

*S E L E C T E D*  
**K H U T A B**  
**IX**

**(SERMONS & SPEECHES)**

**19 JUNE 2015 – 18 DECEMBER, 2015**

\*

**BY**

**MUHAMMAD AMIN A. SAMAD**

**CANBERRA, DECEMBER, 2015**

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ

وَ بِهِ نَسْتَعِیْنُ

فِیْ اُمُوْرِ الدُّنْیَا وَ الدِّیْنِ

For the Collection of my Islamic Speeches  
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## TRANSLITERATION SYSTEM

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

### a. Consonants:

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

## b. Vowels:

	Short:	Long:
<i>Fathah</i>	--◌---: = a	◌ = ā
<i>Kasrah</i>	--◌---: = i	◌ = ī
<i>Dammah</i>	--◌---: = u	◌ = ū

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

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

d. *Alif maqṣūrah*: á, e.g., *qad.á* (قَضَى) and *shūr á* (شُورَى)

## بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

### PREFACE

This booklet is the ninth part of my collection of speeches and writings from 19 June 2015 – 18 December, 2015, entitled *Khutab IX*. They were delivered at the *muṣallā* (place of prayer, prayer room) at the Multi-Cultural Centre, Canberra Museum and Gallery building, Civic Square, Canberra.

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

It has been like an accident that before leaving a certain place I left a booklet behind. The booklet

*Khuṭab I* (the collection of speeches and sermons at the Canadian Islamic Centre, al-Rashid Mosque) before leaving Edmonton (Canada) for Australia; *Khuṭab II* (the collection of sermons at the Canberra Islamic Centre) at Monash, ACT, before leaving for overseas (the longest and happiest travel I have ever made); the *Khuṭab III* before leaving for Indonesia and Malaysia in September 2007; *Khuṭab IV*, was the collection of my sermon at the ANUMA delivered until the first quarter of the year 2011, and published later at the end of this year after recovering from the operation of removing the aortic aneurism of my stomach on 11 June; the *Khuṭab V* is the collection of my *khuṭbah* at the prayer room at the Multicultural of Canberra Museum and Gallery building, at Civic Square, Canberra, from the end of December, 2012 till the end of June, 2013 before leaving for Indonesia; the *Khuṭab VI* is the continuation of my collection of my *khuṭbah* at the same location at Civic Square, Canberra before leaving for Melbourne visiting friends. This visit is following the advice of Prophet Muhammad s.a.w. «زُرْ عِبَّاءَ، تَزِدَّ حُبَّاءَ» “Visit at intervals, so that you will increase love.” The *Khuṭab VII* is the

continuation of my collection of my *khuṭbahs* at the same location at Civic Square, Canberra before leaving for Sydney and Melbourne visiting friends. This *Khuṭab VIII* is the continuation of my collection of my *khuṭbahs* at the same location at Civic Square, Canberra before leaving for Sydney. By this time I was very lucky to reach the age of 79 AH/77 CE. Praise be to Allah the Almighty Who has given me such a long life. I have confidence in Him that He would give me more extra bonus life.

This *Khuṭab IX* is the continuation of my collection of my *khuṭbahs* at the same location at Civic Square, Canberra. I take this two weeks “holiday” in publishing this booklet as well as preparing for future *khuṭbahs (khuṭab)*, early next year, *in shā’ Allāh*.

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

Canberra, December, 2015

M.A.S.

## A. INTRODUCTION FOR THE KHUṬBAH

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

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

- الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ نَحْمَدُهُ وَنَسْتَعِينُهُ وَنَسْتَغْفِرُهُ وَنَسْتَهْدِيهِ وَنَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ مِنْ شُرُورِ أَنْفُسِنَا وَ مِنْ سَيِّئَاتِ أَعْمَالِنَا، مَنْ يَهْدِيهِ اللَّهُ فَلَا مُضِلَّ لَهُ وَمَنْ

يُضِلُّنَّ فَلَا هَادِيَ لَهُ ، وَ أَشْهَدُ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَحْدَهُ لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ، لَهُ الْمُلْكُ وَلَهُ الْحَمْدُ يُحْيِي وَيُمِيتُ وَهُوَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ . وَ أَشْهَدُ أَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا عَبْدُهُ وَ رَسُولُهُ، أَرْسَلَهُ اللَّهُ بِالْهُدَى وَدِينِ الْحَقِّ لِيُظْهِرَهُ عَلَى الدِّينِ كُلِّهِ وَلَوْ كَرِهَ الْكَافِرُونَ . وَأُصَلِّي وَأُسَلِّمُ عَلَى الْمَبْعُوثِ رَحْمَةً لِّلْعَالَمِينَ هَادِيًا وَمُبَشِّرًا وَ نَذِيرًا وَ دَاعِيًا إِلَى اللَّهِ بِإِذْنِهِ وَ سِرَاجًا مُنِيرًا وَ عَلَى آلِهِ وَ أَصْحَابِهِ الطَّيِّبِينَ الطَّاهِرِينَ وَمَنْ وَالَاهُمْ بِإِحْسَانٍ إِلَى يَوْمِ الدِّينِ .

- أَلْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الْعَلِيِّ الْأَعْلِيِّ، أَحْمَدُهُ سُبْحَانَهُ، وَ أَشْهَدُ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَحْدَهُ لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ، خَلَقَ فَسَوَّى وَ قَدَّرَ فَهَدَى، وَ أَشْهَدُ أَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا عَبْدُهُ وَ رَسُولُهُ نَبِيُّ الرَّحْمَةِ وَ الْهُدَى، أَللَّهُمَّ صَلِّ وَ سَلِّمْ وَ بَارِكْ عَلَى عَبْدِكَ وَرَسُولِكَ سَيِّدِنَا مُحَمَّدٍ وَعَلَى آلِهِ وَ صَحْبِهِ الْأَيْمَةِ الْأَبْرَارِ النُّجَبَاءِ، وَالتَّابِعِينَ وَ مَنْ تَبِعَهُمْ بِإِحْسَانٍ إِلَى يَوْمِ الْبَعْثِ وَ النَّشُورِ وَ الْجَزَاءِ .

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

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

After performing the first *khuṭbah* stand up again for the second *khuṭbah* citing its introduction briefly, such as the following:

- اَلْحَمْدُ لِلّٰهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِيْنَ. وَ اَشْهَدُ اَنْ لَا اِلٰهَ اِلَّا اللّٰهُ وَ اَشْهَدُ اَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا رَسُوْلُ اللّٰهِ. اَللّٰهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلٰى مُحَمَّدٍ وَعَلٰى اٰلِهِ وَ صَحْبِهِ اَجْمَعِيْنَ.

Some examples of *du'ā's* and its meanings in the second *khuṭbah*, are as follows:

- رَبَّنَا لَا تُؤَاخِذْنَا اِنْ نَسِيْنَا اَوْ اَخْطَاْنَا رَبَّنَا وَلَا تَحْمِلْ عَلَيْنَا اِصْرًا كَمَا حَمَلْتَهُ عَلٰى الَّذِيْنَ مِنْ قَبْلِنَا رَبَّنَا وَلَا تُحَمِّلْنَا مَا لَا طَاقَةَ لَنَا بِهِ وَاعْفُ عَنَّا وَاعْفِرْ لَنَا وَارْحَمْنَا اَنْتَ مَوْلَانَا فَانصُرْنَا عَلٰى الْقَوْمِ الْكَافِرِيْنَ  
*Our Lord! Do not punish us if we forget or make a mistake. Our Lord! Do not lay on us such a burden as You placed on those before us. Our Lord! Do not lay on us a burden that which we have not the*

*strength to bear! Forgive us, have mercy on us. You are our protector, help us against the unbelievers.*

- رَبَّنَا إِنَّا سَمِعْنَا مُنَادِيًا يُنَادِي لِلْإِيمَانِ أَنْ آمِنُوا بِرَبِّكُمْ فَآمَنَّا رَبَّنَا فَاغْفِرْ لَنَا ذُنُوبَنَا وَكَفِّرْ عَنَّا سَيِّئَاتِنَا وَتَوَقَّفْنَا مَعَ الْأَبْرَارِ. رَبَّنَا وَآتِنَا مَا وَعَدْتَنَا عَلَىٰ رُسُلِكَ وَلَا تُخْزِنَا يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ إِنَّكَ لَا تُخْلِفُ الْمِيعَادَ.

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

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

*O Allah! Forgive the Muslims, males and females, the believers, males and females, the living among them as well as the dead! Verily, You are, O our Lord, the*

*All-Hearing and Near, Who answer (our) prayers, and fulfil (our) needs, O the Lord of all creatures.*

- اَللّٰهُمَّ نَوِّرْ عَلٰى اَهْلِ الْقُبُوْر قُبُوْرَهُمْ؛ اَللّٰهُمَّ اغْفِرْ لِاَلْحَيٰءِ وَ يَسِّرْ لَهُمْ اُمُوْرَهُمْ.

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

- اَللّٰهُمَّ تُبِّ عَلٰى التّٰئِبِيْنَ وَ اغْفِرْ ذُنُوْبَ الْمُذْنِبِيْنَ وَ اشْفِ مَرْضٰى الْمُسْلِمِيْنَ وَ اَكْتُبِ الصّٰحَّةَ وَ الْعَافِيَةَ وَ التّوْفِيْقَ وَ الْهُدٰىيَةَ لَنَا وَ لِكَافَّةِ اُمَّةٍ مَّحَمَّدٍ اَجْمَعِيْنَ.

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

- رَبَّنَا اغْفِرْ لَنَا وَ لِوَالِدِيْنَا وَ اَرْحَمُهُمَا كَمَا رَبَّيْنَا صِبْغًا

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

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

*O Allah, set right for me my religion which is the safeguard of my affairs, set right for me my world wherein is my living, and my Hereafter to which is my return, make the life for me (a source) of abundance for every good, and my death a source of comfort for me protecting me against every evil.*

- اَللّٰهُمَّ اَرِنَا الْحَقَّ حَقًّا وَارْزُقْنَا اتِّبَاعَهُ وَارِنَا الْبَاطِلَ بَاطِلًا وَارْزُقْنَا اجْتِنَابَهُ

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

- رَبَّنَا هَبْ لَنَا مِنْ اَزْوَاجِنَا وَذُرِّيَّاتِنَا فُرَّةَ اَعْيُنٍ وَاجْعَلْنَا لِلْمُتَّقِيْنَ اِمَامًا

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

- اَللّٰهُمَّ وَحِّدْ صُفُوْفَ الْمُسْلِمِيْنَ وَوَحِّدْ كَلِمَتَهُمْ وَانصُرْهُمْ عَلٰى اَعْدَائِهِمْ

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

- اَللّٰهُمَّ اَمَلًا بُيُوْتِ الْمُسْلِمِيْنَ خَيْرًا وَبَرَكَهًّ وَعِلْمًا وَدِيْنًا وَ هِدَايَةً وَ تَقْوَى.

*O Allah, fill the houses of the Muslims  
with welfare, blessing, knowledge,  
religion, guidance, and piety.*

- رَبَّنَا اَتِنَا فِي الدُّنْيَا حَسَنَةً وَفِي الْاٰخِرَةِ حَسَنَةً وَقِنَا عَذَابَ النَّارِ.  
اللّٰهُمَّ اٰمِيْنَ يَا رَبَّ الْعٰلَمِيْنَ

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

عِبَادَ اللّٰهِ، اِنَّ اللّٰهَ يَأْمُرُ بِالْعَدْلِ وَالْاِحْسَانِ وَاِتْيَاءِ ذِي الْقُرْبَى وَيَنْهَى عَنِ  
الْفَحْشَاءِ وَالْمُنْكَرِ وَالْبَغْيِ يَعِظُكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَذَكَّرُوْنَ. اُنْذِرُوْا اللّٰهَ يَذْكُرْكُمْ وَ  
اَشْكُرُوْهُ عَلٰى نِعْمِهِ يَزِدْكُمْ وَ لَذِكْرِ اللّٰهِ اَكْبَرُ وَ اللّٰهُ يَعْلَمُ مَا تَصْنَعُوْنَ.  
اَقِمِ الصَّلَاةَ !!!

## 1. FASTING IN HISTORY

Fasting is not something new either to human beings or to animals. Human as well as animal will fast when they are in the times of stress or illness, even at the slightest uneasiness. The early great philosophers and thinkers, such as Hippocrates (460 BC – 370 BC), Plato (428 BC-348 BC), Socrates (470 BC – 399 BC), Aristotle (384 BC – 322 BC), and Galen (131 CE – 201 CE) used fasting for health and therapy, and praised the benefit of fasting. Paracelsus (1493-1541), one of the fathers of Western Medicine said, "Fasting is the greatest remedy--the physician within."

Fasting in the early religious and spiritual communities was a part of ceremonies and rites. Traditionally it was associated with a period of quiescence, namely, being at rest, where most of physical activities were suspended, and probably symbolically associated with birth. In ancient times people traditionally fasted at the vernal (spring) equinox (namely, time of the year at which the sun crosses the equator and when day and night are of equal length), around 20 March, as well as at the autumnal (fall) equinox, around 22 September. These fasts were believed to increase fertility of the land and the human body for reproduction. Among American Indians they fasted to avert disasters, such as flood, drought, war, earthquake, *etc*, and as penance for their sin.

Fasting has been a religious practice since the beginning of recorded history. Its purpose is to purify the soul and to prepare for receiving atonement of sins. It is still being practiced by Roman and Orthodox Catholics, some Protestant sects (such as Episcopalians and Lutherans), Tibetan Buddhists, American Indians, Jews, and Muslims. Today it is practiced for various spiritual benefits, such as purification of the soul, spiritual vision, mourning, penance or sacrifice, as well as to break the habit of gluttony (eating too much).

In 1920 the Indian Yogi and Guru Paramahansa Yogananda (5 January 1893 – 7 March 1952) who founded a worldwide spiritual organization called *Self-Realization Fellowship (SRF)* based at Mount Washington, California, Los Angeles, said: "*Fasting is a natural*

*method of healing.*"<sup>1</sup> The oldest and most comprehensive health care system called *Ayurvedic Medicine* includes fasting as therapy. *Ayurveda* (*ayuh* means "life", and *veda* means "knowledge") is "Science of Life" or "Wisdom of Life" deals with nature and all aspects of life.

In Hinduism fasting is abstaining from food half a day, one day and even more. The Hindus observe fast in the name of the deity every once, twice, three times, or more times a week. For example, Monday is associated with Shiva, and fasting on this day would please him, and on Saturday would please Hanuman, "the monkey God", and others say, the god of that day is Shani or Saturn, whereas Hanuman is "the God of Tuesday". The Hindus also observe fast on festivals like Navaratri (when people fast for nine days); Shivratri and Karwa Chauth.

One should fast once a week with an empty stomach but can drink water till afternoon. Then one can drink fruit juice or one or two fruits. Then one breaks the fast after sunset. The time of fasting is either (a) from sunrise to sunset, or (b) from midnight (12.00 *a.m.*) to the midnight (12.*a.m.*) of the next day. While Muslims are recommended to break their fast with dates or water, the Hindus have to break their fast with rice, and meat is not allowed. The meat is of an animal the soul of which is of human in the process of incarnation. It is not a good idea to kill someone while fasting for the deity.

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<sup>1</sup> Among his interesting statements are: "*You are walking on the earth as in a dream. Our world is a dream within a dream; you must realize that to find God is the only goal, the only purpose, for which you are here. For Him alone you exist. Him you must find.*" – (from the book *The Divine Romance*). For Muslims, God Whom they call "Allah" and Who created the whole universe has been found by them, and the purpose of life is no longer to find Him, but to worship Him. He said: (الذاريات: 56) , *"And I (Allah) created not the jinn and mankind except that they should worship Me (Alone)* (Q. 51:56)

Buddhist monks fast the standard day of fasting eighteen days where they drink a small amount of water daily. At first they start with three days eating dry bread to prepare the stomach without food. After eighteen days fasting, they eat small portions of thin porridge or gruel every few hours for three days, until their digestive system return to be normal. If this first fast is successful and beneficial, it can be doubled into thirty-six days, or even seventy-two days, but it has to be under supervision of an experienced teacher. Buddhist people are not required to follow vegetarian diet and to avoid dairy products, as they are only a personal option. Following the practice of Buddha who was said to have eaten one meal a day, before noon, some Buddhists do the same.

Among Jewish people there are seven traditionally accepted fast days in a year, commemorating important events or remembering tragedies of the past: (1) the Fast of the First Born (observed by the first born males only), on the 14<sup>th</sup> of *Nissan* commemorating that they were the first born saved from the plague of the first born in Egypt; (2) the Fast on the 17<sup>th</sup> of *Tammuz*, commemorating the breakdown of the wall of Jerusalem by the Emperor Nebuchadnezzar and the cessation of Temple worship during the siege of the Emperor Titus (the Fast of the 4<sup>th</sup> month); (3) The Fast on the 9<sup>th</sup> of *Av*, remembering the tragedies of the Jewish people, which is the most important fast day after Kippur fast day (the Fast of the 5<sup>th</sup> month); (4) the Fast on the 3<sup>rd</sup> *Tishri*, commemorating the murder of the Judean Governor Gedaliah (the Fast of the Seventh Month); (5) the Fast Day of Atonement (Yom Kippur) on the 10<sup>th</sup> of *Tishri*, the most holy day of the Jewish year, and where no work of any kind is allowed; (6) the Fast day of the 10<sup>th</sup> of *Tevet*, commemorating the fall of Jerusalem; on this day *Kaddish* (Jewish prayer for the dead) was recited for people whose date or place of death are unknown (the Fast of the 10<sup>th</sup> month); (7) the Fast of Ester on 13<sup>th</sup> of *Adar*, before Purim festival which commemorates the salvation of the Jewish people from the persecution of the ancient Persian emperor.

Fasting among Catholics could mean: not eating snacks between meals, or by abstaining from all food. The Church strongly recommends the Catholic to fast forty days before Easter Sunday called *Lenten Fasting and Penance* with only one meal per day and without meat. Then the rule became more lenient, where fasting is only on the first day of the Lent (*i.e.* the forty days), and on Good Friday. Although the rule remains, *i.e.* one full meal a day without meat, a small amount of food in the morning is allowed.

Fasting is not required in the Bible, but highly recommended for Christians to do so from time to time to become closer to God, but it has to be done secretly (see *Matthew 6:16-18*).

How long a Christian should fast? It could be one day as in Bible times (Judges 20:26), occasionally three days (Esther 4:16), or seven days (1 Samuel 31:13), and forty days in three occasions: when Moses received the 10 Commandments (Exodus 34:28), Elijah encountering God (1 Kings 19:8), and when Jesus was being tempted in the wilderness (Matthew 4). Fasting this long is not recommended unless with medical supervision.

Jesus himself was said to have fasted voluntarily alone in the desert east of Jerusalem for a full forty days and forty nights. This is one of many differences between Islam and Christianity, where fasting in Ramadan is prescribed in Islam, and one of its five pillars. Since the Qur'an mentions that it has also been prescribed to people of earlier generations (Q. 2:183), it must have been taught by earlier prophets to their followers without being recorded. However, there are many other fasts which are recommended, such as:

- the Day of 'Arafah (9<sup>th</sup> of Dhu 'l-Hijjah) except the pilgrims at 'Arafah should not fast this day.
- the Day of 'Āshūra' (10<sup>th</sup> day of Muḥarram)
- Six days in the month of Shawwāl (the month following Ramadan)
- the 13<sup>th</sup>, 14<sup>th</sup>, and 15<sup>th</sup> of every lunar month
- each Monday and Thursday of a week
- every other day, known as the fast of Prophet David (Dā'ūd) *a.s.*

There are some days of festivals where Muslims are prohibited from fasting, as follows:

- *Īd al-Fitr* (1<sup>st</sup> of Shawwal), following the fasting days in Ramadan.
- *Īd al-Aḍḥā* (10<sup>th</sup> of Dhū'-Hijjah)
- *Tashrīq* days (11th, 12th, 13th of Dhū'-Hijjah)

The objective of fasting as mentioned in the Qur'an is to obtain *taqwā*. Allah says in the Qur'an:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمُ الصِّيَامُ كَمَا كُتِبَ عَلَى  
الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ (البقرة: 183)

*O you who believe! Observing fasting is prescribed  
for you as it was prescribed for those before you,  
that you may become the pious (Q. 2:183)*

Muhammad Asad translated *لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ* "so that you might remain conscious of God," namely, to gain *taqwā*, which could be translated as "God consciousness" or "God wariness." On the other hand, Muhammad Marmaduke Pickthall translates it "that ye may ward off (evil)," so that *taqwā* means "avoiding evil." The term *taqwā* is also translated as "piety" and "fearing Allah."

'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb *r.a.* asked Ubayy ibn Ka'b the meaning of *taqwā*.

"Have you taken a path where there were many thorns on it?" asked Ubayy.

"Yes," answered 'Umar.

"Then what did you do?," asked Ubayy again.

"I protected myself and be careful [not to step on them]," said 'Umar.

"That is *taqwā*," said Ubayy.

For this meaning of *taqwā* which means "self-protection" the Abbasi poet Ibn al-Mu'tazz (861-908) explains it in his poem as follows:

خَلِّ الدُّنُوبَ صَغِيرَهَا \* وَكَبِيرَهَا ذَاكَ التَّقَى  
وَاصْنَعْ كَمَا شِ فَوْقَ أَرْضِ \* ضِ الشُّوكِ يَحْدَرُ مَا يَرَى  
لَا تَحْقِرَنَّ صَغِيرَةً \* إِنَّ الْجِبَالَ مِنْ الْحَصَى

*Abstain from sins, either small or big, that is piety  
And do like a person walking on a thorny piece of land,*

*Being careful of what he is seeing.*

*Do not look down on a minor sin;*

*Verily, mountains are made of pebbles*

The Prophet s.a.w. as narrated by Abū Hurayrah r.a. said:

الصِّيَامُ جُنَّةٌ فَلَا يَرْفُثُ وَلَا يَجْهَلُ، وَإِنْ أَمْرٌ قَاتَلَهُ أَوْ  
شَاتَمَهُ فَلْيُقُلْ: إِنِّي صَائِمٌ مَرَّتَيْنِ (رواه البخاري)

*Fasting is a shield (protection from the Hell-fire).*

*So the person observing the fast should avoid sexual  
relation with his wife, and should not behave foolishly  
and impudently, and if somebody fights with him*

*or abuses him, he should say to him twice,*

*“I am fasting” (Reported by Bukhārī)*

May Allah accept our fasting as well as other acts of devotion to  
Him.

(CIVIC, 19 June, 2015)

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## 2. AMĀNAH (HONESTY, FAITHFULNESS, ETC.)

The term *أَمَانَةٌ* (*amānah*) is derived from the verb *أَمِنَ* (*amina*), meaning “to be safe,” “to feel safe,” “to be reliable,” “to be trustworthy.” It is the opposite of *خِيَانَةٌ* (*khiyānah*, faithlessness, perfidy; betrayal; treason; deception). Linguistically, *amānah* means: reliability, trustworthiness; loyalty, faithfulness, fidelity, fealty; integrity, honesty; confidence, trust, good faith; trusteeship; confidentiality; secrecy (of something).

Technically, *amānah* means a right which should be fulfilled and kept. It also means the object of the *amānah*, namely, *al-wadī'ah* (أَلْوَدِيْعَةٌ), something entrusted to someone’s custody). This includes keeping someone’s secret. The person who upholds this *amānah* is called *al-Amīn* (الْأَمِينُ, the reliable, trustworthy, honest, faithful person) the epithet of the Prophet before he was appointed by Allah as His Messenger. In this sense, the jurist and Qur’ān commentator al-Ḥusayn al-Dāmaghānī (d. 478/1085) gives the meanings of the term *amānah* in the Qur’ān as follows:

1. الْفَرَائِضَ, religious obligations, including praying and fasting, such as:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَخُونُوا اللَّهَ وَالرَّسُولَ وَتَخُونُوا  
أَمَانَاتِكُمْ وَأَنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ (الأنفال: 27)

*O you who believe! Betray not Allah and His Messenger, nor betray knowingly your amānah (things entrusted to you, and all the duties which Allah has ordained for you) (Q. 8:27)*

إِنَّا عَرَضْنَا الْأَمَانَةَ عَلَى السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَالْجِبَالِ فَأَبَيْنَ أَنْ يَحْمِلْنَهَا  
وَأَشْفَقْنَ مِنْهَا وَحَمَلَهَا الْإِنْسَانُ إِنَّهُ كَانَ ظَلُومًا جَهُولًا (الاحزاب: 72)

*Truly, We did offer the amānah (the trust or moral responsibility or honesty and all the duties which Allah has ordained) to the heavens and the earth, and the mountains, but they declined to bear it and were afraid of it (i.e., afraid of Allah’s Torment). But man bore it. Verily, he was unjust (to himself) and ignorant (of its results) (Q. 33:72)*

2. **الْوَدَائِعِ**, something entrusted to someone's custody, such as:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَأْمُرُكُمْ أَنْ تُؤَدُّوا الْأَمَانَاتِ إِلَىٰ أَهْلِهَا وَإِذَا حَكَمْتُمْ بَيْنَ النَّاسِ أَنْ تَحْكُمُوا بِالْعَدْلِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ نِعِمَّا يَعِظُكُمْ بِهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ سَمِيعًا بَصِيرًا (النساء:58)

*Verily, Allah commands that you should render back the trusts to those to whom they are due; and that when you judge between men, you judge with justice. Verily, how excellent is the teaching which He (Allah) gives you! Truly, Allah is Ever All-Hearer, All-Seer. (Q. 4:58)*

After the conquest of Makkah the Prophet s.a.w. enter the Holy Mosque, made *ṭawāf* (circumambulation around the Ka'bah), and then he called 'Uthmān ibn Ṭalḥah (the keeper of the key of the Ka'bah), took the key from him and opened the door of Ka'bah. He entered it, then he stood at its door, citing,

لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَحْدَهُ صَدَقَ وَعْدُهُ وَنَصَرَ عَبْدَهُ وَهَزَمَ الْأَحْزَابَ وَحْدَهُ

*There is no god but Allah Alone, He had fulfilled His promise, He has helped His servant and has defeated the Confederates by Himself.*

Then he sat down in the mosque. 'Ali ibn Abi Ṭālib stood up and said to him, "O Messenger of Allah, appoint us doorkeeper as well as water supplier (for Makkan pilgrims)." The Prophet asked: "Where is 'Uthmān ibn Ṭalḥah?" When the person came, he said to him: "This is your key, O 'Uthmān, today is the day of piety and fulfillment." To this, Allah revealed the above verse, and the Prophet did not give the key of the Ka'bah to 'Ali, and the job of serving the pilgrims and supplying water for the pilgrims.

وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ لِأَمَانَاتِهِمْ وَعَهْدِهِمْ رَاعُونَ (المؤمنون:8، المعارج:11)

*Those who are faithfully true to their amanat (all the duties which Allah has ordained, honesty, moral responsibility and trusts) and to their covenants; (Q. 23:8; 70:11)*

3. **الْعِفَّةِ**, virtuousness, chastity; purity; modesty; honesty, uprightness, such as:

قَالَتْ إِحْدَاهُمَا يَا أَبَتِ اسْتَأْجِرْهُ إِنَّ خَيْرَ مَنِ اسْتَأْجَرْتَ الْقَوِيُّ الْأَمِينُ (القصص:26)

اسْتَأْجَرْتَ الْقَوِيُّ الْأَمِينُ (القصص:26)

*And said one of them (the two women): "O my father!*

*Hire him! Verily, the best of men for you to hire is the strong, the trustworthy.” (Q. 28:26).*

It is about Moses (Mūsā a.s.) because of his honesty and integrity one of the girls he had helped in watering their sheep asked her father to employ him. The father’s name was Jethro (يَثْرُونُ or يَثْرَى), the other name of Prophet Shu‘ayb a.s. (Other commentators said that he was the nephew of Prophet Shu‘ayb).

Dishonesty is one of the signs of hypocrisy. Abū Hurayrah narrated that the Prophet s.a.w. said:

آيَةُ الْمُنَافِقِ ثَلَاثٌ إِذَا حَدَّثَ كَذَبَ وَإِذَا وَعَدَ أَخْلَفَ وَإِذَا أُؤْتِمِنَ خَانَ (رواه البخاري)

*There are three signs of the hypocrite: when he talks he lies, when he promises he breaks it, and when he is relied upon he betrays it (Reported by Bukhari)*

‘Abdullah ibn ‘Amr narrated that the Prophet s.a.w. 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 (رواه البخاري)

*There are four qualities of a pure (clear) hypocrite; if he has one quality only, then he has a quality of hypocrisy until he abandons it: if he is relied on he betrays, if he talks he lies, if he promises he breaks it, and if he argues he acts immorally (Reported by Bukhari)*

What is meant by acting immorally, according to Ibn Baṭṭāl (d. 449/1057), the commentator of Bukhari’s collection of *ḥadīths*, is “lying and misgiving” (الْكَذِبُ وَالرَّيْبَةُ). What the Prophet means is that sharing the dominant qualities of hypocrites does not mean he has turned into hypocrisy and apostasy, a dire warning and defamation against these bad qualities.

Similarly, Anas r.a. narrated that the Prophet s.a.w. said:

لَا إِيمَانَ لِمَنْ لَا أَمَانَةَ لَهُ وَلَا دِينَ لِمَنْ لَا عَهْدَ لَهُ (رواه أحمد)

*There is no faith for a person who does not possess amanah, [i.e., unreliable] and there is no religion for one who does not keep his*

*promise.* (Reported by Ahmad)

This indicates lack of faith, honesty and sincerity, not the loss of faith, infidelity, and apostasy. It is like saying that a bottle is empty, although it still contains little water.

A similar *ḥadīth* runs as follows:

مَنْ غَشَّ فَلَيْسَ مِنَّا (رواه الترمذي)

*Whoever cheats is not one of us*

(Reported by al-Tirmidhī)

Before he became a prophet, Muhammad *s.a.w.* had been well-known for his honesty, and the people of Makkah called him “*al-Amīn*”, (the reliable, trustworthy, loyal; upright, honest; faithful). They had asked him to be judge in their disputes, and had entrusted their goods to his custody. Before he left for Madinah to avoid their persecution for his claim to be a prophet, he had entrusted their goods to his cousin ‘Ali. Khadījah had employed him to sell her goods in Syria, and because of his honesty people bought the goods he brought with higher price to show their appreciation for his honesty. This brought profit beyond his expectation, and Khadījah asked him later to marry her. They married, and she became the first person who believed in his message, a believer.

After he became prophet, his arch-enemy at that time, Abū Sufyān, admitted to the Emperor Heraclius of his honesty when he was asked about the new prophet. After learning his characters and background, Heraclius told Abū Sufyān, “If I knew I could reach him now, then I would go to him, and if I were in his presence then I would gladly wash his feet.”

Honesty is inevitable in our daily-life. It is one of the foundations of peace, from family to international relations. Our dealings with others have to be based on trust. We trust everybody until he cheats us, then we lose our trust on him. Everybody has to be treated innocent until he is found guilty. If honesty is no longer in a community, a society or a state then waits for its collapse and destruction. Abū Hurayrah narrated that the Messenger of Allah *s.a.w.* said:

إِذَا ضَيِّعَتْ الْأَمَانَةُ فَأَنْتَظِرُ السَّاعَةَ قَالَ كَيْفَ إِضَاعَتُهَا يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ  
قَالَ إِذَا أُسْنِدَ الْأَمْرُ إِلَى غَيْرِ أَهْلِهِ فَأَنْتَظِرُ السَّاعَةَ (رواه البخاري)

*If honesty (trust) is missed then wait for the time of its  
destruction. He was asked, how it is missed O Messenger of  
Allah? He said that if a case is relied upon unqualified  
person then wait for the time of its destruction*

(Reported by Bukhari)

What the Prophet means is that no matter how smart a person is he is not qualified for a position as long as he or she lacks honesty.

What if someone cheats us, is it allowed to cheat him back, according to Islamic teachings? The Prophet *s.a.w.* taught us to treat everybody with honesty, even to the cheater. He said:

أَدِّ الْأَمَانَةَ إِلَى مَنْ ائْتَمَنَكَ وَلَا تَخُنْ مَنْ خَانَكَ (رواه أحمد و أبو داود والترمذي)

*Be honest to a person who is honest with you,  
and do not betray the person who betrays you*

(Reported by Ahmad, Abū Dā'ūd, and al-Tirmidhī).

