is before them”*, that is, when they saw what happened, that is, when they transformed, physically and in their character to monkeys and pigs. So, they saw this punishment.

﴿وَمَا خَلْفَهَا﴾ *“and what is after them”*. And even in the time of the Prophet ﷺ there were Jews who showed animosity, plotted and conspired with the polytheists against Rasulullah ﷺ and the Muslims.

﴿وَمَوْعِظَةً لِّلْمُتَّقِينَ﴾ *“and a warning for those with taqwa”*, so, it is a warning for every person who is God-fearing throughout every time and place, and the people of every religion.

And this lesson is not exclusive for this reason of revelation but rather the lesson and meanings here are general.

Verse 67:

﴿وَإِذْ قَالَ مُوسَىٰ لِقَوْمِهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَأْمُرُكُمْ أَنْ تَذْبَحُوا بَقْرَةً ۚ قَالُوا أَتَتَّخِذُنَا هُزُوًا ۖ قَالَ أَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ أَنْ أَكُونَ مِنَ الْجَاهِلِينَ﴾

“And remember when Musa said to his people, ‘Indeed, Allah commands you to slaughter a cow.’ They said, ‘Do you take us in ridicule?’ He said, ‘I seek refuge in Allah from being among the ignorant.’”

Surah Baqarah is named as such because of this story of the cow in it. It is a story that happened to the children of Israel in the time of Prophet Musa ﷺ, so as to affirm a very important principle from the important principles of faith which is, the resurrection.

And to have belief in the resurrection is the most important condition from the conditions of faith, second to the belief in Allah ﷻ. And it is the most important part of the parts of faith, that is, to believe in the last day and in resurrection after death. All people see death but they do not see the resurrection, hence it is unseen, and veiled, just like all the parts of faith such as the belief in Allah ﷻ, in His angels, in His books, in His prophets, in the Last Day, and in the Decree and Predestination, the good of it and the bad of it.

And those who lived in the time of the prophets saw them but they did not see the revelation descending onto them. And we see the revealed books in front of us but we did not see them being revealed. Hence belief in prophethood and in the revealed books are also among the belief in the unseen as well.

Thus, faith is the principle of conviction in what is veiled from the human being and it exists in the heart. And there are other stories in the Holy Qur'a in which affirms the principle of resurrection for the people such as the story of the one who passed by a village that had been overturned and said:

﴿أَوِ كَالَّذِي مَرَّ عَلَى قَرْيَةٍ وَهِيَ خَاوِيَةٌ عَلَى عُرُوشِهَا قَالَ أَنَّى يُحْيِي هَذِهِ اللَّهُ بَعْدَ مَوْتِهَا فَأَمَاتَهُ اللَّهُ مِائَةَ عَامٍ ثُمَّ بَعَثَهُ﴾

“the one who passed by a township which had fallen into ruin. He said, ‘How is Allah going to bring this back to life after its death?’ Then, Allah caused him to die for 100 years and then raised him up again.”

[Surah Al-Baqarah: 259].

And also in the story of Prophet Isa عليه السلام who was sent to the children of Israel when he brought the dead back to life by the permission of Allah ﷻ. Hence this principle is connected to the resurrection after death. Allah ﷻ shows them how He brings the dead back to life so that they will believe in the resurrection.

There is a great difference between stories narrated by human beings and Qur'anic stories. In the stories by man, we narrate the events as how it happened, as for Qur'anic stories, we are given specific sections for a specific purpose with the goal of nurturing faith.

So Qur'anic stories are the best stories. They are not for entertainment, rather they are for nurturing and development. They have a belief-centred goal and role so as to serve important principles in faith.

And if it was a storybook written by man, it would not begin from the middle of the story as we see in this story. Stories have different aspects surrounding events, persons, time and places. However, Allah ﷻ does not want us to be concerned with events nor persons, which is why He keeps the personalities unknown, for example when He says:

﴿قَالَ فِرْعَوْنُ﴾ *“Pharaoh said...”* [Surah Al-A'raaf: 123].

The term Pharaoh is the term for their king hence we do not know who is this pharaoh. Was he Tahwatmis or Ramsees or someone else?

We do not know because knowing which Pharaoh is not the point as Allah ﷻ does not want us to be concerned by the story nor by the personalities, rather we should be concerned with the lessons. And this Qur'anic story serves to enforce the principle in faith that has to do with resurrection and also the attributes of the children of Israel, because humanity in every era yet to come after the revelation of the Holy Qur'an will be affected greatly by this group. And here we are today, seeing how they conspire against the Arab and Islamic nations and tore them into different countries, allowing for themselves Masjidul Aqsa, and they have transgressed and harmed the Muslims tremendously.

And here Prophet Musa عليه السلام said to his people:

﴿إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَأْمُرُكُمْ أَنْ تَذْبَحُوا بَقْرَةً ۖ قَالُوا أَتَتَّخِذُنَا هُزُؤًا ۗ قَالَ أَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ أَنْ أَكُونَ مِنَ الْجَاهِلِينَ﴾

“Indeed, Allah commands you to slaughter a cow.” They said, “Do you take us in ridicule?” He said, “I seek refuge in Allah from being among the ignorant.”

The word “Al-Qawm” means people. It refers to the men because Allah ﷻ says: ﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا يَسْخَرُ قَوْمٌ مِنْ قَوْمٍ عَسَىٰ أَنْ يَكُونُوا خَيْرًا مِنْهُمْ وَلَا نِسَاءٌ مِنْ نِسَاءٍ عَسَىٰ أَنْ يَكُنَّ خَيْرًا مِنْهُنَّ﴾
“Oh believers, let not some men among you laugh at others. It may be that the latter are better than the former. Nor let some women laugh at other women for it may be that the latter are better than the former” [Surah Al-Hujurat: 11].

So, when the people of Musa عليه السلام said to him, “Do you take us as a joke?” he sought protection with Allah ﷻ that he should mock them, since a prophet is commanded by Allah ﷻ. He is the one who commanded him to inform them of this instruction, hence it is not possible to be a form of mockery of them.

And when a commandment comes from a higher station to a lower station, it is indeed a commandment. If it comes from a station that is at the same level, it is simply a request, and when it is from a lower level to a higher level, then it is a supplication or a hope.

Allah ﷻ ordered them with a commandment by the tongue of their prophet Musa عليه السلام but the children of Israel tried to escape from carrying out this commandment so they said to Musa عليه السلام:

﴿اتَّخَذْنَا هُزُؤًا قَالِ أَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ أَنْ أَكُونَ مِنَ الْجَاهِلِينَ﴾

“Do you take us in ridicule?’ And he said, ‘I seek refuge in Allah from being among the ignorant.’”

He was a prophet, it was not possible for him to ridicule them, and it was Allah ﷻ who commanded him to relay the instruction hence it was a commandment from God. They knew he was a prophet as they had lived with him for a long period of time and he had gone through many phases with them. They had seen him perform his numerous miracles such as when he struck the sea with his staff and the seas split, and when mann and salwa descended

onto them, when they saw all the signs and proofs and miracles that were clear. So, this is the picture that we see of the children of Israel and their procrastination of negotiation with the Arabs, and all of their detailed descriptions, we find, has been affirmed in these verses.

So, similarly in the case of the cow, they wanted to dodge this instruction so they began to procrastinate by asking about the characteristics of the cow. Had they gotten any cow and slaughtered it, it would have sufficed them. However, they wanted to be difficult so Allah ﷻ made it difficult on them and increased the conditions with the increase in their questions.

Verse 68:

﴿قَالُوا ادْعُ لَنَا رَبَّكَ يُبَيِّنْ لَنَا مَا هِيَ ۚ قَالَ إِنَّهُ يَقُولُ إِنَّهَا بَقْرَةٌ لَا فَارِضٌ وَلَا بِكْرٌ عَوَانٌ بَيْنَ ذَلِكَ ۗ فَافْعَلُوا مَا تُؤْمَرُونَ﴾

“They said, ‘Call upon your Lord to make clear to us what it is.’ He said, ‘Allah says, it is a cow which is neither old nor virgin, but in between that, so do what you are commanded.’”

﴿لَا فَارِضٌ﴾: Not old

﴿وَلَا بِكْرٌ﴾: Not virgin as in, too young

﴿عَوَانٌ بَيْنَ ذَلِكَ﴾: between these two ages

This was still possible to find and slaughter hence settling the matter, however they came back and said:

Verse 69:

﴿قَالُوا ادْعُ لَنَا رَبَّكَ يُبَيِّنْ لَنَا مَا لَوْنُهَا ۚ قَالَ إِنَّهُ يَقُولُ إِنَّهَا بَقَرَةٌ صَفْرَاءُ فَاقِعٌ لَوْنُهَا تَسُرُّ النَّاظِرِينَ﴾

“They said, ‘Call upon your Lord to show us what is her color.’ He said, ‘He says, it is a yellow cow, bright in colour, pleasing to the observers.’”

Allah ﷻ did not make the colour a condition on them in the beginning of the affair however they wanted to be difficult and made things difficult onto themselves so Allah ﷻ gave them conditions and traits that were found only in a specific cow.

﴿فَاقِعٌ لَوْنُهَا﴾ *“bright coloured”*, that is of very bright yellow. And if they could find such a cow and slaughter it, the affair would have ended there.

But they came back asking:

Verse 70:

﴿قَالُوا ادْعُ لَنَا رَبَّكَ يُبَيِّنْ لَنَا مَا هِيَ ۚ إِنَّ الْبَقَرَ تَشَابَهُ عَلَيْنَا وَإِنَّا إِن شَاءَ اللَّهُ لَمُهْتَدُونَ﴾

“They said, ‘Call upon your Lord to make clear to us what it is. Indeed, all cows look alike to us. And indeed we, if Allah wills, will be guided.’”

Hence Allah ﷻ has given us a glimpse into the nature of the children of Israel who were being difficult in their procrastination, so Allah ﷻ gave them a description that was not possible for them to find in a cow, except one specific cow.

Verse 71:

﴿قَالَ إِنَّهُ يَقُولُ إِنَّهَا بَقَرَةٌ لَا ذَلُولٌ تُثِيرُ الْأَرْضَ وَلَا تَسْقِي الْحَرْثَ مُسَلَّمَةٌ لَا شِيَةَ فِيهَا ۗ قَالُوا الْآنَ جِئْتَ بِالْحَقِّ ۗ فَذَبَحُوهَا وَمَا كَادُوا يَفْعَلُونَ﴾

“He [Musa] said, ‘He says, it is a cow neither trained to plough the earth nor to irrigate the field, one free from fault with no blemish.’ ‘They said, now you have come with the truth.’ So they slaughtered her, but they could hardly do it.”

﴿لَا ذُلُولٌ﴾ *“not domesticated”* that is, it is not tamed, nor trained, not used in farming nor in watering nor in ploughing, and it has no defects nor deficiencies. It has a beautiful outward appearance with not a limb that has a defect. Hence Allah ﷻ gave them a description that was almost impossible, and in fact, these characteristics were not found in any cow except just one in that area.

﴿فَذَبَحُوهَا وَمَا كَادُوا يَفْعَلُونَ﴾ *“Thus, they slaughtered it and they almost were not able to do so.”*

The truth had come to them from the beginning and they know that Prophet Musa ﷺ was indeed a prophet who had brought truth to them from Allah ﷻ.

So, every time they questioned, they were given more conditions until finding it became difficult even though, eventually, they did find it. They were almost not able to because of their hesitation. This then, is the characteristic of the children of Israel; they negotiate and want, yet they do not want, they sign agreements or not. This is their state till our day today - with their deceiving personalities. This description is proof for the very precise Qur’anic phrasing describing the children of Israel.

Verse 72:

﴿وَإِذْ قَتَلْتُمْ نَفْسًا فَادَّارَأْتُمْ فِيهَا وَاللَّهُ مُخْرِجٌ مَّا كُنْتُمْ تَكْتُمُونَ﴾

“And remember when you slew a man and disputed over it, but Allah was to bring out that which you were concealing.”

There was a very rich man amongst the children of Israel who did not have children to inherit from him, but he had a nephew. His nephew came in the night and killed him when nobody saw, because he wanted the money. Then he took his corpse to another town and placed it in front of one of the houses in that town so as to frame the owner of the house with murder, or even to place the blame on the people of that town so that they will pay the blood money as was the custom of the time, unless 40 of their men were able to swear that they did not kill the man. The people of the town denied having anything to do with the murder of the man hence every group denied any blame on themselves.

The dispute became serious between them to the point that they had to go to Prophet Musa عليه السلام to ask him to ask Allah ﷻ about the murder. So, he said to them to slaughter a cow.

Here we find another principle in faith. It is shown in the story of a righteous man amongst the children of Israel who owned a young calf. He only had a son and his wife was very young. He wanted to leave this cow for his son but his wife said to him, “how will it be cared for and nurtured when it is still young?” He said to her, “I will rely on Allah and entrust it to Him when I leave it, then when my son grows older, say to him to rely on Allah and he will get it back.” And just like this, the cow was freed, with the owner relying in Allah ﷻ. Then when the boy grew older, after 20 years, his mother said to him, “The time has come for you to seek the cow that your father had left for you.” He said, “How do I seek it? Where do I find it?” She said, “Your father relied on Allah ﷻ and entrusted it to Allah ﷻ, so you rely on Allah ﷻ and He will bring it back to you” So he said, “Oh God of Ibrahim and Ishaq and Ya’qub, bring back to me what

my father entrusted You with!” Thus, Allah ﷻ guided him to the cow. It was not old nor young, but was between the two, bright in colour. Its characteristics were exactly as Allah ﷻ mentioned to the children of Israel and this was due to the blessing of the righteous father. Hence the righteousness of fathers will flow down to sons and they benefit from that righteousness. And the people had to buy it at a price equal to its weight in gold as their need for it was dire as there was no other cow of this description.

Verse 73:

﴿فَقُلْنَا اضْرِبُوهُ بِبَعْضِهَا ۗ كَذَلِكَ يُحْيِي اللَّهُ الْمَوْتَىٰ وَيُرِيكُمْ آيَاتِهِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَعْقِلُونَ﴾

“So, We said, ‘Strike the slain man with part of it.’ Thus, does Allah bring the dead to life, and He shows you His signs that you may understand.”

Allah ﷻ ordered them to strike the corpse with a part of the cow that had been slaughtered.

Through this is a story, Allah ﷻ does not want to amuse us but to educate us.

When they had struck the dead man with a part of the dead cow, the man stood up and told them that his nephew was the one who had killed him. Then, he died again for the second time. Thus, Allah ﷻ says:

﴿كَذَلِكَ يُحْيِي اللَّهُ الْمَوْتَىٰ وَيُرِيكُمْ آيَاتِهِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَعْقِلُونَ﴾ *“Thus, does Allah bring the dead to life, and He shows you His signs that you might reason.”*

This means that He shows you things which are extraordinary so that you will think.

The Holy Qur’an addresses the intellect. Our religion is also a religion of intellect and knowledge. This is a scientific interpretation, as Allah The Most

High did not ask us to believe by force. Rather, he gives proofs and evidences for the minds.

Verse 74:

﴿ثُمَّ قَسَتْ قُلُوبُكُمْ مِنْ بَعْدِ ذَلِكَ فَهِيَ كَالْحِجَارَةِ أَوْ أَشَدُّ قَسْوَةً وَإِنَّ مِنَ الْحِجَارَةِ لَمَا يَتَفَجَّرُ مِنْهُ الْأَنْهَارُ وَإِنَّ مِنْهَا لَمَا يَسْقَىٰ فَيَجْرُجُ مِنْهُ الْمَاءُ وَإِنَّ مِنْهَا لَمَا يَهْبِطُ مِنْ خَشْيَةِ اللَّهِ وَمَا اللَّهُ بِغَافِلٍ عَمَّا تَعْمَلُونَ﴾

“Then your hearts became hardened after that, being like stones or even harder. For indeed, there are stones from which rivers burst forth, and there are some of them that split open and water comes out, and there are some of them that fall down for fear of Allah. And Allah is not unaware of what you do.”

They had seen how Allah ﷻ gave life to the dead in front of them. Furthermore, Musa ﷺ had stood in front of them and said, “A lifeless being (the cow) giving life to another lifeless being (the man)”. In spite of all these, their hearts became hardened, as Allah ﷻ says:

﴿قَسَتْ قُلُوبُكُمْ﴾ *“your hearts became hardened”*. Allah ﷻ did not say, “Your selves became hardened”. This is because the heart is the seat of feelings, compassion and mercy. It is also the source of behaviour and the opening for faith. There is a Hadith:

((أَلَا وَإِنَّ فِي الْجَسَدِ مُضْغَةً إِذَا صَلَحَتْ صَلَحَ الْجَسَدُ كُلُّهُ، وَإِذَا فَسَدَتْ فَسَدَ الْجَسَدُ كُلُّهُ أَلَا وَهِيَ الْقَلْبُ))

*“Verily, there is a piece of flesh in the body, if it is healthy, the whole body is healthy, and if it is corrupt, the whole body is corrupt. Verily, it is the heart.”*⁶⁸

The hearts of the Israelites became hardened after they refused to learn from all that they saw of the signs of Allah ﷻ, such as the man and quails, the separation of the ocean, their escape with safety from Pharaoh and his people

⁶⁸ Sahih al-Bukhari: The Book of Belief, The superiority of that person who leaves all doubtful (unclear) things for the sake of his religion, Hadith no. 52

and the bringing of the dead to life in the story of the cow. However, their hearts continued being coarse, hard and opposing the truth and values brought by the Prophets throughout time. Their hearts had become like stones.

We see stones and we know that they are solid and strong. The difference between the heart and a stone is that the heart is made up of soft muscle, while a stone's make-up is solid and hard. However, despite the physical make-up of the stones:

﴿وَإِنَّ مِنْ الْجِبَارَةِ لِمَا يُنْفَجِرُ مِنْهُ الْأَنْهَارُ وَإِنَّ مِنْهَا لِمَا يَشَقُّقُ فَيَخْرُجُ مِنْهُ الْمَاءُ وَإِنَّ مِنْهَا لِمَا يَهْبِطُ مِنْ خَشْيَةِ اللَّهِ﴾

“..For indeed, there are stones from which rivers burst forth, and there are some of them that split open and water comes out, and there are some of them that fall down for fear of Allah..”

Here, Allah ﷻ is reminding them of the gushing forth of twelve springs from the stone when Prophet Musa عليه السلام used his staff to strike it.

The Holy Qur'an did not bring to light and expose the hearts, thoughts and movements of any particular people except of the Israelites. However, Allah ﷻ says here addressing in the plural form:

﴿ثُمَّ قَسَتْ قُلُوبُكُمْ﴾ *“Then your hearts became hardened after that...”* Who are Allah ﷻ is addressing in this verse?

Those whose hearts had become hardened and they had lived and died during the time of the Prophet Musa عليه السلام. The Jews who were in Medina during the revelation period were not the ones whose hearts had hardened. The Jews who are occupying Palestine today and through whom humanity is suffering from their crimes, transgression, plotting and conspiracy against the Arabs and the Muslims, had also not been present during the time of Musa عليه السلام. However, when Allah ﷻ addresses anyone, he addresses with His Divine Knowledge. He knows that this speech, although it seems as if it is addressed to those people during the time of Musa عليه السلام, is actually addressed to the

Israelites present during the revelation period and also to all the Israelites generally, till the Day of Judgement. Thus, this speech of Allah ﷻ is a general speech, and this is the way of the speech found in the Holy Qur'an.

When Allah ﷻ says:

﴿وَكَانَ اللَّهُ غَفُورًا رَحِيمًا﴾

“And Allah is ever Forgiving and Merciful.” [Surah An-Nisaa': 96]

Although the word “Kana” is in the past tense form, this does not mean that Allah ﷻ is not ever Forgiving and Merciful now. This is because, Allah ﷻ is not subjected to time and place. Allah ﷻ has always been, is and will remain ever Forgiving and Merciful. The standard measurements of time that we know do not apply to Him, nor do the criterion and standards of human speech apply to His Divine Speech. Therefore, when Allah ﷻ is the One who says something, it is a totally different matter. The superiority of Allah's Divine Speech over the speech of mankind is like the superiority of Allah ﷻ over humankind. You are not like Allah ﷻ in any way. You are Alive and He is Alive, but the ‘Living’ is never similar,

﴿لَيْسَ كَمِثْلِهِ شَيْءٌ وَهُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْبَصِيرُ﴾

“There is nothing like unto Him, and He is the Hearing, the Seeing.”

[Surah Ash-Shuraa: 11]

In these verses, Allah ﷻ speaks of the Israelites. Their hearts had become harder than stones. This is because, some stones have rivers bursting forth from them, and some of them split open and water comes out of them. This seems like a repetition, but it is actually not. The difference between these two descriptions is that in the former, Allah ﷻ says: ﴿يَتَفَجَّرُ مِنْهُ الْأَنْهَارُ﴾ this means that *“the river comes towards you.”* However, in the latter, Allah ﷻ says:

﴿يَشْفُقُ فَيَخْرُجُ مِنْهُ الْمَاءُ﴾ this means that “*you are the ones who comes seeking this water.*” Therefore, the former is referring to a river while the latter is referring to a spring. This is of the precision of the Qur’anic expression.

﴿وَإِنَّ مِنْهَا لَمَا يَهْبِطُ مِنْ خَشْيَةِ اللَّهِ﴾ “*and there are some of them that fall down for fear of Allah*”: This is like the event that took place with Prophet Musa ﷺ when:

﴿فَلَمَّا تَجَلَّى رَبُّهُ لِلْجَبَلِ جَعَلَهُ دَكًّا وَخَرَّ مُوسَىٰ صَعِقًا﴾

“*his Lord appeared to the mountain, He rendered it level, and Moses fell unconscious*” [Surah Al-A’raaf: 143]

This is the way that stones fall down for fear of Allah ﷻ. This is the reason Allah ﷻ says:

﴿لَوْ أَنزَلْنَا هَذَا الْقُرْآنَ عَلَىٰ جَبَلٍ لَّرَأَيْنَهُ خَاشِعًا مُّتَصَدِّعًا مِنْ خَشْيَةِ اللَّهِ﴾

“*If We had sent down this Qur'an upon a mountain, you would have seen it humbled and coming apart from fear of Allah*” [Surah Al-Hasyr: 21].

Here, we see how the mountains, made up of hard rock, still crumbles down for the fear of Allah ﷻ.

﴿وَمَا اللَّهُ بِغَافِلٍ عَمَّا تَعْمَلُونَ﴾ “*And Allah is not unaware of what you do.*”: Although Allah ﷻ sees the deeds of Mankind, He grants respite but does not neglect, as everything with Him is by due measure. As for us human beings, when we see a killer, a criminal, a transgressor or a thief among human beings, we tend to hasten to give him the due punishment. This is because, our measure is subjected to time, thus we feel that the time since the committing of the wrong action has prolonged. However, Allah ﷻ is not subjected to the laws of time, as He is the One who created time, so Allah ﷻ says:

﴿وَكَانَ الْإِنْسَانُ عَجُولًا﴾

“*and man is ever hasty*” [Surah Al-Isra’: 11].

Here, Allah ﷻ describes the human being as hasty, and hastiness is referring to the laws of time. Allah ﷻ also says:

﴿فَمَنْ يَعْمَلْ مِثْقَالَ ذَرَّةٍ خَيْرًا يَرَهُ (٧) وَمَنْ يَعْمَلْ مِثْقَالَ ذَرَّةٍ شَرًّا يَرَهُ (٨)﴾

“So whoever does an atom's weight of good will see it, And whoever does an atom's weight of evil will see it.” [Surah Az-Zalzalah: 7-8].

Therefore, Allah ﷻ is not unaware of what man do, and he will not leave out a single thing.

Verse 75:

﴿أَفَتَطْمَعُونَ أَنْ يُؤْمِنُوا لَكُمْ وَقَدْ كَانَ فَرِيقٌ مِنْهُمْ يَسْمَعُونَ كَلَامَ اللَّهِ ثُمَّ يُحَرِّفُونَهُ مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا عَقَلُوهُ وَهُمْ يَعْلَمُونَ﴾

“Do you entertain the hope, [Oh believers], that they would believe in you, while a party of them used to hear the words of Allah and then distort the Torah after they had understood it while they knew it? ”

This speech is addressed to the Prophet ﷺ and the Muslims who were in Medina when this verse was revealed.

The word ﴿تَطْمَعُونَ﴾ has the word ‘*Tama*’ as its noun, which means ‘the desire of the self for something which is not its due rights to have’. The believers had entertained the hope that these delinquent Jews would believe, although it was not their rights to desire this, as Allah ﷻ says:

﴿إِنَّكَ لَا تَهْدِي مَنْ أَحْبَبْتَ وَلَكِنَّ اللَّهَ يَهْدِي مَنْ يَشَاءُ﴾

“Indeed, [O Muhammad], you do not guide whom you like, but Allah guides whom He wills.” [Surah Al-Qasas: 56].

You are not tasked to force people to get guidance. Your task is to direct and explain, as Allah ﷻ says:

﴿فَذَكِّرْ إِنَّمَا أَنْتَ مُذَكِّرٌ (٢١) لَسْتَ عَلَيْهِمْ بِمُصَيِّرٍ (٢٢)﴾

“So remind, [OMuhammad]; you are only a reminder. You are not a controller over them. ” [Surah Al-Ghashiyah: 21-22].

Therefore, all the criminal and terrorist movements that are built upon the forcing of belief on people coercively are false and have no connection whatsoever to the uprightness of the religion. Islam can never be forced upon people, and it is not a right of anyone to force Islam on others, as there is no compulsion in religion.

Thus, the job of an individual is to convey the message of *Iman* and Islam. Allah ﷻ says, addressing His Prophet ﷺ:

﴿أَفَأَنْتَ تُكْرِهُ النَّاسَ حَتَّىٰ يَكُونُوا مُؤْمِنِينَ﴾

“Then, [O Muhammad], would you compel the people in order that they become believers?” [Surah Yunus: 99].

Allah ﷻ says of the Israelites:

﴿وَقَدْ كَانَ قَرِيْقٌ مِنْهُمْ يَسْمَعُونَ كَلَامَ اللَّهِ ثُمَّ يُحَرِّفُونَهُ مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا عَقَلُوهُ وَهُمْ يَعْلَمُونَ﴾

“ while a party of them used to hear the words of Allah and then distort the Torah after they had understood it while they knew?”

Notice the greatness of Islam which goes according to the principle of ‘Preserving of Possibilities’. This means that matters are not generalised on everyone. Many of us err due to this generalization. For example, a preacher ascends the rostrum and gives a judgement: “The people have strayed from the right path”, or “The people are all liars!”, thus generalizing it for everyone. This is not correct.

However, Allah ﷻ gives a just of judgement, even regarding the Israelites. He says:

﴿وَقَدْ كَانَ قَرِيْقٌ مِنْهُمْ يَسْمَعُونَ كَلَامَ اللَّهِ ثُمَّ يُحَرِّفُونَهُ مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا عَقَلُوهُ وَهُمْ يَعْلَمُونَ﴾

“while a party of them used to hear the words of Allah and then distort the Torah after they had understood it while they knew it?”

That is, only a party of them, not all of them commit these acts. The Muslim is required to ponder upon the verses of Allah ﷻ by using his intellect. Our religion is a religion of knowledge which began with the word *Iqra'*, an imperative which means ‘read!’. Islam is a religion of knowledge, as Allah ﷻ says:

﴿فَاعْلَمْ أَنَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ﴾

“So know, [O Muhammad], that there is no deity except Allah”

[Surah Muhammad: 19].

Thus, we are the ones who should teach knowledge and spread it to people. It is not permissible for us to accept the stigma which labels our religion with ignorance, whereas every verse in our religion encourages us to ponder, reflect and learn.

Those who distorted the Torah knew that it was the truth from Allah ﷻ. They had read it and judged its contents through their intellects and logic and found that it was true. Then, they distorted it while they knew of its truth.

Verse 76:

﴿وَإِذَا لَقُوا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا قَالُوا آمَنَّا وَإِذَا خَلَا بِبَعْضِهِمْ إِلَىٰ بَعْضٍ قَالُوا أَتُحَدِّثُونَهُمْ بِمَا فَتَحَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْكُمْ لِيُحَاجُّوكُمْ بِهِ عِنْدَ رَبِّكُمْ أَفَلَا تَعْقِلُونَ﴾

“And when they meet those who believe, they say, “We have believed”; but when they are alone with one another, they say, “Do you talk to them about what Allah has revealed to you so they can argue with you about it before your Lord?” Then will you not reason?”

The upper hand and the word was for the Muslims in Medina during the time of the Prophet ﷺ. Therefore, the Jews would say, “We have believed”, if they met the believers. However, when they were alone with one another, they would say: “Do not tell them of what has been said in the Torah, lest they use it to argue with you about it before your God!”. The argument will always be in the hands of our religion.

The Torah contained the characteristics of the Prophet ﷺ, as stated by Abdullah Bin Sal’lam, one of the Rabbis among the Jews who embraced Islam⁶⁹: “Verily, I can find the description of the characteristics of the Prophet ﷺ clearly in the Torah until it is as if I know him.” The Jews would distort the parts of the Torah which mentioned the characteristics of the Prophet ﷺ. Then, a group of them would constantly remind each other not to talk to any one of the Muslims about what is in their Book concerning the characteristics of the Prophet ﷺ. This was so that the Muslims would not use it as an argument against them. Thus, Allah ﷻ refutes what they say by saying:

⁶⁹ Anas Ibn Malik Narrated: Abdullah bin Salam heard the news of the arrival of Allah’s Messenger (at Medina). So, he came to the Prophet ﷺ and said: “I will ask you about three things which nobody knows unless he truly is a prophet. Firstly, what is the first portent of the Hour? What is the first meal of the people of Paradise? And what makes a baby look like its father or mother?”. The Prophet ﷺ said, “Just now Jibril has informed me about that.” Abdullah said: “Jibril? He, among the angels is the enemy of the Jews.” The Prophet ﷺ said: “As for the first portent of the Hour, it will be a fire that will collect the people from the East to West. And as for the first meal of the people of Paradise, it will be the caudate (i.e. extra) lobe of the fish liver. And if a man’s discharge proceeded that of the woman, then the child resembles the father, and if the woman’s discharge proceeded that of the man, then the child resembles the mother.” On hearing that, Abdullah said, “I testify that None has the right to be worshipped but Allah, and that you are the Messenger of Allah.” (Sahih al-Bukhari: Prophets (كتاب الأحاديث الأنبياء), Chapter: The Creation of Adam and his offspring, No: 3329.

Verse 77:

﴿أَوَلَا يَعْلَمُونَ أَنَّ اللَّهَ يَعْلَمُ مَا يُسِرُّونَ وَمَا يُعْلِنُونَ﴾

“But do they not know that Allah knows what they conceal and what they declare?”

Allah ﷻ knows all the secrets and that which is yet more hidden. The word *As-Sirr* which means ‘*the secret*’, is something which is only between two parties. However, when it goes beyond these two parties, it has circulated and spread. That which is yet more hidden refers to what is in a person’s self that no one other than Allah ﷻ knows.

