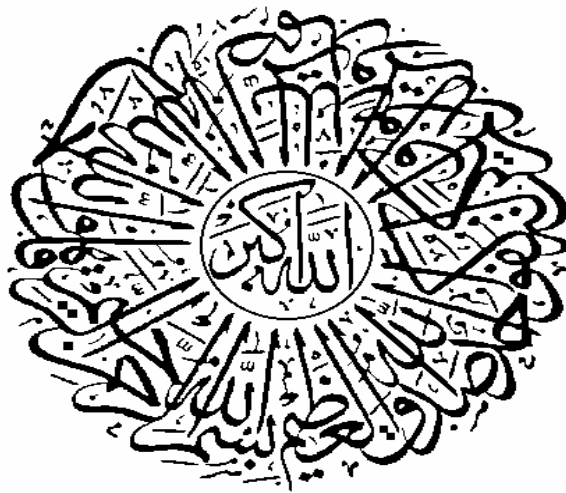


Yasin T. al-Jibouri

ALLĀH:

The Concept of God in Islam

VOLUME ONE



﴿قُلْ هُوَ الرَّحْمَنُ أَمَّا بِهِ وَعَلَيْهِ تَوَكَّلْنَا﴾

Say: "He is (Allāh) the Most Gracious: We have believed in Him,
and we have put our trust in Him..." (Qur'ān, 67:29)



DEDICATION

To the One Who made me what I am, Who invited me, the unworthy servant of His that I am, to accept His True Religion, to visit His House, to disseminate His creed in this part of His vast and spacious universe, to thank Him for all the innumerable blessings with which He has blessed me, the undeserving slave of His that I am. To my Lord and Maker, Creator and Cherisher. To the One Who is dearer to me than my precious parents or anyone else in the whole world and beyond. To the One Who never failed me whenever I invoked Him, the sinner that I am. To the One Who lives in my heart, in my mind, in my veins, in my soul, in my existence, in everything related to me. To the One Whom I see whenever the wind blows, whenever I smell a rose, whenever I freeze in the cold, whenever I hear a tale about Him told, whenever I see a baby laugh or cry, whenever I see the birds fly high and high, whenever I see how the grass is green, how He exists in every scene, in the heavens, on earth, or in-between. To the One Who saved me from the clutches of the Pharaoh of his time (Saddam Hussein) and his tribe and brought me to the land of modern day Babylon. To the One Who taught me the value of time, Who trained my ears to appreciate every rhyme, Who taught me the language of modern day tyrants and oppressors, Who gave me the courage to tell them who they really are, to name them, and to shame them. To the One Who protected me when I was in the jaws of death many a time. To the One Who made me realize that He never forgets me even when I for a moment or so forget Him or get distracted from Him. To the One Who looks after me when I am heedless, mindless, careless, or penniless. To the One Who deserves all the Praise in the heavens and on earth by each and everyone He created, be it as big as the cosmos or as small as the electrons, protons, or neutrons. To the One Whose justice terrifies me, Who is to me quite near and very, very Dear; to Allāh, Blessed, Praised, and Exalted is His Name, pleading to Him to accept this humble effort as a token of my appreciation of all what He has done for me and bestowed on me, including His blessing of writing this book...

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Cover of the Indonesian translation of al-Jibouri's book *Allāh: The Concept of God in Islam*. This Indonesian translation (over 900 pages, apparently with comments on the original English text), was published in Jakarta in 2003 by Lentera Basritama. This book in your hands is an edited version of the Ansariyan edition. It contains more texts and details.

The word “Allāh” in other scriptures and languages:

- *Allāh* in other languages with Arabic script is spelled the same way. This includes Urdu, Persian/Dari, Uyghur among others.
- Bengali: আল্লাহ *Allāh*
- Bosnian: *Allāh*
- Chinese: 阿拉 *Ālā*, 安拉 *Ānlā*; 真主 *Zhēnzhǔ* (semantic translation)
- Greek: Ἀλλάχ *Allách*, Θεός *Theós* (God)
- Hebrew: אללה *Allāh*
- Hindi: अल्लाह *Allāh*
- Japanese: アラー *Arā*, アッラー *Arrā*, アッラーフ *Arrāfu*
- Maltese: *Alla*
- Korean: 알라 *Alla*
- Polish *Allāh*, also archaic *Allach* or *Ąłach*
- Russian, Ukrainian, Bulgarian: Алла́х *Allakh*
- Serbian, Belarusian, Macedonian: Alah, *Алах*
- Spanish, Portuguese: *Alá*
- Thai: อลลฮ *Anlāw*
- Punjabi (Gurmukhi): ਅੱਲਾਹ *Allāh* (archaic ਅਲਹੁ in Sikh scripture)



In the Name of Allāh, the most Gracious, the most Merciful

PREFACE

It is customary to start a book about Islam by making a statement saluting the Prophet of Islam ﷺ, his progeny ﷺ and righteous companions ﷺ thus:

الحمد لله رب العالمين، و صلى الله على سيدنا محمد و آله الطيبين الطاهرين و أصحابه
المنتجبين، و رضي الله عن التابعين لهم باحسان و تابعي التابعين، و عن العلماء و
الصالحين الى يوم الدين؛ اللهم آمين يا رب العالمين.

Praised be the Lord of the Worlds; Allāh blesses our master Muḥammed ﷺ, his good and pure Progeny ﷺ and elite companions ﷺ, and may He be pleased with those follow these companions in goodness as well as those who follow the latter. May He be pleased with the scholars and the righteous, all of them, up to the Day of Resurrection. O Lord of the Worlds! I plead to You to answer this prayer.

Islam belongs to the monotheistic religions, a “member” of the three major faiths of the world, chronologically trailing Christianity and Judaism where the concept of God stands at the core of the faith. Godhead is the most important article of faith in these religions which, from our viewpoint, are actually one and the same: The Almighty revealed His truth to the Israelites, so it was called Judaism, then He revealed it to Christ ﷺ, so it was called Christianity. But when He revealed it to Muhammed ﷺ, some people called it “Muhammedanism” whereas those who follow

Muhammed ﷺ have always called themselves and would like others to call them “Muslims,” people who surrender to the will of the Almighty. The Jews surrendered to His will when they followed Moses ﷺ in their exodus, and the Disciples followed Jesus ﷺ and recorded his words, from memory and without his supervision, incorporating many of their own personal views in it, with the exception of Saint Barnabas, who is discussed in this book, thus surrendering to the will of God. The truth which God revealed to the Jews then to the Christians then to Muslims is one and the same; people, not He, gave it labels, capitalized on differences which they, not He, caused in these “creeds” which should have all been one: The Almighty has one truth, one religion with which He blesses His servants. Some of these “servants”, rest assured, are the ones who created differences that led to disputes some of which became bloody.

An in-depth study of these three Unitarian religions will reveal the similarities between them simply because they all came from one and the same God Who does not have but one tongue, one word, one truth, one Heaven, one Hell, one straight path to Him, one human family, one Ādam, one Eve... This is the absolute truth, yet not many people believe in it; on the contrary, many people reject it outright and claim that they, and only they, know the truth and abide by it, thus excommunicating all others.

These days the followers of all these three Abrahamic faiths are increasingly coming under attack by a new breed of fanatics who were told to be extremist, trained to hate and to seek “Paradise” by killing others. These are the extremists whose hostility and hatred is fueled by a particular form of “religious” teachings which has strayed from the straight path of Islam, yet they claim to be Muslims and that they, and only they, are the true Muslims and everyone else is not. Their extremism is being funded by oil money, and money talks. A number of terrorist organizations are now out to kill the followers of these three creeds, and if these followers do not undertake measures to protect themselves, they will fall prey to these terrorists. Such preparation is not done by only setting up armies, flying predators, moving troops by the hundreds of thousands with

all their lethal weapons; it is better done by exposing the falsehood of the teachings promoted by these terrorists, by educating the public, and by standing in the face of certain governments that provide these terrorists with money and support. This book is a humble effort to explain to the readers the truth about Islam, the religion of peace and harmony, of brotherhood not only with followers of the Abrahamic creeds but also of brotherhood with all other religions of the world.

This book is the third of eight works written so far by its author. This book is not about the author. If you really wish to know who Yasin T. al-Jibouri, the Internet is your gate to such knowledge. Two web sites suffice you: www.authorhouse.com and www.amazon.com. If you still wish to know about this guy who always keeps himself busy, and if curiosity weighs heavily on you, refer to pages 43 – 89 of his book titled *Mary and Jesus in Islam* which AuthorHouse has already published and is available to order online from the above sites and hundreds others worldwide. Some of these pages will provide you with images of front covers of some of the books which al-Jibouri has written, edited or translated, a list totaling 52; so, be prepared.

My book titled *Allāh: the Concept of God in Islam* was first published by Anṣāriyān in 1997 when I was in the United States, then it was reprinted later under the title *The Concept of God in Islam* by the same Publisher. After I had returned home (Iraq) in September of 2003, I decided to get it printed in the United States, but I was informed by the prospective publisher that the number of its pages must not exceed 740, so I decided to split it into two volumes, the one in your hand is the first.

Yet there may be readers who are either reluctant to get a copy of the U.S. edition of my book titled *Mary and Jesus in Islam* or simply have no access to it, and they insist on knowing something about the author of these books; therefore, a word is indicated below which hopefully gives them an idea about him unless they are planning to write a book about this stranger!

ARABIC transliteration RULES APPLIED IN THIS BOOK ONLY FOR ISLAMIC TERMS

according to the regulations of the Library of the U.S. Congress

Arabic

Letters of the Alphabet

Initial	Medial	Final	Alone	Romanization
ا	ل	ل	ا	omit
ب	ب	ب	ب	b
ت	ت	ت	ت	t
ث	ث	ث	ث	th
ج	ج	ج	ج	j
ح	ح	ح	ح	h
خ	خ	خ	خ	kh
د	د	د	د	d
ذ	ذ	ذ	ذ	dh
ر	ر	ر	ر	r
ز	ز	ز	ز	z
س	س	س	س	s
ش	ش	ش	ش	sh
ص	ص	ص	ص	ṣ
ض	ض	ض	ض	ḍ
ط	ط	ط	ط	ṭ
ظ	ظ	ظ	ظ	ẓ
ع	ع	ع	ع	‘ (ayn)
غ	غ	غ	غ	gh
ف	ف	ف	ف	f
ق	ق	ق	ق	q
ك	ك	ك	ك	k
ل	ل	ل	ل	l
م	م	م	م	m
ن	ن	ن	ن	n
ه	ه	ه , ة	ه , ة	h
و	و	و	و	w
ي	ي	ي	ي	y

Vowels and Diphthongs

اَ	a	اَ	ā	اِي	ī
اُ	u	اِي	ā	اَو	aw
اِ	i	اُو	ū	اَي	ay

ALA-LC Romanization Tables

Al-Jibouri is a well known translator, and he is the very first person ever to translate the works of the Martyr Ayatullāh Sayyid Muhammed Bāqir as-Sadr, the greatest economist, philosopher, author and political figure in the modern history of Iraq, such as: *A General Outlook at Rituals* (which was published in 1979 by the World Organization for Islamic Services (WOFIS), *Contemporary Man and the Social Problem* (which was also published by the same Publisher in 1980), *The General Bases of Banking in the Muslim Society* (which was published in Maryland, U.S.A., in 1981), and *What Do You Know About Islamic Economics?* which was published by the Imāmia Center of Lanham, Maryland, U.S.A., in the month of Ramadan 1410 A.H./April 1990 A.D. Al-Jibouri twice published his translation titled *A General Outlook at Rituals* in the U.S., getting their latest edition registered with the Library of Congress of Washington, D.C., the only one bearing as-Sadr's name. He also translated and/or published many other titles; among them are: *A Biography of Muhammed Bāqir as-Sadr*, *The Form of Islamic Government and Wilayat al-Faqeeh*, *About the World Political Situation from a Muslim's Viewpoint*, and *Our Faith*. The latter work is written by Sayyid Muhammed Hussain al-Jalāli, a famous Iraqi scholar, researcher, critic and theologian now living in Chicago, Illinois, U.S.A.

In 1975, that is, three years after starting his higher studies in the United States, Yasin T. al-Jibouri received instructions to facilitate the entry to the United States of the very first representative of the then Grand Ayatollāh Abul-Qāsim al-Khoei in North America, namely Sheikh Muḥammad Sarwar of Quetta, near the Pakistan-Afghanistan border, who, due to al-Jibouri's personal sponsorship, did, indeed, arrive at the same point of entry al-Jibouri used in late August of 1972, namely New York's John F. Kennedy Airport, on January 25, 1976, a very important date in the history not only of the Shī'ite community of North American but of that of the whole Islamic world due to the *tablīgh* activities that resulted from the establishment of such a monumental Shī'ite institution like the Khoei Center in an important part of the world. The request to facilitate the entry into the United States of Sheikh Sarwar came through New York's Shī'a Association of North America (SANA),

which was founded by al-Jibouri's great friend, Ghulam-Raza Hassanali, who had migrated to the United States with his family from Dares-Salam, Tanzania, as did Aunali Khalfan who is mentioned elsewhere in this Preface. SANA is believed to be the very first Shī'ite organization established in the United States: It was founded in the early 1970s, perhaps a year or two before al-Jibouri had founded his Islamic Society of Georgia, Inc. Sheikh Sarwar failed to obtain an entry visa to the United States after having tried to do so in Iraq, then in Iran, Germany and the United Kingdom. Followers of al-Khoei in these countries acted as guides and hosts for the Sheikh and helped him with accommodations and travel expenses. When Hassanali spoke to al-Jibouri about the Sheikh being given the run-around, the first sent a package to the Sheikh who was at the time in London containing the following documents: 1) a letter of sponsorship which al-Jibouri typed on his Society's stationery indicating that he was the Sheikh's personal sponsor and guarantor, that al-Jibouri pledged not to let this cleric work in the United States, and that the visa applicant, if granted the visa, would abide by U.S. laws, rules and regulations; 2) a copy of the Bylaws of the Islamic Society of Georgia, Inc., of which al-Jibouri was the General Secretary; 3) constitution of the Islamic Society of Georgia, Inc.; and 4) some copies of the *Islamic Affairs* newsletter. Unfortunately, the package arrived after the Sheikh had already made another failed bid in London to obtain the entry visa to the United States; so, he was advised to go to Lebanon to try his luck. In Beirut, he was subjected to a foiled kidnapping attempt as the country was embroiled in civil war; so, the Shī'ites there were very much concerned about his safety: They whisked him out of Beirut in the depth of the night to Damascus which was to be his last attempt following which he would return to Najaf, Iraq, to resume his studies at the *hawza*. In Damascus, Sheikh Sarwar submitted the package sent to him by al-Jibouri during the interview, and he was finally able to obtain his entry visa.

A few days following the arrival in the United States of Sheikh Muḥammad Sarwar, the Sheikh became al-Jibouri's roommate in Atlanta, Georgia. There, Sheikh Sarwar received training by al-Jibouri on the preparation of newsletters and different publications

especially in the areas of typesetting, art designs and layout, steps required for making a "cold camera-ready copy" before being sent to the press. He was sent to the United States with specific instructions from the late Grand Ayatollah al-Khoei to start a regular newsletter or magazine, produce a new English translation of the Holy Qur'ān and write books for Muslim children and adults. Upon its completion, Sheikh Sarwar's English translation of the Holy Qur'ān was published by Tahrike-Tarsile-Qur'ān, Inc. (Distribution of Holy Qur'ān, Inc.) of New York, a publishing house established and managed by al-Jibouri's close friend, Aunali Khalfan, and his great family. For your information, Khalfan was instrumental in the publication for the first time ever of a text of the Holy Qur'ān in Braille language for the blind. He has been publishing not only various translations of the Holy Qur'ān but also some other top quality Islamic books, including many published by Anṣāriyān, the list of which now tops five thousand. One of the books which he has published and is now marketing is *Peak of Eloquence: Nahjul Balāgha* which is compiled by al-Sharīf al-Raḍi and edited by Yasin T. al-Jibouri with an Introduction by Martyr Murtadha Mutahhari. This title is marketed world-wide by other American book sellers as well. May the Almighty bless Aunali's efforts and reward them in the life of this world and in the Hereafter, *Allāhomma Āmeen* اللهم آمين.

As for the magazine which the Sheikh was instructed to issue, it was given the title *The Message of Islam*. It was, indeed, founded in February of 1976 under the supervision of Sheikh Sarwar not in Atlanta, Georgia, but in Houston, Texas, shortly before the Sheikh had gone to Atlanta to be al-Jibouri's roommate for few months. Its publication was made possible through help from the Shī'ite community in Houston members of which had written al-Khoei requesting him to send them a scholar to teach them Shī'ite Islam. During his stay at al-Jibouri's very modest apartment (so modest, its monthly rent at the time was only \$98 exclusive of utilities) in Atlanta, Georgia, the Sheikh put out two editions of this magazine. Thereafter, the Sheikh moved from Atlanta to New York City where there have always been a much larger Shī'ite population and where a fourth edition of *The Message of Islam* was published. To the best of

al-Jibouri's knowledge, this magazine disappeared after the publication and distribution of its fourth edition. In New York, Sheikh Muḥammad Sarwar founded the Khoei Center. Later on, unfortunately a controversy developed because of which the New York Shī'ite community requested the late Grand Ayatollah al-Khoei to remove Sheikh Muḥammad Sarwar from office and appoint someone else in his place. The great sage sent in 1982 one of his sons, namely martyr Sayyid Abdul-Majīd al-Khoei, on a fact-finding mission and to prepare for the establishment of the Khoei Foundation, the very first major institution established by Najaf's *marji`iyya* مرجعية (highest religious authority) in the Western world. The year 1982 ended Sarwar's term which started in 1976. He was replaced, after a bitter and costly court battle, by Sheikh Fadhil al-Sahlani, an Iraqi sheikh from Nasiriyya and a friend of al-Jibouri. Sheikh al-Sahlāni has been efficiently running the Foundation, School and Center ever since. In the process of those court hearings, Yasin T. al-Jibouri, in his capacity as Sarwar's personal sponsor, was requested to submit a signed statement indicating that the late Grand Ayatollah al-Khoei was Sarwar's boss and that the latter was obligated to follow his orders; otherwise, he would be insubordinate. Al-Jibouri complied, composing and signing such a statement as requested in his capacity as the one who helped him come to the United States and acted as his guarantor. The statement was presented before the judge who ruled that Sarwar should step down from his office and hand over all documents and assets to Sheikh Faḍil al-Sahlāni, the new representative of al-Khoei to the believers in the United States and Canada.

There may be skeptics who cast doubt about the truth in the text above or below, particularly when there is reference to Shaikh Muhammad Sarwar. I, author of this book and former roommate of Sarwar, would like to advise these skeptics to verify this information with Shaikh Sarwar himself who is a well known personality now living with his family in New York. I have also noticed that many writers who wrote about the spread of Islam in the West in general and in the U.S. in particular neglected how the Shaikh made it to the U.S. in 1976 which was the prelude for the establishment of the Khoei Foundation and Center in New York then in London, U.K.

More details about how the Khoei Foundation was established in London are included in the Preface to my book titled *Mary and Jesus in Islam* which AuthorHouse has published in Indiana, U.S.A.

The present building of the Khoei Foundation, which is located in Jamaica, New York, was opened seven years after that incident, that is, on the 15th of Sha'bān 1409 A.H./March 25, 1989, in order to meet the religious needs of the Muslim community in the United States. The religious programs are conducted in Arabic, Urdu, Persian and, of course, English. Presently, the address of the Khoei Foundation is 13711 90th Avenue, and that of the Khoei Center is 8989 Van Wyck Expressway, both located in Jamaica, a suburb of New York City. The latter includes a mosque, a school and resident imām's quarters as well as a modern library, kitchen and cafeteria.

In the same year, that is, 1989, the Grand Ayatollah al-Khoei established the London branch of this Foundation, appointing his son, Sayyid Muḥammed Taqī al-Khoei, as its head. It is now located on Chevening and Salusbury roads. Its board, upon establishment, was comprised of these dignitaries: Sayyid Muḥammed Taqī al-Khoei, Sheikh Muḥsin Ali al-Najafi, Sheikh Yousuf Nafsi, Sayyid Muḥammed al-Mousawi (of Bombay, India), Sayyid Faḍil al-Milani, Sayyid Majid al-Khoei (another son of the late al-Khoei), Sheikh Hajj Kādhim Abdul- Ḥussain, Sayyid Muḥammed Ali Shahristāni رحمه الله (a world renown philanthropist and founder of the Open Islamic University in London, a man who was born in Iraq and who had descended from an Iranian family), and al-Ḥajj Mustafa Kawkal. Sayyid Taqī al-Khoei was succeeded in this post by his brother, the late Sayyid Abdul-Majīd al-Khoei who was assassinated in Najaf, Iraq, on Thursday, April 10, 2003. Following this tragic incident, Sayyid Yousuf al-Khoei, another son of the late Grand Ayatollāh, became director of London's Khoei Foundation. Another branch for the Khoei Foundation was established in Montreal, Canada, but information about it has not been available at the time when this text has been compiled for the kind reader.

Late Grand Ayatollāh al-Khoei was born on November 19, 1899 and died on August 8, 1992. Following the demise of the late sage,

Grand Ayatollāh Abul-Qāsim al-Khoei, the Shī'ite world, represented in Najaf's *hawza*, Islamic seminary, elected Sayyid Ali al-Sistāni to succeed him in this highest religious office. Grand Ayatollāh Sayyid Ali al-Ḥusaini al-Sistāni was born on August 4, 1930 in Mashhad, Iran, to a family of religious scholars. His grandfather, after whom he was named, was a famous scholar who had studied in Najaf. Sistani's family originally comes from Isfahan. During the Safavid period, his forefather, Sayyid Muḥammed, was appointed by then King Ḥussain as "Sheikhul-Islam" (mentor/leading authority on Islam) in the Sistan province. He traveled to Sistan where he and his children settled, hence his last name, "al-Sistāni". Sistāni began his religious education as a child, starting in Mashhad and moving on to study at the great Shī'ite holy city of Qum in central Iran in 1949. In 1951, after spending few years there, he went to Najaf, Iraq, to study under the late Grand Ayatollāh Abul-Qāsim al-Khoei. Sistāni rose in religious ranks to be named in 1960 a supreme "marji" مرجع أعلى the highest religious authority, under Iraqi government's head, Gen. Abdul-Karīm Qāsim, but without any interference from the government. At the unusually young age of 31 (that is, in 1961), Ayatollāh Sistāni reached the senior level of accomplishment called *ijtihād*, which entitled him to pass his own judgments on religious questions and issue binding edicts.

Yasin T. al-Jibouri is discussed in detail by Prof. Larry Poston in his book *Islamic Dawah in the West: Muslim Missionary Activity and the Dynamics of Conversion to Islam* (New York, United States, and Oxford, United Kingdom: Oxford University Press, 1992; ISBN No. 0-19-507227-8). One of the essays which he wrote and circulated is an extensive, thorough and extremely well researched rebuttal to Samuel P. Huntington's famous article "The Clash of Civilizations?" which appeared in *Foreign Affairs* magazine in the Summer of 1993. His rebuttal is actually a laborious research which exhausted two weeks of his time and many sleepless nights and is dated October 26, 1993. Due to the extensive research exhausted and the mass of data and information incorporated in this rebuttal, al-Jibouri has recently included it as an Appendix for his book titled *Mary and Jesus in Islam* which has recently been published by AuthorHouse of

Indiana, U.S.A. May the Almighty assist us and keep our feet firm
on His Right Path, *Assirat al-Mustaqeem, Allāhomma Āameen.*





In the Name of Allāh, the most Gracious, the most Merciful

INTRODUCTION

In any theistic religion, the concept of God rests at the core of its beliefs, tenets and practices, and it determines what its adherents regard as admissible, permissible, commendable or otherwise. It shapes their attitudes towards others whom they label as "unbelievers." It inspires their perceptions, formulating how they conceive their role in life, how they should treat one another, what they should do when they sin or fall into error. It determines the extent of their humanity and provides them with a yardstick to measure that of others. It dictates to them ways to treat other living beings around them: animals, plants, the environment at large, how they look at nature and how they envision their responsibility to protect and preserve it. It paves their path to worldly happiness and to salvation in the hereafter. No words can over-estimate the significance of such a concept in any given faith based on the belief in a Supreme Deity, God Almighty, Creator of everything and everyone.

This book is written primarily for open-minded non-Muslims. Needless to say, the primary reference utilized is the Holy Qur'ān. A colon (:) separates the number of a Chapter (*Sūra*) from a verse (*āya*) or verses (*āyāt*). For example, 2:255 refers to Chapter 2 (al-Baqarah, the Cow), verse 255, or *āyat al-kursi* آية الكرسي, verse of the Throne.

Why did I write this book? For about a third of a century living in exile in the United States, I have had the opportunity to closely discern the attitudes of non-Muslims around me towards Islam and Muslims, often visiting a number of churches—and one synagogue in Atlanta, Georgia—to observe first-hand how they worship God, what their faith enjoins or prohibits, how they look at those who do not

subscribe to their beliefs. When I was living in Atlanta, Georgia, from 1972 to 1979, as many as five churches had my name and address on their mailing lists. Beautiful young ladies would come to my apartment to escort me and my roommates (a Pakistani Hindu and an Indian Sunni Muslim) to various church functions. The food was always good, although I and my very nice and polite Indian roommate had to always make sure that no pork or any of its derivatives would pollute our systems. And there were many good looking young ladies, too, another reason not to miss any occasion or invitation. The trap was well set for us. And we were single and available, young, healthy and full of energy. And temptation was always there. I had asked those churches to place my name and address on their mailing list, to let me know when they had a function, and to send their good-looking young ladies to my apartment for the ride to the church. All of that did not happen coincidentally. In my view, nothing, absolutely nothing, happens by coincident, not even a stone rolling down a mountain or a leaf falling on the ground. Everything happens according to a plan put forth by the Planner and Executor of the universe, the cosmos, the One and Only God Who created it and everything in it. "Accidentally," "coincidentally," and "by chance" are words and expressions which should be eliminated from language altogether; they are intruders. They are sacrilegious.

My visits to churches and Christian homes were never done out of a pure desire to have a good time, to socialize, to have one girl-friend or more as some of my roommates had anticipated, nor to kill time. For me, killing time is one of the worst types of murders. From the list of the books which the Almighty helped me write, edit or translate, you can conclude that I am not the type of individual who wastes his time, and the Preface to my book titled *Mary and Jesus in Islam* which AuthorHouse published can prove it. I had a burning desire to see things for myself, to closely observe. Some promoters of those church programs were more aggressive than others. They wanted to gauge how serious we were about our religious beliefs in order, perhaps, to evaluate their chances to succeed in converting us to Christianity, and they did so in various ways. There were occasions, therefore, when tempers rose high, accusations flew and

offenses committed. Yes, there were times when I had to pay a dear price for defending my Islamic creed in the face of attacks launched by some of those promoters, missionaries, for not keeping my mouth shut as was the case with my nice Indian roommate who just did not want to offend anybody. I have never hesitated to offend others, including my closest friends, when I was convinced that they were offending the Almighty. God knows how many people, Muslims and non-Muslims, who will be offended when they read this book! And there was always a price to pay, and I gladly paid it even when it hurt badly. This is why I have been called many names by many people, Muslims and non-Muslims alike, and the Internet carries many attacks against my person which I regard as testimonies and compliments. They can attack me as much as they want, for their attacks will always strengthen my faith and conviction. It is O.K. when some people call me names as long as the Almighty calls me a good, though far from being perfect, servant of His. I do not care if all people of the world call me bad names. If my Lord and Maker keeps the gates of His mercy and forgiveness open for me, name calling does not bother me in the least. If you read the Preface to my book titled *Mary and Jesus in Islam* which AuthorHouse published, you will see how some “Muslims” in Virginia called me “terrorist”...!

From the very beginning, I realized that those churches were doing their best—and worst—to convert non-Christians to Christianity; after all, is not this what missionary work is all about? And who could be better candidates than single foreign students studying for their graduate degrees? Once they go home, these students will disseminate their new faith with zeal and enthusiasm to others. At least this is what those churches were hoping. This is why many of their preachers and priests were distributing anti-Islamic literature, thinking that by attacking others' beliefs, they would protect their own and win new converts. They had forgotten about the laws of action and reaction. Some of those churches were showing movies derogatory to Islam and to the Prophet of Islam ﷺ. Since my life's motto has always been the Prophet's tradition saying, **السَّامِتُ عَنْ الْحَقِّ شَيْطَانٌ أُخْرَسَ** "One who remains silent rather than says the truth is a tongue-tied Satan," I refuse to be that Satan.

I almost broke into a fist fight once with an Atlanta pastor who was then my host and who was during a gathering assaulting Islam and the Prophet of Islam ﷺ; he had to shut his mouth after listening to my counter-arguments and to a volley of charges of my own against today's version of Christianity which included tracing the deviation in the Christian Church back to its very first years. My book titled *Mary and Jesus in Islam* to which reference is made above shows you the depth of the research which I conducted to prove that today's version of Christianity is definitely not what Christ ﷺ preached, nor is he proud of those who now call themselves Christians. I explained to that pastor how much respect Muslims have for Christ ﷺ and his saintly mother ﷺ and juxtaposed it with the disrespect of people like him towards our Abrahamic faith. I reminded him of the bloody and shameful history of the barbaric Crusades which were sponsored by the Church, of the Muslim lands they burnt and looted and of the Muslim blood they shed and of the Muslims who were kidnapped then shipped to Europe as slaves. He soon realized that he was facing a formidable foe who was fully knowledgeable of the history of the Christian church and who, for many years, had studied such bloody history academically and written numerous term papers about it, and who knew fully well the extent of mischief inflicted in the past and is still being inflicted on the Islamic world by the colonizers and imperialists who profess to follow Christ ﷺ, the prince of peace, the man who never hurt anyone or anything. He realized how ignorant he was about our faith, how tolerant our religion is, how hypocritical most leaders of the Islamic world nowadays are, how much the so-called Christian West is indebted to Islamic civilization, and how rude he was in attacking my beliefs despite his knowledge of the fact that I was then editor of a globally circulated Islamic publication¹. The memory of the encounter with that pastor still boils blood in my veins even

¹At that time, I was editing *Islamic Affairs* ﷺ bimonthly newsletter which was regularly mailed out to readers in all 50 U.S. States and in 67 countries world-wide.

today, despite the passage of so many years; it is in defense of this precious Islamic creed that I write this book hoping the Almighty will accept and bless it, praying that He accepts and blesses the other books and articles which I have written, edited, or translated during all these years and, God willing, in the years to come.

The pastor incident took place before the outbreak of the Islamic Revolution in Iran. Needless to say, this Revolution enraged and provoked the enemies of Islam, mostly Zionist Jews who dominate the public opinion through their total control of the information and news media. They also control the financial and political systems of the West in general and of the U.S. in particular. More details about these facts are included in my Rebuttal to Samuel P. Huntington's essay "The Clash of Civilizations?" which I appended to the text of my book titled *Mary and Jesus in Islam*. This edited Rebuttal can be found on pages 495 – 521 of the said book. The Islamic Revolution in Iran provided these traditional enemies of Islam and those whom they brainwash, through the mediums of their news media and entertainment industry, with a golden opportunity to vent their contempt towards Islam and Muslims, making the latter the object of their daily attacks, ridicule and favorite pastime. I had, of course, to bear my share of persecution. I was, like millions others, inspired by this great revolution that signaled the dawn of freedom for all the downtrodden and persecuted peoples of the world, not only for Iranians or other Muslims. Non-Muslims, too, deserve to live in dignity and enjoy the life which the Almighty granted them. The details of the persecution to which I was exposed are detailed in my autobiographic *Memoirs*.

This book is not written for those who deliberately misrepresent our Islamic faith, for these will never see anything except through their own tinted glasses, and there is no cure for their blindness. These are mentally and psychologically sick with a sundry of contagious and terminal diseases: prejudice, arrogance, close-mindedness, racist superiority complexes..., and it is a waste of precious time to try to deal with them; they are unworthy of my or anyone else's attention. Rather, this book is written for open-minded and fair non-Muslims who sincerely wish to know how Muslims conceive their Creator. It

is for these non-Muslims, and for those Muslims whose extended stay in any non-Muslim country may have taken its toll on their faith, who changed their names from "Jasim" to "Jessy," from "Hussain" to "Jose," etc., that this book is written.

May Allāh *Ta`ālā* guide us to His Path, *Allāhomma Āmeen*.



Surat al-Fatiha as a calligraphic design



PART ONE

KNOWING ALLĀH

Muhammed ﷺ, the Messenger of Allāh, has said, "One among you who knows Allāh best is the one who fears Him the most, and I fear Him even more." Ibn `Abbās¹ رضى الله عنه says that a bedouin once came to the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ and said, "O Messenger of Allāh! Teach me of the most unusual norm of knowledge!" He ﷺ asked him, "What have you done with the peak of knowledge so that you may now ask about its most unusual types?!" The man asked him, "O Messenger of Allāh! What is this peak of knowledge?!" He ﷺ said, "It is knowing Allāh as He deserves to be known." The bedouin then said, "And how can He be known as He ought to be?" The

¹Ibn `Abbās was one of Prophet Muhammed's cousins: he was Abdullāh ibn `Abbās ibn Abd al-Muttalib رضى الله عنه, of Banū Hāshim, of Quraysh. Referred to as the Islamic nation's scribe, he was a highly respected *ṣaḥābi* whose *aḥādīth* are classified by al-Bukhāri and Muslim as "*Ṣaḥīḥ*," accurate, authentic. He was born in Mecca, and he kept the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ company and narrated his traditions. He fought on the side of Imām `Ali عليه السلام during the Battle of the Camel (which started on Friday, Jumada I 16, 36 A.H./November 10, 656 A.H.) against `Āisha and her supporters, and also during the Battle of Ṣiffīn (which started in Dhul-Ḥijjah 36 A.H./May 657 A.D.). During his later years, he became blind, so he retired to Ta'if where he died in 68 A.H./687 A.D. In both al-Bukhāri's and Muslim's "*Ṣaḥīḥ*" books, there are 1,160 *aḥādīth* transmitted through Ibn `Abbās alone.

Messenger of Allāh ﷺ answered, "You must know Him as having no model, no peer, no antithesis, and that He is One and only: He is the One Who is Apparent yet Hidden, First and Last, having neither peer nor a similitude; this is the true knowledge about Him."

Accurately knowing Allāh is the pillar whereupon Islam in its entirety stands. Without such knowledge, any action in Islam does not have any real value whatsoever: It has neither essence nor merit.

The Question is: "How can we get to know Allāh, and what is the venue of attaining such knowledge?" The answer is crucially conditional: If we do not know the right course, we can never reach the desired destination.

Any erroneous approach to knowing Allāh is a major contributor to distancing a large number of people from accurately getting to believe in Allāh. The Holy Qur'ān narrates to us stories about those who disbelieved in Allāh in every age and time, depicting for us how they insisted, in order to believe in Him, on hearing or seeing Him, relying on their physical faculties. Following are only a few examples:

Allāh Almighty has said in His Book, the Holy Qur'ān,

And those who have no knowledge say: Why does not Allāh speak to us or a sign come to us? Even thus did those before them say; (they said) the like of what such people say; their hearts are all alike. Indeed, We have made the signs (leading to belief in Him) clear for people who are sure. (2:118)

And those who do not hope for Our meeting say: Why have no angels been sent down on us, or (why) do we not see our Lord? Certainly they themselves are too proud and have revolted in great revolt. On the day they see the angels, there shall be no joy on that day for the guilty... (25:21-22)

Pharaoh said: O Haman! Build me a tower so that I may attain the means of access, the means of access to the heavens, then (I may be able to) reach the God of Moses, and I surely think that he is a liar. And thus was the evil of his deed made fair-seeming to

Pharaoh, and he was turned away from the (right) course. (40:36-37)

"Turned away from the (right) course" refers to the course that ends at acquiring a sound and accurate knowledge about the Almighty. Such a goal should be our first and foremost concern. Without properly knowing Allāh, how can we properly worship Him? The Messenger of Allāh, Muhammed ﷺ, has narrated this *qudsi* tradition: "For everything there is a path, and the path to Paradise is knowledge." This book is a humble attempt to search for such sound and accurate knowledge, the one that brings one closer to his Lord and leads him to the path of salvation, to happiness both in this life and in the eternal life to come.

Muslims Start Everything in the Name of Allāh

In one *ḥadīth*, the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ is quoted as having said, "Anything which does not start with the Name of Allāh is cut-off (from Allāh's blessing)." It is customary for Muslims to invoke the Name of Allāh whenever they do anything important, or whenever they seek His protection against His arch-enemy and ours, Satan the Accursed. Examples are: When they stand up or sit down, when they eat, drink, enter their homes, open the door of their cars or bathrooms or any room in the house, start the engines of their cars, put on or take off their clothes, ascend or descend a ladder, start writing something important, slaughter an animal decreed by Allāh as lawful for their food..., and even when they cohabit with their wives in the hope Allāh will bless them with righteous progeny who will be the apples of their eyes in this life and the means of salvation in the life to come, who keep their name and reputation alive and who raise their social status and esteem. Such are the manners of good Muslims.

So, let us now start in the Name of Allāh Who created and formed everything from nothing, the ever-Living, the Eternal Who is never affected by time, nor space, nor anything else, for these are among His own countless creations, the One Who never initiated a place for His being, nor did He attain His might after having created everything, nor was He weak before or after then or ever. In the

Name of Allāh Who never needed company before creating everything. In the Name of Allāh the like of Whom there is nothing at all, nor was He without His domain before He created it. In the Name of Allāh Who hears without a hearing faculty, Who sees without eyes. In the Name of Allāh Who is Mighty without having to derive His might from His creation. In the Name of Allāh the eyes of Whose creatures can never see Him, nor can their minds grasp His Greatness, the Most Exalted One, the all-Knowing. I testify that Allāh is the One and Only God; there is no partner with Him, the One and only One on Whom all things and beings depend. He does not beget, nor is He begotten, nor is there anything at all like Him. I further testify that our master Muhammed ﷺ is His Servant and Messenger, bearer of His Message and of the glad tidings, the one whom He trusted with His revelation; blessings of Allāh with him and his righteous and pure progeny, his Ahl al-Bayt عليه السلام, and the righteous ones from among his *ṣaḥāba* and those who followed them on the path of righteousness, the true *tabi`īn* عليه السلام.

How Prophet Muhammed ﷺ Praised His Lord

Our master Muhammed ﷺ has said,

All Praise is due to Allāh, the One and only God. His being Eternal is compounded by His being Divine. He is Proud in His own right and in His Greatness. He creates whatever He wills and initiates the creation without having to have a model for any of what He creates. Our Lord is the One Who has always been beyond time as such; through His knowledge has He split the seed; through His Might has He created everything; through the light of the morning has He started the dawn; there is none that can alter what He has created, nor is there any that can change what He has made, nor is there any that can revoke His decree or repeal His command or be exempted from His call. There is no extinction to His domain, nor is there a term for His Divinity. He is the first to create, the One Who is eternal even beyond eternity itself, the One Who has obscured Himself from His creation in the horizon of ambition, in the lofty Exaltation, in the abundant domain, higher than anything that is high. Yet He is close to everything, so He manifests Himself to His beings even without Himself being seen, while He is the most Sublime. By His Light He veiled Himself and

ascended the height, obscuring Himself from His creation. He sent them messengers so that He would have the clear argument against them, and so that His messengers would testify against His creation. He sent prophets to them to bring them glad tidings and to warn them, so that He would guide whomsoever He pleases after providing them with His clear signs and bringing to life whomsoever He pleases with the same, hence the creation will know about their Lord that which they did not know, and they will know Him as their God after having rejected Him. They will believe in His Unity after having persisted in denying it.

Commonly Asked Questions About "Allāh"

Let us now try to answer a number of basic questions about the Almighty:

1) How can you describe Him?

Numerous verses of the Holy Qur'ān point out to His existence. Consider the argument of His Friend Ibrahim عليه السلام (Abraham, the great patriarch, peace with him) who said: "My Lord is the One Who brings life and Who causes death" (Qur'ān, 2:258), and the argument of prophet Moses عليه السلام who said, "[He is] your Lord and the Lord of your fathers of old" (Qur'ān, 26:26). Also consider these verses:

Our Lord is the One Who gave everything its creation, then He guided it (to its destination). (Qur'ān, 20:50)

The Lord of the East and the West: there is no god but He; therefore, take Him for a protector. (Qur'ān, 73:9)

2) Can you define Him?

The Exalted One says that He defies definition: "... Nothing at all is like Him" (Qur'ān, 42:11).

3) Can one ask: "What is He?"

Pharaoh asked Moses عليه السلام, "And what is the Lord of the worlds?" (Qur'ān, 26:23). Moses عليه السلام answered by saying that He is "Your Lord and the Lord of your fathers of old" (Qur'ān, 26:26). There is no way to know Him by defining "what" He is; rather, one can get to know the proofs of His Existence, Might, Knowledge, Wisdom,

Mercy and His being the Creator of everything. "Do not think about Allāh," said Imām Ali عليه السلام, "rather, think about what Allāh has created, for thinking about Allāh only increases one's bewilderment."

4) Is He one or more?

The Glorified One has required the Muslims to

Say: He, Allāh, is One. (Qur'ān, 112:1)

And your God is One God! (Qur'ān, 2:163)

Had there been in them any gods besides Allāh, they would have certainly been in a state of disorder. (Qur'ān, 21:22)

5) Is He confined to any place or space?

The Holy Qur'ān tells us that:

He is the Supreme One (watching) over His worshippers. (Qur'ān, 6:61)

They revere their Lord High above them. (Qur'ān, 16:50)

The Beneficent God is firmly established on the throne (of authority). (Qur'ān, 20:5)

"Above them" in 16:50 refers to the Almighty being above His servants in His Might, Power, Loftiness, not to being above them in place, space, area, elevation, or physical location; these do not apply to Him. The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ called on His Lord during his ascension to heavens pleading to Him thus, "You are as You have praised Your own Self," and Prophet Yunus عليه السلام (Jonah) son of Matti (Matthew), while being in the bottom of the sea, called on his Lord saying, "There is no god but You! Glory to You! Surely I have become one of those who commit injustice against their own souls!" (Qur'ān, 21:87). The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ has said, "Do not exalt me over him [over Yunus] in nearness to Allāh just because I reached the High Throne while he was in the bottom of the sea, for the Adored One is above being confined to a space or a direction."