However, Ibn Baṭṭāl comments further that trying to get back our right taken by deceit does not include in the Prophet's statement above, as long as we do not take back more than what we deserve. The example is that Hind, Abū Sufyān's wife, complained to the Prophet that her husband was stingy and did not provide sustenance for her and her children, and the Prophet allowed her to take herself what she needed from her husband's wealth without his approval, because the maintenance was her right and his obligation.

Scholars hold different opinions whether it is possible or not to get something else equals to the value of the thing taken from us through cheating. Al-Shāfi'ī allows it based on the story of Abū Sufyān's wife mentioned above. According to Abū Ḥanīfah it is possible only to take something similar to it, gold for gold, silver for silver, measured for measured, weighed for weighed. Mālik as reported by al-Qāsim does not allow it, but in another report by Ziyād he allows it, as long as it does not exceed what is needed.

As Muslims we believe that our whole body is *amānah*, a trust that we have to take care of it, not to abuse it, and that we will be responsible for what we have done with it in the Hereafter. Allah said:

وَلَا تَقْفُ مَا لَيْسَ لَكَ بِهِ عِلْمٌ إِنَّ السَّمْعَ وَالْبَصَرَ وَالْفُؤَادَ  
كُلُّ أُولَئِكَ كَانَ عَنْهُ مَسْئُولًا (الإسراء:36)

*And follow not (O man, i.e., say not, or do not or witness not) that which you have no knowledge. Verily, the hearing, and the sight, and the heart, of each of those one will be questioned (by Allah) (Q. 17:36)*

It includes spreading gossips which could lead to defamation.

Our job is *amānah*, a trust which we should perform the best we can, even this very earth we are living in and its contents are entrusted to us by Allah the Almighty to keep them in their best condition. One of the six characteristics of the people promised with Paradise is being faithful to their trusts and to their pledges (Q. 23:8) as mentioned earlier. The treacherous person would be known in the Hereafter. The Prophet *s.a.w.* said, as narrated by Ibn ‘Umar,

لِكُلِّ غَادِرٍ لَوَاءٌ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ يُعْرَفُ بِهِ (رواه البخاري ومسلم)  
*Every treacherous person will have a banner in the Judgment Day by which he will be known*  
(Reported by Bukhari and Muslim)

In conclusion, among the good characters of good Muslims is *amānah*, namely, honesty, faithfulness, reliability. They believe that they will be responsible for keeping this *amānah* before Allah the Almighty in the Hereafter. (CIVIC, 26 June, 2015)

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### 3. IT IS INTENTION THAT COUNTS

Umar ibn Al-Khattab *r.a.* reported: The Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings be upon him, said:

إِنَّمَا الْأَعْمَالُ بِالنِّيَّةِ وَإِنَّمَا لِأَمْرِي مَا نَوَيْتُ فَمَنْ كَانَتْ هِجْرَتُهُ إِلَى اللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ فَهِجْرَتُهُ إِلَى اللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ وَمَنْ كَانَتْ هِجْرَتُهُ لِدُنْيَا يُصِيبُهَا أَوْ امْرَأَةٍ يَتَزَوَّجُهَا فَهِجْرَتُهُ إِلَى مَا هَاجَرَ إِلَيْهِ (رواه البخاري و مسلم)

*Actions are (judged) by motives (intentions), so each man will have what he intended. Thus, he whose migration (hijrah) was to Allah and His Messenger, his migration is to Allah and His Messenger; but he whose migration was for some worldly thing he might gain, or for a wife he might marry, his migration is to that for which he migrated.*

(Reporter by Bukhari and Muslim)

This prophetic tradition (*ḥadīth*) is so important that Imam al-Shāfi'ī an Imam Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal said that it is one third of the knowledge of Islam; it is related to about 70 topics of *fiqh* (Islamic jurisprudence). It is because any human acquisition is either by his heart, his tongue or his limbs, and intention is one of them.

Muslim scholars divide intention (*niyyah*) into two categories: intention in matters of worship, and intention in worldly matters. Intention in matters of worship is used by Muslim jurists as one of many conditions for the validity of worship. It is intention that makes distinction between obligatory and recommended prayers. When you enter the mosque to pray, while you are standing for prayer you make your intention whether you are going to perform an obligatory prayer or a recommended one.

With regard to intention with worldly matters, Muslim jurists have different views: The first view is that there is no need for intention in matters of habitual actions, like drinking, eating, sleeping, and wearing our clothes. The second view is that intention is included in every action. If you eat to be full thanking Allah for his blessing, or in order to make you strong in obeying Allah, you will be rewarded. If you wear clothes to cover yourselves you will get

reward. But if your intention is to show off and to boast, then you will become sinful. Therefore, any habitual and ordinary action, if it is accompanied with intention, will turn into an act of devotion, a religious observance in which you will be rewarded. If you build a house to protect your family you will be rewarded for it. The Prophet s.a.w. said to Sa'd ibn Mālik in a long tradition, as follows:

...وَأَسْتَبْنَفِقُ نَفَقَةً تَبْتَغِي بِهَا وَجْهَ اللَّهِ إِلَّا أَجْرَكَ اللَّهُ بِهَا  
حَتَّى اللَّقْمَةَ تَجْعَلُهَا فِي فِي امْرَأَتِكَ ... (رواه البخاري)

*... nothing you spend seeking Allah's pleasure, except that He will reward you for it, even the morsel you put into your wife's mouth ... (Reported by Bukhari)*

"Actions are (judged) by motives (intentions)", means actions are accepted or rejected, right or wrong are based on intention. The expression "so each man will have what he intended" means the reward of action is based on intention. Therefore, in order to get reward for our good action we have to make good intention, namely, sincerity for Allah's sake, not as a show-off. In a *ḥadīth qudsī* (namely, the idea is from Allah, but the wording is from the Prophet), the Prophet s.a.w. said, that Allah the Almighty said:

أَنَا أَعْنَى الشُّرَكَاءِ عَنِ الشُّرُكِ مَنْ عَمِلَ عَمَلًا أَشْرَكَ فِيهِ مَعِيَ  
غَيْرِي تَرَكَتُهُ وَشِرْكُهُ (رواه مسلم)

*I am the most in not needing association, whoever acted an action associating Me (with something else), I would leave him with his associate (Reported by Muslim)*

If someone prays not for the sake of Allah, but as show off, hypocrisy, then his prayer will not be accepted by Allah. Allah said:

إِنَّ الْمُنَافِقِينَ يُخَادِعُونَ اللَّهَ وَهُوَ خَادِعُهُمْ وَإِذَا قَامُوا إِلَى الصَّلَاةِ قَامُوا  
كُسَالَى يُرَاءُونَ النَّاسَ وَلَا يَذْكُرُونَ اللَّهَ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا (النساء:142)

*Verily, the hypocrites seek to deceive Allah, but it is He Who deceives them. And when they stand up for the prayer, they stand with laziness and to be seen of men, and they do not remember Allah but a little (Q. 4:142)*

The Prophet s.a.w. said:

مَنْ صَلَّى يُرَائِي فَقَدْ أَشْرَكَ وَمَنْ صَامَ يُرَائِي فَقَدْ أَشْرَكَ  
وَمَنْ تَصَدَّقَ يُرَائِي فَقَدْ أَشْرَكَ (رواه أحمد)

*Whoever prays to be seen has become a polytheist,  
whoever fasts to be seen has become a polytheist, and  
whoever gives charity to be seen has become  
a polytheist (Reported by Ahmad)*

Therefore, in order to be safe from Allah's punishment in the Hereafter, we have to be sincere in our intention, that all our deeds are for Allah's sake, and all our actions are a kind of devotion and obedience to Him. Allah says:

قُلْ إِنَّمَا أَنَا بَشَرٌ مِّثْلُكُمْ يُوحَىٰ إِلَيَّ أَنَّمَا إِلَهُكُمُ إِلَهٌ وَاحِدٌ فَمَنْ كَانَ يَرْجُوا لِقَاءَ  
رَبِّهِ فَلْيَعْمَلْ عَمَلًا صَالِحًا وَلَا يُشْرِكْ بِعِبَادَةِ رَبِّهِ أَحَدًا (الكهف:110)

*Say (O Muhammad), "I am only a man like you. It has been revealed to me that your God is One God (Allah). So whoever hopes for the Meeting with his Lord, let him work righteousness and associate none as a partner in the worship of his Lord." (Q. 18:110)*

While we are performing our devotion with right intention, when we change our intention, then our devotion will become unacceptable, like the intentions and the acts of hypocrites. However, if we made an extra intention, for example, the *imam* bows or prostrates longer than usual to be seen as a pious man by his friends or people in the congregation, then this is a minor *shirk* (idolatry), but the prayer is still valid and sound. There will be no reward for doing longer prostration or bowing, as it is not purely for Allah's sake. However, if after performing the prayer, for example, and someone comes to the *imam* and praises him, then he wants to do the prayer of the *khuṭbah* better than before, for Allah's sake, there will be nothing wrong with it, because the praise came after performing the prayer.

There are some good deeds where besides the reward in the Hereafter, the reward in this world is also mentioned. For example,

Anas ibn Mālik and Abū Hurayrah narrated that the Prophet s.a.w. said:

مَنْ سَرَّهُ أَنْ يُبْسَطَ لَهُ فِي رِزْقِهِ أَوْ يُنْسَأَ لَهُ فِي أَثَرِهِ  
فَلْيَصِلْ رَحِمَهُ (رواه البخاري و مسلم)

*Whoever wishes to have his sustenance increased or his life span extended, he shall keep his good kinship relationship (Reported by Bukhārī and Muslim)*

Shaykh al-Albānī's commentary on this ḥadīth is as follows:

*The ostensible meaning of this ḥadīth is that Allah through His Wisdom has made good kinship relationship as the motive for long life, just like good character and good neighbourhood as mentioned in some sound ḥadīths. But this is not contradictory to what is known in religion by necessity that age has been fixed, because this is considered final. It is like bliss and misery which have been fixed for every person, and there has to be legal reason for them. As faith increases with obedience and decreases with disobedience, this does not contradict what has been written in the Preserved Tablet."*

(صحيح الأدب المفرد, 1 / 24)

Shaykh al-Islam Ibn Taymiyyah says that there are two kinds of appointed time of death: the absolute one which is known by Allah only, and the restricted one. Referring to the above verse he says that Allah ordered the angel to write his appointed time of death, and said: "If he keeps his good kinship relationship I would increase it," but the angel did not know whether it would happen so that his appointed time of death would be increased or not. It was Allah Who knows the final decision which does not come earlier or later. (مجموع الفتاوى 8 / 517).

Another example is that the Prophet s.a.w. said:

مَنْ قَتَلَ قَتِيلًا لَهُ عَلَيْهِ بَيِّنَةٌ فَلَهُ سَلْبُهُ (رواه البخاري و مسلم)  
*Whoever kills a person (in the battlefield) with indisputable evidence, the booty (he left) will be for*

*him* (Reported by Bukhari and Muslim)

Since the worldly reward is mentioned to incite the Muslims to go to the battlefield to defend Islam besides the reward promised in the Hereafter, it is possible to have double intention here: to obtain booty if kills the enemy, and to obtain martyrdom if he is killed. But if no worldly reward is mentioned, then only one intention is allowed: to defend Islam. Similarly, if we keep good kinship relationship for the sake of Allah, and at the same time we expect the worldly reward with prosperity and long life, this is also possible. If our intention is more towards the reward in the Hereafter than the worldly reward, then we shall get more reward from it, and vice versa.

If we go to Makkah with the intention to perform the pilgrimage, but at the same time we bring some goods to sell to assist us in our travel expense, there is nothing wrong with it, as the main intention is the pilgrimage, while trade is only a means to assist us in our expense. But if our main intention is for trade, while pilgrimage is only our secondary intention, then our reward for our pilgrimage is based on the degree of our intention for it.

As the main motive or intention for going to the battlefield is to defend Islam, and not to gain booty, Imam Mālik did not like the leader of the army to tell his soldiers about the booty that they may get, so that they would not forget the main intention, to defend Islam.

The *ḥadīth* continues with the Prophet's statement that whoever migrates for some worldly things, namely business or for a wife he might marry, then there will be no reward for his migration, as it is intention that counts. It is like a man gives charity for Allah's sake, another man did the same, but to let people know how generous he was, and another person did the same, so that the recipient of charity would stop bothering him. The reward is only for the person who gave charity for Allah's sake.

In another *ḥadīth* the Prophet *s.a.w.* encouraged us to seek knowledge and wealth with good intention. He said:

إِنَّمَا الدُّنْيَا لِأَرْبَعَةٍ نَفَرٍ عَبْدٍ رَزَقَهُ اللهُ مَالًا وَعِلْمًا فَهُوَ يَتَّقِي فِيهِ رَبَّهُ وَيَصِلُ فِيهِ رَحْمَهُ وَيَعْلَمُ اللهُ فِيهِ حَقًّا فَهَذَا بِأَفْضَلِ الْمَنَازِلِ وَعَبْدٍ رَزَقَهُ اللهُ عِلْمًا وَلَمْ يَرزُقْهُ مَالًا فَهُوَ صَادِقُ النِّيَّةِ يَقُولُ لَوْ أَنَّ لِي مَالًا لَعَمِلْتُ بِعَمَلِ فُلَانٍ فَهُوَ بِنِيَّتِهِ فَأَجْرُهُمَا سَوَاءٌ وَعَبْدٍ رَزَقَهُ اللهُ مَالًا وَلَمْ يَرزُقْهُ عِلْمًا فَهُوَ يَخِيطُ فِي مَالِهِ بِغَيْرِ عِلْمٍ لَا يَتَّقِي فِيهِ رَبَّهُ وَلَا يَصِلُ فِيهِ رَحْمَهُ وَلَا يَعْلَمُ اللهُ فِيهِ حَقًّا فَهَذَا بِأَخْبَثِ الْمَنَازِلِ وَعَبْدٍ لَمْ يَرزُقْهُ اللهُ مَالًا وَلَا عِلْمًا فَهُوَ يَقُولُ لَوْ أَنَّ لِي مَالًا لَعَمِلْتُ فِيهِ بِعَمَلِ فُلَانٍ فَهُوَ بِنِيَّتِهِ فَوَزُرُهُمَا سَوَاءٌ (رواه الترمذي و أحمد)

*This world is for four kinds of people only: a man endowed by Allah with wealth and knowledge with which he fears his Lord, keeps his good kinship relationship, and knows that Allah has rights on him, and this is the highest position; a man given by Allah knowledge, not wealth, but he has good intention, and says, "had I wealth like so-and-so has, I would have done like what so-and-so did, and he is sincere in his intention, then the reward for both of them will be equal; a man given by Allah wealth and not knowledge, so that he will be brought down with his wealth unknowingly, and will not fear Allah with it, and he will not keep good kinship relationship, and he does not know Allah's right on him, and this is the worst position; and a servant who is given by Allah neither wealth nor knowledge, and he says that had he wealth he would have done the same with what so-and-so did, and because of this intention both (the rich without knowledge and the poor) will bear the same sin.  
(Reported by Tirmidhi and Ahmad)*

In conclusion: in doing things with good intention we shall get reward, without intension, there will be no reward, and with bad intention we will become sinful.

(CIVIC, 24 July, 2015)

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#### 4. AL-ḤASAN AL-BAṢRĪ (1)

One of the duties of the Prophet is to explain the Qur'ān to his people. Allah says:

وَأَنْزَلْنَا إِلَيْكَ الذِّكْرَ لِتُبَيِّنَ لِلنَّاسِ مَا نُزِّلَ إِلَيْهِمْ وَلَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ (النحل: 44)

*And We have also sent down to you (O Muhammad) the Reminder (i.e., the Qur'ān), that you may explain clearly what is sent down to them, and that they may give thought (Q. 16:44)*

وَمَا أَنْزَلْنَا عَلَيْكَ الْكِتَابَ إِلَّا لِتُبَيِّنَ لَهُمُ الَّذِي اخْتَلَفُوا فِيهِ وَهُدًى

وَرَحْمَةً لِّقَوْمٍ يُؤْمِنُونَ (النحل: 64)

*And We have not sent down the Book (the Qur'ān) to you (O Muhammad), except that you may explain clearly to them those things in which they differ, and (as) a guidance and a mercy for a folk who believe. (Q. 16:64)*

After the death of the Prophet, his companions (*ṣaḥābah*) took over and gave the explanation and commentary (*tafsīr*) of the Qur'ān, among them were the four rightly-guided caliph (Abū Bakr, 'Umar, 'Uthmān, 'Ali), although they did not give much about it, Ibn Mas'ūd, Ibn 'Abbās, Ubayy ibn Ka'b, Zayd ibn Thābit, Abū Mūsā al-'Ash'arī, and Ibn al-Zubayr. Their principal teacher was Ibn 'Abbās.

Then came the generation of the *tābi'īn* (successors) that followed the generation of the *ṣaḥābah*. The scholars of *tafsīr* in this generation lived in Makkah, such as Mujāhid (d. 104/722), 'Aṭā' (d. 114/732), and 'Ikrimah (d. 105/723). In Madinah they were: Muhammad ibn Ka'b al-Qarẓī (d. 117/735), Abū 'l-'Āliyah al-Riyāḥī (d. 90/708), and Zayd ibn Aslam (d. 130/747). Their principal teacher was Ubayy ibn Ka'b. In 'Irāq they were: al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī (d. 110/728), Masrūq ibn al-Ajda' (d. 63/682), and Ibrāhīm al-Nakhā'ī (d. 95/713). Their principal teacher was Ibn Mas'ūd, and their main centres were Basrah and Kufah.

When the name “al-Ḥasan” is mentioned in the books of *tafsīr* (commentary of the Qur’ān) he is not other than the well-known Muslim scholar al-Ḥasan “al-Baṣrī” (الحسن البصري), “the native of Basrah”. He was well-known not only for his deep knowledge, but also for his wisdom and asceticism. He was a jurist, a theologian, a preacher, who was famous for his eloquence and inspiring speeches, a *sufi* (Islamic mystic), and a renowned follower of ‘Ali ibn Abī Ṭālib.

Al-Hasan was the son of two ex-slaves of Persian origin. His father, Peroz (Yasār) was taken prisoner at a town of Maysān in Iraq. He was then taken to Madinah where he met Khayrah who would be al-Ḥasan’s mother. Yasār became the slave of Zayd ibn Thābit, who was one of the famous scribes who recorded Divine revelation for the unlettered Prophet, whereas Khayrah became the slave of Ummu Salamah, the wife of the Prophet.

Al-Ḥasan was born in Madinah in 21/642 and was brought up in the house of Ummu Salamah who freed his mother from slavery after his birth. He was said to have met many companions of the Prophet including seventy of them who joined the battle of Badr. It was said that ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb prayed for him, and said "O Allah! Make him well-versed in religion and make people love him." He spent his early years with his family in Wādī l-Qurā near Madinah.

When al-Ḥasan was about fifteen years old he moved to Basrah where he learned various branches of Islamic knowledge from the Prophet’s companions who were living there, such as *fiqh* (Islamic jurisprudence), *ḥadīth* (Prophet’s traditions), Arabic language and the Qur’ān. He learned *tafsīr*, *ḥadīth*, and *qirā’āt* (variant readings) from Ibn ‘Abbās. He learned the recitation of the Qur’ān from the *tābi’ī* Ḥaṭṭān ibn ‘Abd Allāh al-Raqqāshī and the methodology of delivering religious sermons, speeches and tales from the *ṣaḥābah* and the poet al-Aswad ibn Suray’ al-Tamīmī, the first story-teller of Basrah.

At that time religious story telling in the mosque appealed people, but as many of them tended to exaggerate, even invented stories for their personal benefit, such as to gain respect and fame. Eventually, the story tellers, the *quṣṣāṣ* were banned from telling

their tales in the mosque of Basrah except al-Ḥasan, as he talked about life after death and religious morality based of the Qur’ān, the Sunnah of the Prophet and the revered companions.<sup>1</sup>

Al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī was a great teacher. He had a big class in the mosque of Basrah in which he taught people *hadith*, *fiqh*, the Qur’ān, Arabic language, and rhetoric<sup>2</sup>. He also taught people in his house about piety and asceticism. As a *mufassir* (a commentator of the Qur’ān), his commentaries were mentioned several times in the books of *tafsīr* (commentary of the Qur’ān). Some examples of his commentaries are as follows:

وَمَنْ جَاهَدَ فَإِنَّمَا يُجَاهِدُ لِنَفْسِهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَغَنِيٌّ عَنِ الْعَالَمِينَ (العنكبوت:6)

*And whosoever strives, he strives only for himself.*

*Verily, Allah stands not in need of any of the alamin*

*(mankind, jinn, and all that exists (Q. 29:6)*

This means, according to al-Ḥasan, a man can struggle in the way of Allah without striking a sword, namely, without going to the

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<sup>1</sup> One day the celebrated scholars Imam Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal and Yaḥyā ibn Mā’īn entered a mosque where a story teller was delivering his tale. When he said that he heard from Yaḥyā ibn Mā’īn and Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal said that the Prophet said such thing, they looked at each other and asked whether any of them had said it, and both denied it. So, after delivering the tale, they confronted him, saying that they had never said such thing. The story teller said, “I have never seen such foolish people like you! Do you think that you are the only persons called Yaḥyā ibn Mā’īn and Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal?” Another incident was when a story teller was eating while he has walking on the street. When his friend told him not to do so in front of people, he said that they were not people, but cows and donkeys. In order to prove it, he called people, and when they gathered around him, he said: “O people, listen to what the Prophet said. ‘Whoever is able to touch his nose with the tip of his tongue will enter Paradise’. When people did so, he told his friend, “See, I have told you so.”

<sup>2</sup> Rhetoric, which is called in Arabic *‘ilm al-balāghah* (علم البلاغة) is a part of the science of Arabic language besides *naḥw* (النحو), i.e., grammar, syntax, and *ṣarf* (الصرف), i.e., inflection. This Arabic rhetoric is divided into three branches: *‘ilm al-ma’ānī* (علم المعاني) dealing with verbal expression of concepts and content; *‘ilm al-bayān* (علم البيان) dealing with metaphorical language, in general, rhetorical art of the Arabs; and *‘ilm al-badī’* (علم البديع) dealing with figures of speech, and in general, the art of beautiful style.

battlefield, even once.<sup>3</sup>

كَلَّا بَلْ رَانَ عَلَى قُلُوبِهِمْ مَا كَانُوا يَكْسِبُونَ (المطففين:14)  
*Nay! But on their hearts were covered over  
 by what(sins) they earned (Q., 83:14)*

Al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī's explanation of this verse is that continuous sin makes heart blind and dead. He said: "It is because of doing one sin after another, until the heart becomes blind and dies."<sup>4</sup>

وَمِنْهُمْ مَنْ يَقُولُ رَبَّنَا آتِنَا فِي الدُّنْيَا حَسَنَةً وَفِي الْآخِرَةِ  
 حَسَنَةً وَقِنَا عَذَابَ النَّارِ (البقرة:201)  
*And of them there are some who say: "Our Lord!  
 Give us in this world that which is good and in the  
 Hereafter that which is good, and save us from  
 the torment of the Fire!" (Q. 2:201)*

Al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī's commentary of this verse is that "the good of this world" is knowledge and worship, and "the good of the Hereafter" is Paradise.<sup>5</sup>

In a *ḥadīth* narrated by Anas *r.a.* reported by Imam Ahmad that the Prophet *s.a.w.* visit a man who was very sick. The Prophet asked him whether he had asked Allah about something. He said that he used to say, "O Allah! Whatever punishment you saved for me in the Hereafter, give it to me in this life." The Prophet *s.a.w.* said to him, "All praise is due to Allah! You cannot bear it. You should have said, "Our Lord! Give us in this world..." citing the above verse. The man began reciting this supplication, and he was healed.

According to al-Ḥasan asking forgiveness from Allah is the solution of many problems. The classical commentator al-Qurṭubī

<sup>3</sup> قال الحسن البصري: إن الرجل ليجاهد، وما ضرب يوماً من الدهر بسيف *see Tafsīr Ibn Kathīr*. Another interpretation is that whoever struggles for his own sake, not for Allah's sake, then Allah would not need his struggle, *see Tafsīr al-Qurṭubī*.

<sup>4</sup> عن الحسن، قال: وقرأ (كَلَّا بَلْ رَانَ عَلَى قُلُوبِهِمْ مَا كَانُوا يَكْسِبُونَ) قال: الذنب على الذنب حتى يموت وقال الحسن البصري: هو الذنب على الذنب، حتى يعمى القلب، فيموت. *see Tafsīr al-Ṭabarī*. *see Tafsīr Ibn Kathīr* وكذا قال مجاهد ابن جبر وقتادة، وابن زيد، وغيرهم

<sup>5</sup> عن الحسن: "ومنهم من يقول ربنا آتينا في الدنيا حسنة وفي الآخرة حسنة"، قال: الحسنة في الدنيا: العلم والعبادة، وفي الآخرة: الجنة *see Tafsīr al-Ṭabarī*.

said that when a man complained to him concerning the drought, another concerning his poverty, another lack of rain, another about having no offspring, he advised each of them to ask forgiveness from Allah. When they were doubtful of it, he said that it was not from his own, but following what Allah said in *surat Nūḥ* (chapter 71), citing the following verse:

فَقُلْتُ اسْتَغْفِرُوا رَبَّكُمْ إِنَّهُ كَانَ غَفَّارًا. يُرْسِلِ السَّمَاءَ عَلَيْكُمْ مِدْرَارًا. وَيُمْدِدْكُمْ  
بِأَمْوَالٍ وَبَنِينَ وَيَجْعَلْ لَكُمْ جَنَّاتٍ وَيَجْعَلْ لَكُمْ أَنْهَارًا (نوح:10-12)

*I [i.e. Noah] said to them: Ask forgiveness of your Lord, verily, He is Oft-Forgiving. He will send rain to you in abundance, And give you increase in wealth and children, and bestowed on you gardens, and bestow on you rivers. (Q., 71:10-12)*

Ibn Taymiyyah said that when the tyrant al-Ḥajjāj ibn Yūsuf al-Thaqafī (40-95/660-714) became the governor of Iraq, al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī said that he was sent by Allah as a punishment, and they should not repel it with their hands, but rather, they should be humble and submissive. Yet, he criticized him in front of people. Al-Ḥajjāj built a building for himself at Wāsiṭ (between Kufah and Basrah), then he invited people to spend good time with him and pray for him.

When al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī saw the crowd around the building, he advised them to keep away from worldly matters to seeking Allah's pleasure. He then said, "We have seen what the most evil person has done, the Pharaoh had built bigger and higher building than what he has built, but eventually Allah destroyed him and what he built. May al-Ḥajjāj know that the inhabitants of the heaven curse him, and the inhabitants of the earth mislead him.

One of the audiences who feared al-Ḥajjāj's punishment asked him to stop preaching, and said, "Enough, Abū Sa'īd, enough!" But he kept talking, saying that Allah had taken a covenant from the scholars to make it known and clear to people, and not to hide it, the same covenant betrayed by the People of the Book (Q., 3:178)

The next day, al-Ḥajjāj came and said to his people: "Woe on you! A slave belonging to the people of Basrah criticized us as he

pleased, and none of you challenged him. By Allah, I shall pour his blood on you, coward!” He ordered them to bring a sword, a *naṭʿ* (نطع, a leather mat put under the person whose head would be cut off), an executioner, as well as al-Ḥasan to him.

When al-Ḥasan came and saw the sword, the leather mat, and the executioner, he moved his lips, and came to al-Ḥajjāj with dignity and full confidence, whereas the audience worried for him. Seeing this unexpected behavior of al-Ḥasan, he changed his attitude and said: “Come here, Abū Saʿīd, come here!” and offered him to sit on his carpet. He looked at him, and started asking him various religious issues which he answered very well and with confidence.

“You are the master of scholars, Abū Saʿīd!” said al-Ḥajjāj, and asked his servant to bring him various kinds of perfume, rubbed it to al-Ḥasan’s beard, and then let him go. He was followed by al-Ḥajjāj’s guards who told him that al-Ḥajjāj had changed his mind, and asked him what he said when he moved his lips after seeing the sword and the leather mat. Al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī said: “I was praying, ‘O my Benefactor and my Protector in danger, make his torture cold and safe for me, as You have made fire cold and safe for Abraham’.” He was referring to the Qur’ānic verse Q. 21:69.

(CIVIC, 10 July, 2015)

المصادر:

المكتبة الشاملة

تفسير الطبري (ت. 310 هـ)

تفسير القرطبي (ت. 671 هـ)

تفسير ابن كثير (ت. 774 هـ)

د. عبد الرحمن رفعت باشا. صور من حياة التابعين للصف الثالث المتوسط 1406\1986

Ahmad von Denffer, *‘Ulūm al-Qur’ān*. Kuala Lumpur: A.S. Noordeen, 1991.

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## 5. AL-ḤASAN AL-BAṢRĪ (2)

A Bedouin was passing by Basrah and asked, “Who is the Master of the city?” It was said to him: “Al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī.” The Bedouin asked again: “How did he become their master?” They said: “It is because he does not need their worldly wealth, but they are in need of his knowledge.” He became a voluntary judge of Basrah in 102/ 720.

Al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī did not like conducting debates in matters of religion. For him this kind of debate would create doubt. When a man asked him to debate with him about Islam, he replied that he knew his religion, and if that man had lost his religion let him go and look for it. His reply to some questions indicated his piety.

When he was asked whether *Iblīs* (the Devil) slept, he said had *Iblīs* ever slept, then we would have time to have a rest. When he was asked how he was, he answered that his condition was worse than that of the people who were on board of a sinking ship in the middle of the sea, each was hanging on a piece of wood to save himself. In another time he said that his condition was like that of a person awaiting death in the morning and in the evening, not knowing whether he would survive through the night and in what condition he would die.

When he was asked about the world and the Hereafter, al-Ḥasan Al-Baṣrī, answered: “The world compared to the Hereafter is like the place of sunrise and the place of sunset. Whenever you come closer to one of them you would be farther away from the other. With regard to this world, it starts with tiredness and ends with annihilation. What is *ḥalāl* (legal, lawful, permitted) in it there is *ḥisāb* (reckoning, accounting), and what is *ḥarām* (illegal, unlawful, prohibited) in it there is punishment. Whoever becomes rich in it will be tested, and whoever becomes poor in it would be sad.”

Al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī was loved, respected and admired by his contemporaries. One of them was a man who was called Abū Qatādah al-‘Adawī. He advised people to follow him, and to keep close to him, as Abū Qatādah had never seen a man who had similar

opinions to that of 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb except him, and was one of the most knowledgeable people on the *ḥalāl* (lawful) and the *ḥarām* (unlawful) acts. His close neighbour, Khālid ibn Ṣafwān, said he had never seen a man like him; his outward appearance and words were identical to his inner reality and his deeds. When he enjoined what was right he was the first one to do it, and when he forbade what was wrong, he was the farthest away from it. He was never in need of people, but people were in need of him.

Some wise sayings of Al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī are as follows:

- Islam is the capital of a believer; it is always with him, he does not leave it behind when he travels, and he does not entrust it to another.
- Statements can only be correct with actions; statements and actions can only be correct with an intention; statements, actions and intention can only be correct if they are according to the Sunnah. (The Sunnah of the Prophet is his path which we Muslims should follow in order to reach our destination, namely, salvation in the Hereafter, without which we would go astray)
- The person who acts without knowledge is like a wayfarer without a way, and such a person ruins more than he fixes. Therefore seek knowledge, in a way that doesn't harm your worship, and seek worship, in a way that doesn't harm your knowledge seeking, for there was a nation that sought worship and neglected knowledge, until they went out with their swords against the *ummah* (nation) of Muhammad *s.a.w.* Had they sought knowledge, it wouldn't have led them to what they did.
- Evil has three foundations and six subsidiary branches. Its foundations are: envy, covetousness, and love of the worldly life. Its subsidiary branches are: love of leadership, love of boasting, love of praise, love of filling oneself with food, love of sleep, and love of relaxation.
- The goodness where there is no evil is: *shukr* (gratitude to Allah) in times of well-being, and *ṣabr* (patience) in times of misfortune. But

many people are not thankful when they are blessed, and are not patient when they are tried with misfortune.