Verse 78:

﴿وَمِنْهُمْ أُمِّيُونَ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ الْكِتَابَ إِلَّا أَمَانِيَّ وَإِنْ هُمْ إِلَّا يَظُنُّونَ﴾

“And among them are the illiterates who do not know the Scripture except in wishful thinking, but they are only assuming”

In this verse also, we can observe the principle of ‘Preserving of Possibilities’. Allah ﷻ does not generalize here, as He says: ﴿وَمِنْهُمْ﴾. That is, *“not all of them.”*

Linguistically, the “*Ummiy*”, (which means the illiterate person), is attributed to his “*Umm*” which means mother. This is because, he is in a state which is similar to the state his mother gave birth to him, as he has not taken in any knowledge from his surroundings and community.

Illiteracy for normal human beings is a deficiency. However, illiteracy for the Prophet ﷺ is the peak of perfection.

The difference between the illiteracy of human beings and the illiteracy of the Prophet ﷺ is like the difference between deficiency and perfection. The deficient person is the one who has never studied. The perfect is the Prophet

ﷺ, as Allah ﷻ is the One who taught him. Allah ﷻ did not Will for His prophet ﷺ to be taught by any human being, as He would reveal to him the Holy Qur'an that would challenge the human beings. Due to this, Allah ﷻ reserved for Himself the teaching of His Prophet, as Allah ﷻ says:

﴿وَعَلَّمَكَ مَا لَمْ تَكُنْ تَعْلَمُ﴾

“...and has taught you that which you did not know...” [An-Nisaa': 113].

Thus, Allah ﷻ has taught him so that he can become the teacher for all human beings, and the teacher of all the teachers. His knowledge is not received from his environment nor his surroundings, to avoid people saying that he was taught the Qur'an by Man:

﴿وَقَالُوا أَأَسَاطِيرُ الْأَوَّلِينَ اكْتَتَبَهَا فَهِيَ تُمْلَى عَلَيْهِ بُكْرَةً وَأَصِيلًا﴾

“And they say, "Legends of the former peoples which he has written down, and they are dictated to him morning and afternoon." [Al-Furqan: 5],

as they had said as an attack at the prophet ﷺ the beginning of his mission.

These illiterates among the Israelites: ﴿لَا يَعْلَمُونَ الْكِتَابَ إِلَّا أَمَانِيًّا﴾

“...who do not know the Scripture except in wishful thinking...”.

Linguistically, the word *Umniyyah*, which is the singular for *Amaniyy*, is something which a person wishes to happen but does not have the means of achieving, as a poet said:

I wish the youthfulness would return one day.

So that I can inform it of what the grey hairs have done.

The returning of youthfulness is impossible and will never actualize. Thus, it is an *Umniyyah*. The *Umniyyah* can be something which might or might not happen.

Among the Jews, there were the Rabbis and learned men who knew what was found in the Torah. Amongst them too were those who did not know of the Scripture except in wishful thinking. Some of this second group of people wished that they knew of the Torah, yet they did not. Rather, they were moving along only with supposition while they took the knowledge of their religion from their Rabbis. These Rabbis were the ones who had written the Torah. There was also another group of illiterates from this second group who wished that they knew the Scripture. However, they also supposed that the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ had been mentioned in the Torah. The word “*Zhonn*”, which means assumption or supposition, has a percentage of truth which is closer towards confirmation than non-confirmation. However, it does not reach the level of knowledge.

Verse 79:

﴿فَوَيْلٌ لِلَّذِينَ يَكْتُوبُونَ الْكِتَابَ بِأَيْدِيهِمْ ثُمَّ يَقُولُونَ هَذَا مِنْ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ لِيَشْتَرُوا بِهِ ثَمَنًا قَلِيلًا فَوَيْلٌ لَهُمْ مِمَّا كَتَبَتْ أَيْدِيهِمْ وَوَيْلٌ لَهُمْ مِمَّا يَكْسِبُونَ﴾

“So woe to those who write the “scripture” with their hands, then say, “This is from Allah,” in order to exchange it for a small price. Woe to them for what their hands have written and woe to them for what they earn.”

Here, why does Allah ﷻ specifically say the word: ﴿بِأَيْدِيهِمْ﴾ “*with their hands*”, whereas writing is not done except with one’s hands?

The meaning is that the Rabbis and learned men among the Israelites wrote the Torah with their own hands and did not assign this task to anyone else, due to their strong desire to distort it. This is because, as the description: “with their hands” is from Allah ﷻ, we are sure that it is exactly as it happened.

﴿فَوَيْلٌ لَهُمْ مِمَّا كَتَبَتْ أَيْدِيهِمْ وَوَيْلٌ لَهُمْ مِمَّا يَكْسِبُونَ﴾ *“Woe to them for what their hands have written and woe to them for what they earn.”*

Linguistically, the word “Al-Wail” means ‘the coming of evil’. It is a word used as a curse for destruction and punishment. Thus, these people have two curses and two punishments incumbent upon them because they used to fabricate lies against Allah ﷻ and then taught them to people.

There is a weighty responsibility and a manifold and severe punishment for those who bring the religious sciences to people while they distort its meanings according to their desires. This has been done by those who change Islam into terrorism and killing. They also take parts of verses out of their context and interpret them according to their desires and personal interests, such as this verse:

﴿وَقَاتِلُوا الْمُشْرِكِينَ كَافَّةً﴾

“Fight all the polytheists”. [Surah At-Tawbah: 36]

Those people will be cursed because they have exchanged the verses of Allah ﷻ for a small price. In the Holy Qur’an, Allah ﷻ states that they have “Ishtaraa” which means (*bought*) the verses of Allah ﷻ with a small price. In reality, the price is sold and not bought. However, Allah ﷻ uses this as an expression to make an example of them. Even if they gave up millions from the wealth of the earth in exchange for the distortion of Allah’s Words, it would still be a small price. Thus, on them will be a curse for what they have earned. Their earnings, which they believed to be their profits, will instead bring evil consequences unto them.

Verse 80:

﴿وَقَالُوا لَنْ نَمَسَّنَا النَّارُ إِلَّا أَيَّاماً مَعْدُودَةً قُلْ أَتَّخَذْتُمْ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ عَهْدًا فَلَنْ يُخْلِفَ اللَّهُ عَهْدَهُ أَمْ تَقُولُونَ عَلَى اللَّهِ

﴿مَا لَا تَعْلَمُونَ﴾

“And they say, ‘Never will the Fire touch us, except for a few days.’ Say, ‘Have you taken a covenant with Allah? For Allah will never break His covenant. Or do you say about Allah that which you do not know?’”

Everything that can be counted is considered little, as the big amount is uncountable, as Allah ﷻ has said:

﴿وَإِنْ تَعُدُّوا نِعْمَةَ اللَّهِ لَا تُحْصُوهَا﴾

“If you enumerate Allah’s blessings, you will not be able to count them.”

[Surah Ibrahim: 34]

Whereas He says of the little which can be counted:

﴿وَشَرَوْهُ بِثَمَنٍ بَخْسٍ دَرَاهِمَ مَعْدُودَةٍ﴾

“And they sold him for a cheap price, a few dirhams, for they set small store by him. ” [Surah Yusuf: 20]

The price mentioned here is only a little.

In this verse, these Israelites seek that their charge on the Day of Judgment will only span a few days consisting of a small punishment.

﴿قُلْ أَتَّخَذْتُمْ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ عَهْدًا فَلَنْ يُخْلِفَ اللَّهُ عَهْدَهُ﴾ **“Say, ‘Have you taken a covenant with Allah? For Allah will never break His covenant’”**: This is because, Allah ﷻ will not break the covenant and promise.

﴿أَمْ تَقُولُونَ عَلَى اللَّهِ مَا لَا تَعْلَمُونَ﴾ **“Or do you say about Allah that which you do not know?”**

Verse 81:

﴿بَلَىٰ مَنْ كَسَبَ سَيِّئَةً وَأَحَاطَتْ بِهِ خَطِيئَتُهُ فَأُولَٰئِكَ أَصْحَابُ النَّارِ هُمْ فِيهَا خَالِدُونَ﴾

“Yes, whoever earns evil and his sin has encompassed him - those are the companions of the Fire; they will abide therein eternally.”

The word "*Balaa*" is normally translated as, (Yes). However, it means agreeing to the opposite of what a person says. Thus, it is a positive answer for a question which contains a negation.

The word "***Ahaatat***" has "***Al-Ihatah***" as a (noun). "*Al-Ihatah*" means something surrounded from every direction. Those who fabricate lies against Allah ﷻ, write the Books with their hands and claim that it is from Allah ﷻ and say of the Holy Qur'an what is not part of it, have committed grave disobediences.

The eternal abode in hell-fire is not for the committing of small sins. The Prophet ﷺ has said:

((مَنْ قَالَ فِي الْقُرْآنِ بِرَأْيِهِ أَوْ بِمَا لَا يَعْلَمُ فَلْيَتَّبِعُوا مَفْعَدَهُ مِنَ النَّارِ))

*“Whosoever says of the Qur'an according to his own opinion, or what he does not know, let him have his abode in the Hellfire.”*⁷⁰

This is because, their sin is at the peak of disobedience.

'*Balaa*': This means: “Yes, you are the ones who have committed the mistakes.

The eternal abode in hell-fire is not for the committing of small sins but for the grave sins. Thus, they are promised this as they had distorted the words of Allah ﷻ. There has to be punishments for the crimes that are committed by people. If not, the affairs in the world would be ruined.

⁷⁰ Sunan an-Nasai al-Kubra: The Book of The Virtues of the Qur'an, Chapter: The one who says of the Qur'an without knowledge, Hadith no. 8085.

﴿فَأُولَٰئِكَ أَصْحَابُ النَّارِ﴾ *“those are the companions of the Fire”* : The Holy Qur’an uses the word ‘*Ashab*’ (which means ‘companions’) here, as a person himself chooses his companions. Therefore, these people have sent their own selves to this place of return. They themselves have chosen the hellfire, whereas Allah ﷻ did not force this choice on them.

Verse 82:

﴿وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ أُولَٰئِكَ أَصْحَابُ الْجَنَّةِ هُمْ فِيهَا خَالِدُونَ﴾

“But they who believe and do righteous deeds - those are the companions of Paradise; they will abide therein eternally.”

Each time punishment is mentioned in the Holy Qur’an, it will be followed by a radiant and positive picture for the obedient believers. They are the companions of Paradise. This means that they have chosen the Paradise for their own selves.

The eternal abode in Paradise and its blessings cannot be achieved by a human being through *Iman* with his tongue only. Rather, it has to come along with good deeds, as *Iman* or faith is ‘what is revered in the heart and certified by actions’, as Rasulullah ﷺ has informed us. Thus, *Iman* also encompasses the certitude in the heart and the deeds performed by the body parts, not only the speech of the tongue. In summary, the eternal abode in Paradise is not achieved except through *Iman* and good deeds.

Verse 83:

﴿وَإِذْ أَخَذْنَا مِيثَاقَ بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ لَا تَعْبُدُونَ إِلَّا اللَّهَ وَبِالْوَالِدَيْنِ إِحْسَانًا وَذِي الْقُرْبَىٰ وَالْيَتَامَىٰ وَالْمَسَاكِينِ وَقُولُوا لِلنَّاسِ حُسْنًا وَأَقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَآتُوا الزَّكَاةَ ثُمَّ تَوَلَّيْتُمْ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا مِّنْكُمْ وَأَنتُمْ مُّعْرِضُونَ﴾

“And [recall] when We took the covenant from the Children of Israel, [enjoining upon them], ‘Do not worship except Allah; and to parents do good and to relatives, orphans, and the needy. And speak to people good [words] and establish prayer and give zakah.’ Then you turned away, except a few of you, and you were refusing.”

Observe here the greatness of the Divine Commands. Allah ﷻ, The Creator of Mankind, is the one who has laid down laws to ensure the protection and safety of Mankind. So do not place yourself in the position of the God of Mankind! Only He can legislate commands and laws for the human beings from the time of the Prophet Adam عليه السلام until Allah ﷻ takes back the Earth and all that is on it.

"*Al-Mithaq*" means 'the contract which is fastened'. It encompasses everything which contains responsibilities. An example is the marriage contract that the Holy Qur'an describes as:

﴿وَأَخَذَ مِنْكُمْ مِيثَاقًا غَلِيظًا﴾

“and they have taken from you a solemn covenant.” [Surah An-Nisaa': 21]

Allah ﷻ has named the marriage contract a solemn covenant, thus describing it with the greatest term. This is due to the extent of responsibilities found in it. Observe the greatness of Islam and the rights it gives to women through marriage!

Allah ﷻ had taken the covenant from the Israelites regarding 8 things:

The first item in the covenant:

﴿لَا تَعْبُدُونَ إِلَّا اللَّهَ﴾ *“Do not worship except Allah.”*

Every single one of the Divine Messages from Allah ﷻ enjoins people to worship Him, not to associate partners with Him and not to worship anything else along with Him. They were given these enjoinsments through the Book that was revealed to them and the Prophet who had been sent to them. Musa عليه السلام and the Torah too were included in this covenant. So, Allah ﷻ had asked them to take the covenant not to associate any other Deity with Allah ﷻ. “*Shirik*” or associating partners with Allah ﷻ, does not necessarily mean the worshipping of idols, the sun or the moon. The other deity could be the desire, wealth, lust or power. Allah ﷻ says:

﴿أَرَأَيْتَ مَنِ اتَّخَذَ إِلَهَهُ هَوَاهُ أَفَأَنْتَ تَكُونُ عَلَيْهِ وَكِيلاً﴾

“Have you seen the one who takes as his god his own desire?”

[Surah Furqan: 43]

Taking the desire as god means that you make yourself as the one you worship other than Allah ﷻ, as worshipping Allah ﷻ means obeying His Commands.

The second item in the covenant:

﴿وَبِالْوَالِدَيْنِ إِحْسَانًا﴾ *“and to parents do good”*

When Allah ﷻ reminded them regarding their parents, He did not say: “Do not be undutiful to your parents!” Instead, He says, “do good to your parents.” The parents are the direct reason for the existence of the human being. So, this was enjoined to the Israelites. All the Muslims are also given this enjoinsment, in the verse:

﴿وَقَضَىٰ رَبُّكَ أَلَّا تَعْبُدُوا إِلَّا إِيَّاهُ وَبِالْوَالِدَيْنِ إِحْسَانًا ۗ﴾

“And your Lord has decreed that you not worship except Him, and to parents, be kind.” [Surah Al-Isra’: 23]

Thus, Allah's ﷻ pleasure is found in the pleasure of one's parents and Allah's ﷻ anger is found in the anger of one's parents, as the Truthful one ﷺ said. These are enjoinders that the individual has to abide by. The enjoinder to have *Ihsan* which means 'kind treatment' to parents, is repeated in the previous Divine Books and also in the Holy Qur'an. Sayyidina Ali ؑ said, "If there was a word which is smaller than 'Uff', Allah ﷻ would have mentioned it when forbidding the offending of one's parents." So, the one who is dutiful to his parents can do as many deeds as he wishes and he will never enter Hellfire. And the undutiful one can do as many deeds as he wishes and he will never enter Paradise. This is because, the pleasure of one's parents makes Allah ﷻ pleased. Furthermore, the one who does not present any form of goodness to his parents will never present any goodness to his God, his people or his country. If you were to listen to a speech or a piece of advice from a speaker or a preacher, you should look at his relationship with his parents and his family at home. If you were to find out that he was undutiful to his parents, you should just ignore his words.

The *Ihsan* is of a higher status than the *Wajib* or the obligatory. All the verses in the Holy Qur'an reminding people to be good to their parents come together with the word *Ihsan*. Your obligation is to care for your parents. However, the *Ihsan* is in performing what is more than the obligation. Rasulullah ﷺ has said:

(("رَغِمَ أَنْفٌ، ثُمَّ رَغِمَ أَنْفٌ، ثُمَّ رَغِمَ أَنْفٌ" قِيلَ مَنْ؟ قَالَ: " مَنْ أَدْرَكَ أَبَوَيْهِ عِنْدَ الْكِبَرِ، أَحَدَهُمَا أَوْ كِلَيْهِمَا، فَلَمْ يَدْخُلِ الْجَنَّةَ "))

“‘May he be disgraced! May he be disgraced! May he be disgraced!’ It was asked: ‘Who?’ He said: ‘He whose parents, one or both, attain old age during

his life time, and he does not enter Jannah (by rendering being dutiful to them)'.⁷¹

The obligation is to be good to them, as Allah ﷻ says in the following verse:

﴿إِمَّا يَبْلُغَنَّ عِنْدَكَ الْكِبَرَ أَحَدُهُمَا أَوْ كِلَاهُمَا فَلَا تَقُلْ لَهُمَا أُفٍّ وَلَا تَنْهَرُهُمَا وَقُلْ لَهُمَا قَوْلًا كَرِيمًا﴾

“Whether one or both of them reach old age [while] with you, say not to them [so much as], "uff," and do not reprimand them but speak to them a noble word.”

[Surah Al-Isra': 23]

Ihsan, on the other hand, is above what is obligatory, as we can find in the following verse:

﴿إِنَّ الْمُتَّقِينَ فِي جَنَّاتٍ وَعُيُونٍ (١٥) آخِذِينَ مَا آتَاهُمْ رَبُّهُمْ ؕ إِنَّهُمْ كَانُوا قَبْلَ ذَلِكَ مُحْسِنِينَ (١٦) كَانُوا قَلِيلًا مِنَ اللَّيْلِ مَا يَهْجَعُونَ (١٧) وَبِالْأَسْحَارِ هُمْ يَسْتَغْفِرُونَ (١٨) وَفِي أَمْوَالِهِمْ حَقٌّ لِّلسَّائِلِ وَالْمَحْرُومِ (١٩)﴾

“Indeed the God-wary will be amid gardens and springs, receiving what their Lord has given them, for they had been virtuous aforetime. They used to sleep a little during the night, and at dawns they would plead for forgiveness, and there was a share in their wealth for the beggar and the deprived.”

[Surah Adz-Dzariyat: 15 -19].

Here, notice that the people who are called *Muhsinun* which means those who have *Ihsan*, are described as performing the night prayer, seeking repentance in the moments before daybreak and giving charity (other than the obligatory alms). All these acts are not obligatory. We know this because when Allah ﷻ speaks of the *Zakah* or obligatory alms, He says:

﴿وَالَّذِينَ فِي أَمْوَالِهِمْ حَقٌّ مَّعْلُومٌ﴾

“and in whose wealth there is a known right” [Surah Al-Ma'arij: 24].

⁷¹ Sahih Muslim: The Book of Virtue, Enjoining Good Manners, and Joining of the Ties of Kinship, Chapter: The Disgrace Of One Whose Parents, One Or Both Of Them, Reach Old Age During His Lifetime, And He Does Not Enter Paradise, Hadith no. 2551.

Observe the precision of the verse which mentions additions to the obligatory acts while not intending that they are obligatory. Therefore, *Ihsan* to one's parents means to do more than what Allah ﷻ has made obligatory.

The covenant in this verse was revealed to Musa ﷺ in the Torah. The most important part in it is the part which contains these 8 items which we are discussing. These items are shared by all the Divine Messages. The *Aqeedah* is one because they are all from The One God. However, the legislations and rulings are numerous according to the changing of the periods. In every period, a Prophet is sent along with a message. So, the *Aqeedah* is the same but the legislations are different in accordance with the time and situation.

The *Aqeedah* in all of the Divine Messages is the worship of Allah ﷻ Alone and non other than Him. The word '*Ibadah* or worship, means the obedience to the One who issues the commands by carrying out all that He commands and refraining from all that He forbids. '*Ibadah* does not only mean carrying out the obligations such as the prayer, *Zakah* and pilgrimage, for these are the pillars of Islam. However, '*Ibadah* has a wider scope than this. It covers every single act of obedience that Allah ﷻ commands. Note however, that the prayer is not considered a prayer if a person performs it while he still does acts of disobedience, steals, lies, backbites and all other such things. Whosoever does not abstain from that which is forbidden is not considered as having worshipped. Moreover, the one whose prayer does not stop him from immorality and wrongdoing, is not considered as having prayed.

Any reformative movement or construction of a sound society must revolve around these four circles. This will ensure the building of a civilised and developed society which spreads goodness to all of mankind. They are: Being kind to the parents, relatives, orphans, and the needy.

Allah ﷻ has paired His worship with the *Ihsan* towards one's parents. Thus, whoever does not present any goodness to his parents is not expected to

present goodness to anyone, not to his country nor people. This is a decision which has been determined in all of the Divine legislations. This is why, Allah ﷻ has paired His worship with *Ihsan* towards one's parents.

Islam has given precedence to the mother by three levels over the father. It is narrated in a Hadith that Rasulullah ﷺ was asked by a man, "Who among people is most deserving of my fine treatment?" He ﷺ said, "*Your mother.*" He again asked, "Who next?" "*Your mother*", the Prophet ﷺ replied again. He asked, "Who next?" He (the Prophet) ﷺ said again, "*Your mother.*" He again asked, "Then who?" Thereupon he ﷺ said, "*Then your father.*"⁷² This shows the rights of women in Islam. She is at the highest level that a human being could reach. She is also given priority over the man. She is the mother, wife, sister and daughter. She makes up half of the community and nurtures the whole community. Allah ﷻ says:

﴿وَوَصَّيْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ بِوَالِدَيْهِ حَمَلَتْهُ أُمُّهُ وَهَنَا عَلَى وَهْنٍ وَفِصَالُهُ فِي عَامَيْنِ أَنْ اشْكُرْ لِي وَلِوَالِدِكَ إِلَيَّ الْمَصِيرُ﴾

"We have enjoined man concerning his parents: His mother carried him through weakness upon weakness, and his weaning takes two years. Give thanks to Me and to your parents. To Me is the return." [Surah Luqman: 14],

and

﴿وَإِنْ جَاهَدَاكَ عَلَىٰ أَنْ تُشْرِكَ بِي مَا لَيْسَ لَكَ بِهِ عِلْمٌ فَلَا تُطِعْهُمَا ۗ وَصَاحِبُهُمَا فِي الدُّنْيَا مَعْرُوفًا﴾

"But if they urge you to ascribe to Me as partner that of which you have no knowledge, then do not obey them. Keep their company honourably in this"

[Surah Luqman: 15].

In summary, it is not possible to attain Allah's ﷻ pleasure except through the pleasure of the parents, as Allah's ﷻ pleasure is found in the pleasure of one's parents and Allah's ﷻ anger is found in the anger of one's parents. The enjoinder to be kind to one's parents is found in all the religions and religious

⁷² Sahih al-Bukhari: The Book of Adab, Chapter: Who is more entitled to the best companionship?, Hadith no. 5626.

legislations. If you want to build a community or country, the first step required from you would be to have a good relationship with your parents.

To have *Ihsan* means to carry out that which exceeds what is obligatory upon you. Since the obligation is to be good to one's parents, *Ihsan* towards them will mean that you work hard to gain their pleasure and abstain from invoking their anger in all matters.

The third item in the covenant:

Maintaining *Ihsan* to the relatives, as found in this part of the verse:

﴿وَوَٰدِي الْفُرُبَىٰ﴾ *“and to relatives”*.

If every individual takes responsibility for the poor, needy and sick among his relatives, the four circles mentioned previously will be covered, thus, social solidarity will be realized. In addition, justice and equality will prevail, there will be no big gap between the social classes and poverty will be non-existent in the community.

Maintaining family ties is a type of *ibadah* (worship) towards Allah ﷻ, as narrated in a noble Hadith:

((الرَّجْمُ مُعَلَّقَةٌ بِالْعَرْشِ نَقُولُ: مَنْ وَصَلَنِي، وَصَلَهُ اللهُ، وَمَنْ قَطَعَنِي، قَطَعَهُ اللهُ))

*“The bond of relationship is suspending from the Throne, and says: ‘He who keeps good relations with me, Allah will keep connection with him, but whosoever severs relations with me, Allah will sever connection with him.’”*⁷³

The fourth item in the covenant:

﴿وَالْيَتَامَىٰ﴾ *“and to orphans”*

The orphan is the one who has lost his father. That is, he has lost his helper, supporter and defender. The one who is most deserving of *Ihsan* after

⁷³ Sahih Muslim: The Book of Virtue, Enjoining Good Manners, and Joining of the Ties of Kinship, Chapter: Upholding Ties of Kinship, And the Prohibition of Severing Them, Hadith no. 2555.

one's parents is the orphan. Maintaining *Ihsan* towards the orphan is not only through our wealth. Rather, it is also through good interaction with him. When the society is kind to the orphan, he will not feel the loss, thus social solidarity will be realized. The Prophet ﷺ had said, as he himself grew up as an orphan:

((أَنَا وَكَافِلُ الْيَتِيمِ فِي الْجَنَّةِ هَكَذَا. " وَأَشَارَ بِالسَّبَّابَةِ وَالْوَسْطَى، وَفَرَجَ بَيْنَهُمَا شَيْئًا))

*"I will be like this in Paradise with the person who takes care of an orphan".
The Messenger of Allah (saw) raised his forefinger and middle finger (by way
of illustration) and parted between them a little."*⁷⁴

Allah ﷻ says:

﴿فَأَمَّا الْيَتِيمَ فَلَا تَقْهَرْ﴾

"So as for the orphan, do not oppress [him]." [Surah Adh-Dhuha: 9] and

﴿أَرَأَيْتَ الَّذِي يُكَذِّبُ بِالْإِيمَانِ (١) فَذَلِكَ الَّذِي يَدُعُّ الْيَتِيمَ (٢)﴾

*"Have you seen the one who denies the Recompense? For that is the one
who turns away the orphan." [Surah Al-Maun: 1-2].*

Turning away the orphan means to drive him away and not to act with kindness towards him. Here, Allah ﷻ pairs up disbelief and denial of the Recompense with offending the orphans.

This religion is a religion of values, *Akhlaq*, love and giving. It is not one of malice, killing or sectarianism. This type of covenant is present in all the religious legislations and religions.

The fifth item in the covenant:

﴿وَالْمَسْكِينِ﴾ *"and the needy"*

⁷⁴ Sahih al-Bukhari: The Book of Divorce, Chapter: *al-Li'an*, Hadith no. 4998.

The needy is the one who owns some meagre means which do not suffice for him. This is as we can find in Surah Al-Kahf:

﴿أَمَّا السَّفِينَةُ فَكَانَتْ لِمَسَاكِينَ يَعْمَلُونَ فِي الْبَحْرِ﴾

“As for the ship, it belonged to poor people working at sea.”

[Surah Al-Kahf: 79].

The people described here are poor and own a ship. However, their earnings are not enough to support them. Thus, we have to be kind to those who have a little but it does not suffice to meet their needs.

Maintaining *Ihsan* to all of these groups eliminates spite and hatred from the community and reduces the gap between the social classes. The one who carries out all of the afore-mentioned is, in reality, building the real reformatory movement in the society.

The sixth item in the covenant:

﴿وَقُولُوا لِلنَّاسِ حُسْنًا﴾ *“And speak to people good [words].”*

Here, Allah ﷻ uses the word *Husn* instead of *Ihsan*. *Husn* is the infinitive form which means ‘the whole of goodness’. There is a Qur’anic indication here, that is, all your words are to be good and become the source of all goodness. You should not be foul, indecent and hurtful to others through your tongue and you should not utter except the good. Allah ﷻ says:

﴿ادْفَعْ بِالَّتِي هِيَ أَحْسَنُ فَإِذَا الَّذِي بَيْنَكَ وَبَيْنَهُ عَدَاوَةٌ كَأَنَّهُ وَلِيٌّ حَمِيمٌ﴾

“Repel [evil] by that [deed] which is better; and thereupon the one whom between you and him is enmity [will become] as though he was a devoted friend.” [Surah Fussilat: 34] and

﴿ادْفَعْ بِالَّتِي هِيَ أَحْسَنُ السَّيِّئَةِ نَحْنُ أَعْلَمُ بِمَا يَصِفُونَ﴾

“Repel, by [means of] what is best, [their] evil. We are most knowing of what they describe.” [Surah Al-Mukminun: 96].

There is also a noble Hadith which states:

((لَيْسَ الْمُؤْمِنُ بِالطَّعَّانِ، وَلَا اللَّعَّانِ، وَلَا الْفَاحِشِ، وَلَا الْبِذِيِّ))

“A true believer is not involved in taunting, or frequently cursing (others) nor in indecency nor obscenity.”⁷⁵

There are people who do not mind being foul-mouthed and hurting others with their tongue. Some of them even call others to evil, hatred and sectarianism. An example is the prejudiced mass media which utilises every disgraceful and malicious piece of information to spread separatism, spite and sectarianism. They never say any good to others, instead they only say the bad.

This is because, the good is what is seen good by the religion and what goes in line with what Allah ﷻ says.

The seventh item in the covenant:

﴿وَأَقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ﴾ *“and establish prayer”*

The eighth item in the covenant:

﴿وَأَتُوا الزَّكَاةَ﴾ *“and give zakah”*

The enjoiments for the previous actions have come before the command to perform prayer, pay the alms and the rest of worship. This is because, the one whose prayer does not stop him from immorality and wrongdoing, will only get further away from Allah ﷻ with his prayers. What kind of prayers and *Zakah* will you present to Allah ﷻ if you are not dutiful towards your parents and are not kind to relatives, orphans and the needy?!

⁷⁵ Sunan at-Tirmizi: The Book of Righteousness and Joining of the Ties of Kinship, Chapter: What Has Been Related About The Curse, Hadith no. 1977.

The prayers of those who do not satisfy these prior enjoinders will merely become hollow movements void of weight and value, as Allah ﷻ says:

﴿وَقَدِمْنَا إِلَىٰ مَا عَمِلُوا مِنَّ عَمَلٍ فَجَعَلْنَاهُ هَبَاءً مَّنثُورًا﴾

“Then We shall attend to the works they have done and then turn them into scattered dust.” [Surah Al-Furqan: 23].

Because of this, the other actions, which will lead to the establishment of prayer came first in the covenant.

The establishment of prayer is not merely performing it. It is to carry it out along with all its pillars, conditions, *Khushu'*, targets and purposes. Allah ﷻ says:

﴿وَأَقِمِ الصَّلَاةَ إِنَّ الصَّلَاةَ تَنْهَىٰ عَنِ الْفَحْشَاءِ وَالْمُنْكَرِ وَلَذِكْرُ اللَّهِ أَكْبَرُ﴾

“and establish prayer. Indeed, prayer prohibits immorality and wrongdoing, and the remembrance of Allah is greater” [Surah Al-‘Ankabut: 45].

The remembrance of Allah ﷻ is greater than immorality and wrongdoing. This is contrary to those who use *Allahu Akbar* which means ‘Allah ﷻ is The Greatest’ as a slogan when committing their crimes.

Every religion enjoins the prayers and *Zakah*. Although there might be differences in the prayer movements of each religion. The prayer is considered by all, as the connection between the servant and His God. And although there might be differences in the amount of *Zakah* enjoined, it too is found in every religion.