He has also addressed Him saying, "You and he in the strata of the heavens;" the believers call on Him saying, "You and them on earth." Had He been in a particular area or place, all these persons could not have differed from one another in His regard at any given time. He is above being confined to place or direction: "All those in the heavens and the earth glorify Allāh" (Qur'ān, 57:1).

6) When did He begin to exist?

The Praised One has said,

He is the First and the Last, the Evident and the Immanent, and He has full knowledge of all things. (Qur'ān, 57:3)

Everything is to perish except He. (Qur'ān, 28:88)

Anyone who asks when His existence came to be implies that there was a time when He did not exist, i.e. that void preceded Him. He is not "preceded" by anyone, nor is He "succeeded" by anyone. His continuation is above being tied to time, while time itself is one of His countless creations. His existence is too holy to be dependent on time; such are characteristics of things or persons who come to be then perish, or of those whose being is possible in the future, but they do not apply to Him. Another verse which similarly describes His eternity and perpetuity is this: "Everyone on earth will perish but will abide (forever) the Face of your Lord, full of Majesty, Bounty and Honor" (Qur'ān, 55:26-27), and also this: "Blessed is He in Whose hands is the dominion" (Qur'ān, 67:1). "Blessed," that is, *tabaraka*, is derived from *baraka*, blessing, which connotes constancy and lack of acceptance to change. His existence is everlasting, eternal, perpetual.

7) Over what does He rule?

The Almighty says, "Say: O Allāh! Master of authority! You give authority to whomsoever You please and take it away from whomsoever You please" (Qur'ān, 3:26). He, and only He, is the King of kings; He grants others authority: "Blessed is the One in Whose hand is the kingdom" (Qur'ān, 67:1). Vanities and possessions owned by others will all disappear on the Day of Judgment: "Whose will be the dominion that Day? It is Allāh's, the

One, the Subduer (of all)" (Qur'ān, 40:16).

8) What is the “extent” of His knowledge?

He has said,

[He is] the One Who knows the unseen and the seen. (Qur'ān, 6:73)

And with Him are the keys of the unseen treasures: none knows them but He. (Qur'ān, 6:59)

Slumber does not overtake Him nor sleep. (Qur'ān, 2:255)

And your Lord is not forgetful. (Qur'ān, 19:64)

And you are not (engaged) in any affair, nor do you recite concerning it any portion of the Qur'ān, nor do you do anything, except that We are witnesses over you when you enter into it. (Qur'ān, 10:61)

9) What is His speech?

The Most Glorified and Exalted One has said,

Were all trees on earth (made into) pens and the sea (to supply it with ink), with seven more seas to add thereto, the words of Allāh would not have been exhausted; surely Allāh is Mighty, Wise. (Qur'ān, 31:27)

Say: Were the sea (turned into) ink for the (recording of the) words of my Lord, the sea would surely be consumed before the words of my Lord are exhausted though We were to bring the like of that (sea) to add thereto. (Qur'ān, 18:109)

10) How is He?

The most Exalted One says,

Allāh's is the command before (now) and thereafter. (30:4)

The day on which no soul shall control anything for (another) soul, and the command on that Day shall be entirely Allāh's. (82:19)

11) Why is He the Praised One?

The Almighty has said that He is "... the Apparent and the Hidden" (Qur'ān, 57:3), that is, His Existence, Might and Wisdom are all evident if one observes the indications thereto, yet His reality is obscured from all intellects, for these intellects cannot grasp His greatness sufficiently or accurately. This is why one should instead try to appreciate, the greatness of what the Almighty has created, whether on earth, above it, beneath it, or in the endless cosmos.

12) What is His will?

The answer to this verse is provided by verses such as these:

And you do not please except if Allāh [so] pleases. (Qur'ān, 76:30)

Allāh chooses whomsoever He pleases especially for His mercy, and Allāh is the Lord of mighty grace. (Qur'ān, 2:105)

Allāh grants His authority to whomsoever He pleases; Allāh cares for all, and He knows all things. (Qur'ān, 2:247)

Allāh sets whomsoever He pleases on the right path. (Qur'ān, 2:272)

He it is Who shapes you in the wombs as He pleases. (Qur'ān, 3:6)

If He pleases, He may take you off and make whomsoever He pleases successors after you. (Qur'ān, 6:133)

13) Why is He the all-Knowing, the Omnipotent?

He has responded to those who raised such a question by saying,

He cannot be questioned concerning what He does while they shall be questioned. (21:23)

All things are destined in the end to the One Who has facilitated their being what they are, the One Who cannot be explained; therefore, the attempt to analyze Him, His Attributes, and His actions, is simply impossible.

14) Does He have sons, daughters, parents, or any family members or relatives?!

The God of Islam and of all mankind has said, "Say: He, Allāh, is One. Allāh is He on Whom everyone [and everything] depends. He does not beget, nor is He begotten, and none is like Him" (Qur'ān, 112:1-4).

15) Does He forgive?

He has said, "Inform My servants that I am *the* Forgiving, *the* Merciful" (Qur'ān, 15:49).

16) What about His creation?

He has said,

O man! What has beguiled you from your Lord, the Gracious One Who created you then made you complete, then He made you symmetrical? Into whatever form He pleased did He shape you. (Qur'ān, 82:6-8)

Have they not considered that Allāh Who created the heavens and the earth and was not tired by their creation...? (Qur'ān, 46:33)

This is Allāh's creation, so show Me what those besides Him have created. (Qur'ān, 31:11)

17) Can He be seen?

He, the Most Exalted, the Most High, has told us that

When Moses came to the place appointed by Us, and his Lord addressed him, he said: "Lord! Show (Yourself) to me so that I may look on You." Allāh said: "By no means can you see Me; but look at the mountain; if it abides in its place, then shall you see Me." When his Lord manifested His glory to the mountain, He made it like dust, and Moses fell in a swoon. When he recovered his senses, he said: "Glory to You! To You do I turn in repentance, and I am the first to believe." (Qur'ān, 7:143).

Some Muslims, however, believe, as the reader will find out in a later part of this book, that the believers will be able on the Day of

Judgment to see Allāh “physically” and will be able to “identify” Him. Shī`as disagree with these misinformed Muslims, may Allah guide them aright, as you will read later in this book, *Inshā-Allāh*.

18) How does He command?

He has said,

His command, when He intends anything, is only to say to it: Be, and it is. (Qur’ān, 36:82)

When He decrees an affair, He only says to it: Be, and it is. (Qur’ān, 40:68)

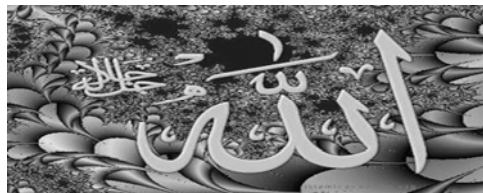
His creatures have always wondered about His Attributes, Praise and Glory to Him, so He provided them with the following verses wherein they can find the clear answer:

And Allāh’s are the most Beautiful Names (Attributes), so call on Him thereby. (Qur’ān, 7:180)

Allāh: there is no god but He; His are the very Best Names. (Qur’ān, 20:8)

Say: Call on Allāh or on *ar-Raḥmān*; whichever you call on, He has the Great Names... (Qur’ān, 17:110).

He is Allāh, besides Whom there is no other god; the King, the Holy, the One Who grants peace, the One Who gives security, the Guardian over all, the Mighty, the Supreme, the Possessor of greatness; Glory to Allāh from what they set up (with Him). He is Allāh the Creator, the Maker, the Fashioner; His are the most beautiful Attributes; whatever there is in the heavens and the earth declares His glory, and He is the Mighty, the Wise. (Qur’ān, 59:21-24)



Paradise." He is also quoted as saying that whoever learns these Attributes by heart and comprehends their meanings (and acts on them) will enter Paradise. One should be familiar with the meanings and implications of these Names, not just with their count. Nobody can sufficiently be acquainted with the Attributes of Allāh as He Himself says in 73:20: "He knows that you cannot (sufficiently) count Him (His Attributes)." A tradition says, "Derive your manners from the Attributes of Allāh." Allāh has willed to show His servant His Attributes which collectively describe Him without His Name being a separate part thereof, even though He is not identical to them in essence.

DOCTORS TESTIFY TO HEALING EFFECTS OF THE WORD "ALLĀH"

1. Testimony of a Muslim Doctor:

It has been discovered by Dr. Ibrahim Karim, a Muslim biologist, that the names of Allāh have healing power to a large number of diseases. He used precision methods in the measurement of energy within the human body, and discovered that every one of the names of Allāh stimulates energy in the immune system of the human body to work efficiently in a certain ideal human body.

He discovered that the mere mention (reciting) of the names of Allāh leads to improvement in the tracks bioenergy within the human body, and after a 3-years of research Dr. Karim reached the following results:

1. Ear – *As-Samī`* (The all-Hearing)
2. Bone – *An-Nāfi`* (The creator of good)
3. Backbone - *Al-Jabbār* (The Compeller)
4. Knee – *Ar-Ra`ūf* (The Affectionate)
5. Hair – *Al-Bādi* (The Originator)
6. Heart – *An-Nūr* (The Light)
7. Muscles – *Al-Qawiyy* (The Almighty)
8. Heart Waves – *Al-Wahhāb* (The giver of all)
9. Heart Muscle – *Ar-Razāqq* (The Sustainer)
10. Nerve – *Al-Mughni* (The Enricher)
11. Artery – *Al-Jabbār* (The Great)

12. Stomach – *Ar-Razāqq* (The Sustainer)
13. Cancer – *Al-Jalīl* (The Mighty)
14. Thyroid – *Al-Jabbār* (The Great)
15. Thigh- *Ar-Rāfi`* (The One Who raises the status)
16. Migraine – *Al-Ghaniyy* (The Rich One)
17. Eye Arteries – *Al-Muta`āli* (The Supreme One)
18. Kidney - *Al-Ḥayy* (The Ever Living One)
19. Colon – *Ar-Ra`ūf* (The Affectionate)
20. Intestine – *Ar-Razzāq* (The Sustainer)
21. Liver - *An-Nāfi`* (The creator of good)
22. Pancreas – *Al-Bāri* (The Make of Order)
23. Fatty Sacks – *An-Nāfi`* (The creator of good)
24. Womb - *Al-Khāliq* (The Creator)
25. Bladder – *Al-Hādi* (The Guide)
26. Rheumatism – *Al-Muḥaymin* (The Guardian)
27. Prostat – *Ar-Rashīd* (The Righteous Teacher)
28. Nerves of the Eye – *Az-Zāhir* (The Manifest One)
29. Pineal Gland – *Al-Hādi* (The Guide)
30. Blood Pressure – *Al-Khāfiḍ* (The Abaser)
31. Lung – *Ar-Razzāq* (The Sustainer)
32. Thymus Gland – *Al-Qawiyy* (The Almighty)
33. Gland above the Kidney – *Al-Bāri* (The Make of Order)
34. Hair Peel - *Al-Jalīl* (The Mighty)
35. The Nasal Cavities – (*Al-Lāṭif* – *Al-Ghaniyy* – *Ar-Raḥīm*)
36. Eye – (*An-Nūr* – *Al-Baṣīr* - *Al-Wahhāb*)

Method of Treatment

Put your hands on the place of pain and praise Allāh's names listed above according to your disease until the pain heals *inshā-Allāh*.

2. Testimony of a non-Muslim Doctor:

Vander Hoven, a psychologist from the Netherlands, announced his new discovery about the effects of reciting the Qur'ān and of repeating the word ALLĀH both on patients and non-patients. The Dutch professor confirms his discovery with studies and researches applied on many patients over a period of three years. Some of his patients were non-Muslims, others did not speak Arabic at all but were trained to pronounce the word "ALLĀH" clearly and properly

with a long “Ā” which is accented throughout this book as you can see. The result was great, particularly on those who suffer from dejection and tension. *Al-Watan*, a Saudi daily, reported that the psychologist was quoted as saying that Muslims who can read Arabic and who recite the Qur’ān regularly are able to protect themselves from many psychological diseases some of which lead to depression, one of the worst.

The psychologist explained how each letter in the word "ALLĀH" affects the healing of psychological diseases. He pointed out in his research that pronouncing the first letter in the word "ALLĀH" which is the letter (A), released from the respiratory system, controls breathing. He added that pronouncing the velar consonant (L) the Arabic way, with the tongue touching slightly the upper part of the jaw, producing a short pause and then repeating the same pause constantly, relaxes the respiration.

Also, pronouncing the last letter, which is the letter (H), makes a contact between the lungs and the heart and, in turn, this contact controls the heartbeat. What is exciting in the study is that this psychologist is non-Muslim but interested in Islamic sciences and searches for the secrets of the Holy Qur’ān. Allāh, The Great and the Glorious, says, “We will soon show them Our Signs in the (furthest) regions (of the earth) and in their own selves, until it becomes manifest to them that this is the truth” (Qur’ān, 41:53).

ALLĀH’S ATTRIBUTES AND THEIR DERIVATION

On p. 112, Vol. 1 of his *Usūl*, the renown scholar al-Kulayni ar-Rāzi cites Hishām ibn al-Hakam as saying that when he once asked Imām Ja’far as-Sādiq عليه السلام about Allāh's Attributes and their derivations, as well as the derivation of the word "Allāh," the Imām عليه السلام said to him, "O Hisham! The proper noun 'Allāh' is derived from 'ilāh'; the Creator requires the existence of creation [to testify to His being its Creator]. This is a noun, not an adjective. Anyone who worships a name without worshipping what the name stands for is actually committing *kufṛ*, apostasy; in reality, he does not worship anything at all. One who worships the name and the meaning is also committing *kufṛ*, for he will be worshipping two. Only one who

worships the meaning without the name is in line with the concept of Tawhīd (Unity of God). Have you understood all of this, O Hisham?" He answered him in the affirmative, requesting him to provide more explanations, whereupon the Imām عليه السلام said, "There are ninety-nine Attributes of Allāh. Had each Attribute been the same as it describes, each one of them would have been a god by itself. But 'Allāh' is the meaning one deducts once he becomes familiar with all these Attributes. They all, O Hisham, in their collective sense, are not the same as He Himself. Bread is something you eat. Water is something you drink. A garment is something you wear. And fire is something that burns. Do you understand all of this, O Hisham, fully enough so that you would promote it and fight the enemies of Allāh for its sake?!" Hisham answered him in the affirmative, whereupon the Imām عليه السلام added, "May Allāh grant you thereby benefits, and may He keep your feet firm thereon, O Hisham!"

Imām as-Sādiq عليه السلام has said,

O son of Ādam! If a bird were to eat your heart, it would not have felt satisfied. If the hole of a needle were put before your vision, it would have covered it up. How dare you, using these two, expect to know by them the domain of the heavens and the earth?! Had you been truthful, you would have looked at this sun: It is one object among many of Allāh's creations. Had your eyes been able to see all of it, then, and only then, would you have really been truthful. Allāh, the Exalted and the Great, says, "And to your Lord is the [end] goal" (Qur'ān, 53:42). So, when speech reaches the subject of Allāh, it is then that you should hold your peace...





EXPLANATION AND DERIVATION OF THE WORD “ALLĀH”

Views vary in this regard. One says it is derived from one who *ilāhs* (as a verb) another when the latter seeks refuge with him during the time of fear or calamity, and he would grant him refuge and a safe haven; so, the word would become *ilāh* (as a noun) of people, just as one may be their *imām* when he leads them in congregational prayers or becomes their undisputed leader, or just as a robe becomes *riā'* when it is worn, or *liḥāf* when used as a covering. Since it is an adjective for someone who is great, “There is nothing like unto Him” (Qur’ān, 42:11), people desired to glorify Him by giving the word the prefix *al*, thus it became *Al-ilāh*. But they found the *hamza* in the beginning and also in its midst, where it is quite heavily stressed (elongated), heavy on the tongue, so they eliminated it and it became just as it is revealed in the Holy Qur’ān, that is, “Allāh”. This viewpoint is supported by al-Hārith ibn Asad al-Muhāsibi¹ and a group of scholars, and there are dissenters.

Derivation of the Word “Allāh”

Some say that the word “Allāh” is derived from the verb *walaha* وله (past tense), *yawlahu* يوله (present tense), from the root noun *walah* وله. The *waw* و was replaced with a *hamza* همزة, just as the case with *wisād* وساد and *isād* إساد, *wishāḥ* وشاح and *ishāḥ* إشاح, *wikāf* وكاف and *ikāf* إكاف. *Walah* وله is extreme love. Prophet Yahya عليه السلام (John the

¹He is “Abū Abdullāh” al-Hārith ibn Asad ibn Abdullāh al-Muhāsibi al-Basri. He was called “al-Muhāsibi” because he used to always hold himself to account. He was one of the pillars of Sufism during the third Hijri century (9th A.D.). Abū Abdul-Rahmān al-Maslami describes him as “mentor of most Baghdadis”, and he was originally from Basra although he was born in Baghdad in 170 A.H./786 A.D. and died also in Baghdad in 243 A.H./857 A.D.

Baptist) used to be forlorn most of the time whereas Jesus ﷺ used to be mostly merry and always wearing a smile on his glorious and radiant face. They both sought the judgment of the Almighty in their regard, whereupon Allāh inspired them thus: “The nearest of you to Me is the one who thinks best of Me.” And surely Allāh knows best.

The Almighty is Endless regarding His essence, perpetuity, eternity, Attributes, qualities and blessings. His creations, on the other hand, are described as reaching the end of their life terms, being limited in their characteristics, thoughts, and spheres. The one who is incapacitated cannot reach the Endless One. No wonder, then, that the minds are forever overcome by the lights of His Independence, and the reasons are too feeble to realize the brightness of His Greatness. He is as He describes Himself when He says in 6:18 and 6:61, “He is the Supreme above His servants.”

The Creator is the One Who is adored, and He is worthy of it; hence, He is called *ilāh* الله. He has made it clear for us that He is the One who bestows His blessings on those whom He creates in sundry ways. Adoring is the ultimate form of glorifying. Reason testifies that the ultimate end of glorification suits only the One Who is the source of benevolence and bliss. It is to this fact that the Almighty refers when He says, “How do you deny Allāh while you were dead and He gave you Life?” (Qur’ān, 2:28).

Nobody knows Allāh as He deserves to be known except Allāh Himself. In sermon 186 in *Nahjul Balāgha*, Imām Ali ﷺ says the following:

“One who assigns conditions to Him does not believe in His Oneness. Nor does one who likens Him to anything grasp the reality about Him. One who illustrates an example for Him does not revere Him. One who points at Him and imagines Him does not know the meaning of His Lordship. Anything known by itself is a created thing, and everything that exists by virtue of other things is the effect thereof. He does things but not with the help of instruments. He assigns measures but not with the faculty of thinking. He is rich but not by acquisition. Time does not keep company with Him, nor does

He seek help from any means. His Being precedes time. His Existence precedes non-existence, and His eternity precedes beginning. By creating the senses, it is known that He does not have the same. By comparing antitheses, it is known that He has no antithesis, and by striking similarities between things, it is known that there is nothing similar to Him. He has made light the contrary of darkness, brightness the opposite of dimness, dryness the opposite of moisture, and heat the opposite of coolness. He causes harmony among opposites. He fuses together diverse things; He brings closer what is remote and distances what is joined together. He is not confined to limits nor computed by figures. Matters are attracted to one another, and parts point out to what is similar to them; the word 'since' disproves their eternity, and possibility disproves their perpetuity, while certain means keep them distant from perfection. Through them does the Creator manifest Himself to the intellect, and by them is He veiled from vision. Stillness and motion do not apply to Him; how can anything that He causes to have any effect on Him, and how can anything which He has created revert in its effect unto Him? Or how can anything have an impact on Him while He Himself brought it into being? Had it not been so, He would have become subject to diversity, His Being would have become divisible (into parts), and His reality would have been prevented from being Eternal. Had He had a front, He would have had a rear! He would have needed to be completed had there been any shortage in Him. In that case, characteristics of His creatures would have appeared in Him, and He would have become a sign (leading to other objects) instead of the latter leading to Him. Through the might of His effectiveness is He distanced above being affected by things. Neither change nor extinction affects Him. He has not begotten anyone lest it should have been said that He Himself was begotten. He has not been begotten lest He should have been confined to limits. He is too sublime to have sons, too pure to take women. Imagination cannot reach Him to assess Him. Comprehension cannot conceive Him and fancy a shape for Him. Senses do not perceive Him in order to probe Him. Hands cannot touch Him to feel Him. He does not change into any condition. He does not pass from one stage to another. Nights and days do not age Him. Light and darkness do not alter Him. It cannot be said that He has a limb or extremity, an end or an

expiration, nor do things control Him to raise or lower Him, nor does anything support Him to bend Him or to keep Him erect. He is not inside things nor outside them. He conveys news, but not with a tongue or voice. He listens, but not with ear holes or organs of hearing. He speaks but does not utter words. He remembers but does not memorize. He determines but not by exercising His mind. He loves and approves without sentiments. He hates and feels angry without any painstaking. When He intends to create a thing, He says to it 'Be!' and it is, but not through a voice that strikes (the ears). His speech is a manifestation of what He has created. His peer never existed before, nor is He regarded as old; otherwise, He would have become a second god. It cannot be said that He came into being after He had not been in existence because in that case the effects of creation would have been reflected on Him, and there would have remained no difference between them and Him, and He would have no distinction over them. Thus, the Creator and the created would have become equal, and the Initiator and what is initiated would have been on the same level. He created creation without any model made by someone else, and He did not secure the assistance of any among His creation for creating. He created the earth and controlled it without having to hold it, retained it without having to support it, making it stand without poles, raising it without pillars, protecting it against bending or curving, defending it against crumbling or fragmenting. He fixed mountains on it like pegs, solidified its rocks, caused its streams to flow and expanded its valleys. Whatever He made did not suffer any flaw, and whatever He strengthened did not permit any weakness. He manifests Himself over the earth through His authority and greatness. He is aware of what there is inside it through His knowledge and understanding. He has power over everything on earth by virtue of His sublimity and dignity. Nothing on earth that He commands defies Him, nor does it oppose Him to overpower Him. He is not in need of anyone to feed Him. All things bow down to Him and are humble before His greatness. They cannot flee away from His authority to someone else in order to escape His benefit or harm. There is no parallel for Him who may match Him, and none is like Him to equal Him. He will destroy the earth after its existence, till all that exists on it will become non-existent. But the extinction of the world after its creation is no stranger than its

formation and invention the first time. How could it be? Even if all the beings on earth, be they birds or beasts, cattle or pasture herds, of different origins and species, clever or not so clever nations, all jointly combine efforts to create even a mosquito, they will not be able to bring it into being nor understand the means to its creation. Their wits are bewildered and they are aimlessly wandering. Their powers fall short and they fail, returning disappointed and worn out, realizing that they are defeated, admitting their inability to produce it. They will also realize that they are too weak (even) to destroy it. Surely, after the extinction of the world, Allāh the Glorified will remain alone with nothing else besides Him. He will be, after its extinction, as He was before then: without time or place, a moment or a period. Age and time will not then exist, and years and hours will disappear. There will be nothing except Allāh, the One, the Omnipotent. To Him is the return of all matters. The initial creation of all matters was never within the power of the latter, and the prevention of their own extinction was never within their reach. Had they had the power to prevent such an extinction, they would have existed forever. When He created any part of this world, its creating did not cause Him any difficulty, and the creating of anything which He created and formed did not exhaust Him. He did not create it to enhance His authority, nor did He do so for fear of any loss or harm, nor to seek help against an overwhelming foe, nor to guard against any avenging opponent, nor for the extension of His domain, nor for boasting of it before a partner, nor because of His feeling of loneliness and desire to seek company. Then, after its creation, He will destroy it not because of any worry that overcomes Him in maintaining and administering it, nor for any pleasure that will accrue to Him, nor for the cumbersomeness of anything over Him. The prolongation of its existence does not wear Him out to induce Him to its quick destruction. But Allāh, the Glorified One, has maintained it with His kindness, kept it intact with His command, and perfected it with His might. Then, after its destruction, He will bring it back into being again not for any need of His own for it, nor to seek the assistance of anything in it, nor to change the condition of loneliness to that of company, nor from ignorance to knowledge, nor from want and need to independence and plentitude, nor from disgrace and lowness to honor and prestige.”

In another sermon, wherein he discusses the beginning of the creation of the heavens and earth, the Imām عليه السلام says,

Praise is due to Allāh Whose worth cannot be described by orators, Whose bounties cannot be counted by those who compute, the obedience to Whom cannot be satisfied by those who strive to do so, the One Whom the height of intellectual endeavor cannot appreciate, and the depths of understanding cannot reach, for Whose description no limit can ever be set, nor praise satisfies, nor time suffices, and no duration is fixed. He brought forth creation through His might, dispersed the winds as an act of His mercy, and He firmed the earth with the mountains. The foremost in religious obligation is to acknowledge Him, the perfection of acknowledging Him is to achieve His Pleasure, the perfection of achieving His Pleasure is to believe in His Oneness, the perfection of believing in His Oneness is to regard Him as the Pure, and the perfection of His purity is not to attach adjectives to Him because every adjective is an indication that it is different from that to which it is best named, and everything to which something is best named is different from the Best Name itself. Thus, whoever attaches adjectives to Allāh recognizes a peer like Him, and whoever recognizes His peer regards two gods; and whoever regards Him as One of two (gods) associates partners with Him, and whoever associates partners with Him errs in His regard and does Him injustice, and whoever errs in His regard points out at Him, and whoever points out at Him admits limitations for Him, and whoever admits limitations for Him numbers Him. Whoever wonders where He is maintains that He is confined to a place, and whoever wonders above what He is maintains that He is not above something else. He is a Being but not through phenomenon of coming into being. He exists but not from non-existence. He is with everything but not in physical proximity. He is different from everything but not in any physical way. He acts but without connotations of movement or means. He sees yet none among His creation can see Him. He is One and Only, so there is none with whom He keeps company or whom He misses when absent.



THE 99 ATTRIBUTES OF ALLĀH

أَسْمَاءُ اللَّهِ الْحُسْنَى

Now let us discuss His Attributes in more details:

1. *Allāh* الله

The proper noun “Allāh” solely belongs to the Almighty God, the Truth. Any word that follows it is regarded as an adjective describing it, while it remains a noun indicative of the True God. It combines all His Attributes, and it needs no introduction from others, whereas the other Attributes attain recognition when added thereto. “Allāh” is not given to anyone other than Him, nor should it ever be used for anyone besides Him.

Allāh is the ever-Existent, the One Who causes existence, Who maintains existence, Who creates everything that exists. Whatever He creates shall perish; He never will: "... Say: 'Allāh!' then leave them sporting in their vain discourses" (Qur'ān, 6:91).

2. *Ar-Raḥmān* الرحمن

Allāh has said, "All those in the heavens and on earth will come to the Beneficent God obediently" (Qur'ān, 19:93).

"Ar-Raḥmān ar-Raḥīm" الرحمن الرحيم are two of the Attributes of Allāh which remind people of His mercy, of the fact that His acts of affecting goodness and rewards reach whomsoever He pleases, thus warding off evil from them. "Ar-Raḥmān" and "ar-Raḥīm" are two concurrent Attributes of His each of which conveys more meanings of mercy than the other.

"Ar-Raḥmān" is an Attribute specifically relevant to Allāh; none besides Him can be called or referred to as such, whereas "*ar-Raḥīm*" can be applied to people: One may be described as "*raḥīm*", merciful or kind, but a human cannot be "*raḥmān*".

In the Holy Qur'ān, we read: "In the Name of Allāh, the Most Beneficent, the Most Merciful" (Qur'ān, 1:1); "The beneficent God is firm in power" (Qur'ān, 20:5). It is an Attribute demonstrating that mercy can be possible only through Him. It means "the One Who grants mercy beyond which there is no other mercy at all and the like of which does not at all exist".

Though derived from mercy, "ar-Raḥmān" is both a noun and an adjective. Neither contradicts the other.

It is commonly known that mercy means: one's desire or power of will to bring goodness to one who is much less than him in status.

3. *Ar-Raḥīm* الرحيم

Allāh, Praise and Glory to Him, has said, "Inform My servants that I am the Forgiving, the Merciful" (Qur'ān, 15:49).

Ar-Raḥīm is derived from *raḥma* رَحْمَة, mercy or compassion. *Raḥma* implies the salvation of those who receive it from harm and loss, and their being blessed with guidance, forgiveness and sound conviction. *Ar-Raḥīm*, i.e. the One Who grants *raḥma*, is a superlative. It is the highest derivative form of *raḥma*. Allāh has said, “He it is Who sends His blessings on you, and (so do) His angels, so that He may bring you out of utter darkness into the light, and He is Merciful to the believers” (Qur’ān, 33:43).

Ar-Raḥīm is the One Who bestows countless blessings. Some say that this word is derived from *Raḥīm*, and we have already come to know that the root word for it is *raḥma*, that is, favors from Allāh and blessings; surely His blessings cannot be counted, nor can they ever be exhausted.

The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ has said, “One who has no compassion towards people is deprived of Allāh's Compassion.” He has also said, “One who does not respect the seniors among us, nor shows compassion towards our young, nor safeguards the rights of the scholars among us, is surely none of us.” Compassion towards the servants of Allāh is a sure path to achieving the mercy of Allāh. The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ has said, “Be merciful unto those on earth so that those in the heavens may be merciful unto you.”

4. *Al-Mālik* (المالك أو الملك)

God has said, “... So exalted be Allāh, the True King” (Qur’ān, 23:116).

Al-Mālik conveys the meaning of One Who is free, by virtue of His Own merits and characteristics, from depending on anything in existence, while everything in existence depends on Him. Nothing in existence can do without Him, whereas everything that exists derives its existence from Him or because of Him. Everything/everyone is His.

Al-Mālik occurs in: “Master of the Day of Judgment” (Qur’ān, 1:4). Another method of recitation: *Melik*, King of the Day of Judgment.

Al-Maleek exists in this verse: “In the seat of honor with a most Powerful King” (Qur’ān, 54:55). “Mālikul-Mulk” exists in: “O Allāh, Master of the Kingdom!” (Qur’ān, 3:26). *Al-Malakoot* exists in: “Therefore, glory to the One in Whose hand is the kingdom of all things” (Qur’ān, 36:83).

The Almighty has described Himself as being “Mālikul-Mulk,” the Owner of everything, of the whole domain, saying, “Say: O Allāh, Master of the Kingdom!” (Qur’ān, 3:26), and “Master of the Day of Judgment” (Qur’ān, 1:4), which is one of the first verses of the Holy Qur’ān.

A land's owner is its “mālik,” one legally bound to obey the king, the “malik,” with regard to land-related laws issued by the latter, whereas the opposite is not possible.

Among the Attributes of Allāh Almighty, the word “al-Mālik” has occurred independently, whereas the word “Mālik” is always added to something else, such as “Māliki Yawmid-Deen,” Master of the Day of Judgment; therefore, the first Attribute has to be more revered.

5. *Al-Quddoos* القدوس

Allāh has said, “Whatever in the heavens and on earth declares the glory of Allāh, the King, the Holy” (Qur’ān, 62:1).

Al-Qudoos means: the One Whose characteristics cannot be conceived by the senses, nor can He be conceived by imagination, nor can He be realized by any mind or reason or judged by any intellect. Linguistically, it is derived from *quds*, purity or cleanness. “Al-bayt al-muqaddas” means the Purified House, the one in which people purify themselves from the filth of sins. Paradise is also called the place of *quds* because it is free from the ills of the life of this world. Arch-angel Gabriel is called in Islam *al-rūḥ al-quds*, the Holy Spirit, because he is free from any fault in delivering divine inspiration to the messengers of Allāh. Allāh has described Himself as “... the King, the Holy” (Qur’ān, 59:23), and He has also said, “Whatever in the heavens and on earth declares the glory of Allāh,

the King, the Holy” (Qur’ān, 62:1).

Al-Quddūs is the One Who is above need and Whose Attributes are above being deficient. He is the One Who purifies the souls against sinning, Who takes the wicked by their forelocks, Who is above being limited to space or time.

The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ once sent one of his companions to teach Islam to a group of new converts and to lead them in congregational prayers. That companion used not to recite any chapter of the Holy Qur’ān (besides, of course, the Fātiha) other than Sūrat at-Tawhīd (or al-Ikhlāṣ, i.e. Ch. 112), so those believers went back once to the Prophet ﷺ and told him about it. The Prophet ﷺ said to them, “Go back and ask him why he does so.” On asking him, the companion answered them by saying, “... because it contains the Attribute of *ar-Raḥmān*, and this is why I love to recite it so often!” When they told the Prophet ﷺ this answer, he said to them, “Go back and tell him that the Praised and Glorified One loves him, too.”

Ibn ‘Abbās spent a night once with his cousin the Messenger of Allāh. When the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ woke up and stood up on his bed, he raised his head towards the heavens and thrice repeated the following statement: *Subḥanal Mālik al-Quddūs!* (Glory to the King, the Holy!) Then he recited the last verses of Sūrat Āli-‘Imrān starting with the verse: “Surely in the creation of the heavens and the earth...,” etc.

6. *As-Salām* السلام

Allāh Almighty has said that He is “... the King, the Holy” (Qur’ān, 59:23).

As-Salām means: the One Who is free from defect and shortcoming, Whose qualities are above deficiency, Whose deeds are free from evil. Since He is as such, there can be neither peace nor security in existence without Him.

Salām means peace. Allāh Almighty has said, “... and Allāh invites

to the abode of peace” (Qur’ān, 10:25), meaning Paradise: Anyone who abides therein will have been saved from agony and perdition. Allāh has said, “And if he is one of those on the right hand, then peace to you from those on the right hand” (Qur’ān, 56:90-91), that is, rest assured that they are enjoying peace and tranquility. *Salām!* is a greeting; if a Muslim tells another Muslim *As-Salāmu ‘Alaikum!*, he will have assured him of safety and security, granting him immunity against his evil or ill intentions. Allāh Almighty praises Yahya (John the Baptist) عليه السلام by saying, “And peace with him the day he was born, the day he dies and the day he will be raised up to life (again)!” (Qur’ān, 19:15).

The most precarious situations to which human beings are exposed are three: The time of birth, the time of death, and the time of resurrection. So Allāh honored Yahya in all these three situations, granting him peace, safety and security against their woes. He saved him from the perils of all these three situations and granted him security against fear.

Muslims are repeatedly enjoined by the Holy Qur’ān to disseminate peace and to be receptive to those who offer it:

O you who believe! Enter into peace one and all... (2:208)

And if they incline to peace, do incline to it too and trust in Allāh. (8:61)

And the servants of *ar-Raḥmān* are the ones who walk on earth humbly, and when the ignorant ones address them, they say: *Salām* (Peace)! (25:63)

And when those who believe in Our Signs come to you, say: Peace with you! Your Lord has ordained mercy on Himself... (6:54)

So turn away from them and say, Peace! For they shall soon come to know. (43:89)

Allāh's *Salām* is His speech. Likewise, the Messenger of Islam used to quite often enjoin the believers to disseminate the greeting of peace among them. There are numerous traditions testifying to this fact; among them are the following:

Assalāmu minal Islam **السلام من الاسلام**: The greeting of peace is an integral part of the creed of Islam.

Afshu as-Salāma taslamu **أفشوا السلام تسلموا**: Disseminate the greeting of peace among you so you may achieve peace and security.

Whoever upholds three things will have combined in him the meaning of conviction: 1) fairness to his own self, 2) disseminating of the greeting of peace to everyone, and 3) spending wisely out of what he saves.

Afshu as-Salāma baynakum **أفشوا السلام بينكم**: Disseminate the greeting of peace among you.

In one of his supplications, the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ used to say, “Lord! Make us harbingers of peace to Your friends!” The Holy Qur’ān tells us that the name of Paradise is “Dār as-Salām,” the abode of peace; He, Glory and Exaltation to Him, says, “They shall have the abode of peace with their Lord, and He is their guardian because of what they did” (Qur’ān, 6:127). Allāh will make the greeting of the believers, when they meet Him, “Peace!” He says, “Their salutation on the Day they meet Him shall be: *Salām!* (Peace!)” (Qur’ān, 33:44). Referring to the believers, He says the following in Sūrat ar-Ra’d (Ch. 13), “... the gardens of perpetual abode which they will enter along with those who do good deeds from among their parents and spouses and offspring, and the angels will enter on them from every gate (saying): Peace with you because you were constant! How excellent, then, is the issue of the abode!” (Qur’ān, 13:23-24).

Thawban, servant of the Messenger of Allāh, has said, “Whenever the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ finished his prayers, he would seek

forgiveness of Allāh thrice, saying,

اللهم أنت السلام و منك السلام و اليك يرجع السلام، تباركت و تعاليت يا ذا الجلال و
الاکرام

'Lord! You are the Peace; from You is the Peace and to you peace returns; Blessed and Exalted are You! O One with Greatness and Honor!'

7. *Al-Mu'min* المؤمن

Allāh has described Himself as *al-Mu'min*: "... the One Who gives peace, Who grants security" (Qur'ān, 59:23).

"*Al-Mu'min*" means: the One to Whom peace and security are rendered: He provides the means of their attainment, blocking all the avenues of fear. There is neither peace nor security in this life against the causes of disease and perdition, nor in the life hereafter against the torment and the Wrath, except that He provides the means to attain it.

'*īmān*, linguistically speaking, is an infinitive (to believe) derived from two verbs: *taṣdeeq*, testimony for the truth of something or someone, as in: "... and you will not believe us though we are truthful" (Qur'ān, 12:17), and *amān*, asylum or a peaceful haven as in: "... and gave them security against fear" (Qur'ān, 106:4). Some linguists are of the view that the derivation of '*īmān* is from this second verb.

If we say that the Almighty grants His servants security against anything they dread, we must be understood in the light of the circumstances of the life in this world and in the hereafter. As regarding the life in this world, the removal of the cause of fear is not reasonably accepted except when a precarious situation has actually taken place. Fear cannot be removed when the possibility of loss of life is present, and nobody can remove such a possibility except Allāh. Nobody can bring about peace and security other than He. A blind person is apprehensive of perishing on account of his inability to see the area from which death may overtake him. Sound

vision grants him security against being annihilated. One whose arm is amputated fears the situation when he cannot defend himself except with the use of his arm. His healthy arm, then, is the cause of his feeling secure. The same can be said about all our senses and bodily parts. The One Who created all these parts is the same One Who has removed from man the causes of fear by granting him such parts. The One Who has created delicious food for man as well as good medicines and taught him how to make useful tools, thus sparing him a lot of trouble, is surely the same One Who grants him security against all such perils.

The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ has said, “Anyone who believes in Allāh and the Last Day should bring security to his neighbor against his own misdeeds.”¹

8. *Al-Muhaimin* المهيمن

In 59:23, we read: “He is Allāh besides Whom there is no other god, the King, the Holy, the One Who grants peace, the One Who grants security, the Guardian over all, the Mighty, the Supreme, the One Who possesses greatness; Glory to Allāh from whatever they set up (with Him).”

When applied to the Almighty, *al-Muhaimin* means that He is the One Who oversees His servants' actions, Who provides them with sustenance and decrees their life-spans. He does so through His knowledge, control and protection. Anyone who oversees something is its guardian; so he has full power over it. These Attributes can never be present in their absolute meaning except in Allāh.

This Attribute describes in 10:61 the One Who testifies for or against His servants who enter into mutual transactions: “... We are witnesses over you when you enter into it.” Allāh is *al-Muhaimin*, the One Who witnesses all what His servants do, be it a speech or an action. The meaning of this verse incorporates the meaning of the

¹This tradition is recorded on p. 12, “Kitāb al-Adab” (book of etiquette), Vol. 8 of al-Bukhārī's *Ṣaḥīḥ*.

word “*muhaimin*” thus: the One Who knows everything and from Whose knowledge nothing at all can escape, not even the weight of an atom on earth or in the heavens.

Al-Khalīl ibn Amed al-Farāhidi¹ says that *al-Mu'min* means: the One Who ever watches, Who ever protects. It is common in Arabic to describe someone as *muhaimin* if he protects someone else or is his guardian.

Al-Mibrad dictionary explains its meaning as: the One Who is most kind and compassionate. Arabs describe the bird that stretches its wings to protect its young as being *muhaimin* over them.

Al-Hassan al-Basri says it means the Guardian Who testifies to one's truth. Applied to the Almighty, it may carry one of two meanings: His testimony by word, hence His testimony informing us about His messengers being truthful, and His empowering those messengers to produce miracles, thus testifying to their truthfulness.

Al-Muhaimin is the One Who encompasses in His knowledge the management of the affairs of all His creation from the smallest atom to the largest planet in the cosmos.

9. *Al-ʿAzīz* العزيز

The Almighty has said, “O Moses! Surely I am Allāh, the Omnipotent, the Wise” (Qur’ān, 27:9).

The root word of this Attribute is *ʿizz*, might, power, strength,

¹ He is “Abū Abdul-Rahmān” al-Khalīl ibn Ahmed al-Farāhidi al-Basri (100 – 173 A.H./718 – 791 A.D.), of the Azd tribe, founder of the science of scansion, mentor of Seebawayh and the first to write a concordance for the Arabic language. Al-Farāhidi was one of the most prominent scholars of the Basri School. He is said to have been born in Oman. A number of books are attributed to him such as *معاني الحروف* (*Maʿāni al-Huroof*, meanings of alphabets), *العوامل والعروض والنقط* (*Al-ʿAwāmil wal Arooḍ wal Nuqāṭ*, factors, scansions and dots). He altered the way the *ḥarakāt* (accent/emphasis marks) are drawn in Arabic.

victory, elevation, non-submission. Its verb means: to strengthen or to support as in: “We sent them two [messengers] but they called them liars, so We strengthened them with a third” (Qur’ān, 36:14), that is, supported them and their argument with a third messenger. Linguistically, its verb means: to overcome, to gain the upper hand, to subdue...

Al-‘Azīz is the One Who Alone has all honor; He is never humiliated, nor is He ever wronged; neither imagination nor intellect can ever conceive Him. He is the One Who cannot be overcome or in any way harmed, the One Who has no peer nor a similitude, Who is very much needed, Who is victorious and is never vanquished, the Mighty, the Omnipotent Who can never be reached.