- This world is but a dream that a sleeper sees—he delights in it for a few moments, and then wakes up to face reality.
- In order to be followed as an example, a Muslim has to be a father (mother) to young Muslims, a brother (sister) to other Muslims, or a son (or daughter) to the elders.
- Whoever does not find happiness in the *dhikr* (remembrance) of Allah, prayer, and reciting the Qu’ran, will not find it anywhere else.
- Life is made up of three days: yesterday which has gone along with all that was in it, tomorrow which you may never see, but today is for you, so work on it.
- Do not sit idle, because death is constantly seeking you.
- Someone has said that no one should do the religious duty **الْأَمْرُ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَ النَّهْيُ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ** (commanding what is good and prohibiting what is wrong), except an infallible person, namely, a person who does not make any mistake. Satan would like this statement, so that no one would command what is right and forbid what is wrong, as nobody is free from wrong-doing.
- If someone wants to know who he is, he should present himself to the Qur’ān, namely to know how good or how bad he is according to the teachings of the Qur’an.
- The best season is winter: its nights are long for those who want to pray night prayers, and its days are short for those who want to fast. This is contrary to the belief that the best season is summer, especially among Western people, where they can spend longer days enjoying themselves in the open air.
- We are people who would not do any act in public if we can do it in private. So, in making *du’ā’* (supplication) we do it without sound, but to whisper to our Lord.
- Do not feel safe from *fitnah* (test, calamity), and always ask Allah for keeping your *īmān* (faith in Islam) at the time of death.

- The sign of forgiveness given to the person who has been on *hajj* (pilgrimage to Makkah) is that he abandons the evils he used to commit.
- A man seeking knowledge could be seen in humbleness in his sight, in his tongue, in his hands, in his prayers, in his speech, and his disinterest in worldly temptation. A man possessing a portion of knowledge and put it into practice, it would be better for him than the world and its contents.
- Verily, Allah lets a person enjoy a blessing for as long as He wills. But when he is no longer thankful for it, He turns it into a punishment.
- Do not detest the misfortunes that befall you, for what you detest may be the cause of your salvation, and what you like may be the cause of your ruin.
- You will never truly love Allah until you love obeying Him.
- Among the signs that Allah has turned Himself away from a person is that he becomes occupied with that which does not concern him.

If the reports are genuine, al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī might have been endowed with a special kind of knowledge given to selected pious ascetic people called *الْعِلْمُ اللَّدْنِيّ*, namely, knowledge imparted directly by Allah through mystic intuition, as mentioned in the Qur'an, as follows:

... وَعَلَّمْنَاهُ مِنْ لَدُنَّا عِلْمًا (الكهف:65)

... whom [i.e. Khidr] We have taught knowledge  
from Us (Q. 18:65)

It was related that al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī saw some men was passing by dragging a body of a dead man. He fell unconscious, apparently from the shock. When he regained consciousness, he told his friends that the dead man had been a pious man before, but he became an apostate. How did he become an apostate? While on his way to the mosque to pray, he saw a beautiful woman, and he fell in love with her. When he asked her to marry her, she refused unless he followed her religion, Christianity. As he could not control his passion any longer he became Christian and married her.

Time passed by, the woman said to him: "You have forsaken your religion which was more important in your life for the sake of lust which has no value. Now, I am also forsaking my religion, but for the sake of eternal bliss under the care of the One, the Self-Sufficient." Then she recited *sūrat al-Ikhlāṣ*, as follows:

قُلْ هُوَ اللَّهُ أَحَدٌ . اللَّهُ الصَّمَدُ . لَمْ يَلِدْ وَلَمْ يُولَدْ .  
وَلَمْ يَكُنْ لَهُ كُفُوًا أَحَدٌ ( الإِخْلَاصُ : 1-4 )

*Say (O Muhammad): "He is Allah, (the) One, al-Samad (The Self-Sufficient Master, Whom all creatures need, He neither eats nor drinks). He begets not, nor was He begotten; And there is none co-equal or comparable unto Him." (Q., 112:1-4)*

When the people who heard her story asked her how she knew and memorized these verses, she said that it was through a dream. In her dream she was shown her place in Hell. She became terrified, but the angel Mālik, the keeper of Hell, told her not to be afraid, as Allah had ransomed her with that man, who would take her place in Hell, while the angel Mālik took her hand and admitted her to Paradise. She saw a line written in it as follows:

يَمْحُو اللَّهُ مَا يَشَاءُ وَيُثَبِّتُ وَعِنْدَهُ أُمُّ الْكِتَابِ (الرعد: 39)  
*Allah blots out what He wills and confirms (what He will), and with Him is the Mother of the Book (the Preserved Tablet). (Q. 13:39).*

Then the angel recited *surat al-Ikhlāṣ* (Q., 112) to her, and she began to repeat it, and she woke up memorizing it.

Another story was narrated by 'Aṭṭār in his *Muslim Saints and Mystics* that al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī had a neighbour who had been a fire-worshipper for over seventy years called Simeon. When the man fell ill nearing death, al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī visited him, advised him to fear Allah and to end his life by asking Allah's forgiveness. The man told him that he had been a fire-worshipper all his life, but Al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī persisted, and the man weeping accepted the belief in Allah. He told him that when he died he would let people wash his body, put

him in the grave with his (al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī's) hands, and place in his (Simeon's) hands the document declaring his conversion to Islam, as evidence. Feeling guilty of forcing Simeon to convert, al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī fell asleep and had a miraculous dream: he saw Simeon "glowing like a candle; on his head a crown, robed in fine raiment, he was walking with a smile in the garden of Paradise." He was amazed and Simeon thanked him for his warning, and he gave him (Simeon) back the parchment containing the declaration of faith. When al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī woke up, he saw the parchment in his hand, and thanked Allah for His mercy and asked for His forgiveness.

Al-Ḥasan Al-Baṣrī passed away on the first of Rajab, which was on Thursday night, 110 A.H./728 A.C. at the age of 89. His body was washed and the funeral prayer for it was conducted after the Friday prayer in grand mosque, where he had spent his time teaching and calling people to the path of Allah. That day the entire people of Basrah attended his funeral, that the mosque remained empty at the hour of *ʿaṣr* (later afternoon) prayer. It was the first time and the only time people did not pray obligatory prayers in that mosque.

One of many lessons we learn from al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī is that despite of his being the son of slaves he turned to become the most honourable person in his time and one among highly respected scholars in Islamic history. It is achievement that counts rather than descent.

(CIVIC, 14 August, 2015)

المصادر:

المكتبة الشاملة

( تفسير الطبري (ت. 310 هـ)

تفسير القرطبي (ت. 671 هـ)

تفسير ابن كثير (ت. 774 هـ)

د. عبد الرحمن رفعت باشا. صور من حياة التابعين للصف الثالث المتوسط 1406\1986  
Ahmad von Denffer, *ʿUlūm al-Qurʿān*. Kuala Lumpur: A.S. Noordeen,  
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<http://sunnahonline.com/library/biographies/365-al-hasan-al-basri>

<http://topfamousquotes.com/hasan-al-basri-quotes/>

## 6. BERNARD NABABAN

This is the story of Bernard Nababan, born at Tebing Tinggi, North Sumatra, Indonesia, on 10 November, 1966.<sup>1</sup> He was the third among seven children of a Christian family who wished him to be a clergyman. His father was a clergyman at Huria Batak Protestant Church and his mother was a conductress of hymns song in that church. After finishing his study at Christian Teaching Education School, he was admitted to Nomensen High School of Theology, a school for prospective clergymen in Medan.

Bernard in this High School of Theology was active in attending seminaries, and eventually he was appointed to be an Evangelist for three and a half years at the church where his father was a clergyman. As an Evangelist he was also active outside his school.

In 1989 Bernard Nababan and some of his friends were sent to a Muslim area to assist its people as well as to spread Biblical teachings, as Christianity stresses the significance of love and compassion towards fellow human beings. He was very optimistic in his mission, and explained it to the community leaders who offered him to conduct a dialogue. In the dialogue they appreciated his activity in assisting them materially, but not to spread Christianity, and to convert them to Christianity

The community leaders said that Christianity was not for them, but solely for the Children of Israel, as Jesus said, "I was sent only to the lost sheep of Israel" (Matthew 15:24).<sup>2</sup>

They started opening various versions of the Bible, and mentioned the weakness of the Bible one by one. They also discussed the dialogue between K.H. Bahauddin Mudhari with a Christian in the

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<sup>1</sup> The date 10<sup>th</sup> of November is coincident with the Indonesian *Hari Pahlawan* (Heroes' Day), observed every year to commemorate heavy fighting between Indonesian and British Allied forces at Surabaya on 10 November 1945. This was less than three months after Indonesia's Proclamation of Independence.

<sup>2</sup>It was Paul who propagated Christianity to non-Jews, violating the teaching of Jesus, in his letters to the Corinthians (see 1 Corinthians 12:13). No wonder if we say that the present Christianity is actually "Pauline Christianity".

island of Madura entitled *Dialog Ketuhanana Yesus* (Dialogue Concerning the Divinity of Jesus).<sup>3</sup> The dialogue ended only after the *ādhān* (the call for maghrib prayer).

When he returned to the boarding school the *Dialogue* left a deep impression on him. He read the book dealing with a Muslim and a Christian given to him impressed him more, that he read it twelve times. He started to teach less often than usual for three days consecutively. Apparently, the clergyman of the school noticed that he had conducted a dialogue with someone who understood the Bible. So, he told him: “It is unbelievable that you have been defeated by people who know only the weakness in the Bible, while you have learned it for 3.5 years, and you have also attended seminars on Christianity.”

After deep contemplation Bernard decided to stop becoming a prospective clergyman, and to leave the boarding school. At midnight he left the boarding school for good. But, where should he go? If he went home his parents would take him back to the boarding school and would interrogate him thoroughly. He just took a public transport not knowing where to go. In his flee he met a Muslim man from Java. He explained to him his escape from his school and parents, and that he was in a very grave condition. The man took him to Jember in Eastern Java where he stayed with him for one year and treated him like his brother. In return, he worked with him and helped him in his work. He did not practice his religion any longer, and he felt as he had lost guidelines.

While Bernard Nababan stayed in that house he felt peacefulness, his host never asked or persuaded him to convert to his religion, and highly respected freedom of religion. Bernard was amazed by this attitude, and he began to be attracted to Islam. He asked his host about Islam, and the host referred him to a scholar. They went to the house of Shaykh Khatib ‘Umar, the leader of the

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<sup>3</sup> The book has been translated into English by myself in 1988 entitled *Dialogue between a Muslim and a Christian*, with endnotes and 2 appendices; it can be read by visiting <http://www.muhamine.blogspot.com/>

Islamic boarding school *Rawḍatul ‘Ulūm*. Bernard explained to him his background, his religion and his religious activities, his doubt about the truth of the Bible that contained contradiction in its verses which indicated its weakness, and his wish to learn more about Islam.

On hearing this Shaykh Khatib ‘Umar became very moved by his story, and embraced Bernard spontaneously, saying: “You are a lucky man, as Allah has given you knowledge, so that you know that there are many weaknesses in the Bible. If you want to learn wholly about Islam it will take long time, as Islamic teachings cover widely all kinds of subjects. What is most important is learning and believing in the principles of faith in Islam.”

Bernard, by then, realized the big gap between Islam and Christianity which he believed. In Christianity he learned that there were three Gods (the Dogma of Trinity), namely, God the Father, God the Son, and the Holy Ghost. Christianity does not believe the messengership of Muhammad *s.a.w.*, and the Christians accused him of being a “*tukang kawin*” (a person whose hobby was to marry several women). They also believed in three Holy Scriptures only, the Torah, the Zabur (Psalms of David), and the Bible. Christianity does not believe in the torment in the grave, but all Christian will definitely enter Heaven. The most important thing for them was the crucifixion of Jesus to redeem the sin of people in this world.

The explanation of Shaykh Khatib ‘Umar extremely touched Bernard’s heart, and he realized that it agreed with his conscience. Comparing the two religions, Christianity and Islam, he came to the conclusion that Islam was more rational than Christianity, and he decided to embrace Islam.

The next day Bernard went to Shaykh Khatib Umar again to express his intention to embrace Islam. He had learned comparative study of religion for almost three years. The Shaykh was surprised and asked whether he had thought it over, and Bernard answered with “yes”.

Before conducting Bernard's conversion to Islam in 1991, Shaykh Khatib said: "As a matter of fact, you are not going to convert to Islam, but to revert to Islam. It is because you were born Muslim, and it is your environment that misguided you.<sup>4</sup> So, in fact, Islam is *fiṭrah* (natural disposition, innate character, instinct). It means that the Islamization of human beings is *sunnatullāh* (Allah's prescription), Allah's decision. Staying away from Islam is an irrational act, whereas returning to Islam means returning to one's natural disposition." Bernard became so moved to hear it, that he shed tears unconsciously. Then the shaykh led him pronouncing the *shahādah* (confession of faith), namely,

أَشْهَدُ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَأَشْهَدُ أَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا رَسُولُ اللَّهِ

*I bear witness that there is no god but Allah, and I bear witness that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah.*

The next day of the conversion (reversion) Bernard was circumcised and changed his name with Syamsul Arifin Nababan. He became a student of Shaykh Khatib in studying Islam thoroughly in the boarding school *Rawḍatul 'Ulūm* and strictly adhered to it from 1991 to 1993. Then he became home-sick. He was not only permitted to go, but also was given a provision of Rp. 10,000 to return to Northern Sumatra.

At home, none of his family recognized him, because he was wearing *gamīs* (a kind of dress or gown worn by Arab males, especially in Saudi Arabia), and a turban. He told them that he was Bernard Nababan who had fled from home, and told them that he had embraced Islam. His mother became choked, his elder brothers became very furious, and eventually he was expelled from home. This eviction made him stronger in his determination. He went to

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<sup>4</sup> The shaykh was referring to the *ḥadīth* of the Prophet who said, as narrated by Abū Hurayrah, كُلُّ مَوْلُودٍ يُوَلَّدُ عَلَى الْفِطْرَةِ فَأَبَوَاهُ يُهَوِّدَانِهِ أَوْ يُنَصِّرَانِهِ أَوْ يُمَجِّسَانِهِ كَمَثَلِ الْبَيْهَمَةِ كُلُّ مَوْلُودٍ يُوَلَّدُ عَلَى الْفِطْرَةِ فَأَبَوَاهُ يُهَوِّدَانِهِ أَوْ يُنَصِّرَانِهِ أَوْ يُمَجِّسَانِهِ كَمَثَلِ الْبَيْهَمَةِ . تَنْتَجِجُ الْبَيْهَمَةُ هَلْ تَرَى فِيهَا جَدْعَاءَ . "Every baby is born with natural disposition (to be a Muslim); it is then his parents who make him a Jew, or a Christian, or a Magian, like the animal, do you see any of it with amputated limbs?" (Reported by Bukhārī, Muslim, and Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal).

several cities and towns to propagate Islam. His speeches were warmly welcomed by his audience. Eventually, he became stranded in Jakarta and moved to it. His *da'wah* (calling to Islam) activity increased and developed. In the meantime, he got scholarship to study Islam at LIPIA (*Lembaga Ilmu Pengetahuan Islam dan Arab*), *Ma'had al-'Ulūm al-Islāmiyyah wa 'l-'Arabiyyah* (the Institute of Islamic Knowledge and Arabic Language) in Jakarta from 1996 till 1999. From 1998 to 2001 he attended IAIA (Institut Agama Islam Al-Aqidah), *Al-'Aqidah Institute of Islamic Studies* in Jakarta, and in 2003 he attended the Qur'anic Studies at IIQ (Insitut Ilmu Qur'an), *Institute of Qur'anic Knowledge* in post graduate level.

In 1997 he was invited by the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to perform the *hajj* (pilgrimage to Makkah), the fifth principle of Islam. Upon his return he succeeded in converting two of his brothers to Islam, and to propagate Islam. He started preaching from mosque to mosque, and from office to office. He also had a chance to deliver his speeches in the U.S.A. and Australia.

One of many of his achievements was that he founded an Islamic boarding school called *An Naba' Centre* located in Bentaro area, South Tangerang, for new Muslims. There were about sixty of them, coming from various areas in Indonesia. He also became the Chairman of *Majlis 'Ulama' Indonesia* (Ketua MUI, Chairman of the Council of Muslim scholars) at Ciputat, Indonesia.

Syamsul Arifin Nababan attended seminars on Islam in Indonesia as well as abroad. They are chronologically as follows:

- A one day Seminar on Comparative Religion (held in Medan at Asrama Haji on February 14th, 2006).
- International Seminar on Islamic Brotherhood: An Indonesian Experience (held in Singapore, May 17th, 1998).
- International Seminar on Islam as a Universal Religion (*rahmatan lil'alamin*) (held in Sydney and Melbourne Australia on September-October 1th-10th 2007).
- International Seminar on Human Rights on Qur'anic Perspective (held in Malaka, Malaysia on May 19th 1998).

Bernard Nababan whose parents wanted him to become a clergyman, but Allah had another plan. He became, not only a Muslim and changed his name to Syamsul Arifin Nababan, but also a *dā'iyah*, a person who invites people to Islam through his speeches. He said that his family name NABABAN was unique, that even if you read it backward it will remain the same, NABABAN. His articles, books, and unpublished papers chronologically are as follows:

- Debate on Islam versus Christianity, on CD, 2004.
- Reflection and Internalisation of Sacrifice Values on a New Indonesian Perspective, *Waspada News Paper*, 2006.
- The Prophet Jesus on Qur'anic Perspective, 2006.
- The Critique of the Qur'an towards the Bible, 2006
- National Seminar on "Peace and Human Rights In Islamic Perspective" (held in Papua on December 13<sup>th</sup>, 2006).
- The Mentioning of Prophet Muhammad in the Bible, 2007.
- The Urgency of Studying Comparative Religion, 2007.
- An Interview of Spiritual Experiences, *Tarbawi and Gontor Magazine*, 2008.
- A 100 Questions on Comparative Religion, 2008.
- Questioning on Authenticity of Bible, 2008.
- A Collection of Islamic Friday Sermon, 2008.
- The Actual Sermons of Ustadz Nababan, 2008.
- The Rejection of the Bible against Jesus's Divinity (n.d.).

May Allah reward him for his dedication to Islamic propagation.

CIVIC, 21 August, 2015

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## 7. ABŪ HURAYRAH (1)

One of the companions of the Prophet who narrated the *ḥadīths* (traditions) of the Prophet the most was Abū Hurayrah. He was the most prolific narrator of *ḥadīths* as he had narrated about 5,375 *ḥadīths* despite the three years he spent in the Prophet's company. Imām al-Bukhārī said that more than eight hundred people among the *ṣaḥābah* (the Prophet's companions) and the *tābi'īn* (people belonging to the generation following that of the *ṣaḥābah*) who reported from him, including Ibn 'Abbās, Ibn 'Umar, Jābir ibn 'Abd Allāh, and Anas ibn Mālīk.

Abū Hurayrah was born in Yemen of al-Dawsī al-Azdī tribe in 19 BH (before Hijrah)/603 CE, and was named at birth 'Abd Shams ("Servant of the Sun" or "Worshipper of the Sun"). His father Ṣakhr ("Rock") had died, leaving him with his mother Maymūnah bint Ṣubayḥ without any other relative. When Ṭufayl ibn 'Amar, the chieftain of his tribe, returned after meeting the Prophet, Abū Hurayrah was one of the first to answer the call to Islam among his tribe. He was a boy of sixteen years old.

When Abū Hurayrah came with his mother to Madīnah in the seventh year after Hijrah (629 CE) the Prophet was at the campaign of Khaybar, so he stayed in the mosque among the *Ahl al-Ṣuffah*.<sup>1</sup> Because of hunger he staggered, and people pressed their feet on his neck, mistakenly thinking that he was being attacked by epilepsy. He was a little over 33 at that time, was single without a wife or a child. The Prophet changed his name with 'Abd al-Raḥmān, and when he saw him carrying a kitten, he gave him the nickname "Abū Hurayrah" (lit. "Father of a Kitten", meaning "the Owner of a kitten").<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> *Ṣuffah* is a shelter at the backside of the Prophet's mosque prepared for poor people among his companions who did not have either a place to live or a relative to stay with. They were called *Ahl al-Ṣuffah* ("the people living in the Shelter") or *Aṣḥāb al-Ṣuffah* ("the Companions of the Shelter").

<sup>2</sup> It is said that Abū Hurayrah in pre-Islamic era was a sheep tender. One day he found a stray kitten, took care of it as a company, and in the evening, he put it on a branch of a tree, for fear of being attacked by wild animals a night. The next morning he took it again to accompany him in tendering sheep. He was then called "the Owner of a Kitten" ("Abū Hurayrah").

When Abū Hurayrah’s mother was still an idolater and rejected to embrace Islam and said some bad words about the Prophet he came to him crying, and asked him to pray for her to accept Islam. When he returned home he heard the splashing of water and her mother told him to wait. When she came out and let him get in she was dressed and pronounced the *shahādah*, “I bear witness that there is no god but Allah, and I bear witness that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah.” He came again to the Prophet with tears of joy of the good news of his mother’s conversion to Islam. But because he and his mother were strangers and had no relative, he asked the Prophet to pray for them. The Prophet prayed that Allah would make people love them.<sup>3</sup>

Abū Hurayrah remained courteous to his mother throughout his life. Before leaving home he stood at the door of her room and greeted her and prayed for her, and his mother answered his greeting also with prayer. He also used to say to her, “May Allah have mercy on you as you cared for me when I was young.” His mother replied, “May Allah have mercy on you as you delivered me from being lost when I was old.”

Abū Hurayrah once rebuked a young man whom he thought less respectful to his parent. He saw a young man walking with an old man. He asked the young man about the old one. When he learned that he was his father, he advised him not to call his father by his name, not to walk in front of him, and not to sit before him (while his father was standing).

When some people complained that Abū Hurayrah narrated from the Prophet more than they did, he said that his *muhājirīn* (emigrant) brothers were busy in the market, whereas his *anṣār* (the people of Madinah who assisted the *muhājirīn*) brothers were busy working in their fields and gardens. But he (Abū Hurayrah) used to stick to the Prophet, kept accompanying him wherever he went, contented with what would fill his stomach and he used to attend

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<sup>3</sup>The Muslims loved him when they heard Abū Hurayrah’s name was mentioned, and considered him blessed by Allah with unfailing memory, except people among the Shī’ah who considered him unreliable transmitter.

that which they used not to attend, and he used to memorize that which they used not to memorize. (Reported by Bukhari)

When Abū Hurayrah became extremely hungry he placed a stone on his stomach. One day Abū Bakr was passing by, and he asked him about the meaning of a verse of the Qur'ān—although he knew it-- expecting to be invited for a meal, but this did not happen. He tried also with 'Umar, but 'Umar told him smilingly that he could not invite him as he had nothing to feed him. When the Prophet was passing by, he realized that he was hungry. He asked him to follow him to his house. He found a bowl of milk sent by someone, and asked Abū Hurayrah to go to the *Aṣḥāb al-Ṣuffah* and to invite them. They were the emigrant who had no home, business or work, but were the first to respond to any call for jihad against disbelievers. They came and all of them drank from the bowl of milk, and still had some for the Prophet and Abū Hurayrah. In another occasion the Prophet invited them and presented to them a plate of dates, each with two dates, whereas Abū Hurayrah also took two dates, one for himself and another for his mother.

When people thought that he had done too much, one day he stood at the door of the mosque. Whenever someone came out he asked him what the *imām* had read in the '*ishā*' (night) prayer, and some of them became confused. He then said to them: "You have just now prayed with the *imām*, and yet you forget what the *imām* cited in his prayer, now you want to be like me in memorizing the *ḥadīths* of the Prophet."

Abū Hurayrah also said that he narrated many *ḥadīths* because Allah said:

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَكْتُمُونَ مَا أَنْزَلْنَا مِنَ الْبَيِّنَاتِ وَالْهُدَىٰ مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا بَيَّنَّاهُ لِلنَّاسِ فِي الْكِتَابِ أُولَٰئِكَ يَلْعَنُهُمُ اللَّهُ وَيَلْعَنُهُمُ اللَّاعِنُونَ . إِلَّا الَّذِينَ تَابُوا وَأَصْلَحُوا وَبَيَّنُّوا فَأُولَٰئِكَ أَتُوبُ عَلَيْهِمْ وَأَنَا التَّوَّابُ الرَّحِيمُ .

(160 البقرة: 159-160)

*Verily, those who conceal the clear proofs, evidences and the guidance, which We have sent down, after We have made it clear for the people in the Book, they are the ones cursed by Allah and cursed by the cursers. Except those who repent and do righteous deeds, and openly declare (the truth which they concealed). These, I will accept their repentance.*

*And I am the One Who accepts repentance, the Most Merciful. (q. 2:159-160)*

Had it not been for the two verses in the Qur'an as mentioned above, he would not have narrated a single *ḥadīth*.

After the death of the Prophet Abū Hurayrah went to the market and told people that the inheritance of the Prophet was being distributed in the mosque, and urged them to come to have their share in the inheritance. So, they came to the mosque, but they found nothing distributed, so they came to him, saying that there was nothing there distributed. He asked them what they had seen in the mosque. When they told him that what they had seen there were people praying, reading the Qur'ān, and discussing about *ḥalāl* and *ḥarām*. "That is the inheritance of the Prophet," said Abū Hurayrah.

At the time of Abū Bakr he took part in the battle against the apostates and deniers of *zakat*, and in the battle of Yarmuk against the Romans. At the time of 'Umar he was appointed Governor of Bahrayn Province (Eastern part of the Peninsula) for two and a half years, as 'Umar did not keep anyone in any important position for long. Abū Hurayrah returned to Makkah with wealth. 'Umar asked him how he became rich, he informed him that he traded in his spare time and earned profits, gifts from people as well as piling his own salary. 'Umar said: "Nay! I believe since you were the Governor, they traded with you on favorable terms in order to win your favor. You better cut it into two and deposit one half in the public treasury."

Abū Hurayrah did not protest and did not say, for example, “I acquired my wealth through *ḥalāl* (lawful) means, and it is up to me how much I shall give to the public treasury.” Instead, he agreed with ‘Umar’s suggestion. He must have thought of the accountability in the Hereafter, and therefore he was happy to deposit half of his wealth to the *bayt al-Māl* (Public Treasury).

‘Umar offered him again to employ him, but he declined. ‘Umar asked him why he rejected the position and said:

“You have rejected the position which had been asked by a person better than you.”

“Who was that person,” asked Abū Hurayrah.

“Yūsuf son of Ya‘qūb *a.s.*” said ‘Umar.

“Yūsuf was a prophet, and son of a prophet, and I am just Abū Hurayrah son of Umaymah. I am after three things or two,” said Abū Hurayrah.

“Do you mean five?,” asked ‘Umar

“I fear to speak without knowledge and judge without wisdom, my back beaten, my wealth taken, and my honour abused,” said Abū Hurayrah.

At the time of ‘Uthmān when he was in his house surrounded by his enemy who wanted to kill him, Abū Hurayrah was with him to defend him. But ‘Uthman told him to lay down his sword, because it is him, not Abū Hurayrah whom they wanted. So, he threw his sword, and since then, he did not know where it was.

When the caliph Marwān ibn al-Ḥakam wanted to test Abū Hurayrah’s memory, he sat him in a room, and unknown to him, a scribe behind a curtain was ordered to write down whatever he said. A year later, he called Abū Hurayrah again to recall the *ḥadīths* he had said before, and it was the same with what the scribe had recorded without any mistake, indicating his strong memory.

While Abū Hurayrah was sick and lying in his bed the caliph Marwān ibn al-Ḥakam visited him and found him weeping. When he asked him why he was weeping, he said: “I am not weeping because of leaving this world of yours, but I am weeping because of the long journey, lack of provision, and I am standing at the end of the road leading either to Heaven or Hell, and I do not know which one I shall follow.” The caliph said to him: “May Allah heal you, O Abū Hurayrah.” But he prayed: “O Allah, I like to meet You, so like also to meet me, and make it quick.” No sooner than the caliph left his house, he passed away. He died in 59 AH/681 CE in Madinah at the age of 78 and was buried at al-Baqī’ cemetery.

(CIVIC, 28 August, 2015)

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## 8. ABŪ HURAYRAH (2)

Abū Hurayrah's company with the Prophet lasted about three years. He came to Madinah when the Prophet was at Khaybar campaign at the 7<sup>th</sup> year of Hijrah. It was in the month of Şafar, and he passed away in Rabī' al-Awwal, 11<sup>th</sup> year of Hijrah, so that they spent over four years. But Abū Hurayrah said that he had accompanied the Prophet for over three years. He did not count the time when the Prophet was away from Madinah when he did not accompany him, but was left behind in Madinah.

It is said that there are 5,374 *ḥadīths* narrated by Abū Hurayrah in the books of *ḥadīths* in these three years of accompanying the Prophet. These three years equal to over 1,050 days. If Abū Hurayrah narrated averagely five *ḥadīths* a day, the total would be over 5,255 *ḥadīths*. A *ḥadīth* technically, is not only what the Prophet said, but also what he did, what he approved, either a statement, an act done in front of him, or heard by him. It also includes a statement concerning the behaviour and character of the Prophet, such as how the Prophet went out to pray, *etc.* In this case, it would not be difficult for Abū Hurayrah to narrate the approximate five *ḥadīths* a day.

It is not an exaggeration that Abū Hurayrah narrated over 5,000 *ḥadīths* if we consider the following case:

- a. A *ḥadīth* could be sound (*ṣaḥīḥ*), weak (*ḍaʿīf*), and even invented, fabricated (*mawḍūʿ*), for example, a *ḥadīth* claimed to have been narrated by Abū Hurayrah, but he did not narrate it. We still call it a *ḥadīth*, an invented one, to record it in history, so that we know that it is not genuine.
- b. A *ḥadīth* consists of *matn* (text) and *sanad* (chains of transmitters), in order to know who said so from whom, whether the persons are reliable, have strong memory, or unreliable, liars, *etc.* One *matn* could have more than one *sanad*, but the *matn* remains the same. If there are ten *sanads*, scholars of *ḥadīths* do not count it one *ḥadīth* based on its *matn*, but ten *ḥadīths* based

on its *sanad*, some of them could be sound or weak based on the quality of its transmitters.

- c. Some of the *ḥadīths* narrated by Abū Hurayrah were not directly from the Prophet, but he took them from the *ṣaḥābah* who were earlier than him, as he started to accompany the Prophet only on the 7<sup>th</sup> year of the Hijrah. Before that he took the *ḥadīths* from them.
- d. Abū Hurayrah was with the Prophet in Madinah in four years because he did not count the time when the Prophet was outside Madinah. It does not mean that he did not see the Prophet in one year. He might have narrated some *ḥadīths* in that period.

shaykh Muhammad Rashīd Riḍā says that there are many factors leading to narrating many *ḥadīths* by Abū Hurayrah, as follows:

1. He intended to preserve the sayings of the Prophet and his actual condition, so that people would get benefit from them. Therefore, he kept accompanying him and asked him question, whereas some companions did not venture to ask him, except in case of necessity. Ubayy ibn Ka‘b said that Abū Hurayrah was courageous in asking the Prophet questions which other than him would not ask him. One example was reported by Bukhārī, as follows:

قُلْتُ يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ مَنْ أَسْعَدُ النَّاسِ بِشَفَاعَتِكَ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ فَقَالَ لَقَدْ ظَنَنْتُ  
يَا أَبَا هُرَيْرَةَ أَنْ لَا يَسْأَلَنِي عَنْ هَذَا الْحَدِيثِ أَحَدٌ أَوْلُ مِنْكَ لِمَا رَأَيْتُ مِنْ  
حِرْصِكَ عَلَى الْحَدِيثِ أَسْعَدُ النَّاسِ بِشَفَاعَتِي يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ مَنْ قَالَ لَا  
إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ خَالِصًا مِنْ قَبْلِ نَفْسِهِ (رواه البخاري و أحمد)

*I (Abū Hurayrah) said: "O Messenger of Allah, who will be the luckiest people with your intercession in the Resurrection Day?"*

*He said: "I thought O Abū Hurayrah that nobody would ask me about this matter before you because I see your eagerness about it; the luckiest people with my intercession in the Resurrection Day is the one who say sincerely from himself, that there is no god but Allah."*

(Reported by Bukhārī and Aḥmad)

2. Abū Hurayrah was constantly with the Prophet's company, following him even when he visited his wives and companions, even in the middle of the street, in order to get learn from it. Therefore, this short period of accompanying the Prophet is equal to many years the *ṣaḥābah* spent in accompanying the Prophet. Many of them did not see him except in the time of prayer, or meeting with him, or visiting him for important matters. 'Abdullah ibn 'Umar said that Abū Hurayrah was better than him and knew more about what happened. He also said to him: "You have accompanied the Messenger of Allah the most, and you know the most about his *ḥadīths*. Ṭalḥah ibn 'Ubaydillah said, 'There is no doubt that Abū Hurayrah heard what we do not hear."
3. Abū Hurayrah had strong memory which was the characteristic of many people living in the desert in the time of Bedouin life where they relied on their memory. They said that if people relied on their writing their memory would become weak, and they were proud of their strong memory. Imām al-Shāfi'ī and al-Bukārī both admitted that Abū Hurayrah was the reporter of *ḥadīths* who memorized the most in his time. 'Umar also admitted it and told Abū Hurayrah: "You are the one who accompanied the Messenger of Allah the most, and who preserved his *ḥadīth* the most."
4. The good news from the Prophet that he would have strong memory. Abū Hurayrah complained to the Prophet for his short memory, that he heard many narrations from him, but he forgot them. The Prophet told him to spread his garment. He did, and the Prophet moved his hands as if filling them with something, then emptied them in Abū Hurayrah's garment, and said: "Take and wrap this sheet over your body." He did it, and after that he never forgot anything he heard from the Prophet (Reported by Bukhari). He said that nobody memorized the sayings of the Prophet more than himself except 'Abd Allāh ibn 'Amr, because he was literate and was allowed by the Prophet to write what he heard from him.