The *Zakah* is the twin brother of the prayers. The *Zakah* meant here, is not the *Ihsan* mentioned, which is the voluntary charity. However, it is the obligatory charity which is the due right of the poor. It is not considered a favour nor is it an act of kindness, as *Ihsan* are acts which exceed the obligation. The charity is a *Burhan*, which means a proof, as it proves the goodness of your

relationship with Allah ﷻ. If you were to give the *Zakah* to your relatives, it would be counted as the maintaining of ties and *Zakah*. And if you were to give them charity, it would be counted as the maintaining of ties and also *Sadaqah* or charity, thus, you are actually maintaining your family ties while giving charity.

﴿ثُمَّ تَوَلَّيْتُمْ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا مِّنْكُمْ وَأَنْتُمْ مُعْرِضُونَ﴾

“Then you turned away, except a few of you, and you were refusing.”

To turn away from something means to avoid it. So, they turned away, except a few of them. We can see the principle of Preserving the Possibilities being applied here. Allah ﷻ does not generalize this charge for all of them, but says: ﴿إِلَّا قَلِيلًا مِّنْكُمْ وَأَنْتُمْ مُعْرِضُونَ﴾ *“except a few of you, and you were refusing.”*. Thus, Allah ﷻ monitors their hearts and uncovers their inner beings. They turn away from abiding by the covenant while their hearts are refusing it.

This is a constant characteristic of the Jews. Their hearts refuse what their tongues have acknowledged.

Verse 84:

﴿وَإِذْ أَخَذْنَا مِيثَاقَكُمْ لَا تَسْفِكُونَ دِمَاءَكُمْ وَلَا تَخْرِجُونَ أَنْفُسَكُمْ مِنْ دِيَارِكُمْ ثُمَّ أَقْرَرْتُمْ وَأَنْتُمْ تَشْهَدُونَ﴾

“And remember when We took your covenant, [saying], “Do not shed each other's blood or evict one another from your homes.” Then you acknowledged [this] while you were witnessing.”

When a person sheds the blood of a fellow human being, it is as if he is shedding his own blood. And when a person who kills another soul, it is as if he has killed the whole of Mankind, as Allah ﷻ says:

﴿مَنْ قَتَلَ نَفْسًا بِغَيْرِ نَفْسٍ أَوْ فَسَادٍ فِي الْأَرْضِ فَكَأَنَّمَا قَتَلَ النَّاسَ جَمِيعًا﴾

“If anyone slew a person – unless it be for murder or for spreading mischief in the land – it would be as if he slew all of mankind” [Surah Al-Ma’idah: 32].

﴿وَلَا تُخْرِجُونَ أَنْفُسَكُمْ﴾ *“evict one another”*: The word ‘Anfusakum’ here means ‘yourselves’. However, in this verse, it refers to ‘other than yourselves’. Therefore, this establishes the brotherhood in humanity. Verily, the believers are brothers, and this is the brotherhood in religion. Brotherhood in humanity is another type of brotherhood, as Sayyidina Ali عليه السلام said, “Human beings are of two groups: Either your brother in religion, or your counterpart in creation...”

﴿وَلَا تُخْرِجُونَ أَنْفُسَكُمْ مِنْ دِيَارِكُمْ﴾ *“or evict one another from your homes”*: The word *Anfusakum* is used here to establish the brotherhood in humanity. They had acknowledged this covenant when the Prophet Musa عليه السلام brought with him twelve leaders from among the Israelites to witness it.

Verse 85:

﴿بِمَ أَنْتُمْ هَؤُلَاءِ تَقْتُلُونَ أَنْفُسَكُمْ وَتُخْرِجُونَ فَرِيقًا مِنْكُمْ مِنْ دِيَارِهِمْ تَظَاهَرُونَ عَلَيْهِم بِالْإِثْمِ وَالْعُدْوَانِ وَإِنْ يَأْتُوكُمْ أُسَارَى تُفَادُوهُمْ وَهُوَ مُحْرَمٌ عَلَيْكُمْ إِخْرَاجَهُمْ أَفَنُؤْمِنُونَ بِبَعْضِ الْكِتَابِ وَتَكْفُرُونَ بِبَعْضٍ فَمَا جَزَاءُ مَنْ يَفْعَلُ ذَلِكَ مِنْكُمْ إِلَّا خِزْيٌ فِي الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَيَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ يُرَدُّونَ إِلَى أَشَدِّ الْعَذَابِ وَمَا اللَّهُ بِغَافِلٍ عَمَّا تَعْمَلُونَ﴾

“Then, you are those [same ones who are] killing one another and evicting a party of your people from their homes, cooperating against them in sin and aggression. And if they come to you as captives, you ransom them, although their eviction was forbidden to you. So do you believe in part of the Scripture and disbelieve in part? Then what is the recompense for those who do that among you except disgrace in worldly life; and on the Day of Resurrection they will be sent back to the severest of punishment. And Allah is not unaware of what you do.”

The word *ثمَّ* “*Then*” is a conjunction which shows ‘a delay in time until the subsequent happening’. On the other hand, the conjunction *Fa’* shows ‘an immediate subsequent happening’.

Thus, the usage of the word *ثمَّ* “*Then*” means that the speech is now moved to address the Jews who were in Medina during the revelation period of the Holy Qur’an. They were of two groups, a group who were allies with the tribe of Aws and a group who were allies with the tribe of Khazraj. Therefore, when a battle broke out between the Aws and Khazraj, one group of Jews would fight together with the Aws and the other would fight with the Khazraj. Thus, one group of Jews would end up killing the other and evicting them from their homes.

تَتَظَاهَرُونَ عَلَيْهِمْ “*cooperating against them*”: That is, You help a group to overcome another.

بِالْإِثْمِ وَالْعُدْوَانِ “*in sin and aggression*”: The word *Ithm* means ‘aggression without the right to do so’ and the word ‘*Udwan* means ‘the exceeding of the limits’.

The meaning of these parts of the verse is that after these battles, there will be the ransoming of the captives. The plural form of the word *Asiir* which means a captive, is normally the word *Asraa*, as we can find in the following:

مَا كَانَ لِنَبِيِّ أَنْ يَكُونَ لَهُ أُسْرَىٰ حَتَّىٰ يُخِشَ فِي الْأَرْضِ

“It is not fitting for a prophet that he should have prisoners of war until he has thoroughly subdued the land” [Surah Al-Anfaal: 67].

However, the plural used in this verse is *Usaaraa*, which is called a ‘broken plural’. In the Arabic Language, the ‘broken plural’ may imply more than one meaning. Here, it is an indication that there is a large number of captives. This is not used in the Arabic Language except if the One who is Speaking is All-Knowledgeable of people’s inner selves. The Speech of Allah ﷻ talks about

the human being's outward and inward selves. It speaks of their inner selves and examines its depths. For example, when Allah ﷻ talks about the angels, He says:

﴿قَالُوا أَتَجْعَلُ فِيهَا مَنْ يُفْسِدُ فِيهَا وَيَسْفِكُ الدِّمَاءَ﴾

“They said, ‘will you place therein those who will make mischief therein and shed blood?’” [Surah Al-Baqarah: 30],

whereas this saying of the angels could have been only in their selves and was their secret which could not be known except by Allah ﷻ.

Similarly here, Allah ﷻ knows that Jews were ransoming their captives who were of their own people although He had in the first place forbidden them from even evicting them.

﴿أَفَتُؤْمِنُونَ بِبَعْضِ الْكِتَابِ وَتَكْفُرُونَ بِبَعْضٍ﴾ *“So do you believe in part of the Scripture and disbelieve in part?”*: The word *Kufr* means ‘concealing. Thus, they showed some parts of the Book but concealed some other parts, taking some of it and leaving some of it.

Some people take from the Holy Qur’an only what they see to be of benefit to them, such as those who hurry to get their share of inheritance with the argument that Allah ﷻ has enjoined it in the Holy Qur’an. However, if there is a mention of a right that is incumbent upon him, they escape and turn away. They take from the Holy Qur’an that which is suitable for them in their opinion and leave what is not.

﴿فَمَا جَزَاءُ مَنْ يَفْعَلُ ذَلِكَ مِنْكُمْ إِلَّا خِزْيٌ فِي الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَيَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ يُرَدُّونَ إِلَىٰ أَشَدِّ الْعَذَابِ﴾

“Then what is the recompense for those who do that among you except disgrace in worldly life; and on the Day of Resurrection they will be sent back to the severest of punishment.””:

The recompense in this world may or may not happen. However, whoever believes that he has gotten away with his crime is mistaken, for the most just recompense will be in the Hereafter.

﴿وَمَا اللَّهُ بِغَافِلٍ عَمَّا تَعْمَلُونَ﴾ *“And Allah is not unaware of what you do.”*: Sometimes, Allah ﷻ might delay the recompense. However, He grants respite but does not neglect. The recompense will surely happen in the Hereafter.

Verse 86:

﴿أُولَئِكَ الَّذِينَ اشْتَرُوا الْحَيَاةَ الدُّنْيَا بِالْآخِرَةِ فَلَا يُخَفَّفُ عَنْهُمْ الْعَذَابُ وَلَا هُمْ يُنصَرُونَ﴾

“Those are the ones who have bought the life of this world [in exchange] for the Hereafter, so the punishment will not be lightened for them, nor will they be aided.”

(بِالْآخِرَةِ): In a transaction, the letter ‘Be’ is normally affixed to the thing which is left or sold off. The buyer pays an amount of wealth and takes the merchandise. For example, if you bought a book which costs a thousand Syrian Pounds, it means you have paid that amount and taken the book. Thus, these people who are described in the verse have taken the worldly life and left the Hereafter. This is also the case for those who explain the religion according to their own desires.

Thus, ﴿فَلَا يُخَفَّفُ عَنْهُمْ الْعَذَابُ وَلَا هُمْ يُنصَرُونَ﴾ *“so the punishment will not be lightened for them, nor will they be aided.”*

Verse 87:

﴿وَلَقَدْ آتَيْنَا مُوسَى الْكِتَابَ وَقَفَّيْنَا مِنْ بَعْدِهِ بِالرُّسُلِ وَآتَيْنَا عِيسَى ابْنَ مَرْيَمَ الْبَيِّنَاتِ وَأَيَّدْنَاهُ بِرُوحِ الْقُدُسِ أَفَكُلَّمَا جَاءَكُمْ رَسُولٌ بِمَا لَا تَهْوَى أَنْفُسُكُمْ اسْتَكْبَرْتُمْ فَفَرِيقًا كَذَّبْتُمْ وَفَرِيقًا تَقْتُلُونَ﴾

“And We did certainly give Musa the Scripture and followed up after him with messengers. And We gave ‘Isa, the son of Maryam, clear proofs and supported him with the Pure Spirit. But is it [not] that every time a messenger came to you, [O Children of Israel], with what your souls did not desire, you were arrogant? And a party [of messengers] you denied and another party you killed.”

In this verse and the ones preceding it, the Holy Qur’an focuses on all the movements of the Israelites and their followers up till the Jews of Medina, namely the *Bani Qaynuqa’*, *Bani Nadhir*, *Bani Quraizah*, and the Jews of *Khaibar*. These latter group of Jews had aroused trouble and hatred between the tribes of Aws and Khazraj, provoked the Prophet ﷺ and did abominable acts.

Here, Allah ﷻ says: ﴿وَلَقَدْ آتَيْنَا مُوسَى الْكِتَابَ﴾ ***“And We did certainly give Musa the Scripture”***, and when the word ﴿الْكِتَابَ﴾ comes together with the mention of a specific Prophet, it will refer to the Book that had been sent down to that particular Prophet. Thus, the word here is referring to the Torah.

﴿وَقَفَّيْنَا مِنْ بَعْدِهِ بِالرُّسُلِ﴾ ***“and followed up after him with messengers”***: The word ‘*Qaffaina*’ comes from the word ‘*Qafaa*’ which means ‘*that which comes immediately after something.*’ Thus, after Musa ﷺ, Prophets had come successively to the Israelites. The Israelites believe that the big number of Messengers sent to them is a gift from Allah ﷻ, thus they claim:

﴿نَحْنُ أَوْلَادُ اللَّهِ وَأَحِبَّاءُهُ﴾

“We are the children of God and His loved ones” [Surah Al-Ma’idah: 18].

In reality, the big number of Messengers to any one nation is a sign of the multitude of diseases in them, similar to the need of the one who has a multitude of critical diseases to a big group of doctors to treat him. Between Prophet Musa عليه السلام and Prophet Isa عليه السلام, many Prophets and Messengers had been sent to the Israelites. They are Yusha', Ilyasa', Dawud, Sulaiman, Yunus, Zakariyya and Yahya until Isa عليه السلام. And there were also many others whom Allah ﷻ did not relate to us about, as He says:

﴿وَرُسُلًا قَدْ قَصَصْنَاهُمْ عَلَيْكَ مِنْ قَبْلُ وَرُسُلًا لَمْ نَقْصُصْهُمْ عَلَيْكَ وَكَلَّمَ اللَّهُ مُوسَى تَكْلِيمًا﴾

“And [We sent] messengers about whom We have related [their stories] to you before and messengers about whom We have not related to you. And Allah spoke to Musa with [direct] speech.” [Surah An-Nisaa’: 164].

Allah ﷻ has given Prophet Isa عليه السلام the clear proofs. They are the miracles which demonstrate the truthfulness of his conveyance from Allah ﷻ. Allah ﷻ also supported him with the *Ruh Al-Qudus* or the Pure Spirit, who is Jibril عليه السلام. He had been born without a father and had been subjected to that which no other Messenger had been subjected to, such as the denial and disbelief of people. Thus, he had been constantly supported by the *Ruh Al-Quuds*.

The word *Qudus* means the pure.

The word *Ruh* can mean a few meanings:

Either it is used to mean the values which were revealed in the Holy Qur’an, as Allah ﷻ says:

﴿وَكَذَلِكَ أَوْحَيْنَا إِلَيْكَ رُوحًا مِنْ أَمْرِنَا﴾

“And thus We have revealed to you an inspiration of Our command.” [Surah Asy-Syuraa: 52],

as the Holy Qur’an is the spirit of life and the nutrition of the soul.

Or it can mean the spirit that with it, the body is given life. For the human is tantamount to a fistful of clay from the Earth and a breath from the spirit of Allah ﷻ.

Allah ﷻ has named Jibril the *Ruh Al-Qudus* which means the Pure Spirit. Hence, Prophet Isa ﷺ had been supported with the clear poofs and the *Ruhul Qudus*.

Despite all the miracles that he had come with:

﴿إِنِّي أَخْلَقْتُ لَكُمْ مِنَ الطِّينِ كَهَيْئَةِ الطَّيْرِ فَأَنْفُخُ فِيهِ فَيَكُونُ طَيْرًا بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ وَأُبْرِئُ الْأَكْمَهَ وَالْأَبْرَصَ وَأُحْيِي الْمَوْتَى بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ وَأُنَبِّئُكُمْ بِمَا تَأْكُلُونَ وَمَا تَدَّخِرُونَ فِي بُيُوتِكُمْ﴾

“that I design for you from clay [that which is] like the form of a bird, then I breathe into it and it becomes a bird by permission of Allah . And I cure the blind and the leper, and I give life to the dead - by permission of Allah. And I inform you of what you eat and what you store in your houses.”

[Surah Ali 'Imran: 49],

and despite the support of the *Pure Spirit*, the Israelites still did not believe in him.

Prophet Isa ﷺ had been sent down to the Israelites to save them from the atrocities they were committing. However, they denied, were arrogant and rejected the matters that he had come to them with. Similarly, this is what they had done to all the Messengers. They had even killed the Messengers, such as Prophet Yahya ﷺ. Thus, they were the killers of the Messengers in the past, and the killers of nations subsequently. This is the nature of the Israelites.

Verse 88:

﴿وَقَالُوا قُلُوبُنَا غُلْفٌ بَلْ لَعَنَهُمُ اللَّهُ بِكُفْرِهِمْ فَقَلِيلًا مَّا يُؤْمِنُونَ﴾

“And they said, ‘Our hearts are wrapped.’ But, [in fact], Allah has cursed them for their disbelief, so little is it that they believe.”

﴿وَقَالُوا قُلُوبُنَا غُلْفٌ﴾ “And they said, ‘Our hearts are wrapped.’”: The word *Ghulf* here means closed, contented and wrapped. They mean to say that in their hearts is knowledge that suffices them, such that they are not in need of new messages or laws. It can also mean that their hearts are wrapped and sealed, that is, Allah ﷻ has stamped and put a seal on their hearts such that the light of guidance cannot enter them, nor can the darkness of disbelief leave.

﴿بَلْ لَعَنَهُمُ اللَّهُ بِكُفْرِهِمْ فَقَلِيلًا مَّا يُؤْمِنُونَ﴾ “But, [in fact], Allah has cursed them for their disbelief, so little is it that they believe.”

According to the principle of (Preserving the Possibilities), Allah ﷻ acknowledges that they do have believe, though a little. Allah ﷻ did not totally deny belief from them, as among them, there are those who believed.

﴿بَلْ لَعَنَهُمُ اللَّهُ بِكُفْرِهِمْ﴾ “But, [in fact], Allah has cursed them for their disbelief”: The word ‘*bal*’ negates their saying and claim. They are expelled from the mercy of Allah ﷻ, thus the rays of light and guidance will not penetrate into their hearts.

Here, some people who claim rationalism argue: “They are sinless. Allah ﷻ guides whom He wills and causes to stray whom He wills.” Or they argue: “What is the sin of him who Allah ﷻ leads astray?” According to the Principles of Interpretation, when there is a generalization in the Holy Qur’an and also a specification, we have to go by the specification to interpret the generalization. Thus, it is obligatory for the one who does not understand the fine details of the science of *Tafseer* to not embark upon it. The Wahabis have distorted *Tafseer* as they do not have knowledge of this science.

In answer to the rationalists: There are verses which say:

(وَاللَّهُ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الْفَاسِقِينَ)

“and Allah does not guide the defiantly disobedient people.”

[Surah Al-Ma'idah: 108],

(وَاللَّهُ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الظَّالِمِينَ)

“and Allah does not guide the wrongdoing people.”

[Surah Al-Baqarah: 258] and

(وَاللَّهُ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الْكَافِرِينَ)

“And Allah does not guide the disbelieving people.” [Surah Al-Baqarah: 264].

The 'Faasiq' is the one who strays from the Commands of Allah ﷻ, the 'dhalim' or oppressor is the one who oppresses people and also himself and the Kafir or disbeliever is the one who conceals what Allah ﷻ has commanded and also the signs which come from Allah ﷻ.

Therefore, do not say: “Allah did not guide him.” Rather, say: “He is a Faasiq, Dhalim and Kafir. Therefore, Allah ﷻ did not grant him guidance.

So here, in this verse, Allah ﷻ curses them due to their disbelief and concealing of Allah's ﷻ Commands and all that has come from Him.

Verse 89:

﴿وَلَمَّا جَاءَهُمْ كِتَابٌ مِنْ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ مُصَدِّقٌ لِمَا مَعَهُمْ وَكَانُوا مِنْ قَبْلُ يَسْتَفْتِحُونَ عَلَى الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا فَلَمَّا جَاءَهُمْ مَا عَرَفُوا كَفَرُوا بِهِ فَلَعْنَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَى الْكَافِرِينَ﴾

“And when there came to them a Book from Allah confirming that which was with them - although before they used to pray for victory against those who disbelieved - but [then] when there came to them that which

they recognized, they disbelieved in it; so the curse of Allah will be upon the disbelievers.”

The Book meant in this verse is the Holy Qur'an. Not a single Book was revealed except that it confirmed the previous Books, as it is from Allah ﷻ, from the One God:

﴿شَرَعَ لَكُمْ مِنَ الدِّينِ مَا وَصَّى بِهِ نُوحًا وَالَّذِي أَوْحَيْنَا إِلَيْكَ وَمَا وَصَّيْنَا بِهِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَمُوسَى وَعِيسَى أَنْ أَقِيمُوا الدِّينَ وَلَا تَتَفَرَّقُوا فِيهِ﴾

“He has ordained for you of religion what He enjoined upon Nuh and that which We have revealed to you, [O Muhammad], and what We enjoined upon Ibrahim and Musa and ‘Isa - to establish the religion and not be divided therein.” [Surah Asy-Syuraa:13].

The *Din* or religion is therefore from Allah ﷻ.

The Jews in Medina used to await the coming of a Messenger. When disputes happened between them and the tribes of Aws and Khazraj in Medina, they would say to them, “When the promised Messenger comes, we will be with him and kill all of you the way the people of ‘Aad and Iram were killed!” However: ﴿فَلَمَّا جَاءَهُمْ مَا عَرَفُوا كَفَرُوا بِهِ﴾ *“but [then] when there came to them that which they recognized, they disbelieved in it”*. The mention of the Messenger is found in the Torah and in the Bible, as Allah ﷻ says via the tongue of Prophet Isa ﷺ:

﴿وَمُبَشِّرًا بِرَسُولٍ يَأْتِي مِنْ بَعْدِي اسْمُهُ أَحْمَدُ﴾

“and bringing good tidings of a messenger to come after me, whose name is Ahmad.” [Surah As-Saf: 6].

However, they disbelieved. That is, they concealed what came in the Holy Qur'an and denied its contents. They also refused to believe in it, thus Allah ﷻ cursed them. This means that He expelled them from His Mercy, just as He cursed Iblis and expelled him from His Mercy.

Verse 90:

﴿يُسْمَا اشْتَرَوْا بِهِ أَنْفُسَهُمْ أَنْ يَكْفُرُوا بِمَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ بَغِيًّا أَنْ يُنَزَّلَ اللَّهُ مِنْ فَضْلِهِ أَنْ يُنَزَّلَ اللَّهُ مِنْ فَضْلِهِ عَلَى مَنْ
يَشَاءُ مِنْ عِبَادِهِ فَبَاءُوا بَعْضَ عَلَى غَضَبٍ وَلِلْكَافِرِينَ عَذَابٌ مُهِينٌ﴾

“How wretched is that for which they sold themselves - that they would disbelieve in what Allah has revealed through [their] outrage that Allah would send down His favour upon whom He wills from among His servants. So, they returned having [earned] wrath upon wrath. And for the disbelievers is a humiliating punishment.”

The word *Ishtarau* which means ‘sold’ is used. This is because, they are materialists who do not understand except the language of business and wealth and via demonstrations using gold and silver coins and the dollar. This is their life. When they disbelieved in what Allah ﷻ sent down in the Holy Qur’an, it is as if they had bought disbelief, which is a business transaction at a loss.

The word *Kufr* here means denial and concealment, not killing and terrorism as claimed by the terrorists, when they accuse others of disbelief.

The word *Al-Baghyu* means aggression and the exceeding of the limits.

﴿أَنْ يُنَزَّلَ اللَّهُ مِنْ فَضْلِهِ عَلَى مَنْ يَشَاءُ مِنْ عِبَادِهِ﴾ *“that Allah would send down His favour upon whom He wills from among His servants.”*

When the Holy Qur’an was revealed to the Arabs to an Arabian Messenger, they rejected it, as they had wished that the Messenger would be from the progeny of the Israelites. For they used to claim that they would be victorious over the people of Medina as the last prophet would be of the Jews. Then it happened that he was of the Arabs.

Allah ﷻ is most knowing of where He places His Message. Prophethood is a favour. The sealing of the Prophets with our Prophet Muhammad ﷺ is the

greatest favour on us. Allah ﷻ sent him from the Arabs, thus honouring the Arab nations. Our Prophet is Arab, the Holy Qur'an is in Arabic and the tongue of the dwellers of Paradise is Arabic, as our Prophet Muhammad ﷺ has mentioned.

﴿فَبَاءُوا بِغَضَبٍ عَلَىٰ غَضَبٍ﴾ “So they returned having [earned] wrath upon wrath”.

The first wrath is incurred as they denied the truth that was brought by Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. This wrath was shared between them and the disbelievers who possess no Divine Books. The second wrath was specifically incurred on them, because they denied the Prophet ﷺ despite the fact that his description is found in their Torah and his characteristics are described there. Yet, they still disbelieved, although they knew his truthfulness and that what he brought is the truth. Thus, they concealed what was in the Torah. The word *Kufr* means concealment. That is, they concealed what came to them from Allah ﷻ.

﴿وَالْكَافِرِينَ عَذَابٌ مُّهِينٌ﴾ “And for the disbelievers is a humiliating punishment.”

This humiliating punishment is to be given on the Day of Judgment. This is the worst type of punishment, as the human being who used to be arrogant and haughty will now be subjected to humiliation on the Day of Judgement due to that which he used to do in the world.

Verse 91:

﴿وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُمْ آمَنُوا بِمَا أَنزَلَ اللَّهُ قَالُوا نُوْمِنُ بِمَا أَنزَلَ عَلَيْنَا وَنَكْفُرُونَ بِمَا وَرَاءَهُ وَهُوَ الْحَقُّ مُصَدِّقًا لِّمَا مَعَهُمْ قُلْ فَلِمَ قَتَلْتُمُو أَنْبِيَاءَ اللَّهِ مِنْ قَبْلُ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ﴾

“And when it is said to them, ‘Believe in what Allah has revealed,’ they say, ‘We believe [only] in what was revealed to us.’ And they disbelieve in what came after it, while it is the truth confirming that which is with them. Say, ‘Then why did you kill the prophets of Allah before, if you are [indeed] believers?’”

When it was said to them to believe in the Holy Qur'an, they stated that they would only believe in the Torah. Subsequently, they disbelieved in what came after it, that is, namely the Holy Qur'an. This was despite the fact that it is the truth confirming that which is with them, that which came in the Torah and all of the former Divine Books. This shows the unity of the *Aqeedah*, thus the Holy Qur'an debates with them by saying:

﴿قُلْ فَلِمَ قَتَلْتُمُ أَنْبِيَاءَ اللَّهِ مِنْ قَبْلُ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ﴾ , *“Say, ‘Then why did you kill the prophets of Allah before, if you are [indeed] believers?’”*.

This verse addresses the Jews who were present during the period of revelation. It reminds them that their fore-fathers had killed the Prophets, thus they were liars who did not believe in the Torah, Bible nor the Qur'an. They did not believe except in wealth and their own interests.

Verse 92:

﴿وَلَقَدْ جَاءَكُمْ مُوسَىٰ بِالْبَيِّنَاتِ ثُمَّ اتَّخَذْتُمُ الْعِجْلَ مِنْ بَعْدِهِ وَأَنْتُمْ ظَالِمُونَ﴾

“And Musa had certainly brought you clear proofs. Then you took the calf [in worship] after that, while you were oppressors.”

Here, the speech refers to the Jews who were present at the time of Prophet Musa عليه السلام. They were the ones that the clear proofs had been given to.

﴿بِالْبَيِّنَاتِ﴾ *Al-Bayyinat* which means the clear proofs, are the miracles that Allah عز وجل supported he Prophet Musa عليه السلام with, as He says:

﴿وَلَقَدْ آتَيْنَا مُوسَىٰ تِسْعَ آيَاتٍ بَيِّنَاتٍ﴾

“And We had certainly given Musa nine evident signs” [Surah Al-Isra': 101].

They were: The flood, the locusts, the lice, the frogs, the staff, the hand, the parting of the ocean, the blood and the famine. They were miracles which were clear and plain. Albeit all of this, they killed the Prophets of Allah عز وجل,

denied the Torah, disbelieved in the Bible and disbelieved in the Prophets. Then Allah ﷻ says to them: *(Then you took the calf as a God!! And you worshipped it albeit all these clear proofs!!)* Their extreme denial reached the point where they even said to Musa ﷺ:

﴿أَرْنَا اللَّهَ جَهْرَةً﴾ *“Show us Allah outright!”* [Surah An-Nisaa’: 153]

Thus, they are the *Dhalimun* or oppressors because they oppress themselves and buy the worldly life in exchange for the Hereafter.

Verse 93:

﴿وَإِذْ أَخَذْنَا مِيثَاقَكُمْ وَرَفَعْنَا فَوْقَكُمُ الطُّورَ خُذُوا مَا آتَيْنَاكُمْ بِقُوَّةٍ وَاسْمَعُوا قَالُوا سَمِعْنَا وَعَصَيْنَا وَأَشْرَبُوا فِي قُلُوبِهِمُ الْعِجْلَ بِكُفْرِهِمْ فَلَنْ يُنْسَمَا يَأْمُرُكُمْ بِهِ إِيْمَانُكُمْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ﴾

“And remember when We took your covenant and raised over you the mount, [saying], ‘Take what We have given you with determination and listen.’ They said [instead], ‘We hear and disobey.’ And their hearts absorbed [the worship of] the calf because of their disbelief. Say, ‘How wretched is that which your faith enjoins upon you, if you should be believers.’”

The raising of the mountain over the Israelites is a miracle that Allah ﷻ gave specifically to them. They had feared the raising of the mountain above their heads more than they feared Allah ﷻ. Thus, they had prostrated while looking from the side for fear of the mountain. They did not fear Allah ﷻ but feared the mountain. This movement is found in them till this day.

﴿خُذُوا مَا آتَيْنَاكُمْ بِقُوَّةٍ وَاسْمَعُوا﴾ *“Take what We have given you with determination and listen.”*: That is, you are to accept your religion with contentment and certitude and to perform your prayers with strength, vitality and strong eagerness. The Prophet ﷺ used to say to Bilal ؓ when he wanted him to give the call to prayer:

((يَا بِلَالُ، أَقِمِ الصَّلَاةَ، أَرْخَنَا بِهَا))

“Oh Bilal, give the iqamah (call) for prayer, give us comfort by it.”⁷⁶

He did not say: “Relief us of it, Oh Bilal.” This indicates that you should not be lazy to perform worship of Allah ﷻ. You should also give the *Zakah* or the obligatory alms willingly with a good heart. Similarly, all of Allah’s commands should be carried out in this manner.

﴿وَأَسْمَعُوا﴾ *“and listen”*: You are to understand and obey! Allah ﷻ says:

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا أَطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ وَلَا تَوَلَّوْا عَنْهُ وَأَنْتُمْ تَسْمَعُونَ﴾

“O you who have believed, obey Allah and His Messenger and do not turn from him while you hear [his order].” [Surah Al-Anfaal: 20].

The hearing is a means of understanding the Commands of Allah ﷻ. You are actually listening from Allah ﷻ when you recite the Holy Qur’an. The Holy Qur’an cannot be learnt except through listening and reading (to a Teacher). The countries of Sham, all praises be to Allah ﷻ, are well-known for the teaching of recitation and giving endorsements for reciters through the chains of recitation. Trained reciters from these countries have gone to all the Islamic regions over the centuries.

The Holy Qur’an cannot be learnt except through listening and reading (to a Teacher). How will the person who has never heard the recitation of the Holy Qur’an differentiate between the word (الم) in this verse:

﴿الم (١) ذَلِكَ الْكِتَابُ﴾ and

“Alif, Lam, Meem. This is the Book” [Surah Al-Baqarah: 1-2] and this verse:

﴿أَلَمْ تَرَى كَيْفَ ضَرَبَ اللَّهُ مَثَلًا﴾

⁷⁶ Sunan Abi Dawud: The Book of Adab, Chapter: Prayer in the Darkness of the Night, Hadith no. 4985

“Have you not considered how Allah presents an example”

[Surah Ibrahim: 24],

since both their scripts are the same, although their recitation is different? The *Tajweed* Rules contain the rules of reciting, the way the Prophet ﷺ had recited the Holy Qur’an. The reciters had learnt them from the companions, generation after generation, reciter to reciter, until it has reached us today exactly as it was revealed. Therefore, we listen in order to learn the Holy Qur’an, and then recite it to the Qur’anic Teachers.