The Almighty has described Himself as *al-‘Azīz*, narrating in His Book, the Holy Qur’ān, an anecdote about Jesus pleading to Him thus “... If You forgive them, surely You are the Mighty, the Wise” (Qur’ān, 5:118). He has also said, “And to Him belongs greatness in the heavens and on earth, and He is the Mighty, the Wise” (Qur’ān, 45:37). He has proven that He has in Him all the Attributes of Greatness, saying, “To Allāh belongs the might, and to His Prophet ﷺ, and to the believers” (Qur’ān, 63:8), and also, “Glory to your Lord, the Lord of Honor, above what they describe” (Qur’ān, 37:180). While discussing Iblis, He quotes him saying, “... by Your Might (do I swear that) I will surely make them live an evil life, all of them” (Qur’ān, 38:82).

The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ used to say, “I seek refuge with Your Honor, for You are the One Who is the One and Only God Who never dies, while the jinns and men die.”

10. *Al-Jabbār* الجبار

Allāh has said, “He is Allāh besides Whom there is no other god, the Sovereign, the Holy, the Source of peace (and perfection), the Guardian of Faith, the Preserver of safety, the One Exalted in Might, the Irresistible, the Supreme; Glory to Allāh! (High is He) above the partners they attribute to (Him)” (Qur’ān, 59:23).

Linguistically, *al-Jabbār* is derived from *jabr*, the opposite of breaking. It suggests the forceful mending of something broken, fractured, shattered, crushed..., etc. It is also said that the adjective *jabbār* means great, huge, inaccessible. Linguists say that *al-Jabbār* is the Most Great. It is a superlative adjective derived from *jabr*; He is the One Who not only mends what is broken but also enriches the one who is incapacitated by poverty and want. In short, He is the One Who repairs everything broken or impaired.

Abdullāh ibn `Abbās says that *al-Jabbār* is the Great King, while Ibn al-Anbari says that *al-Jabbār* is the One Who [the greatness of Whom] is beyond anyone's reach. Others have said that *al-Jabbār* means the One Who cannot be harmed by any mighty oppressor, and nobody can dispute with Him about anything. It is said that *al-Jabbār* conveys the same meaning conveyed by the Attribute *al-Mutakabbir*, the Proud or the Supreme One. Pride and Supremacy are commendable Attributes only when applied to Allāh. If applied to anyone else, on the other hand, they become abominable qualities. It is also said that the meaning of *al-Jabbār* connotes: the One Who forces His will on others. Nothing can happen in His domain except whatever He pleases, whether His beings like it or not. Or it may mean the One Who repairs, improves, or reforms, as is the analogy with one who mends, say, a broken limb.

One of its derivatives is *jabaroot*, supremacy or greatness. According to one tradition, the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ has supplicated thus, "Glory to the One Who has all the *jabaroot* and all the domain." In one of his statements, Imām Ali ibn Abū Tālib عليه السلام has said, "He is the One Whose will has manifested itself on the nature of hearts, that is, He firmed the hearts according to the way He created them and according to their level of knowing Him; those who know Him are the happy ones, while those who do not are the wretches."

Al-Jabbār connotes forcefulness and forcibleness. We can find out that all parts of the body have been driven to perform their functions without any will of their own. Cast a look at the sun as it moves in its orbit without deviating from it as little as an inch, whether it likes

it or not. Man has no control over the time when Allāh chooses his life to begin, or how he is born, or when he dies, or the family in which he is to be born. All these are predestined for him, and he has no control over them. So is the case with all other beings on the face of earth. They all have been created with the ability to adapt to life on earth, and nobody has any choice in this matter: “It is He Who has spread out the earth for (His) creatures; therein are fruits and date-palms having sheathed clusters” (Qur’ān, 55:10-11). All of these things are created without the choice of any human being.

11. *Al-Mutakabbir* المتكبر

Allāh has said, “He is Allāh besides Whom there is no other god, the Sovereign, the Holy, the Source of peace (and perfection), the Guardian of the Faith, the Preserver of safety, the One Exalted in Might, Irresistible, Supreme; Glory to Allāh! (High is He) above the partners they attribute to (Him)” (Qur’ān, 59:23).

Understanding *al-Mutakabbir* requires a good deal of reasoning and insight. Its root word *kibriyā’* means greatness and sovereignty, and it incorporates the meanings of the perfection of one's self and existence; nobody can be described as such except Allāh. Greatness, as far as Allāh Almighty is concerned, is the loftiness of status: “By His command does He send the spirit (of inspiration) to any of His servants He pleases so that it may warn (men) of the Day of mutual meeting” (Qur’ān, 40:15). *Al-Mutakabbir* is the One Who possesses all greatness, Who is above having any of the qualities of His creatures, Who is above being harmed by the oppressors among His creation, Whose greatness and pride are the super-most. He is too great to be deficient in anything or in need for anyone or anything, the One Who is above having any of the characteristics and attributes of His creatures, the One Who Alone has all greatness and pride. None besides Him is justified when imagining himself as great, or as mighty, or as the sovereign. He is the One Who is too Holy to be afflicted by any calamity; so, no greatness is justified for anyone besides Him; He is the One Who has all might and kingdom. This Attribute means: the One Who has combined in Him, and Who rightly deserves so, all the attributes of greatness, perfection, pride and glory, all at the same time.

He is too Great to submit to others; rather, submission is due to Him, and only to Him. The Holy Qur'ān bestows the Attribute of greatness on the Almighty in Sūrat al-Jāthiya: "To Him be Glory throughout the heavens and the earth, and He is Exalted in Power, full of Wisdom" (Qur'ān, 45:37). Pride due to the sense of being great is of two kinds:

One is when actions of such a person are indeed great and better than those of anyone else's; He is "... the Source of peace (and perfection), the Guardian of Faith, the Preserver of security, the One Exalted in Might, the Irresistible, the Supreme" (Qur'ān, 59:23).

The other is that one conceives himself artificially to be as such, and this applies to most people:

Thus does Allāh set a seal over the heart of everyone who is proud, haughty. (40:35)

Surely evil is the dwelling place of those who are proud. (16:29)

Isn't there in hell an abode for those who are proud? (39:60)

Quoting the Lord of Greatness, the Almighty God, the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ has said, "Pride is My cloak; Greatness is My garment; whoever disputes with Me regarding either, I shall surely hurl him into the fire." Here the Almighty informs and admonishes us that greatness, might and pride are all His prerogatives, that none among His servants is worthy of claiming any of them for himself.

In one of his supplications, the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ says, "I seek refuge with You, Lord, against the evil of pride." He is also quoted as saying that pride is an indication of ingratitude towards the Truth, the Almighty. He has said, "Pride is ingratitude towards the Truth." Imām Ali عليه السلام has said, "The son of Ādam is truly amazing! A wound can end his life, a bug can cause him pain, his sweat can make him stink, so how can he ever feel proud of himself?!"

The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ has warned us against pride and being proud of ourselves, saying, “Nobody will enter Paradise if he has even the weight of a mustard seed of pride, and nobody will enter the fire if there is a likewise weight of conviction in his heart.” As the lucky¹ ones enter Paradise, their hearts will be purged of any pride and jealousy: “And we will root out whatever rancor there is in their hearts” (Qur’ān, 15:47).

The Attribute *al-Mutakabbir* is mentioned only once in the text of the Holy Qur’ān in 59:23, and Allāh knows best.

12. *Al-Khāliq* الخالق

Allāh has said, “He is Allāh the Creator...” (Qur’ān, 59:24).

Al-Khāliq is derived from *khalq*, creating. Allāh, *al-Khāliq*, the Creator, is the One Who brings things into existence after their non-existence, Who invents and innovates without a prior model. Some scholars say that *al-Khāliq* is the One Who creates things out of naught then bestows on them their characteristics of movement and other qualities. Others say that He is the One Who invents whatever the eyes can see, Who perfects their creation. Still others say that He is the One Who determined the measure of all things when they were enshrouded by void, perfecting them by His bounties and goodness, bringing them into existence according to His will, desire and wisdom. Anyone who thinks that there is anyone else besides Him who creates is indeed one who commits *kufṛ*, apostasy, blasphemy, disbelief. Allāh Almighty has said the following:

... [He is] the Creator of everything; therefore, worship Him.
(6:102)

... Is there any creator besides Allāh...? (35:3)

¹The word “lucky” is used here only because the Holy Qur’ān states in 41:35 that the residents of Paradise will surely be the very lucky ones. The Almighty's use of this word is quite different from that of humans. It is humans' use of this word that we reject.

Yea, indeed! For He is the Supreme Creator, of (infinite) skill and knowledge. (36:81)

... So, blessed is Allāh, the best of creators. (23:14)

Is it not His to create and to govern? Blessed is Allāh, the Cherisher and Sustainer of the worlds. (7:54)

Ibn (son of) `Abbās (son of Abdul-Muttalib, one of the Prophet's eleven uncles) is reported as saying that whenever the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ looked in the mirror, he would say, "Praise to Allāh Who has made both my creation and my manners good, Who beautified in me what He has not done in others." According to a narration by our master Imām Ali ibn Abū Tālib عليه السلام, the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ used to say the following whenever he looked in the mirror: "Praise to Allāh! Lord! Just as You have made my form good, I implore You to make my manners, too, good."¹

13. *Al-Bāri* الباري

Allāh has said, "He is Allāh the Creator, the Evolver, the One Who bestows forms (or colors) on what He creates. To Him belong the Attributes" (Qur'ān, 59:24).

There are viewpoints regarding the explanation of *al-Bāri*: One says it refers to the One Who brings about something out of nothing, the One Who creates something which was never there before. It is said that Allāh is *al-Bāri* of creation, the One Who brought about all things into existence out of non-existence.

The other meaning conveys the cutting off or severing of something. The root verb of this word means cutting and shaping something such as a twig or a pencil. One may say that illness has parted from him, or that he is free of a claim put forth by someone else. It can also be applied metaphorically such as one person severing his partnership with another, or a woman separating from her husband. Allāh has *bara'a*, created or initiated, the creation without a model;

¹Muslim, *Ṣaḥīḥ*. It also is stated on page 260 of his "Book of Adhkār".

bariyya means those whom He has created. Another meaning is curing or healing. A wise statement indicates that one who is cured should express gratitude to the One Who cured him.

Ja'far ibn Sulaymān¹ is quoted as having said that he passed once by a blind old woman grieving over herself and wailing, so he asked her, "What does it take to sustain you?" She answered him saying, "Stop sticking your nose where it does not belong; I have reached this stage of life without needing you or others." Then she added, "Have you not heard the statement made by the Friend of Allāh who said, '[Allāh] Who created me then showed me the way, and He provides me with food to eat and with water to drink, and when I am sick, He restores my health to me'" (26:78-80)?

One who knows the real meaning of *al-Bāri'*, therefore, is one whose heart is not affected by events, nor can momentous events overtake him by surprise. It is also said that anyone who comes to know Who *al-Bāri'* really is will dissociate himself from claiming to have anything to do with his own form or shape, fearing his Creator's Might, knowing that he is not doing Him a favor by worshipping and obeying Him. It is also said that He is the One Who has dissociated Himself from everyone else, the One Who is never surprised by whatever events take place. It is also said that anyone who recognizes Him as *al-Bāri'* will dissociate himself from committing anything prohibitive, seeking refuge with the King, the Most Forgiving One.

14. *Al-Muṣawwir* المصور

Allāh has said, "He is Allāh the Creator, the Evolver, the One Who

¹ Ja'far ibn Sulaymān (4 – 178 A.H./625 – 794 A.D.) was an ascetic scholar and narrator of *ḥadīth*. He narrated *ḥadīth* quoting Abū Imrān al-Jawni, Thābit al-Banāni, Yazīd al-Rashk, Mālik ibn Dinār, al-Ja'd "Abū Othmān" and many others. He is quoted by Sayyar ibn Hātim, Abdur-Razzāq, Musaddad ibn Musarhid, Bishr ibn Hilāl, Ishāq ibn Abū Isrā'eel, Muhammed ibn Sulaymān Laween and others. He is quoted by al-Tirmidhi, describing his hadith as "good", and by al-Nisā'i. Muslim, too, regards him as an authority on *ḥadīth*.

bestows forms (or colors). To Him belong the best Attributes” (Qur’ān, 59:24).

Al-Muṣawwir is the One Who fashions, Who gives something its distinctive form and shape. The general human form is distinguished from that of non-humans. Allāh says, “... and He formed you and made your forms good” (Qur’ān, 40:64), “Into whatever form He pleased He shaped you” (Qur’ān, 82:8), and “He it is Who shapes you in the wombs as He pleases” (Qur’ān, 3:6).

Al-Muṣawwir means: the One Who invents the forms and shapes of whatever He creates, Who beautifies them according to His wisdom, giving everything its own distinctive shape and form. He creates humans in different forms and shapes, making some of them different from others in physique, size, complexion, etc. This may be the meaning of the verse saying, “And among His signs is the creation of the heavens and the earth and the diversity of your tongues and colors; most surely there are signs in this for those who have knowledge” (Qur’ān, 30:22). “He it is Who shapes you in the wombs as He pleases; there is no god but He, the Mighty, the Wise” (Qur’ān, 3:6); “And certainly We created man of an extract of clay, then We made him a small seed in a firm resting-place, then We made the seed a clot, then We made the clot a lump of flesh, then We made in the lump of flesh bones, then We clothed the bones with flesh, then We caused it to grow into another creation; so, blessed is Allāh, the best of creators” (Qur’ān, 23:12-14).

Whenever the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ prostrated, he used to say, “Lord! To You have I prostrated, in You have I believed, and to You have I submitted! My countenance has prostrated to the One Who created it and shaped it, Who created hearing and vision for it; so, blessed is Allāh, the best of creators!”

Among the supplications of the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ when he prostrated is this one: “My face has submitted to the One Who created and formed it and Who made its form good.” The Holy Qur’ān has informed us a good deal about *al-Muṣawwir*, Allāh. In Sūrat al-A`rāf, for example, we read the following: “And certainly

We created you then fashioned you” (Qur’ān, 7:11). In Sūrat at-Taghābun, we read: “He has created the heavens and the earth in just proportions, and He has given you shape and made your shapes beautiful, and to Him is the final resort” (Qur’ān, 64:3). In Sūrat Ghāfir, we read: “Allāh is He Who made the earth a resting-place for you and the heavens a canopy, and He formed you then made your forms good, and He provided you with good things; that is Allāh, your Lord; blessed then is Allāh, the Lord of the worlds” (Qur’ān, 40:64). In Sūrat Āli-‘Imrān, we read: “He it is Who shapes you in the wombs as He pleases; there is no god but He, the Mighty, the Wise” (Qur’ān, 3:6). In Sūrat al-Infītar, we read: “O man! What has beguiled you from your Lord, the Gracious One Who created you then made you complete, then He made you symmetrical? Into whatever form He pleased He constituted you” (Qur’ān, 82:6-8). And in Sūrat al-Hashr we read: “He is Allāh the Creator, the Evolver, the Bestower of forms (or colors). To Him belong the Attributes; all those in the heavens and on earth declare His Praises and Glory, and He is Exalted in Might, Wise” (Qur’ān, 59:24).

Allāh Almighty has said, “And He created pairs, the male and the female, from the small seed when it is adapted, and on Him is its bringing forth a second time” (Qur’ān, 53:45-47).

15. *Al-Ghaffār* الغفار

Allāh has said, “Surely I am most Forgiving to whoever repents and believes and does good deeds” (Qur’ān, 20:82).

Al-Ghaffār is one of Allāh's Attributes derived from *ghufr* and *ghufrān*, both nouns which convey the meaning of: veiling, hiding, concealing. Allāh's *maghifra*, forgiveness, is His veiling of one's sins, and His forgiveness by granting him His favor and mercy. *Al-Ghaffār* is the One Who has manifested what is beautiful and veiled what is ugly in the life of this world and Who does not inflict His penalty on him in the life hereafter. He is the One Who forgives sins, veils shortcomings, wipes out sins by accepting one's repentance. He accepts His servants' repentance and is pleased thereby, and the One Who forgives sins and turns them into good deeds by His great favor. He is the One Who forgives the sins though they may be

great, and He veils them though they may be numerous.

The words derived from forgiveness have mostly been associated with Allāh. One of them is *al-Ghāfir* as in this verse: “The One Who forgives the sins” (Qur’ān, 40:3). The second is *al-Ghafūr*; He has said, “... then [if he] asks forgiveness of Allāh, he shall find Allāh Forgiving, Merciful” (Qur’ān, 4:110). A third is *al-Ghaffār* as in: “And surely I am most Forgiving of one who repents and believes and does good deeds” (Qur’ān, 20:82), “... seek forgiveness of your Lord; surely He is the most Forgiving” (Qur’ān, 71:10), and “... surely He is the Mighty, the great Forgiver” (Qur’ān, 39:5). It is proven, by making a reference to the Holy Qur’ān, that all these Attributes, which are derived from forgiveness, are applied only to Allāh, the Most Exalted One.

Having killed a Copt, Moses implored his Lord thus: “Lord! Surely I have harmed my own self; so, forgive me” (Qur’ān, 28:16). He first admitted his sin then sought His forgiveness. Allāh also revealed the fault of David عليه السلام then said, “So We forgave him this (lapse)” (Qur’ān, 38:25). He addressed Muhammed ﷺ saying, “So that Allāh may forgive your past and future faults” (Qur’ān, 48:2). Has He not in these examples exposed a sin then forgiven it? In one of his supplications, Prophet Muhammed ﷺ says, “Lord! I implore You to forgive me an apparent forgiveness and a concealed one, and to forgive open and secret sins.”

The meanings of *maghifra*, the root word of *al-Ghaffār*, *al-Ghāfir*, and *al-Ghafūr* are clear in the verse saying: “The One Who forgives the sins and accepts the repentance, the One Who is severe in punishment, the Lord of bounty; there is no god but He; to Him is the eventual return” (Qur’ān, 40:3).

Al-Ghaffār is the One Who very often veils [His servants’ sins and faults], so much so that He does not publicize one's sins in the life of this world nor in the life hereafter. One of the companions of the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ was asked once, “What did you hear the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ say with regard to one's silent supplication?” He answered by saying that he had heard the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ

say, “Allāh, the most Honored, the Most Great, will touch His servant who believes in Him with His mercy by veiling his sin from the public in the life of this world, and in the life hereafter He will ask him about each and every sin and fault which he had committed. Once he admits all of them and realizes that he is going to perish on their account, the Almighty will say, ‘I have veiled your sins in the past short life, and in this one I am going to forgive them.’ Then he will be handed the book of his good deeds. All this happens to those who believe in Him; as regarding those who do not, and the hypocrites, He will deal with them quite differently.”

16. *Al-Qahhār* القهار

Allāh has said, “Say: Allāh is the Creator of all things, and He is the One, the Supreme” (Qur’ān, 13:16).

Linguistically, *al-Qahhār* is derived from *qahr*, conquest, subduing, vanquishing, winning a victory. It means the overtaking of something or someone with the intention to humiliate him. One who takes another by way of *qahr* is one who takes him against his will. *Al-Qahhār* is a superlative of *al-Qāhir*, the Victor or Subduer. Allāh, indeed, is the One Who, by His Might, has subdued everything He created to His Authority and Power, using His creatures as He pleases, whether they like it or not. *Al-Qāhir* is the One Who has the upper hand over all creation; “... and Allāh is the Master of His affair” (Qur’ān, 12:21).

Al-Qahhār is the One Whose vengeance nobody can withstand. He humiliates oppressors, splits the spine of kings and emperors. He is the One besides Whose Might all creation is powerless, without Whose Power all beings are helpless. If we submit to Him, He will meet our needs, but if we do not, He will make us suffer as we try to achieve our objectives. He is the One Who splits the spine of the tyrants and oppressors from among His foes, subduing them by taking their lives away, and by humiliating them, while there is nothing in existence that can escape His Might and Power: everyone and everything is helpless in His grip.

Al-Qahhār effects His will with regard to His creatures, whether

they like it or not, whether they are willing or unwilling. He has subdued the souls of the worshippers by instilling in their hearts the fear of His retribution, and the hearts of those who are endowed with knowledge with the Might of nearness to Him, and the souls of those who love Him by unveiling the truth about Him to them. He has subdued all beings by death, so none is safe from Him, not even an angel who enjoys a special status with Him, nor a prophet, nor a messenger. Allāh will make even the angel of death, Israel, taste of death; so, when his soul is taken out, the angel of death will say, “By Your Honor do I swear that had I known the taste of death to be like this, I would never have taken away anyone's soul at all!” It is to such a meaning that the word *qahr*, on the taking of the souls of all beings, conveys as implied in the verse saying, “To whom does the kingdom belong this day? To Allāh, the One Who subdues all” (Qur’ān, 40:16).

If one who believes in Allāh desires to personify within him the meanings embedded in this Attribute, he has to subdue his own self, his *nafs*, and control his evil desires, by not plotting in cooperation with Satan, and by returning to Allāh, submitting to His will in all matters. The path whereby man derives light from the Attribute *al-Qahhār* is that one should view his *nafs*, which is ever present within him, as the worst of his enemies, so he subdues it and strangles it, doing exactly the opposite of what it tells him to do, so much so that it will have no choice except to submit to divine commandments. Then he will have to subdue his stubborn opponent, i.e. Satan, staying on his guard against his evil suggestions, blocking his avenues. Then he will have to subdue his carnal desires and insinuations by not following what they inspire him to do.

17. *Al-Wahhāb* الوهاب

Allāh, the Most Exalted, the Most High, teaches His servants how to supplicate to Him thus: “Lord! Do not let our hearts deviate after having guided us, but grant us mercy from Your own Presence, for You are the Grantor of bounties without measure” (Qur’ān, 3:8).

Al-Wahhāb is derived from the proper noun *hiba* the verb of which, *yahib* means: to make someone else the owner of what the giver, the

first party (the doer), rightfully owns without asking the second party for any compensation in return. It is the gift which is free from any recompense or gain for the giver. If someone gives out such gifts quite often, he will earn the titles of *jawād* and *wahhāb*, the generous one, the oft-giving, respectively. Allāh Almighty is described as *the* Most Generous, *the* Most Giving, i.e. *al-Wahhāb*, simply because He gives everyone according to his means. Among Allāh's Attributes are *al-Wahhāb* and *al-Wāhib*. The latter Attribute means: the giver, whereas the first is a superlative of the latter. One who is *wāhib* is one who grants many gifts.

Al-Wahhāb is the One Who gives away without a compensation; He bestows His favors on His servants without a selfish end; He grants even without being asked; He is the One Who initiates giving, and He is the oft-Giver. Allāh is surely *al-Wahhāb* because He is *the* Most Munificent, *the* Most Giving, *the* One Who ever tries to get closer to His servants, Who graciously bestows His favors on them, Who gives them even before they ask Him, the ever-Giver Who gives everyone what he needs. *Al-Wahhāb* bestows His blessings on His servants, and this indicates His inclusion of everyone as He continuously gives. He does not give painstakingly, nor does He seek a benefit, or an advantage, for Himself by doing so. *Al-Wahhāb* showers you with His blessings without having to have a reason or a means to do so. *Al-Wahhāb* gives away without being compensated for what He gives, and He causes all beings to die without a particular purpose He seeks to achieve for Himself. According to Sūrat al-Shūra, “He bestows (children), male or female, according to His Will (and Plan)” (Qur’ān, 42:49).

Whenever the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ used to wake up during the night, he would supplicate thus: “Lord! There is no god but You! Glory to You! Lord! I seek Your forgiveness for my sins, and I plead to You, by Your mercy, O Lord, to increase my share of knowledge, not to permit my heart to deviate after having guided it, and to grant me, from You, a mercy, for surely You are *al-Wahhāb*...”¹

¹Abū Dāwūd, *Al-Athkar*, p. 81.

18. Ar-Razzāq الرزاق

“*Ar-Razzāq*” is derived from *rizq*, sustenance, or anything of any benefit to man, animals, plants, etc., whereby the latter are sustained or are helped in their growth. Rain is also called *rizq*; it helps sustain every living being on our planet. In 51:58, we read: “Surely Allāh is the One Who bestows sustenance, the Lord of Power, the Strong One.” Another verse referring to our sustenance is this: “And in the heavens is your sustenance and what you are threatened with” (Qur’ān, 51:22). “In the heavens is your sustenance may be a reference to the rain that descends from the heavens, the sky”¹. As to the phrase “and what you are threatened with”, this may be a clue that the end of life on Planet Earth will be terminated by a collision of an asteroid or a large size cosmic debris with the earth, but this is not the place to discuss such interpretations or speculations. If Allāh so wills, the author of this book intends, if Allāh so wills, to write a complete *tafsīr*, an exegesis, of the Holy Qur’ān that will contain such interpretations and speculations the like of which has never been written in English before. If the reader wishes to see such a book published, he is requested to pray the Almighty to make it happen. Prayers go a long way, had people only known. Allāh listens to each and every supplication no matter who the supplicant is so long as the latter is a true believer in Him.

The word *rizq* may be used for means of income, livelihood, sustenance, money, wealth..., or for the earning of something good, be it during the life of this world or in the life to come, or it may be applied to one's lot or fortune, or even to anything eaten. *Ar-Razzāq* is a superlative of *al-Rāziq*, the One Who provides *rizq*. *Ar-Razzāq* is applied to none other than Allāh. There are two types of *rizq*: one

¹Notice that the word “heavens” is used throughout this book as singular due to its reference to one: the sky. If it is at all used in the plural, it will then be referring to the seven layers or spheres of the sky. As for the word “heaven”, it is often used by non-Muslims to refer to Paradise. Non-Muslims' concept of Paradise is certainly different from that of Muslims, and so is the case with their concept of God.

sustains the body, such as food and drink, while the other sustains the soul, which is knowledge and true inspiration. The latter is the best type of sustenance simply because what sustains the soul lasts forever, while what sustains the body has a temporary duration.

Ar-Razzāq is the One Who creates all types of sustenance, Who extends His favor to cover making such sustenance attainable to His creatures, Who provides means for getting them to attain their sustenance. He sustains all His creation by whatever means needed to keep them alive. He sustains the minds with knowledge, the hearts with understanding, the souls with manifestations, the bodies with food, and so on. Only He can do so. Anyone who realizes this fact will recognize the fact that his own sustenance, and that of everyone and everything else, is controlled by none other than Allāh.

References to *rizq* have been made in several Qur'ānic verses such as these:

... Allāh provides means of subsistence to whomsoever He pleases without a measure. (2:212)

Allāh is Benignant to His servants; He gives sustenance to whomsoever He pleases, and He is the Strong, the Mighty One. (42:19)

... and whoever fears Allāh, He will make an outlet for him and give him sustenance from whence he does not expect. (65:2-3)

... these are the believers truly; they shall have forgiveness and an honorable provision. (8:74)

... and the sustenance (provided) by your Lord is better and more abiding. (20:131)

Most surely this is Our sustenance: it shall never deplete. (38:54)

Say: The (blessing) from the presence of Allāh is better than any amusement or bargain. (62:11)

... surely the things you worship besides Allāh cannot sustain you.
(29:17)

There is no creature moving on earth except that its sustenance depends on Allāh. (11:6)

One of the Islamic manners inspired by the Attribute *ar-Razzāq* is that a servant of Allāh becomes convinced that there is no partner with his Lord in providing sustenance, just as He has no partner in creating everything. He, therefore, pleads to Him for anything small or big. He also feels satisfied with what *ar-Razzāq* has allotted for him, just as He has said, “And they are the ones who, when spending, are neither extravagant nor parsimonious but keep the just means between these [extremes]” (Qur’ān, 25:67), and also, “Those who, when spending, are neither extravagant nor niggardly but hold a just (balance) between these (extremes)” (Qur’ān, 17:29).

The abundance of Allāh's sustenance is without a limit. He is the One Who says the following in Sūrat Hud: “There is no creature moving on earth except that its sustenance depends on Allāh: He knows the time and place of its definite abode and its temporary deposit: all is in a clear record” (Qur’ān, 11:6).

19. *Al-Fattāḥ* الفتح

The Almighty has said, “Say: Our Lord will gather us together and will in the end decide the matter between us (and you) in truth and justice, and He is the One to decide, the One Who knows everything” (Qur’ān, 34:26).

In Arabic, *fataḥa*, the verb, means “opened”, and *muftāḥ* means key, whereas *fath* means victory or conquest. *Fath* also means flowing water, a creak, or a river. It also means: to arbitrate between two opponents. *Istiftāḥ* means: seeking help or achieving victory. Both *al-Fātiḥ* and *al-Fattāḥ* are among the Attributes of Allāh. They exist within the text of the Holy Qur’ān. *Al-Fattāḥ* is a superlative of *al-fath*. To say that Allāh is *al-Fattāḥ* is to say that He is the One Who judges between those whom He creates, His servants, the obedient ones and the rebellious. It is derived from *fath* which means, in such usage, arbitration or decision-making. It exists in this meaning in the

verse saying, “Lord! Decide between us and our people with truth, and You are the best of those who decide” (Qur’ān, 7:89). It also means: the One Who grants victory as in this verse of Sūrat al-Anfal: “If you pray for victory, then indeed victory has come to you” (Qur’ān, 8:19).

Al-Fattāḥ is the One Who opens deadlocked matters and issues, Who reveals the truth, Who simplifies whatever seems to be complicated, Who controls the affairs of the heavens and the earth: “And with Him are the keys of the unseen treasures: none knows them but He, and He knows what is in the land and in the sea” (Qur’ān, 6:59). So He is the One Who opens what is closed and Who has the keys to everything, Who widely opens the gates of sustenance and brings down rain whereby He brings life back to dead lands, Who grants victory and support for His prophets whom He sends to various lands so that the light of the truth may shine therein, and so that He may purge their souls from evil intentions. He opens the closed hearts and fills them with His light, so they become tranquil, and they enjoy the feeling of success.

The Attribute *al-Fattāḥ* inspires good manners which ought to be followed by anyone who correctly grasps the meanings it implies, who deeply contemplates on it, who sincerely desires to be blessed by it. Among such manners is that one should maintain an attitude of beautiful anticipation of the Grace of Allāh, continuously expecting to receive His favors, always looking forward to earning His blessings. He abandons haste, feels satisfied with his lot and with whatever his Lord has decreed for him. Contentment is a treasure that never depletes, says an Arabic axiom. How true!

20. Al-`Aleem العليم

Allāh has said, “... and trust in Allāh; surely He is the Hearing, the Knowing” (Qur’ān, 8:61).

Al-`Aleem is derived from *`ilm*, knowledge, which results from comprehending the truth about something and from the sure conviction which agrees with reality. *Al-`Aleem*, when applied to the Almighty, is the One Who is most Knowing; surely His knowledge

encompasses everything in existence even before anything begins to exist. Nothing at all can escape His knowledge. He is the One Whose knowledge is inclusive, be it apparent or hidden, minute or magnanimous. He knows its beginning and its end, what is above or underneath it, and what results therefrom.

Al-'Aleem is also the One Who knows what has happened and what will. The knowledge of the unknown is with Him, and so is the knowledge of the Hour; He knows what the wombs bear, when the rain falls, what every soul earns, what evil intentions one harbors, what worldly desires he/she conceals, when and where anyone will die. *Al-'Aleem* is the One Who knows the details of all things, the particulars of things, what one's conscience and soul hide. Nothing at all, not even the weight of an atom on earth or in the heavens, can ever escape His knowledge. From the word *'ilm* have many other words been derived. *Al-'Ālim* is one. It occurs in Sūrat al-Mā'ida in this verse: "... surely You are the great One Who knows the unseen" (Qur'ān, 5:109). Another is *al-A'lam* which occurs in Sūrat al-An'ām: "Allāh best knows where He places His message" (Qur'ān, 6:124). *Al-'Aleem* is a superlative of *al-Ālim*.

The Holy Qur'ān contains the following verses which demonstrate the various meanings and types of knowledge:

He knows that there is weakness in you. (8:66)

He knows that there will be sick ones among you. (73:20)

And surely We know that your breast straitens at what they say.
(15:97)

Allāh knows what every female bears. (13:8)

Al-'Aleem, one of the ninety-nine Attributes of Allāh, occurs in many Qur'ānic verses such as:

... that is the ordinance of the Mighty, the Knowing. (36:38)

The revelation of the Book is from Allāh, the Mighty, the

Knowing. (40:2)

... surely He knows what is in the breasts. (11:5)

... We have no knowledge except what You have taught us; surely You are the Knowing, the Wise. (2:32)

And the sun runs [its course] to a term appointed for it; that is the ordinance of the Mighty, the Knowing. (36:38)

This word is coined as a superlative derived from a verb meaning: “to know or to be familiar with”.

The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ is quoted as saying that one who supplicates in the morning by thrice repeating, “In the Name of Allāh with Whose Name nothing at all, be it on earth or in the heavens, can ever harm, and He is the Hearing, the Knowing, will not be afflicted by any sudden calamity till evening time, and if he says so in the evening, he will not be afflicted by any sudden calamity till daybreak.”

21. *Al-Qābiḍ* القابض

Allāh has said the following in the Holy Qur’ān: “... and Allāh straitens and amplifies...” (Qur’ān, 2:245).

Linguistically, *qabḍ*, root verb of *al-Qābiḍ*, means: to take, hold, seize, grip, catch, handle, and the like. It is the holding of something with the hand such as a sword's handle, etc. It is meant as a way to forcefully take control of something or someone. Allāh Almighty has said the following in this sense: “... and Allāh straitens and amplifies...” (Qur’ān, 2:245), meaning He straitens, withholds, His sustenance of some while amplifying it for others.

Al-Qābiḍ means: “the One Who takes hold of the souls by subduing them, the spirits by effecting justice in their regard, the means of sustenance by His wisdom, and the hearts by making them fear His Glory.” *Al-Qābiḍ* is the One Who causes the souls to be taken away from their bodies, their temporary homes, at the time of death. The angel who takes the souls away (i.e. the *Qābiḍ*) is called in Islam

Israel. *Al-Qābiḍ* is the One Who takes hold of the hearts, Who controls them, Who isolates them through their lack of knowledge, through their own oversights. He takes hold of some hearts, so He unveils to them His Greatness and Glory. He pleases other hearts through the means whereby He gets closer to them out of His own Kindness, Munificence, and Beauty. *Al-Qābiḍ* is the One Who unveils His Glory to you, so He protects you; He is the One Who makes you dread being distanced from Him.

Al-Qābiḍ is the One Who controls the entire cosmos; in the following verse, He makes a reference to His control over the earth: "... and the whole earth shall be in His grip on the Day of Resurrection and the heavens rolled up in His right hand" (Qur'ān, 39:67). The Almighty has neither a right nor a left hand; He has no hands at all; this is only a figure of speech denoting His total control over the heavens and the earth and everything in them. The expansion of the earth is done by Him during the life of this world; says He, "Have We not made the earth an even expanse?" (Qur'ān, 78:6) meaning spread like a carpet. On the Day of Judgment, the earth shall also be there, but it will look quite different from its present appearance...; everything about how it will look and what will happen above and underneath it is detailed in books of *ḥadīth*, in traditions..., but let us not digress here by borrowing from another book of mine soon, *Inshā-Allāh*, to be written!

Al-Qābiḍ receives the knowledge of and appreciates acts of charity; to be charitable is to be a true servant of His, a blessed one. He says, "... Allāh accepts repentance from His servants and takes the alms" (Qur'ān, 9:104). He straitens the hearts, that is, places heavy burdens on them, burdens of woes and worries, of fears or of aspiration, and He also eases them.

22. *Al-Bāsiṭ* الباسط

Linguistically, *al-Bāsiṭ* means: one who stretches his hand, be it as a gesture of good will (in order to shake hands with someone else), or otherwise (to harm someone else, be it by inflicting a physical harm on it, or by causing damage to his property or his own self). It may be applied literally or metaphorically. The Almighty, for example,

has quoted Cain son of Ādam saying the following to his brother Able: “If you stretch forth your hand towards me to slay me..., etc.” (Qur’ān, 5:28). It also means: to please. According to one tradition, the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ has said, “Fāṭima is part of me; whatever pleases her pleases me, and whatever displeases her displeases me, too.” Literally, it means: to relax the facial muscles in order to express pleasure and happiness, elation or excitement; all other meanings branch out of that. *Inbisāt*, its noun, means, among other things, abandoning modesty. *Al-baseeṭa* is the outstretched tract of land, and *baṣṭ* is: expansion or propagation.

Al-Bāsiṭ is the One Who pleases the souls by making them happy and delighted. He is the One Who plants the seeds of life in the bodies to signal the beginning of life therein. He, at the advent of resurrection, brings life back to them in order to show people, in the life hereafter, what they used to do during their temporary life in this world.

The Attribute *al-Bāsiṭ* does not exist in the text of the Holy Qur’ān, yet its derivatives certainly do; these are examples where such derivatives exist:

Nay! His hands are spread out; He expends as He pleases. (5:64)

Allāh has made for you the earth a wide expanse. (71:19)

Allāh is the One Who sends forth the winds, so they raise a cloud, then He spreads it forth in the sky as He pleases, and He breaks it up, so you see rain coming forth from it; when He causes it to pour on whomsoever He pleases of His servants, lo, they rejoice! (30:48)

The Holy Qur’ān speaks of decorating the bodies with strength: “... and increased you in excellence in respect of physique” (Qur’ān, 7:69). And it speaks of pleasing through both knowledge and excellence of physique when it says, “... and He has increased him abundantly in knowledge and in physique” (Qur’ān, 2:247).

We have to point out here that we ought to mention both divine

Attributes of *al-Qābiḍ* and *al-Bāsiṭ* together in order to convey the meanings of might and wisdom. The Almighty is *al-Qābiḍ* just as He is *al-Bāsiṭ*.

23. *Al-Khāfiḍ* الخافض

Some scholars say that both Attributes *al-Khāfiḍ* and *al-Rāfiʿ* ought to be used simultaneously. If applied to our Islamic creed, both Attributes connote misguidance and guidance respectively. If applied to knowledge or obedience to Allāh, they imply the highest and the lowest of ranks respectively; it is in this sense that they occur in this verse: “Abasing (one party), exalting (the other)” (Qur’ān, 56:3), meaning abasing the unbelievers who occupy the lowest ranks of hell while exalting the believers to the highest ranks of Paradise.

Allāh has said, “And be kind to him who follows you from among the believers” (Qur’ān, 26:215). *Khafḍ* is the opposite of *rafʿ*: the first implies vanquishing, lowering the status of, abasing, insulting, humiliating. The Hour is sometimes described as such in 56:3: “Abasing (one party), exalting (the other)” (Qur’ān, 56:3), meaning abasing some people because of their transgression, hurling them into the pit of hellfire. In Sūrat al-Hijr, we read more about the *khafḍ*: “... be kind to the believers” (Qur’ān, 15:88), and in Sūrat al-Isrā’ we read: “Be submissively gentle to them, compassionate” (Qur’ān, 17:24).

Al-Khāfiḍ is the One Who humiliates the oppressors and tyrants, lowering their ranks and insulting them. He abases at will. *Al-Khāfiḍ* is the One Who lowers, through humiliation, all those who think of themselves as being great, the arrogant and the conceited. He lowers entire nations. He lowers falsehood. *Al-Khāfiḍ* is the One Who lowers the rank of all those who disobey Him, Who humiliates those on whom His wrath descends, Who lowers the ranks of those who deserve to be treated as such. He humiliates the unbelievers by exposing them to misery, His foes by distancing them from Him, and by exposing them to perdition.

Al-Khāfiḍ is the One Who has lowered the status of those who do

not believe in Him, of those who are arrogant, of the liars, and of those who swerve away from His Path, the Path of Islam, His final Word of truth.

24. *Ar-Rāfi`* الرافع

The Holy Qur'ān states the following: "Allāh will exalt those of you who believe, and those who are granted knowledge, to high degrees" (Qur'ān, 58:11).

Ar-Rāfi` is one of the Attributes of Allāh whose root word is *raf`*, lifting, raising, exalting, elevating, and the like. It can be used for objects as in 2:63: "... and lifted the mountain over you," and in 13:2: "Allāh is the One Who raised the heavens without any pillars so that you may see [His might] and He is firm in power." It can also be used for raising the structure of a building as is the case in the verse saying, "And when Abraham and Ishmael raised the foundations of the House..." (Qur'ān, 2:127). It is also used for exalting or revering someone's status as in this verse: "... and exalted your esteem" (Qur'ān, 94:4). It is also used to exalt the status or degree of someone honored as in the verse saying, "... and We have exalted some of them above others in degrees" (Qur'ān, 43:32), and also, "... and exalted thrones..." (Qur'ān, 56:34), that is, thrones the status of which is exalted by nearness to Him.

Ar-Rāfi` is Allāh Who exalts the status of His friends, granting them victory over their foes and His, and that of the righteous, to the highest degrees. He exalts the truth; He exalts the believers by granting them happiness; He exalts His friends from among the believers by getting closer to them; He exalts the status of His friends by granting them the upper hand, and He exalts the status of those who befriend Him in truth and in equity. *Ar-Rāfi`* raised the heavens without pillars, raised the clouds over the winds, raised the birds in the air: "Have they not seen the birds above them expanding (their wings) and contracting (them)? Who withholds them save the Beneficent God? Surely He sees everything" (Qur'ān, 67:19).

Ar-Rāfi` has raised the status of His friends in the life of this world by making the believers humble themselves before them, and by

making people pay homage and respect to them even if they do not wield any power, even if they have no wealth at all: “Now surely the friends of Allāh shall have no fear, nor shall they grieve. Those who believed and guarded (themselves against evil) shall have glad tidings in the life of this world as well as in the life hereafter; there is no alteration to the words of Allāh; that is the mighty achievement” (10:62-65). *Ar-Rāfi`* exalts the reputation of those who are regarded as weaklings among their own people, supporting the wronged against those who wrong them.

In Sūrat al-Baqarah, the Almighty says, “We have made some prophets excel over others; among them are those to whom Allāh spoke, and some of them He exalted by (many degrees of) rank” (Qur’ān, 2:253). In Sūrat al-An`ām, He says, “And this was Our argument which We gave to Abraham against his people; We exalt in dignity whomsoever We please; surely your Lord is Wise, Knowing” (Qur’ān, 6:83). In the same chapter, the Almighty tells us that “He it is Who has made you successors in the land and raised some of you above others by (various) degrees so that He may try you by what He gives you; surely your Lord is quick to requite (evil), and He is most surely the Forgiving, the Merciful” (Qur’ān, 6:165). Other references occur in the following verses:

Allāh said: O Jesus! I am going to terminate the period of your stay (on earth) and cause you to ascend to Me, to purify you from those who disbelieve, and to make those who follow you above those who disbelieve till the Day of Resurrection; then to Me shall be your return, so I will decide among you concerning that in which you differed. (3:55)

And mention Idris (Enoch) in the Book; surely he was a truthful man, a prophet, and We raised him high in heaven. (19:56-57)

And the heavens He raised and established the balance. (55:7)

One who is granted a blessing through the inspiration of this Attribute of Allāh is one who rises above his abominable desires and inclinations; such a person will be exalted by Allāh to a status as high as that enjoyed by the angels with Him or even higher...