5. The Prophet's prayer for Abū Hurayrah. A man came to Zayd ibn Thābit asking about something. He said, "You must go to Abū Hurayrah, for while I, he and So-and-so were in the mosque doing our *du'a* (supplication), the Prophet came, sat down and said, "Go back to where you are." So, I and my companion made our *du'a*, and the Prophet said, "*āmīn*". Then Abū Hurayrah made his *du'a* and said: "O Allah, I ask You like what they have asked You, and I ask You knowledge which would not be forgotten," and the Prophet said, "*āmīn*!" So, we said, "We ask Allah knowledge which would not be forgotten," and the Prophet said, "The Dawsī man (meaning Abū Hurayrah) has overtaken you." (Reported by al-Ḥākim). Abū Hurayrah occupied himself in narrating *ḥadīths* intentionally, because he memorized them in order to spread them, whereas the majority of the *ṣaḥābah* mentioned the *ḥadīths* out of necessity only dealing with a legal judgment, *fatwa* or in giving evidence. A person who occupies himself with something would remember it the most, whether with an occasion or without it, as his objective was teaching itself.
6. Abū Hurayrah narrated what he heard and what was narrated by others among the *ṣaḥābah*, and eager to know the narration of earlier *ṣaḥābah*, such as Abū Bakr, 'Umar, Ubayy ibn Ka'b, Usāmah ibn Zayd and 'Ā'ishah. He mentioned them by name, but sometimes, he did not mention them.

The contemporary scholar in his essay "In Defence of Abu Hurayrah" says that the main sources of these allegations against Abū Hurayrah are the Shī'īs and the students of Orientalists. For the former, many examples are found in the work of the Lebanese Shī'ī 'Abd al-Ḥusayn Sharaf al-Dīn al-Amalī entitled *Abū Hurayrah*. These examples were refuted by Dr. Muhammad Ajāj al-Khaṭīb (Professor at the University of Damascus, Colleges of Sharī'ah and Education) in his Master's thesis entitled *السُّنَّةُ قَبْلَ التَّدْوِينِ* (the Sunnah before Its Compilation) (Cairo, 1963), and his work *Abū Hurayrah Rāwī al-Islām* (Abū Hurayrah the Reporter of Islam) (Cairo, 1962). With regard to the latter, most of the arguments of the Orientalists were

summarized by the Egyptian Maḥmūd Abū Rayyah in his work *أضواءٌ على السنة المحمّديّة* (*Enlightenment on the Muhammadan Sunnah*) (Cairo, 1958) where he attempted to show that the whole *Sunnah*, namely *ḥadīths* attributed to the Prophet were nothing but fabrication and lies, and therefore, Abū Hurayrah's genuineness was questionable. He was known later as one of the exponents and champions of the *Inkār al-Sunnah* (Rejection of Sunnah), followed by the self-claimed prophet Dr. Rashad Khalifa, and presently, Dr. Ahmad Sobhi Mansour the founder of *Ahl al-Qur'ān* (the Qur'ānist), now living in the USA.

Abū Rayyah's arguments were challenged by many scholars, such as Dr. Muṣṭafā al-Sibā'ī, the founder of Muslim Brotherhood in Syria, in his thesis entitled *السنة و مكانتها في التشريع الإسلامي* (*the Sunnah and Its Position in the Islamic Legislation*) (Cairo, 1961), Shaykh 'Abd al-Razzāq Ḥamzah, the Head of *Dār al-Ḥadīth* in Makkah, and the Imām of Masjid al-Ḥarām, in his book entitled *ظلمات أبي رية أمام السنة النبوية* (*the Darkness of Abū Rayyah before the Prophetic Sunnah*) (Cairo, n.d.), and Shaykh 'Abd al-Raḥmān ibn Yaḥyā, the librarian of Masjid al- al-Ḥarām, his book is entitled *الأنوار الكاشفة لما في كتاب أضواء على السنة من الزلل والتضليل والمجازفة* (القاهرة، 1378 هـ). A comprehensive work defending most of the objections against Abū Hurayrah is that of an Iraqi Muslim Brotherhood scholar, 'Abd al-Mun'im Ṣāliḥ al-'Alī al-'Izzī, entitled (بغداد، 1393\1973) *دفاع عن أبي هريرة*.

The allegation that 'Umar beat Abū Hurayrah with a shield for relating too many *ḥadīths* and accused him lying is not found in the *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, but by the Shī'ī Mu'tazilī Ibn Abī 'l-Ḥadīd in his commentary of *Nahj al-Balāghah* quoting another Shī'ī Mu'tazilī Abū Ja'far al-Iskāfī without *sanad* (chains of transmitters), and therefore cannot be verified. 'Umar never beat Abū Hurayrah.

Bishr al-Marīsī's claim that 'Umar said that Abū Hurayrah was the greatest liar among the narrators of *ḥadīths* was responded by al-Dārimī in his book *رد الإمام الدارمي عثمان بن سعيد على بشر المريسي العنيد* ، in which he said that it would be unlikely that 'Umar accused him of being a big liar, but at the same time he appointed him in charge of

important posts. Moreover, ‘Umar’s grand-sons, among whom were Sālim ibn ‘Abd Allāh, and Ḥafṣ ibn ‘Aṣim related *ḥadīths* from Abū Hurayrah from the Prophet. If Abū Hurayrah were a liar, ‘Umar would have warned his grand-sons from taking *ḥadīths* from him.

Although ‘Ā’ishah corrected Abū Hurayrah’s mistakes in the *ḥadīths*, she did not accuse him of being a liar. For example, he said that a person who was still in the state of *janābah* (major ritual impurity) till morning in Ramaḍān was not allowed to fast, based on a *ḥadīth* he heard from Faḍl ibn ‘Abbās and not the Prophet. This was also the view of some *tābiṭ* such as ‘Ā’ishah’s nephew ‘Urwah ibn al-Zubayr. This was also the view of Ṭāwūs, ‘Aṭā’, Sālim ibn ‘Abd Allāh ibn ‘Umar, al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī, and Ibrāhīm al-Nakhā’ī. ‘Ā’ishah said that it was allowed to fast for people who were in a state of full ritual impurity. Imān al-Zarkashī said the legal judgment of the *ḥadīth* had been abrogated, but Abū Hurayrah did not know it.

These are some examples of allegations against Abū Hurayrah and had been replied by our Muslim scholars.

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## 9. IRENE (IRENA) HANDONO

Last Sunday (6 September 2015) the Indonesian/Muslim community in Canberra was visited by one of prominent *da'is* (Islamic callers) in Indonesia, called Hajjah Irene Handono. She was on her tour in some cities in Australia, such as Sydney, Canberra, and Melbourne. Like many people who have found Islam and propagate it, such as Yusuf Estes and Gary Miller, Irene Handono is also active in propagating it as well as founding a foundation to assist new Muslim ladies. How she found Islam and some of her activities are as follows:

Irene Handono was born on 20<sup>th</sup> of July 1954 in Surabaya, Eastern Java, Indonesia, and was raised in a pious Catholic family. She was baptized when she was still a baby, and attended school like other children, but she also attended private religious courses. As a teenager she was active in the Church organization. It was her wish to serve God with her whole life, and as a Catholic it was living in monastery which was the noblest life. Becoming a religious sister was the only purpose of her life.

Irene Handono's early life was a prosperous one. Her family's house was very big, and she was of Chinese ethnicity, the youngest and the only female of five children of the family. Her father was a well-known business man in Surabaya, and one of the main contributors to the Church. She was endowed with many talents, as her academic achievements were always satisfactory, and she was appointed the youngest chairperson in one of Church organizations.

After finishing her high school education Irene Handono's wish to become a religious sister became stronger and stronger, especially after noticing interaction among youth. Her parents became astonished, as they would be separated from their only daughter, but as pious parents they eventually consented. On the contrary, her elder brothers were proud of having a pious sister.

In the monastery there were only two sisters who were given double duty, including Irene Handono, namely, attending the education in the monastery and the Institute of Theological Philosophy. She attended the Faculty of Comparative Religion,

Department of “Islamology”. It was here that for the first time she learned about Islam. At the introduction lecture, the lecturer said that the best religion was Christianity, whereas other religions were not good. Islam, he said, was bad, by giving examples, such as: “Who are poor in Indonesia? Who are uneducated, dirty, vile, living at the flooded plain of the river? Who are those who used to lose foot-wears every Friday, who cannot be united, who become terrorists? They are Muslims, so their religion Islam is bad.”

Irene Handono said that this conclusion had to be verified. She said that other countries like Philippines, and Mexico, where the majority of their peoples are Christians were not better. Even the state of Israel was created by plundering the land of the Palestinians. Therefore, Islam was not a symbol of evilness, and she was interested in learning further about Islam from its sources, the Qur’ān and the *Ḥadīth*, and she was allowed to do so by her priest with one condition, namely, finding the weakness of Islam.

When she opened the Qur’ān she did not know anything about it as it was written in Arabic. So, she took its translation, and started reading it, not from its beginning which was at the right side, but from the end which was at the left side of the book. The first thing she read was *sūrat al-Ikhlāṣ* (chapter 112) which read:

*Say: He is God, the One and Only. God, the Eternal,  
Absolute; He begetteth not, nor is He begotten. And  
there is none like unto Him (A.Y. Ali’s translation)*

After reading this she said to herself: “This is good, and is acceptable.” The next day in the morning the lecturer in his lecture on theology said that God was one, but had three personalities, namely God the Father, God the Son, and the Holy Ghost. Three gods in one, one god in three and this is called Trinity or Triunity. At night she read *sūrat al-Ikhlāṣ* again, stating “God is One.” She said to herself, “This is the right one.”

The next day she said to her priest that she did not understand yet the true nature of God.” The pastor went to the blackboard and drew an equilateral triangle where  $AB=BC=CA$ . He explained that it

was one triangle but had three sides which meant that God is one but has three personalities: God the Father has the same authority with God the Son, and has the same authority with the Holy Ghost. She argued that if it were so, one day with the advance of science and technology God with three personalities would not be able to handle this world, that there should be another personality so that He would have four personalities. The pastor said that it would be impossible, but she said it could be. She drew a circle and a quadrangle inside it. But the pastor said that it was not allowed because it was a dogma made by Church leaders. She asked what to do if she did not understand that dogma, and the pastor answered that she should just accept it, whereas doubting it would be a sin.

One day Irene Handono asked her pastor who made the pulpit, the chair and the table. As her pastor asked her to answer it herself she said they were made by the carpenter. They would remain made of wood; they would never become a carpenter. A human being will remain a human being till the Doomsday and would not be able to make himself God, and God cannot be treated like a human being. Her argument with her Pastor was that God created the universe including human beings as His slaves (servants). If any human being appointed another human being as God, this appointment would be invalid. She learned from the Church history that Jesus was called God for the first time, and was appointed God by the Roman emperor Constantine in 325 at the Council of Nicaea. Jesus never said, "I am your God" in the bible of Matthew, Mark, Luke or John.

In the next meeting Irene Handono said that she did not find any weakness in the Qur'ān, and she was sure that nobody could. She kept reading the translation of the Qur'ān until she made a conclusion that the right religion was only one, Islam. She learned the true Mary in the Qur'ān, *sūrat Maryam* (chapter Mary), whereas in the Catholic doctrine her position was extraordinarily high, that almost every prayer was said through her intercession. Strangely enough, there was no bible of Mary. However, she converted to Islam six years later.

Irene Handono left the monastery and continued her study at Atmajaya University, and married a Catholic man, hoping that after marriage she would not be engaged in matter of religion. But this did not happen. She had long discussions with her husband who was an activist student. The discussions turned into debate and quarrels, as she always defended Islam. The gap between her and her husband became wider and wider, until it reached its climax. She realized that her marriage is on the rock. She found a Muslim scholar who would teach her about Islam, as she had learned about it through reading only. His name was (the late) K.H. Misbah, former Chairman of the Council of '*Ulamā*' (Muslim scholars) of Eastern Java. When she told him her intention to embrace Islam, he told her that to become Muslim was easy but she had to be ready to bear the consequence. When she said that she was ready with it, he asked:

“Do you know the consequence?”

“Yes, I know, my marriage,” she said.

“Which one do you prefer, your marriage or Islam?” he asked.

“Islam,” she answered firmly.

She declared her *shahadah* in front of him. It was in the year 1983 in the Al-Falah mosque in Surabaya when she was 26 years old. Her 5 years of marriage endowed with two sons and one daughter ended with divorce. However, all her children became Muslims.

One day before Ramadan that year she started praying. One of her elder brothers was looking for her. When he opened the door of her room he was surprised to find a woman praying. He closed the door thinking that another woman was praying. The next day the same thing happened and he learned that it was his sister, who was praying. He was stunned, shocked, unable to speak his face became red and pale. Since then her family relationship became damaged. Her religion was not acceptable, and she had to leave the house. She rent a modest house in Surabaya. As the only daughter in the family, her mother visited her occasionally. She did not accept Islam, as she had already had negative thinking about Islam. Six years later her mother passed away, and since then there were no contact any longer with the members of the rest of her family.

In 1992 Irene Handono performed the pilgrimage to Makkah. She expressed her feeling since she became Muslim, and “complaint” to Allah. “O Allah, as You have preordained me to become Muslim, why didn’t You make me a daughter of Muslim parents, like most of my brothers and sisters in faith? In this way I would not have to endure much suffering. Why should my life journey become so intricate and complicated like this?” In the *Masjid al-Ḥarām* (Inviolable Mosque) Irene Handono thanked Allah for His guidance and asked Him forgiveness. She felt and enjoyed the bliss of faith and Islam, which, according to her, might not have been enjoyed by people who had become Muslims since seven generations.

Allah gave her the power and ability to deliver speeches and to call people to Islam, not only in Surabaya, but she was also invited several times to deliver her speeches about Islam in Jakarta. Allah endowed her blessings including meeting and marrying Masruchin Yusufi, a Muslim scholar, a widower with five children. They both were active in propagating Islam even in remote villages in Indonesia. She said that the challenge was so big, but she had conviction that her life and her death were only for the sake of Allah.

Irene Handono wrote many books, among which are as follows:

- *Perayaan Natal 25 Desember: Antara Dogma & Toleransi* (Christmas celebrations on 25<sup>th</sup> December: between Dogma and Tolerance) in which she explained, among others, why *casuarina* tree is used as a Christmas tree, while there is no such tree in Palestine, and why the Christmas falls on the 25<sup>th</sup> of December.
- *Islam Dihujat* (Islam is Blasphemed) to respond Robert Morey’s book *Islamic Invasion* which has become a guide book by the Church the world over, and which she thought was worse than Salman Rushdie’s *Satanic Verses*, because it said, among others, that the Prophet suffered from epilepsy and sexual abnormality.

Speaking about Christianization Strategy in Indonesia she said that the Christians build 1,000 schools free of charge, so that Muslims who are unable to bear the expense of their children’s education have to send them in these Christian schools where they

will learn about Christianity and could eventually become Christians. Dr. Suradi, a Christian physician who treated his patients free of charge, said not to hesitate in doing Christianization among Muslims, as there were 10 % only among them who understand the Qur'ān.

Other methods of Christianization are: publishing the Bible in Arabic to be read like chanting the verses of the Qur'ān as those who are not familiar with the Qur'ān would be deceived; the calligraphy of the Bible Matthew made similar to that of the Qur'ān. For this purpose cheating is permitted as the Bible said: *“Someone might argue, ‘If my falsehood enhances God’s truthfulness and so increases his glory, why am I still condemned as a sinner?’”* (Romans 3:7). Among Christianization projects in Indonesia are: *Jericho* and *Andalas* for Christianizing Java and Sumatra respectively, and *Joseph 2004* to have a Christian president, at least a Muslim by name only.

In October 2004 Hajjah Irena Handono established the “Irena Center”, *Lembaga Pembinaan Muallaf dan Pembentengan Aqidah* (The Institution for Guiding Converts and Defending the Faith) and is in the process of establishing an Islamic Boarding School for Female Converts at Sentul near Bogor, West Java. For those who like to donate they can deposit it at the Indonesian National Bank, *BNI, Cab. Bendungan Hilir, Jakarta, Acc. No. 92 2929 929*. There are over three hundred female converts in her institution. For consultation she can be contacted at *irena\_center@yahoo.com/* Ph. 021-88855562.

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## 10. SACRIFICE

Next week, on the 24<sup>th</sup> of September 2015 the Muslims around the world will celebrate the festival of *Eid al-Adha*, the festival of sacrifice. It commemorates the willingness of Prophet Abraham to sacrifice his son Ismael.<sup>1</sup> Iblīs (Satan) persuaded him not to do so, telling him that Allah would never order something bad like sacrificing his son. Prophet Abraham threw stone at him, ignoring his advice in obeying Allah without any condition, whether rational or irrational. It is a total obedience. This is an example of total submission to Allah, whereas Iblīs, using his analogy but polluted with envy, disobeyed Allah when he was ordered to pay respect to Adam. It is because he was created from fire, while Adam was created from clay. He thought that fire was better than clay, and therefore he who was created from fire was not supposed to bow to Adam who was created from clay, even it was Allah's order. He was supposed to have totally obeyed Him without any reservation, because it was Allah Who created him. That is what Prophet Abraham and his son Ishmael did: total submission and obedience to Allah, and we are supposed to do the same. At the last moment Allah replaced Isma'il with a ram to be sacrificed.

Following this example the Muslims all over the world who are affluent are urged to share their fortune by sacrificing a goat, a sheep, a cow, or a camel. The meat is to be divided in three parts: a part is to be distributed to the poor, the other

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<sup>1</sup> According to the Bible, it was Isaac who would be sacrificed instead of Ishmael. *Then God said, "Take your son, your only son, Isaac, whom you love, and go to the region of Moriah. Sacrifice him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains I will tell you about."* (Genesis 22: 2). This verse means, either Ishmael was not considered Abraham's son, or Ishmael was not loved by his father, Abraham. Neither of these statements is acceptable in Islam. In fact the genuineness of the Bible in general is doubted, and the Genesis in particular, which is like a weak *ḥadīth*. Genesis 22: 12 states the Isaac was his only son.

part to his relatives, and the remaining for himself and his family. It is the piety that reaches Allah, not the meat and the blood, as mentioned in the Qur'ān,

لَنْ يَنَالَ اللَّهَ لُحُومُهَا وَلَا دِمَاؤُهَا وَلَكِنْ يَنَالُهُ التَّقْوَىٰ مِنْكُمْ كَذَلِكَ سَخَّرَهَا  
لَكُمْ لِتُكَبِّرُوا اللَّهَ عَلَىٰ مَا هَدَاكُمْ وَبَشِّرِ الْمُحْسِنِينَ (الحج:37)

*It is neither their meat nor their blood that reaches Allah, but it is piety from you that reaches him. Thus have We made them subject to you that that you may magnify Allah for His Guidance to you. And give glad tidings (O Muhammad) to the doers of good. (Q. 22:37)*

Anas r.a. said: "While we were with the Messenger of Allah in the mosque, he dozed off into a slumber. Then he lifted his head smiling. We said, 'O messenger of Allah! What has caused you to laugh?' He said, "Verily, a surah (chapter) was just revealed to me', then he cited,  
إِنَّا أَعْطَيْنَاكَ الْكَوْثَرَ. فَصَلِّ لِرَبِّكَ وَأَنْحَر. إِنَّ شَانِئَكَ هُوَ الْأَبْتَرُ (الكوثر 1-3)  
Verily, We have granted you (O Muhammad) al-Kawthar. Therefore, turn in your prayer to your Lord and sacrifice (to Him only), For he who hates you (O Muhammad), he will be cut of (from posterity and every good thing in this world and in the Hereafter) (Q. 108, 1-3)

Then he said, 'Do you All know what is al-Kawthar?' We said, 'Allah and His Messenger know best.' He said, "Verily, it is a river that my Lord, the Mighty and Majestic has promised me and it has abundant goodness. It is a pond where my Ummah will be brought to on the day of Judgement. Its containers are as numerous as the stars in the sky. Then a servant of Allah from among them will be (prevented from it) and I will say: "O Lord! Verily, he is from my Ummah (followers). Then: "He (Allah) will say, "Verily, you do not know what he introduced (or innovated) after you.

(Reported by Muslim Abū Dā'ūd, and al-Nasā'ī)

The Arabs called anything abundant in number, degree and significance *kawthar*. Sufyān said that when an old woman was asked what her son brought with him from his traveling, she answered *kawthar*, meaning lots of goods. Therefore Qur'ān commentators say that that *kawthar* in the above verse generally means anything good in abundance, such as the Qur'ān and wisdom, besides the name of the river in Paradise given to the Prophet.

Then Allah ordered the Prophet and the Muslims to make obligatory and optional prayers, and to give sacrifice of animals solely and sincerely for Allah. The term *naḥr* has two meanings: upper portion of the chest, namely, putting the right palm on the top of the left palm on the upper chest while praying, and slaughtering, namely, giving sacrifice by slaughtering animals as sacrifice. Both meanings are applicable to the above verse.

The verse *“For he who hates you (O Muhammad), he will be cut of (from posterity and every good thing in this world and in the Hereafter) was revealed in replying the following allegations:*

1. Al-'Āṣ ibn Wā'il. Whenever the Prophet was mentioned in his presence he would say; “Leave him, for he is a man who is cut off having no descendants. So when he dies he will not be remembered.” (Narrated by Ibn 'Abbās, Mujāhid, Sa'īd ibn Jubayr, and Qatādah)
2. Ka'b ibn Ashraf and a group of disbelievers. The Quraysh people told him that he was the leader of the people, and asked him his opinion about the worthless man who was cut off from his people (meaning the Prophet), while they were the custodians of the Ka'bah and water suppliers to the pilgrims. He answered that they were better than him. (Narrated by Ibn 'Abbās recorded by al-Bazzār).

3. Abū Lahab. When a son of the Prophet died, Abū Lahab went to the idolaters, and said, “Muhammad has been cut off (i.e. from progeny) tonight.” (Reported by ‘Aṭā’)

The verse replied that having no son his remembrance would not be cut off. On the contrary, Allah preserved his remembrance. He is the only person remembered, mentioned by name, loved and respected the most by Muslims consisting of one-sixth of the world population. His name is mentioned in the *adhān* (calling for prayer), as well as in prayer.

There are six terms for “sacrifice” in the Qur’ān: (1) *dhabḥ* (slaughtering) used in the Qur’ān as a sacrifice for other than Allah, such as idols, as in Q. 5:3, and the slaughtered animal is called *dhabīḥah*; (2). *qurbān* (sacrifice, offering) as in Q. 3:183 in which the Jews would not accept a Messenger unless he gives an offering devoured by fire from heaven; in Q. 5:27 it is about the offering of the two brothers Hābīl (Abel) and Qābīl (Cain); in Q. 46:28 the term *qurbān* is not the sacrifice or offering, but “a means to be close to Allah, a way to approach Allah,” as the term is derived from the word *qaruba* or *qariba* meaning “to be near, to come near”, so that *qurbān* literally means “something made to become closer to Allah,” and could be an offering, and also by worshiping idols, as the Quraysh idolaters said, “We worship them only that they may bring us near to Allah...” (Q. 39:3); a weak *ḥadīth* said “The daily prayer is the *qurbān* i.e., a means to become near to Allah) of every pious man (3) *Naḥr* is a kind of sacrifice by cutting the jugular veins, as mentioned above; (4) *udḥiyah* is used for annual sacrifice by pilgrims in Makkah; (5) *hady* (*animal of sacrifice*) is offered when the Prophet and the Muslims were prevented from completing their pilgrimage, ending with the Treaty of Ḥudaybiyyah to avoid bloodshed. They sacrificed the *hady*, shaved their heads, and ended their state of *iḥrām*, and returned home (Q. 2:196); *hady* is also the animal brought to Makkah for penalty of killing animal while one is in the state of *iḥrām* (Q. 5:2, 95, 97); (6) *mansak*

(religious ceremonies) as mentioned in Q. 22:34, interpreted by Mujāhid as shedding blood of animals, namely, sacrifice.<sup>2</sup>

Muslim scholars hold different views concerning the legal judgment of the sacrifice (*qurbān* or *uḍḥiyah*). The vast majority of them say it is *Sunnah Mu'akkadah* (definitely recommended act). This is the view of Shāfi'ī, and Mālikī schools, and the well-known view of Aḥmad. The other view is that it is *wājib* (obligatory) according to Ḥanafī school, one of the two views of Aḥmad and Mālikī school, this is also the view of Ibn Taymiyyah of Ḥanbalī school. It is important to note here, that there is difference between *wājib* and *farḍ* according to Ḥanafī school. *Wājib* is obligatory but without strong evidence, such as sacrificing on the *Ied al-Adha* day. On the other hand, *farḍ* is something with strong evidence, such as performing the five-daily prayers and fasting in the month of Ramadan. For them, they are not *wājib* but *farḍ*. For others both are the same.

Some conditions for the validity of the *qurbān* are as follows:

1. The slaughtering process must be carried out in accordance to the *Sharī'ah*: it has to be with a sharp knife or object, no gun, no electric shock or carbon dioxide.
2. The animal should be laid on its left side, its face pointing towards the *Qiblah*, and slaughtered quickly.
4. Before slaughtering recite بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الْكَبِيرِ "Bismillāh Allāhu Akbar (In the name of Allah, Allah is Great).
5. At least three of the four veins in the throat of the animal must be cut.

<sup>2</sup> Al-Qurṭubī said: يُقَالُ: نَسَكَ إِذَا دَبَحَ يَنْسُكُ نَسْكَاً. وَالدَّبِيحَةُ نَسِيكَةٌ، وَجَمْعُهَا نُسُكٌ، وَمِنْهُ قَوْلُهُ تَعَالَى: "أَوْ صَدَقَةٌ أَوْ نُسُكٌ" (البقرة: 196). وَالنُّسُكُ أَيْضًا الطَّاعَةُ. وَقَالَ الْأَزْهَرِيُّ فِي قَوْلِهِ تَعَالَى: "وَلِكُلِّ أُمَّةٍ جَعَلْنَا مَنْسَكًا": إِنَّهُ يُدَلُّ عَلَى مَوْضِعِ النَّحْرِ فِي هَذَا الْمَوْضِعِ، أَرَادَ مَكَانَ نُسُكٍ. جَعَلْنَا مَنْسَكًا": . وَقَالَ الْفَرَّاءُ: الْمَنْسُكُ فِي كَلَامِ الْعَرَبِ الْمَوْضِعُ الْمُعْتَادُ فِي خَيْرٍ أَوْ شَرٍّ. وَقِيلَ مَنْسَاكُ الْحَجِّ لِتُرْدَادِ النَّاسِ إِلَيْهَا مِنَ الْوُفُوفِ بِعَرَفَةَ وَرَمِي الْجِمَارِ وَالسَّعْيِ. وَقِيلَ: مَنْسَكًا عِيدًا، قَالَهُ الْفَرَّاءُ. وَقِيلَ: حَجًّا، قَالَهُ قَتَادَةُ. وَالْقَوْلُ الْأَوَّلُ أَظْهَرُ، لِقَوْلِهِ تَعَالَى: (لِيَذْكُرُوا اسْمَ اللَّهِ عَلَى مَا رَزَقَهُمْ مِنْ بَهِيمَةِ الْأَنْعَامِ) أَي عَلَى ذَبْحِ مَا رَزَقَهُمْ. فَأَمَرَ تَعَالَى عِنْدَ الذَّبْحِ بِذِكْرِهِ وَأَنْ يَكُونَ الذَّبْحُ لَهُ، لِأَنَّهُ رَازِقٌ ذَلِكَ (تفسير القرطبي)

6. It has to be completely dead before it can be skinned or cut into pieces.

Animals that are impaired, such as sick, blind, crippled, wounded, *etc.* cannot be slaughtered as *qurban*. Their minimum age as follows: sheep (male and female) at least 6 months (one share); goats (male and female), at least one year (one share); cows, oxen, buffaloes, at least two years (7 shares); and camels (male and female), at least 5 years (7 shares). The period for the sacrifice is 3 days, starting after the Eid prayer of 10 Dhul Hijjah till before sunset on the 12th of Dhul Hijjah according to Ḥanafi, Mālikī, and Ḥanbalī schools, and 4 days till before sunset the following day, namely on the 13th of Dhul Hijjah, according to Shāfi'ī school. It can be done preferably on the day time. The exception is if the animal to be slaughtered ran away, and was caught later, or the person entrusted for slaughtering was asleep or forgot it, then it can be slaughtered after the lapse of the period. It is like a person who forgets to pray, he has to do it the time he remembers it.

It is not acceptable to replace *qurbān* with money, or the institution of *qurbān* would be forgotten, whereas these livestock are for us to eat. Let our poor Muslim brothers and sisters share the taste of the meat and have benefits from it, including Vitamin B12 in it.

(CIVIC, 18 September, 2015)

المصادر:

المكتبة الشاملة

تفسير الطبري (ت. 310 هـ)

تفسير القرطبي (ت. 671 هـ)

تفسير ابن كثير (ت. 774 هـ)

<https://ar.wikipedia.org/wiki/أضحية>

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## 11. REFUGEES

In order to avoid the persecution of the Quraysh idolaters in Makkah the Prophet ordered in the early period of Islam his followers to emigrate to a safe place: in Ethiopia and then in Madinah. There were three kinds of people in response to this order to emigrate: (a) those Muslims who obeyed this order and emigrated to Madinah; (b) those Muslims who preferred to stay in Makkah for worldly reason, pretending not to be Muslims to avoid their persecution; (c) children and those who were sick and old, and were unable to emigrate, such as ‘Abdullah ibn ‘Abbās and his mother.