﴿وَأَسْمِعُوا﴾ *“and listen”*: Here, this phrase can also mean ‘obey!’.

﴿قَالُوا سَمِعْنَا وَعَصَيْنَا﴾ *“They said [instead], ‘We hear and disobey’”*: They could not say ‘We hear and we obey’, as we say:

﴿سَمِعْنَا وَأَطَعْنَا غُفْرَانَكَ رَبَّنَا﴾

“We hear and we obey. [We seek] Your forgiveness, our Lord”

[Surah Al-Baqarah: 285].

However, they said: “We hear” with their tongues, but “We disobey” with their hearts. They could not say that they disobeyed with their tongues. Thus, they intended the disobedience in their hearts and hid it, but Allah ﷻ knew of it. For this is the Speech of Allah ﷻ, whereas no human being is able to say things like this. However, Allah ﷻ can, as He knows what they hide in their hearts.

﴿وَأَشْرَبُوا فِي قُلُوبِهِمُ الْعِجْلَ بِكُفْرِهِمْ﴾ *“And their hearts absorbed [the worship of] the calf because of their disbelief.”*

The calf is big whereas the heart is small. How could it absorb the cow?

This is a metaphorical picture which means, the love of the cow was absorbed into their hearts. This is similar to when we say that water is absorbed into every cell of the body. This means that not one cell is left without water

absorbed in it. Thus, disbelief and denial had entered into all their cells. This is of the accuracy of the comparison. If it had been from any other than Allah ﷻ, they would have found within it much contradiction. Therefore, love of the cow was absorbed into their hearts, due to their disbelief and denial, not as a form of oppression from Allah ﷻ.

﴿قُلْ بِئْسَمَا يَأْمُرُكُمْ بِهِ إِيمَانُكُمْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ﴾ “Say, ‘How wretched is that which your faith enjoins upon you, if you should be believers.’”

Verse 94:

﴿قُلْ إِنْ كَانَتْ لَكُمْ الدَّارُ الآخِرَةُ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ خَالِصَةً مِنْ دُونِ النَّاسِ فَتَمَنَّوْا الْمَوْتَ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ﴾

“Say, [Oh Muhammad], ‘If the home of the Hereafter with Allah is for you alone and not the [other] people, then wish for death, if you should be truthful.’”

The word ‘Qul’ is an imperative which means ‘say!’ and is addressed to the Prophet ﷺ. The verses were sent from Jibril ﷺ to the Prophet ﷺ with full accuracy and truthfulness as they were revealed. So, “Say to them, Oh Muhammad:

﴿إِنْ كَانَتْ لَكُمْ الدَّارُ الآخِرَةُ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ خَالِصَةً مِنْ دُونِ النَّاسِ فَتَمَنَّوْا الْمَوْتَ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ﴾

“If the home of the Hereafter with Allah is for you alone and not the [other] people, then wish for death, if you should be truthful.”

This is because, they had said:

﴿لَنْ تَمَسَّنَا النَّارُ إِلَّا أَيَّامًا مَعْدُودَةً﴾

“the fire shall not touch us except for a few numbered days”

[Surah Al-Baqarah: 80],

and claimed to be the chosen people of God and the Holy Qur'an challenged them regarding that.

However, Ibn Abbas رضي الله عنه interprets that this verse contains a *Mubalahah*. The *Mubalahah* happens when a group of people wish for death if they were lying. So, they will say: "If we are lying, may we be given death by Allah!" However, they will never say it. And if they did, they would die at that instance from choking, that is, from their saliva. But they did not say it, and will never say it.

Verse 95:

﴿وَلَنْ يَمَنَّوْهُ أَبَدًا بِمَا قَدَّمَتْ أَيْدِيهِمْ وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ بِالظَّالِمِينَ﴾

“But they will never wish for it, ever, because of what their hands have put forth. And Allah is Knowing of the wrongdoers.”

The one who has committed all these offences and atrocities will never wish for death. As for the Muslims, they do not dread death, but rather, they wish for it in the way of Allah ﷻ. During the Battle of *Hunayn*, when Sayyidina Hasan رضي الله عنه brought for Sayyidina Ali رضي الله عنه his armour, he said to him: "Oh my son, verily, your father does not care whether he stumbles upon death, or death stumbles upon him."

However, the Jews will never wish for it, not the ones before nor the ones after. This is because, the word '*Lan*' is a negation for the future. The proof is what we witness from the Zionists today.

This is because, ﷻ knows of their oppression to themselves and to others. Thus, those who have committed such atrocities, sins and faults, will never wish for death. On the contrary, they will wish for a continuous life. Allah ﷻ is All-Knowing of the oppressors, those who oppress themselves and also oppress others.

Verse 96:

﴿وَلَتَجِدَنَّهُمْ أَحْرَصَ النَّاسِ عَلَى حَيَاةٍ وَمِنَ الَّذِينَ أَشْرَكُوا يَوَدُّ أَحَدُهُمْ لَوْ يُعَمَّرُ أَلْفَ سَنَةٍ وَمَا هُوَ بِمُرْحَرَجِهِ مِنَ الْعَذَابِ أَنْ يُعَمَّرَ وَاللَّهُ بَصِيرٌ بِمَا يَعْمَلُونَ﴾

“And you will surely find them the most greedy of people for life - [even] more than those who associate others with Allah. One of them wishes that he could be granted life of a thousand years, but it would not remove him in the least from the [coming] punishment that he should be granted life. And Allah is Seeing of what they do.”

Allah ﷻ did not say the word ‘Hayah’ which means life, affixed with the definite article *Alif* and *Lam*. Rather, it came without the definite article

﴿حَيَاةٍ﴾. This means that they are greedy for any type of life, be it full of sins or trivial. As it is still better, in their opinion, than death.

Because the polytheist does not have a Hereafter, the world is his only concern and the extent of his knowledge. The Jews were greedier for life than the polytheists were, as they hope and would love to live a thousand years or more. However, even if they lived a thousand years, this long life would not remove them from the punishment. And as long as the ending is death, there is no difference between the one who has lived only a few years and the one who has lived hundreds of years.

The word ‘*Yu’ammara*’ which means ‘to be granted life’ is in the form of the passive voice. This is because, longevity is not in the hands of anyone but in the Hands of Allah ﷻ. Allah ﷻ is the One who grants a long life and He is also the One who prevents it. Thus, as the span of life is not in the hands of the human beings, the passive voice is used.

The word ‘*Yu’ammara*’ has the word ‘*Umur*’ as its noun. The ‘*Umur*’ refers to the years that a person goes through between his birth and death. The word is

taken *'Imaar* which means building or dwelling. This is because, the body is inhabited by life, as when the life ends, the body becomes a motionless corpse.

The word *'Alfa Sanah* which means 'a thousand years' was mentioned as the thousand is the biggest number that the Arabs knew. Thus, when they were counting, they would say 'a thousand thousand' instead of saying 'a million'.

Verse 97:

﴿قُلْ مَنْ كَانَ عَدُوًّا لِجِبْرِيلَ فَإِنَّهُ نَزَّلَهُ عَلَى قَلْبِكَ بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ مُصَدِّقًا لِمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ وَهُدًى وَبُشْرَى لِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ﴾

“Say, ‘Whoever is an enemy to Jibril - it is [none but] he who has brought the Qur'an down upon your heart, [O Muhammad], by permission of Allah, confirming that which was before it and as guidance and good tidings for the believers.’”

The Jews, as they killed the Prophets, had enmity towards the angels. So, they concealed their animosity towards Jibril ﷺ, the angel who came down with the revelation of the Holy Qur'an, and said: “Verily, Jibril is our enemy.”

One of the Jewish Rabbis had asked the Prophet ﷺ regarding the one who had come to him with the revelation. So, he ﷺ answered, “*Jibril*”⁷⁷. Then the Jewish Rabbi said, “If it had been other than him, we would believe in you. This is because, Jibril is our enemy, as he always comes down (bringing tidings) of earthquakes and punishments. However, Mikail⁷⁸ always comes down with mercy, rain and fertility.”

This emphasizes the materialism of the Jews, as they measure affairs based on the human beings' interests. Thus, their statement that Mikail ﷺ is

⁷⁷ *Jibriil, Jabraail, Jabrail, Jabriil*: Multiple names for the same angel.

⁷⁸ *Miikaal, Miikaail, Miikaaiil*: Multiple names for the same angel.

their beloved and Jibril ﷺ is their enemy, is due to this materialism that has become their nature.

So, Allah ﷻ said to His Prophet ﷺ, They have enmity towards Jibril because he had brought the revelation upon your heart by permission of Allah. This revelation confirms that which was with them of the Torah, and it is a guidance and good tiding for the believers. Hence, their enmity towards Jibril ﷺ is an enmity towards Allah ﷻ.

Verse 98:

﴿مَنْ كَانَ عَدُوًّا لِلَّهِ وَمَلَائِكَتِهِ وَرُسُلِهِ وَجِبْرِيلَ وَمِيكَالَ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ عَدُوٌّ لِلْكَافِرِينَ﴾

“Whoever is an enemy to Allah and His angels and His messengers and Jibril and Mikail - then indeed, Allah is an enemy to the disbelievers.”

This verse is referring to the Israelites. Allah ﷻ through His Unlimited Knowledge, had known that the Jews are the foundation and source of evil in the universe, and that this nation will suffer from them. The biggest proof of this can be seen from what Arabs had to suffer in the past and present due to their conspiracies and plotting which have not stopped even for a second, such as what we see in Syria today of destruction and devastation.

When the Prophet ﷺ entered Medina, he had a discourse with the polytheists and discourses with the Jews. Due to this, the Jews have earned wrath upon wrath. The former because they had rejected what the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ had brought, and this is the shared wrath with the polytheists, and the latter specifically on them because they had been commanded to follow him as mentioned in the Torah.

Everything which the Prophet ﷺ went through of trials and plotting in the Muslim community was of their doing. Moreover, their plotting and betrayal during the Battle of the Trench is plain to all.

In this verse, Allah ﷻ mentions Jibril ﷺ and Mikail ﷺ from amongst the angels. Jibril ﷺ is the one who brings the Divine messages and commands, while Mikail ﷺ is the one entrusted with handing out provisions such as bringing down fertility and rain.

The Jews had said to the Prophet ﷺ: “Our enemy from among the angels is Jibril, for we do not like him. However, we like Mikail.” Here, they have measured enmity based on the humanly measurements due to their materialism. This is similar to when we say, “We like this person and hate that person.” This measurement of theirs is not valid as the angels are all one whole unit of belief.

In this verse, Allah ﷻ answers them. He does not say: “For verily, His Messengers, His angels, Jibril and Mikail are enemies to the disbelievers”, but suffices by saying that Allah is an enemy to the disbelievers. This is because, all of the messengers, angels, Jibril and Mikail obtain their value from Allah ﷻ. Thus, having enmity towards them is like having enmity towards Allah ﷻ. And He is The Irresistible, The Strong, The All-Powerful and in His Hands lie all the decrees.

Verse 99:

﴿وَلَقَدْ أَنْزَلْنَا إِلَيْكَ آيَاتٍ بَيِّنَاتٍ وَمَا يَكْفُرُ بِهَا إِلَّا الْفَاسِقُونَ﴾

“And We have certainly revealed to you verses [which are] clear proofs, and no one would deny them except the defiantly disobedient.”

This verse is addressed to the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, as a rebuttal towards the Jews who used to argue with him.

The word ‘Aayah’ means a miracle. Therefore, since the Holy Qur’an is miraculous in its words and meanings, that is, in both structure and content, its

verses are called the ‘Aayaat’. There is a miracle found in every single verse of the Holy Qur’an.

﴿وَمَا يَكْفُرُ بِهَا إِلَّا الْفَاسِقُونَ﴾

“...and no one would deny them except the defiantly disobedient.”

The word ‘Kufr’ means the concealment and denial. Thus, no one denies and conceals the verses of Allah ﷻ except the ‘Fasiqun’; the ones who stray from the way. The word ‘Fasiq’ comes from the verb ‘Fasaqa’. When it is used for a fruit, it means that the fruit has separated itself from its skin.

Verse 100:

﴿أَوْكَلَّمَا عَاهَدُوا عَهْدًا نَبَذَهُ فَرِيقٌ مِنْهُمْ بَلْ أَكْثَرُهُمْ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ﴾

“Is it not [true] that every time they took a covenant a party of them threw it away? But, [in fact], most of them do not believe.”

The covenants that had been taken from the Israelites were numerous; present from the time Allah ﷻ had sent them the mann and the salwa, then forgave them when they had worshipped the calf and then took them across the sea and saved them from the people of Pharaoh. And when the Torah was sent down, Allah ﷻ took the covenant from them once more. This covenant contained the glad tidings of the coming of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ and also the mention of his descriptions.

﴿أَوْكَلَّمَا عَاهَدُوا عَهْدًا نَبَذَهُ فَرِيقٌ مِنْهُمْ﴾ *“Is it not [true] that every time they took a covenant a party of them threw it away?”*: The word ‘Ahadu’ which means ‘they took a covenant’ is referring to the plural, but the word ‘Nabaza’ which means ‘threw’, is not. This is so that this charge is not generalized for all of the Jews. For there were among them, those who had believed and abided by the covenant of Allah ﷻ, such as Ka’ab Al-Ahbar and Abdullah Bin Salam.

And this is in line with the words of Allah ﷻ.

Among the characteristics of the Jews is that every time they took a covenant, a party of them would throw it away. It was as if breaking covenants was of their nature, creation and natural disposition. Thus, all the contracts that the Zionists sign today, will be agreed upon by a group of them and denied by another. It is as if they had agreed to have some of them agree and some disagree. It is as if they had inherited this characteristic from their fathers and fore-fathers.

Verse 101:

﴿وَلَمَّا جَاءَهُمْ رَسُولٌ مِّنْ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ مُصَدِّقٌ لِّمَا مَعَهُمْ نَبَذَ فَرِيقٌ مِّنَ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ كِتَابَ اللَّهِ وَرَاءَ ظُهُورِهِمْ كَأَنَّهُمْ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ﴾

“And when a messenger from Allah came to them confirming that which was with them, a party of those who had been given the Scripture threw the Scripture of Allah behind their backs as if they did not know [what it contained].”

The Prophet mentioned in this verse is Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. He had brought them the Holy Qur’an which confirmed that which was with them, the Torah. Every Book which came from Allah ﷻ would confirm those which came before it. This is because, the ‘*Aqeedah*’ is one and does not differ, revealed by the One God ﷻ. Thus, the news of Paradise and Hellfire, that which is connected to ‘*Akhlaq*’ and values and that which is connected to the Oneness of Allah ﷻ and His Attributes are the same in all the Divine messages.

So, Muhammad ﷺ had come to them confirming the Torah. However, they threw the Holy Qur’an behind their backs, left it and distanced themselves from it, so that they would not remember anything which had been mentioned by the Qur’an, as if they did not know what it contained. And Allah ﷻ says of

them: ﴿كَأَنَّهُمْ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ﴾ “as if they did not know.” because they knew. They totally knew the truthfulness of Rasulallah ﷺ in conveying from Allah ﷻ. Even the numerous questions that the Jewish Rabbis used to ask the Prophet ﷺ would receive answers that were in line with what was in the Torah. However, they pretended that they did not know, although in reality, they were fully knowing of it.

Verse 102:

﴿وَاتَّبَعُوا مَا تَتْلُو الشَّيَاطِينُ عَلَىٰ مُلْكِ سُلَيْمَانَٰ وَمَا كَفَرَ سُلَيْمَانُٰ وَلَكِنَّ الشَّيَاطِينَٰ كَفَرُوا يَعْلَمُونَ النَّاسَ السِّحْرَ وَمَا أُنزِلَ عَلَىٰ الْمَلَكِينَٰ بِبَابِلَٰ هَارُوتَ وَمَارُوتَ وَمَا يُعَلِّمَانِ مِنْ أَحَدٍ حَتَّىٰ يَقُولَا إِنَّمَا نَحْنُ فِتْنَةٌ فَلَا تَكْفُرْ فَيَتَعَلَّمُونَ مِنْهُمَا مَا يُفَرِّقُونَ بِهِ بَيْنَ الْمَرْءِ وَزَوْجِهِ وَمَا هُمْ بِضَارِينَ بِهِ مِنْ أَحَدٍ إِلَّا بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ وَيَتَعَلَّمُونَ مَا يَضُرُّهُمْ وَلَا يَنْفَعُهُمْ وَلَقَدْ عَلِمُوا لَمَنِ اشْتَرَاهُ مَا لَهُ فِي الْآخِرَةِ مِنْ خَلَقٍ وَلَبِئْسَ مَا شَرَوْا بِهِ أَنفُسَهُمْ لَوْ كَانُوا يَعْلَمُونَ﴾

“And they followed [instead] what the devils had recited during the reign of Sulaiman. It was not Sulaiman who disbelieved, but the devils disbelieved, teaching people magic and that which was revealed to the two angels at Babylon, Harut and Marut. But the two angels did not teach anyone except after they had said, ‘We are a trial, so do not disbelieve [by practicing magic].’ And [yet] they learn from them that by which they cause separation between a man and his wife. But they could not harm anyone through it except by permission of Allah. And the people learn what harms them and does not benefit them. But the Children of Israel certainly knew that whoever purchased the magic would not have any share in the Hereafter. And wretched is that for which they sold themselves, if they only knew.”

This verse is the only one which talks about black magic, all that is linked to its knowledge and that it is a form of disbelief. This verse is referring to the Israelites, as they are the ones who had followed what the devils had recited during the reign of Prophet Sulaiman ﷺ during his time. Despite the fact that this action had been done during the time of Prophet Sulaiman ﷺ, the verb

used is in the present tense: ﴿تَتْلُو﴾ “recite”. This indicates that the devils are still reciting, because many of the Jews are still following what the devils are reciting.

Many of the Jews do not believe that Sulaiman ﷺ is a Prophet, and claim that he is not.

Whereas Sulaiman ﷺ is the son of the Prophet Dawud ﷺ. He had asked from His God to grant him a kingdom which will not belong to anyone after him. Thus, Allah ﷻ had subjected to him the winds, birds and jinns and had softened iron for him:

﴿قَالَ رَبِّ اغْفِرْ لِي وَهَبْ لِي مُلْكًا لَا يَنْبَغِي لِأَحَدٍ مِنْ بَعْدِي إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ الْوَهَّابُ﴾ (٣٥) فَسَخَّرْنَا لَهُ الرِّيحَ تَجْرِي بِأَمْرِهِ رُحَاءً حَيْثُ أَصَابَ (٣٦) وَالشَّيَاطِينَ كُلَّ بِنَاءٍ وَعَوَاصٍ (٣٧) وَأَخْرَيْنَ مُفْرَّينَ فِي الْأَصْفَادِ (٣٨) ﴿

“He said, ‘My Lord, forgive me and grant me a kingdom such as will not belong to anyone after me. Indeed, You are the Bestower.’ So We subjected to him the wind blowing by his command, gently, wherever he directed, And [also] the devils [of jinn] - every builder and diver, And others bound together in shackles.” [Surah Sad: 35-38].

He was a Prophet who was also a king, and the jinn used to work under his commands.

Who are the jinns?

We respect the minds and address not only those who believe in the Holy Qur’an but every single human intellect. The type of texts found in this verse (regarding the jinns) will be of no doubt to the believers and there is no room for interpretation, as it is final.

However, for the non-believers, we need to explain, clarify and have a discourse with them using that which will convince their intellects until we reach the ‘Aqeedah’ and convey to them the correct message.

We are the people of knowledge, information and ‘*Iman*’. In this twenty-first century, we judge everything using the intellect that Allah ﷻ has given and honoured us with. The verses in the Holy Qur’an also call to the thinking and using of the intellect that Allah ﷻ has honoured the human beings with over the rest of creation, as He says:

﴿وَلَقَدْ كَرَّمْنَا بَنِي آدَمَ﴾

“And indeed, we have honoured the children of Adam” [Surah Al-Isra’: 70].

The Holy Qur’an also praises the people who think.

The question is: Do the jinn exist or not?

The answer: Is there a scientific objection to their existence?

Ignoring the point of whether we like them or not, there is no objection towards the existence of creations which we cannot see. If we were to look through a microscope, we would discover that there are germs all around us. Thus, we cannot deny the existence of things that we cannot see with our naked eye. In this century, the microscope has led us to the discovery of bacterium and the transfer of infections through them. Therefore, is there an objection to the existence of the jinn?

There are many creations which we do not have the means as yet to find out about, nor do we have the tangible data to reach them. Thus, since we do not have enough information to reach them through our intellects, when we know about them through transmission, then we believe in them.

The Holy Qur’an has told us about the jinns.

They are creations created from fire which are fast in movement. We know of this through transmission, which is what Allah ﷻ and His Messenger ﷺ have told us. This is because we do not possess the means to discover them otherwise.

There are galaxies which are thousands or millions of light years away from us which we do not possess the means to discover yet. Does this mean that they are non-existent? Similarly, we believe in the existence of the jinn because Allah ﷻ has told us about them in the Holy Qur'an. This is because, we believe through our 'Aqeedah' or a Creed that it is the Speech of Allah ﷻ. The 'Aqeedah' is formed after thinking, analysing and subjecting to all the criterions of a matter. Then, it will move to the heart, where it is confirmed and is transformed to an Aqeedah or a Creed. This is why we respect all the beliefs that people hold on to, as these beliefs have gone through these criterions and standards.

We believe in quoting, which is the Holy Qur'an and the Hadith. They contain what Allah ﷻ and His Messenger ﷺ have informed us of. The devils are those jinn and human beings who rebel against the directives set by Allah ﷻ. Thus, among the jinn, there are those who are obedient believers and there are those who are the rebellious, the devils. In Surah Al-Jinn, Allah ﷻ says via the tongue of the jinn:

﴿وَأَنَا مِمَّا الصَّالِحُونَ وَمِمَّا دُونَ ذَلِكَ كُنَّا طَرَائِقَ قَدَدًا﴾

“And among us are the righteous, and among us are [others] not so; we were [of] divided ways.” [Surah Al-Jinn: 11] and

﴿شِيَاطِينَ الْإِنْسِ وَالْجِنَّ﴾ *“devils from mankind and jinn”* [Surah Al-An'aam: 112].

Only the jinn and mankind are given choices. As for the angels, they do not have choices and they do not disobey. That is why, when Allah ﷻ commanded them to prostrate to Adam ﷺ, they did. However, Iblis rebelled against the command of Allah ﷻ by saying:

﴿أَنَا خَيْرٌ مِنْهُ خَلَقْتَنِي مِنْ نَارٍ وَخَلَقْتَهُ مِنْ طِينٍ﴾

“I am better than him. You created me from fire and created him from clay.”

[Surah Al-A'raaf: 12].

The Holy Qur'an speaks of the existence of jinns, so we believe in it. In the past, the jinns used to steal hearings before the Prophethood of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. After his Prophethood, they were barred from it. Prophet Sulaiman ﷺ employed the jinn and interacted with them, as Allah ﷻ tells us:

﴿وَمِنَ الْجِنِّ مَن يَعْمَلُ بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ بِإِذْنِ رَبِّهِ﴾

“And among the jinn were those who worked for him by the permission of his Lord.” [Surah Saba’: 12].

Therefore, there is no intellectual objection for the communication between mankind and jinns. Whereas, there is a religious objection, as it is forbidden on us, nation of Rasulallah ﷺ.

The devils had inspired people with adorned speech as a delusion, and had taught them a specific form of magic that the Jews had started to follow. This is black magic and it is a form of disbelief. Prophet Sulaiman ﷺ had not disbelieved, but it was the devils who had, because they had taught people black magic. The religious ruling states that the one who deals in black magic is a disbeliever.

This verse contains a touch of obscurity, as it is linked to black magic. Black magic is a form of disbelief as it inflicts harm and damage, such as causing separation between a man and his wife. Here, Allah ﷻ has mentioned expressions which are at the peak of accuracy. The word ‘*Sihir*’ which means black magic, comes from the word ‘*Sahar*’, which means the last part of the night when illusions and imaginations will prevail.

There are two types of black magic:

The first type: It contains illusions and imaginations. An example for this type of magic are the tricks upon the eye (optical illusion) which misleads the sight. This is like that which had been done by the magicians of Pharaoh:

﴿يُخَيَّلُ إِلَيْهِ مِنْ سِحْرِهِمْ أَنَّهَا تَسْعَى﴾

“seemed to him from their magic that they were moving [like snakes].”

[Surah Taha: 66] and

﴿سَحَرُوا أَعْيُنَ النَّاسِ﴾

“they bewitched the eyes of the people” [Surah Al-A’raaf: 116].

Here, the ropes and sticks of these magicians were not moving in reality. The eyes were the ones which had imagined something which was not happening, as Allah ﷻ says:

﴿فَأَوْجَسَ فِي نَفْسِهِ خِيفَةً مُوسَى (٦٧) فَلَمَّا لَا تَخَفُ إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ الْأَعْلَى (٦٨) وَأَلْقَى مَا فِي يَمِينِكَ تَلْفُفٌ مِمَّا صَنَعُوا
إِنَّمَا صَنَعُوا كَيْدٌ سَاجِرٌ وَلَا يُفْلِحُ السَّاجِرُ حَيْثُ أَتَى (٦٩)﴾

“And he sensed within himself apprehension, did Musa. Allah said, ‘Fear not. Indeed, it is you who are superior. And throw what is in your right hand; it will swallow up what they have crafted. What they have crafted is but the trick of a magician, and the magician will not succeed wherever he is.’”

[Surah Taha: 67-69].

Therefore, when Prophet Musa ﷺ threw his staff, they fell down in prostration as it had turned into a real serpent. Then:

﴿قَالُوا آمَنَّا بِرَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ (١٢١) رَبِّ مُوسَى وَهَارُونَ (١٢٢)﴾

“They said, ‘We have believed in the Lord of the worlds, The lord of Moses and Aaron.’” [Surah Al-A’raaf: 121-122].

And in another verse, Allah ﷻ says:

﴿فَأَلْقَى السَّحَرَةُ سُجَّدًا قَالُوا آمَنَّا بِرَبِّ هَارُونَ وَمُوسَى﴾

“So the magicians fell down in prostration. They said, ‘We have believed in the Lord of Harun and Musa.’” [Surah Taha: 70].

The second type: It is a harmful type of knowledge which is not of any benefit. It is not obtained except via the jinn.

In this verse we are discussing, Allah ﷻ addresses the Jews who were present at the time of the Prophet ﷺ and informs them of what their fore-fathers had done. So He says:

﴿وَاتَّبَعُوا مَا تَتْلُو الشَّيَاطِينُ عَلَىٰ مُلْكِ سُلَيْمَانَ﴾ *“And they followed [instead] what the devils had recited during the reign of Sulaiman”*. Prophet Sulaiman ﷺ was a Prophet who was also a king. As a favour from Allah ﷻ, he used to employ the jinns in some tasks. These Jews had followed what the devils had recited of witchcraft during the reign of Prophet Sulaiman ﷺ.

﴿وَمَا كَفَرَ سُلَيْمَانُ وَلَا كَنَّ الشَّيَاطِينُ كَفَرُوا﴾ *“It was not Sulaiman who disbelieved, but the devils disbelieved..”*: The devils had disbelieved because they were the ones who had taught black magic. From here, it is derived that teaching, engaging in, as well as practicing black magic is a form of disbelief. And disbelief means the concealing of ‘*Iman*’ or *faith*. The Jews had claimed that Prophet Sulaiman ﷺ had hidden books under his throne containing the black magic that he had used to employ the jinns and winds. They claimed that these books had been taken out after his death and that this was the black magic that they had taught. This is a lie and fabrication, as black magic is a form of disbelief, whereas Sulaiman ﷺ was a prophet who had never disbelieved nor had he taught black magic at all. However, the devils were the ones who had disbelieved.

The devils are those who rebel against the way set by Allah ﷻ, from amongst both jinn and mankind. Thus, every single person who learns black magic today is actually learning what the devils had recited. This is because, the Holy Qur’an uses the present tense in this verse: ﴿مَا تَتْلُو الشَّيَاطِينُ﴾. That is, they are still reciting.

The interpretation of this verse was not mentioned by the Prophet ﷺ. Due to this, the Scholars of *Tafseer* have differed:

There are some who say that Harut and Marut were two angels who had taught black magic to the people of Babylon in Iraq. In addition to teaching,

they had also warned people against learning and engaging in it, by stating that this was a test on them. They also advised people to leave it as it was a form of disbelief.

There is another method of recitation of the Holy Qur'an where the letter 'Lam' in the word 'Malakain' comes with a *kasrah* or lower vowel⁷⁹, making it *Malikain*. This means that they were not two angels but two kings. Thus, there is a difference of opinion regarding the nature of Harut and Marut who used to teach black magic to the people. The verse does not clarify their nature. Rather, it has left a slight vagueness to suit the nature of black magic which is built upon obscurity.

If Allah ﷻ had Willed for us to know the nature of Harut and Marut, he would have explained it further to us. However, He had left a slight vagueness to the issue. There is also similarity between the obscurity of black magic and the obscurity of the time of *Sahar* which means pre-dawn. During this time, things cannot be seen clearly, as it is the period of the night which has the most intense blackness.

The way of the Holy Qur'an is such that it does not place importance in interpreting details that are not of any benefit to know. An example is the number of the young men of the cave. Allah ﷻ says in answer to those who ask about their number:

﴿سَيَقُولُونَ ثَلَاثَةٌ رَابِعُهُمْ كَلْبُهُمْ وَيَقُولُونَ خَمْسَةٌ سَادِسُهُمْ كَلْبُهُمْ رَجْمًا بِالْغَيْبِ وَيَقُولُونَ سَبْعَةٌ وَثَامِنُهُمْ كَلْبُهُمْ قُل رَّبِّي أَعْلَمُ بِعَدَّتِهِمْ مَا يَعْلَمُهُمْ إِلَّا قَلِيلٌ فَلَا تُمَارَ فِيهِمْ إِلَّا مِرَاءً ظَاهِرًا وَلَا تَسْتَفْتِ فِيهِمْ مِنْهُمْ أَحَدًا﴾

“They will say there were three, the fourth of them being their dog; and they will say there were five, the sixth of them being their dog - guessing at the unseen; and they will say there were seven, and the eighth of them was their

⁷⁹ This is among the *Syaz Qiraat*, as recited by Al-Hasan Al-Basri, Ibn Abbas, Adh-Dhahhak Ibn Muzahim and Abdurrahman Ibn Abza. It is said that the two kings referred to here are: Dawud and Sulaiman (‘alaihimas salam).

dog. Say, [O Muhammad], ‘My Lord is most knowing of their number. None knows them except a few. So do not argue about them except with an obvious argument and do not inquire about them among [the speculators] from anyone.’” [Surah Al-Kahf: 22].

This is because, Allah ﷻ wants us to learn the lessons and goals and seek after benefits from the historical happenings. Whereas there is no benefit in knowing numbers and names.