25. *Al-Mu`izz* المعز

Allāh has said,

Whoever desires honor, to Allāh belongs the honor all of it. To Him do the good words ascend, and the good deeds He raises; (as for) those who plan an evil plan, they shall have a severe chastisement, (as for) their plan, it shall surely perish. (35:10)

He has also said in Sūrat Āli-`Imrān:

Say: O Allāh, Master of the kingdom! You bestow the kingdom on whomsoever You please and take the kingdom away from whomsoever You please, and You exalt whomsoever You please and abase whomsoever You please; in Your hand is the good (all of it); surely You have power over all things. (3:26)

Allāh has said, “Those who take the unbelievers for guardians rather than the believers: do they seek honor from them? Surely all honor is Allāh's” (Qur’ān, 4:139).

Al-Mu`izz conveys the meaning of: the One Who honors whomsoever He pleases from among His servants. Linguistically, *ma`azza*, the noun derived from the verb *yu`izz*, means power, strength, might. Allāh is surely *al-`Azīz*, the Mighty One Who subdues and is never subdued, Who strengthens His friends by His favor, protecting them against sinning, forgiving their faults, permitting them to reside in Paradise, the abode of His Munificence. Then He honors them by permitting them to witness His manifestations and see His signs. He is the One Who empowers His prophets by protecting them against erring, granting them victory, protecting them, raising their status among their people. He honors one who obeys Him even if poverty is his lot, and He raises the status of a pious servant of His even if he were an Abyssinian slave. Allāh, God, The Truth, Praised and Glorified is His Name, is referred to as such in various verses of His Book, the Holy Qur’ān. Among such references are the following:

Do not let their speech grieve you; surely might is wholly Allāh's;

He is the Hearing, the Knowing. (10:65)

Glory to your Lord, the Lord of Honor, above what they describe.
(37:180)

To Allāh belongs the might, and to His Prophet, and the believers,
but the hypocrites do not know. (63:8)

Imām Ali ibn al-Hussain Zayn al-`Ābidīn عليه السلام is quoted as saying, "If one desires to be honored even though his tribe is not distinguished, or to be held in high esteem even though he has no authority, or to be a man whose wealth does not diminish, he should get out of the humiliation of disobedience and enter into the honor of obeying his Lord."

Essentially, the way how God honors His servants is by making them feel satisfied, contented, for humiliation lies in one being greedy. Had it not been for false hopes, no free man would have ever been enslaved by anything which, in all truth, is insignificant. The Almighty places one who persists in praising His Name in the center of honor, instilling love and respect for him in people's hearts. A servant of Allāh who aspires to earn a good share of personifying this Glorified Name has to honor the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ and those who are knowledgeable among his own contemporaries, showing respect and humility to them.

26. *Al-Mudhill* المذل

The Almighty has said, "Those who oppose Allāh and His Prophet ﷺ shall be (herded) among the most abased" (Qur'ān, 58:20). *Al-Mudhill* is one of the Attributes of Allāh derived from the noun *āl*, whatever results from subduing, vanquishing, overcoming, conquering, someone. The Almighty says, "... walk in the ways of your Lord submissively" (Qur'ān, 16:69), that is, freely. He has also said, "... its fruits shall be made accessible (to them), always easy to reach" (Qur'ān, 76:14). *Al-Mudhill* is the One Who abases or humiliates whomsoever He pleases, depriving them of all prestige. He is the One Who justly abases His foes when they disobey Him and rebel against His commandments. He insults them and dismisses them, causing them to be hurled into the abode of His chastisement,

the inferno of hell. *Al-Mudhill* is the One Who abases His foes by depriving them of knowing Him, enabling them to have their way and to go against His injunctions. He will then have them transported to the abode of His chastisement, insulting them by dismissing and cursing them.

Al-Mudhill is the One Who abases the unbelievers through the power of the truth, Who subdues whomsoever He pleases. Allāh has not honored any servant of His more than He has to one who abases his own evil-insinuating self, his *nafs*, and He has not abased any servant of His more than one who is preoccupied with trying to earn distinction, prominence, and prestige for himself. In Sūrat al-A`raf we read the following verse: “(As for) those who took the calf (for a god), surely wrath from their Lord and disgrace in the life of this world shall overtake them” (Qur’ān, 7:152). Anyone who looks niggardly at people to see how he can take advantage of them, who is never satisfied with what he has had, one who is dragged by his own schemes to elevate himself to prominence while keeping himself in the darkness of ignorance..., is one whom Allāh has surely disgraced and deprived. Such an individual is implied in verses such as this: “But you caused yourselves to fall into temptation, and you waited and doubted, and vain desires deceived you, till the threatened punishment of Allāh came while the arch-deceiver [Satan] deceived you about Allāh, so today ransom shall not be accepted from you” (Qur’ān, 57:14). This is the lowest degree of humiliation.

Dhull ذُلّ, humiliation, or bringing it about, that is, *idhlāl* اِذْلَال, humiliating, comes in many types, shapes and sizes. Allāh abases an oppressor by making him fall a prey to disease, or to his lust for women, or to his greed for wealth, or by making him in dire need of others. Let us supplicate thus: “Lord! Take us out of the humiliation of disobedience to the honor of obedience to You, and do not permit any of those whom You created to disgrace us, and crown us with the crown of Your honor. Honor is in needing nobody.” The absolutely perfect degree of such honor, to be sure, belongs to none other than Allāh Who has said, “Surely all honor is Allāh's” (Qur’ān, 4:139). Next in degree of being honored is one who is closest to the

Almighty: "... to Allāh belongs the honor, to His Prophet, and to the believers" (Qur'ān, 63:8).

27. *As-Samee`* السميع

Allāh has said, "And to Him belongs whatever dwells in the night and in the day, and He is the Hearing, the Knowing" (Qur'ān, 6:13).

Al-Samee` is the One—and Only One—Who listens to everything in existence without the use of a faculty for hearing or a hearing aid. Allāh hears each and every sound and voice even if it is hidden from us. His hearing encompasses everything: He hears the pleas of those who are in distress; He responds to the supplications of those in need; He helps those who are desperate for help; He hears the praising of those who praise Him, so He rewards them for it, and the supplication of those who plead to Him, so He responds to them. He hears the sound of the black ant walking on a solid rock in the darkest night; and He hears what the hearts contemplate and what scruples penetrate the conscience. His response to the supplication of one person does not distract Him from responding to another; He knows where the vision trespasses and what the breasts conceal; He hears every silent plea; He hears you and me. Nothing on earth or in the heavens can ever be hidden from Him.

As-Samee` is derived from *sam`*. It conveys the fact that Allāh, the Most High, realizes the truth about each and every sound even if it is, to our limited ability, quite silent. He, Glory to Him, realizes and distinguishes sounds as well as colors just as He realizes and distinguishes everything else.

Sam` may mean: acceptance of and a favorable response to. It exists, for example, in a tradition wherein the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ says, "Lord! I seek refuge with You against a statement which is not heard, meaning a supplication which does not receive His favorable response." It is also similar to one Muslims pronounce during their obligatory daily prayers: *Sami`a Allāhu liman ḥamidah*, that is, Allāh responds favorably to the pleas of those who praise Him.

The Almighty has said,

Surely I am with you both: I do hear and see. (20:46)

Or do they think that We do not hear what they conceal and their secret discourses? Aye! And Our messengers (angels) are with them writing (everything) down. (43:80)

Allāh has indeed heard the plea of the [woman] who pleads to you about her husband. (58:1)

And if they resolve to divorce, Allāh is surely Hearing, Knowing. (2:227)

One who comes to realize that Allāh knows everything will safeguard his tongue against uttering falsehood. He will always say what is right. One who realizes that Allāh hears even our thoughts will adopt the manners of one who watches over his conduct and who always holds himself accountable for what he contemplates, says, or does. A servant of Allāh ought to know that Allāh did not create the hearing faculty for him except so that he would listen to the speech of Allāh which He revealed unto His Prophet ﷺ in order to benefit from it and to be guided by it. If a servant of Allāh seeks to be close to his Lord by offering *nawāfil* (optional acts of adoration), he will be loved by Allāh Who will then pour over his hearing of His divine light, thus making his insight very sharp, so much so that such a person will be able to see beyond the world of matter. If a servant of Allāh remains straightforward in his worship of Allāh, continuously seeking to please Him, Allāh will surely provide him with goodness from Him and with divine light.

28. *Al-Baṣeer* البصير

Allāh has said, “He is with you wherever you are, and Allāh sees whatever you do” (Qur’ān, 57:4).

In language, seeing is achieved through the faculty of vision; it is the reflection of light on what can be seen and its impression on the eyes. Seeing is also an insight, discretion, an innermost conviction. One who is *baṣeer* is one who sees deeply, who is knowledgeable, who is an expert. Also, to “see” means not to rush, but to

contemplate, to be acquainted with things, and to be firm in adhering to the creed.

Al-Baṣeer sees everything, the apparent and the hidden, without using the faculty of vision. When applied to the Almighty, Glory to Him, vision receives the perfection whereby the qualities of anything that can be seen are realized. *Al-Baṣeer* fully knows every visible thing, and to Him the truth in their regard is apparent, evident. He knows where vision trespasses and what the breasts conceal. He sees and oversees; nothing in the high heavens nor on earth, nor in what is between them both, nor what is under the ground, can ever be concealed from His vision, and He is the ever-Present Who is never absent.

One who realizes that Allāh has such an attribute will be disciplined by constantly keeping a vigil on his conduct, by being precise when holding his soul to account. One who safeguards his hearing and vision against incurring the wrath of the Almighty, not committing anything that does not beseem him or is not commendable, is loved by Allāh, and he will be blessed with hearing and vision as indicated in sacred traditions.

29. *Al-Ḥakam* الحكم

The Almighty has said, “The judgment is only Allāh’s; He relates the truth and He is the best of those who decide” (Qur’ān, 6:57).

Both *al-Ḥakam* and *al-Ḥākim* convey the same meaning; the origin of the first means the same as that of *man`*, prohibition, from which a word such as *ḥakama*, an iron rein piece used to restrain horses, is derived.

Al-Ḥakam means: the One Whose word is final in determining what is right and what is wrong, in distinguishing between acts of righteousness and those of sinning. He rewards each soul according to what it earns, Who decides between His servants as He pleases, Who distinguishes between the wretch and the lucky, tormenting the first and rewarding the latter. *Al-Ḥakam* is the precise Arbitrator, the absolutely correct Judge Whose decision none can overturn, nor can

anyone repeal His decree.

Al-Ḥakam is the One in Whose promise there should be no doubt at all, in Whose action there is no fault at all; He has decreed that the hearts must be contented and pleased with Him, that the souls must be submissive, obedient, to Him. He separates the truth from falsehood. In Sūrat al-An`ām, we read: “Shall I then seek a judge other than Allāh? He it is Who has revealed to you the Book (which is) made clear” (Qur’ān, 6:114). In Sūrat Yunus we read: “Follow what is revealed to you and persevere till Allāh gives His judgment, and He is the best of judges” (Qur’ān, 10:109). Other such references are:

Then who calls you a liar with regard to the judgment after this? Is not Allāh the best of judges? (95:7-8)

Judgment is only Allāh's; on Him do I rely, and on Him let those who are reliant rely. (12:67)

There are many derivations from this word in various places throughout the Holy Qur’ān.

Among Allāh's judgment with regard to His servants is that everyone will receive the rewards of what he earns, and that his endeavor will be witnessed, noted, recorded, preserved; those who do good deeds will receive eternal bliss, whereas those who sin will receive eternal damnation. He makes righteousness the path to heaven and sinning the path to hell. Shurayḥ ibn Hānī has said that his father Hani ibn Yazīd said, “I came to see the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ once and he heard people calling me ‘Abū [father of] al-Ḥakam.’ He said to them, ‘Al-Ḥakam is Allāh! Why are you named like that?!’ I said to him, ‘Whenever my people dispute with one another, I judge between them to the satisfaction of both disputing parties.’ The Prophet ﷺ then asked me if I had any sons. ‘Yes. They are: Shurayh, Abdullāh and Muslim, sons of Hānī.’ ‘Who is their oldest?’ the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ asked me. I told him it was Shurayh. He then said, ‘You are Abū [father of] Shurayh,’ then he

invoked Allāh to bless me and my sons.”¹

30. *Al-`Adl* العدل

Allāh has said, “Surely Allāh enjoins the doing of justice and of good deeds (to others) and the giving to the kindred, and He forbids indecency, evil, and rebellion; He admonishes you so that you may be mindful” (Qur’ān, 16:90).

`Adl means moderation; *al-`adl* is above oppressing or being inequitable to anyone in His decrees and actions. Rather, He grants everyone what is due to him; He puts everything in its right place; nothing ensues from Him except justice. He does whatever He pleases, and His decree regarding His servants is carried out.

In Sūrat al-An`ām, the Almighty says, “And the word of your Lord has been accomplished truly and justly; none can change His words, and He is the Hearing, the Knowing” (Qur’ān, 6:115). He enjoins justice and equity and says the following in Sūrat al-Nisa' (Women): “When you judge between people, you should judge with justice; surely Allāh admonishes you with what is excellent; surely Allāh is Seeing, Hearing” (Qur’ān, 4:58).

There are many traditions narrated about the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ pointing out to *`adl* and highlighting the status of those who act on it. One of them is his saying, “There are seven types of people whom Allāh will shade on a Day when there will be no shade except His: a just imām, a young man who grows up adoring Allāh, a man whose heart is always attached to mosques, two men who love one another for the sake of Allāh: They meet and they part only accordingly, a man sought by a woman of prominence and beauty [for illicit sex] and to whom he says, ‘I fear Allāh,’ a man who pays charity and hides his action, so much so that his left hand does not know what his right hand gives away, and a man who mentions the Name of Allāh for the sake of remembering Him while his tears overflow.” This tradition is recorded by al-Bukhāri and Muslim and is quoted

¹Abū Dāwūd, *Jāmi` al-Fawā'id* جامع الفوائد, Vol. 2, p. 410.

on pp. 164-165, Vol. 3, of *Al-Targheeb wat Tarheeb*, and on p. 30 of *Qabasāt min Hadi an nubuwwah*.

31. *Al-Lāṭeef* اللطيف

Allāh has said, "... surely my Lord is benignant to whomsoever He pleases; surely He is the Knowing, the Wise" (Qur'ān, 12:100).

Al-Lāṭeef is one of Allāh's Attributes derived from extreme kindness and compassion in a way which no human faculty can ever fathom. *Al-Lāṭeef* continuously pours His blessings unto His servants; His actions are good and beautiful. This Attribute also means: the One Who cannot be sensed by human senses or those of all other beings, Who knows hidden and minute matters. *Al-Lāṭeef* has combined in Him terse and wise compassion as well as minute and detailed knowledge of all affairs and of the means to make them reach whomsoever He pleases from among His creation.

Al-Lāṭeef pleases His servants when He removes the clouds of His wrath away from them, the One Who is compassionate towards His servants even in matters related to His decree; He knows all hidden matters. He is the One Whose knowledge encompasses everything minute regarding all facts. His will is carried out, the will whereby He protects His creatures. He knows the most intricate of details relevant to interests and their obscurities; He gently makes them reach their destinations. He is Most Kind and Compassionate to His servants even when they are not aware of it; He manages their affairs and wishes everything good for His servants. He desires their ease and makes for them the means of righteousness and goodness attainable. He eases everything difficult, Who joins everything broken. Allāh has said, "Does He not know, being the One Who created (everything and everyone)?! He knows the subtleties, the One Who is ever-Aware (of everything)" (Qur'ān, 67:14).

One of the signs of His kindness towards His servants is that He has given them more than enough and required them to do less than what they can, thus making the achievement of eternal happiness attainable by easy endeavor during a short period of time, i.e. one's life-span, which is too short to be compared with the eternity of the

hereafter.

Al-Lāṭeef has conceived everything within the framework of its own antithesis. Allāh, for example, hid for prophet Joseph عليه السلام the prominence of authority in the garb of slavery till he himself eventually came to say: "... surely my Lord is benignant to whomsoever He pleases; surely He is the Knowing, the Wise" (Qur'ān, 12:100). A man was taken once to prison although he was innocent of the charge, so he kept repeating Joseph's invocation saying, "... surely my Lord is benignant to whomsoever He pleases; surely He is the Knowing, the Wise" (Qur'ān, 12:100). A young man came to him during one night and said to him, "Stand up so that I may get you out of your jail." The man asked the youth how he could get out since the doors were all locked, but the youth ordered him for the second time to stand up. He walked with the young man till he got out of town, then he said to him, "Recite: 'Surely my Lord is benignant to whomsoever He pleases; surely He is the Knowing, the Wise'" (Qur'ān, 12:100).

32. *Al-Khabeer* الخبير

The Most Exalted One has said, "Vision does not comprehend Him, while He comprehends all vision, and He knows the subtleties, and He is the Aware" (Qur'ān, 6:103).

Al-Khabeer is one of the Attributes of Allāh, and it means: the One Who knows everything and from Whose knowledge nothing at all escapes. He knows the essence of everything and is acquainted with the truth in its regard. *Al-Khabeer* is familiar with the most intricate matters; He knows the ailment and its remedy.

Al-Khabeer knows the innermost of everything; nothing takes place in His domain without His knowledge; no atom moves nor stands still, nor a soul is upset or eased, except that He knows about it. He is the One from Whose knowledge nothing on earth or in the heavens is hidden; nothing moves in the heavens or on earth except that He knows about its final resting point or destination.

Scholars have distinguished between *al-Khabeer* and *al-'Aleem*. The

first connotes knowledge, but when knowledge is applied to hidden matters, it is then called *khibra*, and the One Who knows it is called *al-Khabeer*.

The Almighty has said, “What?! Do you think that you will be left alone while Allāh has not yet ascertained those of you who have struggled hard and have not taken anyone as an adherent besides Allāh and His Prophet and the believers?! Allāh is Aware of all what you do” (Qur’ān, 9:16). Anyone who has a certain need about which he likes to ask Allāh for something should recite the verse saying “Does He not know, the One Who created?! He knows the subtleties, and He is the Aware” (Qur’ān, 67:14) repeatedly till he falls asleep.

33. *Al-Ḥaleem* الحليم

Allāh has said, “... certainly Allāh has pardoned them; surely Allāh is Forgiving, Forbearing” (Qur’ān, 3:155).

Al-Ḥaleem is an Attribute of the Almighty derived from the root word *ḥilm* which means: taking the time to do something. It also means care, attention and sensibility. Allāh's *ḥilm* is His postponement of chastising those who deserve to be chastized, so He delays the penalty of some of those who deserve it. After that, He may penalize them or overlook their faults. Or He may swiftly penalize some of them. He witnesses the transgression of transgressors and the disobedience of those who disobey Him without being provoked by anger or overwhelmed by wrath, and He does not rush to penalize despite His ability to do so. Allāh has said, “Had Allāh destroyed men on account of their iniquity, He would not have left on earth a single creature” (Qur’ān, 16:61).

Al-Ḥaleem does not bring about a swift vengeance; had He intended to effect revenge at a later time, He would have been called spiteful, vengeful, and if He does not intend to seek revenge at all, then surely He is Forgiving. He can also be called *al-Ḥaleem* if He does not intend to seek revenge at all provided He does not declare His intention. If He does declare it, He then is called Forgiving. *Al-Ḥaleem* quite often overlooks sins and covers up shortcomings. He

forgives after having covered up. He safeguards His affection for His servants. His promise is good. He fulfills His promise. *Al-Haleem* shields those who indulge in sins with His forgiveness, Who pardons those who violate His laws, Who is not slighted by the rebellion of the rebellious, and no oppression of any oppressor can ever provoke Him.

The Holy Qur'ān has described some of Allāh's messengers as *ḥaleem*; clement. For example, Abraham, the Friend of Allāh, is described as, "... most surely Abraham was very tender-hearted, forbearing" (Qur'ān, 9:114), and in Sūrat Hūd, he is praised likewise: "Most surely Abraham was forbearing, tender-hearted, oft-returning (to Allāh)" (Qur'ān, 11:75). The Holy Qur'ān states the following in Sūrat al-Ṣaffāt about Ishmael "So We gave him the glad tidings of a boy [Ishmael] possessing forbearance" (Qur'ān, 3:101). *Ḥilm* is a gracious and a noble attribute, so much so that one tradition recorded by Ibn al-Athīr cites the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ as saying, "*Ḥilm* is the master of all good norms of conduct." It also records another such tradition saying, "One who is *ḥaleem* is almost on the same footing with Allāh's prophets." *Ḥilm* enjoys a high status and esteem despite the abundance of one's sins and the repetition of one's repentance.

Allāh has said, "Allāh does not call you to account for what is vain of your oaths, but He will call you to account for what your hearts have earned, and Allāh is Forgiving, Forbearing" (Qur'ān, 2:225). He has also said, "The seven heavens declare His glory and the earth, too, and those who are in them, and there is not a single thing but glorifies and praises Him, but you do not understand their glorifying; surely He is Forbearing, Forgiving" (Qur'ān, 17:44).

A forbearing and munificent person, then, is one who often forgives the sins and conceals the shortcomings. He is the one who forgives after shielding one's sins, who safeguards his compassion, who is true to his word, who forgives those who break his law, who is not stirred by the rebellion of transgressors, nor is he provoked by oppression. Allāh's Munificence regarding the sinners is great: "... and He is the Most High, the Great" (Qur'ān, 2:255).

It is narrated that Abraham saw a man committing a sin, so he prayed Allāh to cause him to perish, and so it happened. He saw a second and a third, and he repeated his plea, and they, too, perished. Then he saw a fourth and invoked Allāh likewise to annihilate him. It was then that Allāh inspired him, “O Abraham! Stop! If We were to annihilate each one of Our servants who commits a sin, then only a small number will survive; but if one sins, We give him a respite; if he repents, We accept his repentance, and if he persists, We postpone his penalty knowing that he cannot escape from Our domain.”

It is also narrated that a young man used to commit many sins, and he used to persist in sinning; nay, he even used to repent and immediately go back to sinning. Having done so quite often, he was addressed by Satan thus, “For how long will you keep sinning and repenting?” Satan wished that Allāh would cause that man to lose hope in His mercy and become despondent. When night came, the man performed his ablution and offered two *rek`āts*, then he raised his eyes to the heavens and said, “O You Who protects the righteous against sinning, Who safeguards those who are protected from sinning, Who makes the righteous what they are! If You neglect me, You will find me losing heart; my forelock is in Your hand; my debts are before You! O You Who changes the hearts! I invoke You to keep my heart firm on following Your creed!” Allāh, thereon, said to His angels, “O angels of Mine! Have you all heard his statement? Bear witness, then, that I have forgiven all his past sins and safeguarded him against sinning for the rest of his life.”

34. *Al-`Aẓeem* العظيم

The Almighty has said, “So glorify the Name of your Lord, the Great” (Qur`ān, 56:96).

“Al-`Aẓeem” is a superlative derived from the noun *`īẓam* which means greatness, magnanimity, dignity, honor, esteem, pride... The Absolute *Aẓeem* is the One Whose greatness cannot be grasped by vision; it is beyond all limits, so much so that no human intellect can ever absorb it. Allāh has said, “He is the Most High, the Great”

(Qur'ān, 2:255).

The most prominent person in a town is called its greatest. This is the meaning of what the unbelievers say as the Holy Qur'ān quotes them: "... to a man great in both towns..." (Qur'ān, 43:31). Allāh has said, "... and the great Qur'ān" (Qur'ān, 15:87). When the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ wrote a letter to Heraclius (which will be discussed in Volume Two of this book *Inshā-Allāh*), he addressed him as "the *Aẓeem* man of Rome," that is, the greatest personality or dignitary in Rome. Heraclius, who ruled from 610 - 641 A.D., was a Byzantine emperor, ruler of the Eastern Roman empire. He was involved in many wars with the Persians from 634 - 642 A.D. He did not accept Islam; his armies were eventually conquered by Islamic troops, so he lost Syria, Palestine and Mesopotamia (upper Iraq) as well as Egypt, one after the other.

If you consider the greatness of *al-'Aẓeem*, you will come to know that anyone besides Him is insignificant. The human being, no matter how knowledgeable, is limited in the scope and content of his knowledge. How can you compare such a limited amount of knowledge with that of the Almighty? An example of His might exists in this verse: "Neither your creation nor your raising (*ba'th*, the reunion between the soul and recreated body) is only like (that of) a single soul" (Qur'ān, 31:28). To the Almighty, the creation of the entire cosmos is as easy as the creation of one single soul: "Our word for a thing when We intend it is only to say to it: Be, and it is" (Qur'ān, 16:40).

Allāh has required us to revere His signs, i.e. wonders, miracles; He says, "... That (shall be so), and whoever respects the signs of Allāh, it surely is (the sign) of the piety of the hearts" (Qur'ān, 22:32). One who highly regards the signs of Allāh, respects religious rites, holds in high esteem anything related to Allāh, is surely held in high esteem by both Allāh and His servants.

The Messenger of Allāh, Muhammed ﷺ, has conveyed the following glad tidings: "One who learns then becomes fully knowledgeable then acts on what he has learned is called great in the

kingdom of the heavens.”

Ibn `Abbās رضي الله عنه quotes the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ as saying, “If someone enters a room to visit a sick person who is on the brink of death and he repeats seven times the saying of: ‘I plead to Allāh the Great, Lord of the Great Throne, to heal you,’” that sick person will be healed by the Will of Allāh.

35. *Al-Ghafūr* الغفور

Allāh has said, “... surely Allāh forgives faults, all of them; surely He is the Forgiving, the Merciful” (Qur’ān, 39:53).

Al-Ghafūr is derived from the root word *Ghafūr*, veiling or covering. He is *al-Ghafūr* because He quite often veils the sins from others’ eyes and knowledge and forgives those who commit them. He does not dispute about them with His servants. *Maghfira* means the covering and the forgiving of sins. Allāh’s forgiveness means protection of His servant against His torment. Its verb means: to openly overlook one’s sins.

Al-Ghafūr is the Master Whose power is perfect; He may unconditionally forgive due to the favors He bestows on His servants, and due to His benevolence.

The Holy Qur’ān has referred quite often to forgiveness, and Allāh has diversified it so that the hearts of those who disobey Him may not lose hope of His mercy, and so that no criminal will despond of the mercy of Allāh. He forgives the sins and accepts the repentance. In Sūrat Ghāfir, we recite this verse: “The One Who forgives the faults and Who accepts repentance, Who is Severe in punishment, the Lord of bounty” (Qur’ān, 40:3). Other such references are as follows:

... so forgive us and have mercy on us; You are the best of those who forgive. (7:155)

Most surely I am the most Forgiving of one who repents and believes and does good deeds then continues to follow the right guidance. (20:82)

He has created the heavens and the earth with the truth; He makes the night cover the day and the day overtake the night, and He has made the sun and the moon subservient (to His will): each runs to an assigned term; surely He is the Mighty, the oft-Forgiving. (39:5)

As regarding the verse saying, “Inform My servants that I am the Forgiving, the Merciful” (Qur’ān, 15:49), some companions of the Prophet ﷺ were once indulged in laughter as the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ passed by. He greeted them then said to them, “Do you laugh while the fire is before you?” They regretted and felt extremely depressed. He soon went back to them and said, “Gabriel has just come to me and told me that Allāh asked why I caused some of His servants to lose hope in His mercy,” then he repeated 39:5 as quoted above.

The lot of one who wishes to personify the Attribute *al-Ghafūr* is that he constantly seeks His forgiveness. He forgives His servants time and over again. This is the key to obtaining the forgiveness of Allāh as referred to in 24:22: “Do not let those among you who possess grace and abundance swear against giving to the near of kin and the poor and those who have migrated for the cause of Allāh; they should pardon and overlook. Do not you love that Allāh would forgive you? Allāh is Forgiving, Merciful.”

36. *Al-Shakūr* الشکور

Allāh has said, “... so that He may pay them back their rewards in full and give them more out of His grace: surely He is the Forgiving, the One Who multiplies the rewards” (Qur’ān, 35:30).

Linguistically, “*al-Shakūr*” is derived from the root word *shukr* which conveys the meaning of: an increase. Arabs describe a land as such if its plants are abundant. They describe an animal as such if it is fattened. Plants sustained by a little amount of water are called *Shakūr*. *Al-Shakūr* thanks quite often; He appreciates acts of righteousness, charity and kindness. A servant of Allāh who is *Shakūr* is one who perseveres to thank his Lord by obeying Him and by carrying out the obligations which He has mandated on him.

Shukr is recognition and propagation of goodness.

Al-Shakūr, Allāh, appreciates even the few good deeds His servants do, doubling His rewards for them manifold. His way of thanking them is by giving them of His bounties though He was the One Who enabled them to do such good deeds in the first place. He planted in their hearts the desire to do them, then He provided for them all the means to carry such desires out. He enables His servants to be grateful for the blessings which He bestows on them, so He rewards them even for small acts of obedience to Him with an abundance of His good things. He grants a bliss in the hereafter that never ends for a few days' endeavor.

Al-Shakūr accepts the little and gives a lot. Allāh has called Himself *al-Shakūr* in order to tell us that He rewards His servants for thanking Him; hence, the reward for such gratitude is called *shukr*, just as the penalty for a bad deed is called bad; He has said, “And the recompense of evil is a like punishment” (Qur’ān, 42:40).

One of the tokens of accepting one's expression of appreciation is that he receives an increase of Allāh's blessings according to 14:7: “If you are grateful, I will certainly give you more, and if you are ungrateful, My chastisement is truly severe.” The truth about appreciation is not related to the qualities of Allāh: appreciation comes from people; it is simply the expending of the blessings granted by Allāh in the way for which He created them. Linguistically, appreciation is coupled with blessing, grace, gratitude. Nobody can do Allāh a favor for which He has to thank him; therefore, His appreciation must be understood metaphorically according to *Tafsīr al-Manār*. Allāh's gratitude means that He is capable of rewarding the doers of good, that He does not permit the deeds of such doers to be wasted or unrewarded. It is in this sense that rewarding the doer of good with what he deserves is called appreciation, and Allāh has thus called Himself appreciative. Allāh has also promised those who appreciate His blessings to increase His blessings on them; so, such gratitude also falls under the same type of appreciation. The most Appreciative One has said, “... and whoever does good spontaneously, surely Allāh is Grateful,

Knowing” (Qur’ān, 2:158). Thus do we come to know that Allāh, Glory to Him, has a conduct which is surely the most perfect when He called Himself appreciative of His beings although whatever good they do neither benefits Him nor harms Him in the least; rather, its benefit is surely for our own good. It is, in reality, a sign of His own blessings on us that He guides and enables us to do it; so, it does not suit any sensible person to observe the great favor bestowed on him by Allāh without thanking Him for it, or without obeying Him.

Allāh also says, “... Therefore remember Me, so I will remember you, too, and be thankful to Me, and do not be ungrateful to Me” (Qur’ān, 2:152). In this verse, Allāh teaches His servants to be appreciative, ordering them to remember the blessings which He has bestowed on them by their hearts, tongues and senses..., by their actions, for actions speak louder than words. Their reward for it is that He reminds them of His permission to continue to enjoy such blessings, and to increase them, ordering them to praise Him by His Attributes, to discuss His countless blessings, to glorify Him openly and secretly, so that He may mention them in His high company and mention His being pleased with them. In a *qudsi* tradition, the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ quotes the Almighty as saying, “I am as My servant thinks of Me: I am with him; if he mentions Me silently, I shall mention him likewise, and if He mentions My Name before a crowd of people, I shall mention him before a better crowd; if he gets closer to Me as much as a span, I shall get closer to him as much as a yard; if he gets closer to Me as much as a yard, I will get closer to him more than twice that much. If he comes to Me walking, I shall come to him running.” Allāh commands His servants to be grateful to Him and not deny the blessings which He has bestowed on them. This is a warning for this nation against that wherein previous nations had fallen due to the latter's denial of the blessings which the Almighty had showered on them. He granted them the powers of reason, emotion, judgment and many other such blessings. His blessings are countless, innumerable.

A servant of Allāh should never tire of thanking and praising Him, incessantly and unhesitatingly. In a supplication, the Messenger of

Allāh ﷺ says, “Lord! I am incapable of praising You enough; You are as You have praised Yourself.” Praising Allāh and thanking Him as He really deserves is not within the human capacity. A servant of Allāh, therefore, must leave it to the One Who can do so: Allāh, Praise is due to Him, and ONLY to Him. How can man acquire perfection in such an area while he contemplates on some blessings bestowed on him by Allāh and says to himself: “I was mere naught and Allāh caused me to be, then He granted me the beautiful outward appearance, and the power of reason which is the very best of my inner qualities, then He granted me hearing and vision and guided me to know Him, then He made His great rewards attainable and even praised me in his Great Book”? If you move your tongue and say: *Alḥamdu-lillāh* (Praise Allāh), thinking that mere saying so is sufficient to express gratitude for all the great favors He has bestowed on you, then you surely have taken leave of absence from your sanity, for you surely will not have thanked Him at all. “Talk is cheap,” says an axiom, whereas “Actions speak louder than words.” Express your gratitude towards your Maker by actions, not just by words. A servant's true expression of gratitude is his own admission that he simply is incapable of sufficiently expressing his gratitude to His Maker, Sustainer, and Benefactor.

Jābir ibn Abdullāh al-Ansāri has quoted the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ as saying, “If one is given something while being capable of finding a way to likewise give, let him do so, but if he is not, then let him praise the giver, for one who remains silent and says nothing commits *kufṛ*, apostasy. And if one were to put on clothes which he was not given, he would then be like one who wears two outfits of forgery.”¹

37. *Al-`Aliyy* العلي

Allāh has said, “... What they call on besides Him is falsehood; Allāh is the High, the Great” (Qur’ān, 22:61).

“*Al-`Aliyy*” is one of Allāh's Attributes. It is derived from *uluww*,

¹at-Tirmidhi, *Sunan*, Vol. 4, p. 379.

height, sublimity, or loftiness versus lowliness. The height referred to here is that of status. *Al-`Aliyy* is High, so High that He can neither be conceived nor visualized. Minds are at a loss regarding His Greatness; intellects are incapable of conceiving His perfection. According to *Al-Mufradāt*, one who is *`Aliyy* is a prominent person, a man of distinction. When applied to the Almighty, as in 22:61 cited above, the implied meaning is that He is above being described by anyone or truly known by anyone, and He is above what anyone says about Him.

He is the One above Whose status there is none at all, and everything in existence is under His control. Allāh has said, “He is the Most High, the Great” (Qur’ān, 2:255), “... Judgment belongs to Allāh, the High, the Great” (Qur’ān, 40:12), and, “... the Great, the Most High” (Qur’ān, 13:9).

“High” and “low” may both be applied to tangible as well as intangible things. As regarding the tangible ones, the *`Arsh* (Throne) is said to be higher than the *Kursi* (the Seat of Authority), and the heavens is higher than the earth. Such words are applied only to tangible things, things which have dimensions, i.e. material things. Since the Almighty is above having dimensions, His being *al-`Aliyy* is above being as such.

The One Who is *al-`Aliyy* is above being conceived by any intellect, and Whose Attributes are too great to be described. He is the One in Whose Greatness minds are puzzled, and in trying to realize His Essence the intellects fall short.

Among the good manners adorning a believer are: humbleness and submissiveness before the Glory of the Almighty. It is only then that He exalts his status. Al-Qushayri has reported saying that Allāh inspired Moses to go near a mountain so that He would address him. Every mountain there vied with the others in the hope of being the one near which such a divine address would take place. Mount Sinai thought very humbly of itself saying, “Since when do I deserve the honor of being the site worthy of the status of Moses when addressed by his Lord?” For this reason, Allāh inspired Moses to go

near Mount Sinai due to the latter's humility.

According to *Al-Asmā' wal Şifāt*, where a *qudsi* tradition is quoted, the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ heard during the Night of Isra (the night journey to Jerusalem) a praising in the high heavens saying: *Subḥān al-`Aliyy al-A`Lā, Subḥanahu wa Ta`āla*, that is, “Glory to the Most High, Glory to Him and Exaltation.” Iyas ibn Salāmah has quoted his father saying that he had heard the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ starting every supplication by saying, “*Subḥana al-A`Lā al-Wahhāb*,” “Glory to the Most High, the ever-Giving.”

38. *Al-Kabeer* الكبير

We read the following in the Holy Qur’ān: “They shall say: What is it that your Lord said? They shall say: The truth. And He is the Most High, the Great” (Qur’ān, 34:23).

Linguistically, one who is *kabeer* is a great person, a dignitary, a distinguished personality. Allāh, Glorified and Exalted is His Name, is greater than everything and everyone, and He is the Absolutely Great One, the One Who is Great on His own merits, in His qualities and Essence, above being in any way like any of His creatures; “There is nothing like Him, the One Who is superior to the praise of any of those who praise, glorify, or attempt to describe Him. He is the most perfect of anything in existence, the One Who has all the Glory, the Greatness, the Honor and the Sublimity. He is above what the beings He has created conceive Him to be. He is too Great to be described or His actions to be comprehended.”

The Almighty has said,

He is the High, the Great. (40:12)

Proclaim His greatness magnifying (Him). (17:111)

And your Lord do magnify. (74:3).

To Him belongs greatness in the heavens and the earth. (45:37)

The Almighty has been lauded with characteristics of this sort:

One is *al-Kabeer*. The other is *al-Mutakabbir*, the explanation of which has already been dealt with. The third is *al-Akbar* as in 9:72: "... and best of all is Allāh's goodly pleasure" (Qur'ān, 9:72), and in 29:45: "... certainly the remembrance of Allāh is the greatest." But it has not been used in the Holy Qur'ān as a reference to the Almighty, yet it occurs as an Attribute of His in the Sunnah such as our saying: *Allāhu Akbar!* The fourth is *al-Kibriyā'*; Allāh has said, "And to Him belongs greatness..." (Qur'ān, 45:37). So, let us discuss these Attributes:

As regarding *al-Akbar*, there are two ways to look at it: First, He is greater than anything else in existence. It is possible to view the "Allāhu Akbar!" phrase which Muslims pronounce audibly when performing their prayers in the same light, meaning that Allāh is greater than anyone or anything else; hence, one's mind will not be occupied by anyone or anything else besides Him, nor is his heart attached to anyone or anything else besides Him.

Allāhu Akbar! is a statement derived from *al-Kabeer* and is pronounced to initiate the obligatory prayers, during the time of *rukoo'*, *sujood* or *qiyām*, that is, when bowing, prostrating or standing during the performance of obligatory prayers. It is called *takbeer*, Glorification of *al-Kabeer*, the Great One, the Most Great. *Takbeer* is required on several occasions such as the *adhān*, *iqāma*, prayers, both feasts, funeral prayers, on seeing the Ka'ba, throwing the stones [during the pilgrimage], and announcing the time for *jihād*, holy war. The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ is said to initiate anything of significance with *Allāhu Akbar!*

Ibn `Abbās ؓ is quoted as saying that the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ used to teach his companions a supplication whereby they could shun all ailments and types of fever which said, "In the Name of Allāh *al-Kabeer*; we seek refuge with Allāh al-Aẓeem from the evil of any feverish vein, and from the inferno of hellfire."

The Attribute *al-Kabeer* is repeated five times throughout the text of the Holy Qur'ān.

39. *Al-Hafeez* الحفيظ

The Almighty has said in the Holy Qur'ān, "And he has no authority over them, but so that We may distinguish the one who believes in the hereafter from the one who is in doubt concerning it, and your Lord preserves all things" (Qur'ān, 34:21).

"*Al-Hafeez*" is derived from the root word *hifẓ*, safeguarding or protecting something or someone. Its antithesis is *sahu* سهو, forgetfulness, negligence, inattentiveness. Women who safeguard the property of their husbands when the latter are absent are described in the Holy Qur'ān as *ḥāfīẓātīn lil ghayb*. A book is called *Hafeez* because its contents safeguard records of actions and statements from being lost (from people's memory, etc.).

Al-Hafeez very much maintains the existence of everything that exists, Who safeguards contradictory elements against overwhelming one another such as what is hot and what is cold, what is moist and what is dry, qualities which Allāh has created, making them inherent in our creation as well as in that of all animals and plants. Had He not thus safeguarded them, by neutralizing them once and by increasing the amount of what diminishes thereof another, they would not have coexisted with one another, their mixing would have been annulled, their composition would have diminished, and their ability to be composed or amalgamated would have disappeared. *Al-Hafeez* carries a stronger meaning than that of *al-Hafiz*. *Al-Hafeez* has two meanings: One is the opposite of oversight or forgetfulness, and its meaning is derived from knowing. When we say that the Almighty safeguards things, we mean that He knows them in all their quantities and intricacies, and that such knowledge is not altered by diminution, oversight, negligence, or forgetfulness. The other is that *al-Hafeez* safeguards things against loss: He guards them, and all His characteristics and perfection are above extinction. He has also said: "Attend constantly to prayers and to the middle prayers, and stand up truly obedient to Allāh" (Qur'ān, 2:238), and, "... the preservation of them both does not tire Him" (Qur'ān, 2:255). He protects His Divine statements, i.e. the Holy Qur'ān, hence the verse, "We have revealed the Reminder, and We are its Guardian"

(Qur'ān, 15:9), meaning Protectors against alteration, distortion, or any tampering with its sacred text, applied here particularly to the text of the Holy Qur'ān.

Despite the greatness of his status, the Friend of Allāh, Abraham, supplicated thus: “Lord! Grant me wisdom and join me with the righteous” (Qur'ān, 26:83), and, “Lord! Make us both submitting to You” (Qur'ān, 2:128). Moses, who spoke to the Almighty, also supplicated saying, “Lord! Expand my breast for me” (Qur'ān, 20:25). The Almighty has said the following to His Prophet and Messenger Muhammed ﷺ: “... had it not been that We had already established you...” (Qur'ān, 17:74), and, “... Allāh will protect you from people” (Qur'ān, 5:67). He admonished the believers to pray by saying, “Lord! Do not make our hearts deviate after You have guided us aright” (Qur'ān, 3:8).