When the Battle of Badr took place in the 2<sup>nd</sup> year of Hijrah those who preferred to stay in Makkah were forced to join the Quraysh army, or they would disclose their belief in Islam, and be persecuted. Ibn ‘Abbās said that some people among the Quraysh army who were secretly Muslims were hit in the battlefield. Their fellow Muslims in the Muslim army recognized them and prayed to Allah that they might be forgiven for joining the disbelievers in the battlefield. Then Allah revealed the following verses:

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ تَوَفَّاهُمُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ ظَالِمِي أَنفُسِهِمْ قَالُوا فِيمَ كُنْتُمْ قَالُوا كُنَّا  
مُسْتَضْعَفِينَ فِي الْأَرْضِ قَالُوا أَلَمْ تَكُنْ أَرْضُ اللَّهِ وَاسِعَةً فَتُهَاجِرُوا  
فِيهَا فَأُولَئِكَ مَاوَأَهُمْ جَهَنَّمَ وَسَاءَتْ مَصِيرًا. إِلَّا الْمُسْتَضْعَفِينَ مِنَ  
الرِّجَالِ وَالنِّسَاءِ وَالْوِلْدَانِ لَا يَسْتَطِيعُونَ حِيلَةً وَلَا يَهْتَدُونَ  
سَبِيلًا. فَأُولَئِكَ عَسَى اللَّهُ أَنْ يَعْفُوَ عَنْهُمْ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ  
عَفُورًا غَفُورًا (النساء: 97-99)

*Verily, as for those whom angels take (in death) while they are wronging themselves (as they stayed among the disbelievers even though emigration was obligatory for them), they (angels) say (to them): “In what (condition) were you?” They reply: “We were weak and oppressed on the earth.” They (angels) say: “Was not the earth of Allah spacious enough for you to emigrate therein?” Such men will find their Abode in Hell—*

*what an evil destination! Except the weak ones among men, women and children who cannot devise a plan [i.e., cannot find the way], nor are they able to direct their way. These are they whom Allah is likely to forgive, and Allah is Ever Oft-Pardoning, Oft-Forgiving (Q. 4:97-98)*

When the Muslims who remained in Makkah knew that Allah would not forgive them for not emigrating to Madinah, they started emigrating. But the Makkan idolaters chased them and persecuted them. Then the following verse was revealed,

وَمِنَ النَّاسِ مَنْ يَقُولُ آمَنَّا بِاللَّهِ فَإِذَا أُوذِيَ فِي اللَّهِ جَعَلَ فِتْنَةَ النَّاسِ كَعَذَابِ اللَّهِ وَلَئِنْ جَاءَ نَصْرٌ مِنْ رَبِّكَ لَيَقُولُنَّ إِنَّا كُنَّا مَعَكُمْ أَوْ لَيْسَ اللَّهُ بِأَعْلَمَ بِمَا فِي صُدُورِ الْعَالَمِينَ (العنكبوت:10)

*Of mankind are some who say: "We believe in Allah." But if they are made to suffer for the sake of Allah, they consider the trial of mankind as Allah's punishment; and if victory comes from your lord, (the hypocrites) will say: "Verily, we were with you (helping you)." Is not Allah Best Aware of what is in the breasts of the Alamin (mankind and jinn)? Q. 29:10)*

When they were told about the above verse they became very sad and lost hope for migrating to Madinah. However, they were told that Allah had given them a way out, as another verse was revealed to relieve them from being hopeless, as follows:

ثُمَّ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ لِلَّذِينَ هَاجَرُوا مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا فُتِنُوا ثُمَّ جَاهَدُوا وَصَبَرُوا إِنَّ رَبَّكَ مِنْ بَعْدِهَا لَعَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ (النحل:110)

*The, verily, your Lord for those who emigrated after they had been put to trials and thereafter strove hard and fought (for the Cause of Allah) and were patient, verily your Lord afterward, is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful. (Q. 16:110)*

So, they started emigrating again, and when they were overtaken by the idolaters, they fought back, some were saved and others were killed. Anyway, Allah has forgiven them for their delay in emigrating.

This was the *hijrah* (migration) in the time of the Prophet, moving to a place to avoid persecution, where Islam could be practiced without any problem, in modern technical term, it is called “taking refuge”, and *muhājirīn* are refugees rather than migrants. A migrant is a person who chooses to leave his country to find a job, to study or to be reunited with his family. On the other hand, a refugee is a person who has fled persecution, has sought and granted protection, and a person seeking refuge due to a natural disaster. An asylum seeker is someone seeking protection because they have a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of their race, religion, nationality, political opinion or membership of a particular social group. An asylum seeker could also be someone who is fleeing other serious human rights violations, including torture or cruel, inhumane or degrading treatment or punishment. He may be (1) residing in a refugee camp waiting for an opportunity to return to their home country, or (2) waiting for resettlement in another country, or (3) may have been resettled in another country such as Australia.

Before becoming a refugee, a person has to be an asylum seeker, seeking protection because of fear of being persecuted because of his race, religion, nationality, political opinion or membership of a particular social group. He could also be someone who is fleeing other serious human rights violations, including torture or cruel, inhumane or degrading treatment or punishment.

After the U.S.-led invasion of Iraq in March 2003 the number of refugees increased till it reached over 4 million refugees around the world in 2007, including 2 million in neighbouring Middle East countries, and 1.9 million in Iraq,

which means 15 % of the Iraqi people had left their homes. There are over 1.2 million Iraqi refugees in Syria which had 18 million populations, and by 2009 Jordan which had only 6 million populations, had taken 700,000 Iraqi refugees. In 2011 one-quarter of the population of Jordan were refugees.

Due to the conflict in Iraq refugees immigrate to Pakistan and Syria. About 1.8 million refugees were hosted in Pakistan. About 2.8 million people from Afghanistan took refuge in 69 different asylum countries whereas about 1.9 million Iraqis have moved, mostly to neighboring asylum countries.

About three weeks ago, an Egyptian billionaire, Naguib Sawiris, offered to buy an island belonging to Greece or Italy for Syrian refugees. He said:

*“Greece or Italy sell me an island, I’ll call its independence and host the migrants and provide jobs for them building their new country.”*

Naguib Sawiris  
Egyptian billionaire  
*Agence France-Presse*

He was also reported by *Agence France-Presse* as follows:

*“Sawiris said an island off Greece or Italy could cost between \$10 million and \$100 million, but added the ‘main thing is investment in infrastructure.’”*

*Agence France-Presse*

One of the Arab countries which hosts the Syrian refugees with generosity is Lebanon with over one million Syrian refugees, equal to one-quarter of its population. Compared to USA, it is like hosting 75 million refugees. The non-Arab neighbouring country, Turkey which has 70 million populations, hosts 1.6 million Syrian refugees.

The condition of the people of Syria in 2011 was that out of 22.4 million of its inhabitants, about 200 thousand deaths, 4

million refugees, and 7.5 million are internally displaced. So, less than half of its population remain in their homes.

We do not know when the misery of the refugees will end, as long as the two contending parties, the government and those who revolt against it do not find any solution for their disagreement. The Prophet had already warned us against revolting against impious rulers, as long as they do not order people to disobey Allah. The Prophet *s.a.w.* said:

عَلَى الْمَرْءِ الْمُسْلِمِ السَّمْعُ وَالطَّاعَةُ فِيمَا أَحَبَّ وَكَرِهَ إِلَّا  
أَنْ يُؤْمَرَ بِمَعْصِيَةٍ فَإِنْ أُمِرَ بِمَعْصِيَةٍ فَلَا سَمْعَ وَلَا طَاعَةَ  
(رواه البخاري و مسلم و أبو داؤد والنسائي و أحمد)

*Upon the person is hearing and obeying concerning what he likes and what he dislikes, unless he is ordered to do an act of disobedience [to Allah]. If he is ordered to do an act of disobedience, there is no hearing or obeying.”* (Reported by Bukhārī, Muslim, Abū Dā’ūd, al-Nasā’ī and Aḥmad)

Revolting against impious or oppressing rulers could lead to destruction more than if they obeyed them. Scholars who adhere to removing impious rulers say that it should be done by fighting them on condition that bloodshed among Muslims which is called *fitnah*, namely, riot, discord and civil strife would be avoided.

One of the means to bring down an impious ruler peacefully is by rejecting any government position in his cabinet. On the 21<sup>st</sup> of May 1998 Former President Suharto who had ruled Indonesia for 32 years tendered his resignation from presidency. The main reason is that the condition of the country at that time was so desperate that all members of his cabinet resigned, and nobody would replace them. He could have ignored the demonstration of thousands of students at the Parliament Building demanding his resignation, but without members of Cabinet to assist him he would not be able to rule the country. This *boycott* policy was very effective at that time

Another example is Shah of Iran who took power in 1953 with the help of the CIA. He abolished political parties, and some of their members had been exiled; others had been imprisoned or tortured by SAVAK, the Shah's secret police.

Demonstrations against the Shah commenced in October 1977, became intensive in January 1978. That year strikes and demonstrations paralyzed the country. The Shah imposed martial law in Tehran and the troops reluctantly fired on demonstrators killing more than 500 people, as their brothers and other relatives might have been among them. This incident, known later as "Black Friday", did not deter the demonstrators. On January 16, 1979 the Shah left Iran for exile, and died in July, 1980. Ayatollah Khomeini was invited back to Iran greeted by several million Iranians.

Persistent and continuous peaceful demonstrations could work in bringing down impious rulers. Allah knows best.

(CIVIC, 25 September, 2015)

المصادر:

المكتبة الشاملة

تفسير الطبري (ت. 310 هـ)

تفسير القرطبي (ت. 671 هـ)

تفسير ابن كثير (ت. 774 هـ)

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## 12. RELIGION AND BLASPHEMY (1)

Allah says addressing the whole mankind, as follows:

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنَّا خَلَقْنَاكُمْ مِنْ ذَكَرٍ وَأُنْثَىٰ وَجَعَلْنَاكُمْ شُعُوبًا وَقَبَائِلَ لِتَعَارَفُوا  
 إِنَّ أَكْرَمَكُمْ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ أَتْقَاكُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلِيمٌ خَبِيرٌ (الحجرات:13)

*O mankind! We have created you from a male  
 and a female, and made you into nations and tribes  
 that you may know one another. Verily, the most  
 honorable of you with Allah is that (believer)  
 who has the most pious (Q. 49:13)*

The Qur'ān commentator Mujāhid ibn Jabr (21-104/642-722) said that the Arabs in the past knew each other by knowing their names, their parents' names and the names of the tribes to which they belonged. Sufyān al-Thawrī (97-161/716-778) said that the Ḥimyar people who resided in Yemen dealt with each other according to their provinces, while the Arabs in Ḥijāz (Western Arabia) dealt with each other according to their tribes. As every tribe has its own tribal language it is estimated that up to 7,000 different languages are spoken around the world, and about 90% of them are spoken by less than 100,000 people.

Knowing one another implies learning from each other's characteristics, traditions, cultures and religions. The concept of religion is constituted of three factors, namely, God, Universe and Man. These have connection with the concept of salvation. Hence, former President to World Federation of Islamic Mission and Islamic Centre in Karachi, Muhammad Fazlur-Rahman Ansari in his lecture at the Tokyo mosque in 1960 divided the world religions into two categories: (1) Religions of Salvation, and (2) Religions of Fulfilment.

Religions of Salvations are generally all religions with the exception of Islam, which belongs to Religion of Fulfilment. Religions of Salvation are divided into two categories:

- a. those whose concept of salvation is linear, namely, the advance of human life is linear, passing through the gateway of death, to continue beyond the grave, until it reaches heaven or hell. Zoroastrianism, Judaism, and Christianity belong to this category.
- b. those whose concept of salvation is cyclic, namely, the continuous transmigration of souls in cycle upon cycle until it reaches heaven (Moksha in Hinduism, and Nirvana in Buddhism). Hinduism and Buddhism belong to this category.

On the other hand, the concept of fulfilment in Islam is that the world is essentially good, God is Absolutely Good, and all His actions are good, human personality are good and social relations are also good. All human beings are born sinless which is contradictory to Christian teachings that all human beings are born in sin inherited from Adam and Eve. A person who inherits any kind of defect or sickness is not a kind of condemnation, but a test, he has to find a cure for it, and to be patient with it, and Allah would reward him for his patience.

Allah has given human beings with certain facilities and powers to be used in its utmost for their own prosperity and welfare in this earthly life. This is also a kind of devotion besides performing the five-daily prayers, fasting in Ramadan, *etc.* Allah has created the whole contents of the earth for them (Q. 2:29), and neglecting them is therefore, renunciation of worldly life is not the teaching of Islam.

Hinduism in the strict sense of the word is more of a social order than a religion. A Hindu can be a person who believes in one God, three gods, millions of gods, or even no god. It is said that it is the most undefinable religion in the world, as it is actually the story of the race of Aryans of Central Asia. When they conquered the northern plains of India they brought with them certain beliefs of nature-worship and certain principles of social organization, and at the same time they absorbed the beliefs and social habits of their subjects.

Their beliefs mixed together, and conflicting beliefs and mutually fighting gods and goddesses were tolerated and accommodated. Therefore, Hinduism is a number of religious systems, and the only common doctrines are of the *karma* and transmigration of the soul.

Hinduism is for the Indians, like Judaism for the Jews. Both are religions of their respective races. Unlike Islam and Christianity which are missionary religions, Hinduism does not believe in conversion to Hinduism. If a Hindu is born he is bound to racial and caste-system. He is born either as a Brahmin (the highest caste), a Kshatriya, a Vaishya, or a Sudra, and he cannot change his caste, no matter how great his achievement is in life. A Brahmin remains holy, and the Sudra remains unholy, and this remains unchangeable. Like in Judaism where a non-Jewish is considered inferior, a non-Hindu is also considered inferior in Hinduism.

The word *karma* is originally from the Sanskrit word *karman*, meaning “action, effect, and fate.” *Karma* in Hinduism as well as in Buddhism is (1) “the sum of a person’s actions in this and previous states of existence, viewed as deciding their fate in future existences.” It is also (2) “action, seen as bringing upon oneself inevitable results, good or bad, either in this life or in a reincarnation; in Hinduism it is one of the means of reaching Brahman.” It is also (3) “intentional ‘action’; the workings of cause and effect, whereby virtuous actions lead to happiness and non-virtuous actions lead to suffering.” In Theosophy<sup>1</sup> *karma* is “the cosmic principle according to which each person is rewarded or punished in one incarnation according to that person's deeds in the previous incarnation.” It is the rule of cause and effect: “As you sow, so you reap” (Galatians, 6:7). Salvation in Hinduism is cyclic, namely, in order

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<sup>1</sup> Theosophy is any religious or philosophical system based on intuitive insight into the nature of the divine, but especially that of the Theosophical Society founded in New York in 1875 by Madame Blavatsky and Colonel H.S Olcott

to attain to Salvation the human being must undergo cycles upon cycles of rebirth. If a person commits more vices than virtues in this life, he will be born again in this world in a lower caste, or even in a lower category of existence, such as animals and insects. This is a kind of punishment, until he breaks the cycles of rebirth and enters the heaven (Moksha).

In rejecting these views of karma and transmigration of the soul F.R. Ansari mentions three arguments, as follows:

1. It is necessary that every man has to have a complete picture of his previous life in order to realize his suffering or benefiting on any occasion in this life, but this does not happen. Therefore, the purpose of his rebirth would not be acceptable. In other words, it is like a man is being punished without knowing his mistake.
2. Like an immature seed, we do not bring it back and paste it to its tree, but rather we select the mature seed to grow a better tree. Similarly, a person who is not pure or mature enough to achieve Salvation should not be brought back to be pasted in the earthly life, but rather he should be provided with conditions whereby his impurity and immaturity may be put right, so that he might proceed to the path of evolution.
3. Evolution is an established law of the human personality and the universe which is always linear, whereas transmigration of the souls is cyclic, and therefore it is unacceptable.

Buddhism was born in India as a revolt against some principles and institutions of Hinduism, especially against caste-system and holding the idea of the impersonal concept of God or of non-existent of God. The doctrines of Karma and Awa Gawan were retained. No wonder that some scholars who incline to regard Buddhism as one of many sects of Hinduism.

The founder of Buddhism was Siddhartha Gautama, a Hindu prince who left his house in search of solution for the

human sufferings. After years of contemplation and meditation he attained Buddhahood, namely, Enlightenment, under a bodhi tree at Buddh-Gaya in the province of Bihar, India. He found the solution to conquer suffering, namely, to negate all desires. The world is unreal, like an illusion, a trap, and the wise person (Buddhist) has to cut off all his relations with the world. His life should be a roaming beggar who has no home, and no worldly duty. Even Gautama himself when he returned to his naïve place he did not visit his wife.

The concept of Buddhism that everything is like an illusion means that it appeared to exist in one way, but actually it exists in another way. It is like the optical illusion where a line can look longer than another line, but actually is shorter. Another example is that the ocean consists of a series of separate waves that come and go. But if we look beneath the surface, we shall find that the ocean is vaster and more mysterious than what we initially believed.

There are three main sects in Buddhism: (a) the *Mahayana* was so called, because they were the majority Group at the Council of Patna; it allows social relations as a natural and necessary evil. (b) the *Hinayana*, the minority group, the most orthodox, the most loyal to the spirit and the teaching of Buddha, and they believed in asceticism; and (c) the Zen Buddhism was a new version of Buddhist philosophy which permits and promotes militarist aspirations among militarist Japanese.

The doctrine of transmigration of souls or incarnation has no solid foundation in human experience. Many people believe in some form of reincarnation. Testimony of people who claim to recall people, places, things and events from what they believe could be their past lives. Under hypnosis many people recall the detail of their previous lives.

Stephen Wagner, the paranormal phenomena expert in his article *The Mystery of Past Life Recall* related this story:

“In 1824, a nine-year-old boy named Katsugoro, the son of a Japanese farmer, told his sister that he believed he had a past life. According to his story, which is one of the earliest cases of past life recall on record, the boy vividly recalled that he had been the son of another farmer in another village and had died from the effects of smallpox in 1810....”

Stephen Wagner’s commentary on this story is this: “Past life recall is one of the most fascinating areas of unexplained human phenomena. As yet, science has been unable to prove or disprove its genuineness. Even many who have investigated claims of past life recall are unsure whether it is an historical recollection due to reincarnation or is a construction of information somehow received by the subconscious. Either possibility is remarkable. And like many areas of the paranormal, there is a propensity for fraud that the serious investigator must watch out for. It's important to be sceptical about such extraordinary claims, but the stories are nonetheless intriguing.”

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### 13. RELIGION AND BLASPHEMY (2)

Judaism is the religion of the Jewish people, although many of them have abandoned or neglected it. It is the religion brought by Prophet Moses (Mūsā) *a.s.* It is over 3,500 years old, and keeps developing. Its holy book is called *Torah* revealed to Prophet Moses, but the present day *Torah* (Old Testament) is no longer the pure revelation revealed to Prophet Moses, as it contains the collection of texts upon which Judaism was based.

Although the *Torah* contains the idea of pure monotheism, we also find primitive and blasphemous notions, among which are as follows:

1. God (Yahweh, Jehovah) has limited power. The Old Testament said:

*“By the seventh day God had finished the work he had been doing; so on the seventh day he rested. And God blessed the seventh day and made it holy, because on it he rested from all work of creating that he had done.”*

(Genesis 2:2-3)

The idea of resting for God implies His being tired and having limited power. This is not the nature of God the Almighty Who is infinite in His Being and all His Attributes.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The creation of the heavens and the earth in six days is also mentioned in the Qur’ān seven times (Q. 7:54, 10:3, 11:7, 57:4, “and all that is between them” Q. 25:59, 32:4, and 50:38), but Allah did not rest on the seventh day, for He was and is always the “most powerful” and the “almighty”; He has 99 names which are also His attributes indicating His majesty and omnipotence. “Neither slumber nor sleep overtakes Him” (Q. 2:255), “Verily, His Command, when He intends a thing, is only that He says to it, ‘Be!’ – and it is!” (Q. 36:82); “When He decrees a matter, He only says to it: ‘Be!’ – and it is.” (Q. 2:117’ 3:47, 19:37).

2. The Lord saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thought of his heart was only evil continually. And the Lord was sorry that he had made man on earth, and it grieved him to his heart. (Genesis 6:5-6)
3. God refused to forgive Adam. As for Eve, the punishment is as follows: *“To the woman he said: ‘I will greatly increase your pains in childbearing; with pain you will give birth to children. Your desire will be for your husband, and he will rule over you.’”* (Genesis 3: 16). As for Adam, the punishment is as follows: *“To Adam he said, ‘Because you listen to your wife and ate from the tree about which I commanded you, ‘You must not eat of it.’ Cursed is the ground because of you; through painful toil you will eat of it all the days of your life.’”* (Genesis 3: 17)<sup>2</sup>
4. God in the Old Testament was portrayed like human beings:
  - a. He moulds man like a potter, planted a garden in Eden (Genesis 2: 7, 8).
  - b. He walked in the garden (Genesis 3: 8).
  - c. He made garments of skin for Adam and his wife (Genesis 3: 21).
  - d. He came down from heaven to see the building of the Tower of Babel (Genesis 11:5).
  - e. He with two angels ate and drank with Abraham (Genesis 18:1, 8). The Qur’ān also mentioned the three guests of Prophet Abraham. All were angels in human forms. The Qur’an commentator Ibn ‘Abbās said that they were: Jibrīl (Gabriel), Mīkā’īl (Michael), and Isrāfīl

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<sup>2</sup> It is mentioned in the Qur’ān that Adam asked forgiveness from Allah. He said: *“Our Lord! We have wronged ourselves. If you forgive us not, and bestow not upon us Your Mercy, we shall certainly be of the losers.”* (Q. 7:23). *“... And his Lord pardoned him (accepted his repentance). Verily, He is the One Who forgives (accepts repentance), the Most Merciful.”* (Q. 2:37)

(the angel who will sound the trumpet on the Day of Resurrection). Being angels they did not touch the food, which made him scared, but they told him not to fear, as they were angels sent by Allah to punish the people of Prophet Lot. (Q. 51:24-28; 15:51-53)

- f. He appeared as a man and struggled with Jacob. He was overcome by him, and told him that his name was no longer Jacob but Israel, because he had overcome God and men (Genesis 32:22-32); in Hosea 12:4 Jacob struggled with an angel and overcame him.
5. There is incompatibility between good and merciful God according to theologians and that portrayed in the Bible, such as:
- a. God commanded atrocities commanded the Israelites to enslave the cities which made peace with them, ... and to completely wipe out all the inhabitants of the city (Deuteronomy 20:10-17) . He commanded Moses to kill every male (Numbers 31:7, 17).
  - b. He condones the murder of children. While Elisha was on his way to Bethel some small boys jeered at him, saying "Go up, you baldhead!" He cursed them in the name of the Lord. And two she-bears came out from the woods and tore forty-two of the boys (2 Kings 2:22-24)

In Christianity monotheism is of a peculiar or a special type, namely, the Triune God: God the Father, God the Son and the Holy Ghost, (and to some, instead, Goddess the Mother), Three in One, and One in Three, three individuals or definite persons in One, and therefore, Christianity is not purely monotheistic.

Christians believe in the doctrine of the original sin. The sin was inherited from Adam when he disobeyed God by eating the forbidden fruit of the tree of life. Therefore all mankind after Adam are born sinful and sinners. Paul of Tarsus in his letter to the Church in Rome he says:

*Therefore, just as sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way death came to all men, because all sinned. (Romans 5:12)*

*There is no one righteous, not even one; there is no one who understands, no one who seeks God. All have turned away, they have together become worthless; there is no one who does good, not even one. (Romans 3:10-12)*

This sin is the consequence of being the human nature deprived from its origin holiness and justice, a sin “contracted” and not “committed.” For the remission of this Paul’s doctrine of the original sin babies are baptized after birth as soon as possible. The well-known Catholic theologian St. Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274 CE) says that as original sin incurs everlasting punishment, children who have not been baptized and died in original sin will not see the kingdom of God. However, no ordinary man could get rid of the “original sin” except someone without sin, namely, Jesus who was the incarnation of God to “redeem” or pay with his life and to bear the burden on sins of mankind (who believed in him) by suffering and dying on the Cross. So, God as the Father sacrificed His Own Son, which was the incarnation of Him. Here lie the doctrines of the Atonement and of Incarnation. In his letter to the Romans Paul said:

*God presented him [Jesus] as a sacrifice of atonement, through faith in his blood. He did this to demonstrate his justice, because in his forbearance he had left the sins committed beforehand unpunished. (Romans 3:25)*

The Christian theologian David Craig explains in his book *What Christian Believe* the doctrine of atonement as follows:

*The Doctrine of Atonement claims that Jesus has borne the penalty instead of humans so that God can freely forgive sin. The sin, elsewhere called ‘Original Sin’, has been punished but instead of sinful humanity paying the price for its fallen state, it was Jesus, a sinless victim,*

*who paid the price and was executed. Jesus becomes a substitute for each person. Sacrificial theories refer to Jesus as a sinless offering who makes universal expiation of the stain of sin. Atonement is seen as a victory against evil and sin personified in the devil.*

The doctrine of the original sin has been criticised by many Christian scholars, such as Prof. John Bowker, former Dean of Trinity College, Cambridge. He says that there is no original sin in the stories of Genesis which belong first to the Jews. What the Christians call “the Fall” according to the Jews is “a fall upwards, a fall into new opportunities of being human.”

Jesus himself did not teach the original sin. For him a child is born free from sin, as mentioned in Mathew as follows:

*Then little children were brought to Jesus for him to place his hands on them and pray for them. But the disciples rebuked those who brought them. Jesus said, “Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these.” When he had placed his hands on them, he went on from there. (Matthew 19:13-15)*

Jesus also said:

*“See that you do not look down on one of these little ones. For I tell you that their angels in heaven always see the face of my Father in heaven.”  
(Matthew 18:10)*

This Teaching of Jesus is in line with the teachings of Islam. The Prophet s.a.w. said,

كُلُّ مَوْلُودٍ يُوَلَّدُ عَلَى الْفِطْرَةِ فَأَبَوَاهُ يُهَوِّدَانِهِ وَيُنَصِّرَانِهِ  
أَوْ يُمَجِّسَانِهِ... (رواه البخاري)

*Every child is born on fitrah (sinless), but it is his parents that make him a Jew or a Christian or a Magian... (Reported by Bukhārī)*

It is also mentioned in the Old Testament that everyone dies with his own sins, as follows:

*The soul who sins is the one who will die. The son will not share the guilt of the father, nor will the father share the guilt of the son. The righteousness of the righteous man will be credited to him, and the wickedness of the wicked will be charged against him. (Ezekiel 18:20)*

*Instead, everyone will die for his own sin; whoever eats sour grapes—his own teeth will be set on edge. (Jeremiah 31:30)*

This doctrine is confirmed by the Qur'an, as follows:

... وَلَا تَزِرُ وَازِرَةٌ وِزْرَ أُخْرَى... (الأنعام:164)  
*...No bearer of burdens can bear the burden of another... (Q. 6:164)*

The Old Testament also states that the children cannot be punished because of the sin or crime of their parents and vice versa, as follows:

*Fathers shall not be put to death for their children, nor children put to death for their fathers; each is to die for his own sin. (Deuteronomy 24:16)*

This is the teaching of true religions taught by prophets sent by Allah to mankind. (CIVIC, 9 October, 2015)

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#### 14. THE MEANINGS OF *KHAYR* (GOOD) IN THE QUR'ĀN (1)

In order to understand the verses of the Qur'ān extensively we have to learn the sciences of the Qur'ān laid down by earlier scholars of the Qur'ān. One of these sciences is *Asbāb al-Nuzūl* ("the causes of revelation"), means the occasions that led to the revelation of a particular verse. Al-Zarkashī (d. 794/1392) who mentioned forty-seven sciences of the Qur'ān in his *Burhān* put *asbāb al-nuzūl* in the first place. Al-Suyūfī (d. 991/1505) who mentioned eighty sciences put it in the ninth place in his *Itqān*. Without knowing it the verse of the Qur'ān might be misunderstood. One of the verses commonly misunderstood is the following verse:

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَالَّذِينَ هَادُوا وَالتَّصَارِي وَالصَّابِئِينَ مَنْ  
آمَنَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ وَعَمِلَ صَالِحًا فَلَهُمْ أَجْرُهُمْ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ  
وَلَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ (البقرة: 62)

*Verily, those who believe and those who are  
Jews and Christians, and Sabians, whoever believes  
in Allah and the Last Day and does righteous  
good deeds shall have their reward with their  
Lord, on them shall be no fear, nor  
shall they grieve (Q. 2:62)*

This verse was revealed in answering the question of Salmān al-Fārisī about the monks with whom they had prayed in their churches, expecting the advent of Prophet Muhammad in Arabia, and advised Salmān to follow the new prophet whenever he met him. Then the above verse was revealed to explain that not only these monks, but the Jews before the advent of Prophet 'Īsā (Jesus), and the Christians before the advent of Prophet Muhammad *s.a.w.* would be safe. But those who do not want to follow the new prophet, namely, the Jews after the advent of Prophet 'Īsā, and the Christians after the advent of Prophet Muhammad *s.a.w.* would not be safe.

If we read this verse to the Jews and the Christians without explaining its meaning they would think that they do

not have to become Muslims to attain salvation, and the Muslims do not have to invite non-Muslims to Islam. To correct misunderstanding, Allah revealed the following verse:

وَمَنْ يَبْتَغِ غَيْرَ الْإِسْلَامِ دِينًا فَلَنْ يُقْبَلَ مِنْهُ وَهُوَ  
فِي الْآخِرَةِ مِنَ الْخَاسِرِينَ (آل عمران: 85)

*And whoever seeks a religion other than Islam,  
it will never be accepted of him, and in the Hereafter  
he will be one of the losers (Q. 3:85)*

Another branch of Qur'ānic science is called *لُجُوهٌ وَالنَّظَائِرُ فِي الْقُرْآنِ* (al-wujūh wa 'l- nazā'ir fī al-Qur'ān) translated as "homonyms and synonyms in the Qur'ān." Al-Zarkashī put it in number four of the 47 branches of the Qur'ānic science in his work *al-Burhān*, whereas al-Suyūtī put it in number 39 of the 80 branches in his work *al-Itqān*.

*Homonym* is one of the five classes of *Typographic Paronomasia*. *Paronomasia* is the use words having similar sounds but different meanings. It is divided into **Typographic Paronomasia** and **Visual Paronomasia**. *Homonym* is the combination both *homographs* (the use of words that sound the same and have different meanings such as *sun* and *son*; *plain* = easy to see, to hear or to understand, and *plane*= *flat or level surface*) and *homophones* (words that are spelt the same but have different meanings such as *advert to* = refer to, and *advert* = (GB col.) advertisement). So, *homonyms* is where the sounds and the spellings of two or more words are exactly the same, but have different meanings, such as *60 seconds* = 1 minute, *second hand* = used, not new; *second class* = lower class. Here we have identical words but have different meanings.

*Al-nazā'ir* is close to synonyms, namely a word which has many meanings, such as the word عَيْن in Arabic has many meanings: letter ع, eye, spring, source, prime (of something). Here we have one word which has many meanings. In the Qur'ān we may find words which has many meanings, such as

*fitnah*, such as: temptation, trial, sedition, riot, discord, dissention, civil strife we are having now in the Middle East. In Indonesia we mistakenly translate *fitnah* as “slander” which is in Arabic *iftirā’* (إِفْتِرَاء) and “consider” it worse than killing.

The term *khayr* (خَيْر) as an adjective literally means: good; excellent, outstanding, superior, admirable; better; best. As a noun it means: “good thing, blessing; benefit, interest, advantage; welfare; charity.” Al-Rāghib al-Iṣfahānī (d. 425/1132) gives the definition of *khayr* (good thing) as follows: it is what everybody wants, such as: ‘*aql* (intelligence), ‘*adl* (justice), *faḍl* (superiority, favor, kindness), and useful thing. It is the opposite of *sharr* (evil, calamity, injustice, harm, wickedness, vice). He divides the good thing into two categories: (a) absolute good, namely, something which is always liked by anybody in any case, such as Paradise, and (b) relative good, such as wealth; it could be good for one person in one case, but bad for another in another case. Therefore, wealth is also called “good thing” relatively, as we shall see.

Al-Dāmaghānī (d. 478/1085) mentions eight meanings of the term *khayr* in the Qur’ān, whereas Ibn al-Jawzī (d. 597/1201) mentions twenty-two meanings. Three out of the eight examples mentioned by both of them are as follows:

1. *al-māl* (wealth), as in the following verses:

كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمْ إِذَا حَضَرَ أَحَدَكُمُ الْمَوْتُ إِنْ تَرَكَ خَيْرًا الْوَصِيَّةُ  
لِلْوَالِدَيْنِ وَالْأَقْرَبِينَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ حَقًّا عَلَى الْمُتَّقِينَ (البقرة: 180)

*It is prescribed for you, when death approaches any of you, if he leaves wealth, that he makes a bequest to parents and next of kin, according to reasonable manners. (This is) a duty upon the pious (Q. 2:180)*

There are two views concerning this verse:

(a) Those who say that the bequest for the parents is 2/3 of the wealth, for the relatives 2/3 of the remaining 1/3,

namely, 2/9 of the wealth, and the bequest for non-relatives will be 1/9 of the wealth, which is also the view of al-Ḥasan.

- (b) The other view says that the verse is abrogated (specified) with the verse dealing with the law of inheritance, so that the parents and the relatives will have legal shares in the inheritance, and the bequest will be to the relatives who do not have share of it. This is also the view of Qatādah. Those who have share will not get a bequest. The verse in question runs as follows:

لِلرِّجَالِ نَصِيبٌ مِّمَّا تَرَكَ الْوَالِدَانِ وَالْأَقْرَبُونَ وَلِلنِّسَاءِ  
نَصِيبٌ مِّمَّا تَرَكَ الْوَالِدَانِ وَالْأَقْرَبُونَ مِمَّا قَلَّ مِنْهُ أَوْ  
كَثُرَ نَصِيبًا مَّفْرُوضًا (النساء: 7)

*There is a share for men and a share for women from what is left by parents and those nearest related, whether, the property be small or large—a legal share.(Q. 4:7)*

The explanation of the Qur'ān dealing with the distribution of wealth in inheritance is given in more details in the Qur'ān, more than that of praying and fasting, such as Q. 4:11.