Similarly, when the Prophet ﷺ was asked about the new moons, the Holy Qur’an limited its answer to what would be of benefit for them to know, thus Allah ﷻ says:

﴿قُلْ هِيَ مَوَاقِيتُ لِلنَّاسِ وَالْحَجِّ﴾

“Say, ‘They are measurements of time for the people and for Hajj.’”

[Surah Al-Baqarah: 189].

This was what would be of benefit to those who had asked at that time. Subsequently, another period might come when people would discover new things which are of benefit to them regarding these new moons.

Thus, it is not important for us to know whether Harut and Marut are angels or kings. It suffices for us to know that black magic is a harmful knowledge which cannot be learnt. It is also a form of disbelief, trial and tribulation.

There had also been tests for the people during the life of Rasulullah ﷺ, such as the *Isra’* and *Mi’raj*, as Allah ﷻ says:

﴿وَمَا جَعَلْنَا الرُّؤْيَا الَّتِي أَرَيْنَاكَ إِلَّا فِتْنَةً لِلنَّاسِ﴾

“And We did not make the sight which We showed you except as a trial for the people” [Surah Al-Isra’: 60],

and the changing of the *Qiblah* or the direction of the prayer. Here, the Muslims who had initially been commanded to face the direction of the *Baitul*

Maqdis, were now told to face the Kaaba, a matter which they had been hoping for, as Allah ﷻ says:

﴿وَمَا جَعَلْنَا الْقِبْلَةَ الَّتِي كُنْتَ عَلَيْهَا إِلَّا لِنَعْلَمَ مَنْ يَتَّبِعِ الرَّسُولَ مِمَّنْ يَنْقَلِبُ عَلَىٰ عَقْبَيْهِ﴾

“And We did not make the qiblah which you used to face except that We might make evident who would follow the Messenger from who would turn back on his heels.” [Surah Al-Baqarah: 143].

Similarly, Harut and Marut had also been a ‘*Fitnah*’ which means a trial and test.

The Jews had continued learning black magic despite the warnings and reminders that had been issued saying that it was a form of disbelief. They had learnt that which could separate between a man and his wife. However, Allah ﷻ gives assurance that harm and benefit is not beyond His Will and Power, as He says:

﴿وَمَا هُمْ بِضَارِّينَ بِهِ مِنْ أَحَدٍ إِلَّا بِإِذْنِ﴾

“But they could not harm anyone through it except by permission of Allah”
[Surah Al-Baqarah: 102].

For nothing in the creation of Allah ﷻ strays from His Will. Nothing can harm without his command. Even the poison of the snake and scorpion cannot harm except with the permission of Allah ﷻ. Nothing in His kingdom can break away from His commands. Thus, no one can harm, benefit, separate or unite except with the permission of Allah ﷻ, The Most Blessed and Exalted.

﴿وَيَتَعَلَّمُونَ مَا يَضُرُّهُمْ وَلَا يَنْفَعُهُمْ﴾ *“And the people learn what harms them and does not benefit them”*: We can conclude from here that the knowledge of witchcraft and black magic is harmful and non-beneficial. It is only done through connecting with the devils.

We also believe that black magic, envy and the evil eye exists. Allah ﷻ says:

﴿وَمِنْ شَرِّ النَّفَّاثَاتِ فِي الْعُقَدِ (٤) وَمِنْ شَرِّ حَاسِدٍ إِذَا حَسَدَ (٥)﴾

“And from the evil of the blowers in knots, And from the evil of an envier when he envies.” [Surah Al-Falaq: 4-5].

The envious person might harm with the evil eye, with the will of Allah ﷻ. Therefore, Rasulullah ﷺ has taught us to seek refuge in Allah ﷻ from the evil of black magic, the evil eye and the envious person through reciting Surah Al-Ikhlās and the *Mu’awwidzatain*, which refers to Surah Al-Falaq and Surah An-Nas. By reciting them, we are guarding ourselves with the power of Allah ﷻ from the evil of His creations. In addition, Rasulullah ﷺ has taught us that reciting Surah Al-Baqarah is also a protection from black magic and the devils, and that the house in which Surah Al-Baqarah is recited will not be entered by the devils, as he has said,

((إِقْرُؤُوا سُورَةَ الْبَقَرَةِ، فَإِنَّ أَجْزَأَهَا بَرَكَهٌ وَتَرْكُهَا حَسْرَةٌ، وَلَا يَسْتَطِيعُهَا الْبَطَلَةُ))

*“Recite Surah Al-Baqarah, for in reciting it there is blessing and in leaving it there is sorrow. And the magicians cannot bear to recite it”.*⁸⁰

Therefore, the believer should shield himself with the Holy Qur’an and should not engage in magic nor hearsay. He should not be scared of anyone as long as he recites the Holy Qur’an, prays and strengthens his relationship with Allah ﷻ. So, stay with the Holy Qur’an, and continuously increase your prostrations and recitation of the Holy Qur’an. For these are the two main connections with Allah ﷻ, namely the connection through prostration during prayers and the connection through speech during the recitation of the Holy Qur’an. Thus, a believer should not leave his house in the morning except after reciting a part of the Holy Qur’an. As long as he is praying and reciting the

⁸⁰ Sahih Muslim: The Book of Prayer for Travellers and Shortening it, Chapter: The virtue of reciting the Qur’an and Surah Al-Baqarah, Hadith no. 804.

Qur'an, he should not fear anything. However, the one who engages in black magic has forfeited his religion and his hereafter.

﴿وَلَقَدْ عَلِمُوا لَمَنِ اشْتَرَاهُ مَا لَهُ فِي الْآخِرَةِ مِنْ خَلَقٍ وَلَبِئْسَ مَا شَرَوْا بِهِ أَنْفُسَهُمْ لَوْ كَانُوا يَعْلَمُونَ﴾

“But the Children of Israel certainly knew that whoever purchased the magic would not have in the Hereafter any share. And wretched is that for which they sold themselves, if they only knew.”:

Verily, the one who learns black magic and hurts the creation through it will not have a share in the hereafter, as he has sold himself and his religion to the devils through learning black magic and witchcraft.

Verse 103:

﴿وَلَوْ أَنَّهُمْ آمَنُوا وَاتَّقَوْا لَمَثُوبَةٌ مِنْ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ خَيْرٌ لَوْ كَانُوا يَعْلَمُونَ﴾

“And if they had believed and had Taqwa, then the reward from Allah would have been [far] better, if they only knew.”

Verily, the guarding and preservation of the *Iman* is through ‘*Taqwa*’ or piety. ‘*Taqwa*’ is the abundance of all that is good. Sayyidina Ali Bin Abi Talib عليه السلام once said: “*Taqwa* is having fear of The Exalted, acting upon the revelation, contentment with the little (that one possesses) and preparation for the day of departure.” Allah ﷻ has said regarding those who have ‘*Taqwa*’ or piety:

﴿إِنَّ الْمُتَّقِينَ فِي جَنَّاتٍ وَعُيُونٍ (١٥) آخِذِينَ مَا آتَاهُمْ رَبُّهُمْ إِنَّهُمْ كَانُوا قَبْلَ ذَلِكَ مُحْسِنِينَ (١٦)﴾

“Indeed, the righteous will be among gardens and springs, Accepting what their Lord has given them. Indeed, they were before that doers of good.”

[Surah Adz-Dzariyat: 15-16].

﴿لَمَثُوبَةٌ مِنْ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ خَيْرٌ لَوْ كَانُوا يَعْلَمُونَ﴾ *“then the reward from Allah would have been [far] better, if they only knew.”*

In this verse, instead of the word ‘*Thawab*’ which means reward, Allah ﷻ uses the word ‘*Mathubah*’. ‘*Mathubah*’ comes from the word ‘*Tathwib*’ which linguistically is the repetition of the ‘*Takbirs*’ of the Imam after he has said them during prayers so that people can hear them. And the one who is performing this repetition is called the ‘*Muthawwib*’. Therefore, ‘*Mathubah*’ actually means the repetition of an action in a better way than before. It is also derived from the word ‘*Thawb*’, which means a shirt. When a shirt is taken by the skilled tailor, he will return it in a form that is better than it previously was.

The word ‘*Khair*’ which means good, is the only word in the Arabic Language that maintains the same form when it is used as a noun and when used as a superlative. So, we cannot say, for example: “Zaid is Akhyar (in the normal superlative form) than Amr”. Rather, we should say, “Zaid is ‘*Khair*’ than Amr.” Therefore, when one of two things is good but the other is better, we still use the same word, ‘*Khair*’, to describe it.

The word ‘*Sharr*’ which means evil, is the opposite of the word ‘*Khair*’ or good.

Verse 104:

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَقُولُوا رَاعِنَا وَقُولُوا انظُرْنَا وَاسْمَعُوا وَلِلْكَافِرِينَ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ﴾

“Oh you who have believed, say not [to Allah 's Messenger], ‘Ra'ina’ but say, ‘Unzhurna’ and listen. And for the disbelievers is a painful punishment.”

The Hebrew Language that was the language used by the Jews had some similarities to our Arabic Language.

The word ﴿رَاعِنَا﴾ actually means ‘place us in your care and protection!’. However, they said it to mean ‘the wicked person among us’. Sa’ad Bin Mu’az ﷺ once heard one of the Jews utter this word to the Prophet ﷺ. He understood

what the Jew had actually meant and threatened him. This Jew became frightened and promised him that he would stop saying it.

﴿وَقُولُوا انظُرْنَا﴾ This means, ‘make us the place where you look’ or ‘look at us’.

﴿وَأَسْمِعُوا﴾ *“and listen”*: The Jews had said: “We hear but we disobey”, whereas the believers had said:

﴿سَمِعْنَا وَأَطَعْنَا غُفْرَانَكَ رَبَّنَا﴾

“We hear and we obey. [We seek] Your forgiveness, our Lord”

[Surah Al-Baqarah: 285].

﴿وَاللَّكَافِرِينَ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ﴾ *“And for the disbelievers is a painful punishment.”*: This is the recompense for the one who disbelieves in the verses of Allah ﷻ.

Verse 105:

﴿مَا يَوَدُّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِنْ أَهْلِ الْكِتَابِ وَلَا الْمُشْرِكِينَ أَنْ يُنَزَّلَ عَلَيْكُمْ مِنْ خَيْرٍ مِنْ رَبِّكُمْ وَاللَّهُ يَخْتَصُّ بِرَحْمَتِهِ مَنْ يَشَاءُ وَاللَّهُ ذُو الْفَضْلِ الْعَظِيمِ﴾

“Neither those who disbelieve from the People of the Scripture nor the polytheists wish that any good should be sent down to you from your Lord. But Allah selects for His mercy whom He wills, and Allah is the possessor of great bounty.”

Those who disbelieved from the People of the Scripture were the Jews. There were also some of the remaining polytheists in Medina. These two groups of people did not wish that the verses would be revealed to Rasulullah ﷺ. This was because, they contained the goodness of both the world and the hereafter. Furthermore, Allah ﷻ had revealed them to the heart of an Arabian Prophet, something which they had not wished to happen. However, Allah ﷻ selects for His gift whom He wills. And Allah ﷻ has reserved for our Prophet ﷺ this Holy Qur’an as a grace from Him, as Allah ﷻ says:

﴿وَكَانَ فَضْلُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكَ عَظِيمًا﴾

“And ever has the favour of Allah upon you been great.”

[Surah An-Nisaa’: 113] and

﴿اللَّهُ أَعْلَمُ حَيْثُ يَجْعَلُ رِسَالَتَهُ﴾ *“Allah is most knowing of where He places His message.”* [Surah Al-An’aam: 124].

Verse 106:

﴿مَا نَنْسَخْ مِنْ آيَةٍ أَوْ نُنسِهَا نَأْتِ بِخَيْرٍ مِنْهَا أَوْ مِثْلَهَا أَلَمْ تَعْلَمْ أَنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ﴾

“We do not abrogate a verse or cause it to be forgotten except that We bring forth [one] better than it or similar to it. Do you not know that Allah is over all things competent?”

Here, we are faced with the topic of ‘*Al-Bida*’. It is the situation where a ruling is laid down, and then when it is implemented, its incapability of handling the matter is established, hence it is replaced with a new ruling. *Al-Bida*’ is impossible for Allah ﷻ. The concept of ‘*Naskh*’ or Abrogation differs from *Al-Bida*’. It is the elimination of a ruling and the revelation of another one.

The word *Naskh* linguistically means ‘the removal’. When we say that the sun has *Nasakhat* the shadow, it means that it has removed its traces and has replaced the space it had occupied with light. Thus, ‘*Naskh*’ in the Holy Qur’an means the removal of a ruling and the coming of another.

We say that, when Allah ﷻ intended that a ruling be issued for the believers in gradual succession, He knew that each step of the rule was to be there for a limited time. When the time was up, it would be removed and the new ruling would take its place. This was because, He knew that the situation was such that the ruling needed to be issued gradually. Therefore, this does not at all mean that Allah ﷻ had initially issued a ruling which he replaced with a better ruling as during the implementation of the former, it was found that it had its

short-comings, Transcendent is He of this. Rather, He had revealed the first ruling on the condition that it was temporary, as every verse which had been abrogated had been revealed to be carried out for a certain period of time and was then replaced while this had been known and decreed by Allah ﷻ since eternity.

Abrogation is not applicable to the verses which contain matters of ‘Aqeedah’ or creed and Qur’anic stories and also those which bring information regarding Allah ﷻ, Paradise and Hellfire and the rewards and punishments. Therefore, stories of the Prophets, such as:

﴿وَلَقَدْ آتَيْنَا دَاوُودَ مِنَّا فَضْلًا يَا جِبَالُ أَوِّبِي مَعَهُ وَالطَّيْرَ وَآلْنَا لَهُ الْحَدِيدَ﴾

“And We certainly gave Dawud from Us bounty. [We said], "O mountains, repeat [Our] praises with him, and the birds [as well]." And We made pliable for him iron” [Surah Saba’: 10]

and also topics regarding the Divine *Essence* such as:

﴿هُوَ اللَّهُ الَّذِي لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ الْمَلِكُ الْقُدُّوسُ السَّلَامُ الْمُؤْمِنُ الْمُهَيْمِنُ الْعَزِيزُ الْجَبَّارُ الْمُتَكَبِّرُ سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ عَمَّا يُشْرِكُونَ﴾

“He is Allah, other than whom there is no deity, the Sovereign, the Pure, the Perfection, the Bestower of Faith, the Overseer, the Exalted in Might, the Compeller, the Superior. Exalted is Allah above whatever they associate with Him.” [Surah Al-Hasyr: 23],

will never be abrogated.

Abrogation is only applicable to verses which contain rulings and responsibilities. It is legislated to either facilitate gradual advancement of the human behaviour, as a trial and test for human beings or due to a temporary cause or purpose. An example to illustrate this last point is the facing towards *Baitul Maqdis* in prayer for a certain period of time. After that, the command to change the direction of prayer to face *Masjidil Haram* instead was issued, as Allah ﷻ says:

﴿قَدْ نَرَى تَقَلُّبَ وَجْهِكَ فِي السَّمَاءِ فَلَنُوَلِّيَنَّكَ قِبْلَةً تَرْضَاهَا فَوَلِّ وَجْهَكَ شَطْرَ الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ﴾

“We have certainly seen the turning of your face, [O Muhammad], toward the heaven, and We will surely turn you to a qiblah with which you will be pleased. So turn your face toward al-Masjid al-Haram.”

[Surah Al-Baqarah: 144].

Thus, there had been a purpose and aim for the facing of the Muslims towards *Baitul Maqdis*, which was to demonstrate the unity of the Divine Messages, to gain the hearts of the People of the Scriptures and as a test for the Muslims. When these objectives had been realised, Allah ﷻ reinstated for them the facing towards *Masjidil Haram*. This change has been decreed by Allah ﷻ since eternity. It had not happened due to the longing in the Prophet’s ﷺ heart nor due to his repeated glances to the sky only. Rather, all of it had been known by Allah ﷻ, as He says:

﴿قَدْ نَرَى تَقَلُّبَ وَجْهِكَ فِي السَّمَاءِ فَلَنُوَلِّيَنَّكَ قِبْلَةً تَرْضَاهَا﴾

“We have certainly seen the turning of your face, [O Muhammad], toward the heaven, and We will surely turn you to a qiblah with which you will be pleased.” [Surah Al-Baqarah: 144].

So, the abrogated verse had been good for its time, and the second ruling which replaced it had brought additional goodness after that time. Both rulings were good in their own periods. For Allah ﷻ knows every single matter even before it happens, as He is the God of time and place.

There are doubts which are aroused towards the Holy Qur’an which are in fact, elements of strength for it. The whole of the Book of Allah ﷻ is an element of strength. However, when a matter is raised against any verse, it actually becomes clear to us that the verse contains a miracle. Thus, we will be able to use the intellect and rational thinking to overcome those who debate with us regarding the Book of Allah ﷻ.

The '*Naskh*' or Abrogation of the verses of the Holy Qur'an means the removal of a verse and the coming of another, be it in ruling, phrasing or form. It is clear that, the topic of *Al-Bida'* has been purposely used to stir doubts regarding '*Naskh*'.

The word *Al-Bida'* comes from the word *Badaa* which literally means '*something becoming evident*'. This means that after you issue a specific ruling, you then realize that there is another ruling which is better than it. So, you changed the earlier ruling for the later one. So, by this, they aroused the doubt that after ﷺ revealed a ruling, another ruling which was better than it became evident. Hence, He eliminated it and replaced it with this other one. This is not possible with regards to Allah ﷻ as it is a matter which happens to human beings, not to the God of human beings.

There is a second doubt which has been aroused too, which is: Why should there be '*Naskh*' or Abrogation when the Speaker is Allah ﷻ? Why do verses abrogate each other, whereas this is a pure, great and blessed Book? Why does the Holy Qur'an have changes and abrogation in it?

We answer them by providing points of strength regarding the same point that they claim is a weak spot. They had used a baseless yardstick when they compared the Speech of Allah ﷻ to the speech of mankind, when the human being is incomparable to the God of human beings. The rules set by mankind change according to the changes in environment or when their imperfections are discovered during implementation. Therefore, when a better ruling is found, it will be taken to replace the initial one. This is the concept of *Al-Bida'* found in the legislation set by human beings. However, this standard does not apply to the laws of Allah ﷻ. This is because, there are principles and rules for the Holy Qur'an that Rasulullah ﷺ has specified for us. The one who wants to interpret the Holy Qur'an has to know numerous sciences, such as the rulings, *Asbabun Nuzul* (the reasons for revelation), '*Khas* and '*Am*' (The Specific and The

General), *Nasikh* and *Mansukh* (The Abrogating and The Abrogated), *Muhkam* and *Mutashabih* (The Clear and The Unclear) and many more. Allah ﷻ says:

﴿فَاسْأَلُوا أَهْلَ الذِّكْرِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ﴾ *“So ask the people of the message if you do not know.”* [Surah An-Nahl: 43].

Furthermore, there are many verses which need reference to others verses for their interpretation so that they will be understood correctly.

The enemies of Islam have utilised the openings found through the ignorant to form a political Islam, which tells them to kill the disbelievers by quoting parts of the verses of the Holy Qur’an taken out of their context. In actual fact, they are calling to extremism and terrorism through utilising these verses which are taken out of context to fulfil their own desires. Examples of the verses that they utilise are:

﴿إِنَّ الْحُكْمَ إِلَّا لِلَّهِ﴾

“The decision is only for Allah.” [Surah Al-An’aam: 57] and

﴿وَمَنْ لَمْ يَحْكَمْ بِمَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ فَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْكَافِرُونَ﴾

“And whoever does not judge by what Allah has revealed - then it is those who are the disbelievers.” [Surah Al-Ma’idah: 44].

Naskh is only applicable to verses which contain rulings and not to those concerning ‘*Aqeedah*’ or the Qur’anic stories which cover a big part of the verses and Surahs of the Holy Qur’an. For example, the story of ‘*Ashabul Fil*’ or The Companions of The Elephant, is not subject to abrogation. This is because, the events of a story will forever be as they are:

﴿أَلَمْ تَرَ كَيْفَ فَعَلَ رَبُّكَ بِأَصْحَابِ الْفِيلِ﴾

“Have you not considered, [O Muhammad], how your Lord dealt with the companions of the elephant?” [Surah Al-Fil: 1].

'Naskh' is also non-applicable to verses which contain information concerning Allah ﷻ, His Oneness and His Attributes and verses concerning Paradise and Hellfire. This is because information regarding 'Aqeedah' that comes from Allah ﷻ, can only be one.

'Naskh' is only applicable to some rulings and not all of them. When any ruling was revealed, Allah ﷻ is not unaware of it such that He will get to know of something better later. On the contrary, Allah ﷻ had known, with His Manifesting and Eternal Knowledge, that the ruling would be put in place for a specific period of time. He also Knew that another stage would come when people would be ready for the next ruling, as they had gotten used to that former task of faith required from them. Thus, it is totally not due to any flaws in the ruling. An example, as we have mentioned, is the changing of the *Qiblah*. Whereby Allah ﷻ had initially commanded the believers to face the *Baitul Maqdis* to test their *Iman* or faith and its firmness, to give an indication of the unity of the Divine Messages, to provide a similar ground among followers of these messages and also to bring together the hearts of the people of the Scriptures. So, they had faced it. But Allah ﷻ had Willed for that ruling to be for a specific time only and He would remove it at the end. And He had known too that another ruling would come to abrogate this one.

It could be that a verse remains present in the Holy Qur'an but its practice has been abrogated, whereas Allah ﷻ had known all along that He would change the ruling. An example is the prohibition of alcohol. When Allah ﷻ had revealed:

﴿لَا تَقْرَبُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَأَنْتُمْ سُكَارَىٰ﴾

“do not approach prayer while you are intoxicated” [Surah An-Nisaa': 43],

Allah ﷻ had known that the verses prohibiting alcohol totally would come later. However, before that, there would be a period of time where people would get used to leaving alcohol. Therefore, after this mentioned period, the verse

from Surah An-Nisaa' was abrogated and the verse prohibiting alcohol totally was revealed:

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِنَّمَا الْخَمْرُ وَالْمَيْسِرُ وَالْأَنْصَابُ وَالْأَزْلَامُ رَجْسٌ مِنْ عَمَلِ الشَّيْطَانِ فَاجْتَنِبُوهُ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ﴾

“O you who have believed, indeed, intoxicants, gambling, [sacrificing on] stone alters [to other than Allah], and divining arrows are but defilement from the work of Satan, so avoid it that you may be successful.”

[Surah Al-Ma'idah: 90].

Here, the wisdom called for gradual prohibition until the people had gotten used to leaving alcohol. Thus, 'Naskh' has its reasons and functions.

There are three types of 'Naskh'.

The first type: The verse remains, but the ruling brought by it is abrogated. An example is the verse prohibiting alcohol which went through a few gradual stages. When the final verse which totally prohibited alcohol was revealed, all the verses, which were revealed earlier during the stages of prohibition, were abrogated. Thus, their rulings were abrogated and practicing them became invalid.

As the period of revelation lasted twenty-three years, it spanned across a long time. Thus, when Allah ﷻ revealed:

﴿الْيَوْمَ أَكْمَلْتُ لَكُمْ دِينَكُمْ﴾

“This day I have perfected for you your religion” [Surah Al-Ma'idah: 3],

the revelation of the Holy Qur'an was completed, the revelation ended and the rulings were established in their final form.

However, during the period of revelation, some verses, for instance, could be connected to specific events such as the Battle of Badr or the Battle of Uhud. So, they could have been abrogated after the purpose of their revelation had ended. Then, other verses bringing other rulings would be sent down.

Therefore, when the time of the temporary verse was up, Allah ﷻ would reveal another verse similar to it or better than it.

We may be asking: Why does the verse remain although its ruling has been abrogated?

The answer is, in our interaction with the Words of Allah ﷻ, we benefit from its form, structure, meanings and miracles. All of these contain ‘*Barakah*’ or blessings, as Allah ﷻ says:

﴿كِتَابٌ أَنْزَلْنَاهُ إِلَيْكَ مُبَارَكٌ﴾

“[This is] a blessed Book which We have revealed to you, [O Muhammad],”
[Surah Sad: 29].

Every verse we recite, we will get ten rewards for every single letter in it. The Prophet ﷺ has said:

((مَنْ قَرَأَ حَرْفًا مِنْ كِتَابِ اللَّهِ فَلَهُ حَسَنَةٌ، وَالْحَسَنَةُ بِعَشْرِ أَمْثَالِهَا، لَا أَقُولُ أَلَمْ حَرْفٌ، وَلَكِنْ أَلِفٌ حَرْفٌ، وَلَا مِمْ حَرْفٌ، وَمِيمٌ حَرْفٌ))

*“Whoever recites a letter from the Book of Allah, he will be credited with a good deed, and a good deed gets a ten-fold reward. I do not say that Alif-Lam-Mim is one letter, but Alif is a letter, Lam is a letter and Mim is a letter.”*⁸¹

An example of this type of ‘*Naskh*’ is the verse regarding making a will for the parents to have a share from the inheritance in Surah Al-Baqarah:

﴿كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمُ إِذَا حَضَرَ أَحَدَكُمُ الْمَوْتُ إِنْ تَرَكَ خَيْرًا الْوَصِيَّةَ لِلْوَالِدَيْنِ﴾

“Prescribed for you when death approaches [any] one of you if he leaves wealth [is that he should make] a bequest for the parents”

[Surah Al-Baqarah: 180].

⁸¹ Sunan at-Tirmizi: Chapters on The Virtues of The Qur’an, Chapter: What is mentioned regarding the rewards of the one who recites a letter from the Qur’an, Hadith no. 2910.

This verse was abrogated when the verse regarding inheritance was revealed, whereupon the parents were assigned a part of the inheritance by law:

﴿وَلِأَبَوَيْهِ لِكُلِّ وَاحِدٍ مِّنْهُمَا السُّدُسُ﴾

“And for one's parents, to each one of them is a sixth” [Surah An-Nisaa': 11],

and thereupon, a will cannot be made for the deserving inheritors. Initially, the practice of making a will to include the parents in inheritance had been carried out. After this understanding had established in the selves and people were ready to accept the subsequent law, the initial one was abrogated and the verses regarding inheritance were revealed. These verses had specified the way of distributing the inheritance.

The second type: The verse is abrogated from the Book of Allah ﷻ but the ruling remains. An example is the verse regarding stoning. The wordings have been abrogated but its ruling remains practiced:

(الشيخ و الشيخة إذا زنيا فارجموهما البتة و الله عليم حكيم) (The old man and woman, if they fornicate, should definitely be stoned. And Allah is All-Knowing, All-Wise)⁸².

The third type: Both the verse and the ruling are abrogated, An example is the number of breast-feedings. It was narrated that Aishah رضي الله عنها said: “When the Qur’an was first revealed, the number of times of breast-feedings that would make a child a mahram (relative), was ten. Then this was abrogated and

⁸² An-Nasai has narrated on the account of Abdullah Ibn Abbas (ra) that he said: “I heard Umar say: (قَدْ حَشِبْتُ أَنْ يَطُولَ بِالنَّاسِ زَمَانٌ حَتَّى يَقُولَ قَائِلٌ: مَا نَجِدُ الرَّجْمَ فِي كِتَابِ اللَّهِ، فَيَصِلُوا بِتَرْكِ فَرِيضَةِ أَنْزَلَهَا اللَّهُ، أَلَا وَإِنَّ الرَّجْمَ حَقٌّ عَلَى مَنْ زَنَى إِذَا أَحْصِنَ وَكَانَتْ الْبَيِّنَةُ أَوْ الْإِعْتِرَافُ وَقَدْ قَرَأْنَاهَا: (الشَّيْخُ وَالشَّيْخَةُ إِذَا زَنِيَا فَارْجُمُوهُمَا الْبَتَّةَ). وَقَدْ رَجَمَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ وَرَجَمْنَا بَعْدَهُ)

(I fear that after a long time has passed, some will say: 'We do not find (the sentence of) stoning in the Book of Allah ﷻ,' and they will go astray by abandoning an obligation enjoined by Allah ﷻ. Rather stoning is a must if a man is married and proof is established, or if he admits it. We have read it (in the Qur'an). “And if an old man and an old woman commit adultery, stone them both.” Rasulullah ﷺ had stoned (adulterers) and we stoned (them) after him.' ”

Al-Baihaqi said: The ruling found in the verse regarding stoning is established. However, its recitation is abrogated. This is something which I do not know of any disputes regarding it.

replaced with five, which is well-known, then Rasulullah ﷺ passed away. These verses used to be recited from the Qur'an⁸³.

﴿نَأْتِ بِخَيْرٍ مِنْهَا أَوْ مِثْلِهَا﴾ *“We bring forth [one] better than it or similar to it.”* That is, the verse was better than it had been in its period. Every verse had been good for its own period.

The word ‘*Nunsiha*’ refers to the removal of the part which was abrogated. It comes from the word ‘*Nisyan*’, which means to forget. In this context, it means not remembering the previous ruling or erasing it, that is, the forgetting of the previous ruling due to the coming of a new one which is similar or better in goodness. Every verse that had come from Allah ﷻ had been good for its time and period.

The word ‘*Khair*’ which means good, is a word which can be used as a noun or a verb. It can also be used as a superlative to mean better and worse. ‘*Khair*’ and ‘*Sharr*’ instead of ‘*Akhyar*’ and ‘*Asharr*’.

The verse ends with the saying of Allah ﷻ: ﴿أَلَمْ تَعْلَمْ أَنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ﴾

“Do you not know that Allah is over all things competent?”

Allah ﷻ is All-Powerful to make a certain ruling at a certain time and another one at another time. This ‘*Naskh*’ and changing of rulings happened with His Power.

⁸³ Sahih Muslim: The Book of Suckling, Chapter: Becoming Mahram is established by Five Breastfeedings, Hadith no. 1452

Verse 107:

﴿أَلَمْ تَعْلَمْ أَنَّ اللَّهَ لَهُ مُلْكُ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَمَا لَكُمْ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ مِنْ وَلِيٍّ وَلَا نَصِيرٍ﴾

“Do you not know that to Allah belongs the dominion of the heavens and the earth and [that] you have not besides Allah any protector or any helper?”

This verse is directed to everyone who recites the Holy Qur’an. This is because, although it is addressed directly to our beloved Prophet ﷺ every speech that is addressed to him is also directed to all of mankind.

The dominion (*Al-Mulk*) consists of the owner (*Al-Maalik*), the property (*Al-Milk*) that he deals with and the king (*Al-Malik*) who rules these owners. Allah ﷻ owns all of the kings, owners and properties. And as long as the dominion is in Allah’s Hands, the authority in the heavens and Earth is His. All that is in the Heavens and Earth submit to His Rule.

This verse is a rebuttal on those Jews who raised doubts regarding the issue of Abrogation and the changing of the religious rulings. They said: “The Muslims used to follow our *Qiblah* (direction in prayers), but are now facing other than it...”. Allah ﷻ says:

﴿قَدْ نَرَى تَقَلُّبَ وَجْهِكَ فِي السَّمَاءِ﴾

“We have certainly seen the turning of your face, [O Muhammad], toward the heaven” [Surah Al-Baqarah: 144].