One who contemplates on the meanings of *al-Ḥafeez* and eagerly longs for Him with all his heart is one in whose heart the love for His Lord is borne, carried, the Lord Who protects His servant even when the latter is disobedient to Him, falling short of worshipping Him, lagging behind in adoring Him. He reawakens his heart from its inattentiveness. It is then that Allāh makes his heart like a preserved treasure of secrets, so he takes courageous stands, safeguarding his senses against committing sins, protecting his heart against spiritually harmful insinuations.

40. *Al-Muqeet* المقيت

In the Holy Qur'ān, we read: “Whoever joins himself (to another) in a good cause shall have a share thereof, and whoever joins himself (to another) in an evil cause shall be responsible for it, and Allāh controls all things” (Qur'ān, 4:85).

“*Al-Muqeet*” is derived from the root noun *qoot*, sustenance, the food that sustains the human body. Ibn `Abbās has said that *al-Muqeet* is *al-Muqtadir*, the Omnipotent. *Al-Muqeet* creates all beings, creating likewise the means for their sustenance. He provides ways for them to have access to such means of sustenance; He has made accessible to them what is necessary and what is a luxury. He

sustains the bodies and the souls. He has taken on Himself to sustain His creation. *Al-Muqeet* hears the silent supplication and responds to it and knows the affliction and removes it. “*Al-Muqeet*” conveys the same meaning as that of “*al-Hafeez*,” the Protector; so, He protects and sustains the living beings.

Reference to *qoot* exists throughout the Holy Qur’ān. For example, Allāh has said the following in Sūrat Fuṣṣilat: “And He made in it mountains above its surface, and He blessed therein and made therein its foods, in four periods: alike for the seekers” (Qur’ān, 41:10). He sustains the hearts through knowledge, so He is *ar-Razzāq* but in a more specific way, for sustenance includes both food and non-food items. *Qoot* is food sufficient to keep someone's body alive. It may also mean the One Who takes full control over something or someone, Who is Capable of managing his/her affairs. *Al-Muqeet* Alone is Capable and Knowledgeable of everything.

One of the good manners inspired by this Attribute is that when food is brought to you, you must recognize *al-Muqeet* Whose sustenance is quite spacious and encompassing, through Whose Grace are you provided with food. Such recognition will cause the light of this Attribute to lift you spiritually. God will then make you the treasure-house for His servants, enabling you to sustain others, teach them knowledge, and lead them to the ever-Living, the Sustainer.

Do not seek the achievement of all your wishes and desires except from Allāh, for He surely holds the keys to the treasures of His sustenance. According to one *qudsi* tradition, Allāh said to Moses, “O Moses! Ask Me with regard to everything, including your shoe strings and the salt for your [cooking] pot.”

41. *Al-Haseeb* الحسيب

Allāh has said in the Holy Qur’ān, “... those who deliver the messages of Allāh and fear Him and not fear anyone save Allāh, and Allāh suffices for taking account (of everything)” (Qur’ān, 33:39).

Al-Haseeb is one of Allāh's Attributes, and it is often explained as the One Who rewards good deeds. Its meaning may also be

understood as the One Who provides sufficiently, Who grants whatever His servants need; He is the Master on Whom all rely; there is no *Ḥaseeb* besides Him, and all His creation are in need of His help and support. It is also said that *al-Ḥaseeb* is the One to Whom everything honorable is referred, and with Him does every glory end. He calls His servants to account for their deeds, Who tries those who obey Him and rewards them for such obedience, Who calls those who disobey Him to account and penalizes them for their disobedience; He, and only He, tries everyone.

Things are connected to one another, and in the end they are connected to Allāh Who has said, “O Prophet! Allāh suffices you and the believers who follow you” (Qur’ān, 8:64). If we look at this great cosmos, which is fixed and unaffected by external effects since millions of years, we will conclude that there is a complex accounting system for it which is spontaneous. It makes cosmic criteria fixed in order to guarantee the preservation of human life on earth in the best way so that man may be able to perform the function for which Allāh created him, that is, to worship Him and only Him. The number of computations required to run such a tremendous cosmos can never be conceived by any human mind; so, how can one imagine the spontaneous alterations of some while the rest remain the same?! It is the Great *al-Ḥaseeb*, the computing One, the Great, the most swift of all those who compute. It truly is an Attribute which deserves a close look. If a thinking person were to remain thinking all life, he will never be able to compute except very, very little indeed. Yet I like through these simple statements to give the reader an idea that may provide him with a glimpse of the greatness of this miraculous Attribute:

The verb *ḥasaba* means: counted, computed, calculated, deducted a total, etc. *Ḥisāb* means: counting, computing, calculating or accounting, and it is accomplished by adding, subtracting, and such mathematically related steps. The science of *ḥisāb* is arithmetics from which more advanced sciences: algebra, mathematics, and calculus, are derived. The Holy Qur’ān contains references to *al-Ḥaseeb* and to the derivatives of its root word in verses such as these:

... and though there may be the weight of a grain of mustard seed,
We will (still) bring it, and sufficient are We to take account.
(21:47)

Then are they sent back to Allāh, their Master, the True One; now
surely His is the judgment, and He is the swiftest in taking
account. (6:62)

They shall have (their) portion of what they have earned, and
Allāh is swift in reckoning. (2:202)

There is none to repeal His decree, and He is swift to take account.
(13:41)

... there he finds Allāh, so He pays him back his reckoning in full,
and Allāh is swift in reckoning. (24:39)

In order to be acquainted with the secret of Allāh's Power as embedded in His Attribute *al-Ḥaseeb*, as it manifests itself on His creation, let us take a look at the chemical, physiological and astronomical balance existing in the cosmos. We will see that there is a high computing power too great to be conceived, one capable of conducting such computations and is controlled by One Who is fully knowledgeable of the cosmos in its entirety, of the smallest atom in it up to the largest planet. Had it not been so, its cosmic computations would not have remained fixed. In order to form an idea about the complexity of such computations, we have to provide an example:

Were we to think for one moment about the number of computations which take place inside our bodies, we will surely be unable to calculate them. So, how can man conceive the number of computations in the whole cosmos from the smallest atom to the largest planet in their various types, orbits, and environments? The mind, no matter how great, can never do so, and it will definitely recognize Allāh and His Absolute Power, and that He is the only capable *al-Ḥaseeb* to make such computations; so, let us contemplate on this Attribute so that we may honor and thank Him. Allāh has pointed out in the text of the Holy Qur'ān the calculation according to which

the cosmos is arranged in accordance with places very well computed in their locations, orbits and speeds: “Surely We have created everything according to a measure. And Our command is but one, as (swift as) the twinkling of an eye” (Qur’ān, 54:49-50). He has also said,

But nay! I swear by the falling of the stars, and most surely it is a very great oath, if you only know... (56:75-76)

The sun and the moon follow a reckoning. (55:5)

(As for) the moon, We have ordained for it stages till it becomes again like an old dry palm branch. (36:39)

... and ordained for it measured stations so that you may know the computation of years and the reckoning. (10:5)

He causes the dawn to break, and He has made the night for (you to) rest, and the sun and the moon for reckoning. (6:96)

As a matter of fact, there is hardly any verse which does not contain one indication or more about the computed system of the cosmos or of the human body, but the Holy Qur’ān highlights a specific significance for a different type of calculations: the calculations of the sustenance of Allāh's servants according to the wisdom of Allāh, some of which are according to a measure, and some coming from whence a servant of Allāh does not know: “... and Allāh gives means of subsistence to whomsoever He pleases without measure” (Qur’ān, 2:212). Such is usually the sustenance of the righteous whom Allāh sustains from whence they do not know or expect: “... and whoever is careful of (his duty to) Allāh, He will make an outlet for him and give him sustenance from whence he does not expect” (Qur’ān, 65:2-3). Also, Allāh's giving is great, so great that its true value can never be conceived or computed. There is still a greater calculation: the calculation of the deeds and the intentions behind them, their recording as well as the rewards for them in the life of this world or in the one to come, or in both, for the Almighty says the following in this regard:

... Only the delivery of the message is (incumbent) on you, while calling (them) to account is Ours. (13:40)

So that Allāh may requite each soul (according to) what it has earned; surely Allāh is swift in reckoning. (14:51)

... So We called it to account severely and We chastised it with a stern chastisement. (65:8)

Surely to Us is their return, then surely on Us is the taking of their account. (88:25-26)

... Surely Allāh takes account of all things. (4:86)

“Whoever brings a good deed,” says the Almighty in the Holy Qur’ān as He refers to the Day of Judgment, “he shall have ten like it, and whoever brings an evil deed, he shall be recompensed only with the like thereof, and they shall not be dealt with unjustly” (Qur’ān, 6:160). People on the Day of Judgment will be simultaneously judged just as they are being judged in the life of this world. Their sustenance will be forwarded to them at once, and Allāh is never diverted by anything from another: “So that Allāh may requite each soul (according to) what it has earned; surely Allāh is swift in reckoning” (Qur’ān, 14:51). Those who are blessed with understanding know the precision of the Divine computation from their own dealing with Him, for He has said, “... and whether you manifest what is in your minds or hide it, Allāh will call you to account accordingly, then He will forgive whomsoever He pleases and chastise whomsoever He pleases, and Allāh has power over all things” (Qur’ān, 2:284). God’s management of the affairs goes on forever and ever. Our master Muhammed has said, “Call your own selves to account before you yourselves are called on to account for them.”

42. *Al-Jaleel* الجليل

Allāh has said, “And the person of your Lord will forever endure, the Lord of glory and honor” (Qur’ān, 55:27), and also, “Blessed be the Name of your Lord, the Lord of Glory and Honor” (Qur’ān, 55:78)!

Linguistically, the verb “*yujill*” means: to magnify or glorify someone or deem him great. The Attribute “*al-Jaleel*” is derived from honor, dignity and greatness. He is too Great to do anything which does not fit His Honor. He purifies the heart by manifesting the qualities of His Glory to it. He reveals what is hidden by the attributes of His beauty and what is in the world, all of it, of glory, perfection, goodness and magnificence by the lights of His Essence and the effects of His qualities. *Al-Jaleel* is worthy of bidding and forbidding; besides Him, every great person is not great at all, and every gigantic thing is dwarfed. He grants glory to those who approach Him and humiliation to those whom He dismisses from His presence.

The Absolute *al-Jaleel* is Allāh. The Attribute “*al-Kabeer*” describes the perfection of the Self, whereas “*al-Jaleel*” describes the perfection of His qualities. “*Al-‘Azeem*” refers to the perfection of the Self. All qualities of His are referred to according to the extent one can conceive; so, He exhausts the mind and is not exhausted; He can never be seen by anyone, yet He sees everyone. When the qualities of glory are attributed to a reasoning mind capable of conceiving them, they are called beauty, and the one they describe is called beautiful. Originally, the Attribute “*al-Jameel*” was linguistically applied to a picture which can be discerned by the eyes no matter what it represents, one which suits and agrees with the vision. Then it was applied to an inner picture which may be conceived by the mind such as one may talk about a beautiful conduct, for it is conceived by the mind rather than the eyesight. Inner pictures, then, if harmonious and combining the qualities of perfection that suit them, just as they ought to be, convey an inner beauty just as they convey to whoever discerns and conceives them a visual pleasure, and their inner beauty is more intense than their outward one.

The share a servant of Allāh may derive from the inspiration of this Attribute is that he adorns himself with beauty and bears in mind that it is He Who has bestowed on him the blessings of beauty, be it the beauty of a visible image or of the inner self. The inner beauty of the soul is surely higher and greater than that of the beauty of the

body. The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ used to thus supplicate after his prayers: *Allāhomma anta as-Salām wa minka as-salam wa ilayka yarji'us-salam; tabarakta wa Ta`ālāyta ya thal Jalāli wal Ikrām,*

اللهم أنت السلام و منك السلام و اليك يرجع السلام، تباركت و تعاليت يا ذا الجلال و
الاکرام

that is, “Lord! You are the Peace and the source of peace, and to You all peace is rendered; Glory to You, You are the One with all the Greatness and Honor!”

The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ has also said, “Hold Allāh in high esteem so that He may forgive you, that is to say, Glorify Him by obeying Him and by distancing yourselves from committing any disobedience of Him, and seek nearness to Him, Glory to Him, by performing what He has enjoined you to perform.”

43. Al-Kareem الكريم

Allāh has said, “... Whoever is grateful, he is grateful only for (the good of) his own soul, and whoever is ungrateful, surely my Lord is self-Sufficient, Honored” (Qur’ān, 27:40).

Scholars say that anything regarded as good, precious, of great importance, is *kareem*. Linguistically, a person who is outgiving is also called *kareem*, generous. Anything held in its own category in high esteem is called *kareem*. Allāh is called “*al-Kareem*”, an Attribute that describes His benevolence and beneficence. Allāh has always been Generous, and He will always be so. He is high above any lowliness; He gives abundantly, and He gives beautifully.

Al-Kareem forgives though He is capable of inflicting the most severe punishment; He fulfills His promise; He gives more than what one pleads to Him for; He does not mind how much He gives and to whom; He does not permit anyone who seeks refuge with Him to suffer loss; He does not need means to do what He does. One Who can combine in Him all these qualities is the Absolute *al-Kareem*; none other than Allāh is as such.

The Almighty has said, “O man! What has beguiled you from your Lord, the Gracious One...?” (Qur’ān, 82:6), and, “Read and your Lord is the Most Honorable” (Qur’ān, 96:3).

Arabs are used to calling anything *kareem* if it has a commendable merit or quality. Muhammed ﷺ, the Messenger of Allāh ﷻ, has said, “Yousuf is the most *kareem* of people,” meaning in lineage and descent. They may describe something the presence of which can be identified by one of the physical senses as *kareem*. For example, the Egyptian women, on seeing Yousuf (Joseph) said, “... This is but a noble angel” (Qur’ān, 12:31). Describing Paradise, the Almighty says it is a “... noble place” (Qur’ān, 44:26). This word may also be applied to anything honorable; the Almighty has said, “... Surely the most honorable of you with Allāh is the one who is most careful (of his duty towards Allāh)” (Qur’ān, 49:13).

Arabs may also apply it to something that has many benefits or advantages, such as what is implied in this verse which narrates the story of Prophet Solomon عليه السلام: “Surely an honorable letter has been delivered to me” (Qur’ān, 27:29). According to exegesis, *kareem* in this verse means quite significant and weighty, containing very good statements.

One of the signs of His greatness and generosity is that He provides His bounties even to those who do not deserve them. He doles out His benevolence even without being asked. If a suppliant prays Him for forgiveness, one of the signs of His greatness is that He will erase that suppliant's sin if he truly repents, and He records a good deed for him in its place. Allāh has said, “The parable of those who spend their wealth in the way of Allāh is like the parable of a grain growing seven ears (with) a hundred grains in each, and Allāh multiplies for whomsoever he pleases, and Allāh is ample-Giving, Knowing” (Qur’ān, 2:261). Among the signs of His greatness is that in the life of this world He covers the sins of the sinners and hide their shortcomings.

In one incident, the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ has narrated a story about the forgiveness of the Almighty which is thought-provoking.

He said, "I know the last person who will enter Paradise and the last one to get out of hellfire. He is a man who will be approached and it will be said, 'Show him his minor sins and suspend the major ones,' whereupon he will be shown his minor sins. He will then be asked if on such-and-such day he did such-and-such, and he will answer in the affirmative, fearing the penalty from his major sins. He will be told, 'In place of each of your sins, you will be granted a good deed,' whereupon he will say, 'Lord! But... I have committed other sins which I do not see here among them!'" The narrator of the anecdote says that he saw the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ smile at that juncture of the story till his molar teeth became visible.

Allāh is "*al-Kareem al-Mutaghafil*," that is, the Great One Who deliberately and quite often overlooks. One of the signs of His Greatness is that He forgives whenever He is prayed for forgiveness; Allāh has said, "Ask forgiveness of your Lord; surely He is the most Forgiving" (Qur'ān, 71:10). And among the signs of His Greatness is that He forgives without reminding those whom He forgives of the types of sins and ugly things which they had committed.

And among the signs of His Greatness is that if people come to Him after having obeyed Him only a little, He will grant them quite a generous reward and will honor them by praising them beautifully. Among the signs of His Greatness is that He includes them in His Covenant; He has said, "... Fulfill (your) covenant with Me, I will fulfill (My) covenant with you" (Qur'ān, 2:40). He even makes them worthy of His love: "... He shall love them and they shall love Him" (Qur'ān, 5:54).

Among the other signs of His Greatness is that He has made this world the loaned property of His servants saying, "He it is Who created for you all that is on earth" (Qur'ān, 2:29), and the hereafter as well, "... and a Garden, the extensiveness of which is like the heavens and the earth, prepared for those who guard (themselves against evil)" (Qur'ān, 3:133).

Also among the signs of His Greatness and generosity is that He has made everything in the heavens and the earth subservient to man:

“And He has made whatever in the heavens and on earth, all of it, subservient to you, [a gift] from Him” (Qur’ān, 45:13). One of the signs of a believer's good conduct in as far as the Attribute “*al-Kareem*” is concerned is that he directs himself wholeheartedly towards His Lord. He makes it his habit to feed and clothe the orphans and be good to his kith and kin. In order to attract the attention of the Muslims to this weighty matter, Prophet Muhammed ﷺ has said, “If someone who is held in high esteem by his folks comes to you, be generous to him.” He has also said, “Your Lord, Honor and Glory belong to Him, is ever-Living, Generous, too shy to disappoint any of His servants who plead to Him.”

It is a sign of good manners to habitually forgive the doers of evil deeds, including repeated offenders, and to cover the faults of your brethren in all circumstances. Such generosity of manners is surely more precious than any materialistic generosity, for the latter preserves the body whereas the first sustains the soul. The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ has said, “You will not be able to please all people with your wealth; so, do please them with your good manners.” He has also said, “Allāh, Honored is His Name, is Generous, and He loves good manners and hates a lowly conduct.” The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ has said, “The generous one is close to Allāh, close to [the hearts of] people, close to Paradise, distant from the fire. A miser is distant from Allāh, distant from people, distant from Paradise, close to the fire.”

As for “*al-Akram*,” i.e. the most Generous, surely it is Allāh, the Most Generous of all those who are generous. This Attribute may also bear the same meaning embedded in that of “*al-Kareem*.”

44. *Ar-Raqeeb* الرقيب

Allāh has said, “... and be careful of (your duty to) Allāh through Whom you demand (your rights of) one another, and to the ties of kinship; surely Allāh ever watches over you” (Qur’ān, 4:1).

“*Ar-Raqeeb*” is one of Allāh's Attributes, and He is the Witness Who is never absent from the scene. In language, a *raqeeb* is a vigilante, a watchman who stands to protect and guard. In the army,

the *raqeeb* is the one in the vanguard. *Ar-Raqeeb* is Allāh Who safeguards everyone and everything, the One from Whose knowledge nothing at all can escape. According to one sacred tradition, the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ has said, “Safeguard Muhammed in his household,” meaning safeguard his name and honor it. “*Raqeeb*” also means offspring. The angel who writes down whatever we do and say is also called *raqeeb*: “He does not utter a word except that there is by him someone watching at hand” (Qur’ān, 50:18). *Ar-Raqeeb*, that is, *the* One Who truly ever watches over us, is, of course, Allāh. One Who is *raqeeb* regarding Allāh is one who acknowledges that He oversees whatever we do and say, so he observes his duties towards Him. Allāh, *ar-Raqeeb*, knows our conditions and counts our breath. *Ar-Raqeeb* neither laxes nor forgets, Who is always present and is never absent, Who knows everything and nothing regarding the conditions of His creation can ever escape His knowledge. He manages the affairs of His servants, Who knows what they say, Who watches over His servants, Who observes what they do, Who is familiar with their innermost thoughts.

Narrating the story of Jesus son of Mary, the Almighty quotes Jesus as saying, “... But when You caused me to die, You were the Watcher over them, and You witness all things” (Qur’ān, 5:117). He has also said, “... And Allāh is Watchful over all things” (Qur’ān, 33:52). There are two viewpoints that explain the meaning of *ar-Raqeeb*:

One: Linguistically, He safeguards things, Who watches over everyone, Who guards everyone, Who is free of any oversight or negligence. He takes care of and preserves everything. The Almighty has said, “He does not utter a word except that there is by him a watcher at hand” (Qur’ān, 50:18), meaning an angel who records his deeds and takes note of everything he contemplates, says, or does, while Allāh is *ar-Raqeeb* Who looks after His servants, knows their conditions and whatever they utter.

As regarding observation, it is His saying: “... Surely I (Allāh) am with you both: I hear, and I see” (Qur’ān, 20:46). Regarding

knowledge, it is His saying: “Allāh knows what every female bears, and that of which the wombs fall short of completion, and that in which they increase” (Qur’ān, 13:8). Other such references include:

... And He knows what is in the land and the sea. (6:59)

He knows what goes deep down into the earth and what comes out of it. (57:4)

The other viewpoint says that this word is derived from *irtiqāb*, waiting. Allāh has said, “Wait, therefore; surely they (too) are waiting” (Qur’ān, 44:59). Such a viewpoint is impossible to accept; therefore, it is rejected on the ground that one who waits for something needs to reach its commencement, desiring to find out its outcome. The correct meaning of this latter verse is that Allāh wants His servants to reach out to Him, to make Him the goal of their adoration, submission and humility.

Ar-Raqeeb, then, is the Witness Who is never absent. The virtues of one who watches himself is implied in a tradition wherein the Messenger of Allāh, Muhammed ﷺ, says, “*Ihsān* (goodness) is that you worship Allāh as though you see Him, for if you do not see Him, He surely sees you.”

It is narrated that a man once passed by a young slave tending sheep and pointed to a ewe and said, “Sell me this ewe, young shepherd!” The young slave told him that it was not his; therefore, he could not sell it, whereupon the man said, “Where is your brilliance?! Can't you tell its owner that a wolf ate one of his sheep?” He answered him by saying, “Then where is Allāh?!” The man was very impressed by his answer, so he bought the young slave and set him free, then he bought the herd and gave it to him as a gift. Since then, that man kept repeating “... Then where is Allāh?!” quite often. It is, therefore, one of the good manners of a believer towards Allāh, *ar-Raqeeb*, to keep in mind that Allāh ever watches over him and sees whatever he does. He knows that his self, that is, his *nafs* **نفس**, is his enemy, and that the accursed Satan, too, is another, and that they both seize every opportunity to make him lax and disobey his Lord;

therefore, he must always be on his guard. He must close all the pitfalls in which he may fall and block all the avenues from which Satan may approach him. It is also one of the signs of good manners of a believer in this regard to watch himself and his senses, to keep vigil, and to do whatever he does solely for the achievement of the Pleasure of his Lord in a pure intention, to observe his obligations towards his Muslim brethren, and not to expose the latter's faults to others.

45. *Al-Mujeeb* المجيب

Allāh has said, “And to Thamūd (We sent) their brother Šāliḥ. He said: O my people! Worship Allāh; you have no other god besides Him; He brought you into being from the earth and made you dwell in it; therefore, ask forgiveness of Him, then turn to Him; surely my Lord is Nigh; he ever answers” (Qur’ān, 11:61).

Linguistically speaking, both nouns *ijāba* and *istijāba* mean basically the same, and “*al-Mujeeb*” has two meanings: One is: the One Who answers the pleas. The other is: the One Who grants what He is pleaded for.

Al-Mujeeb, Allāh, responds to the plea of those who plead to Him and helps them, Who favorably answers the supplication of those who supplicate to Him, Who removes the need of those in need and gives them sufficiently. He even gives even before being asked and accepts even prior to being pleaded. He knows the need of those who are in need before they pray Him, and He since eternity knows all their needs, so He has provided them with means to satisfy all their needs: He creates foods and all types of sustenance for them; He creates the tools and the means to get such tools to the hands of those who need them. *Al-Mujeeb* responds to the pleas of those who plead to Him. Since time immemorial, He knew in advance what they needed. He goes to the rescue of those who are in dire need of help, and He does not disappoint anyone who pleads to Him.

This theme recurs quite often throughout the Holy Qur’ān. Examples are:

And Noah called on Us, and most excellent are We to answer the prayer. (37:75)

So their Lord accepted their prayer: That I will not waste the deed of one who does a good deed among you, whether male or female, each one of you being from the other. (3:195)

And Job (Ayyūb) cried out to his Lord: Harm has afflicted me, and You are the most Merciful of the merciful. So We responded to him and removed the harm from him, and We gave him his family and the like (number) of them in addition: a mercy from Us and a reminder to the worshippers. (21:83-84)

Or Who answers the [prayer of] the distressed one when he calls on Him and removes the evil, and Who will make you successors on earth? Is there a god with Allāh? Little is it that you mind! (27:62)

... You sought aid from your Lord, so He answered you: I will assist you with a thousand angels following one another. (8:9)

When My servants ask you concerning Me, then surely I am very near; I answer the prayer of the suppliant when he calls on Me. (2:186)

And your Lord says: Call on Me, I will answer you; surely those who are too proud to worship Me shall soon enter hell abased. (40:60)

For those who respond to their Lord there is goodness, and those who do not respond to Him, had they had all that is on earth and the like thereof with it, they would certainly have offered it for a ransom. (As for) those (latter ones), an evil reckoning shall be theirs, and their abode is hell, and evil, indeed, is the resting-place. (13:18)

O you who believe! Answer (the call of) Allāh and His Prophet when he invites you to that which gives you life, and be informed that Allāh intervenes between man and his heart, and that to Him you shall be gathered. (8:24)

Allāh is capable of responding in various ways. When some of His

friends are in need of something, He satisfies their need, and He may even make some circumstances deliberately hard for them only to test them and raise their status due to their perseverance, and to their thanking Him during the time of ease as well as the time of hardship. So when they almost lose hope, He comes to their rescue with beautiful rewards and with indications of His being pleased with them. Allāh guarantees for His servant that He will respond favorably to his supplication in the way which He knows to be in his best interest, and at the time He chooses, rather than the time chosen by His servant; so, do not lose hope because of His delay in answering your plea, for such a delay may prove to be better for you. Allāh May even opt to grant you better than what you ask Him for; so, plead to Him as one convinced of His favorable response.

The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ used to say, “Plead to Allāh, being convinced of His answer to your pleas, and be advised that Allāh does not respond to the pleas of one who is inattentive, indifferent.” This tradition has been recorded by at-Tirmidhi. He has also said, “No Muslim pleads to Allāh a plea wherein there is no desire for committing a sin nor the severing of the ties of kinship except that Allāh will grant him one of three good rewards: He will either grant him an immediate response, or He may save the rewards for him in the life hereafter, or He may keep its equivalent of evil away from him.” His companions said, “Then we will plead to Him a great deal, indeed.” He said, “Surely Allāh is greater still!”

The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ has said, “When you have a plea, plead to Allāh, and whenever you need help, seek help from Allāh.” In another tradition, he says, “Allāh is too shy to disappoint any of His servants who pleads to Him for something good.”

46. *Al-Wāsi`* الواسع

The Most Exalted and Glorified One has said, “... Wherever you turn, there is Allāh's purpose; surely Allāh is Ample-giving, Knowing” (Qur’ān, 2:115).

Al-Wāsi` is one of Allāh's Attributes, and its root word is derived from *si`a*, spaciousness, expanse, capacity, abundance, plenitude,

etc. One may have an abundance of knowledge if he is acquainted with a good deal of it, or he may have an abundance of means. In his book *An-Nihāya*, Ibn al-Athīr, who discusses Allāh's Attributes, says that *al-Wāsi`* can enrich everyone who is indigent, Whose mercy encompasses everything. His authority never ends; His benevolence is unlimited; His domain is endless. He never stops giving; He is never distracted by knowing something from knowing another, nor by one issue from taking care of another. His knowledge encompasses everything; His might suffices everything. His mercy is spacious; He is independent; His authority is above everything; His knowledge, might, and benevolence are the greatest. He is the One for the meanings of Whose Attributes there can be no limit, Whose knowledge is spacious, and so are His mercy and forgiveness; His domain is tremendous.

The Absolute *al-Wāsi`* is Allāh, Glorified and Exalted is He. There is no shore for the spacious ocean of His knowledge. Had the seas been ink, they would have been consumed before His words can ever be exhausted. There is no end for what He is capable of giving and blessing.

The Holy Qur'ān has indicated that Allāh's knowledge is vast and endless. In Sūrat al-An`ām, the Almighty says, “And his people disputed with him. He said: Do you dispute with me regarding Allāh, and He has, indeed, guided me? And I do not fear in any way those that you set up with Him unless my Lord pleases; my Lord comprehends all things in His knowledge; will you not then mind?” (Qur'ān, 6:80). The Holy Qur'ān has described Allāh's mercy as vast; in Sūrat al-A`rāf it is stated that, “And ordain for us good in this world's life and in the life hereafter, for surely we turn to You. He said: (As for) My chastisement, I will afflict with it whomsoever I please, and My mercy encompasses all things; so I will ordain it (especially) for those who guard (themselves against evil) and pay the *zakāt* and those who believe in Our signs” (Qur'ān, 7:156). In Sūrat Taha, His knowledge is described as vast: “Your only God is Allāh; there is no god but He; He comprehends all things in (His) knowledge” (Qur'ān, 20:98). Other references to the vastness of His knowledge, to His mercy and might, are as follows:

Our Lord comprehends all things in His knowledge; in Allāh do we trust: Lord! Decide between us and our people with the truth, and You are the best of those who decide. (7:89)

Those who bear the Throne and those around Him celebrate the praise of their Lord and believe in Him and ask protection for those who believe (saying): Lord! You encompass all things in mercy and knowledge; therefore, grant protection to those who turn (to You) and follow Your way, and save them from the punishment of hell. (40:7)

And the heavens We raised high with power, and most surely We make things ample. (51:47)

We ought to ponder on Allāh's vast knowledge, for He is the Absolute *al-Wāsi`* Whose Grace has encompassed everything in existence, in fact, even prior to their existence, and even before the existence of time itself, since He has always been for all eternity. His knowledge encompasses everything. Nothing He knows distracts Him from knowing something else. His might overwhelms everything; no issue distracts Him from another. His Hearing encompasses everything; no person's supplication can distract Him from hearing the supplication of another. His benevolence encompasses all His creation; His helping one particular needy person does not prohibit Him from helping another.

One of the ways for learning a code of ethics derived from this Attribute, "*al-Wāsi`*", is that you should include all servants of Allāh in your good treatment and kindness at all times; be gracious to all people. Help them when they seek your help, and treat all of them with the best treatment. A servant of Allāh ought to remember and seek wisdom from the conduct of the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ who was saying his prayers once when he overheard a bedouin supplicating to his Lord saying, "O Allāh! Have mercy on me and on Muhammed, and do not be merciful to anyone else besides us." The Prophet ﷺ said to him, "You have pleaded to Him to limit what is limitless," meaning the mercy of Allāh which has no limits. The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ has also said, "If Allāh grants you an

increase [of His blessings], do give your own self an increase.”

47. *Al-Ḥakeem* الحكيم

Allāh has said, “... And if You forgive them, then surely You are the Mighty, the Wise” (Qur’ān, 5:118).

“Ḥakeem” is a superlative form, a form for the glorification of the One Who has all the wisdom; hence, *al-Ḥakeem* is the very greatest in His wisdom. Allāh is the most wise in creating everything and in perfecting such a creation. His wisdom means His prior knowledge of everything and His bringing everything into existence most wisely and most perfectly.

Wisdom means: the best way of knowing something utilizing the very best of means. “Al-Ḥakeem” carries the same meaning as that of “*al-‘Aleem*.” Nobody knows Allāh except Allāh; therefore, *al-Ḥakeem* cannot be anyone but Allāh: He knows the origins of all things through His eternal and perpetual knowledge which nobody can ever conceive as being liable to extinction.

“*Al-Ḥakeem*” may also mean His being Holy, too Holy to do anything which does not beseem Him. In Sūrat al-Mominoon, Allāh says, “What?! Did you then think that We had created you in vain and that you will not be returned to Us?!” (Qur’ān, 23:115). Some scholars have said that *al-Ḥakeem* is equitable in His assessment, benevolent in His management of affairs, the One Who has determined the measure of everything, the One Whose wisdom is the very ultimate end, the One Who places everything in its right place. Nobody can really appreciate Allāh's wisdom other than Allāh Himself.

Al-Ḥakeem is free from seeking any self-interest, nor can anyone object to anything He does. *Al-Ḥakeem* is adorned with wisdom, and wisdom is knowing the best of things through the best means. The best of everything is Allāh; so, He is the Absolute *al-Ḥakeem*; He knows everything by the very best means of eternal and everlasting knowledge, the knowledge which nobody can conceive as ever coming to naught, nor can there be any doubt about it, and nobody

can be described as such except Allāh.

Some scholars say that wisdom means getting to know the truth for its own sake, and to know goodness in order to act on it. A servant of Allāh, though his portion of knowledge and potential may be little, such shortcoming is evident in him when compared to Allāh's knowledge and might and to the knowledge and ability of the angels. Yet whatever amount human beings have been given is quite significant by the token that Allāh Himself has deemed it great when he said, "... And whoever is granted wisdom is indeed granted a great deal of goodness" (Qur'ān, 2:269). Abraham prayed his Lord for wisdom saying, "Lord! Grant me wisdom" (Qur'ān, 26:83). Allāh said the following about Dāwūd عليه السلام (prophet David): "We granted him wisdom and a clear judgment" (Qur'ān, 38:20). Scholars have said that wisdom means knowledge.

Knowledge may either be knowing what can exist without our choice or doing, which is theoretical knowledge, or it may be knowledge of what can happen by our choice and doing, which is practical knowledge. Theoretical knowledge may either be the means towards an end, or it may be an end by itself. The means, for example, may be the science of logic the deduction of which is determined by what concepts and assertions mankind can conceive in a way which does not permit except a very rare margin of error.

As regarding what is considered as the ultimate end, be informed that things may be classified into three categories: They may either comprise a form, or they actually are not supposed to exist in a certain form, or either case may be applicable to them. What is supposed to be in a form should either be in a particular one, and the science which researches such portion of what exists is called natural science or physics. What ought not be a particular form and ought to be in some other form, the science that researches it is called the science of mathematics. As regarding the other category which is not supposed to be in a particular form at all, the science that researches it is called theology.

As regarding the third kind, the one which may be in a particular

form or may not, the science researching it is called the inclusive science, and it is like the knowledge of the unit, the multiplicity, the causation, the deduction, the completion or the deficiency. All of this falls under the category of theoretical knowledge.

Practical knowledge may either be the researching of the conditions of man regarding his own body, which is called the science of physiology, or his conditions with members of his household, which is called the science of domestic management, or his conditions (ties to, relationship...) with the rest of the world, which is called political science.

The person who personified wisdom in his everyday conduct among people is the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ by the token of this verse of Sūrat Āli-`Imrān: "Certainly Allāh conferred a benefit on the believers when He raised among them a Messenger from among themselves reciting to them His signs and purifying them and teaching them the Book and the wisdom although before then they were surely in manifest error" (Qur'ān, 3:164).

The wisdom in as far as the servants of Allāh are concerned is to say and to do what is right as much as it is humanly possible. Allāh says in Sūrat al-Baqarah, "He grants wisdom to whomsoever He pleases, and whoever is granted wisdom is indeed granted a great deal of good and none but men of understanding mind" (Qur'ān, 2:269). A wise person among people is one who precisely calculates intricate things; he masters them and skillfully executes them. Wisdom is the greatest knowledge, and its greatness depends on the greatness of what is known, and surely there is nothing greater than Allāh. Anyone who gets to know Allāh is wise even if his share of all other secular branches of knowledge is most modest. The ratio of the wisdom of any of Allāh's servants to that of Allāh is like the ratio of such servant's knowledge to that of Allāh, and what a vast difference it is! And what a vast distance it is between both norms of knowledge! Yet despite the huge gap between both matters, wisdom is regarded as the most precious of all types of knowledge and the most fruitful, and anyone who is endowed with wisdom is surely granted a great deal of good.

Deriving a good conduct from the attribute *al-Ḥakeem* requires a servant of Allāh to be wise, that is, to do his best in whatever good deeds he does, and that his condition is pleasing to others, that is, based on following the commandments of Allāh and distancing himself from whatever He has enjoined us to be distant from. He takes extreme care in performing his religious obligations, distancing himself from following his own whims and desires, staying away from any doubtful matter.

The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ has said, “The zenith of wisdom is fearing Allāh.” A wise person is one who indicts his own self and who learns about what will come after death. A feeble person is one who follows his own desires and still wants even more from Allāh. The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ has made many wise statements in this regard. A bedouin once came to the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ and asked him to teach him something good to say. He told him to say, “There is no god except Allāh, the One and only God Who has no partner; Allāh is Great, Greater than everything; Praise, a great deal indeed of Praise, is due to Allāh; Glory to Allāh, Lord of the Worlds; there is neither power nor might except in Allāh, the Honored One, the Wise.” The bedouin said, “All this is for my Lord; what about something for my own self?!” The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ taught him to say, “Lord! I invoke You to forgive me, to have mercy on me, to grant me guidance, to grant me good health, and to grant me an increase in sustenance.”¹

As regarding what some people consider as having “wisdom,” anyone who knows “everything” without knowing Allāh is not worthy of being called wise because he has missed the knowledge of the best and the most significant of everything. One who knows Allāh is a wise person even if his share of all other branches of knowledge is quite modest, even if he stutters or is unable to absorb them. One who knows Allāh is one whose speech will sound different from that of anyone else, one who seldom indulges in

¹Muslim, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, Vol. 4, traditions 33 and 35.

frivolous matters. On the contrary, his speech will be inclusive, and he does not seek any vanishing interest.

48. *Al-Wadood* الودود

The Most Glorified and Exalted One has said, “And He is the Forgiving, the Loving” (Qur’ān, 85:14).

“*Al-Wadood*” is an Attribute derived from the Arabic word “wudd” which conveys the meaning of love and friendship, and it applies to all avenues of goodness. Allāh is “*al-Wadood*” because He loves His servants and they love Him; He says the following in Sūrat al-M’ida: “O you who believe! Whoever among you turns back from his religion, Allāh will bring people whom He loves and who love Him, who are humble before the believers and mighty against the unbelievers....” (Qur’ān, 5:54).

The condition of true love is that it does not increase on account of loyalty, nor does it decrease on account of aversion. *Al-Wadood* ever tries to show His love for His friends by manifesting His knowledge to them. The “*wadood*” person is one who prefers you over all others, who removes from your heart any desire to notice or to love anyone else but him. *Al-Wadood* very much loves His servants, Who tries to be loved even by the sinners through His forgiveness, and by all His creation by sustaining them and granting them sufficiently. Allāh's righteous servants love Him due to their knowledge of His perfection and the perfection of His qualities, and due to His readiness to forgive.

For all these reasons, *al-Wadood* is the Loving and the Beloved One. If a servant of Allāh dives deeply into the depths of the knowledge of Allāh's perfection, the perfection which causes a servant of Allāh to love his Lord more and more, his knowledge will be crystallized, and he will find a great deal of contentment while worshipping Him accordingly. His knowledge of Him will then bear good fruits, and he, the servant of Allāh, will turn to be the one who loves Him. He may also be understood to be the One Who loves His servants and the love for Whom bears good fruits according to the degree of love in the heart of each one of those who love Him. If someone sees

through his heart his Lord to be self-Sufficient, Gracious, Honored, Omnipotent, everyone is in need of Him while He does not need anyone or anything, yet He loves His servants and wishes the best for them and even tries to get closer to them by granting them His favors..., such a person will surely have been blessed with true vision and a clear sight.

One who tries to fashion his conduct according to the inspiration of this Attribute ought to know that he should love all those whom Allāh loves such as the prophets, successors of prophets, and scholars. He should love everything Allāh loves and with which He is pleased such as acts of righteousness, piety, good deeds and exemplary conduct with others.

Such a person should be compassionate towards all people: He loves to see the disobedient returning to their Lord obediently, the righteous remaining firm in their righteousness. He becomes compassionate towards all servants of Allāh, forgiving those who abuse them, being kind to all people especially his family and kin. It is recorded that the holy Prophet ﷺ said to Imām Ali عليه السلام once, “If you wish to surpass those who are close to Allāh, then join your ties with those who have cut them off from you, grant those who deprived you, and forgive those who wrong you.” The attribute “*al-Wadood*” deserves from the servants of Allāh that they wish one another what they wish for their own selves, and even more so! They should prefer others over their own selves. A righteous man once said, “I wish to be a bridge over the fire whereupon people pass [to heaven] unharmed.”

The perfection of such following is that anger, grudge, or harm received do not stop anyone who exemplifies this Attribute in his conduct from favoring others over himself and from being good to them; thus are we taught by our master the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ; have you been taught differently?! Four of his teeth were once broken, and his face was bleeding, yet all of that uncalled for abuse to which he was exposed at the hands of the infidels did not stop him from praying for them or from wishing them good. Ibn `Abbās is quoted as saying that he had heard the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ, who

had just finished his prayers, supplicating thus: “Lord! I plead to You for mercy from You whereby You guide my heart, manage my affairs, unite my kinsfolk, and bring reform to those who are absent from among my kin. I plead to You for security on the Promised Day, for Paradise on the Day of Eternity, in the company of the witnesses who are near to You, those who bow down and prostrate, who fulfill their promise..., for surely You are the Most Merciful One, the Compassionate.”

Regarding the explanation of the verse saying, “... for them will Allāh bring about love” (Qur’ān, 19:96), the “love” referred to here means that Allāh will make His creation love them, that is, He will make His servants experience love and affection on their own account. Supporting this explanation is a tradition wherein the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ says, “If Allāh loves one of His servants, He calls on Gabriel to tell him so, whereupon Gabriel loves that person, so he calls on the residents of the heavens saying, ‘Allāh loves so-and-so; therefore, you, too, should love him,’ whereupon the residents of the heavens respond to him in the affirmative. Love for him will thus be disseminated among the residents of the earth.”

49. *Al-Majeed* المجيد

Allāh has said, “The mercy of Allāh and His blessings be on you, O *Ahl al-Bayt* آل البيت (People of the Prophet's House); surely He is Praised, Glorified” (Qur’ān, 11:73).

In language, *majd* means glory. When combined with good deeds, a person's own prestige will be enhanced, so he will be called glorious. It also conveys the meanings of manliness, generosity, open-handedness, and gracious conduct.