يَسْأَلُونَكَ مَاذَا يُنْفِقُونَ قُلْ مَا أَنْفَقْتُمْ مِنْ خَيْرٍ فَلِلْوَالِدَيْنِ وَالْأَقْرَبِينَ  
وَالْيَتَامَىٰ وَالْمَسَاكِينِ وَابْنِ السَّبِيلِ (البقرة: 215)

*They ask you (O Muhammad) what they should spend. Say: Whatever you spend of good (i.e. wealth) must be for parents and kindred and orphans and the needy and the wayfarer ... (Q. 2:215)*

A companion of the Prophet called 'Amr ibn al-Jamūḥ (عَمْرُو بْنُ الْجَمُوحِ) told the Prophet that he had much wealth and asked him where to spend it as charity, then the above verse was revealed.

2. الإِيمَان (faith), as in the following verses:

وَلَوْ عَلِمَ اللَّهُ فِيهِمْ خَيْرًا لَأَسْمَعَهُمْ وَلَوْ أَسْمَعَهُمْ  
لَتَوَلَّوْا وَهُمْ مُعْرِضُونَ (الأنفال: 23)

*Had Allah known of any good (i.e., faith) in them, He would indeed have made them listen; and even if He had made them listen, they would but have turned away with aversion (to the truth) (Q. 8:23)*

Had they faith they would have listened to the arguments and evidence. They also asked the Prophet to revive Quṣayy ibn Kilāb and others to testify the messengership of Prophet Muhammad s.a.w. Had they faith they would have heard the answer of all what they had asked. However, had this happened they would still disbelieve, as Allah had sealed their hearts.

Before the battle of Badr the Prophet had come to know that some of the Banī Hāshim clan and others were forced to accompany the Quraysh pagans to fight the Muslims, such as al-'Abbās, and not to harm them. Among the captive were al-'Abbās, his two nephews and one ally. As captives were to pay ransom for their release, he told the Prophet that he had been Muslim before, so that he should not pay ransom. The Prophet said, Allah only knew whether he was a Muslim, and if so, Allah would reward him for it. But being a captive he had to pay ransom. When he said that he had no money, the Prophet told him that he had promised his wife to give the money he had buried to the children of al-Faḍl, 'Abdullah, and Quthan, if he died in the battlefield. This was a secret which was revealed to the Prophet. After paying the ransom, Allah revealed the following verse:

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّبِيُّ قُلْ لِمَنْ فِي أَيْدِيكُمْ مِنَ الْأَسْرَىٰ إِنْ يَعْلَمِ اللَّهُ فِي قُلُوبِكُمْ خَيْرًا يُؤْتِكُمْ خَيْرًا مِّمَّا أُخِذَ مِنْكُمْ وَيَغْفِرَ لَكُمْ وَاللَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ (الأنفال:70)

*O Prophet (Muhammad)! Say to the captives that are in your hands: "If Allah knows any good (i.e. faith) in your hearts, He will give you something better than what has been taken from you,*

*and He will forgive you, and Allah is Oft Forgiving, Most Merciful.” (Q. 8:70)*

3. *الإسلام (Islam) as in the following verses:*

مَنَّاعٍ لِلْخَيْرِ مُعْتَدٍ أَثِيمٍ (القلم:12)  
*Hindered of good (i.e., Islam), transgressor,  
 sinful (Q. 68:12)*

Ibn ‘Abbās says that it is about the person who prevents his son and his relatives from converting to Islam. Al-Ḥasan says that it is about a person who said to his relatives that he would not get benefit at all from their becoming Muslims.

مَنَّاعٍ لِلْخَيْرِ مُعْتَدٍ مُرِيبٍ (ق:25)  
*Hindered of good (i.e., Islam),  
 transgressor, (Q. 50:25)*

This verse was revealed concerning al-Mughīrah who prohibited his nephews from converting to Islam. Another interpretation is that of al-Ḥasan and Qatādah who say that it is about a person who prohibited people from paying the obligatory charity, the *zakat*.

*(CIVIC, 16 October, 2015)*

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## 15. THE MEANINGS OF *KHAYR* (GOOD) IN THE QUR'ĀN (2)

The remaining examples for the various meanings of *khayr* in the Qur'an given by al-Dāmaghānī and Ibn al-Jawzī are as follows:

### 4. *الْعَافِيَةَ* (good health, well-being), as in the following verses:

وَإِنْ يَمَسُّنَكَ اللَّهُ بِضُرٍّ فَلَا كَاشِفَ لَهُ إِلَّا هُوَ وَإِنْ يَمَسُّنَكَ  
بِخَيْرٍ فَهُوَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ (الأنعام:17)

*And if Allah touches you with harm, none can remove it but He, and if He touches you with good (i.e., good health), then He is Able to do all things (Q. 6:17)*

According to al-Ṭabarī and al-Qurtubī the term *khayr* in the above verse means: good health, prosperity and blessing. The similar verse is Q. 10:107.

### 5. *الْأَجْر* (recompense), as in the following verse:

وَالْبُدْنَ جَعَلْنَاهَا لَكُمْ مِنْ شَعَائِرِ اللَّهِ لَكُمْ فِيهَا خَيْرٌ... (الحج:36)

*And the Budn (cows, oxen, or camels driven to be offered as sacrifices by the pilgrims at the sanctuary of Makkah), We have made them for you as among the Symbols of Allah, wherein you have much good (i.e., recompense)... (Q. 22:36)*

The Qur'ān commentators Mujāhid, al-Ḥasan as well as al-Ṭabarī say that the term *khayr* in this verse is the reward in the Hereafter for the sacrifice, while in this world the benefits taken from these animals.

### 6. *الْأَفْضَل* (the best), as in the following verses:

وَقُلْ رَبِّ اغْفِرْ وَارْحَمْ وَأَنْتَ خَيْرُ الرَّاحِمِينَ (المؤمنون:118 118)

*And say (O Muhammad): "My Lord! Forgive and have mercy, for You are the Best of those who show mercy!" (Q. 23:118)*

Forgiveness means erasing the sin of a person and concealing it from people, whereas mercy means guiding and making him succeed in his sayings and his deeds.

وَإِنْ كَانَ طَائِفَةٌ مِّنْكُمْ آمَنُوا بِالَّذِي أُرْسِلْتُ بِهِ وَطَائِفَةٌ لَّمْ يُؤْمِنُوا  
فَاصْبِرُوا حَتَّىٰ يَحْكُمَ اللَّهُ بَيْنَنَا وَهُوَ خَيْرُ الْحَاكِمِينَ (الأعراف:87)

*“And if there is a party of you who believe in that with which I have been sent and a party who do not believe, so be patient until Allah judges between us, and He is the Best of judges.” (Q. 7:87)*

This is about Prophet Shu‘ayb who was told by Allah to be patient for the disbelief of a party of his people.

7. الطَّعَام (food, meal), as in the following verse:

فَقَالَ رَبِّ إِنِّي لِمَا أَنْزَلْتَ إِلَيَّ مِنْ خَيْرٍ فَقِيرٌ (القصص:24)  
... and said: *“My Lord! Truly, I am in need of whatever good (i.e., food) that You bestow on me!” (Q. 28:24)*

Ibn ‘Abbās said that when Prophet Moses *a.s.* ran away from the Pharaoh he became very hungry. After helping the two young women watering their sheep he took refuge under the shade and prayed, citing the above verse. If we are thirsty the best thing we’ll need is water, when we hungry, food, and when we are sleepy, sleep.

8. الظَّفَر (victory), as in the following verse:

وَرَدَّ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا بِغَيْظِهِمْ لَمْ يَنَالُوا خَيْرًا وَكَفَى اللَّهُ  
الْمُؤْمِنِينَ الْقِتَالَ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ قَوِيًّا عَزِيمًا (الأحزاب:25)

*And Allah drove back those who disbelieved in their rage, they gained no advantage (i.e. victory). Allah sufficed for the believers in the fighting (by sending against the disbelievers a severe wind and troops of angels). And Allah is Ever All-Strong, All-Mighty. (Q. 33:25)*

Al-Ṭabarī gives the meaning of *khayr* in this verse as

wealth (booty) and captives”. Allah said that in the Battle of Confederates in 5 AH despite their blockading Madinah for 24 days they got nothing, neither spoil of war, nor captive. Those who joined this battle were: Quraysh and Ghaṭfān, Banū Murrah, Banū Asad, Ashja’, Fazārah, Banū Kinānah, and Banū Sulaym tribes. This was the biggest military campaign taken by the tribes of Arabia to crush Islam and the Muslims once and for all, but failed. From now on the table has turned, and the Quraysh pagans were on defensive instead of offensive position.

The remaining examples for the various meanings of *khayr* in the Qur’an given by Ibn al-Jawzī are as follows:

9. الخَيْل (horses), as in the following verse:

فَقَالَ إِنِّي أَحْبَبْتُ حُبَّ الْخَيْرِ عَنْ ذِكْرِ رَبِّي حَتَّى  
تَوَارَتْ بِالْحِجَابِ (ص: 32)

*He said: “I did love the good (these horses) instead of remembering my Lord (in my ‘Asr prayer), till the time was over, and (the sun) had hidden in the veil (of night) (Q. 38:32)*

This is the meaning given by al-Qurṭubī and al-Suddī, but in another report al-Suddī also said that it means “wealth.” Al-Qurṭubī said that letter “l” (ل) and letter “r” (ر) sometimes interchange in Arabic, such as *انْهَمَلَتِ الْعَيْنُ* (ر) meaning “the eye shed tears” where the verb *هَمَرَ* and *هَمَلَ* are the same, namely, “to shed tears.” The other example is the verb *حَتَرَ* and *حَتَلَ* both mean “to cheat.” Therefore, according to al-Farrā’ the word *الخَيْر* and *الخَيْل* among the Arabs have the same meaning, namely, the horses. This verse is about Prophet Sulaymān (Solomon) who was busy looking at his horses that he missed the time of ‘aṣr prayer out of forgetfulness until sunset.

10. الْقُرْآن (Qur’ān), as the following verse:

مَا يَوَدُّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِنْ أَهْلِ الْكِتَابِ وَلَا الْمُشْرِكِينَ أَنْ  
يُنزَلَ عَلَيْكُمْ مِنْ خَيْرٍ مِنْ رَبِّكُمْ وَاللَّهُ يَخْتَصُّ بِرَحْمَتِهِ مَنْ يَشَاءُ

وَاللَّهُ ذُو الْفَضْلِ الْعَظِيمِ (البقرة:105)

*Neither those who disbelieve among the people of the Scripture (Jews and Christians) and idolaters like that there should be sent down to you any good (i.e. the Qur'an) from your Lord. But Allah chooses for His Mercy whom He wills. And Allah is the Owner of Great Bounty (Q. 2:105)*

Muhammad Asad said that the term *khayr* in the above verse is “revelation” which he called “the highest good.” He said further: “The allusion here is to the unwillingness of the Jews and the Christians to admit that revelation could have been bestowed on any community but their own.” ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib’s commentary on “Allah chooses for His Mercy whom He wills” as “Allah chooses His prophethood to Muhammad *s.a.w.* The Mercy in this verse according to some is the Qur’ān, and according to others, it is in general all kinds of mercy given by Allah to His servants in ancient as well as modern times”

11. أَنْفَعُ (more beneficial), as in the following verse:

مَا نُنسَخُ مِنْ آيَةٍ أَوْ نُنسِهَا نَأْتِ بِخَيْرٍ مِنْهَا أَوْ مِثْلَهَا أَلَمْ تَعْلَمْ أَنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ (البقرة:106)

*Whatever a Verse (revelation) do We abrogate or cause to be forgotten, We bring a better (more beneficial) one or similar to it. Know you not that Allah is Able to do all things? (Q. 2:106)*

The term *ayah* abrogated in this verse is either the verse or the revelation or even both. The abrogation of the verse means the legal judgment in it is abrogated and replaced with another verse containing a new legal judgment. For example, the Qur’ān 16:67 mentions that strong drink and good nourishment are made from date-palm and grapes, which means that strong drink is *ḥalāl* (permitted). The Qur’ān 2:219 says that there is benefit in drinking alcohol, but the sin in it is greater. This means that

drinking alcohol is not recommended, but still permitted. The Qur'ān 4:43 says that it is prohibited to pray while one is drunk. This means alcohol is bad, but is tolerated. The Qur'ān prohibited alcohol as the handwork of Satan. This last verse “abrogates” the legal judgment of alcohol in previous verses. Modern scholars who deny the existence of abrogation which they call “the doctrine of abrogation” in the verses of the Qur'ān call this procedure *تَخْصِيسُ الْعَامِ* (specification of general term), or *تَقْيِيدُ الْمُطْلَقِ* (restricting the unrestricted), and *إِظْهَارُ حُكْمٍ بِطَرِيقَةِ التَّدْرُجِ* (presenting a legal judgment in stages). Alcohol is always and remains *ḥarām* (prohibited, unlawful), but the early Muslims who had been heavy drinkers were told to stop drinking only when they became strong enough in their faith to avoid it. The verses dealing with alcohol are still there in the Qur'ān to remind us of Allah's blessing in prohibiting alcohol in stages, as He had promised us not to burden us beyond our ability (Q. 2;286). Therefore, “abrogation” does not imply either the cancellation of the specific ordinance or the total elimination of the verses from the context of the Qur'ān.

The abrogation of revelation means the replacement of earlier revelations with the newer and better one. It is the abrogation of the Torah (*Tawrāt*) and the Gospel (*Injīl*) replaced with the Qur'ān. Muhammad Asad who translates *ayah* as “message” says that “... if we read this verse in conjunction with the preceding one, which states that the Jews and the Christians refuse to accept any revelation which might supersede that of the Bible: for, if read in this way, the abrogation is the one related to the earlier divine messages and not to any part of the Qur'ān itself.”

12. رَخْصُ الْأَسْعَارِ (cheapness of price), as in the following verse:

وَالِي مَدِينٍ أَخَاهُمْ شُعَيْبًا قَالَ يَا قَوْمِ اعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ مَا لَكُمْ مِنْ  
إِلَهٍ غَيْرُهُ وَلَا تَنْقُصُوا الْمِكْيَالَ وَالْمِيزَانَ إِنِّي أَرَاكُمْ بِخَيْرٍ  
وَإِنِّي أَخَافُ عَلَيْكُمْ عَذَابَ يَوْمٍ مُحِيطٍ (هود: 84)

*And to Madyan (Midian) people (We sent) their brother Shu'ayb. He said: "O my people! Worship Allah, you have no other god but Him, and give no short measure or weight. I see you in prosperity (i.e. the low price of goods) and verily, I fear for you the torment of a Day encompassing (Q. 11:84)*

The interpretation of *khayr* as "the low price of goods" is that of Ibn 'Abbās and al-Ḥasan. Ibn 'Abbās said further that "the torment of a Day encompassing" means "the day when the price of goods increase." Qatādah and Ibn Zayd both say that the term means prosperity in this world. Al-Ṭabarī also holds the same view and said that the term means prosperity in this world including the low price of goods. Ibn Kathīr's interpretation of the verse "*I see you in prosperity*" is that it means "in your livelihood and your provisions. And verily, I fear that you will be deprived of this bounty that you are enjoying by violating Allah's prohibitions." (to be continued)

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<http://literarydevices.net/paronomasia/>

16. THE MEANINGS OF *KHAYR* (GOOD) IN THE QUR'ĀN (3)

13. الصَّلَاح (good or proper condition, righteousness), as in the following verse:

وَالَّذِينَ يَبْتَغُونَ الْكِتَابَ مِمَّا مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَانُكُمْ فَكَاتِبُوهُمْ  
إِنْ عَلِمْتُمْ فِيهِمْ خَيْرًا... (النور: 33)

*And such of your servants as seek a writing  
(of emancipation) give them such writing,  
if you find that there is good and honesty  
(i.e., righteousness) in them...(Q. 24:33)*

It is Allah's command to slave-owners to write a contract of emancipation for their slaves if they ask them, provided that there is *khayr* with them. Some say it is righteousness, others say honesty, wealth, and a skill and ability to earn.

The verse continues with *...وَأَتُوهُمْ مِنْ مَالِ اللَّهِ الَّذِي آتَاكُمْ* and give them something out of the wealth of Allah which He has bestowed upon you... means that these slaves have right and share in the wealth of the *zakat*. It is Allah's command to the believers to help in freeing them, until there will be no more slave among Muslims.

14. الْقُوَّةُ وَ الْقُدْرَةُ (power and ability), as in the following verse:

أَهُمْ خَيْرٌ أَمْ قَوْمُ تُبَّعٍ وَالَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ أَهْلَكْنَاهُمْ  
إِنَّهُمْ كَانُوا مُجْرِمِينَ (الدُّخَان: 37)

*Are they better (i.e., more powerful) or the people of  
Tubba' and those before them? We destroyed them  
because they were indeed criminals (Q. 44:37)*

Tubba' was the title of the ancient powerful Himyar kings who ruled for centuries over Southern Arabia. Despite their power they were eventually overcome by the Abyssinians in the 4th century. These people denied the truth of resurrection and Allah's judgment (Q. 50:14)

15. الدُّنْيَا (the world), as in the following verse:

وَإِنَّهُ لِحُبِّ الْخَيْرِ لَشَدِيدٌ (الْعَادِيَات: 8)

*And verily, he is violent in the love  
wealth (i.e. the world) (Q. 100:8)*

Ibn Zayd says that the term *khayr* in this verse means “the world”, *i.e.*, people extremely love this material world. Other commentators say that the word *khayr* in this verse means “wealth”. The word *shadīd* basically means “strong, powerful, violent.” But if it is related to the wealth, it could mean *mutashaddid* (strict, rigid) and *bakhīl* (greedy, covetous, miser, stingy). Therefore, the above verse means: (a) He is severe in his love of wealth, and (b) He is covetous and stingy due to the love of wealth. Both are correct complementing each other.

16. الإصلاح (correction, betterment, restoration), as in the following verse:

وَلْتَكُنْ مِنْكُمْ أُمَّةٌ يَدْعُونَ إِلَى الْخَيْرِ وَيَأْمُرُونَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ  
وَيَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ وَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ (آل عمران:104)

*Let there arise out of you a group of people  
inviting to all that is good (i.e. Islam), enjoining  
ma’ruf and forbidding munkar. And It is they  
who are the successful (Q. 3:104)*

Probably it is not appropriate to use *islāḥ* as the meaning of the *khayr* in the above verse, but rather Islam as put by al-Ṭabarī. There are two views whether the whole Muslims are enjoined to call people to Islam, or some of them only. According to the classical Arabic philologist Muḥammad ibn al-Qāsim al-Anbārī (d. 328/940), it is the whole Muslims, as sometimes مِنْ (of, from, among) mean كُلُّ (all), so that the expression مِنْكُمْ (of you) means كُلُّكُمْ (all of you). He says that the position of مِنْ is لِلتَّجْنِيسِ (to indicate *paronomasia*), namely, “of you Muslims” and not from non-Muslims. The example in the Qur’ān is, فَاجْتَنِبُوا الرِّجْسَ مِنَ الْأَوْثَانِ... (الحج:30) ... *so shun the abomination (worshiping) of idol...* (Q. 22:30) which means فَاجْتَنِبُوا الْأَوْثَانَ الَّتِي هِيَ رِجْسٌ

“so avoid (worshiping) idol which is a dirty thing”, as any idol is dirty, all of them.

The other view is that of Al-Qurtubī who says that the injunction to call people to Islam is exclusively for scholars, as not all Muslims are scholars, because it is *فَرَضٌ كِفَايَةٌ* (a collective duty), not *فَرَضٌ عَيْنٌ* (an individual duty). These scholars are chosen people. Among the chosen people are as mentioned in the following verse:

الَّذِينَ إِنْ مَكَّنَّاهُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ أَقَامُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَآتَوُا الزَّكَاةَ  
وَأَمَرُوا بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَنَهَوْا عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ... (الحج:41)

*Those (Muslim rulers) who, if We give them power in the land (they) perform the prayers, pay the zakat, and they enjoin ma'ruf and forbid munkar...(Q. 22:41)*

In my view, both views are acceptable, as Islam is a missionary religion, and every Muslim has to be involved in it. In the lowest level, even without talking, we still can use our body language, indicating that we are humble not arrogant, generous and not stingy, honest and not tricky, etc. We are not perfect, but we have some Islamic characters which we should let non-Muslims know in our dealing with them. We can say “I am not a good Muslim, but Islam prohibits such-and-such thing.” In the highest level, it is the job of Muslim scholars, such as the late Ahmad Deedat (d. 2005) of South Africa who had debated five Christian scholars, and challenged Pope John Paul II for a public debate in the Vatican Square in 1984, Dr. Zakir Naik of India, Dr. Gary Miller of Canada, Yusuf Estes of the USA, and Abdur-Raheem Green of UK, to mention a few.

17. *الْوَلَدُ الصَّالِحُ* (suitable child), as in the following verse:

... فَإِنْ كَرِهْتُمُوهُنَّ فَعَسَى أَنْ تَكْرَهُوا شَيْئًا  
وَيَجْعَلَ اللَّهُ فِيهِ خَيْرًا كَثِيرًا (النساء:19)

*... If you dislike them, it may be that you dislike a thing though which Allah brings a great deal of good (i.e., pious children) (Q. 4:19)*

This verse is about Allah's order the Muslims not to treat widows with harshness to take away part the dowry given to them. If they do not like them, Allah may bring good things to them. So far, no other commentators say that *khayr* in this verse means "suitable child", except Ibn al-Jawzī.

18. **العِفَّة** (abstinence, uprightness, righteousness, chastity) and **والصِّيَانَةَ** (preservation, protection, guarding), as in the following verse:

لَوْلَا إِذْ سَمِعْتُمُوهُ ظَنَّ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتُ بِأَنفُسِهِمْ  
خَيْرًا وَقَالُوا هَذَا إِفْكٌ مُّبِينٌ (النور: 12)

*Why then did not the believers, men and women, when you heard it (the slander), think good (chastity) of their own people and say: "This (charge) is an obvious lie?" (Q. 24:12)*

This verse is about the accusation of the Prophet's wife 'Ā'ishah of indecency by hypocrites, and when the believers heard about it they knew that she was innocent and the accusation was an obvious lie, as confirmed by the Qur'ān.

19. **حُسْنُ الْأَدَبِ** (good behavior), as in the following verse:

وَلَوْ أَنَّهُمْ صَبَرُوا حَتَّى تَخْرُجَ إِلَيْهِمْ لَكَانَ خَيْرًا  
لَهُمْ وَاللَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ (الحجرات: 5)

*And if they had had patience till you could come out to them, it would have been better (i.e., good behavior) for them. And Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.(Q. 49:5)*

The verse is about a delegation of the Arabs among them was al-Aqra' ibn Ḥābis al-Tamīmī who called the Prophet from behind his dwellings, whereas the good behaviour would be waiting for him till he came out.

20. **النَّوَافِلِ** (supererogatory performance), as in the following verse:

وَجَعَلْنَاهُمْ أُمَّةً يَهْدُونَ بِأَمْرِنَا وَأَوْحَيْنَا إِلَيْهِمْ فِعْلَ الْخَيْرَاتِ... (الأنبياء: 73)

*And We made them leaders, guiding (mankind) by Our Command, and We revealed to them the doing of good deeds, performing the prayers (i.e., supererogatory performance)...(Q. 21:73)*

This verse is about Prophet Abraham and his descendants Isaac and Jacob who were made prophets and leaders, and inspired to do good deeds. Al-Qurṭubī simply said “good deeds” here means “obedience” to Allah.

21. النّافِع (beneficial, profitable, useful thing), as in the following verse:

...وَلَوْ كُنْتُ أَعْلَمُ الْغَيْبَ لَأَسْتَكْرَثْتُ مِنَ الْخَيْرِ وَمَا مَسَّنِيَ السُّوءُ  
 إِنْ أَنَا إِلَّا نَذِيرٌ وَبَشِيرٌ لِّقَوْمٍ يُؤْمِنُونَ (الأعراف:188)

*“...If I had the knowledge of the Unseen, I should have secured for myself an abundance of wealth, and no evil should have touched me. I am but a warner, and a bringer of glad tidings to a people who believe.”(Q. 7:188)*

Both term الغَيْب (the Unseen) and الخَيْر (the good deed) are in general sense, mean: (a) If I knew what Allah wanted me to do before hand, I would have done it. (b) If I knew when I would win the war I would have fought, so that I would not be defeated. (c) If I knew the year of drought, I would have stored what would be sufficient for me in the time of the drought (Ibn ‘Abbās’s interpretation). (d) If I knew the merchandise that would sell well, I would have bought it in the time of its slump. (e) If I knew when I would die, I would have increased doing good deeds (al-Ḥasan and Ibn Jurayj’s interpretation). (f) If I knew the unseen I would have done what I was required to do. All these interpretations in al-Qurṭubī’s view make sense.

*“and no evil should have touched me”* means (a) The Prophet said that he was not insane as they had claimed him to be, (b) The Prophet said further that if he had

known the unseen he would have taken precaution against evil, but he was just a warner (al-Qurṭubī's commentary)

22. *الْخَيْرُ الَّذِي هُوَ ضِدُّ الشَّرِّ* (good thing which is the opposite of bad thing), as in the following verse:

قُلِ اللَّهُمَّ مَالِكَ الْمُلْكِ تُؤْتِي الْمُلْكَ مَنْ تَشَاءُ وَتَنْزِعُ الْمُلْكَ مِمَّنْ تَشَاءُ وَتُعِزُّ مَنْ تَشَاءُ وَتُنْزِلُ مَنْ تَشَاءُ بِبَيْدِكَ الْخَيْرُ إِنَّكَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ (آل عمران: 26)

*Say (O Muhammad): "O Allah! Possessor of the kingdom, You give the kingdom to whom You will, and You take the kingdom from whom You will, and You endue with honour whom You will, and You humiliate whom You will. In Your Hand is he good. Verily, You are Able to do all things." (Q. 3:26)*

Ibn 'Abbās and Anas ibn Mālik said that when the Prophet *s.a.w.* conquered Makkah he promised his people the kingdom of Persia and Rome. The hypocrites and the Jews of Madinah said, "Impossible! How could he do that, as they are more powerful and more unconquerable? Are not Makkah and Madinah sufficient for him that he becomes ambitious to conquer the kingdoms of Persia and Rome?" Then Allah revealed the above verse. It was also said that the verse was revealed to refute the claim of the Christians on Najrān the divinity of 'Īsā (Jesus) *a.s.* in spite of his ability to do miraculous things, such as to revive the dead (al-Qurṭubī's commentary)

(CIVIC, 30 October, 2015)

المصادر:

المكتبة الشاملة

ابن الجوزي (ت. 1201\597). *نُزْهَةٌ الْأَعْيُنِ النَّوَاطِرِ فِي عِلْمِ الْوُجُوهِ وَالنَّظَائِرِ*.

بيروت: مؤسسة الرسالة، 1985\1405.

تفسير الطبري (ت. 310 هـ)

تفسير القرطبي (ت. 671 هـ)

تفسير ابن كثير (ت. 774 هـ)

Asad, Muhammad. *The Message of the Qur'ān*. Gibraltar: Dar al-Andalus, 1964.

## 17. DID THE PROPHET EVER CONTRADICT THE QUR'ĀN?

Did the Prophet Muhammad *s.a.w.* ever say something contradictory to what is in the Qur'ān? One of the duties of the Prophet mentioned in the Qur'ān was to explain it to people. Allah says,

وَأَنْزَلْنَا إِلَيْكَ الذِّكْرَ لِتُبَيِّنَ لِلنَّاسِ مَا نُزِّلَ إِلَيْهِمْ وَلَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ (النحل:44)  
*And We have also sent down to you (O Muhammad) the Dhikr [reminder (i.e., the Qur'ān)], that you may explain clearly to men what is sent down to them, and that they may give thought (Q. 16:44)*

The Prophet was ordered by Allah to explain the rulings, the promise and the threat mentioned in the Qur'ān orally and practically. He would explain and specify what Allah mentions in general sense in the Qur'ān, such as the rulings dealing with prayer, zakat and others (al-Qurṭubī's commentary). Allah ordered the Prophet to explain what He meant in the Qur'ān, because the Prophet knew what He meant, because he adhered to it, and because he was the best of creation and the leader of the Children of Adam (Ibn Kathir's commentary). His sayings and statements, actions and tacit approvals which we call *Ḥadīth* (Prophet's tradition) reach us through chains of narrators, some are reliable, and others are not. Through studying the biography of each of these narrators scholars evaluate the *ḥadīth* whether it is accepted as sound, or doubted, or even rejected, because of the narrators' weak memory, dishonesty, *etc.*

Before answering this question, we also learn that beside the Prophet, the Qur'ān also explains itself, so that verses of the Qur'ān dealing with one topic have to be studied to know which verse explain what. Therefore, there is no contradiction in the verses of the Qur'ān, and those who claim its existence have not learned extensively the Qur'ān and its tools known as *عُلُومُ الْقُرْآنِ* (Sciences of the Qur'ān). Allah does not contradict Himself in the Qur'ān.

Back to the topic, one of the *ḥadīths* which seems to contradict the Qur'ān is as follows:

عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ أَنَّ النَّبِيَّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ- قَالَ « مَا مِنْ أَحَدٍ يُدْخِلُهُ عَمَلُهُ الْجَنَّةَ . فَقِيلَ وَلَا أَنْتَ يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ قَالَ وَلَا أَنَا إِلَّا أَنْ يَنْعَمَ عَلَيَّ رَبِّي بِرَحْمَةٍ (رواه مسلم).

*Abū Hurayrah narrated that the Prophet s.a.w. said: "Nobody will enter Heaven by his deeds." He was asked: "Even you, O Messenger of Allah?" He said: "Not even me, except that my Lord protects me with His grace." (Reported by Muslim)*

This means, based on this *ḥadīth*, despite our good deeds, our effort to enter Heaven would be without avail, except with Allah's grace. This *ḥadīth* is apparently contradictory to the following Qur'ānic verse:

الَّذِينَ تَتَوَقَّاهُمْ الْمَلَائِكَةُ طَيِّبِينَ يَقُولُونَ سَلَامٌ عَلَيْكُمْ  
ادْخُلُوا الْجَنَّةَ بِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ (النحل:32)

*Those whose lives the angels take while they are in a pious state (i.e, pure from all evil, and worshipping none but Allah Alone) saying (to them): Peace be on you enter you Paradise because of that (the good) which you used to do (in this world)." (Q. 16:32)*

According to this verse the angel will tell pious people to enter Paradise for their good deeds in this world, either as a good tiding, or it will be said to them in the Hereafter (al-Qurṭubī's commentary). Allah will recompense pious people who have been made good by Allah with "cleanness in their faith and purity in their practicing Islam in their lives and in their death." (al-Ṭabarī's commentary).

The above *ḥadīth* does not object totally the validity of good deeds for the condition of entering Paradise, but rather it gives conditions and restrictions for their validity. In other words, people with good deeds in this world will not automatically enter Paradise as if they have the key of it. There

are conditions for the acceptance of good deeds. Any good deed has to be done with *ikhhlāṣ*, sincerity, for the sake of Allah Alone, not for the worldly gain, not for *riyā'* (show off). It has to be done with *tawāḍu'* (humbleness, humility), that it is done for Allah's pleasure with worry and uncertainty that He might not fully accept it, because of its shortcomings. People who fulfill these conditions would definitely enter Paradise with their good deeds as mentioned in the above verse and as promised by Allah in the Qur'ān, namely, the reward of accepted good deeds will be Paradise.

With regard to people who do good deeds without fulfilling these conditions, their good deeds will not be accepted, and therefore they will not enter Paradise, unless Allah forgives them, and this is what is meant by the above *ḥadīth*. Without Allah's mercy and forgiveness, people who do good deeds with arrogance, thinking that Allah would automatically admit them to Paradise disregarding the quality of these deeds will be disappointed in the Hereafter that these deeds would not be acceptable.