Therefore, the turning of the *Qiblah* was not in response to the turning of the Prophet’s face nor his desire to face the Kaaba during prayers.

These had been the means, as Allah ﷻ is the One who had created the Prophet and his heart. He is also the One who had stirred his sentiments and the love in his heart, and had turned his face towards the sky to await the verse commanding the change of direction of prayer. Allah ﷻ Knows with His All-

Encompassing Knowledge (in time, He will unveil reasons and motives of happenings) all that has happened and that which will happen. Even when we say that supplication can stop the decree, it actually means that Allah ﷻ, with His All-Encompassing Knowledge, had known that the supplication and its acceptance would occur.

For nothing strays from His Knowledge and Power.

Verse 108:

﴿أَمْ تُرِيدُونَ أَنْ تَسْأَلُوا رَسُولَكُمْ كَمَا سُئِلَ مُوسَىٰ مِنْ قَبْلُ وَمَنْ يَتَّبِعْ الْكُفْرَ بِالْإِيمَانِ فَقَدْ ضَلَّ سَوَاءَ السَّبِيلِ﴾

***“Or do you intend to ask your Messenger as Musa was asked before?
And whoever exchanges faith for disbelief has certainly strayed from
the soundness of the way.”***

The Jews had raised doubts regarding the issue of Abrogation in the Holy Qur’an. In this verse, Allah ﷻ addresses the believers and says to them:

﴿أَمْ تُرِيدُونَ أَنْ تَسْأَلُوا رَسُولَكُمْ كَمَا سُئِلَ مُوسَىٰ مِنْ قَبْلُ﴾

“Or do you intend to ask your Messenger as Musa was asked before?”

Here, there is a marvelous point. The verb ‘*Su-ila*’ is in the passive voice (As Musa ﷺ was asked) instead of the active voice: (As the Jews had asked Musa). The subject (the Jews) had been left out, as Allah ﷻ did not want to compare the believers to the Jews who had done all that they did to Musa ﷺ. They had asked him to show them Allah ﷻ clearly after all the miracles that he had brought for them:

﴿وَلَقَدْ آتَيْنَا مُوسَىٰ تِسْعَ آيَاتٍ بَيِّنَاتٍ﴾

“And We had certainly given Musa nine evident signs” [Surah Al-Isra’: 101].

Among these miracles were the parting of the ocean, the lifting of the mountain above their heads, the sending down of the Mann and the quails, the staff and the hand. However, they had still denied and disbelieved and asked from Musa ﷺ to let them see Allah outright. This is due to their materialism.

﴿وَمَنْ يَتَّبِعْ الْكُفْرَ بِالْإِيمَانِ فَقَدْ ضَلَّ سَوَاءَ السَّبِيلِ﴾

“And whoever exchanges faith for disbelief has certainly strayed from the soundness of the way.”

﴿بِالْإِيمَانِ﴾: The letter ‘Ba’ is normally affixed to the thing which is left.

A person who purchases something for a hundred Syrian pounds has actually left the hundred pounds and has taken the thing that he has bought. Therefore, the one who has taken disbelief and left *Iman (faith)*, has strayed.

When the Holy Qur’an speaks of disbelief and belief, it is speaking regarding the ‘*Aqeedah*’ or Creed and the thinking. It is not speaking about their consequences. Therefore, there is no link whatsoever between the topic of disbelief and killing. The word ‘*Kufr*’ means the denial and concealing. It does not mean what the terrorist movements use it to mean - killing and crime. Furthermore, the phrase in the ‘*Azan*’ or call to prayer, (*Allahu Akbar... Allahu Akbar*), which is the sign of calling the Muslims to prayer and is a form of confirmation that the command of Allah ﷻ is greater than everything else, has been exploited by the terrorists to become a call to killing and terrorism.

Thus, disbelief is a doctrine which is the opposite of ‘*Iman*’ or faith. In the religion of Allah ﷻ, it is not permissible for anyone to force anyone else to embrace Islam, as Allah ﷻ says:

﴿لَا إِكْرَاهَ فِي الدِّينِ﴾

“There shall be no compulsion in [acceptance of] the religion.”

[Surah Al-Baqarah: 256]. And:

﴿فَمَنْ شَاءَ فَلْيُؤْمِنْ وَمَنْ شَاءَ فَلْيُكْفُرْ﴾

“so whoever wills - let him believe; and whoever wills - let him disbelieve.”

[Surah Al-Kahf: 29].

This shows the freedom of belief. Therefore, the one who chooses disbelief and leaves ‘*Iman*’ has lost his way and has deviated from the right path.

Verse 109:

﴿وَدَّ كَثِيرٌ مِّنْ أَهْلِ الْكِتَابِ لَوْ يَرُدُّوكُمْ مِّنْ بَعْدِ إِيمَانِكُمْ كُفَّارًا حَسَدًا مِّنْ عِنْدِ أَنفُسِهِمْ مِّنْ بَعْدِ مَا تَبَيَّنَ لَهُمُ الْحَقُّ ۗ فَاعْفُوا وَاصْفَحُوا حَتَّىٰ يَأْتِيَ اللَّهُ بِأَمْرِهِ ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ﴾

“Many of the People of the Book wish they could turn you back to disbelief after you have believed, out of envy from themselves [even] after the truth has become clear to them. So pardon and overlook until Allah delivers His command. Indeed, Allah is over all things competent.”

This verse was revealed after the battle of Uhud when the Jews were convinced that the Muslims were defeated. Defeat refers to losing land and losing battles. However, the Muslims did not lose any land nor any battle in Uhud. It was just that the archers went against the instruction of the Prophet ﷺ when he instructed them not to leave the noble hill for the battle field. So they went down from the hill thinking that the battle had ended. Hence Allah ﷻ wanted to teach them a lesson for going against the commands of the Prophet ﷺ so that they will learn what is faith and obedience. Many of the people of the Book would love and want that the Muslims renounce their religion and revert to disbelief so they said to them, “If he was really a prophet, he would not be defeated nor would you all have been defeated with him”. In this verse:

﴿كَثِيرٌ مِّنْ أَهْلِ الْكِتَابِ﴾, the term “Many of the people of the Book” is used and not “All of them” because from amongst them were those who entered into Islam and followed the Prophet ﷺ hence generalisation would not be correct.

As for what pushed the Jews to wish that the Muslims renounce their faith and leave their religion, it was the envy that had grown in their own selves over what the Muslims had been commanded to do by their religion. As Allah ﷻ says, ﴿مَنْ بَعْدَ مَا تَبَيَّنَ لَهُمُ الْحَقُّ﴾ *“after the Truth has become clear to them”*. They know that the Muslims are on the right religion as this is found in their Torah. However, they wanted them (the Muslims) to return to disbelief out of envy. Envy harms the one being envied by the command of Allah ﷻ, as it has been affirmed in the Book of Allah ﷻ, that envy has harm and has evil, as Allah ﷻ says:

﴿وَمِنْ شَرِّ حَاسِدٍ إِذَا حَسَدَ﴾

“And from the evil of the envier when he envies” [Surah Al-Falaq: 5].

And our Prophet ﷺ has taught us protection against envy by reciting the *Mu’awwizatain* (Surah Al-Falaq and Surah An-Nas) and to blow onto ourselves.

Envy: To wish that blessings are removed from someone else even if they do not come to the one who envies. Hence the one who envies is upset that the one he envies has money or children or luxuries of this world and hopes that the envied loses these things even if they do not come to him. The envier harms the envied only by the might of Allah and nothing in Allah’s ﷻ kingdom is beyond the might and will of Allah ﷻ. Similarly, the viper can only harm a person when it bites him by the power of Allah ﷻ, hence nothing is beyond the power of Allah ﷻ.

﴿فَاعْفُوا وَاصْفَحُوا﴾ *“So pardon and overlook”*: This is what Islam commands: Pardoning and overlooking. Allah ﷻ did not say kill and slaughter even though the Jews tried to make the Muslims abandon their prophet and distance themselves from their religion. On top of that, they were hoping that the Muslims would be defeated. However, our religion is a religion of forgiveness and overlooking. So, in spite of whatever these enviers wanted to happen to

the Muslim of harm and pain, Allah ﷻ still commanded the Muslims to forgive and overlook. In another verse:

﴿ادْفَعْ بِالَّتِي هِيَ أَحْسَنُ فَإِذَا الَّذِي بَيْنَكَ وَبَيْنَهُ عَدَاوَةٌ كَأَنَّهُ وَلِيٌّ حَمِيمٌ﴾

“Repel [evil] by that [deed] which is better; and thereupon the one who, between you and him is enmity, [will become] as though he was a devoted friend.” [Surah Fussilat: 34].

Indeed, the enemies of Islam have been trying to show that Islam is a religion of hatred and enmity, terrorism and killing, however there is nothing in Islam that says this. And whatever they have accused Islam of is simply slander and false words. While Islam commands forgiveness and overlooking of those who do evil.

﴿وَلَمَنْ صَبَرَ وَغَفَرَ إِنَّ ذَلِكَ لَمِنْ عَزْمِ الْأُمُورِ﴾

“And whoever is patient and forgives - indeed, that is of the matters [requiring] determination.” [Surah Asy-Syuraa: 43].

Allah ﷻ says, in addressing the Prophet ﷺ:

﴿وَإِنْ عَاقَبْتُمْ فَعَاقِبُوا بِمِثْلِ مَا عُوقِبْتُمْ بِهِ وَلَئِنْ صَبَرْتُمْ لَهُوَ خَيْرٌ لِلصَّابِرِينَ﴾

“And if you punish [an enemy, Oh believers], punish with an equivalent of that with which you were harmed. But if you are patient - it is better for those who are patient.” [Surah An-Nahl: 126].

This is Islam. The difference between pardoning and overlooking is that pardoning is to remove or wipe off, as one would say, the wind removed the footsteps, that is, the wind wiped over the footsteps. So, it is the removal of an outward mark of a specific problem with regards to someone from amongst the people. And this could possibly still leave a mark inwardly in the self. As for overlooking, it is that the heart is completely wiped free of it and the sin and harm are forgotten without any thought of it ever coming to mind again.

﴿حَتَّىٰ يَأْتِيَ اللَّهَ بِأَمْرِهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ﴾

“until Allah delivers His command. Indeed, Allah is over all things competent.”:

Hence it is necessary that the command of Allah ﷻ will come, in order for there to be victory over them. The creation does not possess any might against the might of the Creator. He is the One alone who is most powerful over everything.

Verse 110:

﴿وَأَقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَآتُوا الزَّكَاةَ وَمَا تُقَدِّمُوا لِأَنفُسِكُمْ مِنْ خَيْرٍ تَجِدُوهُ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ بَصِيرٌ﴾

“And establish prayer and give zakah, and whatever good you put forward for yourselves - you will find it with Allah. Indeed, Allah is All-Seeing of what you do.”

The response against the Jews, as well as others besides them, with regards to their attempt to make the Muslims renounce their faith, is to command them to prayer and zakat. Prayer and zakat are both mentioned as they are of the pillars of the religion.

﴿وَأَقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ﴾ ***“And establish the prayer”***

Prayer is the support pillar of the religion. Whosoever establishes it, establishes the religion. And whosoever demolishes it, demolishes the religion. Acts of worship in Islam are not all pillars though in every act in which the pleasure of Allah ﷻ is sought, is an act of obedience. As for pillars, they are only five. And the first of them after the testimony of faith is the prayer. The prayer is a proclamation of the continuous devotion to Allah ﷻ throughout the hours of the day and night by the five prayer times in a day. As Allah ﷻ says:

﴿وَأَقِمِ الصَّلَاةَ طَرَفِي النَّهَارِ وَزُلْفًا مِنْ اللَّيْلِ﴾

“And establish prayer at the two ends of the day and at the approach of the night.” [Surah Hud: 114] and He said:

﴿وَأَقِمِ الصَّلَاةَ لِذِكْرِي﴾

“and establish prayer for My remembrance.” [Surah Taha: 14] and:

﴿أَقِمِ الصَّلَاةَ لِذُلُوكِ الشَّمْسِ إِلَى غَسَقِ اللَّيْلِ وَقُرْآنِ الْفَجْرِ إِنَّ قُرْآنَ الْفَجْرِ كَانَ مَشْهُودًا﴾

“Establish prayer at the decline of the sun [from its meridian] until the darkness of the night and [also] the Qur’an of dawn. Indeed, the recitation of dawn is ever witnessed.” [Surah Al-Isra’: 78].

Whenever the Prophet ﷺ has a serious matter in mind, he would rush to the prayer, because in it is the proclamation of continuous devotion and reliance on Allah ﷻ. The key to the prayer is *Allahu Akbar* (Allah is the greatest) and the prayer is not valid without it. Hence Allah ﷻ is greater than my ownself, my concerns, my occupations and my enemies. Allah ﷻ is greater than everything. And when a caller calls *Allahu Akbar... Allahu Akbar*, he is calling out the greatest call to the greatest form of worship, that is, proclaiming the continuous devotion and dependence on Allah ﷻ. So, leave everything and come to the prayer.

All obligatory acts are excusable from being carried out if a person is unable to do them, except prayer. Fasting in Ramadhan can be delayed to a later time for the one who is ill or travelling; hajj is only for the one who can find a way there; zakat is not obligated on the one who does not own the minimum amount. However, the obligation of the prayer stands regardless of situation. So, the one who cannot pray standing, he prays seated. If he cannot pray seated, then he prays lying down or he indicates the movements with his eyes or have the movements of the prayer go through his heart. Hence the prayer remains obligatory on the Muslim in every possible situation as his dependence and devotion to Allah ﷻ never ends because in it is the phrase *Allahu Akbar* and in it is worship of Allah ﷻ. A person will never achieve freedom if he never

enslaves himself to Allah as he would either be a slave to another human being like him, or stronger than him, or to money, or to his own hidden self, or to his own lowly desires and whims... or you could be a slave to your Creator, and in doing so free yourself from the worship of others besides Him. So, if you are a slave to Allah ﷻ, you will be a leader amongst men. This is so because you will never fear anyone other than Allah ﷻ. There will never be two fears in one heart at the same time: Fear of God and fear of man. And this is because you know that none harms nor benefits, connects nor cuts off, except Allah ﷻ. As a poet said,

It is enough for myself as an honour that I am a servant,

Of My Lord who receives me without an appointment.

Prayer is one of the five pillars of this religion. Between it and the other pillars are strong interlacing connections. In facing the *Qiblah*, that is, the house of Allah ﷻ, prayer has an essence of *hajj* in it. When you are in prayer, you do not eat nor drink, and this is the essence of fasting. In the prayer, you will say the testament of faith that is, I bear witness that there is no God but Allah and that Muhammad is the messenger of Allah. This is the first pillar of the five pillars of the faith. Zakat is also encompassed in the prayer as the prayer takes a portion of your time to be placed in the path of Allah ﷻ just like zakat where a part of your wealth is placed in the path of Allah ﷻ.

﴿وَأْتُوا الزَّكَاةَ﴾ *“And give zakah”*: Zakat has been made compulsory on the believer so he is able to extend his benefit to others. And zakat is not obligated except on someone whose earnings exceed his expenditure. Fulfilling the zakat, ensures that the one who owns the wealth uses it so that he and other than him can benefit from the flow of the wealth. Hence zakat ensures the extension of a person’s deeds in life and it ensures a social guarantee for those in need. As Allah ﷻ says

﴿وَالَّذِينَ فِي أَمْوَالِهِمْ حَقٌّ مَّعْلُومٌ (٢٤) لِّلسَّائِلِ وَالْمَحْرُومِ (٢٥)﴾

“And those within whose wealth is a known right. For the petitioner and the deprived.” [Surah Al-Ma’arij: 24-25].

Hence it is a right, not a privilege nor a gift.

Hence pardoning and overlooking, establishing the prayer and giving zakat, and everything of goodness that we do for others will come back to us. It is for us, ourselves. Hence, we do not present it to Allah ﷻ, rather we are presenting it to ourselves. It has reached us in a *Hadith Qudsi*, where God says:

((يَا عِبَادِي، لَوْ أَنَّ أَوْلَكُمْ وَأَجْرَكُمْ، وَإِنْسَكُمْ وَجِنَّكُمْ كَانُوا عَلَى أَنْفَى قَلْبِ رَجُلٍ وَاجِدٍ مِنْكُمْ مَا زَادَ ذَلِكَ فِي مُلْكِي شَيْئًا، يَا عِبَادِي، لَوْ أَنَّ أَوْلَكُمْ وَأَجْرَكُمْ، وَإِنْسَكُمْ وَجِنَّكُمْ كَانُوا عَلَى أَفْجَرِ قَلْبِ رَجُلٍ وَاجِدٍ مِنْكُمْ مَا نَقَصَ ذَلِكَ مِنْ مُلْكِي شَيْئًا))

“Oh my servant! If the first of you and the last of you, the human of you and the jinn of you had the most pious hearts, that would not increase My kingdom one bit. O my servant! If the first of you and the last of you, the human of you and the jinn of you had the most wretched hearts, that would not decrease My kingdom one bit.”⁸⁴

Hence all goodness that you do for others will come back to you as they’re forms of reward. And the word reward is from the same root word as clothing, as clothing is basically a tailor taking a piece of cloth and making it better than what it was before. Similarly, this is how Allah ﷻ will multiply your good deeds. Rasulullah ﷺ said:

((مَنْ تَصَدَّقَ بِعَدْلِ تَمْرَةٍ مِنْ كَسْبٍ طَيِّبٍ، وَلَا يَقْبَلُ اللَّهُ إِلَّا الطَّيِّبَ، وَإِنَّ اللَّهَ يَتَقَبَّلُهَا بِيَمِينِهِ ثُمَّ يُرَبِّهَا لِصَاحِبِهَا كَمَا يُرَبِّي أَحَدَكُمْ قَلْوَهُ حَتَّى تَكُونَ مِثْلَ الْجَبَلِ))

“Whosoever gives out in charity what is equal to a date from his pure earnings, and Allah only accepts what is pure, for surely Allah will accept it with His right and increase it for the one who gave it away in charity just as

⁸⁴ Sahih Muslim: The Book of Virtue, Joining of the Ties of Kinship and Enjoining Good Manners, Chapter: The Prohibition Of Oppression, Hadith no. 2577

*how one of you would nurture and grow his foal until (this money) becomes like a mountain.*⁸⁵

﴿وَمَا تَقْدُمُوا لَأَنْفُسِكُمْ مِنْ خَيْرٍ تَجِدُوهُ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ بَصِيرٌ﴾

“and whatever good you put forward for yourselves - you will find it with Allah. Indeed, Allah of what you do, is Seeing.”: This brings peace and serenity to the believer as the actions in his life will bring reward to him from Allah ﷻ . And Allah ﷻ is enough as One who keeps count or holds people to account.

﴿فَمَنْ يَعْمَلْ مِثْقَالَ ذَرَّةٍ خَيْرًا يَرَهُ (٧) وَمَنْ يَعْمَلْ مِثْقَالَ ذَرَّةٍ شَرًّا يَرَهُ (٨)﴾

“So whoever does an atom's weight of good will see it, And whoever does an atom's weight of evil will see it.” [Surah Az-Zalzalah: 7-8].

None is able to provide with an atom's weight of anything except Allah ﷻ. This gives you the tranquillity that Allah ﷻ is watching your deeds and will count it for you regardless of how small or insignificant.

Verse 111:

﴿وَقَالُوا لَنْ يَدْخُلَ الْجَنَّةَ إِلَّا مَنْ كَانَ هُودًا أَوْ نَصَارَى تِلْكَ أَمَانِيُّهُمْ قُلْ هَاتُوا بُرْهَانَكُمْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ﴾

“And they say, ‘None will enter Paradise except one who is a Jew or a Christian.’ That is [merely] their wishful thinking, Say, ‘Produce your proof, if you should be truthful.’”

It is a principle in our belief that whenever we see a verse that mentions the Jews and the Christians, we need to distinguish between the Jews and the Christians on account of their position with the Muslims. And there are those who try to distort the bond between the Muslims and the Christians. Whenever

⁸⁵ Sahih al-Bukhari: The Book of Zakah: Chapter: Allah does not accept the charity from booty that is taken illegally, and does not accept except that which is from the earnestly earned money, Hadith no. 1344

the verses speak about the people of the Book, the Jews are blamed and their animosity against the Muslims is mentioned, as Allah ﷻ says:

﴿لَتَجِدَنَّ أَشَدَّ النَّاسِ عَدَاوَةً لِلَّذِينَ آمَنُوا الْيَهُودَ﴾

“You will surely find the most intense of the people in animosity toward the believers [to be] the Jews” [Surah Al-Ma’idah: 82].

As for whenever Allah ﷻ speaks about the Christians, a general ruling is given, as Allah ﷻ says

﴿وَلَتَجِدَنَّ أَقْرَبَهُمْ مَوَدَّةً لِلَّذِينَ آمَنُوا الَّذِينَ قَالُوا إِنَّا نَصَارَى﴾

“and you will find the nearest of them in affection to the believers those who say, ‘We are Christians’” [Surah Al-Ma’idah: 82].

And everything that the Holy Qur’an says about the Jews comes as a warning, while for the Christians, the Qur’an praises them. And whatever we see in this verse, it is the description of a group of people and certain individuals in particular, and not a generalization.

And this is freedom in belief, as Allah ﷻ says:

﴿لَا إِكْرَاهَ فِي الدِّينِ﴾

“There shall be no compulsion in [acceptance of] the religion.”

[Surah Al-Baqarah: 256].

Our religion honours Prophet Isa عليه السلام the Messiah and his mother the virgin Maryam and in the Holy Qur’an is a surah called Ali ‘Imran (The family of ‘Imran) and in it is Allah’s ﷻ words:

﴿إِذْ قَالَتْ امْرَأَةُ عِمْرَانَ رَبِّ إِنِّي نَذَرْتُ لَكَ مَا فِي بَطْنِي مُحَرَّرًا فَتَقَبَّلْ مِنِّي﴾

“[Mention, Oh Muhammad], when the wife of ‘Imran said, ‘My Lord, indeed I have pledged to You what is in my womb, consecrated [for Your service], so accept this from me.’” [Surah Ali ‘Imran: 35].

The wife of Imran is the grandmother of Isa the Messiah ﷺ and the mother of Maryam ﷺ, hence it is not permissible for a Muslim to harm any Christian or their beliefs or their churches claiming that they have found in the Holy Qur'an the permissibility of doing this.

And even if the Jews and the Christians say that none will ever enter paradise except one who is of their religion, then this is a natural matter based on belief and that for every group, there will be those who say this. It is a principle that requires proof and we are not the ones who determine, rather the judgement is with Allah ﷻ.

﴿تِلْكَ أَمَانِيُّهُمْ قُلْ هَاتُوا بُرْهَانَكُمْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ﴾

“That is [merely] their wishful thinking, Say, ‘Produce your proof, if you should be truthful.’” [Surah Al-Baqarah: 111].

Verses that contain principles require proofs so that they may be principles by which one is admitted into paradise.

Verse 112:

﴿بَلَىٰ مَنْ أَسْلَمَ وَجْهَهُ لِلَّهِ وَهُوَ مُحْسِنٌ فَلَهُ أَجْرُهُ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِ وَلَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ﴾

“Yes [on the contrary], whoever submits his face in Islam to Allah while being a doer of good will have his reward with his Lord. And no fear will there be concerning them, nor will they grieve.”

﴿مَنْ أَسْلَمَ وَجْهَهُ﴾ *“whoever submits his face”*

- The face is mentioned because it is the most noble part of the human being. This is how the Holy Qur'an responds to their claims; whosoever submits his face to Allah ﷻ and he is accepted by Allah ﷻ by the condition of excellence in worship and behaviour, as worship is not accepted without excellence (*ihsan*). In fact, it is compulsory to be one of excellent behaviour and not

harmful behaviour. Hence it is not enough to have prayer and fasting while being disobedient to one's parents, spreading corruption, lying, stealing, or killing those who differ in opinion with us. It is not permissible to cause harm to anyone ever, regardless of whether or not they are Muslims or not. Hence whosoever establishes excellence in accordance to its conditions, he will get his reward with His Lord. Allah ﷻ will distinguish between people on the day of judgement, as He says:

﴿إِنَّ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَالَّذِينَ هَادُوا وَالصَّابِئِينَ وَالنَّصَارَى وَالْمَجُوسَ وَالَّذِينَ أَشْرَكُوا إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَفْصِلُ بَيْنَهُمْ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ شَهِيدٌ﴾

“Indeed, those who have believed and those who were Jews and the Sabeans and the Christians and the Magians and those who associated with Allah - Allah will judge between them on the Day of Resurrection. Indeed Allah is Witness , over all things.” [Surah Al-Hajj: 17].

And we are not judges who will hold people to account for what they believe in, rather we respect their beliefs so that they will respect our beliefs and we are not the ones who give reward, rather, Allah ﷻ is the one who rewards.

The difference between fear and sadness is that fear is of something that will happen in the future such as an enemy that is threatening us, while sadness is due to something that has already happened such as illness and deficiency in wealth or loss of loved ones.

Verse 113:

﴿وَقَالَتِ الْيَهُودُ لَيْسَتِ النَّصَارَىٰ عَلَىٰ شَيْءٍ وَقَالَتِ النَّصَارَىٰ لَيْسَتِ الْيَهُودُ عَلَىٰ شَيْءٍ وَهُمْ يَتْلُونَ الْكِتَابَ كَذَلِكَ قَالَ الَّذِينَ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ مِثْلَ قَوْلِهِمْ فَاللَّهُ يَحْكُمُ بَيْنَهُمْ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ فِيمَا كَانُوا فِيهِ يَخْتَلِفُونَ﴾

“The Jews say ‘The Christians have nothing [true] to stand on,’ and the Christians say, ‘The Jews have nothing to stand on,’ although they [both] recite the Scripture. Thus, the polytheists speak the same as their words. But Allah will judge between them on the Day of Resurrection concerning that over which they used to differ.”

And during the time when Islam came, there were two religions. They were Judaism and Christianity. And it is from the natural tendency of human beings from every group to say that the other has no basis. And that history has recorded the attitude of the Christians with respect to the Muslims, among which is the protection given by the Negus, King of Ethiopia, to the Muslims and he was a Christian. Also, when the conquering army came to Syria, the Orthodox Christians stood united next to the Muslims to overthrow the Romans from Syria. Also, how the orthodox Christians stood by with Salahudin Al-Ayoubi. Hence, the society that was built in this city, was built by the Muslims and the Christians. Hence, we do not accept from anyone who wants to harm the Christians by using misconstrued interpretations of the Qur'an. As such, our noble book honours the Christians as how it honours the Messiah Isa, Son of Maryam and his mother عليها السلام.

As for affairs of belief, we leave it to the Lord of Mankind as He will be the One to hold people to account as to their beliefs. And if the Jews and the Christians differ amongst themselves then Allah ﷻ will be the One to judge between them and not us.

Verse 114:

﴿وَمَنْ أَظْلَمُ مِمَّنْ مَنَعَ مَسَاجِدَ اللَّهِ أَنْ يُذْكَرَ فِيهَا اسْمُهُ وَسَعَىٰ فِي خَرَابِهَا أُولَٰئِكَ مَا كَانَ لَهُمْ أَنْ يَدْخُلُوهَا إِلَّا خَائِفِينَ لَهُمْ فِي الدُّنْيَا خِزْيٌ وَلَهُمْ فِي الْآخِرَةِ عَذَابٌ عَظِيمٌ﴾

“And who are more unjust than those who prevent the name of Allah from being mentioned in His mosques and strive toward their destruction. It is not for them to enter them except in fear. For them is disgrace in this world, and they will have a great punishment in the Hereafter.”

The answer to the question is, “nobody is more wretched” and this is a rhetorical question that negates possibilities. The mosques are the houses of Allah ﷻ and Allah ﷻ says in some of His books:

((إِنَّ بُيُوتِي فِي أَرْضِي الْمَسَاجِدُ، وَإِنَّ رُؤَايَ فِيهَا عُمَارُهَا، فَطُوبَىٰ لِعَبْدٍ تَطَهَّرَ فِي بَيْتِهِ ثُمَّ زَارَنِي فِي بَيْتِي، فَحَقُّ عَلَى الْمَزُورِ أَنْ يُكْرَمَ زَائِرُهُ))

“For surely My Houses upon my land are the Mosques. And for surely My visitors to it are those who maintains it. So, give good news to the slaves who purifies himself in his own house then visits me in My house. And it’s only rightful that The Visited honours the visitor.”⁸⁶

And Rasulallah ﷺ said:

((وَجُعِلَتْ لِي الْأَرْضُ مَسْجِدًا وَطَهْرًا))

“The earth has been made for me as a purified place of worship.”⁸⁷

From this we know that if the prayer time comes to a Muslim, he is able to pray anywhere. However, the mosque is a place that is limited to a piece of land known by the people to be for them to gather in - a building for prayer. And

⁸⁶ Faidhul Qadiir: The letter *Hamzah*, Hadith no. 2258

⁸⁷ Sahih al-Bukhari: The Book of Tayammum, Hadith no. 328

that is by their own choice, however, The House that Allah ﷻ chose is The Sacred Mosque:

﴿إِنَّ أَوَّلَ بَيْتٍ وُضِعَ لِلنَّاسِ لَلَّذِي بِبَكَّةَ مُبَارَكًا وَهُدًى لِّلْعَالَمِينَ﴾

“Indeed, the first House [of worship] established for mankind was that at Makkah - blessed and a guidance for the worlds.” [Surah Ali ‘Imran: 96].

So, Allah ﷻ determines its location for mankind and men were not the ones to determine it.

The role of the mosques, that have been established by the Muslims to be houses in which Allah ﷻ is worshiped, is the source of the light of Allah ﷻ to men. Allah ﷻ says in Surah Nur:

﴿فِي بُيُوتٍ أُذِنَ لِلَّهِ أَنْ تَرْفَعَ وَيُذَكَّرَ فِيهَا اسْمُهُ﴾

“[Such niches are] in mosques which Allah has ordered to be raised and that His name be mentioned therein” [Surah An-Nuur: 36].

And these are places of prostration – and prostration is the most honourable time that supplications are answered. This is because the servant is the closest that he could ever be to his Lord when he is in prostration. And mosques are called *masajid* because people perform (prostration) in it to Allah ﷻ. And that should never be any other work in the mosque except for that which is for Allah ﷻ. And Allah Most Blessed says:

﴿وَأَنَّ الْمَسَاجِدَ لِلَّهِ فَلَا تَدْعُوا مَعَ اللَّهِ أَحَدًا﴾

“And [He revealed] that the masjids are for Allah, so do not invoke with Allah anyone.” [Surah Al-Jinn: 18].