Al-Majeed connotes general honor or abundance of wealth. A man who is *majeed* is extremely generous. *Al-Majeed* is Glorified to the utmost extent of Glorification due to His own merits, qualities, and actions. He is also Great in His attributes, beautiful in His power and authority. *Al-Majeed* has the utmost limit of glory; His benevolence is great. *Al-Majeed* is the great One, the One Whose status is Sublime, Who is most Benevolent. His status is tremendous, Whose

Benevolence is great. He is Honored, His actions are beautiful, He is generous in giving. *Al-Majeed* grants His favors to all others. He is Glorified because of His actions. He is Praised by His creation due to His greatness. He alone has the perfect Honor, the vast kingdom since time immemorial, the One Who does not disappoint anyone. His will (command) is always carried out. His Honor is not earned [by anyone else]. His actions are never abhorred. His benevolence is beautiful, He gives most generously...

All meanings of perfect and inclusive glory are always rendered to Allāh, and all of them combined are but a drop in the ocean of His Glory. Glory is also attached to His prophets, to the successors of the latter, and to the *Mujāhidin*, those who struggle for His sake, fighting their own innermost erroneous inclinations and egotistical inclinations.

Allāh has described the Holy Qur'ān as *majeed*, saying, “Qāf. I swear by al-Qur'ān *al-majeed*...” (Qur'ān, 50:1). The Holy Qur'ān is *majeed* because of the abundance of wealth of knowledge, ethics, and sublime objectives it contains and due to the benefits it has for everyone; so, it is beneficial for man both in the life of this world and in the life to come.

One who personifies in his conduct the essence of this attribute ought to be gracious in all circumstances and be most cultured.

50. *Al-Bā`ith* الباعث

Allāh has said, “And the hour is coming; there is no doubt about it, and Allāh shall resurrect those who are in the graves” (Qur'ān, 22:7).

Al-Bā`ith is an attributes linguistically derived from *ba`th* which means: exciting or stimulating action, something that stirs someone to action, sending someone somewhere, going out seeking revenge, or simply waking up someone. It also means sending a soldier to war: *ba`th* means army. It also means to bring life back to the dead.

The word “*al-Bā`ith*” conveys more than one meaning: 1) The

Almighty will bring His creation back to life on the Day of Judgment as stated in Sūrat al-Ḥajj quoted above. 2) He sends messengers to His servants: In Sūrat ab-Naḥl (Bees), He says, “And certainly We raised in every nation a prophet” (Qur’ān, 16:36). 3) He commissions His servants to perform specific tasks by creating the impulses and motivations in them. 4) He sends aid to His servants who need it and helps the sinners by accepting their repentance.

Al-Bā`ith resurrects those in the graves, stirs things into motion, causes determination, manifests the knowledge of the unknown, brings His servants back to life, resurrects His creation on the Day of Judgment; He records what the breasts conceal. *Ba`th* is the life hereafter. One who knows the real meaning of resurrection knows the real meaning of this Attribute. Most people have numerous general misconceptions and ambiguous presumptions about resurrection. They imagine that death is the end of everything, and that resurrection starts a new creation from nothing, just as the first creation was started. Their belief that death is the end of everything is surely erroneous, for we have come to learn from studying the Sunnah that the grave is either a pit of fire or a piece of Paradise. The dead are either happy or miserable. The happy ones, such as the martyrs, are not dead; rather, Allāh says the following about them in Sūrat Āli-`Imrān (the Family of Amram): “And do not reckon those who are killed in the way of Allāh as dead; nay! They are alive receiving sustenance from their Lord, rejoicing in what Allāh has given them out of His grace, and they rejoice for the sake of those who, (being left) behind them, have not yet joined them, that they shall have no fear, nor shall they grieve” (Qur’ān, 3:169-170). The miserable, too, are the living who are leading a miserable life. For this reason, the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ once addressed the latter in the aftermath of the Battle of Badr saying, “I have found what my Lord has promised me to be the truth; so, have you found what your Lord promised you to be true?” He was asked, “How can you address people who have turned into a stink?” He answered them by saying, “You do not hear me better than they, except that they cannot answer me back.”

Al-Bā`ith is also the One Who inspires determination in the hearts of people to undertake lofty objectives on the battlefields of *jihād*, and to purify themselves. *Al-Bā`ith* plants the will to rise up to lofty endeavors; He removes from your heart the evil whisperings, the hissings of the devils, Who purges the innermost conscience from scruples and purifies the deeds from filth. He sends His messengers to convey His commandments: “Allāh raised prophets as bearers of glad tidings and as warners” (Qur’ān, 2:213). He brings the dead back to life: “Then We resurrected you after your death...” (Qur’ān, 2:56). He wakes up those who sleep by reawakening their bodies: “He it is Who takes your souls at night (while asleep), and He knows what you acquire during the day, then He raises you up therein so that an appointed term may be fulfilled, then to Him is your return, then will He inform you of what you were doing” (Qur’ān, 6:60). Glory, then, to Him for resurrecting the dead and recording what the breasts conceal.

The subject of *ba`th* is referred to in numerous places of the Holy Qur’ān; these are some of them:

Certainly We raised in every nation a prophet saying: Worship Allāh and shun Satan. So there were some of them whom Allāh guided, and there were others against whom error was due; therefore, travel in the land and witness what the end of those who rejected [Our signs] was. (16:36)

And during part of the night pray *Tahajjud* beyond what is incumbent on you so that your Lord may raise you to a position of great glory. (17:79)

Then We raised them up so that We might ascertain which of the two parties was best able to compute the time during which they remained (asleep). (18:12)

Those who disbelieve think they shall never be resurrected. Say: Aye! By my Lord! You shall most certainly be resurrected, then you shall most certainly be informed of what you did, and that is easy for Allāh. (64:7)

The portion of inspiration a servant of Allāh may be able to derive

from the attribute *al-Bā`ith* is his knowledge that a soul first has no knowledge of anything, just like the body. Allāh says the following in Sūrat al-An`ām: “Is he who was dead then We brought him back to life and made for him a light whereby he walks among people like one who is in utter darkness from which he can never come forth? Thus what they did was made fair-seeming to the unbelievers” (Qur`ān, 6:122), and in Sūrat al-Nahl He says, “He sends the angels with the inspiration by His command to whomsoever He pleases of His servants saying: Give the warning that there is no god but I; therefore, be careful (of your duty) to Me” (Qur`ān, 16:2). If a servant of Allāh strives hard to learn, he will be as though he has instilled a new life in his soul after its death, and if he strives to teach the ignorant ones, he will be as though he brought their souls back to life after their death.

51. *Ash-Shaheed* الشهيد

Allāh has said, “Is it not sufficient as regarding your Lord that He is Witness over all things?” (Qur`ān, 41:53).

According to *Mu`jam maqayees al lugha* by Ibn Faris¹, the topic of

¹He is “Abul-Hussain” Ahmed ibn Fāris ibn Zakariyya ibn Muhammed Ibn Habīb al-Qazvīni ar-Razi, a linguist, actually an imām of language and literature. His exact date of birth is unknown, but he died in 395 A.H./1005-06 A.D. There is also disagreement about his homeland. He is said that he was from Qazwin (the Caspian Sea area). He stayed for a period of his life in Hamadan then moved to Ray (ancient Tehran) where he died and to which he is attributed. Yāqūt al-Hamawi quotes Yahya ibn Mandah al-Isbahāni narrating an incident about him in which he says that he sought knowledge of *ḥadīth* in Baghdad. He is one of the most outstanding scholars who wrote in several arts in language, literature, oratory, *Usūl* (principles of jurisprudence) and exegesis. Among his works are: معجم مقاييس اللغة وهو من أشهر كتبه a concordance in linguistic scales which is his most famous work الإتياب والمزاوجة *Al-Ittibā' wal Muzāwaja* ، أخلاق النبي *Ikhtilaf al-Naḥwiyyeen* (grammarians' dispute) ، أفعال الأفراد *Akhlaq al-Nabiyy* (manners of the Prophet) ، الأمثلة الأسجاع *Al-Intisar li* الانتصار للثعلب، *Amthilat al-Asjā'* ، التاج ذكره ابن خير الأندلسي *At-Tāj* to which reference is made by Ibn Khayr al-Andalusi ، تفسير أسماء النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم An explanation of the Prophet's names ، الثلاثه ذكره *Tamām Fasḥ al-Kalām* ، تمام فصيح الكلام

، جامع التأويل - *Al-Thalātha* (the three) to which Brockleman refers, ، الحجر، *Al-Ḥajar* (the stone)، *Al-Ḥamāsa* الحماسة المحدثه، *Ḥilyat al-Fuqahā* حلية الفقهاء، *al-Muḥdatha*، *Khalq al-Insān* خلق الإنسان (في أعضاء الإنسان وصفاته)، *Dārāt al-`Arab* (famous Arab homes)، *Damm al-Khata' fīl Shi'r* ذم الخطأ في الشعر، *Dhakhā'ir al-Kalimāt* ذخائر الكلمات، *Damm al-Gheeba* ذم الغيبة، *Rā'i' ad-Durar wa Rā'iq al-Zahr fī Akhbār Khayril Bashār* سيرة النبي، Biography of the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم (وصفه ياقوت بأنه كتاب صغير الحجم) (Yaqūt al-Hamawī described it as a small book)، *Al-Zuhri's letter to Abdul-Malik ibn Marwan*، الشيبات والحلى - ليس كما، *Al-Shiyāt wal Ḥulī* (كتاب اشتهر به كتاب فقه اللغة)، *Aṣ-Ṣāhibī* (a book made famous by jurists of the language)، *Kifāyat al-Muta'allimeen fī Ikhtilāf an-Naḥwiyyeen*، *Qaṣaṣ an-Nahār wa Samar al-Layl* (منها جزء قصص النهار وسمر الليل)، *Al-Yashkuriyyāt* (some of them are at the Zāhiri Library [in Damascus])، *Maqālat Kalla wama Jā'a Minha fī Kitāb Allāh* مقالة كلا وما جاء منها في كتاب الله، *Mukhtaṣar fī Mu'annath wal Mudhakkar* مختصر في المونث والمذكر (ذكره ابن الأنباري)، *Muqaddima fīl Naḥu* مقدمة في النحو (ذكره ابن الأنباري)، *Al-Mujmal* المجمل وهو من أشهر كتبه، *Al-Lāmāt* اللامات (منه جزء بالمكتبة الظاهرية)، *Ghareeb I'rāb al-Qur'ān* الغريب إعراب القرآن، *Al-'Amm wal Khāl* (mentioned by Yaqūt al-Hamawī)، *Fitiyya Faqih al-Arab* (يسكون الراء)، *Al-Farq* الفرق (بتشديد الياء وفتحها)، *Ma'khath al-'Ilm* في المجمع (ابن حجر العلم (ذكره)، *Mutakhayyar al-Alfāz* مقدمة في الفرائض، *Masā'il fīl Lughā* مسائل في اللغة، *Muqaddima fīl Farā'idh* (نسخته في مكتبة تيمور باشا مستنسخة من المكتبة)، *Na't al-Shi'r aw Naqd al-Shi'r* نعت الشعر أو نقد الشعر، *Al-Nayrooz* (الظاهرية). Many of these books have been in manuscript form for almost one thousand years. The Zāhiriyya Public Library، by the way, to which reference is made above, was founded by the Mamluk sultan al-Zahir Baibars al-Bunduqdari in 676 A.H./1277 A.D. (compare this date with that of the founding of the Bodleian Library, the main research library of the Oxford University in England, of 1602...!). It is located at the Bab al-Bareed (Mail Gate) near the Umayyad Mosque in old Damascus. It used to have very precious references and a huge number of books and manuscripts, and it is regarded as one of the most important Arab public libraries. It was first a school. Its manuscripts and references have been moved to the Central National Library or the Assad Library which is

the verb *shahida*, saw, witnessed, or testified, indicates, linguistically, presence, knowledge, and the dissemination of such knowledge. The attribute “*ash-Shaheed*” is derived from *shuhood*, [eye] witnesses, and it requires knowledge by observation: Allāh is *ash-Shaheed* because He is present and observes all beings whom He has created and whom He will create at any time and in any place, and He is fully aware of such beings; “... and He is with you wherever you may be.” *Ash-Shaheed* is a superlative of *al-Shāhid*, the Witness. In his work *Tāj al-`Aroos*, al-Zubaidi has indicated that *ash-Shaheed* is one of Allāh's Attributes meaning: “the One Who is faithful in His witness and from Whose knowledge nothing at all escapes. His knowledge is the very ultimate regarding all apparent matters, all things to observe and to witness.” The Holy Qur’ān states the following in Sūrat Āli-`Imrān (the family of Amram): “Allāh bears witness that there is no god but He” (Qur’ān, 3:18). *Al-Shāhid* knows and manifests the knowledge of what He knows to a select group from among His most sincere and loyal servants. Allāh has proven His being One through all what He has created. *Ash-Shaheed* is ever-present; from His kingdom nothing at all can be absent; everything is included within the realm of His kingdom.

Addressing the Messenger, Allāh says the following in Sūrat al-Nisā' (Women): “... And We have sent you (O Muhammed!) to mankind as a prophet, and Allāh suffices as Witness (to that)” (Qur’ān, 4:79). That is, Allāh suffices as Witness to all people regarding the truth of your message: He testifies that you are His Messenger who does not have full control over His servants. In Sūrat al-An`ām, He says, “Say: What is the weightiest in testimony? Say: Allāh is Witness between you and me” (Qur’ān, 6:19), that is, were we to rephrase it, “Ask them: What is the greatest witness? Say: Allāh testifies with regard to you and to me.” Allāh ordered His Messenger to ask the disbelievers, “Whose testimony is the greatest and the most accurate?” Then He ordered him to tell them that the greatest is the testimony of the One Whose statement does not permit any lying or erring. The testimony, that is, *shahāda*, of the Almighty is of three

regarded as one of the largest public libraries and the most important, containing thousands of classic references and rare manuscripts.

types: 1) His own telling people in His Book that He has sent the Prophet ﷺ as His Messenger; 2) His own support for His Messenger ﷺ in numerous ways the greatest of which is the Holy Qur'ān, which is the everlasting scholarly and rational miracle. It has been practically proven that all people put together are incapable of producing a chapter or a verse like it; 3) the testimony of previously revealed divine books and the fact that messengers before him had already brought the glad tidings of his Prophethood.

In Sūrat Yūnus, the Great Qur'ān says, “Allāh, therefore, suffices as Witness between us and you that we were quite unaware of your worship (of us)” (Qur'ān, 10:29). It may be paraphrased thus: Allāh suffices as Witness, O polytheists, and as Judge between us and you, for He is fully knowledgeable of our condition and yours, and we were not happy with your own associating partners with Him. In Sūrat at-Tawbah, the Almighty says, “... Allāh and His Prophet ﷺ will witness your deeds, then you shall be brought back to the One Who knows the unseen and the seen, then He will inform you of what you did” (Qur'ān, 9:94), that is, He knows what you hide or manifest, what you conceal or reveal.

The Almighty has repeated the phrase “*`Ālim al ghayb wal shahāda*,” the One Who knows the unseen and the seen, about ten times; among such references are the following:

... His is the kingdom on the Day when the trumpet is blown, [and He is] the One Who knows the unseen and the seen, and He is the Wise, the Aware. (6:73)

The One Who knows the unseen and the seen, the Great, the Most High (is He). (13:9)

The One Who knows the unseen and the seen, so may He be exalted above what they associate (with Him). (23:92)

Such knows the unseen and the seen, the Mighty, the Merciful. (32:6)

Say: O Allāh! Originator of the heavens and the earth Who knows

the unseen and the seen! You judge between Your servants as to that wherein they differ. (39:46)

He is Allāh besides Whom there is no other god, the One Who knows the unseen and the seen; He is the Beneficent, the Merciful. (59:22)

Say: (As for) the death from which you flee, it will surely overtake you, then you shall be sent back to the One Who knows the unseen and the seen, and He will (then) inform you of whatever you did. (62:8)

The believing nation, the nation that believes in Muhammed as the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ, always remembers that its Lord, Allāh, is the Witness over it, and it is also the nation of testimony in every field. Its Lord has said the following about it: “Thus have We made you a medium (just) nation so that you may be the bearers of witness to people, and so that the Messenger may be a bearer of witness to you” (Qur’ān, 2:143).

52. *Al-Ḥaqq* الحق

Allāh has said:

Allāh is the Truth, and He gives life to the dead, and He has power over all things. (22:6)

One of the attributes of Allāh is “*al-Ḥaqq*,” the Truth. His existence is proven to be true and so is His Divinity. He makes the truth manifest by the power of His words, Who supports those whom He loves by His signs. Allāh is the Truth, *al-Ḥaqq*, Who is worthy of being adored, Who is always there and Who never disappears, Whose presence is proven to have always been, since time immemorial, and forever—even before time and above time. His presence is a reality standing on its own merits, and there is no existence except through Him, and by Him, and He never moves and is above motion or anything physical or material. He is the Creator of matter, material, inanimate objects and everything else, so how can He be like them? He permits the truth to manifest itself. He creates everything as His wisdom dictates. He is present in a way

which permits no room for Him to be absent, nor different, nor extinct. Everything that exists is from Him, and to Him is its ultimate end.

Al-Ḥaqq, the Truth, is the antithesis of falsehood. According to one tradition, the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ has said, “*Labbayka Ḥaqqan Ḥaqqā!*” that is, “Here I am, O Truth, O Truthful One, here I am, in obedience to You! Here I am, O the antithesis of falsehood!” Surely He is the truth beyond any doubt.

Allāh has said, “Then are they sent back to Allāh, their Master, the true One” (Qur’ān, 6:62). He has also said,

This is so because Allāh is the Truth, and that which they call on besides Him is falsehood. (31:30)

And Allāh will show the truth to be true by His words. (10:82)

His promise is the very truth; He has said in this regard:

Surely the promise of Allāh is true. (31:33)

Whenever the Prophet ﷺ made *tahajjud* during the night, he would say, “Lord! All Praise is due to You! You are the Lord of the heavens and the earth and everything in them! All Praise is due to You! You are the One Who sustains the heavens and the earth and everything in them! You are the Truth; Your speech is the truth; Your promise is the truth; meeting with You is the truth; Paradise is the truth; Hell is the truth; the Hour [of Judgment] is the truth! Lord! To You have I submitted myself; in You have I believed; on You have I relied; to You have I returned; for Your sake have I disputed with others, based on Your truth have I arbitrated; so, I implore You to forgive my past faults and my future ones, what I have concealed and what I have manifested! You are my Lord! There is no god but You!”

53. *Al-Wakeel* الوكيل

Allāh has said, “... And trust in Allāh, and Allāh suffices as Protector” (Qur’ān, 4:81, 33:3).

“*Al-Wakeel*” is one of the Attributes of Allāh, the Attributes that link whoever repeats them quite often, being aware of their meanings, to the gardens of Allāh, the Truth, Who has all the beauty, perfection, and glory. *Al-Wakeel* is the Sustainer, the One Who has taken on Himself to provide sustenance for His servants. He, and only He, takes charge of all the affairs of those who are in His custody, under His care..., and who is not?! According to linguists, “*al-Wakeel*” is the One to Whom all affairs are entrusted to manage, Who provides His servants with everything they need. In other words, He takes charge of everything. *Al-Wakeel* benevolently looks after His pious servants. He is the One to Whom all affairs are referred, Who makes the truth manifest itself; so, whoever relies on Him will be self-sufficient, and whoever seeks sufficiency from Him will be independent, pleased and happy in the life of this world and in the life to come. Is there happiness greater than that?!

The servants of Allāh entrust their affairs to Him and rely on His benevolence due to their inability to attain what they wish to attain versus His own ability to do so: He takes charge of the conditions of His servants, Who manages them as He pleases. Those who recognize Him will entrust Him to fare with their own affairs. He surely is the only One Who truly fares with His servants as He pleases. If one of His servants entrusts Him to fare with his own affairs, He will beautifully save him the hardship of any task and will grant him more than He grants others; He gives sufficiently to those who rely on Him. He takes care of the affairs of His servants. He initiated the giving to man without the latter having asked Him, and He gave man everything he needed. Whenever man pleads to Him, He directs His attention to him and beautifully looks after him. If he remains on the straight path, He will seal his deeds with the beauty of His guardianship.

Linguistically, a *wakeel* is one on whom one relies; so, this is why it is said that one who relies on Allāh will come to know that Allāh suffices him in as far as his sustenance and affairs are concerned, so he relies on Him and only Him, depending only on Him. The *wakeel* of someone else is the person who efficiently represents him or does on his behalf what he is incapable of doing.

In Sūrat Hūd, Allāh addresses His Messenger Muhammed saying, “You are only a warner, and Allāh is Custodian over all things” (Qur’ān, 11:12), that is, “Your responsibility is simply to convey the Message, to warn against the dire consequences of rejecting it, to invite people to accept it, while Allāh manages the affairs of His servants and watches over them, something which you do not have to do, since it is the responsibility of the Creator towards His creatures, and it is not a topic to be taught or a message to be conveyed.”

Narrating the tale of Ya`qoob (Jacob) and his sons, the Almighty says in Sūrat Yousuf (Joseph), “And when they gave him their pledge, he said: Allāh is the One in Whom trust is placed as regarding what we say” (Qur’ān, 12:66). In Sūrat al-Aḥzāb, the Almighty addresses His Messenger Muhammed saying, “The Lord of the east and the west; there is no god but He; therefore, take Him for Protector” (Qur’ān, 73:9). The address here is repeated twice to the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ; therefore, the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ used to quite often remember his Lord, *al-Wakeel al-Hāfiẓ*, reminding his companions and followers never to neglect mentioning this Gracious Attribute during the time of trouble, hardship and affliction. The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ once said, “How can I feel happy knowing that the one charged with blowing the horn (i.e. archangel Isrāfil) has picked the horn and bent his forehead listening to the order to blow it?” His companions asked him, “Then what are we supposed to say, O Messenger of Allāh?” He said, “Say: *Ḥasbuna Allāh wa ni`mal-Wakeel* (Allāh suffices us, and Great is the Guardian)!”

The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ used to plead to his Lord, *al-Wakeel*, on every occasion saying, “Lord! I implore You not to permit me to rely on my own self even for the twinkling of an eye else I should surely perish.” According to one *qudsi* tradition, the Almighty, addressing His Messenger, says, “You are My servant and Messenger, and I have named you *al-Mutawakkil* [one who trusts in and relies on his Lord]; therefore, the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ was ordered by his Lord to do so; i.e. to always rely on Him. In Sūrat

Āli-`Imrān, He says, "... so once you have made up your mind, place your trust in Allāh; surely Allāh loves those who trust (in Him)" (Qur'ān, 3:159), that is, "Having consulted your companions regarding a matter, you must rely on Allāh in effecting it, and have confidence in His assistance and help, for He is *al-Wakeel*, and He is your Guardian." Allāh loves His servants who turn to Him and rely on Him provided they exert some effort and exhaust the means available to them.

Allāh has made His Messenger a role model to emulate in the reliance on his Lord, for Allāh has ordered His believing servants to be among those who rely on Him. In Sūrat Yūsuf, He says, "Judgment is only Allāh's; on Him do I rely, and on Him let those who are reliant rely" (Qur'ān, 12:67). In another verse of the same chapter, He says, "And what reason do we have not to rely on Allāh, and He has, indeed, guided us in our ways? And certainly we would bear with patience your persecution of us, and on Allāh should the reliant rely" (Qur'ān, 14:12). In 39:38 we read, "Say: Allāh suffices me; on Him do the reliant rely" (Qur'ān, 39:38).

One who chooses Allāh as his Guardian is one who has also to guard Allāh's interest in his own self by observing His rights and obligations and whatever He has required him to do, so he should be the opponent of his own evil-insinuating self day and night, without laxing for a moment, nor falling short even for the twinkling of an eye.

54. *Al-Qawiyy* القوي and 55. *al-Mateen* المتين

The Almighty has said, "Surely Allāh bestows sustenance, the Lord of Power, the Strong One" (Qur'ān, 51:58).

"*Al-Qawiyy*" and "*al-Mateen*" are two of Allāh's Attributes and are mentioned in this order. They share the same basic meaning.

Linguistically, "*al-Qawiyy*" is derived from *quwwa*, strength, power, might, ability, potency, prowess, etc. It is in lexicons indicative of strength versus weakness. Strength in this sense describes a complete and perfect might. Since He is very Strong, Allāh has the

most perfect and absolute might and perfection; He has said, "... Surely your Lord is the Strong, the Mighty" (Qur'ān, 11:66). "*Al-Qawiyy*" means: the One Whose strength is unlimited and before Whom the strength of His foe dwarves, and so does the greatness of anyone held as great. Allāh has granted the angels a mighty power whereby one angel, for example, can crush a mountain or turn cities upside down. Yet such an angel, or his like, fears Allāh and His Might, trembles in awe for fear of His Greatness. *Al-Qawiyy* is the One Whose Might and Greatness are perfect: He subdues and is never subdued; He helps and is never helped; His Might is superior to the might of anyone else. It is also said that He never suffers any weakness in Himself, in His qualities or actions, and His strength is indicative of His complete Might.

There are many Qur'ānic verses that describe Allāh as the Strong One; among them are the following,

O had only those who are unjust seen when they witness the chastisement that power is wholly Allāh's, and that Allāh is severe in requiting (evil)! (2:165)

And wherefore did you not say, when you entered your garden: It is as Allāh has pleased; there is no power save in Allāh? (18:39)

As regarding 'Ād¹, they were unjustly proud in the land, and they said: "Who is mightier than we are?" Did they not see that Allāh Who created them is mightier than them, and that they denied Our signs? (41:15)

When we discern the previously quoted glorious verses, we find the Attribute "*al-Qawiyy*" existing in 8:52 and 40:22 as the One Who is severe in requiting evil. Seven times has the Attribute "*al-Qawiyy*"

¹The people of 'Ād were Arabs who lived in upper Ḥijāz near the area where the people of Thamūd, also Arabs, used to live. Prophet Hud was sent to them; they did not heed his warning, so they were annihilated. As for the people of Thamūd, these used to live in Wādi al-Qura in the 8th century B.C.

been combined with the Attribute “*al-`Azeez*”; strength is not suited except for those who are honorable. Might is accompanied by severity.

The root word, *matāna*, connotes solidness with expansion and extension. It may be applied to a solid rock, or to a distance traversed. *Al-Mateen* is *al-Qawiyy*, the Strong One Who can do whatever He pleases, Who does not need an army to enforce His authority. He needs no help, nor supporters, nor assistants. Rest your hope on none besides Him. *Al-Mateen* is the One Whose Might is perfect; nothing in the heavens nor on earth can stand in His way. He is Allāh Who affects His will, Whose Might is eternal; He affects everything yet nothing can affect Him.

56. *Al-Waliyy* الولي

Allāh has said, “Allāh is the Guardian (*al-Waliyy*) of those who believe (Qur’ān, 2:257).

Al-Waliyy connotes closeness, nearness, one who may be an ally, a neighbor, a guardian, a relative, etc. It also means the supporter, the beloved one.

Allāh has said, “Allāh is the Guardian of those who believe” (Qur’ān, 2:257). Quoting Joseph (prophet Yousuf عليه السلام), He has said, “You are my Guardian in this life and in the life hereafter” (Qur’ān, 12:101). Quoting the believers, He has said, “You are our Patron; so, help us against the unbelieving people” (Qur’ān, 2:286), and, “Then are they sent back to Allāh, their Master, the True One” (Qur’ān, 6:62). He has also said, “That is so because Allāh is the Protector of those who believe, and because the unbelievers shall have no protector” (Qur’ān, 47:11).

Allāh is the Guardian of His servants. A good servant of Allāh is also a friend of His. The Exalted One has said, “Surely the friends of Allāh shall have no fear, nor shall they grieve” (Qur’ān, 10:62). The word “*waliyy*” simultaneously conveys the meanings of a master and a slave, a supporter, a neighbor, a cousin, an ally, a guardian... The common denominator in the meaning of all these connotations

is nearness. A *waliyy* is one who is near to someone else physically and figuratively. The Almighty has said, “*Awla laka fa awla*” (Qur’ān, 75:34), that is, “Nearer to you (is the destruction) and nearer,” a clear warning meaning: “It (destruction) has come close to you, and that against which I have warned you has almost reached you; therefore, beware!”

This proves that the root word of this Attribute is derived from nearness, and this meaning is met in the case of a slave, a supporter, a cousin, an ally, or a guardian. In all these cases, there are situations which necessitate nearness required for proximity and communication. If this is proven, His being *al-Waliyy* of His servants is indicative of His being near to them. The Almighty has said, “... And He is with you wherever you are” (Qur’ān, 57:4). He has also said,

... And We are nearer to him than his life-vein. (50:16)

Nowhere is there a secret counsel between three persons except that He is their fourth. (58:7)

Whoever repeats this Attribute, realizing its great meanings, must be a friend of Allāh. Any friend of Allāh is also a friend of people, Allāh's servants. He looks after them, managing their affairs, and so on. Allāh says, “Believing men and women are guardians of one another” (Qur’ān, 9:71). Whoever aspires to be close to the Almighty will find Him willing to be his friend too, and whoever turns away from Allāh, Allāh will turn away from him, and Satan will welcome him with open arms.

57. *Al-Hameed* الحميد

The Almighty has said, “O people! You are the ones who stand in need of Allāh, while Allāh is the self-Sufficient, the Praised One” (Qur’ān, 35:15).

The root word of “*al-Hameed*” is *hamd* which means: praise, something more general than thanking. *Al-Hameed* is also *al-Maḥmūd*, the Praised One. Allāh is *al-Hameed* due to praising His own Self since time immemorial, and also due to His servants praising Him. His qualities, such as being Glorified and Exalted, are

due to the fact that those who mention His Attribute glorify and exalt it. *Ḥamd* in this context means enumerating or the attempt to enumerate the qualities of perfection conceived by those who praise Him. *Al-Ḥameed* grants you success and compliments you for it; He wipes out your sins and does not embarrass you by exposing them. He is Praised due to His merits.

One whose beliefs, conduct, speech and action are praiseworthy is called *Ḥameed*. Such a description fits only the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ and those whose ranks from among Allāh's prophets are close to his, as well as others such as the friends of Allāh, and the scholars. Each one of these is *ḥameed* with regard to his beliefs, conduct, deeds and statements.

58. *Al-Muḥṣi* المحصي

Allāh has said, “So that He may ascertain that they have truly delivered the messages of their Lord, and He encompasses what is with them, and He records the number of all things” (Qur’ān, 72:28).

The root word of “*Al-Muḥṣi*” is *ihsā'* which means: counting, computing, conducting a census, taking inventory..., etc. Linguistically, it also means to tolerate or to be able to handle. It is also used to describe a tract of land where there is a large quantity of pebbles or stones.

Allāh is *al-Muḥṣi* Who counts what we do and readies it for the Day when we meet Him, that is, the Day of Judgment, the day of *hisāb*, accounting or reckoning, the day of reward or punishment. *Al-Muḥṣi* knows all precise and minute matters, the secrets of what is decreed. He sees what is apparent and is fully knowledgeable of what is hidden. He counts the acts of obedience to Him, knows everything, counts our breath and is acquainted with our insinuations. He is knowledgeable of all beings in existence, when they move around or when they are still, and with all their affairs and deeds.

This Attribute's meaning and derivations exist in several places; here are some examples:

Certainly He has a comprehensive knowledge of them, and He has numbered them a (comprehensive) numbering. (19:94)

Surely We shall give life (back) to the dead, and We record what they have sent forth before and what they leave behind, and of all things have We taken account in a clear Book. (36:12)

And We have recorded everything in a book. (78:29)

59. *Al-Mubdi* المبدئ

Allāh, Glory and Exaltation are His, has said, "... As We originated the first creation, so shall We reproduce it, a promise (binding on Us); We shall surely bring it about" (Qur'ān, 21:104).

Both "*al-Mubdi*" and "*al-Mu`eed*" are among Allāh's Attributes, and most of those who have discussed them have dealt with them together, jointly, in combination.

In Sūrat al-A`rāf, we read the following: "Say: My Lord has enjoined justice, and set your faces upright at every time of the prayers and call on Him, being sincere to Him in obedience; just as He brought you forth in the beginning, so shall you also return (to Us)" (Qur'ān, 7:29). And in Sūrat an-Naml (Ants), we read: "Or Who originates the creation then reproduces it, and Who gives you sustenance from the heavens and from the earth? Is there a god with Allāh? Say: Bring your proof if you are truthful" (Qur'ān, 27:64). In Sūrat al-`Ankabūt, we read this verse: "Say: Traverse the earth and see how He makes the first creation, then Allāh creates the latter creation; surely Allāh has power over all things" (Qur'ān, 29:20). Sūrat al-Rūm (Romans) mentions these Attributes in two places:

Allāh originates creation, then He reproduces it, then to Him you shall all be brought back. (30:11)

He it is Who originates the creation then reproduces it, and it is easy for Him, and His are the most exalted Attributes in the heavens and the earth, and He is the Mighty, the Wise. (30:27)

In Sūrat al-Burūj, we read: “Surely He it is Who originates and reproduces” (Qur’ān, 85:13).

Linguistically, the root word of this Attribute means to start, begin, initiate, and the like. Allāh starts, begins, initiates the creation of all beings and brings them into existence. In Sūrat Saba’, we read the following: “... Falsehood shall vanish and shall not come back” (Qur’ān, 34:49). This verse may be paraphrased thus: “What can falsehood initiate, and what can it bring back?”

Al-Mubdi has brought the cosmos into being without a prior model. He is the One Who created all the worlds in a perfect manner, Who initiates the giving to and the assistance of His servants, proving Himself as the best to rely on.

One who remembers the Attribute “*al-Mubdi*” ought to seek His forgiveness whenever he remembers it and to always remain attentive while supplicating to Him.

60. *Al-Mu`eed* المعيد

Allāh has said, “Surely He it is Who originates and reproduces, and He is the Forgiving, the Loving” (Qur’ān, 85:13-14).

Linguistically, the root word of this Attribute means: to return, to go back. We supplicate thus: “Lord! We plead to You to grant us a return to Your House,” that is, to go back to the Ka’ba after having visited it or after having been there. A man who is *mu`eed* is one who is knowledgeable of certain issues/topics, etc. *Al-Ma`ād* means: the Day of Judgment, of the Return to the Almighty. According to one particular tradition, the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ has supplicated saying, “... And make my abode in the hereafter good, for to it shall I return.” It is narrated that Gabriel asked the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ once, “O Muhammed! Do you have a nostalgic feeling for your place of birth, for your homeland (meaning Mecca, where the Prophet ﷺ was born)?!” He answered him in the affirmative, whereupon Gabriel quoted the Qur’ānic verse saying, “Most surely He Who has made the Qur’ān binding on you will bring you back to the destination” (Qur’ān, 28:85). The Prophet ﷺ migrated from his

birthplace, Mecca, to Medīna in 623 A.D. and could not go back to it till he conquered it with his troops in the year 630 A.D., so he stayed away from home for seven years.

Speaking of nostalgia..., the author of this book left his home country, Iraq, in 1971 to teach in Saudi Arabia where he had his Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL), applied to study for a graduate degree and was accepted by three American universities, so he flew from Saudi Arabia to Lebanon in 1972, from there to Italy, and from Italy to the United States. He could not return home till after the fall of the Saddami regime in April of 2003..., a regime which he fought with his pen and all his resources and never received any recognition for it. He returned home to see his country pillaged, ruined, looted by everyone, foreigners and natives, neighbors and “friends”. He saw how government jobs were treated as commodities, bought, sold, auctioned and traded, where qualifications and merits weighed nothing compared to party and bloc loyalty. Because he did not belong to any political party or bloc, he could not get any government job till this moment, and we are now in the year 2011, while Iraq remains suffering from this pathetic condition, and only Allāh knows if there will be any improvement. The author stayed all those long years trapped in the United States, home away from home and a shelter from oppression. Some Internet sites have posted his story, his Memoirs. You probably can make a good documentary movie (film) about it because it has been so eventful and, *Alḥamdu-Lillāh*, so fruitful.

Al-Mu`eed brings life back to the dead. He gathers all beings for the Judgment Day together, lifting the veils from them and rewarding or punishing them, each according to what he/she had said and done. He tries them about how they fared with the blessings which He bestowed on them. Allāh will cause all things (beings as well as inanimate objects) to come to naught, then He will bring them back again into existence: “Say: The One Who brought them into existence at first will give life [back] to them, and He is Cognizant of all creation” (Qur’ān, 36:79).

We ought to return to Allāh regarding everything, and we have to

bear in mind that Allāh created us when we were nothing at all; He determines our destiny.

61. *Al-Muhyi* المحيي

Allāh has said, “Allāh gives life and causes death, and Allāh witnesses whatever you do” (Qur’ān, 3:156).

Allāh surely brings life to the bodies when He rejoins their souls to them. *Al-Muhyi* creates life and grants it to whomsoever He pleases. He creates people out of nothing, then He brings them back to life when the Day of Judgment approaches after their death. He brings life into the hearts of those who know through the light of His knowledge: “Is he who was dead then We raised him to life and made for him a light whereby he walks among people like one who is in utter darkness from which he cannot come out?” (Qur’ān, 6:122). Allāh gives life to the sperm and to the leech-like clot. He causes rain to pour out of the clouds in order to bring life thereby to a dead land.

References to Allāh bringing life back to the dead are numerous throughout the Holy Qur’ān; here are some of them:

So We said: Strike him (the dead corpse) with part of it (the sacrificed cow); thus does Allāh bring the dead to life, and He shows you His signs so that you may understand. (2:73)

Allāh gives life and causes death, and Allāh sees whatever you do. (3:156)

Say: O people! Surely I am the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ to you all, [the Messenger] of Him to Whom the kingdom of the heavens and the earth belongs; there is no god but He; He brings (beings/things) to life and causes death; therefore, believe in Allāh and in His Messenger, the *ummi* Prophet who believes in Allāh and in His words, and follow him, so that you may walk in the right way (Qur’ān, 7:158).

Allāh's is the kingdom of the heavens and the earth; besides Allāh you have neither guardian nor helper. (2:107)

He gives life and causes death, and to Him you shall be brought back. (10:56)

He it is Who gives life and causes death, and in His (control) is the alternation of the night and the day; do you not then understand? (3:80)

He brings forth the living from the dead and the dead from the living and gives life to the earth after its death; thus shall you be brought forth. (30:19)

One of His signs is that He shows you the lightning for fear and for hope and sends down water from the clouds, then He gives life therewith to a land after its death (barrenness); most surely there are signs in this for people who understand. (Qur'ān, 30:24)

He it is Who gives life and causes death; so, when He decrees an affair, He only says to it: Be!, and it is. (40:68)

Or have they taken guardians besides Him? But Allāh is the Guardian, and He gives life to the dead, and He has power over all things. (42:9)

There is no god but He; it is He Who gives life and causes death, the Lord and Cherisher of yourselves and of your ancestors of old. (44:8)

A believer ought to adorn his conduct by remembering this Attribute quite often so that Allāh may bring light into his heart through knowledge. His soul will then glow with the mysteries of manifestation. He should particularly remember Him as such in the depth of the night.

62. *Al-Mumeet* المميت

Allāh has said, "He it is Who makes (men) laugh and makes (them) weep, and He it is Who causes death and grants life" (Qur'ān, 53:43-44).

Death is the antithesis of life. A wind dies when it stands still. A human dies when he sleeps; sleep is called death by way of analogy:

It causes the faculties of reason and almost all other bodily movements to stop. The *mawāt* is the land which was never tilled. One whose heart dies is dumb, stupid, idiotic, the warmth of his reason cooled down and died out.

Al-Mumeet, the Almighty, decrees death for whomsoever He pleases; none causes death except He. He has subdued His servants by death, causing them to go back to the earth from which He had created them to be covered with dust...

Al-Mumeet has caused the heart of sinners to die because of going against His will. He is the Creator of death. He has caused the tyrants to die out of His mercy for the living. He causes the oppressors to die on account of their disrespect for Him. He causes the land to die, rendering it barren, growing no vegetation, then He brings it back to life when it produces. He brings to life His Sunnah by causing His prophets to inherit it from their predecessors, and He causes the death of innovations through the life of knowledge.

Once, the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ performed the *hajj* then stood over the *Ṣafa*, overlooking the House, the Ka'ba. Then he made three *takbeers* saying, "There is no god except Allāh, the One and only God; there is no partner with Him; His is the kingdom; to Him is all Praise due; He brings to life and causes death; in His hand is all goodness, and He can do anything at all."

Abū Dharr al-Ghifāri, may Allāh be pleased with him, is quoted as saying that whenever the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ was ready to go to bed at night, he would say, "In Your Name do we die and live," and whenever he woke up, he would say, "All Praise is due to Allāh Who has brought us back to life after having caused us to die, and to Him is our final return."

63. *Al-Ḥayy* الحي

The Almighty has said, "... as for the next abode, that most surely is the (real) life, had they only known!" (Qur'ān, 29:64). He has also said, "And rely on the ever-Living Who never dies" (Qur'ān, 25:58).

Life is the antithesis of death. Allāh brings life back to a “dead” land: He causes vegetation to grow in it; He brings it life through rain. When we discuss it as an Attribute of the Almighty, it means that He is the ever-Living Who is self-Sustaining since time immemorial and will continue to be so forever. Every living being besides Him is not alive on its own; it does not by itself sustain its life; rather, its life is sustained by *al-Ḥayy*. *Al-Ḥayy* never dies. The Holy Qur’ān states the following in Sūrat al-Zumar: “Surely you shall die, and so shall they” (Qur’ān, 39:30).

Al-Ḥayy is the Doer, the Aware; any deed without an origin or awareness is dead. The least degrees of awareness is awareness of one's own self. Anything which is not aware by itself is a dead inanimate object. Allāh is the Absolute Living One, and everyone and everything that live besides Him is alive according to the extent of its awareness.