Like the Qur'ān which has sciences (عُلُومُ الْقُرْآنِ) to study in order to understand it, the *ḥadīth* of the Prophet also has sciences (عُلُومُ الْحَدِيثِ) to understand it. For the *asbāb al-nuzūl* (occasions which led to the revelation of the verse of the Qur'ān), we also have *asbāb al-wurūd* (occasions which led to the statement/saying/*ḥadīth* of the Prophet) which shall be dealt with in due course. The *Ḥadīth* or *Sunnah*<sup>1</sup> of the Prophet cannot be fully understood literally by people who have no background in Islamic knowledge. The Prophet had talked to different kind of people in different occasions and times about different subjects within 24 years, and it is the duty of Muslim

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<sup>1</sup> *Sunnah* (pl. *sunan*) is properly a custom or practice, and later narrowed down to the practice of the Prophet or a *ḥadīth*. *Sunnah* includes the Prophet's sayings, deeds and tacit approvals. In this respect it is often synonymous with *Ḥadīth* in general sense. *Sunnah* dealing with legal judgment means meritorious.

scholars to explain what the Prophet meant in his statement, or he would be misunderstood by Muslim laymen, let alone non-Muslims who keep trying to find any shortcoming in the Qur'ān.

One of the things that hinder the progress of Islam is the presentation of Islam by people who have no sufficient background of Islam, so that they explain the *ḥadīth* out of context, and give their personal judgment based on it. For example, they say that Islam is the a continuous arm struggle between Muslims and non-Muslims, as the Prophet said: *إِنَّ أَبْوَابَ الْجَنَّةِ تَحْتَ ظِلَالِ السُّيُوفِ* (رواه مسلم) *Verily, the doors of Paradise are under the shadows of the swords* (Reported by Muslim), whereas, in fact, the Prophet said it when the Muslim army are facing their enemy in the battlefield.<sup>2</sup> Others may think that having wealth is the opposite of piety, or *zuhd*, whereas poverty is the right way to the Hereafter. Some others misunderstand the term *taqdīr*, so that they would never try to improve their condition morally, physically, socially, economically, *etc.* because they associate *taqdīr* with fatalism.

The late Shaykh Muḥammad al-Ghazālī (d. 1996)<sup>3</sup> in answering question no. 40 out of 100 questions in his book *مائة سؤال عن الاسلام* (*One Hundred Questions about Islam*, pp. 177-

<sup>2</sup> A similar *ḥadīth* indicating that the Prophet said it when he was facing the enemy is this. He said *لَا تَمَنَّوْا لِقَاءَ الْعَدُوِّ وَسَلُّوْا اللّٰهَ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ الْعَافِيَةَ فَإِذَا لَقِيْتُمُوهُمْ فَاصْبِرُوا وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ الْجَنَّةَ تَحْتَ ظِلَالِ السُّيُوفِ* (رواه البخاري و مسلم و أحمد و أبو داود و غيرهم) *... do not wish to meet the enemy, and ask Allah the Almighty well-being, so when you meet them be patient, and be informed that Paradise is under the shadows of swords ...* (Re[ported by al-Bukhārī, Muslim, Abū Dū'ūd, Aḥmad and others)

<sup>3</sup> Shaykh Muḥammad al-Ghazālī (1335-1416/1917-1996) was an Egyptian Muslim scholar and thinker, and one of prominent and influential Muslim scholars of the 20<sup>th</sup> century who called for Islamic concepts in modern time and opposed religious extremism and exaggeration. He wrote over fifty books, and his criticism over the ruling systems in the Muslim world was one of many problems he was facing during his stay in Egypt and Saudi Arabia.

178) gives us more explanation about this issue. He said that misunderstanding the Sunnah of the Prophet will cause confusion among Muslims. These people, who do not know about the wisdom of the Qur'ān, do not have any sense of the Arabic literature, have no knowledge of human spirit and the condition of the community, never learned extensively about the biography of the Prophet and various situations he had gone through, either favourable or miserable. They are unable to make distinction between daily routine and religious acts. For these people, what they consider the Sunnah are eating with sitting cross-legged on the floor and not at the table, brushing teeth with *siwāk* (a small stick used for cleaning and polishing the teeth) rather than with toothbrush, washing after urinating or defecating with stone rather than with toilet paper (and of course cleaner with water); they stick the end of their turbans outward till the napes of their necks, they give priority to wearing white and loose garments, and for women to covering their whole body, including their faces.

Shaykh al-Ghazālī said further that these people consider that all customs and traditions of the Bedouin Arabs are in general the Sunnah of the Prophet. As the customs of the Arabs put women in the second position within the community in the name of Islam, they are not allowed to frequent the mosque, are not allowed to seek knowledge at schools, to participate in propagating and defending Islam in military field, *etc.* The case is contrary to people who fully understand the *Ḥadīth* of the Prophet. They know that these customs and traditions are wrong and contradictory to the Qur'ān and the Sunnah of the Prophet. However, some of those who consider themselves experts of Islam defend their “self-claimed truth” fanatically, and claimed that those who are not with them to be strongly influenced by modern culture.

According to Shaykh al-Ghazālī, although the *Sunnah* of the Prophet is the second source of Islam after the Qur'ān, in order to avoid confusion, there are some people only who are

required to learn it extensively. They are the *'ulamā'* (Muslim scholars) who have learned religious knowledge extensively, those who are involved directly with it, such as Muslim leaders, judges, *dā'iyah* (Islamic propagators), and experts in the special fields where mastering the knowledge of *Ḥadīth* is highly required. As for laymen, if they can understand just forty *ḥadīths* it would be sufficient for them. In any case, people who do not understand the Qur'ān should not cite *ḥadīths* or give *fatwa* (formal legal opinion) on Islam concerning the affairs of other people.

Shaykh al-Ghazālī had ever witnessed a group of errand lads who made themselves busy in teaching the *Sunnah*. Then they moved to Yemen hoping that the revival of Islam would start from there. It is the revival which is extremely far away from reality in life and from the possibility of conquering the world. They might hope that some pious jinn would help them and provide them with bombs in war time and with food, clothes and medicines in peace time. He said that this is a kind of madness which has many varieties and manifests itself in many ways (الْجُنُونُ فُنُونٌ).

(CIVIC, 6 November, 2015)

المصادر:

المكتبة الشاملة

تفسير الطبري (ت. 310 هـ)

تفسير القرطبي (ت. 671 هـ)

تفسير ابن كثير (ت. 774 هـ)

محمد الغزالي. مائة سؤال عن الإسلام. القاهرة: نهضة مصر، الطبعة الرابعة،

2005 م

[https://ar.wikipedia.org/wiki/محمد\\_الغزالي](https://ar.wikipedia.org/wiki/محمد_الغزالي)

## 18. OUT OF CONTEXT

There is no doubt that Islam is the fastest growing religion, not only because of mass conversion to it, but also because of rapid increase of already high birth rate of its followers. Even without conversion Islam would become one day the greatest religion in the world, while it is now still in the second position after Christianity. We have witnessed that many churches in the West (Europe, America and Canada) have been turned into mosques because of lack of church attendants. It is not an exaggeration that some Christians are only so by name, as they attend the church three times only in their lifetimes: (a) when they were born and brought to the church to be baptized; (b) when they got married and came by himself voluntarily to the church, and (c) when they die they are carried to the church.

According to Pew Research Center concerning the Future of world religions on the Population Growth Projections from 2010 to 2050, the Christian world population will increase from 2.17 billion to 2.92 billion, but the percentage will remain, 31.4% of world population, whereas Islam in the same period will increase from 1.6 billion to 2.76 billion, the percentage will increase from 23.2 % to 29.7 %, so that in 2050 the number of Muslims will nearly equal the number of Christians around the world. Their number will be equal in 2070, approximately 32.3%, but in 2100 Islam (34.9%) will be ahead of Christianity (33.8%). In 2050 Muslims will make up 10% over the population of Europe, whereas in India although the Hindu religion will remain the majority, it will have the largest Muslim population of any country in the world, surpassing Indonesia.

There is also no doubt that Islam is the most misunderstood religion, even by Muslims themselves, let alone non-Muslims. Some of the Muslims may think that the injunction of applying penalty against committed crimes should be applied individually rather than collectively, in this case, the

ruler or the government. In other words, they may think that it is an individual duty rather than a collective one, so that they may take the law into their own hands. When the ruler acts slowly out of carefulness they may revolt against it and brand it an irreligious one. Although the Qur'an was revealed in بِلِسَانٍ (الشعراء:195) "In the plain Arabic language" (Q. 26:195), it does not necessarily mean that everybody whose mother-tongue is Arabic can understand it clearly, because it was revealed fourteen centuries ago. Even English speaking people would have difficulty in understanding the language of the English poet and dramatist William Shakespeare (d. 1616) of the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> century, let alone the language of the English poet Geoffrey Chaucer (d. 1400) of the 14<sup>th</sup> century.

One of many verses cited by non-Muslims to discredit Islam as an aggressive religion which promotes intolerance is as follows:

قَاتِلُوا الَّذِينَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَلَا بِالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ وَلَا يُحَرِّمُونَ  
مَا حَرَّمَ اللَّهُ وَرَسُولُهُ وَلَا يَدِينُونَ دِينَ الْحَقِّ مِنَ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ  
حَتَّى يُعْطُوا الْجِزْيَةَ عَنْ يَدٍ وَهُمْ صَاغِرُونَ (التوبة:29)

*Fight against those who believe not in Allah, nor in the Last Day, nor forbid that which has been forbidden by Allah and His Messenger (Muhammad s.a.w.) and those who acknowledge not the religion of truth (i.e., Islam among the people of the Scripture (Jews and Christians) until they pay the jizyah with willing submission, and feel themselves subdued. (Q. 9:29)*

This verse was revealed in the year 9<sup>th</sup> of Hijrah when the Prophet had become the sole de facto ruler of the Arabian Peninsula. One year earlier he and his army had conquered Makkah without any resistance, and later that year subjugated the enemy at the battle of Hunayn, which was the last campaign. The conflict with the Quraysh idolaters had been settled as they entered into Islam. The Prophet as the head of the city-state Madinah had made a treaty with the Jewish

people. Two years earlier the Jews of Khaybar were banished for their betraying the treaty.

When the above verse was revealed there was no longer any threat or resistance or any danger from non-Muslims inside the country. It was revealed in the year called in Islamic history *عَامُ الْوُفُودِ*, “the Year of Deputation,” where over seventy delegations came to Madinah to meet the Prophet for various reasons. The delegates kept coming even after the 10<sup>th</sup> of Hijrah. The delegates from Hawāzin and Tamīm tribes came to ask the Prophet to release the captives among their people. Others came to ask the Prophet’s guarantee of protection, that he would not attack them. Others came to express their intention to become Muslims. Some came to express their intention to pay *jizyah* (“protection” tax for non-Muslims instead of zakat for Muslims). Some came to conduct a dialogue with the Prophet, such as the delegation from Christian Najrān consisting of sixty horsemen. Twenty-four among them were their chiefs, and three of them were their leaders. They were ‘Abdul Masīḥ (titled “al-‘Āqib”, “the Subsequent”) who gave advice and made decision, al-Ayham, also known as Sharahbīl (titled “al-Sayyid”, “the Master”) their leader in the journey and social gathering, and Abū Ḥārithah ibn ‘Alqamah (titled “al-Usqf”, “the Bishop”) their priest and religious leader. This Najrān tribe was big enough, consisting of 73 villages, having 100.000 men as its army.

As the delegates did not want to embrace Islam even after the Prophet cited the Qur’an to them, they asked him about Jesus (‘Isā a.s.). The Prophet later received revelation answering the question, as follows:

إِنَّ مَثَلَ عِيسَىٰ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ كَمَثَلِ آدَمَ خَلَقَهُ مِنْ تُرَابٍ ثُمَّ قَالَ لَهُ كُنْ فَيَكُونُ.  
 الْحَقُّ مِنْ رَبِّكَ فَلَا تَكُنْ مِنَ الْمُمْتَرِينَ. فَمَنْ حَاجَّكَ فِيهِ مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا جَاءَكَ  
 مِنَ الْعِلْمِ فَقُلْ تَعَالَوْا نَدْعُ أَبْنَاءَنَا وَأَبْنَاءَكُمْ وَنِسَاءَنَا وَنِسَاءَكُمْ وَأَنْفُسَنَا  
 وَأَنْفُسَكُمْ ثُمَّ نَبْتَهِلْ فَنَجْعَلْ لَعْنَتَ اللَّهِ عَلَى الْكَاذِبِينَ ( آل عمران: 61)

*Then whoever disputes with you concerning him [Jesus,*

*‘Īsā a.s.] after (all) this knowledge that has come to you [i.e., ‘Īsā being a slave of Allah and having no share in divinity], say (O Muhammad): “Come, let us call our sons and your sons, our women and your women, ourselves and ourselves – then we pray and invoke (sincerely) the Curse of Allah upon those who lie.” (Q. 3:61)*

The next day the Prophet came with his daughter Fāṭimah, his grandsons Ḥasan and Ḥusayn to meet them, gave his answer according to the revelation, and challenged them with *mubāhalah*, (i.e., the act of invoking Allah for curses against whoever is not telling the truth among the two contenders, the Prophet and his daughter and grandsons on one side, and the delegations of Najrān on the other). Fearing for their lives and thinking the he might be a true prophet, they decided to cancel the *mubāhalah*. Instead, they remained Christians, conducted a peace treaty with him, and asked him to send them a trusted man as a judge and to collect *jizyah*, then returned home. It is said that both leader ‘Aqīb and al-Sayyid embraced Islam upon their return to Najrān. Islam spread among the people of Najrān the Prophet sent ‘Ali ibn Abī Ṭalib to collect *zakat* from the Muslims among them.

Therefore, it is very wrong to say that the Muslims are enjoined to fight any non-Muslim based on the above verse. The above verse was revealed to indicate the second phase of Islam, to defend it from the outside threat. At that time the Romans killed people who converted to Islam in Syria. One example was Farwah ibn ‘Amr al-Judhāmī, the Roman Governor at Ma‘ān who converted to Islam. He sent a delegation to the Prophet to let him know of his conversion. The Prophet gave him a white horse in return of his conversion to Islam. The Roman emperor at that time wanted him to return to Christianity, but he rejected. He was arrested and imprisoned. Eventually, he was crucified in Palestine, and beheaded near a spring called ‘Afrā’ (عَفْرَاء).

For this reason Allah revealed the above verse to the Prophet for the first time to fight the People of the Book (Jews and Christians) in this case the army of the Christian Roman empire for their persecuting the Muslims in Syria. He called people in Madinah and surrounding areas to defend their Muslim brothers and to fight the Romans. They responded his call, and mobilized about 30.000 fighters and 10.000 horsemen. This was called in Islamic history the Tabūk expedition.

The campaign would eventually end with treaty, that they paid *jizyah*, namely head-tax willingly and obediently, provided that they can easily afford it. The term *jizyah* literally means “a compensation” (in lieu of something else”) for the protection of non-Muslims under Muslim rule against foreign attack, especially the Romans. It is also a compensation for their being relieved from joining the Muslim army. It is for them less than what the Muslims have to pay as *zakat* (head tax and property tax) and others, such charity (*ṣadaqah*), solemn pledge (*nadhr*), penance for violating certain religious regulations (*kaffārah*), etc. Moreover, these non-Muslims under the Muslim rule called *ahl al-dhimmah* (people under protection), or simply *dhimmī* (protected person) are exempted from joining the Muslim army, and when they became old they would get assistance from the state treasury (*bayt al-māl*) like what Caliph ‘Umar did with poor *dhimmīs*. Abū ‘Ubaydah ‘Āmir ibn al-Jarrāh imposed *jizyah* on the people of Ḥimṣ for their protection against the Romans. When his army was infected with plague and was no longer able to protect the inhabitants of Ḥimṣ against the Roman invasion, he returned the *jizyah* to them.

Some of the *dhimmis* are exempted from paying *jizyah*. They are: (a) all women (b) all males who have not reached full maturity (c) old men (d) all sick or crippled men, and (e) priests and monks. Non-Muslims citizen who voluntarily join military service are also exempted from paying *jizyah*. Like the Jews and the Christians the Magians also pay *jizyah*, because the Prophet

said that they have to be treated like the people of the Book (the Jews and the Christians). All Muslim scholars agree with it. Abū Ḥanīfah said that all non-Muslims under the Muslim rule have to pay *jizyah*, disregarding their faiths, because, according to him, all disbeliefs belong to one religion, namely, disbelief (الْكُفْرُ كُلُّهُ مِلَّةٌ وَاحِدَةٌ) "all infidelity belong to one religion". Most of the followers of Imām Mālik hold this view, but according to al-Shāfi'ī the *jizyah* should be imposed on exclusively the Jews, the Christians, and the Magians.

In conclusion, the injunction of fighting the Jews and the Christians was basically directed to the Romans among them who started hostility by persecuting Muslims in their territories. Muslims have right to defend their Muslim brothers. When the enemies surrendered they were asked to pay *jizyah* if they could afford it, and they did not have to pay war reparation as Germany and Japan did after the Second World War. The kind of "humiliation" and the "burden" of paying *jizyah* they suffered would be removed automatically when they become Muslims. Let those who used to attack Islam as an aggressive religion citing this above verse avoid it, and let those who abandon Islam based on this verse return to it.

(CIVIC, 13 November, 2015)

المصادر:

المكتبة الشاملة

تفسير الطبري (ت. 310 هـ)

تفسير القرطبي (ت. 671 هـ)

تفسير ابن كثير (ت. 774 هـ)

محمد أبو زهرة. (ت. 1394هـ\1974م). زهرة التفاسير. دار الفكر العربي

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<http://www.pewforum.org/2015/04/02/religious-projections-2010-2050/>

## 19. ASBĀB AL-WURŪD

The Muslim scholar Ibn al-Qayyim al-Jawziyyah (691-751/1292-1349) said that the root of every *bid'ah* (innovation) and deviation in Islam is misunderstanding what Allah and His Messenger had intended; it is even the source of every mistake in the principles and branches of religion, especially if it is accompanied with bad intention."

Allah said in the Qur'ān that He had perfected Islam, had completed His Favour upon us, and had chosen for us Islam as our religion (Q. 5:3). However, many Muslims still do not fully understand the meanings and the laws derived from it. Muslim scholars have different levels of understanding its meanings and these laws, as nobody knows it entirely except Allah. Allah gives different levels of knowledge and wisdom to His servants, and this is Allah's Wisdom, so that they have to learn from each other, and come to mutual understanding and agreement.

Among the Prophet's companions some of them who were more knowledgeable than the others or who had better quality than the others: the most knowledgeable on *farā'id* (the law of inheritance) was Zayd ibn Thābit, the most knowledgeable on the reading of the Qur'ān was Ubayy ibn Ka'b, on what is *ḥalāl* (legal, permitted) and on what is *ḥarām* (illegal, prohibited) was Mu'ādh ibn Jabal, on the interpretation of the Qur'ān was 'Abdullah ibn 'Abbās, the most compassionate towards the Muslims was Abū Bakr, the most strict on Allah's command was 'Umar, the most shy was 'Uthmān, and it was reported that the most knowledgeable on judicial decision was 'Alī, whereas the *amīn al-ummah* (the trusty of the community) was Abū 'Ubaydah ibn al-Jarrāḥ.

Among the importance science in understanding the *ḥadīth* is *أسبابُ وُرُودِ الْحَدِيثِ* (the reasons for the mentioning the *ḥadīth*), or simply called *asbab al-wurūd*. There are many benefits of knowing it, among which are as follows:

1. Understanding the motive of the *ḥadīth*, such as:

لَيْسَ مِنَ الْبِرِّ الصَّوْمُ فِي السَّفَرِ (رواه البخاري وغيره)  
*It is not part of piety to fast in traveling*  
 (Reported by Bukhārī and others)

The Prophet said it when he saw fasting people suffering. But in normal condition, he did not criticize people who are fasting and non-fasting in traveling.

2. To specify the general concept (تَخْصِيصُ الْعَامِ), such as the following *hadīth* as narrated by ‘Ā’shah *r.a.* the Prophet *s.a.w.* said:

صَلَاةُ الْجَالِسِ عَلَى النُّصْفِ مِنْ صَلَاةِ الْقَائِمِ (رواه أحمد)  
*The reward of praying sitting is half of the reward of praying standing* (Reprted by Ahmad)

‘Abd al-Razzāq and Ibn ‘Umar reported that while they were entering Madinah it was very hot, and people were tired and were praying sitting in the mosque. Then the Prophet entered the mosque, saying: “*The reward of praying sitting is half of the reward of praying standing*” as mentioned above. This is apparently applied to people who are sick and tired prayed whether the obligatory or recommended prayer sitting. However, Muslim scholars give their commentaries, among which as follows:

Muslim scholars agree that those who are unable to stand in prayer because of sickness and others will have full reward either in obligatory or recommended prayer. Al-Tirmidhi and Sufyān al-Thawrī said that healthy people only will get half of the reward if they pray sitting in performing **recommended** prayers only, but not allowed in obligatory prayer, as Allah said,

...وَقُومُوا لِلَّهِ قَانِتِينَ (البقرة:238)

“... and stand before Allah in obedience” (Q. 2:238), and the Prophet said,

صَلِّ قَائِمًا ، فَإِنْ لَمْ تَسْتَطِعْ قَائِمًا فَقَاعِدًا ، فَإِنْ لَمْ تَسْتَطِعْ  
 فَعَلَى جَنْبٍ (رواه البخاري)

*Pray standing, if you cannot stand, sit down, and if you cannot, then on your side* (Reported by Bukhari)

If the *imām* is sitting because he is unable to stand because of sickness or others while leading the obligatory prayer, are the *ma'mūm* also to sit down praying following the *imam*, or they have to stand? There are two views: (a). They can also sit down following the *imam* according to Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal and Ishāq ibn Rāhawayh, and practised by Abū Hurayrah and Jābir ibn 'Abdullah among the *ṣaḥābah*. (b). The majority of scholars say that it is not allowed to pray obligatory prayer sitting for healthy people, neither praying alone, as *imām* or behind the *imam*, based on the *Qur'ānic* verse (Q. 2:238) above. The *imām* can pray sitting while the *ma'mūm* standing as Abū Bakr and other *ṣaḥābah* did while the Prophet was sitting in prayer. This is the view of al-Shāfi'ī, Abū Ḥanīfah, Abū Yūsuf, Mālik, Abū Thawr, and Dā'ūd ibn 'Alī.

3. To specify the ambiguous (تَعْيِينُ الْمُبْهَمِ), such as the following *hadith*, as narrated by Anas ibn Mālik the Prophet *s.a.w.* said:

إِنَّ مِنْ عِبَادِ اللَّهِ مَنْ لَوْ أَقْسَمَ عَلَى اللَّهِ لِأَبْرَهُ (متفق عليه)

*Verily, there are among Allah's servants who if he swears to Allah, He would verily fulfill it*

(Reported by Bukhari and Muslim)

Anas ibn Mālik said that his paternal aunt al-Rubayyī' daughter of al-Naḍr broke the front tooth of a slave-girl, but neither forgiveness nor blood-money was accepted, so people came to the Prophet asking for retaliation, and he accepted it. But her brother (who was also called Anas) said to the Prophet, "O Messenger of Allah, are you going to break her front tooth? By Allah Who sent you with truth, do not let her front tooth to be broken." But the Prophet said: "O Anas, the Book of Allah has prescribed retaliation." Then people became content and accepted the blood-money.

4. Elaborating the general concept (تَفْصِيلُ الْمُجْمَلِ), such as:

عَنْ أَنَسٍ قَالَ : أَمَرَ بِلَالٌ أَنْ يَشْفَعَ الْأَذَانَ وَيُوتِرَ الْإِقَامَةَ

إِلَّا الْإِقَامَةَ. (رَوَاهُ الْبُخَارِيُّ وَغَيْرُهُ)

*Anas narrated: "Bilal was order to say the adhan twice, and iqāmah once except iqamah (i.e. qad qāmat al-ṣalāh) (Reported by Bukhari and others)*

There are about 248 *ḥadīths* concerning the *ādhān* (calling for prayer) and *iqāmah* (announcing that the prayer is about to begin), most of them are narrated by Anas ibn Mālik. Some of them give details upon which scholars based their views, as follows:

- a. The wordings of the *ādhān* are read twice except *la ilaha illallah*, which is said once only, based on the vision of ‘Abdullah ibn Zayd ibn Rabbih and approved by the Prophet.
- b. The wordings of the *iqāmah*, according to:
  - (1) Abū Ḥanīfah, they are like the *ādhān*, but read quickly
  - (2) Al-Shāfi‘ī, Mālik, al-Awzā‘ī and Ibn Ḥanbal, they are read once, except *qad qāmatīṣ ṣalāh* is read twice according to al- Al-Shāfi‘ī.

With regard to the ruling of *ādhān* and *iqāmah* some say that they are collective duties (فَرَضٌ كِفَايَةٌ), others say that they are recommended acts (سُنَّةٌ).

#### 5. Explaining what is not clear, such as the Prophet’s saying:

صَلَاةٌ فِي هَذَا الْمَسْجِدِ أَفْضَلُ مِنْ مِائَةِ أَلْفِ صَلَاةٍ فِيْمَا سِوَاهُ مِنَ الْمَسَاجِدِ (مصنف عبد الرزاق)

*One prayer in this mosque is better than one hundred thousand times better than in any mosque. (‘Abd al-Razzāq’s Muṣannaf)*

Shurayd on the day of the conquest of Makkah told the Prophet that he had made a solemn pledge to pray in the Prophet’s mosque in Madīnah if he (the Prophet) was successful in conquering Makkah. The Prophet told him that praying in the Inviolable Mosque in Makkah would be sufficient for him. Then the Prophet mentioned the merit of

one prayer in it is better than one-hundred thousand prayers in any other mosque.

6. Knowing the abrogating (النَّاسِخُ) and the abrogated (الْمَنْسُوخُ) Narrated ‘Abdullah ibn Mas‘ūd: “We used to participate in the holy battles led by the Messenger of Allah and we had nothing (no wives) with us. So we said, "Shall we get ourselves castrated?" He forbade us that and then allowed us to marry women with a temporary contract. Then ‘Abdullah ibn Mas‘ūd recited to us: *'O you who believe! Make not unlawful the good things which Allah has made lawful for you, but commit no transgression.'*” (Q. 5:87). (Reported by Bukhari).<sup>1</sup> The above *ḥadīth* stated that temporary marriage called *Nikāḥ Mut‘ah* (نِكَاحُ مُتْعَةٍ), or simply called *mut‘ah* was allowed in the early stage of Islam in Madinah, but the Prophet finally prohibited it forever. Salamah ibn al-Akwa‘ and Jābir ibn Abdullah said:

إِنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ ص.م. - قَدْ أَذِنَ لَكُمْ أَنْ تَسْتَمْتِعُوا (رواه البخاري و مسلم)

*“Verily, the Messenger of Allah's Messenger (peace be upon him) has granted permission to you to practice mut‘ah.”* (Reported by Bukhārī and Muslim)

Later the above *ḥadīth* was abrogated by many other *hadiths*, among which are as follows:

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنِّي قَدْ كُنْتُ أُذِنْتُ لَكُمْ فِي الْإِسْتِمْتَاعِ مِنَ النِّسَاءِ  
وَإِنَّ اللَّهَ قَدْ حَرَّمَ ذَلِكَ إِلَيَّ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ فَمَنْ كَانَ عِنْدَهُ مِنْهُنَّ شَيْءٌ  
فَلْيُخَلِّ سَبِيلَهُ وَلَا تَأْخُذُوا مِمَّا آتَيْنُمُوهُنَّ شَيْئًا (رواه مسلم)

*O people, I had permitted you to contract temporary*

<sup>1</sup> Qur’ānic commentators, such as al-Tābarī, al-Qurṭubī, and Ibn Kathīr do not say explicitly that among the good things in the above verse is the *mut‘ah*, but rather any good thing in general including marriage, as many of the companions of the Prophet gathered together in the house of ‘Uthmān ibn Maḥḥūn, and agreed among themselves to fast in the day time, pray at night, not to sleep on mats, not to eat meat and fat, not to approach women and perfume, to wear coarse woolen fabric, to reject the worldly life, to wander in the land and to be like monks. Then the above verse was revealed to them, so that they would not abandon the good things, including marriage. There is no monasticism in Islam.

*marriage with women, but Allah has forbidden it (now) until the Day of Resurrection. So he who has any (woman with this type of marriage contract) he should let her off, and do not take back anything you have given to them (as dower).* (Reported by Muslim)

Imam al-Nawawī said that *mut'ah* was allowed and prohibited twice: allowed before the campaign of Khaybar, then was prohibited after it; it was allowed on the day of the conquest of Makkah for three days, and then was prohibited permanently till the Resurrection day. It is said that it was also allowed for three days on the days of the campaign of Khaybar.

It was reported that 'Aī ibn Abī Ṭālib said that the Prophet on the Day of Khaybar prohibited forever the *mut'ah* and eating of the flesh of the domestic donkeys (Reported by Bukhārī and Muslim). Imam Aḥmad and al-Bayhaqī also reported that the Prophet prohibited the *mut'ah*.

There are other benefits in knowing the *asbāb al-wurūd* of the Prophet's statements such as the restricting the unrestricted (تَقْيِيدُ الْمُطْلَقِ), which would clarify what he meant in his statements. (Civic, 27 November, 2015)

المصادر:

المكتبة الشاملة

تفسير الطبري (ت. 310 هـ)

تفسير القرطبي (ت. 671 هـ)

تفسير ابن كثير (ت. 774 هـ)

د. محمد أبو النور الحديدي، عصمة الأنبياء والرد على الشبه الموجهة إليهم،

مطبعة الأمانة القاهرة 1399\1979)

د. بدر عبد الحميد هميسة. علم أسباب ورود الحديث الشريف

<http://bayanelislam.net/Suspicion.aspx?id=01-04-006>

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[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nikah\\_mut%E2%80%98ah](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nikah_mut%E2%80%98ah)

<http://fatwa.islamweb.net/fatwa/index.php?page=showfatwa>

&Option=Fatwald&Id=485

## 20. IBN JARĪR AL-ṬABARĪ

There are many great classical commentators of the Qur'ān which become the main sources of contemporary scholars in further understanding the meanings of the Qur'ān. One of them was Abū Ja'far Muḥammad Ibn Jarīr al-Ṭabarī, the native of Tabaristan (224-310/839-923). He is considered by Muslim scholars "the father of the science of *tafsīr*". He was born in Amol, Tabaristan, modern Mazandaran, about 20 km south of the Caspian Sea in Iran. Although he was a Persian, all his works was written in Arabic. He wrote on many subjects, such as poetry, grammar, ethics, mathematics, medicine history in commentary of the Qur'ān. His best known works are *Jāmi' al Bayān fī Tafsīr al-Qur'ān* (The Comprehensive Exposition of the Interpretation of the Verses of the Qur'ān), also known as *Tafsīr al-Ṭabarī*, and *Tārīkh al-Rusul wa al-Mulūk* (History of the Prophets and Kings), often referred to *Tārīkh al-Ṭabarī*. As he wrote extensively history which had not been written like it he was also called "the Father of History."

Al-Ṭabarī started learning at his early age. At seven he memorised the Qur'ān, at eight he started leading the prayer, at nine he started studying the *Ḥadīth* (Prophetic traditions), and at twelve he left home to pursue his study. At Rayy (Raghes) he stayed about five years where he studies the Hanafi school, the *sīrah* (biography of the Prophet) by Ibn Ishāq, and pre-Islamic history. Then he travelled to Baghdad and studied under Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal for a short period as he died later, and he found out that he did not learn much from him as he considered him just a recorder of *ḥadīth* rather than a jurist (*faqīh*). Then he went to Basrah, Kufah, and Wasit, where he studied the various *madhhabs* (schools of jurisprudence): Mālikī, Shāfi'ī, and Zāhirī under its founder Dāwūd al-Zāhirī. He followed the Shāfi'ī school for some times, then he established his own school.

On his return to Baghdad, the vizier at that time ‘Ubaydullāh Khāqān offered him a tutoring position for ten dinars a month. It was said that he taught so well that he was offered a tray of dinars and dirhams, but he declined. Then in his late twenties he went to Syria, Palestine, and Egypt. In Beirut he studied the Syrian school’s variant readings of the Qur’ān as well as the legal views of al-Awzā’ī.