And the demolition of mosque is not limited to the demolition of the pillars and the buildings, rather it is the demolition of the human beings. For example, a mosque that is harmful will be one in whose foundations were laid by the hypocrites in the time of the Prophet ﷺ in order to harm the muslims, so the

prophet ﷺ commanded that it be demolished. And it has happened in our time those who abuse the mosque, taking advantage of it to call to killing and destruction. And these are the ones who have stopped the remembrance of Allah ﷻ in His own mosques. Hence there is none more wretched than them and no action more wretched than their actions because they strive to destroy the mosques and uproot the role of goodness and radiance that's in it. The prophet ﷺ had said:

((مَنْ سَمِعَ رَجُلًا يَنْشُدُ ضَالَّةً فِي الْمَسْجِدِ فَلْيَقُلْ: لَا رَدَّهَا اللَّهُ عَلَيْكَ فَإِنَّ الْمَسَاجِدَ لَمْ تُبْنَ لَهُذَا))

“Whosoever hears a man seeking a lost item in the mosques, so say to him, ‘May Allah not return it to you.’”⁸⁸

Regardless of what was missing. And Allah ﷻ says:

﴿إِنَّمَا يَعْمُرُ مَسَاجِدَ اللَّهِ مَنْ آمَنَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ﴾

“The mosques of Allah are only to be maintained by those who believe in Allah and the Last Day” [Surah At-Tawbah: 18],

and what is intended is the establishment of the mosque by man and in this is the highest message of mosques, which is the message of goodness to others and the message of giving and light.

Verse 115:

﴿وَلِلَّهِ الْمَشْرِقُ وَالْمَغْرِبُ فَأَيْنَمَا تُوَلُّوا فَثَمَّ وَجْهُ اللَّهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ وَاسِعٌ عَلِيمٌ﴾

“And to Allah belongs the east and the west. So wherever you [might] turn, there is the Face of Allah. Indeed, Allah is all-Encompassing and Knowing.”

⁸⁸ Sahih Muslim: The Book of Mosques and Places of Prayer, The prohibition of making lost property announcements in the masjid, and what should be said by one who hears a person making such an announcement, Hadith no. 568

The verse that preceded this verse speaks about the mosque, and that for mosques there are etiquettes and laws. The mosque is the house of Allah ﷺ on earth and its visitors are those who establish it, as how our beloved prophet ﷺ has said.

The mosque is a piece of known land that has been put aside by man and it is defined to be a place of worship so that it will become a mosque for Allah. Hence a person may not do any other act in it.

﴿وَأَنَّ الْمَسَاجِدَ لِلَّهِ فَلَا تَدْعُوا مَعَ اللَّهِ أَحَدًا﴾

“And [He revealed] that the masjids are for Allah, so do not invoke with Allah anyone.” [Surah Al-Jinn: 18]

and it is by the choice of men, not by the choice of the Lord of man. And what is the choice of the Lord of man is the Noble Ka’bah in Makkah of which Allah ﷻ says:

﴿إِنَّ أَوَّلَ بَيْتٍ وُضِعَ لِلنَّاسِ لَلَّذِي بِبَكَّةَ مُبَارَكًا وَهُدًى لِّلْعَالَمِينَ﴾

“Indeed, the first House [of worship] established for mankind was that at Makkah - blessed and a guidance for the worlds.” [Surah Ali ‘Imran: 96]

and the mosque that men had built is known to be the mosque of Allah built for worship. And one of the laws of the mosque is that, it is built facing the Sacred Mosque which is the first mosque and the *Qiblah* which is the Noble Ka’bah. The prayer is faced in the mosque in the direction of the noble Ka’bah. And the direction of the *mihrab* is also in the direction of the noble Ka’bah.

And some people believed that Allah’s noble countenance is only found in this direction and Allah ﷻ wanted to say to them that Allah ﷻ exists in every place and that the principle is not a principle of direction. And the glory of your Lord exists in every direction and He is with you wherever you are, for surely He the Most Glorious has said:

﴿وَاللَّهُ الْمَشْرِقُ وَالْمَغْرِبُ فَأَيْنَمَا تُوَلُّوا فَتَمَّ وَجْهُ اللَّهِ﴾

“And to Allah belongs the east and the west. So wherever you [might] turn, there is the Face of Allah.” [Surah Al-Baqarah: 115].

So why did He not say North and South. This is because every direction is determined by first facing east or West. So, when the East and the West have been determined, meaning the rising of the Sun and setting of the Sun, it would determine for you the other two directions, that is, the North and the South.

And in every town, there is East and West. And in every part of this planet Earth, if you want to pray, it is on you to face the direction of Ka'bah, the direction of the Sacred Mosque. None besides Allah ﷻ owns the East and the West, and He in fact owns all direction. As such, Rasulullah ﷺ said:

((وَجُعِلَتْ لِي الْأَرْضُ مَسْجِدًا وَطَهْرًا))

“The earth has been made for me as a pure masjid.”⁸⁹,

that is, no matter where you are, you may seek the countenance of Allah as He is with us wherever we are. So why must we face the mosques in the direction of the *Qiblah*? And why is the prayer not valid unless it is in the direction of the *Qiblah*? Why is facing the *Qiblah* a condition for the validity of the prayer while Allah ﷻ says:

﴿فَأَيْنَمَا تُوَلُّوا فَتَمَّ وَجْهُ اللَّهِ﴾

“So wherever you [might] turn, there is the Face of Allah .”

[Surah Al-Baqarah: 115].

⁸⁹ Sahih Al-Bukhari: The Book of Tayammum, Hadith no. 328

The answer is, because Allah ﷻ wants discipline in the movement of human beings when they stand in front of Allah ﷻ facing Him and not to leave the movement of human beings in chaos.

Imagine entering a mosque and finding every person praying facing in different directions. Unity in worship is not established in such disunity nor is unity itself established until everyone faces in one single direction, nor is unity in worship established until there is unity in direction and in structure. Allah wants the unity of this nation:

﴿إِنَّ هَذِهِ أُمَّتُكُمْ أُمَّةً وَاحِدَةً وَأَنَا رَبُّكُمْ فَاعْبُدُون﴾

“Indeed this, your religion, is one religion, and I am your Lord, so worship Me.” [Surah Al-Anbiya’: 92]

and when you pray, it is on you to say *Allahu Akbar*, to stand, to bow, to prostrate and to give salams. Why are there these conditions and pillars for the prayer; of saying *Allahu Akbar*, bowing, and prostrating? Why is the dawn prayer two cycles and others four?

It is necessary for there to be discipline in performing the obligatory acts of worship for Allah ﷻ.

Hence these acts of worship have been fixed by Allah ﷻ and the wisdom behind them is only for Allah ﷻ to know. What is on you is to be consistent on the commands. Hence the dawn prayer is two cycles so you cannot say I would love to pray more so I will pray it three cycles. Allah ﷻ has only commanded that it be two for a wisdom that only He knows. So, when you pray two cycles, you are not doing it out of a favour for Allah ﷻ, rather you are doing it to please Allah ﷻ and to establish His commands. Thus, complying to structure is in line with the commands of Allah ﷻ. And Allah ﷻ has defined a specific direction for people to face when they stand before Him in prayer. And when a person wants to perform a compulsory act of worship he must comply to the discipline and

specifications that Allah ﷻ has set in the sacred law, of which is the facing of the *Qiblah*, so as to unify people.

The symbol of Islam is unity and not disunity, because Islam is a religion of oneness and the word of oneness is *Laa Ilaaha Illallah* (There is no God by Allah), which is a unified word.

And from the unified word is prayer in congregation, and it has a specific structure to it. The imam says to those praying, “Form straight rows for the prayer, may Allah ﷻ have mercy on you. Settle and form straight rows, for surely (making) straight and tight rows is part of establishing the prayer. And by this, the congregation abides. Hence it is a command that affirms character that Allah ﷻ has enforced. And this principle is not limited to just the mosque. In every place, the glory of Allah ﷻ is found and it is over all of His creation and for all in His kingdom. He is most knowing of His creation and you are of His creation.

Verse 116:

﴿وَقَالُوا اتَّخَذَ اللَّهُ وَلَدًا سُبْحَانَهُ بَلْ لَّهُ مَا فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ كُلٌّ لَّهُ قَانِتُونَ﴾

“They say, ‘Allah has taken a son.’ Exalted is He! Rather, to Him belongs whatever is in the heavens and the earth. All are devoutly obedient to Him,”

The polytheists of Mecca say that the angels are the daughters of Allah, the Jews say that Uzair is the son of Allah and the Christians say that the Messiah is the son of Allah. Hence, they express numerous opinions and beliefs. A principle in belief that is firmly established here, is respecting the beliefs of people. Allah ﷻ wants to make clear the standpoint of Islam with respect to what they say, and this is a principle in belief. Every religion has a

belief system, so does Islam. So, you do not fight people because of what they believe in. Allah ﷻ has given human beings a freedom of choice:

﴿وَلَوْ شَاءَ رَبُّكَ لَأَمَنَّ مَنْ فِي الْأَرْضِ كُلَّهُمْ جَمِيعاً أَفَأَنْتَ تُكْرِهُ النَّاسَ حَتَّىٰ يَكُونُوا مُؤْمِنِينَ﴾

“And had your Lord wished, all those who are on earth would have believed. Would you then force people until they become faithful?” [Surah Yunus: 99],

﴿فَذَكِّرْ إِنَّمَا أَنْتَ مُذَكِّرٌ (٢١) لَسْتَ عَلَيْهِمْ بِمُصَيِّرٍ (٢٢)﴾

“So admonish—for you are only an admonisher, and not a manager over their affairs.” [Surah Al-Ghashiyah: 21-22].

Hence, for us, when we call others to Allah ﷻ or to our beliefs, we do not hold people to account regarding their beliefs. Rather, the sound and authentic beliefs that Islam calls to, tells us that in response to what they say, - we should say:

﴿سُبْحَانَهُ طَبَّلَ لَهُ مَا فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ﴾

“Immaculate is He! Rather to Him belongs whatever is in the heavens and the earth.” [Surah Al-Baqarah: 116],

hence the response is only this one word, not more than *Subhaanah!* *“Immaculate is He!”*.

Glorification (*tasbeeh*) is to sanctify (our understanding) of the Divine essence, in His actions and traits, and this is all within the area of belief. Everything that occurs to you in your mind about Allah ﷻ, He is other than that. And this is the meaning of *Subhaanah*, that is, Allah ﷻ is pure and free from anything that could possibly occur in your mind:

﴿لَيْسَ كَمِثْلِهِ شَيْءٌ وَهُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْبَصِيرُ﴾

“Nothing is like Him, and He is the All-hearing, the All-seeing.” [Surah Asy-Syuraa: 11].

You have sight and hearing, and Allah ﷻ has sight and He hears. However, the hearing and the sight of Allah is not at all like your hearing and your sight. So, when the disbelievers speak about the traits of Allah ﷻ and the sons and daughters of Allah ﷻ, or actions that they relate to Allah ﷻ, the Muslim's response in view of their beliefs is, "Subhaanah". Every act and trait of Allah ﷻ is completely different compared to what is with man. For Allah ﷻ is alive and you are alive but your life is nothing like His, as you will die but Allah is alive and will never die. You are able and Allah ﷻ is able, but your ability is nothing like His ability and this is the meaning of "Subhaanah" (all Perfect is He from any blemish).

Every action that is miraculous and that man is not able to achieve the likes of, the word "Subhaanah" will precede it:

﴿سُبْحَانَ الَّذِي خَلَقَ الْأَزْوَاجَ كُلَّهَا مِمَّا تُنْبِتُ الْأَرْضُ وَمِنْ أَنْفُسِهِمْ وَمِمَّا لَا يَعْلَمُونَ﴾

"Exalted is He who has created in pairs all things that the earth produces, and of themselves, and of what they do not know." [Surah Yaaseen: 36].

So, all aspects of creation require a "SubhanaAllah" because none besides Allah ﷻ is able to create the likes of it:

﴿فَسُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ حِينَ تُمْسُونَ وَحِينَ تُصْبِحُونَ﴾

"So glorify(declare His immaculateness) Allah when you approach evening and when you rise at dawn." [Surah Ar-Ruum: 17],

﴿سُبْحَانَ الَّذِي أَسْرَى بِعَبْدِهِ لَيْلًا﴾

"Immaculate is He who carried His servant on a journey by night."

[Surah Al-Isra': 1].

We see that all these situations had the word *subhaana* preceding it, such as the night journey, which required the word *subhaana*. Furthermore, it is not becoming to ascribe to Allah with what is ascribed to man. Allah ﷻ says:

﴿بَلْ لَهُ مَا فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ ۗ﴾

“Rather to Him belongs whatever is in the heavens and the earth.”

[Surah Al-Baqarah:116].

Kingship negates parenthood because if He owns everything, then it is not possible for Him to have daughters and sons. Similarly, it is not possible for Him to have a hand but we recite:

﴿يَدُ اللَّهِ فَوْقَ أَيْدِيهِمْ﴾

“the hand of Allah is above their hands.” [Surah Al-Fath: 10]

Subhaanallah...

﴿فَأِنَّكَ بَأْ عَيْنِنَا﴾

“for indeed you are before Our eyes.” [Surah At-Tur: 48].

We say, “How immaculate is He above all imperfections!” There is none like Him. This is a speech in faith, we do not force people to take on our belief systems just as we would not like them to try to force upon us their belief system. So, what counts when it comes to relations is behaviour, not belief, that is, if someone differs from me in terms of belief, he is not an enemy to me by virtue of his belief. Animosity should not develop due to differences in belief; rather, it develops due to behaviour and interaction.

﴿فَمَنْ اعْتَدَى عَلَيْكُمْ فَاعْتَدُوا عَلَيْهِ بِمِثْلِ مَا اعْتَدَى عَلَيْكُمْ﴾

“So should anyone aggress against you, assail him in the manner he assailed you” [Surah Al-Baqarah: 194],

﴿وَقَاتِلُوا الْمُشْرِكِينَ كَافَّةً كَمَا يُقَاتِلُونَكُمْ كَافَّةً﴾

“Fight all the polytheists, just as they fight you all” [Surah At-Tawbah: 36].

So, whosoever fights me, I will fight him, and whosoever transgresses against me, I will transgress against him. However, if his belief differs from mine, I will say,

﴿لَكُمْ دِينُكُمْ وَلِيَ دِينِ﴾

“To you your religion, and to me my religion.” [Surah Al-Kafirun: 6]

and I will not attack the beliefs of others. Hence, for them is freedom of belief and for us, freedom of belief.

﴿كُلُّ لَهُ قَانِطُونَ﴾ *“All are devoutly obedient to Him”*

all of His creation are humbled before Him and worship Him.

Verse 117:

﴿بَدِيعَ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَإِذَا قَضَىٰ أَمْرًا فَإِنَّمَا يَقُولُ لَهُ كُنْ فَيَكُونُ﴾

“Originator of the heavens and the earth. When He decrees a matter, He only says to it, “Be,” and it is.”

Look at the beauty and the greatness of the Holy Qur’an. The word (*Badee*) i.e. ‘originator’ means a form of excellence that is one of its kind.

Allah ﷻ created the heavens and the earth and He created human beings without anything being similar to them from before. Any creation and any production on this earth that we made was imitated from a previous example. So, for example, if I wanted to make a container from glass, I must have an example to follow or a mould in which I place it in, in order for me to make it. So, the “*Badee*”, that is, the Originator, Most High, creates without a prior example and He creates by the word, “Be!”. The greatest proof for this is the creation of Adam ﷺ as Allah ﷻ did not create him following a mould and that He has created millions from his progeny all having a face, a head, two hands and two feet but there is not a human being who is exactly like another human

being. And even if someone said that human beings are all similar, we say that on the genetic level it is different, even the fingerprints are different, as well as each person’s voice and their iris. Hence, there is not a human being who exactly resembles another and they are all created by the word “be!” and not by some mould. This is the meaning of “Originator”. If the creation was from a mould, then they would be exactly the same.

﴿وَإِذَا قَضَىٰ أَمْرًا فَإِنَّمَا يَقُولُ لَهُ كُنْ فَيَكُونُ﴾

“When He decrees a matter, He only says to it, ‘Be,’ and it is.”:

The Arabic language is a receptacle for the words of Allah ﷻ and in it are words that have several meanings and one of them is the word “qada”. It has a general meaning, that is, an affair that has been decreed, taken from the word ‘qada’. ‘Qada’ is a rule that is not changeable. The word ‘qada’ can also mean something that reaches the end, as in the verse:

﴿فَإِذَا قَضَيْتُمْ مَنَاسِكُمْ فَاذْكُرُوا اللَّهَ﴾

“And when you finish your rites, then remember Allah”

[Surah Al-Baqarah: 200].

It also means a ruling or an affair and a decree that is established:

﴿وَقَضَىٰ رَبُّكَ أَلَّا تَعْبُدُوا إِلَّا إِيَّاهُ وَبِالْوَالِدَيْنِ إِحْسَانًا﴾

“Your Lord has decreed that you shall not worship anyone except Him, and [He has enjoined] kindness to parents.” [Surah Al-Isra’: 23],

﴿إِنَّمَا أَمْرُهُ إِذَا أَرَادَ شَيْئًا أَنْ يَقُولَ لَهُ كُنْ فَيَكُونُ﴾

“Indeed, when He wills something, His command is to say to it ‘Be,’ and it is.”

[Surah Yaaseen: 82],

that is, a ruling by order.

﴿وَنَادُوا يَا مَالِكُ لِيَقْضِ عَلَيْنَا رَبُّكَ﴾

“They will call out, ‘O Mālik! Let your Lord finish us off!’”

[Surah Az-Zukhruf: 77]

meaning that we will be destroyed.

﴿فَاقْضِ مَا أَنْتَ قَاضٍ﴾

“Decide whatever you may” [Surah Taha: 72]

meaning, do whatever you want, this is when the magicians of Pharaoh said that to him.

﴿وَإِذَا قَضَىٰ أَمْرًا فَإِنَّمَا يَقُولُ لَهُ كُنْ فَيَكُونُ﴾

“When He decrees a matter, He only says to it, ‘Be,’ and it is.”:

how is it that He says to it “be!” before it was created? It is as if He says, “Oh Ahmad! Be!” and Ahmad was. So, he was created in the knowledge of Allah ﷻ, you do not know him but these are affairs in which they are manifested, and not invented. Everything is in Allah’s ﷻ Knowledge, the pens have been lifted and the pages have dried. Everything that exists is known in the knowledge of Allah ﷻ, everything that will be is in the knowledge of Allah ﷻ, it is just a matter of time for it to come to existence. Sayyiduna Ali ؑ was asked, “Oh Father of Al-Hasan, how will people be held to account all at the same time?” He said, “Just as how they are given their sustenance all at the same time.”

Verse 118:

﴿وَقَالَ الَّذِينَ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ لَوْلَا يُكَلِّمُنَا اللَّهُ أَوْ تَأْتِينَا آيَةٌ كَذَلِكَ قَالَ الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ مِنْ قُلُوبِهِمْ تَسَابَهْتَ قَوْلَهُمْ فَمَا
بَيِّنَاتٍ الْآيَاتِ لِقَوْمٍ يُوقِنُونَ﴾

“Those who do not know say, ‘Why does Allah not speak to us or there come to us a sign?’ Thus, spoke those before them like their words. Their hearts

resemble each other. We have shown clearly the signs to a people who are certain [in faith].”

This verse reminds us of the Jews who said, “Show Allah ﷻ to us clearly!” and of all previous nations who requested for signs, making these signs conditional to their belief.

﴿فَأْتِ بِآيَةٍ إِنْ كُنْتَ مِنَ الصَّادِقِينَ﴾

“So bring us a sign, should you be truthful.” [Surah Asy-Syu’ara: 154].

It is not becoming of Allah ﷻ to speak to any human being unless it is from behind a veil and the natural nature of human beings is that they cannot connect directly with the very essence of God. And when Musa ﷺ asked to see his Lord, Allah ﷻ manifested Himself to the mountain, and it crumbled, causing Musa ﷺ to fall unconscious. Hence, it is necessary to only engage or connect with Allah ﷻ from behind a veil or through angels

as Allah ﷻ says:

﴿وَمَا كَانَ لِنَبِيٍّ أَنْ يَكَلِّمَهُ اللَّهُ إِلَّا وَحْيًا أَوْ مِنْ وَرَاءِ حِجَابٍ أَوْ يُرْسِلَ رَسُولًا فَيُوحِيَ بِإِذْنِهِ مَا يَشَاءُ ۗ إِنَّهُ عَلِيمٌ حَكِيمٌ﴾

“It is not fitting for any human that Allah should speak to him except through revelation or from behind a curtain, or by sending a messenger who reveals by His permission whatever He wishes. Indeed, He is All-Exalted, All-Wise.”

[Surah Asy-Syuraa: 51].

﴿قَالَ الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ مِثْلَ قَوْلِهِمْ تَشَابَهَتْ قُلُوبُهُمْ﴾ *“Thus spoke those before them like their words. Their hearts resemble each other.”*: they say the same thing that was said to all prophets before. Allah ﷻ did not say their words were similar, He said their hearts were similar. This is because the heart is the origin of a person’s character and behaviour and it is where belief lies and that the Prophet ﷺ said:

﴿أَلَا وَإِنَّ فِي الْجَسَدِ مُضْعَةً إِذَا صَلَحَتْ صَلَحَ الْجَسَدُ كُلُّهُ، وَإِذَا فَسَدَتْ فَسَدَ الْجَسَدُ كُلُّهُ أَلَا وَهِيَ الْقَلْبُ﴾

“For surely, there is in the body a lump of flesh, if it is sound, the whole body is sound if it is corrupt, the whole body is corrupt. For surely, it is the heart.”⁹⁰

So, the heart is the anchor of belief and belief is weighed in the mind that thinks about it. The mind is then convinced, then it settles in the heart and ties itself to it; turning into the belief system of that individual. It is tied to him, so it is called his *Aqidah* (something that is knotted firmly in a person).

Verse 119:

﴿إِنَّا أَرْسَلْنَاكَ بِالْحَقِّ بَشِيرًا وَنَذِيرًا وَلَا تُسْأَلُ عَنْ أَصْحَابِ الْجَحِيمِ﴾

“Indeed, We have sent you, [Oh Muhammad], with the truth, as a bringer of good tidings and a warner, and you will not be asked about the companions of Hellfire.”

The letter ‘*Inna* is to show Magnificence. Whenever Allah ﷻ speaks about any affair that indicates His actions, He will say:

﴿إِنَّا نَحْنُ نَزَّلْنَا الذِّكْرَ وَإِنَّا لَهُ لَحَافِظُونَ﴾

“Indeed We have sent down the Reminder, and indeed We will preserve it.”
[Surah Al-Hijr: 9].

This ‘*Inna of Magnificence* combines all Attributes that Allah ﷻ has made subservient to His Actions by His Power, His Knowledge, His Wisdom and His Greatness:

﴿وَإِنَّا عَلَىٰ ذَهَابٍ بِهِ لِقَادِرُونَ﴾

“and We are indeed able to take it away.” [Surah Al-Mukminun: 18].

⁹⁰ Sahih al-Bukhari: The Book of Belief, Chapter: The superiority of that person who leaves all doubtful (unclear) things for the sake of his religion, Hadith no. 52

However, whenever Allah ﷻ speaks about worship, He will use the singular form as worship is only to Him alone:

﴿إِنِّي﴾ *“Indeed I”* and He says,

﴿إِنِّي أَنَا اللَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا أَنَا فَاعْبُدْنِي وَأَقِمِ الصَّلَاةَ لِذِكْرِي﴾

“Indeed I am Allah —there is no god except Me. So, worship Me, and establish the prayer for My remembrance.” [Surah Taha: 14].

Whenever He speaks about His actions, He will use the *Inna* that consists of every trait and that is the *Inna of Majesty and Grandeur*.

﴿إِنَّا نَحْنُ﴾ *“Indeed We”* [Surah Al-Hijr: 9].

And here, in this verse, He says, ﴿إِنَّا أَرْسَلْنَاكَ﴾ *“Indeed WE have sent you”* Oh Muhammad, so what is your role and concern?

He did not say to force, or to call people disbelievers or to fight. Truly, we take Islam from the Holy Qur’an and from the actions of Rasulullah ﷺ and his Companions, as well as his Family.

﴿أَرْسَلْنَاكَ بِالْحَقِّ﴾ *“We have sent you, [Oh Muhammad], with the truth”*

Truth is a fixed matter that does not change with time. So, if I say that this cup is made of glass, if you ask me about it a year later, I would say the same words.

We sent you with truth as you were sent by the Ultimate Truth to the creation. And your work and concern are to bring glad tidings to the people and to warn them. ‘Giving glad tidings’ is to inform of something happy that is to come while ‘giving warning’ is to inform of something that is not happy that is to come. Hence, his mission is not to force, rather it is to bring glad tidings to the believers about paradise and to warn the disbelievers about the fire as recompense to their actions. His role is to inform them, to give good news and to warn them:

﴿فَذَكِّرْ إِنَّمَا أَنْتَ مُذَكِّرٌ (٢١) لَسْتَ عَلَيْهِمْ بِمُصَيِّرٍ (٢٢)﴾

“So admonish—for you are only an admonisher, (21) and not a manager over their affairs (22)” [Surah Al-Ghashiyah: 21-22].

People will choose whatever they want, and these words were directed to the leader of all creation and the followers of the leader of all creation.

Verse 120:

﴿وَلَنْ تَرْضَىٰ عَنْكَ الْيَهُودُ وَلَا النَّصَارَىٰ حَتَّىٰ تَتَّبِعَ مَلَّتَهُمْ فَلِإِنَّ هُدَىٰ اللَّهِ هُوَ الْهُدَىٰ وَلَئِنِ اتَّبَعْتَ أَهْوَاءَهُمْ بَعْدَ الَّذِي جَاءَكَ مِنَ الْعِلْمِ مَا لَكَ مِنَ اللَّهِ مِنْ وَلِيٍّ وَلَا نَصِيرٍ﴾

“And never will the Jews nor the Christians approve of you until you follow their religion. Say, ‘Indeed, the guidance of Allah is the [only] guidance.’ If you were to follow their desires after what has come to you of knowledge, you would have, against Allah, no protector or helper.”

When the Holy Qur’an was revealed, some people were followers of Judaism and some Christianity. Hence, the Islamic sacred law has established guidelines regarding interaction with the Jews and the Christians. So, do not ever, any one of you, add on to what is in Islam and what is in this religion. The Jews are the People of the Book, which is the Torah that the Prophet Musa عليه السلام came with, while the Christians are also the People of the Book which is the Gospel that Prophet Isa عليه السلام came with and that Allah عز وجل says:

﴿لَتَجِدَنَّ أَشَدَّ النَّاسِ عَدَاوَةً لِلَّذِينَ آمَنُوا الْيَهُودَ وَالَّذِينَ أَشْرَكُوا﴾

“Surely You will find the most hostile of all people towards the believers to be the Jews and the polytheists” [Surah Al-Ma’idah: 82] and

﴿وَلَتَجِدَنَّ أَقْرَبَهُمْ مَوَدَّةً لِلَّذِينَ آمَنُوا الَّذِينَ قَالُوا إِنَّا نَصَارَىٰ﴾

“and surely you will find the nearest of them in affection to the believers to be those who say ‘We are Christians.’” [Surah Al-Ma’idah: 82].

Therefore, the bond with the true Christians is a good bond as its nature is love and mercy. And animosity is towards the Jews and this affair is settled. It is on every human being to choose the religion that he is most convinced with. And the excellent relationship between the Christians and the Prophets ﷺ is through the Negus and the Christians of Najran. As for the Jews, for surely, they plotted, destroyed, killed and breached their covenants and prepared a plan against Islam and the believers. Allah ﷻ says to His Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, “Say!” and He did not say, “kill!”. “Say Oh Muhammad, for surely the only guidance is the guidance of Allah.”

Verse 121:

﴿الَّذِينَ آتَيْنَاهُمُ الْكِتَابَ يَتْلُونَهُ حَقَّ تِلَاوَتِهِ أُولَئِكَ يُؤْمِنُونَ بِهِ وَمَنْ يَكْفُرْ بِهِ فَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْخَاسِرُونَ﴾

“Those to whom We have given the Book recite it with its true recital. They [are the ones who] believe in it. And whoever disbelieves in it - it is they who are the losers.”

﴿الْكِتَابَ﴾ *“the Book”*: meaning the Torah

﴿يَتْلُونَهُ حَقَّ تِلَاوَتِهِ﴾ *“recite it with its true recital”*: meaning to follow it as it should be followed and to obey its commandments and to give its recitation the full measure.

﴿أُولَئِكَ يُؤْمِنُونَ بِهِ﴾ *“They [are the ones who] believe in it”*

They believe in what has been narrated in the Torah about Rasulullah ﷺ.

﴿وَمَنْ يَكْفُرْ بِهِ فَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْخَاسِرُونَ﴾

“And whoever disbelieves in it - it is they who are the losers”

they are the ones who deny and hide what is said in the Torah and they are the real losers.

Verse 122:

﴿يَا بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ اذْكُرُوا نِعْمَتِيَ الَّتِي أَنْعَمْتُ عَلَيْكُمْ وَأَنِّي فَضَّلْتُكُمْ عَلَى الْعَالَمِينَ﴾

“Oh Children of Israel, remember My favour which I have bestowed upon you and that I preferred you over the worlds.”

The ones being addressed are those who are related or are descendants of Prophet Yaqub عليه السلام. Allah ﷻ has favoured them by mentioning the traits of Muhammad ﷺ in the Torah. The proof for this is the verse prior to this in that the character traits of the Prophet ﷺ were not mentioned in any of the divine revealed books the way they have been mentioned in the Torah.

Verse 123:

﴿وَاتَّقُوا يَوْمًا لَا تَجْزِي نَفْسٌ عَنْ نَفْسٍ شَيْئًا وَلَا يُقْبَلُ مِنْهَا عَدْلٌ وَلَا تَنْفَعُهَا شَفَاعَةٌ وَلَا هُمْ يُنصَرُونَ﴾

“And fear a Day when no soul will suffice for another soul at all, and no compensation will be accepted from it, nor will any intercession benefit it, nor will they be aided.”

﴿وَاتَّقُوا يَوْمًا﴾ *“and fear a Day”*: Place between you and that day a barrier (of protection)

These people will not be helped on that Day as they used to deny and lie against Prophet Muhammad ﷺ.

Verse 124:

﴿وَإِذْ ابْتَلَىٰ إِبْرَاهِيمَ رَبُّهُ بِكَلِمَاتٍ فَأَتَمَّهُنَّ قَالَ إِنِّي جَاعِلُكَ لِلنَّاسِ إِمَامًا قَالَ وَمِنْ ذُرِّيَّتِي قَالَ لَا يَنَالُ عَهْدِي الظَّالِمِينَ﴾

“And [mention, Oh Muhammad], when Ibrahim was tried by his Lord with commands and he fulfilled them. [Allah] said, ‘Indeed, I will make

***you a leader for the people.’ [Ibrahim] said, ‘And of my descendants?’
[Allah] said, ‘My covenant does not include the wrongdoers.’”***

When the Jews were in doubt about the issue of the *Qiblah*, the Noble Qur’an returned to the story of Prophet Ibrahim عليه السلام and how Allah ﷻ tested him. Tests can be through negative things or through good and blessed things. Allah says:

﴿وَنَبْلُوكُم بِالشَّرِّ وَالْخَيْرِ فِتْنَةً﴾

“and We will test you with good and bad by way of test,” [Surah Al-Anbiya’: 35].

To be elected by Allah ﷻ happens after a test, hence, you might be tested by Allah ﷻ to purify you and choose you and raise your position.