Anas ibn Mālik¹ has said, “I was once sitting with the Messenger of

¹Anas ibn Mālik ibn Nadar al-Khazraji Al-Ansāri أنس بن مالك بن النضر الخزرجي الأنصاري (born c.612 and died 709 or 712 A.D.) was a well-known *ṣaḥābi* (companion) of Prophet Muhammed ﷺ. He is said as having been born around the year 612 and died in 709, but some sources provide his date of birth as 606 and of his death as 714 A.D. He was an Ansār of the Banū Khazraj, and he is not to be confused with Mālik ibn Anas, the last of the Companions of the Prophet who died in Basra in 93 A.H. at the age of 103. P. 177, Vol. 1, of Ibn al-Athīr’s encyclopedia titled *Usd al-Ghāba*, his name is given as Anas ibn Mālik ibn al-Nadar ibn Damdam ibn Zayd ibn Harām ibn Jundab ibn ‘Āmir ibn Ghanm ibn Adiy ibn al-Najjār ibn Tha’labah ibn Amr ibn al-Khazraj ibn Hārithah al-Ansāri al-Khazraji al-Najjāri, of Banū Adiy ibn al-Najjār. He is described in this reference as a servant of the Messenger of Allāh, and he used to be proud of it. In his childhood, he used to meet with the mother of Abdul-Muttalib, Prophet Muhammed’s grandmother, namely Salma daughter of Amr ibn Zayd ibn Asad ibn Khadash ibn Āmir. His *kunya* was “Abū Ḥamzah”; he was given this *kunya* by the Prophet. His mother was Umm Sulaym daughter of Milhān. When the Prophet made his migration to Medīna in 622 A.D., Anas was ten years old. This puts his date of birth in 612 A.D. as stated above. He served the Messenger of Allāh for ten years and narrated a number of *aḥādīth*.

Allāh ﷻ in our circle when a man was still performing his prayers. After having bowed down, prostrated and made the *tashahhud*, he supplicated to his Lord saying, 'Lord! I plead to You by the very fact that to You is all Praise due; there is no god but You; You are the One Who gives without reminding the takers, Who created the heavens and the earth; O You Who has all the Honor and all the Glory! O ever-Living One, O Sustainer! I plead to You...' whereupon the Prophet ﷺ said, 'He surely has invoked Allāh by His Greatest Attribute: He answers favorably when He is asked thereby, and He gives when invoked.'

Al-Mumeet causes your heart to die when you fail to remember Him, and your soul to die when you continuously permit yourself to slip away from His right path, practicing no self-control, and your mind to die when you permit your desires to take control of yourself. *Al-Muhyi* brings life to the hearts of those who know and who willingly submit to Him, while *al-Mumeet* causes the [spiritual] death of those who go against His will.

64. *Al-Qayyūm* القيوم

Allāh has said, "Alīf, Lām, Mīm. Allāh, (there is) no god but He, the ever-Living, the self-Subsisting, the One through Whom all things subsist" (Qur'ān, 3:1-2).

One who is *qayyim* is a master and organizer of affairs. The "*qayyim*" creed is the Hanafī faith. The day of *qiyāma* is the Day when everyone will stand before Allāh, Lord of the Worlds, for judgment. *Al-Qayyūm* is never created; He manages all affairs.

Al-Qayyūm exists absolutely on His own, not through others, while every living being exists through Him and because of Him. Nothing, no life whatever, can ever be sustained without Him. *Al-Qayyūm* is the ever-Lasting, the Eternal Who never suffers extinction. He affects justice and equity, Who is self-Sustaining, Who never sleeps.

According to Abdullāh ibn `Abbās, whenever the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ used to stand up to perform his night prayers, he would say, "Lord! All Praise is due to You! You are the Lord of the

heavens and the earth! All Praise is due to You! You are the *Qayyūm* of the heavens and the earth and everything in them; all Praise is due to You! You are the Light of the heavens and the earth; all Praise is due to You! You are the King in the heavens and the earth; all Praise is due to You! You are the Truth; Your promise is true, the meeting with You is true, Your speech is the truth; Paradise is true; the Fire is true; the prophets ﷺ are truthful; Muhammed ﷺ is truthful, and the Hour is true! Lord! To You have I submitted; in You have I believed; on You have I relied; to You is my return; for Your sake do I dispute; Your judgment do I seek; so, I implore You to forgive my sins, the ones I have committed and the ones I may commit in the future, what I have concealed and what I have declared, for You are the One Who advances and Who postpones; there is no god but You, and there is no strength nor might except in Allāh.

According to another tradition, he has invoked His Maker saying, “O *Ḥayy*! O *Qayyūm*! We solicit Your help by Your mercy! Lord! I invoke You to mend my affairs, all of them, and not to permit me to rely on my own self even for a twinkling of an eye, nor for a shorter period, nor on anyone from among Your creation.”

Imām Ali عليه السلام has said, “During the Battle of Badr, I participated in the battle for some time, then I came to the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ to see what he was doing, and I found him making *sajda* while repeating, ‘O *Ḥayy*! O *Qayyūm*!’ So I went back to the battlefield, then I came back to him and I saw that he was still repeating the same words. I kept going there and coming back to him, and he was still doing exactly the same thing till Allāh granted us victory.”

Abdullāh ibn `Abbās is quoted as saying that the Greatest of all Attributes of Allāh is *al-Ḥayy al-Qayyūm*. Anyone who truly realizes that He, Glory to Him, is the *Qā'im*, *Qayyim*, *Qiyām* and *Qayyūm* will never detach his heart from loving the Creator.

Al-Qayyūm connotes His independence and the dependence of all others on Him, that He does not need anyone while everyone needs Him.

Allāh, Glory to Him, is the Only *al-Ḥayy al-Qayyūm*: He exists on His own, whereas everything that exists depends on Him to continue existing. So rely on *al-Qayyūm* besides Whom you need no other supporter, nor is there anyone else besides Him who can sustain you, nor can anyone else teach you whatever you need to know.

65. *Al-Wājid* الواجد

Allāh has said, “And whoever does evil or acts unjustly against his own soul then asks forgiveness of Allāh, he shall find Allāh Forgiving, Merciful” (Qur’ān, 4:110).

The root word of “*al-Wājid*” is “*jidda*”, abundance and independence. *Al-Wājid* is the most Knowing: “And [did He not] find you lost and guide you?” (Qur’ān, 93:7); “... And there he finds Allāh, so He pays him back his reckoning in full” (Qur’ān, 24:39). The phrase “he finds Allāh” means “he finds out that Allāh...” *Al-Wājid* has everything; He lacks nothing; He is never incapable of doing whatever He pleases. *Al-Wājid* is the One from Whose knowledge nothing at all escapes; He does not overlook anything at all. He is the opposite of one who has lost everything. *Al-Wājid* lacks neither necessary things nor any of the requirements related to Divinity and its perfection. He is none but Allāh, the Most Exalted One. In such sense, He, and He alone, is the Absolute *al-Wājid*. Anyone besides Him who may have some of the attributes of perfection while still lacking a few things is not called *wājid* at all.

Al-Wājid has with Him everything He wants and desires; He can affect His decree; He knows everything and He determines everything; He is capable of doing everything; nothing is beyond His reach or might; His status is Sublime. He is the Most Honored; His Might is the most perfect; He gives abundantly and generously.

The root word of this Attribute has many other meanings such as: finding out something through the power of the senses, the reaching for a point or a goal, the existence of something, the mental realization.

66. *Al-Mājid* المايد

The Almighty has said, "... the handiwork of Allāh Who has made everything thoroughly" (Qur'ān, 27:88).

The root word of this Attribute is "*majd*", a noun meaning glory and honors. A man may be said to be *mājid* if he has descended from parents known to have established a deeply rooted reputation of glory and honors. A *mājid* person is very highly distinguished; he quite often showers others with his favors.

The Attribute "*al-Mājid*" means absolute perfection and dazzling glory. He is Beautiful in His qualities and actions. He treats His servants most graciously, most generously, manifesting His Greatness to them through the light of His compassion. Among our supplications is this one:

Lord! You are *al-Mājid al-Majeed*, the Doer of whatever pleases You! We plead to You to grant us security on the Promised Day; Glory to the One Who has been Gracious unto His servants through His Glory and Honors and is distinguished thereby! Glory to the One Who is Great, Whose Honor is Great, Whose Generosity is vast!

The Attribute "*al-Mājid*" underscores the meaning of the Attribute "*al-Wājid*," thus stressing their common meaning of independence. Abū Dharr al-Ghifārī, may Allāh be pleased with him, has quoted the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ quoting, in turn, his Lord saying, "O servants of Mine! You are all sinners except those whom I have healed from sinning; therefore, seek My forgiveness so that I may forgive you by My might. Whoever among you comes to know that I am capable of forgiving, and he seeks My forgiveness, I shall forgive his sins and overlook them. You are all to perish except those whom I guide; therefore, seek My guidance so that I may guide you. You are all poor except those whom I enrich; therefore, ask Me so that I may grant you sustenance. O servants of Mine! If the first of you and the last, whatever is moist with you and whatever is dry, the living among you and the dead, should ever collectively become as pious as the most pious person among My servants, it will not increase My domain as much as the weight of the wing of a

mosquito. And if they all become as wretched as the worst wretch among My servants, it will not decrease My domain as much as the weight of the wing of a mosquito. If the first of you and the last, the moist with you and the dry, the living and the dead, were to ask Me, it will not decrease what is with Me in anything at all just as any of you may pass by a sea shore and immerse a needle therein then takes it out. This is so because I am *al-Mājid*; I do whatever I please; My giving is only a word: Whenever I desire something, I say to it 'Be!' and it is."

This Attribute instills in the hearts of the faithful the sincere desire to treat others with forgiveness, clemency, and patience. One should speak kindly to them, smile to them, and remove the dissension from among them. He should spend his wealth for the good of the poor, and he should be humble and kind to the weak among them. He should treat all people as though they were his own family members and brethren.

67. *Al-Wāḥid* الواحد

Allāh has said, "And your Lord is One (and Only) Lord! There is no god but He" (Qur'ān, 2:163). He has also said, "Say: He, Allāh, is One" (Qur'ān, 112:1).

Linguistically, "*al-Wāḥid*" means: the One Who does not socialize with people nor keeps them company. To believe in *Tawḥīd* is to believe that there is no partner at all with Allāh in His authority, and that being One is a quality of His which nobody else shares with Him.

Tawḥīd means recognition of the Unity of the One Who alone manages the affairs of His servants. None creates, nor sustains, nor grants, nor withholds, nor brings back to life, nor causes death, nor manages the affairs of the domain outwardly or inwardly, except Allāh. Whatever He wills comes to be, and whatever He does not never will. Not even an atom moves without His knowledge; nothing takes place without His will. No leaf falls down without His knowledge. Nothing escapes His knowledge, not even as much as the weight of an atom in the heavens or the earth, nor smaller than

that nor bigger: His knowledge encompasses everything. His might overwhelms everything. His will is affected regarding everything. His wisdom dominates everything.

Tawḥīd, then, means that whatever comes to your mind of how He may be or anything which you think is appropriate for Him..., He is contrary to and above it, Glory to Him.

Tawḥīd is the cornerstone of Islam; *Lā Ilāha Illa Allāh*, There is no god but Allāh. The subject of *Tawḥīd* is beyond anyone's description, for if you discuss the Almighty, there are too many views about Him to discuss, and there are too many ways to discuss Him through Him [i.e. through His statements]. Reason recognizes Him, yet the tongue can never describe Him. *Tawḥīd*'s meaning shatters any image and confuses all branches of knowledge, while Allāh remains just as He has always been and will always be. Glory to the One Who has made no means for His creatures to really know Him except by proving to them that they can never know Him. One who falls into the seas of *Tawḥīd* will day after day feel more and more thirsty. *Tawḥīd* is a prerogative, a privilege, of the Truth (the Almighty), yet His creatures are simply curious. Among people are those whose actions portray their belief in *Tawḥīd*; they look at everything that happens through Him. And there are those who, when the truth is unveiled before their eyes, feel less and less concerned about anyone besides Him; they see everyone to be as one secret within another...

Muhammed, the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ, has said, "Allāh is One, and He loves oneness." This tradition indicates that He loves the heart that is solely dedicated to Him, Glory and Exaltation are His.

Al-Wāḥid, the One and Only God, protects you, the individual that you are, against the group, a number of individuals, whereas the latter cannot protect you against Him. *Al-Wāḥid* cannot be counted. He Alone is the source of all knowledge, the Only One Who reveals what is hidden. His existence has neither duration nor expiration, a limit, a dead-end, nor can anyone carry out a decision against Him, nor can His Essence ever suffer any decrease or increase whatever.

68. *Aṣ-Ṣamad* الصمد

Allāh, Glory and Exaltation are His, has said, “Say: He, Allāh, is One. Allāh is He on Whom all depend” (Qur’ān, 112:1-2).

Aṣ-Ṣamad is an Attribute of Allāh whose linguistic meanings include the following: the ultimate goal, the obeyed Master without Whose command nothing can happen, the Support of those who need to be supported, the One to Whom all matters are referred, the One to Whom all issues are rendered and regarding which nobody else decides, the One to Whom pleas are directed. *Aṣ-Ṣamad* is approached to grant the pleas and is pleaded to make wishes come true. He is the Master sought during the time of need. Arabs describe a household as *ṣamad* if people go there in the hope of fulfilling their worldly needs. God is the final destination, the ultimate goal.

The one whom Allāh enables to be sought by people to meet their needs, particularly those relevant to their creed, as well as those of every day life, the one who serves their interests by word and by means..., is truly one on whom Allāh has bestowed a great deal of goodness. It is goodness inspired by this Attribute.

Whoever recognizes Allāh as the ever-Lasting Who never dies will turn away from the adornments of this fleeting life and will have no desire for its material things... One of the good manners of a believer inspired by this Attribute is that he does not seek help from anyone besides Allāh to help him meet his worldly needs, nor does he rely on anyone else besides Him. He fashions his conduct after Him and becomes the one sought by people for the fulfillment of their needs. According to one *ḥadīth*, the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ has said, “One who is most loved among people is the one who benefits them the most.”

69. *Al-Qādir* القادر

In the Holy Qur’ān, we read, “Say: He has the power to send on you a chastisement from above you, or from beneath your feet, or throw you into confusion, (making you) different parties, and making some of you taste the fighting of others. See how We repeat the signs so

that they may understand” (Qur’ān, 6:65).

Both *al-Qadeer* and *al-Qādir* are among Allāh's characteristics, but not Attributes. They both may be derived from *taqdeer*, estimation or assessment, or from *qudra*, might, power, or ability. *Al-Qadeer* does whatever He does according to the requirement of wisdom, no more, nor less. *Al-Qadeer* is not among Allāh's ninety-nine Attributes although it is repeated more than thirty times throughout the text of the Holy Qur’ān.

The root word of “*al-Qādir*” is the noun “*qudra*”, might, power, prowess, ability, etc. *Laylat al-Qadr*, the Night of Power or Destiny, is surely the Night of the great honor. In the Holy Qur’ān, we read the following verse in Sūrat al-An’ām: “And they do not honor Allāh the Great Honor due to Him” (Qur’ān, 6:91), that is, they do not honor Him as He should be. The word *qadr* means that Allāh is capable of doing anything without tackling it or using any means, etc.; therefore, it does not exert or exhaust Him to do whatever He wants. It means authority and power, that is, the complete dealing with the entire universe, the cosmos, without being opposed by an opponent. Who can oppose Him or escape from His grip? His command is that whenever He decrees anything, he says to it: “Be!” and it is. It means the One Who has the Complete power, Who is not frustrated by anything at all, He needs no means to do anything. He measures His decree, Who manages the universe with might and wisdom: “So We proportion it: How well We are at proportioning (things)!” (Qur’ān, 77:23) and also, “Surely We have created everything according to a measure” (Qur’ān, 54:49). The *qadar* is what Allāh, the Most Honored and Glorified, decrees and decides, the destiny, the fate.

A servant of Allāh has a measure of power to do a number of things, but it is deficient, for his ability is limited. Allāh, on the other hand, makes His servants capable of doing what they do through His might. A servant of Allāh has power to do a number of things, but he cannot do everything. He cannot create things out of nothing. Only Allāh can.

70. *Al-Muqtadir* المقتدر

As regarding the Attribute *al-Muqtadir*, the Almighty has said, “They rejected all Our signs, so We overtook them after the manner of a Mighty, Powerful One” (Qur’ān, 54:42).

Al-Muqtadir is a superlative of *al-Qādir* which enhances the prestige and awe inspired by the latter. *Al-Muqtadir* controls everything through His might which encompasses all His creation. His might is endless. He is the One Who manages all affairs, Who manifests His might to the souls through the light of His Attribute *al-Muqtadir* and thus grants them serenity and security. They recognize and venerate His might in the late hours of the night and at both ends of the day. The meaning it suggests is: “the One Whose Might is Great, Who, through His overwhelming Power, controls all His creatures; He subdues everyone and everything in His domain. He decreed, so existence came to be as a manifestation of His might: ‘... and Allāh holds power over all things’” (Qur’ān, 18:45).

One of the signs of the good manners of a believer in as far as *al-Muqtadir* is concerned is that this Attribute will always fill his heart, and he always remembers it, so much so that a ray of its light will shine on him and will always surround him. The following is a tradition related by Jābir ibn Abdullāh as-Salāmī¹:

The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ used to teach his companions to follow *istikhāra*² in all matters just as he used to teach them the

¹Jābir ibn Abdullāh as-Salāmī is the same as Jābir ibn Abdullāh as-Ansārī about whom a footnote is already included in this book although he is too well known to be identified; he needs no introduction.

²*Istikhāra* means seeking assistance from the Almighty in order to make a weighty decision about doing or not doing an important thing. It is done in different ways the most common of which is the combination of performing prayers (2 *rek’āt*) followed by the recitation of a supplication seeking guidance then the recitation of the Holy Qur’ān. It is very highly recommended when you are not sure about something. Allāh is always there to guide His servants to the right course. If you are still in doubt, refer to Bukhari, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, Vol. 2, Book (Chapter) 2, *ḥadīth* 263.

text of the Holy Qur’ān. He used to always repeat saying, “If one of you decides to do something, let him prostrate twice besides what is incumbent on him then say: ‘Lord! I seek Your *istikhāra* and Your help to enable me to achieve what I aspire! I plead to You to grant me of Your favors, for You can and I cannot, and You know and I do not, and You know the unknown. Lord! If You know that this matter (and here you indicate what it is) is good for me sooner or later, or good for my creed or sustenance, or for the ultimately good end of my affairs, then decree it for me and ease it for me, then bless it for me. Lord! If You know that it is evil for me regarding my creed or the ultimate end of my affairs, or regarding my matter sooner or later, then take me away from it and enable me to acquire goodness wherever it may be, then make me pleased therewith.’”

The Attribute *al-Muqtadir*, Praised and Glorified is He, is mentioned *verbatim* in two verses of the Holy Qur’ān: in verses 42 and 55 of Sūrat al-Qamar (Moon, Ch. 54), and once in verse 45 of Sūrat al-Kahaf (Ch. 18).

71. *Al-Muqaddim* المقدم

Allāh has said, “... so that Allāh may forgive your past faults and your faults to come, complete His favor unto you, and guide you on the right course” (Qur’ān, 48:2).

Linguistically, *taqdeem*, the root word of this Attribute, means advancing, promoting, or preferring; “*al-Muqaddim*” means: the One Who presents things and puts them in their right place, appropriating them. Whoever deserves to be advanced, preferred or favored over others, the Almighty, *al-Muqaddim*, advances his rank or status. If you endeavor to serve your community or nation, He will advance you in fame and grants you of His blessings provided you do it without seeking a selfish end. And He advances the living, each according to his sincerity of worshipping Him, protecting them against falling into disobedience of Him. *Al-Muqaddim* since the beginning of time advanced those whom He loves and made them happy through accurate comprehension and sound judgment. He prefers those who know, who have useful knowledge, over those who do not. He opens the gates of true conviction (*īmān*) for

everyone. He prefers humans over all others, making them imāms, leaders. And He advances, prefers, favors scholars over ignorant folks, making the first party like stars guiding others to righteousness. He has advanced the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ from the very beginning and will advance him at the very end, in the Hereafter. He took a covenant from all those whom He sent into this world that: "... When a Messenger comes to you verifying that which is with you, you must believe in him, and you must support him" (Qur'ān, 3:81). He also advanced him on Laylatul-Isrā', the Night Journey. Muhammed led all other Prophets in congregational prayers during that night.

The Holy Qur'ān states the following: "Do not dispute in My presence, and indeed I warned you beforehand" (Qur'ān, 50:28). Muhammed, the most honored of all prophets, as Muslims regard him, enjoys a status that tops all those of other *Ulul-'Azm* prophets¹, peace with all of them. Next in status are *awliyā'*, the friends of Allāh, whose status is less only than that of the prophets.

Al-Muqaddim, therefore, advances whomsoever He pleases on account of one's piety and frequency of returning to Him, to His path, making them truthful. He responds favorably to their pleas. And *al-Muqaddim* advances the living who worship Him in ranks (in this life as well as in the one to come), protecting them against disobeying or displeasing Him.

72. *Al-Mu'akhir* المؤخر

The Almighty has said, "Man shall on that Day be informed of what he had sent forth before and of what he had put off" (Qur'ān, 75:13).

Al-Mu'akhir causes the polytheists to lag behind while raising the ranks of the believers. He delays the disobedient ones and grants His guidance to those who obey Him. He postpones the penalty of the oppressor because He is Compassionate and Merciful. Whenever

¹These, chronologically arranged, are: Noah, Abraham, Moses, Jesus, and Muhammed, ﷺ peace with them all.

your heart is exposed to a glimpse of the light of His Attribute *al-Mu'akhir*, you will be managing your affairs very well, postponing what the Legislator has decided must be postponed, and looking down at what the Wise Lord has Himself looked down on. In Sūrat Ibrahim (Abraham), we read the following verse: “And do not think that Allāh is heedless of what the unjust ones do; He only grants them a respite till a Day on which the eyes shall be fixedly staring (horrified)” (Qur’ān, 14:42). He has forewarned people regarding the Day when His chastisement will approach them, so those who have wronged their own souls will plead to Him thus: “Lord! Grant us a respite till a near term so that we may answer Your call and follow the messengers” (Qur’ān, 14:44) but they will be told: “Did you not swear before now that there would be no extinction for you?! (Qur’ān, 14:44).

The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ used to supplicate by saying, “Lord! I plead to You to forgive my sins, my ignorance, my extravagance, and to grant me that which You know to be better for me. Lord! I plead to You to forgive my (unintentional) sins, my deliberate sins, my ignorance, when I am serious and when I am not, and I am guilty of all of that. Lord! I plead to You to forgive what I have advanced and what I have postponed, what I have revealed and what I have declared, for You are *al-Muqaddim*, and You are *al-Mu'akhir*, and surely You can do whatever You please.”

Both Attributes *al-Muqaddim* and *al-Mu'akhir* are not mentioned in the text of the Holy. The discussion of advancing something and postponing something else has been dealt with in the Holy Qur’ān with reference to mankind in verses such as these:

Man shall on that Day be informed of what he sent forth before and what he put off. (75:13)

Surely We know those of you who have gone before and We certainly know those who shall come later. (15:24)

And We do not delay it except till an appointed term. (11:104)

One of the signs of a believer's good conduct with regard to both of

these Attributes is that he should take a middle course between fear and excessive hope, and to always be alert.

73. *Al-Awwal* الأول

Allāh has said, “He is the First (*al-Awwal*) and the Last (*al-Ākhir*) and the Ascendant (over all) and the One Who knows hidden things, and He is Cognizant of all things” (Qur’ān, 57:3).

The Attribute *al-Awwal* means: the One on Whom all others rely, the One Who advances all others. Applied to the Almighty, it means: He was never preceded in existence by anyone at all; He does not need anyone else at all; He is Independent of everything and everyone.

A bedouin once asked the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ, “Where was Allāh before creation?” He answered him by saying, “Allāh was and there was nothing with Him.” The bedouin asked him again, “How about now?” He answered him by saying, “He is now just as He has always been.” The Attribute *al-Awwal* exists in Sūrat al-Hadeed (Iron): “He is the First and the Last, the Ascendant (over all), the One Who knows hidden things, and He is Cognizant of all things” (Qur’ān, 57:3). And He is referred to by implication in this verse: “We have ordained death among you and We are not preceded in doing so by anyone else” (Qur’ān, 56:60).

Al-Awwal is the first of anything different from Him. He has the upper hand over His foes, an advancement due neither to time nor to place nor to anything else that can be conceived by mind or acquired by knowledge. *Al-Awwal* means the timeless, the perpetual, the One Who has neither a beginning nor an end. He is the First without a beginning; He exists on His own even before His creatures were ever there.

He is the Eternal One Who has always been and Who is never preceded by anyone at all. Allāh has said, “We have ordained death among you, and We are not preceded in doing so by anyone else” (Qur’ān, 56:60). This verse indicates that He, and Only He, has such power to effect death on His servants, and He is the First to do so without anyone preceding Him.

74. *Al-Ākhir* الآخر

Allāh Almighty has said, “He is the First and the Last, the Ascendant (over all), the One Who knows all hidden things, and He is Cognizant of all things” (Qur’ān, 57:3).

Al-Ākhir is the Last without having to have a first, the Last in His Attribute of eternity and perpetuity; He postpones anything that is to come later. He is the Last by virtue of being above any adjective whereby He may be described, the Last above extinction. He is the Last without anyone having delayed Him and made Him so, and He is the Last due to His sustaining us. He is the Last according to the rule of necessity: He is the First to grant guidance; He is the Last to look after those whom He guides.

Allāh permits the rewards to reach those who earn them and the penalty to afflict those who deserve it; so, just as He was the first since time immemorial, when there was nothing with Him at all, so will He remain the Last One and nothing will be with Him at all.

Among the good manners of a believer with respect to this Attribute is that he keeps remembering it quite often so that its light may manifest itself unto his heart, and so that he should escape this vanishing abode and look forward for the lasting one; he flees from his own self, seeking Allāh, the Lord of the heavens and the earth.

75. *Aẓ-Zāhir* الظاهر

Allāh has said, “... the One Who knows the unseen! So He does not reveal His secrets to any...” (Qur’ān, 72:26).

Linguistically speaking, *aẓ-Zāhir* is derived from *ẓuhoor*, manifestation, appearance, sighting, etc. It means something hidden coming to appearance. It also conveys the meaning of “victor”. This meaning occurs in this verse: “... and they became the uppermost” (Qur’ān, 61:14), that is, in a higher status and rank. *Zāhir* also means back, the opposite of *baṭn*, stomach or belly; so, what is *Zāhir* is the opposite of what is *Bāṭin*. It also means: animals used to transport people and luggage on their backs, their *zahr*s, backs, that is, beasts

of burden, whether it is used as a figure of speech or literally. Something *zaheer* is very strong. According to *ḥadīth*, “There is no verse in the Holy Qur’ān except that it has an apparent meaning and a hidden one.” What is apparent may be the wording, and what is hidden may be the meaning, or it may mean recitation or reading versus comprehension and learning.

The meaning of the Attribute of the Almighty *aẓ-Zāhir* permits more than one interpretation:

- 1) He subdues His creation.
- 2) He knows everything apparent, just as the Attribute *al-Bāṭin* means He knows everything hidden.
- 3) He is *aẓ-Zāhir* due to the abundance of dazzling proofs and the enlightening evidence testifying to His Glory.

Suppose someone says that if He is *aẓ-Zāhir*, the Apparent or the Evident One, the One about Whom there can be no doubt entertained, well, most people seem to doubt His existence nevertheless; so, how can He still be Apparent or Evident?

Allāh is *al-Bāṭin*, the Obscure, if sought through the senses and the imagination. He is *az-Zāhir*, the Apparent One, if sought by the treasure of reason by way of deduction. His being obscure to many minds, despite His being so Apparent, is due to the intensity of such evidence. His being Evident is the reason why He is Obscure, and His light is the same that obscures His glow: whatever exceeds its limit turns into its own antithesis. He is Obscure if one seeks to know Him by applying his own physical senses. The senses are related to what is apparent, such as one's complexion, physique, etc.. In fact, a person is a human being not only on account of his complexion, for even if such complexion or the rest of his parts are altered, he still remains one and the same person. Actually, a person's parts at the time when he ages are not the same when he was young. They would have suffered a great deal of change due to the passage of time and were replaced by ones similar to them through food intake. His identity, nevertheless, has not changed. Such an identity is obscure from the senses, quite clear to the mind

by way of deduction.

76. *Al-Bāṭin* الباطن

Allāh has said, “He is the First and the Last and the Ascendant (over all) and the One Who knows all hidden things, and He is Cognizant of all things” (Qur’ān, 57:3).

Al-Bāṭin means: the One Who is obscured from the eyes of His creatures, the Hidden One due to His Essence that defies visions, minds and intellects. He is immaterial, not a thing, a matter; none can truly define Him through our limited human vocabulary and capacity.

The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ has supplicated thus:

Lord! God of the heavens and of the great Throne. Our Lord and the Lord of everything. The One Who splits the seed and the date-stone. The one Who has revealed the Torah, the Gospel, and the Holy Qur’ān. I seek refuge with You against the evil of every being whose forelock is in Your Hands. Lord! You are the First; there is nothing before You. And You are the Last; there is nothing after You. You are the Apparent; there is nothing beyond You, and You are the Hidden One; there is nothing that can reach You. I plead to You to pay our debts on our behalf, and to save us from [the humiliation of] want.

He is *aẓ-Ẓāhir* through sufficiency, *al-Bāṭin* by objectivity, *al-Ẓāhir* due to His bounties, *al-Bāṭin* through His mercy. He is the Apparent One Who subdues everything, the Hidden One Who knows the truth about everything, the One Who is Apparent for everything by way of convincing proofs, the One Who is Hidden from any physical appearance. Glory, then, to the One Who has obscured Himself from all creation by His light, Who is Hidden from them because of the intensity of His appearance.

The Almighty has said, “... and made His favors to you complete outwardly and inwardly” (Qur’ān, 31:20). Apparent are things we can observe, see, witness, notice, while hidden are things with which we are not familiar. He has also pointed out to the fact that “If you

were to count Allāh's favors, you will not be able to count them” (Qur’ān, 16:18 and 14:34). They are apparent to the senses, defying our intellect.

Man is a manifestation of the Attribute *aẓ-Zāhir* and, at the same time, is also a manifestation of the other Attribute *al-Bāṭin*. Man, physically, is a manifestation of the Apparent Light, and spiritually a manifestation of the Hidden One, *al-Bāṭin*. Whenever a servant of Allāh repeats the Attribute *al-Bāṭin*, his soul will feel submissive to its Creator, and he will realize that he, on his own, is really incapable of doing anything at all; so, it is then that the Truth will be Merciful unto him and will grant him purity of both body and soul.

77. *Al-Wāli* الوالي

Allāh has said, “For his sake there are angels following one another, before him and behind him, who guard him by Allāh's commandment; surely Allāh does not change the condition of people until they change their own conditions, and if Allāh intends evil to anyone, there is none to avert it, and besides Him they have no protector” (Qur’ān, 13:11).

Al-Wāli is the Owner of everything; He deals with everything as He pleases. The *mawla* is also a supporter or a helper.

Al-Wāli manages the affairs of all creation. He initiates whatever improves the conditions of His creatures. In other words, He is the Absolute and undisputed Ruler. *Al-Wāli* is the One and only One Who manages all affairs, Who does everything, and there is neither continuity nor existence without His permission. Everything happens according to His judgment and by His command. *Al-Wāli* gives graciously by halting the advent of mishaps and calamities.

Among the characteristics of *al-Wāli* is that He manages, is capable and is the doer of whatever He pleases. Unless all these attributes are found in someone, he will not be called *wāli*, and there is no *wāli* for our affairs except Allāh. He, and only He, single-handedly manages them first and foremost and safeguards their continuity and existence. It is also possible to attach to the *wāli* the meaning of:

One Who gives abundantly, Who wards off evil.

78. *Al-Muta`āli* المتعالي

Allāh has said, “[He is] the One Who knows the unseen and the seen, the Great, the Most High” (Qur’ān, 13:9).

The root word of *al-Muta`āli* is *`uluww*, height, sublimity, loftiness. Its verb also means one who feels proud, or even arrogant, with regard to someone else, and this usage is for humans. We have already discussed the Attribute *al-`Aliyy*, which is also derived from the same root word. *Al-Muta`āli* is Exalted in His Greatness and Honors, an Exaltation which nobody reaches besides Him. His Honor is above what any of His creation can conceive or comprehend, above what His creatures describe, measure, compute, or define. *Al-Muta`āli* is Sublime and is above everything due to His might or perfection. He, Glory to Him, is Most High due to His Greatness. It also means that He is high above deficiencies or shortcomings, or above being conceived by anyone's imagination. He is very, very High above all His creatures. He does not need any of what He creates or what He did or does not create; He created them out of His Munificence. His Compassionate Attribute is surely gloriously manifesting itself to all what He has created. He does not need the worship of those who worship Him; He makes His grace available to all those who strive to attain it.

Al-Muta`āli is above the falsehood of the conceited, by necessity is Lofty and Sublime. His rank is the Most High; He has the authority all of it. He is Proud and Great. His Glory is too High to be comprehended or conceived by His creation.

One who keeps remembering the Attribute *al-Muta`āli* ought to fashion his conduct according to it by his determination to worship none but Allāh. One who adorns his manners as such will then remember the persecuted and the downtrodden and does his best to help them, so their condition will hopefully improve. According to one tradition, “A wretch indeed is a servant of Allāh who fancied himself and became conceited, forgetting the Great One, *al-Muta`āl*.”

Our second Imām, al-Ḥassan ibn Ali عليه السلام, says that his grandfather, the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ, had taught him a few supplications to recite during his *witr* prayers such as this:

Lord! I plead to You to guide me among those whom You have guided, to grant me good health among those whom You have granted, to befriend me among those whom You have befriended! I further implore You to bless what You have granted me, to shun from me the evil of what You have decreed in my regard, for You decree while none can force his decree on You! Surely none can humiliate those whom You have befriended; Blessed, Lord, are You and Exalted exceedingly.

79. *Al-Bārr* البار

Allāh has said, “Surely He is the Benign One, the Merciful” (Qur’ān, 52:28).

Al-Bārr is one of Allāh's Attributes derived from *bārr*, the doer of goodness; *birr* means the doing of benevolent deeds. *Al-Bārr*, then, is an inclusive word containing all attributes of goodness, benevolence and charity. One who is *bārr* to his parents is very gracious and benevolent to them. Those who are *bārr* are those from whom deeds of goodness are expected. *Birr* also means ties, links, or connections. A person who is *bārr* regarding his kin means he maintains good ties with them. The Holy Qur’ān states this verse in Sūrat al-Mumtahana: “Allāh does not forbid you regarding those who have not made war against you on account of (your) religion and have not driven you out of your homes that you show them kindness and deal with them justly; surely Allāh loves the doers of justice” (Qur’ān, 60:8). And in Sūrat Āli-’Imrān (Family of Amram), we read, “By no means shall you attain righteousness until you spend (benevolently) out of what you love” (Qur’ān, 3:92). A pilgrimage that is blessed and free of any prohibited acts is called *ḥajj mabroor* the reward for which is no less than Paradise according to *ḥadīth*. *Birr* also means piety, which in turn means the doing of whatever brings one closer to Allāh, a word that combines qualities that are very highly commendable and praiseworthy.

The *birr* is the best of what is in the life of this world and that of the hereafter. The best of this life is whatever Allāh makes available to any of His servants such as guidance, bounties and enjoyable things. The best of the life to come is the eternal bliss which is residence in Paradise; may Allāh enable us and those who read and share this book with others to enjoy both blessings by His mercy and grace, *Allāhomma Āmeen*. The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ has said, “Uphold telling the truth, for it shall lead you to *birr*.”

Birr means goodness, a word which combines all good attributes. It implies whatever good deeds bring one closer to Allāh, the Honored One, the Most Exalted. The well of Zamzam is called *bārra* due to the abundance of its benefits and water.

Al-Bārr does not do anything ugly or abominable. He has been Gracious unto those who seek His pleasure by showing them the way how to, and unto the worshippers by His Favors and the granting of success to them. *Al-Bārr* is kind unto those who seek His benevolence and giving, unto the worshippers by beautifully rewarding them. He never ceases giving benevolently because of one's disobedience of Him.

A servant of Allāh may be described as *bārr*. A servant of Allāh can be *bārr* according to the extent of his deeds of righteousness, to his being the first and the foremost to observe the right of his parents, teachers, mentors, neighbors, etc.

One of the ways wherein a servant of Allāh can fashion his conduct after following the light of this Attribute is to befriend the believers who are sincere in their belief, who are acquainted with the secrets of belief. When someone mentions this Attribute quite often, his conduct will then personify it, and love for all servants of Allāh will then be planted in his heart, and all people will love him with sincerity.

Allāh has combined all the aspects of *birr* in one of the verses of Sūrat al-Baqarah when He said:

It is not righteousness that you turn your faces towards the east and the west, but righteousness is this: that one should believe in Allāh and the last Day, the angels, the book and the prophets and give away wealth out of love for His sake to those near in kin, to the orphans, the needy, the wayfarer, the beggars, and for (the emancipation of) the slaves, and keep up prayers and pay the *zakāt*, and those who fulfill their promise when they promise, and those who persevere when in distress and affliction and during the time of conflict: these are they who are true (to themselves), and these are they who guard (themselves against evil) (2:177).

One to whom Allāh is *bārr* will be protected from committing what displeases Allāh, and He, in turn, will please him with many beautiful things. He will make his path in this life full of success. He will make his objectives always good. He will make him independent through Favours from Him, and He will protect him against committing anything which He deems unlawful.

80. *At-Tawwāb* التواب

The Glorified and Exalted One has said,

... except those who repent and amend and make (the truth) manifest: to these do I turn (mercifully), and I am the oft-Returning (to mercy), the Most Merciful. (2:160)

At-Tawwāb is an Attribute whose root word is *tawba*, repentance, which means: returning to Allāh. It means that He accepts His servants' repentance, that is, He resumes bestowing His grace on them, enabling them to repent, making it easy for them to do so. *At-Tawwāb*, then, accepts repentance. He says in the Holy Qur'ān, "... then He turned to them (mercifully) so that they might turn (to Him); surely Allāh is oft-Returning (to mercy), the Most Merciful" (Qur'ān, 9:118). It is known, hence, that if Allāh does not accept the repentance of one of His servants, the latter is not considered repentant, for the initiation of repentance in all reality is from Allāh Who concludes it with His acceptance thereof.

At-Tawwāb facilitates repentance for His servants, time and over again, by the Signs which He manifests for them, and the warning

whereby He warns them; so, when they become familiar with the penalty of their sins, they become frightened, and they return to repentance, and Allāh's favor returns to them when He accept their repentance.

At-Tawwāb accepts the repentance of His servants and forgives their sins. He accepts the repentance of one who disobeys Him then returns to obeying Him. And if he commits a sin, then he returns to Him, He welcomes him back. He forgives the one who slips from the right path then apologizes to Him and He overlooks his sin. As long as the servant of Allāh seeks *tawba*, the Lord remains Forgiving.

The light inspired by this Attribute is that one who accepts the apologies of criminals as well as friends and relatives time and over again derives his conduct from this Attribute. So that we may model our conduct after it, we ought to repent and seek His acceptance of our repentance; we should go to Him in every circumstance. Also, repetition of repentance prepares a servant of Allāh for Allāh's love, which is the greatest honor and status, for repentance is admission of one's deficiency and shortcoming, and the standing most humbly at the threshold of the Most Knowing. For this reason, the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ used to repent quite often in order to show us the path to happiness. It is also one of the good manners of a believer who repeats this Attribute quite often to forgive those who wrong him, to be benevolent to those who mistreat him, and to accept others' apologies.

The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ has desired very much that those who believe in him should always seek Allāh's forgiveness. He once said, "By Allāh! I seek forgiveness of Allāh, and I repent to Him, every day more than seventy times." Allāh has forgiven all the faults of our master Muhammed ﷺ, yet he seeks His forgiveness and repents to Him more than seventy times a day, nay, even a hundred times a day! So, what can we say about how often should Muslims repent to Him and seek His forgiveness?"

Anas ibn Mālik has said that he had heard the Messenger of Allāh

ﷺ quoting his Lord saying, “O son of Ādam! So long as you invoke Me and place all your hope on Me, I shall forgive you, and I do not mind. O son of Ādam! Even if your sins were to pile up and reach the skies, then you seek My forgiveness, I shall forgive you. O son of Ādam! If you come to Me after having committed as many sins as would fill the earth, believing in Me, associating no partners with Me, I shall grant you their equal in forgiveness.”

81. *Al-Muntaqim* المنتقم

Allāh, *subḥānahu wa ta`āla*, has said, “Do not think Allāh (to be One) failing in His promise to His prophets; surely Allāh is Mighty, Lord of retribution” (Qur’ān, 14:47).

Al-Muntaqim, the Avenger, splits the spines of those who deviate from His path, Who increases the penalty of those who oppress in the land, after alerting them and repeatedly warning them, and after enabling them to amend, giving them a respite. It implies a much more severe penalty than merely an immediate one.

The word *al-Muntaqim* is derived from the noun *intiqām*, avenging or seeking revenge against someone. A penalty is not called as such unless the following conditions are met:

- 1) Clemency reaches the limit of extreme outrage. Allāh has said, “On the Day when We seize them with the most violent of seizing; surely We will (then) inflict retribution” (Qur’ān, 44:16).
- 2) A punishment is affected after a period of respite. The Glorified and Exalted One has said, “...Whoever returns to (committing) it, Allāh will inflict retribution on him, and Allāh is the Mighty, the Lord of Retribution” (Qur’ān, 5:95).
- 3) Such a punishment must require a sort of feeling of spiteful gratification on seeing one being hurt, something which never happens in the case of the Creator, but it does happen in the case of vicious and spiteful humans, and there are many of them! The *intiqām*, revenge, of a servant of Allāh is held commendable only if it is inflicted on His foes (those who deny or disbelieve in Him). The

worst of all foes of mankind are their own insinuating selves, the *nafs* النفس الأمارة بالسوء, the evil insinuating self which is within each and every one of us. There is no doubt that he has to seek revenge against such *nafs*.

The Attribute *al-Muntaqim* manifests itself in the body: in the means for its natural defense system when a germ violates the body's sanctity. These means will then kill the germ as a penalty for such a violation, and they will then purge the body of it. *Al-Muntaqim*, then, facilitates getting rid of what is bad, harmful, or dangerous.