Like great scholars before and after him he suffered from some kinds of allegations, and the worst of it of being a *Rāfiḍī*<sup>1</sup> and a *Shī’ī*<sup>2</sup>. This allegation became spread among scholars,

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<sup>1</sup>The term *Rāfiḍī* (رافضي) means “the one who rejects”; *Rāfiḍah* (رافضة) is its collective plural, and its multiple plural is *Rawāfiḍ* (روافض), both meaning “those who reject.” The terms are referred by Sunnī Muslims to the Shī’īs who reject legitimacy of the succession of Abū Bakr, ‘Umar and ‘Uthmān as Muslim leaders after Prophet Muhammad *s.a.w.* Originally the *Rāfiḍah* were followers of the Shī’ah in Kufah and were with Zayd ibn ‘Ali ibn al-Ḥusayn ibn ‘Ali against the Umayyad caliph Hisham ibn ‘Abd al-Malik (ruling through 724-743 CE). When Zayd ibn ‘Ali refused to condemn the three earlier caliphs, namely, Abu Bakr, ‘Umar, and ‘Uthmān, arguing that they had been accepted by ‘Ali himself, they rejected and deserted him. However, the term is also applied to the Twelver Shī’ah who reject (some of them even openly condemn) the three earlier caliphs, as legitimate leaders of the Muslims.

<sup>2</sup> The term *Shī’ah* (شيعة) is an abbreviation of *Shī’atu ‘Alī* (شيعة علي), “followers of ‘Ali” who believe that the proper succession of the Prophet was his son-in-law and cousin ‘Ali, instead of his father-in-law Abū Bakr. They believe that Ali have been divinely appointed as the successor of the Prophet, as the first Imam, succeeded by certain individuals among his descendants (*ahl al-bayt*, “the People of the House”) who possessed infallibility and other divinely-ordained traits. Between 10% and 13% of Muslims are followers of Shi’ah, most of them live in Iraq, Iran, India and Pakistan, and 85% of them are Twelver Shi’ah. The Zaydī Shi’ah, also called al-Zaydiyyah (الزَيْدِيَّة) named after Zayd ibn ‘Ali, the grand-son of Ḥusayn ibn ‘Ali, constitute roughly 0.5% of the world’s Muslim population. Most of them live in Yemen, but they make up about 35-40% of its Muslim population. They do not believe in the infallibility of Imāms after Husayn and that the Imāmate must pass from father to son. Instead, they believe that it can be held by any descendant from either

among them was Ibn Ḥajar who said of him: “He is reliable, honest, and has slight bias [to the Shi‘ah] and tolerated friendship [with them] (ثقة صادق فيه تشيع يسير وموالاته لا تضر)”. But al-Ṭabarī had written a book praising Abū Bakr and ‘Umar entitled *فَصَائِلُ أَبِي بَكْرٍ وَعُمَرُ* (“The Virtues of Abū Bakr and ‘Umar”), whereas the Shi‘ah denounced both of them. He wrote this book when he found out that there was a person in his hometown Amol who cursed these two prominent companions of the Prophet. He mentioned their merits and repudiated the allegation against them. Because of this, the *wali* (ruler) of the town summoned him, and he fled to Baghdad where he passed away before completing the book.

The people of Iraq in general and of Baghdad in particular where al-Ṭabarī lived were followers of the Ḥanbalī school. When he said that Aḥmad Ibn Ḥanbal was a compiler of traditions and not a proper jurist because he based his views on traditions without using *qiyās* (analogy) people became angry with him. His followers would often throw stones at his house. When the Baghdad chief of police tried to organize a debate between him and the Ḥanbalīs to settle their differences he accepted it, but they did not show up. Instead, they came later to pelt his house with stones again.

When al-Ṭabarī died in Baghdad on Sunday evening 26 Shawwāl 310/16 February 923) reaching the age of 85 years he was buried secretly by the ‘Abbasi authority for fear of mob violence by the Ḥanbalīs. The historian Yāqūt al-Ḥamawī (d. 626/1229) also said that because of this allegation of being a

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Hasan ibn ‘Alī or Husayn ibn ‘Alī. The third main group of the Shi‘ah is the Ismā‘īliyyah, named after Ismā‘īl son of Ja‘far al-Ṣādiq (the sixth Imam), also called the Bāṭiniyyah for their belief in the existence of inner interpretation of the Qur’an. The term *bāṭin* means “inner, hidden, secret” which is the opposite of *ẓāhir* which means “obvious, clear, external.” Most of them live in India, Pakistan, Afghanistan and Syria.

*Rāfiḍī* when he died he was buried at night for fear of the people. According to the Qur'ān commentator Ibn Kathīr he was buried in his house because some Ḥanbali followers did not want him to be buried in the day time, and they alleged him to be a *Rāfiḍī* following the allegation of their teacher Muhammad ibn Dāwūd al-Ẓāhirī. Ibn Kathīr rejected the allegation saying that al-Ṭabarī was one of the Muslim scholars who knew and practised the Qur'ān and the Sunnah of the Prophet. The most acceptable view was that of the historians al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī and Ibn 'Asākir who said: "The number of people who gathered together at his funeral procession was uncountable except by Allah, and people prayed funeral prayer at his grave several months days and nights. He was buried the next day on the early morning of Monday in his house at Ya'qūb Public Square in Baghdad.

Al-Ṭabarī was said that he wrote forty pages every day for forty years. Many of his works were lost, but his *Jāmi'*, better known as *Tafsīr al-Ṭabarī*, has survived. He was "a man of encyclopaedic learning who absorbed the whole mass of tradition in his time". His *Tafsīr* consists of thirty volumes containing collections of *ḥadīths* with their full *isnād* (chains of transmitters) dealing with the commentary on the Qur'ān. He deals with whole chapters, although not whole verses, of the Qur'ān. He used to give his view after mentioning many different views, and said "the right view for me in this matter is ...." (والصواب من القول في ذلك عندي أن يقال...). Later commentators, such as al Zamakhsharī (d. 538/1143), Ibn 'Aṭīyyah (d. 542/1147 or 546/1151), Ibn Kathīr (d. 774/1373) and al Suyūṭī (d. 991/1505) followed al-Ṭabarī in examining and explaining the whole Qur'ān in their *tafsīr* works.

Al-Ṭabarī's *Tafsīr* was highly recommended by Ibn Taymiyyah (d. 728/1328) who stated that it was one of the best, and the worthiest of its kind. Abū Bakr al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī called it "a book which has never been written like it," whereas the jurist Abū Ḥāmid Aḥmad al-Isfarāyīnī said, "If a

man travels to China to get it would not be much.” Scholars in his time praised him so much that he was said to be a reliable scholar, one of the great leaders of the Sunnīs whose view was accepted, whom people referred to for his deep knowledge and sound method. The writing of his *Tafsīr* was completed within seven years starting from 283 AH till 290 AH in Baghdad.

Al-Ṭabarī in his *Tafsīr* included many *Jewish legends* (إِسْرَائِيلِيَّات) taken from Jewish converts, such as Ka ‘b al-Aḥbār, Wahb ibn Munabbih, ‘Abd Allāh ibn Sallām, ‘Abd al-Malik ibn Jurayj, and others so that it reached almost 2,500 legends, but he mentioned their *isnād* (chains of transmitters), and he rarely mentioned the sound and the weak. He never took from suspected people like Muqātīl and al-Kalbī.

Al-Ṭabarī’s *Tafsīr* was printed in 30 volumes by al-Amīriyyah Printing Press at Būlāq, Cairo in 1321/1903, then it was printed and copied many times until it was verified by Aḥmad Muḥammad Shākir, and about half of it was published in 16 volumes at Dār al-Ma‘ārif in Egypt in 1374/1955. In 1420/200 it was verified by Aḥmad Muḥammad Shākir again, and was printed again, and was published for the first time by Mu’assah al-Risālah in 24 volumes. Nowadays, with the advance of technology in this 21<sup>th</sup> Century, we are able to read this book through the internet. If you open *al-Maktabah al-Shāmilah* (المكتبة الشاملة), literally means “the Comprehensive Library”, by using WinRAR you will find thousands of classical books in various topics in Arabic. One of my main sources in this library is this *Tafsīr* of al-Ṭabarī.

Al-Ṭabarī was an ascetic person. When the vizier al-‘Abbās ibn al-Ḥasan asked him to write a book on Islamic law for him, he wrote the summary of his book *Laṭīf al-Qawl* and presented it to him. The vizier was so happy, that he sent him one thousand dinars as present, but he rejected it. When he was told that he should take it and give it away as charity to whom he liked, he said that they knew more those who deserved it.

Like other scholars before and after him, al-Ṭabarī also wrote poetry. Among his poetry is as follows:

إِذَا أَعْسَرْتُ لَمْ يَعْلَمْ رَفِيقِي \* وَأَسْتَعْنِي فَيَسْتَعْنِي صَدِيقِي  
حَيَائِي حَافِظٌ لِي مَاءٌ وَجْهِي \* وَرَفِيقِي فِي مُطَالَبَتِي رَفِيقِي  
وَلَوْ أَنِّي سَمَحْتُ بِمَاءٍ وَجْهِي \* لَكُنْتُ إِلَى الْعُلَى سَهْلَ الطَّرِيقِ  
(البحر الوافر: مفاعلتن مفاعلتن فعولن)

*When I am in trouble my companion does not know it,  
and [when] I am in no need [of help], then my friend is  
also in no need [of help].*

*My shameful self-protects my self-respect,  
and my tenderness [protects me] from asking  
[favour from] my companion.*

*And if I let myself sacrifice my honour,  
I would have easily attained glory.*

This poem indicates al-Ṭabarī's honesty, his humbleness, his self-confidence, his trust in Allah, his contentment, his shameful self, and his self-respect which are among good qualities of pious Muslims like him. May Allah reward him for his dedication to Islam, *āmīn!* (CIVIC, 4 December, 2015)

المصادر:

المكتبة الشاملة

تفسير الطبري (ت. 310 هـ)

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جرير الطبري.

## 21. AL-QURṬUBĪ

Another classical Muslim scholar worthy to mention here in the field of *tafsīr* (commentary of the Qur'ān) is Abū 'Abdullah Muhammad ibn Aḥmad whose title was "al-Qurṭubī" (الْقُرْطُبِيُّ) meaning "the native Cordova" in Andalusia (Muslim Spain) where he was born in 610/1214. During his youth he supported his family by carrying clay for use in potteries. He followed the Mālikī school of jurisprudence, the dominant *madhhab* in Andalusia at that time.

Andalusia (Muslim Spain) in general and Cordova in particular was well-known as the centre of learning, the land of scholars and men-of-letters from which admirable writings were produced. It was in Cordova where most books were kept in entire Andalusia, and its public libraries were taken with utmost care. It was the best market place for merchandise, that it had ben said: "If a man died in Seville and had books to sell, they were brought do be sold in Cordova."

In the 10th century the Islamic civilization reached its peak, and in the beginning of the 12<sup>th</sup> century the number of Muslims reached to 5.6 million in Andalusia. In Cordoba alone, there were between 113,000 and 200,000 houses, between 600 and 700 mosques, between 300 and 900 public baths, about 10,000 lamps, 50 hospitals, lighted and paved streets. Public baths were introduced for making ablution (*wuḍū'*) before performing the five-daily obligatory prayers. While the rest of Europe was still in illiteracy more than seventy libraries, bookshops and research institutions had flourished in Muslim Spain. Among great scholars at this golden time of Andalusia were: Ibn al-Bayṭār (d. 646/1248) who described more than 1,400 medical drugs, philosophers who were also physicians, like Ibn Sina (d. 427/1037), Ibn Ṭufayl (d. 581/1185), Ibn Rushd (d. 595/1198), and the Jewish philosopher Maimonides (Ibn Maymūn, d. 600/1204). Abū 'l-Qāsim al-Zahrāwī, (*Albucasis Alzahravius* d. 404/1013), entitled "father of surgery" whose

work was translated into Hebrew, Latin and Castilian. In comparative religions Ibn Ḥazm 's work *al-Faṣl fi al-Milal wa al-Nihal* was well-known till today. Encyclopedias on Arab scholars produced encyclopedias on various branches of knowledge: medicine, astronomy, biology, zoology, botany, chemistry, physics, mathematics, algebra, geometry, etc.

The well-known scholar Abū Bakr Ibn al-‘Arabī said about the education of children in Andalusia at that time. He said that it was the duty of the ruler to instruct Muslim children when they had enough intelligence about faith, to teach them writing and arithmetic, to memorize classical Arabic poetry, to learn and understand Arabic grammar, and when they became matured as teen-agers to teach them the Qur’ān and the *Ḥadīth* of the Prophet. He advised the ruler not to mix in teaching two subjects at the same time, unless the children had good understanding, strong energy, and receptivity to it.

It was in this condition of the city of Cordova where al-Qurṭubī was born. He learned as much as this city could provide for his education. His father Aḥmad died during the Spanish attack in 1230, and six years later King Fernando 1<sup>st</sup> captured Cordova in 1236, and many Muslims left the city, and al-Qurṭubī left for Egypt. Although many people moved to Seville to study, he preferred Egypt where many scholars lived. He settled in Alexandria, and after studying *Ḥadīth* and *Tafsīr* there he moved to Cairo, and then settled in Munyah ibn Khuṣayb north of the town Asyūṭ until he died in 671/1273.

Al-Qurṭubī wrote many books, and the most important one among them was *al-Jāmi‘ li-Aḥkām al-Qur’ān* (الْجَامِعُ لِأَحْكَامِ الْقُرْآنِ) translated as “*The Compendium of Legal Rulings of the Qur’ān*”, which has been very popular even today. The title of the book itself indicates that its main objective was to deduce juristic injunctions and rulings from the Qur’an. However, his commentary was not limited to verses dealing with legal issues, but was a general interpretation of the whole of Quran with a

Maliki point of view, the dominant *madhhab* in Andalusia (Muslim Spain) in his time.

Al-Qurṭubī was not fanatic with Mālikī school, but he followed what he thought the right one. For example, commenting the verse "*It is made lawful for you to have sexual relations with your wives on the nights of the fasts...* (Q. 2:187) he said in the 12<sup>th</sup> out of 36 issues on the verse, after mentioning the disagreement of scholars about eating on the day of Ramadan out of forgetting, and the view of Imam Mālik that it invalidates the fasting and has to be made up, "according the opinion of other than Mālik, it does not invalidate the fasting by eating out of forgetting, I say: this is the right one, and it is the opinion of the majority of scholars."

Another example of al-Qurṭubī's open-mind is his commentary on this verse:

وَأَقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَآتُوا الزَّكَاةَ وَارْكَعُوا مَعَ الرَّاكِعِينَ (البقرة: 43)  
*And perform the prayers and give zakat*  
*(obligatory charity), and bow down along with*  
*those who bow down (Q. 2:43)*

Commenting this verse al-Qurṭubī put it in forty-three issues. In the 16<sup>th</sup> issue he mentioned the opinion of those accept the possibility of a boy leading the prayer, such as al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī and Ishāq ibn Rāhawayh, and those who do not accept it, such as Imām Mālik and al-Thawrī, and others among *aṣḥāb al-ra'y* (upholders of personal opinion), but he did not follow this view, as he found an evident of its possibility. He said: "It is possible for a boy to lead the prayer if he is *qārī'* (a reciter of the Qur'an, namely, he is able to recite the Qur'an properly)". He based his view on the story of a boy of six or seven whose name was 'Amr ibn Salamah who led the prayer because he was the only person among them who could recite the Qur'an. Moreover, the Prophet said, *يَوْمَ الْقَوْمِ أَقْرَاهُمْ لِكِتَابِ اللَّهِ* ("the best reciter of the Qur'an who should lead the prayer") without excepting 'Amr ibn Salamah.

On the 43<sup>rd</sup> and last issue he mentioned three versions of greeting Allah at the beginning of the *tashahhud* cited while one is sitting in the prayer, all of them had been taught by the Prophet, as follows:

- a. 'Umar's version chosen by Mālik and followers of Mālikī school (North Africa), namely,

التَّحِيَّاتُ لِلَّهِ الزَّكَايَاتُ لِلَّهِ الطَّيِّبَاتُ الصَّلَوَاتُ لِلَّهِ...

*Salutations to Allah, pure actions to Allah, good words and prayers [are] to Allah...*

- b. Ibn 'Abbās's version chosen by al-Shāfi'ī, al-Layth ibn Sa'd, and followers of Shāfi'ī school (Indonesia, Malaysia, and to some extent, Egypt where al-Shāfi'ī passed away), namely,

التَّحِيَّاتُ الْمُبَارَكَاتُ الصَّلَوَاتُ الطَّيِّبَاتُ لِلَّهِ...

*Blessed salutations, prayers, good deeds [are] to Allah...*

- c. Ibn Mas'ūd's version, chosen by al-Thawrī, the people of Kufah (in al-Qurṭubī's time), Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal (Ḥanbalī school), Ishāq ibn Rāhawayh (teacher of al-Bukhārī, Muslim, Abū Dā'ūd, al-Nasā'ī), Dā'ūd (founder of Ḍāhirī school), Abū Mūsā al-Ash'arī, as well as the Ḥanafī school.

التَّحِيَّاتُ لِلَّهِ وَالصَّلَوَاتُ وَالطَّيِّبَاتُ...

*Salutations [are] to Allah and prayers and good deed [to Him]...*

As the four *madhhabs* (Ḥanafī, Mālikī, Shāfi'ī, and Ḥanbalī schools) are taught at al-Azhar high schools, special books for *fiqh* (Islamic jurisprudence) are used for students following their respective *madhhabs*.

Al-Qurṭubī's methodology in his *Tafsīr* is as follows:

- He mentioned the *asbāb al-nuzūl*, variant readings, *i'rāb* (desinential inflection), *nāsikh* (abrogating) and *mansūkh* (abrogated) verses, and explained difficult words.
- He frequently appealed to language expression for a legal decision, and frequently cited Arabic poetry.
- He refuted the Mu'tazilah, the Qadariyyah, the Rawāfiḍ (Dissenters), philosophers, and extremist sufis.

- d. He avoided many legendary stories, but occasionally he brought some strange Jewish legends.
- e. He frequently reported from people of early generation based on their authority in the explanation of the Qur'ān and in legal judgments referring every view to its viewers.

Al-Qurṭubī in his *Tafsīr* was highly influenced by many earlier scholars, and reported their commentaries, especially in legal judgments, as his sources, among them are as follows:

- a. al-Ṭabarī's *Jāmi' al-Bayān fī Tafsīr al-Qur'ān*, especially the interpretation of the verses of the Qur'an based on the *ḥadīths* and reports from the companions of the Prophet .
- b. al-Māwardī's *al-Aḥkām al-Sulṭāniyyah* (الأحكام السلطانية) translated as *The Ordinances of Government*. Abū 'l-Ḥasan al-Māwardī's (792-1058) was a Shāfi'ī jurist whose book was considered the most significant classical theoretical explanation of public law in relation to political theory.
- c. al-Naḥḥās's *I'rāb al-Qur'ān* (إعراب القرآن) translated as *The Expression of the Qur'ān* and *Ma'ānī al-Qur'ān* (معاني القرآن), translated as *The Meanings of the Qur'ān*. Abū Ja'far Aḥmad al-Naḥḥās (d. 338/950) was an Egyptian grammarian, a writer, and a commentator of the Qur'an.
- d. Ibn 'Aṭīyah's *al-Muḥarrir al-Wajīz fī 'l-Tafsīr* (المحرر الوجيز في التفسير) translated as *The Brief Editor in the Commentary of the Noble Book*, or simply *Tafsīr Ibn 'Aṭīyah*. 'Ibn 'Aṭīyah (d. 542/1147 or 546/1151) was a native of Granada who studied from scholars of Andalusia commentary of the Qur'ān and its variant readings, Arabic linguistic and grammar, rhetoric, and Islamic law from which al-Qurṭubī got benefit in his *Tafsīr*.
- e. Ibn al-'Arabī's *Aḥkām al-Qur'ān* (أحكام القرآن), *The Principles of the Qur'ān*. Abū Bakr ibn al-'Arabī (d. 543/1148) was born in Seville in 468/1075 where he was educated and studied variant readings on the Qur'ān. Then in 485/1092 he and his father moved to Syria when he continued his study, then he continued his study in Baghdad, and Egypt.

Al-Qurṭubī's *Tafsīr* greatly influenced many later Qur'ān commentators, among them are as follows:

- a. Ibn Kathīr's *Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-'Aẓīm* (تَفْسِيرُ الْقُرْآنِ الْعَظِيمِ), translated as *The Commentary of the Glorious Qur'ān*, or simply called *Tafsīr Ibn Kathīr*. Abū 'l-Fīdā'īl ibn Kathīr was a student of Ibn Taymiyyah and al-Dhahabī. He died in Damascus in 774/1373 in Damascus and was buried next to that of his teacher Ibn Taymiyyah. His *Tafsīr* contained many *ḥadīths* of the Prophet and the sayings of the *ṣaḥābah* cited usually in explaining the verses of the Qur'an.
- b. Abū Ḥayyān's *al-Baḥru 'l-Muḥīṭ* (الْبَحْرُ الْمُحِيطُ), translated as *the Comprehensive Sea (i.e. the Qur'an)*. Abū Ḥayyān al-Gharnaṭī (the native of Granada) was born in 654/1256. He was a commentator of the Qur'an, an Arabic grammarian and a linguist. He travelled extensively in pursue of knowledge: to Tunisia and Egypt (Alexandria, Cairo, Damietta, and Minya). He was said to have memorised the book of Sībawayh on Arabic grammar. He taught the science of Qur'anic exegesis at the college named after Mamluk Sultan al-Manṣūr Qalāwūn in Alexandria and in the Mosque of Ibn Ṭūlūn in Cairo where he died in 745 /1344.

This is a glimpse of al-Qurṭubī's life and works.

(CIVIC, 11 December, 2015)

المصادر:

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## 22. IMAM BUKHĀRĪ

Imam Bukhārī was a famous and respected scholar of *Ḥadīth*. His name was Abū ‘Abdullah Muhammad ibn Ismā‘īl known as “al- Bukhārī” “the native of Bukhārā” in Uzbekistan where he was born on Friday 13<sup>th</sup> Shawwal 194/21<sup>st</sup> July 810, and died on 30 Ramadan 256/21<sup>st</sup> August 870 in Khartank, a village near Samarqand. His father Ismā‘īl was also a scholar of *Ḥadīth* who was the student of Imam Mālik ibn Anas (d. 179/795), Ḥammād ibn Zayd (179/795), and Ibn al-Mubārak (d. 181/797). His father died while he was still quite young.

Bukhārī had lost his eyes while he was still a child. His mother prayed earnestly to Allah to restore his eyesight. One night she had a dream where Prophet Abraham *a.s.* told her that Allah had answered her prayer. In the morning she found out that her son had his eyesight restored.

The young and orphan Bukhārī began learning Ḥadīth at early age, before reaching his ten years old. One day a scholar read the narrators of a *ḥadīth* to people, saying, “Sufyān from Abū Zubayr from Ibrāhīm.” Bukhārī corrected him, saying, “Actually, Abū al-Zubayr did not report from Ibrāhīm.” The man reproved him, so he said to him: “Go back to the original one if you have it.” The man did, and said: “What is then the correct one, boy?” So, he said: “It is al-Zubayr ibn ‘Adī from Ibrāhīm.” The man made the correction and said to him, “You are right.” When he was asked how old he was at that time, he said that he was eleven years old.

At the age of sixteen he was discredited and criticized, and this led him to memorize many books of early scholars, such as of Ibn al-Mubārak and Wakī’ ibn al-Jarrāḥ (d. 197/812). Besides memorizing the *ḥadīths* and books of early scholars, he also learned the biography of all narrators who took parts in the transmission of any *ḥadīth*, including their date of birth, and date and place of death.

Then Bukhārī went to pilgrimage with his mother and elder brother Aḥmad, and after performing the pilgrimage his brother returned to Bukhara where he died, whereas he stayed for two years to pursue his study. He was then eighteen years old when he moved to Madinah, where people also discredited, criticized and defamed him. So he wrote books and spent his nights next to the Prophet's grave compiling the books, *Qaḍāya 'l-Ṣaḥābah wa 'l-Tābi'īn* (The Issues Concerning the Prophet's Companions and the People of the Following Generation) which is now non-existent, and *al-Tārīkhu 'l-Kabīr* ("the Large Compendium) using the moonlight as lighting.

After staying in Hijaz for six years Bukhārī journeyed to Iraq (Baghdad Kufah, and Basrah), Nishapur, Balkh, Rayy, Merv, Khorasan, Ascalon, Egypt and Syria, and learned from over 1000 men, and collected over 6,000 *ḥadīths* (traditions). Among his teachers were: Ishāq ibn Rāhawayh (d. 238/853), Ahmad ibn Hanbal (d. 241/855), Ibnu 'l-Madīnī (d. 234/849), and Yaḥyā Ibn Ma'īn (d. 233/848).

In Baghdad scholars gathered to examine his strong memory. They appointed ten men, each with ten *ḥadīths* to read, but with changed *isnād* (chain of transmitters) and put in different *matns* (texts). When all of these one hundred invented *ḥadīths* were read to him, he admitted that he did not recognize any of them, as if he had bad memory. At the end of the question, he explained to them which *isnād* belong to which *matn* of *ḥadīth*.

Bukhārī was extremely careful in choosing the *shaykh* from whom he could listen and receive a *ḥadīth*. There is story that he wanted to receive *ḥadīths* from somebody, but he changed his mind when he found that the person was cheating an animal (probably a horse) with an empty bucket to catch it.

When Bukhārī saw a few published books on *ḥadīths* in which he found some weak *ḥadīths* in them, an idea came to him to compile strong *ḥadīths* only, namely those with sound

*isnads*. His teacher Ibn Rāhawayh encouraged him to do so. He also saw in his dream that he had a fan in his hand to get rid of flies from resting upon the Prophet. He asked several dream interpreters. They said that in future he would cleanse the Prophet from lies spoken by people through narrating misunderstood *ḥadīths*.

Bukhārī started the compilation of *ḥadīths* in 217/832, when he was merely 23 years old. It took him a period of 16 years to finish it after editing it three times. He showed the manuscript to his teachers for their approval, Ahmad ibn Hanbal, Ibn Madīnī and Ibn Maʿīn. He called it *الْجَامِعُ الْمُسْنَدُ الصَّحِيحُ مِنَ الْأُمُورِ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ وَسُنَنِهِ وَآيَاتِهِ الْمَخْتَصَرُ* which means “*The abridged collection of sound reports with chains of narration going back all the way to the Prophet regarding matters pertaining to the Prophet, his practices and his times*” or simply called *صَحِيحُ الْبُخَارِيِّ* *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Būkhārī*, or *Bukhārī’s Ṣaḥīḥ*. It is said that he made its framework while he was in the *Masjid al-Ḥarām* (the Inviolable Mosque) in Makkah, continually worked on it and made the final draft in the Mosque of the Prophet in Madinah. Before selecting a *ḥadīth* to be put in his *Ṣaḥīḥ* he used to take a bath and pray two *rak’ahs* recommended prayer, and then made an *stikhārah* supplication, asking Allah for proper guidance in selecting the *ḥadīth*. After being satisfied he put it in his book. Before he started writing again after a period of time he wrote *Bismillah* (“in the name of Allah”), probably following the *ḥadīth* “Every important matter not started with *In the name of Allah* will have little or no blessing in it.”

The number of *ḥadīths* in Bukhārī’s *Ṣaḥīḥ* is 7658 (some say 9,082), but without repetition the number is 2,602. This number does not include the *mawqūf* (discontinued) *ḥadīths*, namely, the sayings of the Prophet’s companions and the successors, not his sayings, which are about 160 in number.

Bukhārī laid down the strictest conditions for acceptance of *ḥadīths* for his *Ṣaḥīḥ*. The narrator must have high standard

in personal character, memory, literacy and academy. There must be positive information about the narrators, that each of them met one another as students and teachers of *ḥadīths*. Imām Muslim in this case is more lenient, namely, as long as the two narrators lived in the same place where there was possibility of meeting and learning from each other, then their *ḥadīths* were accepted for him, as long as they did not practice fraudulence. Bukhārī insisted that there have to be positive information that they had met, and learned *ḥadīths* from each other.

People highly respected Bukhārī as a scholar. When he came to Nishapur four thousand horsemen welcomed him, beside those who were on donkeys and on foot. Imam Muslim said to him; “I bear witness that there is no body like you in this world,” and kissed his forehead. He said further to him: “Let me kiss your legs, O teacher of teachers, and master of scholars of *ḥadīths*, and O the physician of unsound *ḥadīths*!”

Bukhārī’s *Ṣaḥīḥ* was highly appreciated by the Prophet through a dream. Abū Zayd al-Marwazī (d. 371/981) reported that he was once asleep between the *Black Stone* and the *Maqām Ibrāhīm* in *Masjid al-Ḥarām* when the Prophet *s.a.w.* appeared in his dream, he said to him: “O Abū Zayd! For how long shall you teach Imam Shāfi’ī’s book? When shall you start teaching my book?” Abū Zayd asked him: “O Messenger of Allah, which book is yours?” He replied: “Muḥammad ibn Ismā’īl’s *al-Jāmi’u ‘l-Ṣaḥīḥ*”.

Imam al-Nawawī said that all scholars in Islam had agreed that *Ṣaḥīḥ* of Bukhārī of being the most authentic after the Holy Qur’ān. This does not mean that its authenticity is equal to that of the Qur’ān. The verses of the Qur’ān were recorded the moment they were revealed to Prophet Muhammad *s.a.w.* by his scribes who dictated to them. Their number is between 13 and 48, among whom were Zayd ibn Thābit and Ubayy ibn Ka’b. Besides, the verses of the Qur’ān were also memorized and studied after being revealed. They were also cited in the

prayers. In addition, Allah protects it from corruption and being lost (Q. 15:9). Bukhārī's *Ṣaḥīḥ* was recorded by human who is not free from committing error. Yet, Bukhārī was the most careful in collecting *ḥadīths*.

The scholar Abū Bakr Muḥammad al-Ḥāzimī (d. 584/1188) divided the *Ḥadīth* into five categories:

1. Those who possessed the high quality of accuracy (excellent memory) and a lengthy companionship with their teachers. Bukhārī's *ḥadīths* mostly belong to this category.
2. Those who also possessed the high quality of accuracy, but did not spend sufficient time with their teachers. Some of Bukhārī's *ḥadīths* belong to this category.
3. Those who spent enough time with their teachers, but have been criticized by scholars. Bukhārī's *ḥadīths* do not belong to this category, but Muslim's does.
4. Those did not spend enough time with their teachers, and have been criticized by scholars, so they were considered weak.
5. Those who were considered weak narrators or unknown to early scholars. They were rejected narrators.

Bukhārī divided his *Ṣaḥīḥ* into 98 Books, and each book is divided into chapters. Book One is the Book of Revelation containing 6 chapters and every chapter contains one *ḥadīth*. Chapter One: How the Divine Inspiration started to be revealed to Prophet Muhammad *s.a.w.* mentioning the well-known *ḥadīth* on the authority of 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb, as follows:

إِنَّمَا الْأَعْمَالُ بِالنِّيَّاتِ ، وَإِنَّمَا لِكُلِّ امْرِئٍ مَّا نَوَى...

*The reward of deeds depends upon the intentions  
and every person will get the reward  
according to what he has intended...*

This is probably to remind himself and us that his intention in writing his *Ṣaḥīḥ* is solely for the sake of Allah.

The last Book, Book 98, the Book of *Tawḥīd* (Islamic Monotheism) contains 58 chapter. The last chapter, Chapter 58

contains one *ḥadīth*, no. 7658 which is the last one, on the authority of Abu Hurayrah, namely,

كَلِمَتَانِ حَبِيبَتَانِ إِلَى الرَّحْمَنِ، خَفِيفَتَانِ عَلَى اللِّسَانِ، تَقِيلَتَانِ  
فِي الْمِيزَانِ سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ وَبِحَمْدِهِ، سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ الْعَظِيمِ .

(There are) two words (or expressions or sayings) which are dear to the Most Beneficent (Allah) and very easy for the tongue to say, “Subḥānallāhi wa biḥamdihī, Subḥānallāhil ‘Aẓīm” (Glorified be Allah, and praised be He, Glorified by Allah, the Most Great).

The *Ṣaḥīḥ* of Bukhārī has been translated into many languages, completely or partially. There are also hundreds of commentaries of it, and some exceeding 25 volumes, among the best ones are: *Fathul-Bārī* by Ibn Ḥajar (852/1449) and ‘*Umdatul-Qārī*’ by Abū Muḥammad Maḥmūd al-‘Aynī (d. 855/1451). These commentaries are very important in order to understand the *ḥadīths* properly. When a man found that the Nile and the Euphrates were in Paradise, he threw the *Ṣaḥīḥ* away, thinking that it was a grave mistake to have them in Paradise rather than on the earth. Had he consulted any commentary of it, he would find that the names of the two rivers are also in Paradise is to indicate that people in the areas of these rivers on the earth (Egypt and Iraq) would be blessed with Islam. (Civic, 18 December, 2015)

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