﴿وَإِذْ ابْتَلَى﴾ “*was tried by his Lord*” that is to put him through a test.

His testing is to purify and elect him. Hence, the election occurs through the test and after the trial.

﴿وَابْرَاهِيمَ الَّذِي وَفَّى﴾

“and of Ibrahim, who fulfilled [the commandments]” [Surah An-Najm: 37].

﴿بِكَلِمَاتٍ﴾ “*with commands*”: Words would cover commandments. Prophet Ibrahim عليه السلام fulfilled the commandments, hence Allah ﷻ made him a leader and a guide for mankind who will come after him. And leadership will not come until after a trial. The most important affliction cum test that Prophet Ibrahim عليه السلام went through was when he was to be burnt in the fire. And another test was when Allah ﷻ commanded him to slaughter Ismail عليه السلام. Hence, when Ibrahim عليه السلام fulfilled the order and submitted to the command of Allah ﷻ, He made him a leader for man in religion and in establishment of the laws. However, Ibrahim عليه السلام also wanted goodness for his children and his descendants, and his concern here is the concern of every father.

﴿قَالَ وَمِنْ ذُرِّيَّتِي قَالَ لَا يَنَالُ عَهْدِي الظَّالِمِينَ﴾ *“He said, and from my descendants? He said, My promise will not reach wrongdoers”*: Hence, Allah ﷻ made the wrongdoers from the children of Ishaq ؑ an exception.

Verse 125:

﴿وَإِذْ جَعَلْنَا الْبَيْتَ مَثَابَةً لِّلنَّاسِ وَأَمْنًا وَاتَّخِذُوا مِن مَّقَامِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ مُصَلًّى وَعَهِدْنَا إِلَىٰ إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَإِسْمَاعِيلَ أَن طَهِّرَا بَيْتِيَ لِلطَّائِفِينَ وَالْعَاكِفِينَ وَالرُّكَّعِ السُّجُودِ﴾

“And [mention] when We made the House a place of return for the people and [a place of] security. And take, [Oh believers], from the standing place of Ibrahim as a place of prayer. And We commanded Ibrahim and Ismail, [saying], ‘Purify My House for those who perform Tawaf and those who are staying [there] for worship and those who bow and prostrate [in prayer].’”

﴿الْبَيْتِ﴾ *“the House”*: A dwelling place, that is, for rest and tranquility.

﴿مَثَابَةً﴾ *“a place of return”*: a place for people return to, everyone who has visited the House wishes to go back to it. Another meaning is that whosoever enters the House, prepares himself to return and repent to Allah ﷻ.

﴿وَأَمْنًا﴾ *“and [a place of] security”*: This is an affair that is made compulsory on people and not a fact of the place itself as Allah (ﷻ) has commanded us to ensure safety to whoever enters the House, and it is not permissible to fight them nor transgress against them.

﴿وَاتَّخِذُوا مِن مَّقَامِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ مُصَلًّى﴾ *“And take, [Oh believers], from the standing place of Ibrahim a place of prayer”*: When Prophet Ibrahim ؑ was commanded to raise the foundations, he placed a rock for him to stand on and his son Ismail ؑ would pass the rocks to him to build the Ka'bah. The station of Ibrahim used to be a place where nobody would pray, hence it remained as a gap and an obstruction during the circumambulation (*tawaf*) of the Ka'bah. So, Umar bin Al

Khattab رضي الله عنه asked the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم to make the station of Ibrahim عليه السلام a place of prayer, then the verse was revealed.

This is proof that the one who built the House initially was not Ibrahim as the place for the House was already existing. As Allah عز وجل said on the tongue of Ibrahim عليه السلام:

﴿رَبَّنَا إِنِّي أَسْكَنْتُ مِنْ ذُرِّيَّتِي بِوَادٍ غَيْرِ ذِي زَرْعٍ عِنْدَ بَيْتِكَ الْمُحَرَّمِ﴾

“Our Lord! I have settled part of my descendants in a barren valley, by Your sacred House” [Surah Ibrahim: 37],

Hence the Sacred House already existed and that Ibrahim was not the first to build it.

The *tho'ifuun* are those who do *tawaf* (circumambulation); those who go around the House. ‘*Akifun*’ are those who stay in the House to worship, and those who bow and those who prostrate.

Verse 126:

﴿وَإِذْ قَالَ إِبْرَاهِيمُ رَبِّ اجْعَلْ هَذَا بَلَدًا آمِنًا وَارْزُقْ أَهْلَهُ مِنَ الثَّمَرَاتِ مَنْ آمَنَ مِنْهُمْ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ قَالَ وَمَنْ كَفَرَ فَأَمَتَّعُهُ قَلِيلًا ثُمَّ أَضْطَرُّهُ إِلَىٰ عَذَابِ النَّارِ وَبِئْسَ الْمَصِيرُ﴾

“And [mention] when Ibrahim said, ‘My Lord, make this a secure city and provide its people with fruits - whoever of them believes in Allah and the Last Day.’ [Allah] said, ‘And whoever disbelieves - I will grant him enjoyment for a little while; then I will force him to the punishment of the Fire, and what a wretched destination.’”

Since the place where the House was located was empty, Ibrahim عليه السلام asked Allah عز وجل to make it a secure and safe town. So, Allah عز وجل made it a secure and safe town. Ibrahim عليه السلام also requested from his Lord to provide fruits for its inhabitants who believe. That is why Ibrahim said:

﴿مَنْ آمَنَ مِنْهُمْ﴾ “*whoever of them believes*”. This is in response to what his Lord said to him in the previous verse:

﴿لَا يَتَّالِ عَهْدِي الظَّالِمِينَ﴾

“*My promise does not reach the wrongdoer*” [Surah Al-Baqarah: 124].

Verse 127:

﴿وَإِذْ يَرْفَعُ إِبْرَاهِيمُ الْقَوَاعِدَ مِنَ الْبَيْتِ وَإِسْمَاعِيلُ رَبَّنَا تَقَبَّلْ مِنَّا إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ﴾

“*And [mention] when Ibrahim is raising the foundations of the House and [with him, his son] Ismail, [saying], ‘Our Lord, accept [this] from us. Indeed, You are the Hearing, the Knowing.’*”

The verse ﴿وَإِذْ يَرْفَعُ﴾ “*and when he is raising*” is revealing in the present tense, as if indicating that the foundations of the House continues to be raised till today, even when the physical foundations were already raised and completed thousands of years ago. It is as if Allah ﷻ is placing the Muslims in front of this momentous occasion and raises the veil of time, as if the raising of the foundations of the House is happening right now.

Verse 128:

﴿رَبَّنَا وَاجْعَلْنَا مُسْلِمِينَ لَكَ وَمِنْ ذُرِّيَّتِنَا أُمَّةً مُسْلِمَةً لَكَ وَأَرِنَا مَنَاسِكَنَا وَتُبْ عَلَيْنَا إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ التَّوَّابُ الرَّحِيمُ﴾

“*Our Lord, and make us Muslims [in submission] to You and from our descendants a Muslim nation [in submission] to You. And show us our rites and accept our repentance. Indeed, You are the One who accepts repentance, the Most Merciful.*”

The “*manasik*” is the way or method of worship. Worship is a gift; it is not to cause difficulty on people nor for them to resist or dislike.

Verse 129:

﴿رَبَّنَا وَابْعَثْ فِيهِمْ رَسُولًا مِنْهُمْ يَتْلُو عَلَيْهِمْ آيَاتِكَ وَيُعَلِّمُهُمُ الْكِتَابَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ وَيُزَكِّيهِمْ إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ
الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ﴾

“Our Lord, and send among them a messenger from themselves who will recite to them Your verses and teach them the Book and the Wisdom and purify them. Indeed, You are the Exalted in Might, the Wise.”

﴿يَتْلُو عَلَيْهِمْ آيَاتِكَ﴾ *“who will recite to them Your verses”* that is the Qur’an.

﴿وَالْحِكْمَةَ﴾ *“and the Wisdom”*, is the sunnah of the Prophet ﷺ. And to arrive at wisdom can also be through studying.

﴿وَيُزَكِّيهِمْ﴾ *“and purify them”* means to cleanse them, to guide them on the path of goodness.

﴿إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ﴾ *“Indeed, You are the Exalted in Mighty, the Wise”*: Al-Aziz is He whom nothing can overtake or overpower because of His Might, and none can ask Him regarding what He does. In fact, they will be asked regarding what they do..

Verse 130:

﴿وَمَنْ يَرْغَبْ عَنْ مِلَّةِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ إِلَّا مَنْ سَفِهَ نَفْسَهُ وَلَقَدْ اصْطَفَيْنَاهُ فِي الدُّنْيَا وَإِنَّهُ فِي الْآخِرَةِ لَمِنَ الصَّالِحِينَ﴾

“And who would be averse to the religion of Ibrahim except one who makes a fool of himself. And We chose him in this world, and indeed, in the Hereafter, he will be among the righteous.”

﴿وَمَنْ يَرْغَبْ عَنْ مِلَّةِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ﴾ *“And who would be averse to the religion of Ibrahim”* means whoever deviates from it and is biased towards it.

﴿عَنْ مِلَّةِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ﴾ *“to the religion of Ibrahim”*. *Millah* is what a human being is inclined to.

﴿اصْطَفَيْنَاهُ﴾ *“We chose him”*: We tested him and he fulfilled .

Verse 131:

﴿إِذْ قَالَ لَهُ رَبُّهُ أَسْلِمْتُ لِرَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ﴾

“When his Lord said to him, ‘Submit’, he said ‘I have submitted [in Islam] to the Lord of the worlds.’”

It is enough for him to say “I submit” because submission is only for Allah ﷻ. However, Prophet Ibrahim ﷺ said, ﴿أَسْلَمْتُ لِرَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ﴾ *“I have submitted [in Islam] to the Lord of the worlds.”* and this is the difference between the words of Allah ﷻ and the words of His slaves.

Islam has an all-encompassing meaning consisting of humbling oneself to the commands of Allah, and to entrust your affairs to Allah ﷻ. We say that humbling oneself to the commands of Allah ﷻ is entrusting one’s affairs to Allah ﷻ. And by this meaning, all the revealed religions are actually Islam.

Verse 132:

﴿وَوَصَّىٰ بِهَا إِبْرَاهِيمُ بَنِيهِ وَيَعْقُوبُ يَا بَنِيَّ إِنَّ اللَّهَ اصْطَفَىٰ لَكُمْ الدِّينَ فَلَا تَمُوتُنَّ إِلَّا وَأَنتُمْ مُسْلِمُونَ﴾

“And Ibrahim instructed his sons [to do the same] and [so did] Yaqub, [saying], ‘Oh my sons, indeed Allah has chosen for you this religion, so do not die except while you are Muslims.’”

﴿وَوَصَّىٰ بِهَا﴾ *“And he instructed”* with the word of Islam; humbling oneself to the commands of Allah ﷻ and to hold fast to them, as well as to worshipping Allah. *“Wasiah”* is the final word a person says in this world before his death.

So, he is sincere in saying it to the ones he loves, such as a father giving his sons parting advice when he is about to pass away. This parting advice (*wasiah*) contains the summary and experiences of life. And at the approach of death, there would not be any form of lying or cheating, rather the parting advice of a person to his children would have sincere counsel and benefit for them or to others he leaves behind.

﴿بَنِيهِ﴾ “his sons”. The children of Ibrahim ؑ are Ismail ؑ and Ishaq ؑ. Ismail is older than Ishaq by 14 years. And from Ishaq ؑ comes the progeny of the children of Israel: Yaqub ؑ is the son of Ishaq ؑ and his children are called the *Asbaat* i.e. the tribes, and of them is Yusuf ؑ. And of their descendants, are the prophets of the children of Israel: Musa, Harun, Zakariyya, Yahya, Dawuud, Sulaiman and Eesa ؑ. As for Ismail ؑ, from his progeny came our Master Muhammad ﷺ and there were no other prophets or messengers from the progeny of Ismail ؑ except Muhammad ﷺ.

And indeed, Prophet Ibrahim ؑ advised them to hold onto Islam, that is, he advised Ismail ؑ and Ishaq ؑ to worship Allah ﷻ and to obey Him by submitting and obeying His commandments and to humble themselves to Him. When the term ‘Islam’ is used to mean sacred law, what is meant by that is the religion of Islam and its sacred laws, as what is said in the Holy Qur’an and Sunnah (Prophetic narrations) of our Prophet ﷺ. However, the literal meaning of Islam is to obey and to humble oneself to Allah ﷻ.

So Yaqub ؑ continued on the path of his grandfather, Ibrahim ؑ, and he too advised his children. Here the Holy Qur’an quotes the words from the tongue of Yaqub ؑ, who is also known as Israel. The word Israel is from *isra* – eal i.e. the chosen slave of Allah ﷻ. The Holy Qur’an quotes the advice of Yaqub ؑ directly from him because Muslims and others will seek desperate help and freedom later on against the grandchildren of Yaqub ؑ, the tribe of the children of Israel. The advice stated here is for the children of Yaqub ؑ,

who are the tribes (asbaat literally means the grandchildren) and among them, Yusuf عليه السلام.

﴿يَا بَنِيَّ إِنَّ اللَّهَ اصْطَفَىٰ لَكُمُ الدِّينَ﴾ “*Oh my sons, indeed Allah has chosen for you this religion*”.

This means, Allah ﷻ has chosen for you the Religion, the Divine Establishment, the Divine Way and in general, every divinely revealed religion.

﴿فَلَا تَمُوتُنَّ إِلَّا وَأَنتُمْ مُسْلِمُونَ﴾ “*so do not die except while you are Muslims*”: It is not in the hands of man to choose when he will die so that he will die as a Muslim. For surely death and life is not in the hands of any slave and it is not for anybody to know his time of death. However, this instruction is basically saying that a person would remain, every single day of his life, humbling himself to the commands of Allah ﷻ, holding on to His commands such that if death springs upon him at any time, he will die on the way and belief of Islam, in the religion of Islam and upon the worship of Allah ﷻ.

Verse 133:

﴿أَمْ كُنْتُمْ شُهَدَاءَ إِذْ حَضَرَ يَعْقُوبَ الْمَوْتُ إِذْ قَالَ لِبَنِيهِ مَا تَعْبُدُونَ مِن بَعْدِي قَالُوا نَعْبُدُ إِلَهَكَ وَإِلَهَ آبَائِكَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَإِسْمَاعِيلَ وَإِسْحَاقَ إِلَهًا وَاحِدًا وَنَحْنُ لَهُ مُسْلِمُونَ﴾

“Or were you witnesses when death approached Yaqub, when he said to his sons, ‘What will you worship after me?’ They said, ‘We will worship your God and the God of your fathers, Ibrahim and Ismail and Ishaq - one God. And we are Muslims [in submission] to Him.’”

Here the verse is addressed to the Jews in Madinah: Were you all present at that time? They were reminded of this incident with Yaqub عليه السلام while he was on his death bed with his sons (the grandchildren of Ibrahim) around him. “And to Yaqub عليه السلام came death” is in the passive voice. Death here is the subject that is placed after the object in the sentence, while the object is Yaqub. It is as if

death is something that is disconnected from us. Then it comes to us, as if we have no connection to it. It comes all of a sudden and surprises us, without any choice given to us. It comes in any place and time. Nobody is able to flee from death nor can anyone request for it to be delayed for whatever reason that they may have. Allah ﷻ says:

﴿أَيْنَمَا تَكُونُوا يُدْرِكْكُمُ الْمَوْتُ﴾

“Wherever you may be, death will find you” [Surah An-Nisaa’: 78].

The children of Yaqub ﷺ settled in Egypt with their father after they all went to Yusuf ﷺ and all fell in prostration to him. Hence now, all of them were gathered around their father Yaqub ﷺ and with them was Yusuf ﷺ. So Yaqub said to them, “What will you all worship after me (i.e. my death)?” They said, “We worship your Lord, and the Lord of your fathers, Ibrahim, Ismail, and Ishaq, the One God and we are submissive to Him.” Ibrahim ﷺ is the grandfather of Yaqub ﷺ and Ishaq ﷺ is his father, so why is the name Ismail included here? The reason is because the position of the father is also held by the paternal uncle. Hence, the grandfather can be called the father, and the father naturally is the father. Similarly, the paternal uncle is also said to be the father, and Ismail ﷺ is the paternal uncle of Yaqub ﷺ.

Ismail ﷺ and Ibrahim ﷺ are among the grandfathers of the Prophet ﷺ and Azar is the paternal uncle of Ibrahim ﷺ.

Yet Allah ﷻ says:

﴿وَإِذْ قَالَ إِبْرَاهِيمُ لِأَبِيهِ آزَرَ﴾

“And when Ibrahim said to his father, Aazar” [Surah Al-An’aam: 74].

It is known that no one from the father and grandfathers of the Prophet ﷺ worshipped idols nor were any of them polytheists. Since Ismail and Ibrahim ﷺ are of the ancestors of the Prophet ﷺ how is it possible that Aazar was of his ancestors when he used to worship idols?!

Hence, the paternal uncle is like the father. Furthermore, the sacred law holds fast to the fact that the paternal uncle is like the father in that the uncle can inherit from the children of his brother in some instances because spending on his brother's children becomes compulsory on him if there is nobody to support them. Loss comes with profit and vice versa. We do not hold on to what is permissible and leave what is compulsory, nor do we seek rights and neglect responsibilities. So, whoever seeks inheritance, he must also support those who are compulsory for him to support.

Just as it is permissible for a man to marry more than one woman, it is obligatory for him to be fair to all of them, and if he is not able to, then he should only have one.

Verse 134:

﴿تِلْكَ أُمَّةٌ قَدْ خَلَتْ لَهَا مَا كَسَبَتْ وَلَكُمْ مَا كَسَبْتُمْ وَلَا تُسْأَلُونَ عَمَّا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ﴾

“That was a nation which has passed on. It will have [the consequence of] what it earned, and you will have what you have earned. And you will not be asked about what they used to do.”

Hence there is no need for arguments and disputations on rulings that have been passed and the affair has ended.

﴿خَلَّتْ﴾ *“passed on”*: the time for it has ended, and its affair is for Allah.

We will not be questioned on things that have happened, nor is it becoming of us to differ over matters that have happened thousands of years ago. These upcoming verses are in rebuttal of the Jews of Madinah who lived in the time of Rasulullah ﷺ.

These are nations whose time have passed and you are not responsible over what they used to do:

﴿وَلَا تَزِرُ وَازِرَةٌ وِزْرَ أُخْرَى﴾

“and you will not be burdened by the burdens of others”

[Surah Al-An'aam: 164], and

﴿كُلُّ نَفْسٍ بِمَا كَسَبَتْ رَهِيْنَةٌ﴾

“every soul will be held responsible for what it has earned” [Surah Al-Muddaththir: 38].

It is not appropriate for us to spend our lives speaking about what had passed while we are seated on the platform of the past. The future is not built upon the illness of the past. We simply just have to take from our generation, and the way of our Prophet ﷺ, that is, whatever Allah ﷻ and His Prophet have commanded us to do and we leave what Allah ﷻ and His Prophet ﷺ have forbidden us from.

Verse 135:

﴿وَقَالُوا كُونُوا هُوداً أَوْ نَصَارَى تَهْتَدُوا قُلْ بَلْ مِلَّةَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ حَنِيفاً وَمَا كَانَ مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ﴾

“They say, ‘Be Jews or Christians [so] you will be guided.’ Say, ‘Rather, [we follow] the religion of Ibrahim, inclining towards truth, and he was not of the polytheists.’”

The ones who are saying this are the Jews of that time, that is, the time of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ and that the Holy Qur'an was sent to him. It is compulsory for us to differentiate the way we interact with the Jews and the way we interact with the Christians. It is not appropriate for any one of us to use the Noble Qur'an to argue in his animosity with the people of the Book, as the Holy Qur'an emphasizes our connection and interaction with them. The Jews are the worst of people in animosity against the believers while the Christians are the closest by way of love with the believers, and this is in

accordance to the verses in the Noble Qur'an. However, the people of revolution and deviation (Da'ish and Annasrah and the likes of them) have misconstrued the interpretation of the words of Allah ﷻ and have interpreted it to suit their own agendas and whims in order to harm the people of the Book. It is not permissible to interpret the verses of the Book of Allah ﷻ in a way that has never been known in the context of these verses. This is only known by those who are knowledgeable in the Book of Allah ﷻ. This verse has called to the way and religion of Ibrahim ﷺ, which encompasses all of the other revealed religions.

﴿ حَنِيفًا ﴾ *“inclining towards truth”* means moving away from polytheism towards worshipping Allah ﷻ alone.

Verse 136:

﴿قُولُوا آمَنَّا بِاللَّهِ وَمَا أُنزِلَ إِلَيْنَا وَمَا أُنزِلَ إِلَىٰ إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَإِسْمَاعِيلَ وَإِسْحَاقَ وَيَعْقُوبَ وَالْأَسْبَاطِ وَمَا أُوتِيَ مُوسَىٰ وَعِيسَىٰ وَمَا أُوتِيَ النَّبِيُّونَ مِنْ رَبِّهِمْ لَا نُفَرِّقُ بَيْنَ أَحَدٍ مِنْهُمْ وَنَحْنُ لَهُ مُسْلِمُونَ﴾

“Say, [Oh believers], ‘We have believed in Allah and what has been revealed to us and what has been revealed to Ibrahim and Ismail and Ishaq and Yaqub and the tribes and what was given to Musa and Isa and what was given to the prophets from their Lord. We make no distinction between any of them, and we are Muslims [in submission] to Him.’”

Say to those who argue with you from amongst the Jews and others, “We believe in Allah and whatever has been revealed to us – meaning the Qur’an – and whatever has been given to Musa ﷺ and Isa ﷺ, that is, the Torah and the Gospel. And, we believe in every prophet, and we make no distinction between the prophets with respect to our beliefs, rather we humble ourselves to Allah ﷻ and we fulfil His commands.

Verse 137:

﴿فَإِنْ آمَنُوا بِمِثْلِ مَا آمَنْتُمْ بِهِ فَقَدْ اهْتَدَوْا وَإِنْ تَوَلَّوْا فَإِنَّمَا هُمْ فِي شِقَاقٍ فَسَيَكْفِيكَهُمُ اللَّهُ وَهُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ﴾

“So, if they believe as you believe, then they have been [rightly] guided; but if they turn away, they are only in dissension, and Allah will be sufficient for you against them. And He is the Hearing, the Knowing.”

This means, if they were to believe in what you all believe in, they will be guided to the Truth. However, if they reject and turn away, then they are in great disagreement with you and in great opposition. So, do not be concerned, Oh Muhammad, over what comes to you from them. For surely, they will conspire against you, try to poison you, rally the disbelievers against you, break their covenants with you and eventually they will try to kill you. However, Allah will protect you from them, and Allah is enough for you.

﴿أَلَيْسَ اللَّهُ بِكَافٍ عَبْدَهُ﴾

“Isn’t Allah enough for His servant?” [Surah Az-Zumar: 36]

and He is all Hearing of whatever they say, all Knowing of whatever they do.

Verse 138:

﴿صِبْغَةَ اللَّهِ وَمَنْ أَحْسَنُ مِنَ اللَّهِ صِبْغَةً وَنَحْنُ لَهُ عَابِدُونَ﴾

“[And say, ‘Ours is] the religion of Allah. And who is better than Allah in [ordaining] religion? And we are worshippers of Him.”

‘Sibghah’ is a dye, meaning to mix colours up. Dyes are different as compared to oils in that oils are externally applied while dyes are absorbed by the pores. The ‘sibghah’ of Allah ﷻ here is the natural state of human beings, that people are born with. Every child is born upon the natural disposition as what has been told to us by the Most Truthful and Trusted ﷺ. However, what

happens around him will influence him. The ‘sibghah’ of Allah ﷻ is the true direction a person should take.

﴿وَنَحْنُ لَهُ عَابِدُونَ﴾ “And we are worshippers of Him”

constantly in servitude and worship of Allah ﷻ and in obedience to His Commandments.

Verse 139:

﴿قُلْ أَتَحَاجُّونَنَا فِي اللَّهِ وَهُوَ رَبُّنَا وَرَبُّكُمْ وَلَنَا أَعْمَالُنَا وَلَكُمْ أَعْمَالُكُمْ وَنَحْنُ لَهُ مُخْلِصُونَ﴾

“Say, [Oh Muhammad], ‘Do you argue with us about Allah while He is our Lord and your Lord? For us are our deeds, and for you are your deeds. And we are sincere [in deed and intention] to Him.’”

To debate is to discuss with proofs, and the Jews are people of contention. They are used to always debate with the Prophet ﷺ. So, say to them, Oh Muhammad, that Allah is the Lord of all the worlds, and not just the Lord of Muslims alone nor just the Lord of the Jews alone nor the Lord of just one religion from amongst the religions exclusively. And the proof for this is that we begin our prayers saying:

﴿الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ﴾

“All praises is (due) to Allah, Lord of the worlds” [Surah Al-Fatihah: 2].

The Muslims are not divisive and we will say what the Noble Qur’an says, *﴿وَهُوَ رَبُّنَا وَرَبُّكُمْ﴾ “He is our Lord and your Lord”.*

The distinguishing factor between people is their actions that are righteous and sincere for the sake of Allah ﷻ, deeds done with sincerity, as there are those who do goodness but would love that people get to know about it while they are doing it. This is called showing off (*riyaa*). Shaddaad bin Uways رضي الله عنه said, “I heard the Messenger of Allah ﷺ say:

“The thing I fear most for my nation is polytheism and subtle desires.”

I said, “Oh Messenger of Allah, will your nation fall into polytheism after you?”

He said,

“Yes! However, they will not do so by worshiping the sun nor the moon nor stones nor idols, but they will show off their deeds.”⁹¹

That is, they seek that people admire them in their deeds. And half of this faith is based on the words of the Prophet ﷺ.

((إِنَّمَا الْأَعْمَالُ بِالنِّيَّاتِ، وَإِنَّمَا لِكُلِّ امْرِئٍ مَا نَوَى))

“For surely actions are only by their intentions, and for surely, for every person only what he has intended.”⁹²

Hence, it is compulsory to pair all good deeds with a sincere intention, to do it for Allah ﷻ alone.

Verse 140:

﴿أَمْ تَقُولُونَ إِنَّ إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَإِسْمَاعِيلَ وَإِسْحَاقَ وَيَعْقُوبَ وَالْأَسْبَاطَ كَانُوا هُودًا أَوْ نَصَارَى قُلْ أَأَنْتُمْ أَعْلَمُ أَمْ اللَّهُ وَمَنْ أَظْلَمُ مِمَّنْ كَتَمَ شَهَادَةً عِنْدَهُ مِنَ اللَّهِ وَمَا اللَّهُ بِغَافِلٍ عَمَّا تَعْمَلُونَ﴾

“Or do you say that Ibrahim and Ismail and Ishaq and Yaqub and the Descendants were Jews or Christians? Say, ‘Are you more knowing or is Allah?’ And who is more unjust than one who conceals a testimony he has from Allah? And Allah is not unaware of what you do.”

The meaning here is that the Jews claim that the Prophets Ibrahim, Ismail, Ishaq and Yaqub ﷺ were all Jews or Christians, so say to them, Oh

⁹¹ Majma'uz-Zawaid wa Manba'ul-Fawaid: Volume 2, Hadith no. 5226

⁹² Sahih al-Bukhari: The Book of Revelation, Chapter: How the Divine Inspiration to Rasulullah (saw) started, Hadith no. 1

Muhammad, “Are you more knowledgeable or is Allah?” and there is no doubt at all that Allah ﷻ is more knowledgeable! These words are about the Jews, as the Torah had precise details on the description of the Prophet ﷺ and glad tidings of his message and his coming. However, the Jews concealed these and their witnessing of the truth and denied all of it when the seal of the Prophets ﷺ appeared being of a race other than theirs, that is, not a Jew and not from the line of Yaqub and Ishaq عليه السلام. Hence, they concealed what was in their book on the traits and characteristics of the Prophet ﷺ.

There is not a person who does more wrong than one who hides what Allah ﷻ has revealed in His books and Allah ﷻ, is not unaware of the truth of what they do.

Verse 141:

﴿تِلْكَ أُمَّةٌ قَدْ خَلَتْ لَهَا مَا كَسَبَتْ وَلكُمْ مَا كَسَبْتُمْ وَلَا تُسْأَلُونَ عَمَّا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ﴾

“That is a nation which has passed on. It will get [the consequence of] what it earned, and you will get what you have earned. And you will not be asked about what they used to do.”

There is no repetition in the Noble Qur’an but that it holds a secret, so, it is on us to search for the secrets in every repeated word in the Holy Qur’an, and to search the source and the reasons for the revelation of every word. This verse was mentioned exactly as it was previously, however, the meanings are different due to the context. Hence, it is on us to search in what preceded it and what came after it. The verse that preceded it was in the context of Ibrahim, Ishaq and Yaqub عليه السلام and Allah ﷻ said to them, “For surely your lineage will not intercede for you with Allah ﷻ and your fathers are not able to admit you into paradise if you yourselves do not do the work”. As for this verse, what came before it was the claim of the Jews that Ibrahim, Ismail and Ishaq were Jews or Christians so Allah ﷻ says to them, “You have no argument or proof on the day

of Judgement even if Ibrahim ؑ is a Jew, there is no argument or proof for you with respect to your lack of belief, because, for them is what they have earned and for you is what you have earned. Hence there is a great difference between these two verses that seem to be exactly the same and this is only known by analyzing the verses that come before and after it. The former of the two verses means there is no intercession for you, and the latter means there is no argument or proof for you.

And you will not be asked about their deeds, rather you yourselves will be asked about your own deeds.

By the bounty of Allah ﷻ, the explanation of the first juz is completed.



CLOSING DOA

Oh Allah, to You belong all praises; to You belong all Gratitude; to You will be returned all matters, the clear and the hidden. You are The Most Worthy of being praised; and You are the Most Worthy of being worshipped; and You are, indeed, Most Powerful over all things.

Oh Allah, grant us benefit and raise us with the Mighty Qur'an, the Book which You have raised its position, supported its authority and said, Oh The Most Honourable of those Who Speak,

﴿فَإِذَا قَرَأْتَهُ فَاتَّبِعْ قُرْآنَهُ (١٨) ثُمَّ إِنَّ عَلَيْنَا بَيَانَهُ (١٩)﴾

“So when We have recited it [through Jibril], then follow its recitation. Then upon Us is its clarification [to you].” [Surah Al-Qiyamah: 18-19].

This is the Book which is the best of Your Books in arrangement, the most fluent in Speech, the clearest in explaining the lawful and the unlawful. It is exact in its style, clear in its evidence and protected from any addition or decrease. Falsehood cannot approach it from before it or from behind it; it is a revelation from a God who is All-Wise and Praiseworthy.

Oh Allah, make us of the reciters of Your Book and of those who act for you. Make us of those who are sincere in their deeds; those who are persistently standing firm in justice; those who are far removed from the fire; those who are granted the luxuries of Paradise, and those who are granted the gaze at Your Magnificent Countenance.

Exalted is your Lord, the Lord of Might, above what they describe. And peace be upon the messengers. And praise be to Allah, Lord of the worlds.



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