Reference to "revenge" or "retribution" occurs in the Holy Qur'ān: In Sūrat al-Mā'ida, we read: "O you who believe! Do not kill (any) game while you are on pilgrimage, and whoever among you kills it unintentionally, the compensation (for it) is the like of what he killed from the cattle, as two just persons among you shall judge, as an offering to be brought to the Ka'ba, or the expiation (of it) is the feeding of the poor or the equivalent in fasting, so that he may taste the unwholesome result of his action; Allāh has pardoned what is gone by, and whoever returns (to it), Allāh will inflict retribution on him, and Allāh is the Mighty, the Lord of Retribution" (Qur'ān, 5:95).

The "We" in the phrase "We inflicted retribution" is meant, of course, as a reference to Allāh Almighty. It also occurs in several other places throughout the text of the Holy Qur'ān such as the following:

We, therefore, inflicted retribution on them and drowned them in the sea... (7:136)

So We inflicted retribution on them, and they are both, indeed, on an open road (still) pursued. (15:79)

... We punished those who were guilty, and helping the believers is ever incumbent on Us. (30:47)

So We inflicted retribution on them, then see how the end of those who rejected (Our signs) was. (43:25)

When they displeased Us, We inflicted retribution on them. (43:55)

He has revealed to you the Book with the truth, verifying what is before it, and He revealed the Torah and the Gospel aforetime, guidance for people, and He sent the Furqan (Qur'ān). Surely those who disbelieve in the signs of Allāh shall have a severe chastisement, and Allāh is the Mighty, the Lord of retribution. (3:3-4)

... Allāh is the Mighty, the Lord of retribution. (5:95)

Do not, therefore, think Allāh (to be) failing in His promise to His Messengers; surely Allāh is the Mighty, the Lord of Retribution. (14:47)

And whoever Allāh guides, there is none that can lead him astray; is not Allāh the Mighty, the Lord of Retribution? (39:37)

And who is more unjust than one who is reminded of the signs of his Lord then he turns away from them? Surely We will punish the guilty. (32:22)

But if We should take you away, still We shall inflict retribution on them. (43:41)

On the Day when We seize them with the most violent of seizing, surely We will (then) inflict retribution. (44:16)

Al-Muntaqim intensifies His penalty against the oppressors, causing the criminals to be subjected to His retribution. He sends His messengers supported by His signs and miracles to warn people; so, if warning does not benefit someone, He will surely then inflict His penalty and revenge against him.

Once a person comes to realize that there is nothing small or big except that there is a penalty for it equal in size and kind, he will certainly fear his Lord and remain alert regarding his wishes and desires for fear of falling into transgression.

82. *Al-`Afuww* العفو

Allāh has said,

It may be that Allāh will pardon them, and Allāh is Pardoning, Forgiving. (4:99)

Al-`Afuww is derived from the root word *`afuw* and permits several meanings: When used as a verb, it means to go somewhere to receive something, to give without being asked, to increase, to wipe out something. As a noun, it means the wiping out of sins in their entirety. One may supplicate and say, “Lord! I implore You to grant me *`afuw* and *`āfiya*,” that is, not to punish me for my sins, and to make me safe and secure with regard to Your torment. As an adjective, it means what is *ḥalāl*, lawful.

Al-`Afuww has removed, by His Mercy, from the souls the darkness of slipping away from the right path, and of the loneliness of forgetfulness from the hearts through His Greatness. It is also said that He removes the sins from the records and replaces loneliness with beautiful things from Him.

Al-`Afuww wipes out the traces of sins, removing them by the winds of His forgiveness. He wipes out the sins from the records kept by His guardian angels. He even wipes them out from their (angels') memory and the memory of those who committed them. He abandons punishing the sinners, Who does not remind you of your shortcomings; He is Gracious when He forgives. He protects the heart of the doer of evil against loneliness, sparing him the feeling of shame, and He does not remind him of the evil of what he had done.

We notice that in the text of the Holy Qur’ān, the Attribute [indeed a Most Beautiful one] *al-`Afuww* occurs side by side with another Attribute which is *al-Ghafūr* as many as four times, and once side by side with the Attribute *al-Qadeer* as the following verses demonstrate:

... Surely Allāh is Pardoning, Forgiving. (4:43)

It may be that Allāh will pardon them, and Allāh is Pardoning,

Forgiving. (4:99)

... Most surely Allāh is Pardoning, Forgiving. (22:60, 58:2)

If you do good openly or secretly or pardon an evil act, then surely Allāh is Pardoning, Powerful. (4:149)

The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ has always enjoined us to wipe out our evil deeds with good ones, saying, “Fear Allāh wherever you may be, and follow your evil deed with a good one in order to wipe out the first, and treat people with the best of conduct.” He addressed one of his uncles once saying, “O `Abbās, uncle of the Messenger of Allāh! Plead to Allāh for `afuw and `āfiya in the life of this world and in the life to come.”

The Commander of the Faithful Imām Ali ibn Abū Tālib عليه السلام called on one of his slaves once, but the latter did not respond. He repeated his call, and the slave again neglected to respond. Then he repeated it a third time, and no response was there either, so he stood up and looked for him and found him lying down. He asked him, “Did you hear me calling you?” He answered, “Yes, I did.” The Imām عليه السلام asked him, “Then what stopped you from responding?” He answered, “My confidence in your clemency and my reliance on your forgiveness,” whereupon the Imām عليه السلام said, “Then I set you free seeking the Pleasure of Allāh.” The Imām عليه السلام did so on account of the firm conviction on the part of that slave.

One who wishes to receive a glimpse of the light inspired by this Attribute should first forgive those who have committed a wrong deed against him or dealt with him unjustly. One who remembers this Attribute ought to wipe out from his heart any ill feeling towards anyone who has wronged him, and to treat beautifully those who mistreated him.

83. *Ar-Ra'ūf* الرؤف

Allāh, the Glorified and the Exalted One, has said,

... so that He may bring you out of utter darkness and into the light.
(57:9)

Linguistically, this Attribute is derived from *ra'fa*, intense mercy or compassion which is the ultimate limit of *rahma*. When applied to the Almighty, it means His warding off all types of evil.

The Attribute *ar-Ra'ūf* refers to the One Who does not cease being kind and compassionate to the sinners by accepting their repentance, and to His friends by protecting them from committing sins. It conveys the same meaning conveyed by the Attribute *ar-Raḥīm* with an intensification of the meaning embedded in the latter. Among the manifestations of His mercy towards His servants is that He protects them against committing what incurs His penalty. Such a protection from slipping away from the right path carries a stronger sense of mercy than His forgiveness for sins already committed. He may be Merciful unto one of His servants by outwardly exposing him to hardship, but inwardly there may be a great deal of bliss and blessing hidden for him in such hardship, while he does not know it. How often has a servant of Allāh been pitied by people for the harm from which he suffers, the harm of poverty, want and misery, while in reality he is enjoying a blessing for which the angels envy him?

The Most Exalted One has advanced the Attribute *ar-Ra'ūf* over that of *ar-Raḥīm*, preferring *ra'fah* رافة over *rahmah* رحمة and giving precedence to the first over the latter in the following glorious verses:

Most surely Allāh is Affectionate, Merciful, to people. (2:143)

... And We put in the hearts of those who followed him kindness and mercy. (57:27)

... To the believers he is compassionate, merciful. (9:128)

This Attribute is derived from “mercy” and “compassion”. This requires us to distinguish between both of these words. Also, whenever the Almighty uses both of these words, He mentions the Attribute *ar-Ra'ūf* before *ar-Raḥīm*; therefore, we have to explain the difference between both of them and the reason for such a preference.

The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ was travelling once when he happened to pass by a woman baking bread. Her young son was with her. She was told that the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ was passing by, so she came to him and said, “O Messenger of Allāh! It has come to my knowledge that you have said, ‘Allāh is more Compassionate towards His servants than a mother towards her son.’ Is this the correct statement which you have spoken?” He answered her in the affirmative, whereupon she said, “A mother does not hurl her son in an oven like this one.” Having heard her say so, the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ wept, then he said, “Allāh does not torment anyone by the fire [of hell] except one who is too arrogant to bear witness that there is no god but He.”

If a servant of Allāh wishes to model his conduct after the inspiration of this Attribute, he has first to remember and mention it quite often, hence the light of *ar-Ra’ūf* will manifest itself to his heart, so much so that he will become compassionate towards all people, the commoners as well as the elite, always remembering the saying of the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ, “Be merciful to the people of the earth so that the people of the heavens may be merciful to you.”

84. *Mālikul-Mulk* مالك الملك

Allāh has said:

Say: O Allāh, Master of the Kingdom! You give the kingdom to whomsoever You please and take the kingdom away from whomsoever You please, and You exalt whomsoever You please and abase whomsoever You please; in Your hand is goodness; surely You have power over all things. (3:26)

Mālikul-Mulk affects His will in His kingdom however He pleases, letting some live and others perish. The *mulk* in this context means the kingdom, and the *Mālik* is the Omnipotent, the Most Powerful. All things in existence are included in His kingdom, so His is one kingdom because all things in it are somehow connected to one another. Although they may be regarded as many, they constitute one entity, one kingdom.

Mālikul-Mulk fares with His kingdom as He pleases, and none can revoke His judgment, nor can anyone appeal or repeal it. All things in existence, in all their degrees and levels, constitute one kingdom owned by One: Allāh, the Most Exalted One.

Mālikul-Mulk is the true King Who deals with His kingdom as He pleases, bringing things into existence in it or ending the existence of some of its beings, chastising some and accepting the repentance of others, without anyone sharing the authority with Him or prohibiting Him from doing whatever He pleases.

Mālikul-Mulk occurs in the original Arabic text of this verse: “Say: O Allāh, Master of the Kingdom!” (Qur’ān, 3:26). Another derivative is *al-malakoot* which exists in: “Glory to the One in Whose hand is the kingdom of all things, and to Him you shall be brought back” (Qur’ān, 36:83).

... And a hard Day shall it be for the unbelievers. (25:26)

To Whom does the kingdom belong this Day? To Allāh, the One, the One Who subdues (all). (40:16)

And Allāh's is the kingdom of the heavens and the earth, and to Allāh is the eventual return. (24:42)

The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ is quoted as saying that Allāh's Greatest Name, the one because of which He will respond if thereby invoked, exists in the verse saying, “Say: O Allāh, Master of the Kingdom!” (Qur’ān, 3:26).

The Commander of the Faithful Imām Ali ibn Abū Tālib عليه السلام was asked once by Ubādah ibn Rab’i al-Assadi عباد بن ربعي الأسدي, one of the companions of Imām Ali عليه السلام (his first name in some sources is عباية Abāyah) about “ability”. The Commander of the Faithful عليه السلام asked Ubadah, “Do you have it without Allāh or with Him?” Ubabah could not answer, so he told him to say something. “What shall I say, O Commander of the Faithful?!” asked Ubabah. He answered

saying, “You should say that you have it by permission of Allāh Who has full control over it without your help. If He opts to grant it to you, then it is a boon which He gives you. And if He takes it away, it is a trial from Him. He is the real Owner of what you own, and the One Who owns what He enables you to possess. Have you not heard about seeking His help and might by saying, **لا حول ولا قوة الا بالله** `Surely there is neither help nor might except through Allāh'?” The man asked him, “And what does it mean, O Commander of the faithful?” He said, “It means: We do not stay away from committing acts of disobedience to Allāh except if He protects us against disobeying Him, and we have no strength to obey Him except if He grants us His help,” whereupon the man leaped and kissed his hands and feet.

The kingdom of each and every servant of Allāh is his own body. If it affects his will regarding his heart and senses, he will then be the owner of his kingdom according to the extent of his control over it.

85. *Dhul-Jalāli wal Ikrām* ذو الجلال والاکرام

Allāh has said:

Blessed is the Name of your Lord, the Lord of Glory and Honor!
(55:78)

Dhul-Jalāli wal Ikrām is a glorious Attribute that combines glory and beauty, for there is an awesome Glory and Beauty of the Almighty; no servant of Allāh can achieve knowledge except if he becomes familiar with *Dhul-Jalāli wal Ikrām*. This Attribute surely combines in it anticipation, awe, hope and fear.

The Almighty monopolizes the qualities of *Jalāl*, greatness, and *Ikrām*, honor. All greatness is His, and honor is from Him; Glory to Him; there is no glory except that He is its fountainhead, while honor is always His. Glory has originated from Him and overwhelmed His creation, and the norms of His honoring His creation are countless, immeasurable; therefore, He, and only He, is worthy of being Glorified by His creatures. They should express their respect for His Greatness, show appreciation for His favors and

grace, and recognize His signs and bounties.

Dhul-Jalāli wal Ikrām means: the One Who has all Greatness. There is neither distinction nor glory, nor prominence, except if Allāh permits it; in all reality, it is His, from Him, and by Him. Glory and Exaltation are His, the One Who is the source and fountainhead of all glory, perfection, honor, dignity and greatness. There is neither greatness nor favor nor bliss nor goodness except that it originates from His ocean.

Mu'āth ibn Jabal¹ is quoted as saying that the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ once passed by a man who was repeating "O One with the Glory and Honors!" so he said to him, "Your plea will be honored; so, proceed and state it."

¹ Mu'ādh ibn Jabal was one of the Prophet's *ṣaḥāba*, companions, actually one of their greatest and most highly respected. He was born in 593 A.D., although some sources give other dates, and he died while still young at the age of 38 in 10 A.H./631 A.D. in a plague in Sham (Syria) to which he lost his son Abdur-Raḥmān. Ibn al-Athīr details his biography on pp. 400-403, Vol. 4 of his *Usd al-Ghāba* encyclopedia (Beirut: Dār al-Fikr, 1998), giving us his full name as: "Abū Abdur-Raḥmān" Mu'ādh ibn Jabal ibn Amr ibn Aws ibn 'Āith ibn Ka'b ibn Amr ibn 'Uday ibn Sa'd ibn Ali ibn Asad ibn Sārida ibn Tazīd ibn Jusham ibn al-Khazraj. His belonging to the Khazraj tribe means he was one of the Ansār. During the establishment of ties of brotherhood between Mecca's Muhajirūn and Medīna's Ansār, which took place immediately after the Hijra, migration of the Prophet from Mecca to Medīna, the Prophet made him brother of another great *ṣaḥābi*, namely Abdullāh ibn Mas'ūd; he was 18 when he accepted Islam, as we are told at the top of p. 401 (second line) of *Usd al-Ghāba*. Accordingly, Mu'āth was one of the earliest to embrace Islam: Since he was born in 593 A.D., his conversion to Islam must have taken in 593 + 18 = 611. The year 611 A.D. marked one year only after the commencement of the Prophetic mission which started in Mecca in 610 A.D. Also according to *Usd al-Ghāba*, he was one of the 70 Medenite delegates who swore the second Pledge of Aqaba to the Prophet of Islam in the year 622-23 A.D. Volume Two of this book, which discusses the Prophet of Allāh and His very best of creation, namely Muhammed, has another footnote about this great *ṣaḥābi* where the first and second pledges of Aqaba are detailed.

The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ has said, “Uphold *Dhul-Jalāli wal Ikrām*,” that is: “Follow His path and remain steadfast in doing so and repeat this Attribute of His in your supplications.”

If a servant of Allāh keeps repeating this Attribute, and when its light eventually shines in his innermost, he will become highly regarded among the nations. Whoever realizes the Greatness of Allāh will become very humble before Him.

One of the signs of the good conduct of a servant of Allāh is that he seeks nearness to Him by attaching himself to Him, by becoming very humble, by expressing his humility before Allāh. He must realize that all Greatness and perfection belong to Him, and that He honors His servants by granting them His favors.

86. *Al-Muqsit* المقسط

Allāh, Glory and Exaltation are due to Him, has said,

Allāh testifies that there is no god but He, and (so do) the angels and those who have knowledge, maintaining His creation with justice. (3:18)

Meanings of variations of this Attribute's root word is *qist* قسط, equity or fairness, are as follows: *aqsaṭa* أقسط means implemented justice; *qasaṭa* قسط means became inequitable or unfair; *qāsiṭ* قاسط is an unfair or inequitable person, an oppressor; *muqsit* مقسط is one who is fair in his judgment or decision, and *qist* قسط means share, lot, or portion of something. *Qāsiṭoon* قاسطون is plural: They are those who deviate from justice and about whom the Almighty says, “As to the deviators, they are the fuel of hell” (Qur’ān, 72:15).

Qist قسط means the implementing of justice by taking what one unlawfully has acquired and giving it back to its lawful owner. *Iqsāṭ* means that one is given his own lawful share which someone else has unlawfully taken [forcefully or otherwise]; it is also called *insāf*, carrying out equity. *Qasaṭa* means someone became inequitable, and *aqsaṭa* means that he became fair and just. *Al-Muqsit* is the

Almighty Who is fair and equitable in all His decisions and decrees, Who deals with everyone according to a system. *Al-Muqsit* comes to the rescue of the oppressed and brings about justice. The perfection in His doing so is the fact that in addition to pleasing the oppressed His pleases the oppressors as well, which is the ultimate end of equity, something which nobody can do other than Allāh, Glory to Him, Who has said, "... And if you judge, then judge between them with equity; surely Allāh loves those who judge equitably" (Qur'ān, 5:42).

According to a *Qudsi* tradition, as the Prophet ﷺ was sitting once, he smiled to the extent that his molar teeth showed. One of his companions said to him, "May both my parents be sacrificed for your sake, O Messenger of Allāh! What has made you smile like that?!" The Prophet ﷺ answered saying, "Two men of my nation were brought before the judgment of the Lord of Dignity. One of them said, 'Lord! I plead to You to affect justice on my behalf against this man.' Allāh, the Honored and the Great, said, 'Be fair to your brother and give him what is his.' The man said, 'Lord! None of my good deeds is left to affect it thereby.' The Glorified and the Honored One said to the first man, 'What are you going to do to your brother since he has none of his good deeds left with him [to give you]?' The man answered, 'Then, Lord, let him bear some of my own burdens.'" It was then that the eyes of the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ over-flooded with tears. "That, indeed," he continued, "is a momentous Day when men will need others to bear their own burdens." After a pause, the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ continued to say, "Allāh, the Honored and the Glorified One, said to the wronged one, 'Raise your eyes and cast a look at the Gardens of Bliss.' The man said, 'Lord! I see whole cities made of silver and huge houses of gold bedecked with pearls; for which *ṣiddeeq* or martyr are they?' The Almighty said, 'They are for the one who pays the price.' The man said, 'Lord! Who can have their price?!' He said, 'You can.' 'For what, Lord?!' the man asked the Almighty. 'For forgiving your brother,' the Lord said. The man said, 'Lord! I do forgive him.' The Almighty then said, 'Take your brother by the hand and lead him the way to Paradise.'" Then the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said, "Fear Allāh; fear Allāh, and mend your relations, for Allāh will implement

justice on the Day of Judgment among the believers.”

87. *Al-Jāmi`* الجامع

Allāh has said,

Lord! Surely You are the One Who gathers men on a Day about which there is no doubt; surely Allāh will not fail His promise.
(3:9)

Al-Jāmi` is an Attribute of Allāh derived from *jam`* جمع, its root word, which means: to gather, assemble, horde, or combine. The Day of Gathering is the Day of Judgment. It is called so because Allāh will gather on it the early generations of His creation and the last ones, the jinns and mankind, all the residents of the heavens and the earth, each and every servant of Allāh and his deeds, every oppressor and those whom he oppressed, and every prophet and those to whom he was sent. He will also combine between the rewards of those who obeyed Him and the penalty of those who disobeyed Him.

The subject of *jam`*, gathering or combining, is referred to in several verses of the Holy Qur’ān such as the following:

Allāh: there is no god but He; He will most certainly gather you together on the Resurrection Day; there is no doubt about it. (4:87)

He has ordained mercy on Himself; most surely He will gather you on the Day of Resurrection, there is no doubt about it. (6:12)

And on that Day, We will leave some of them in conflict with others, and the trumpet will be blown, so We will gather them all together. (18:99)

Say: Our Lord will gather us together, then will He judge between us with the truth, and He is the greatest Judge, the all-Knowing.
(34:26)

Say: Allāh gives you life, then He causes you to die, then He will gather you to the Day of Resurrection wherein there is no doubt...
(45:26)

And one of His signs is the creation of the heavens and the earth and the living beings whom He has spread forth in both, and when He pleases, He is all-Powerful to gather them together. (42:29)

On the Day when He gathers you for the Day of Gathering, that is the Day of loss (for some) and gain (for others): Whoever believes in Allāh and does good deeds, He will remove from him his evil and cause him to enter gardens beneath which rivers flow to abide therein forever; that is the great achievement. (64:9)

One whose knowledge is perfected and whose conduct is good deserves to be called *jāmi`*. For this reason, a perfect person is one who does not put out the light of his piety by the light of his knowledge; so is one who combines perfect vision with foresight.

88. *Al-Ghaniyy* الغني

Allāh has said,

O men! You are the ones who stand in need of Allāh while Allāh is self-Sufficient, Praiseworthy. (35:15)

Both *al-Ghaniyy* and *al-Mughni* are among the Attributes of Allāh.

Linguistically, *ghina* غنى, root word of *al-Ghaniyy*, means: independence by virtue of having self-sufficiency. It is the opposite of *faqr*, poverty, want, indigence, need, and the like. Independence or self-sufficiency is of various types: One is the absence of need, and none is independent of needing anyone or anything other than Allāh. This meaning is implied in the verse saying, “His is whatever in the heavens and on earth, and most surely Allāh is the self-Sufficient, the Praised” (Qur’ān, 22:64). The other is the small or limited number of one's needs, which is pointed out in this verse: “And found you in want and made you free from want” (Qur’ān, 93:8). A third is what is mentioned by a few ignorant folks among the unbelievers who claimed that Allāh was poor while they were rich, whereupon the One Who has all the Glory and Honors responded by telling them that “Allāh has certainly heard the statement of those who said: Allāh is poor and we are rich” (Qur’ān, 3:181). They had

said so on hearing the verse saying, “Who will loan Allāh a beautiful loan...?” Perhaps they interpreted this verse literally, thinking that Allāh needed to apply for a loan! The Almighty answered them by saying, “O men! You are the ones who stand in need of Allāh while Allāh is self-Sufficient, Praiseworthy” (Qur’ān, 35:15). The Almighty emphasized the same fact in another verse: “... And whoever disbelieves, surely Allāh is self-Sufficient, above any need of the worlds” (Qur’ān, 3:97).

Al-Ghaniyy has no need, within Himself or in His Attributes or deeds, for anything or anyone at all. He needs none while everything and everyone needs Him. *Al-Ghaniyy* is the Perfect One due to what He has and what is with Him. Our Lord, the Most Praiseworthy, is referred to as such because need is a deficiency, and the needy person is incapable of attaining what he desires or aspires for. The one who is needed has an advantage, because of what he has, over the one who is in need of him. Deficiency is out of the question in the case of the Absolute *al-Ghaniyy*, and incapacitation cannot be attributed to Him, Praise to Him, nor can anyone do Him a favor, for everything is His own creation and invention; He formed and created it, and it is totally dependent on Him in everything. Everything is exactly what the Creator wants it to be.

Everyone else besides Allāh is needy while He, *al-Ghaniyy*, does not need anyone. The Holy Prophet ﷺ is quoted as saying, “Wealth is not abundance of availability; rather, it is the richness of one's own soul.” The highest degree of wealth is satisfaction, contentment with what is available with you; therefore, there is, indeed, no wealth like the feeling of contentment. A man may be very poor, yet he tries his best to look good in the eyes of the people. Notice what the Almighty says about such persons: “... The ignorant man perceives them rich on account of their abstaining (from begging)” (Qur’ān, 2:273).

The Almighty exists by virtue of the necessity for His existence, on His own merits; therefore, He needs none besides Himself. Everything and everyone besides Him may exist, yet its existence comes about when He creates it; so, He, and He alone, Praise to Him, is *al-*

Ghaniyy.

89. *Al-Mughni* المكني

Allāh, *al-Mughni*, has said,

... And if you fear poverty, Allāh will enrich you out of His grace if He pleases; surely Allāh is Knowing, Wise. (9:28)

Al-Mughni has granted His favors to His servants abundantly and facilitated for them the achievement of their goals and objectives, and the meeting of their everyday needs. There is neither independence nor self-sufficiency except that He caused it to exist. He enriches His friends from the treasures of His lights, facilitates for those who live in the universe to access the means of their livelihood and sustenance by His decree. He enriches every truth which He provides in a measure, for He, and only He, knows its secrets, what is hidden of it and what is apparent.

Allāh is the Enricher, yet a servant of His whom He has enriched cannot be thought at all as being absolutely independent. The least of his affairs proves that he needs *al-Mughni*; therefore, he is never independent; rather, he may be independent of anyone except Allāh Who provides him with what he needs while not jeopardizing the causes for his needs. The true independent person is one who does not need anyone at all. One who needs and finds what he needs is independent only by way of analogy, which is the most that can be said about anyone besides Allāh. As regarding the lack of need, this is out of the question for anyone besides Him. But if one needs none save Allāh, then he will be called *ghaniyy*. Had he had no need at all, the verse saying “... And Allāh is self-Sufficient while you have need (of Him)” (Qur’ān, 47:38) would not have been accurate. Had there been any possibility at all that Allāh could in any way be regarded as being in need of anything, there would have been no need for the Almighty to be *al-Mughni*, the Enricher.

Al-Mughni makes whomsoever from among His servants self-sufficient. He grants independence and self-sufficiency to His servants, and He can be regarded as granting them self-sufficiency.

And Allāh also makes some of His servants independent of others, for all needs are in reality met by Him: His creatures cannot do anything for themselves without His help; so, how can they be thought to help others when they themselves need to be helped? He grants independence and self-sufficiency to whomsoever He pleases from among His servants according to His wisdom and will. He says the following in Sūrat Ṭāhā: "... Our Lord gave everything its creation then guided" (Qur'ān, 20:50).

About Himself, *al-Mughni* has said,

... If they are needy, Allāh will make them free from want by His grace. (24:32)

And that He enriches and withholds. (53:48)

And He found you in want and made you free of want. (93:8)

One of the ways to derive a code of ethics from *al-Ghaniyy* and *al-Mughni* is that one realizes that he needs Him constantly, and that he trusts in what Allāh has more than he does in what he himself has, and to be good in conducting generosity and benevolence towards other servants of Allāh. One of the norms of conduct of a believer with regard to the Attribute *al-Mughni* is that once he realizes Him to be the One and only One Who is Independent of any need, the One Who satisfies all the needs of His servants, he will rely on Him in everything and will refer to Him in every matter.

90. *Al-Māni`* المنع

Allāh, Glory and Praise are due to Him, and only to Him, has said,

Or do they have gods who can defend them against Us? (21:43)

Al-Māni` is one of Allāh's Attributes and is derived from *man`* منع, the opposite of giving or granting. It also means: to protect, to stop one thing from harming another or one group of people from annihilating another. It is used to describe the defense of a house, a fortified fortress, etc, against an enemy. It means: to protect and support. It means He has the power to stop the causes of annihilation

or deficiency in both creeds and bodies. He wards off evil to protect and safeguard; He stops giving to whomsoever He pleases in order to try or to protect them. He gives life to whomsoever He loves or does not love, but He does not grant the bliss of the hereafter except to those whom He loves.

Al-Māni` protects and supports those who obey Him, and He stops some of His servants from doing what He does not want them to do while giving them what they want. He wards off the causes of perdition and diminution in matters related to creeds and nations due to causes prepared for their preservation which He creates. Obstruction from the causes of annihilation, and the preservation of what is guarded against extinction, are the objectives of *man`* and are the ultimate goal. If *man`*, prohibition, is needed for the purpose of preservation, and the latter is not needed for the sake of the first, then every protector defends and protects. Not everyone who prohibits protects except that he prohibits the causes of annihilation and diminution.

Al-Māni` prohibits affliction from reaching His friends, or the complete abstention from giving to whomsoever He pleases. If He prohibits affliction from reaching His friends, this is due to His beautiful Grace, and if He stops giving to them, it will still be a great favor from Him.

Allāh grants the pleasures of the life in this world to those whom He loves and to those whom He does not, but He does not protect the heart of a servant of His except when the latter is one of His close friends.

Al-Māni` wards off the causes of annihilation and diminution of creed and body by creating the means which protect it against annihilation and diminution. So, He creates some causes and prohibits others; He gives everything what serves its interests and prohibits what causes its damage. He makes some people wealthy by giving them, and He stops giving to whomsoever He pleases to try them with affliction. He enriches and impoverishes; He makes some people happy and some others miserable; He grants some and

withholds from others; He grants some and deprives others; so, He is both *al-Mu'ti*, the Giver, and *al-Māni`*, the One Who withholds. And He withholds giving whomsoever He pleases, and His withholding may contain giving in disguise. He may withhold giving one of His servants abundant wealth and instead give him accomplishments and beauty. He may deprive one of His servants from enjoying good health and make him pleased with His decree. *Al-Māni`* is also *al-Mu'ti*: Within withholding, there may be giving, and within giving there may be withholding.

The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ used to say the following after finishing each of the prescribed daily prayers: “There is no god but Allāh, the One and only God; His is the Kingdom; His is the Praise, and He can do everything. Lord! None can prohibit what You grant, nor can anyone grant what You withhold, and none is capable of stopping the implementation of Your will.”

91. *Al-Dārr* الضار

Allāh has said,

Say: I do not control for myself any harm, nor can I benefit myself in aught except what Allāh pleases. (10:49)

Both *al-Dārr* and *an-Nāfi`* are among the Attributes of Allāh.

Most references wherein these Attributes are discussed have combined both Attributes together. Combining both of these Attributes is better: It conveys a stronger meaning of the Almighty's Power to do whatever He pleases, however He wills; none benefits nor harms others besides Him.

Language says that *Dārr* (أو ضرر) ضرر, harm, is the opposite of *naḥ* نفع, benefit or advantage. Allāh is *al-Dārr*, that is, the One Who can harm anyone He wants, in any way He wishes; He impoverishes some of His servants or causes them to fall prey to sickness according to His wisdom; so, He determines everything. He alone facilitates the means of harm as a trial from Him whereby He purges the sins or subjects one of His servants to a test in order to raise his

status. He decrees harm to some of His servants and affects His decree through certain means. He is the Wise One in whatever He does, the most Merciful in His judgment. If He decrees some harm, it is only for the sake of the general good, and if He decrees an ailment, it is but the useful medicine in the life of this world and the life hereafter.

Allāh has said, “If Allāh touches you with affliction, there is none to remove it but He...” (Qur’ān, 6:17).

Prophet Moses عليه السلام once complained to his Lord about a tooth-ache, so the Almighty instructed him to apply a certain type of herb on the area of his pain, which he did, and the aching stopped. A few days later, the same pain came back to him, so he went and took the same herb and applied it, but this time his pain intensified many times more. He complained to Allāh saying, “Lord! Did You not order me to apply this type of herb and tell me where I could find it?” The Almighty inspired him, “O Moses! I am the One Who heals and Who grants good health; I am the One Who causes harm and Who benefits. You came to Me the first time, so I removed the cause of your ailment, whereas this time you went to the plant (on your own) instead and did not come to Me.”

The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ has said, “Anyone who claims that Allāh commends the doing of wrong deeds and of sins tells lies about Allāh. And anyone who claims that goodness and evil are possible without the will of Allāh strips Allāh of His Authority. And anyone who claims that sins are committed without Allāh's Might tells a lie about Allāh, and whoever tells lies about Allāh, He will lodge him into the fire.” In this tradition, by goodness and evil he means health and sickness respectively due to this verse: “...We try you by evil and by good by way of probation” (Qur’ān, 21:35).

Imām al-Bāqir عليه السلام is quoted as saying, “Allāh, the Exalted and the Great, is more compassionate towards His creation than forcing them to commit sins then penalizing them for doing so, and Allāh is more Mighty than willing to do something and it does not take place.” He was asked once whether there was a distance between

compulsion and destiny, and his answer was, “Yes! One is more distant than the distance between the heavens and the earth!” He has also said, “There should neither be compulsion nor an unrestricted freedom; the best course is a middle one.” The West has been plagued by unrestricted freedom, folks, and I am telling you this because I lived there for a third of a century and observed the results of such freedom! Anyway, when the Imām ﷺ was asked about the middle course, he said, “Let me give you an example: You may see a man committing a sin, and you may try to stop him from doing so but he refuses to desist, whereupon you leave him to commit that sin. When he does not listen to you but insists on sinning, it does not mean that you yourself have encouraged him to commit that sin.”

92. *An-Nāfi`* النافع

As regarding the Attribute *an-Nāfi`*, Allāh *subḥānahu wa ta`ālā* has said, “Whatever benefit comes to you (O man!), it is from Allāh, and whatever misfortune befalls you, it is from your own self” (Qur’ān, 4:79).

An-Nāfi` is the source of any and all benefit and goodness for the life in this world and for the creed. He alone grants good health, wealth, happiness, authority, guidance and piety. He enables all His creatures to receive the benefits He brings about for them. He has facilitated the path leading to Him for those who aspire to tread it. He benefits the souls through His prophets, nourishes the bodies through food, wards off disease through medicine, keeps affliction away through His favors and goodness, and has benefitted everyone, be he an angel, a human, or a jinn.

Ibn `Abbās says, “I was sitting once behind the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ so he said to me, ‘Young man! I would like to teach you a few words [of wisdom]: If you safeguard your rights towards Allāh, He will protect you. If you remain mindful of Allāh's rights on you, you will find Him looking after you. If you have a plea, then plead to Him; if you seek help, seek it from Him, and bear in mind that if all people gather to benefit you in anything, they will not be able to do so except in what He has already allotted for you, and if they all gather together to harm you in any way, they will never be able to do

so except if He has already decreed it on you; the ink has dried, and the tablets have been removed.”

Al-Ḍārr an-Nāfi` is the One from Whom everything good or bad ensues; all is attributed to Allāh and is affected either through the angels, mankind, inanimate objects, or by other means; so, do not think that poison, for example, kills by itself, or that food by itself satisfies hunger. Angels, mankind, demons, or anything else in existence, such as planets, stars, or other things, are all under His control; they do not do anything except what He has made them do. Their totality, in addition to the eternal Power, is like a pen in the hand of the writer as conceived by an illiterate. If a ruler signs the order to penalize or reward someone, the pen whereby he signs such an order cannot tell the difference between one order and another, or between what harm it is causing or what benefit, or even the difference between one of its users and the other. This is the case with all means and causes.

Both *al-Ḍārr* and *an-Nāfi`* are referred to in various places in the Holy Qur’ān; among them are:

Say: I do not control any benefit nor any harm for my own soul except as Allāh pleases; had I known the unknown, I would have had much of good and no harm would have touched me; I am only a warner and giver of glad tidings to people who believe. (7:188)

Say: I do not control for myself any harm, nor any benefit, except whatever Allāh pleases; every nation has a term; when their term comes, they shall not lag behind for an hour, nor can they go before (their time). (10:49)

Yet when He removes the evil from you, lo! A party from among you associates others with their Lord. (16:54)

And when We make people taste of mercy, they rejoice in it, and if evil befalls them for what their hands have done, lo! They despair. (30:36)

The portion a servant of Allāh may obtain of the inspiration of these Attributes is that he becomes “harmful” towards the enemies of

Allāh while benefitting the friends of Allāh. In Sūrat al-Mā'ida, the Almighty describes the faithful as "... lowly before the believers, mighty against the unbelievers" (Qur'ān, 5:54). Such a believer does not plead to anyone, nor does he fear anyone except his Lord; he relies wholly on Allāh. One who fully realizes that his Lord, the Most Exalted One, is the One and only God Who creates and makes things available, Who alone brings new things into existence..., he will then submit to Him and rely on Him regarding all his affairs; he will then live enjoying a peaceful mind; he will be secure from people, and he will provide counsel for everyone. His heart will have room for neither deception nor treachery.

It is good to combine both of these Attributes, *al-Ḍārr* and *an-Nāfi`*, together, for at them it is said that all Attributes end; He, Glory to Him, controls the means for people's harm and benefit, and none can harm anyone nor benefit anyone besides Him; "...Suffices your Lord for a Guide and a Helper" (Qur'ān, 25:31). One who remembers both of these Attributes will submit totally to Allāh and will always feel that everything is from Him and returns to Him.

93. *An-Noor* النور

The Almighty has said,

Allāh is the light of the heavens and the earth; the likeness of His light is a niche wherein there is a lamp; the lamp is in a glass, and the glass is as if it were a brightly shining star lit from a blessed olive-tree, neither eastern nor western, the oil whereof almost emanates light though fire does not touch it: light on light; Allāh guides whomsoever He pleases to His light, and Allāh sets forth parables for men, and Allāh is Cognizant of all things. (24:35)

In language, *noor* is light, whatever its glow, rays, or reflection may be. It aids vision. There are two kinds of light: a light related to the life of this world, and a light related to the life hereafter. The first, let us say the secular, is also of two types: one is what the mind, the intellect, can see; it is a Divine light, the light of reason, of the Holy Qur'ān. The other is related to the physical one, that of things which emit or reflect light such as the sun and the moon. An example for the Divine light is implied in a verse such as this: "... There has

come to you light and a clear Book from Allāh” (Qur’ān, 5:15). Reference to the physical light exists in the verse saying, “He it is Who made the sun a shining brightness and the moon a light (a reflection)” (Qur’ān, 10:5). Here, the sun is mentioned before the moon because its light is more commonly associated with what we can see than the moon.

An-Noor is the Apparent One Who has manifested Himself fully. The One Who is apparent on His own and Who makes everything else apparent and visible is called *an-Noor* Who takes things out of non-existence and brings them into the world of existence. *An-Noor*, Glory to Him, has filled our world with light and brought it into existence, Who determined it since time immemorial, Who has illuminated the apparent existence through the sun and the stars, Who enlightened, that is, brought light into, the world of spirits through the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ, the master of the first generations and of the last, and He illuminated the hearts through the light of His Divinely revealed Books. He illuminated those endowed with knowledge with the light of Divine manifestations. *An-Noor* has illuminated the hearts of the truthful through His Unity, and the conscience of those who love Him by His support for them. He beautified the complexions and brought life to the souls of the pious through their adoration. He guides the hearts to prefer and opt for what is right, Who guides the innermost conscience to silently address Him, such is the *munājāt*.

Noor, light, then, has many meanings. One of them is the light of knowledge and scholarship, which is the dawn of the truth as seen by the heart of a knowledgeable believer. The Attribute *an-Noor* has been mentioned in the text of the Holy Qur’ān and is attributed to Allāh in many places the best known of which is 24:35 cited above.

Ibn ‘Abbās says that the meaning of this verse is that Allāh is the Guide of the residents of the heavens and of the earth; the similitude of His guidance in the heart of a believer is like pure oil which shines even before fire touches it; therefore, when fire does touch it, it intensifies its light, so it intensifies and adds light to its light. The Attribute *an-Noor* is indicative of the fact that Allāh is the Light of

the heavens and the earth.

There are many other verses wherein reference to Allāh's light is made; among them are the following:

They desire to put out the light of Allāh with their mouths, and Allāh insists on perfecting His light though the unbelievers are averse thereto. (9:32)

What?! Is he whose heart Allāh has opened for Islam, so he is in a light from his Lord (is similar to a cruel, hard-hearted one)? Nay! Woe unto those whose hearts are hard against the remembrance of Allāh; surely they are in clear error. (39:22)

And the earth shall beam with the light of its Lord; the Book shall be laid down; the prophets and the witnesses shall be brought forth; judgment shall be issued between them with equity, and they shall not be dealt with unjustly. (39:69)

There are more than forty references to light in the text of the Holy Qur'ān. Some scholars are of the view that the Attribute *an-Noor* is Allāh's Greatest Name **اسم الله الأعظم**. They say that they cannot see anything in existence without seeing the meaning of this Attribute manifested in it.

The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ used to supplicate to his Lord in the morning saying, "Lord! I invoke You to create light in my heart, light in all parts of my body, light in my hearing, light in my sight, light in my hair, light in my complexion, light in my flesh, light in my blood, light in my bones, light before me, light behind me, light on my right, light on my left, light above me, light underneath me! Lord! I implore You to increase my light, to grant me light, and to create light for me."

94. Al-Hādi الهادي

The Most Glorified and Exalted One has said,

... And sufficient is your Lord as a Guide and a Helper. (25:31)

Al-Hādi is an Attribute derived, linguistically, from *hidāya* هداية, guidance, which means: to attract someone to something, such as attracting the heart of a believer to *al-Hādi*, to the One Who provides such guidance. Guidance means bringing the hearts closer to the Almighty.

Guidance is following one's sound reason and commonsense and the graceful way of bringing someone to the anticipated goal. He guides the elite from among His servants whom He has chosen to know His Essence, so much so that they see things through Him, and He guides the commoners from among them to witness His creatures, so much so that they have seen them as signs of His being their Creator and Sustainer. He has guided everything He created to whatever means whereby it can satisfy its needs. He has guided the baby to suck the breast of its mother, the young birds to pick the seeds, and the bees to build their honey-combs in hexagonal shapes which are the best to suit the forms of their bodies, and such examples are quite numerous indeed.

Al-Hādi guides the guilty to repentance, and those blessed with knowledge to the facts regarding nearness to Him. *Al-Hādi* occupies the hearts by truthfulness and equity, the bodies by life and death. *Al-Hādi* has given everything He has created its own shape and characteristics, and He guides whomsoever He creates to the goals behind His creating them, to issues related to their life in this world and to those related to their creed, in addition to everything else related to them. He guides the hearts to know Him and the souls to obey Him; He guides the guilty to the path of repentance, the sincere ones to nearness to Him after being far from it. He keeps the hearts filled with love for equity and truth; He enables them to treat people justly. *Al-Hādi* is in all reality Allāh. *Al-Hādi* has guided the elite from among His servants to wisdom and knowledge.

Whenever the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ woke up during the night for prayers, he used to supplicate to his Lord saying, “Lord! God of Gabriel, Michael and Israfil, Originator of the heavens and the earth, Knower of the unknown and the Witness! You judge between Your servants regarding that wherein they dispute! I plead to You to guide

me to that wherein they have differed, by Your will, for You guide whomsoever You please to a straight path.”

95. *Al-Badee`* البديع

Allāh, Glory and Exaltation are His, has said,

Wonderful Originator of the heavens and the earth! When He decrees an affair, He only says to it “Be!” and it is. (2:117)

In language, to originate is to bring about something without following a model or an example. *Al-Badee`* is the Unique One; there is nothing similar to Him in His essence, qualities, or whatever He does. He has manifested the wonders that He has created as the most beautiful indications of His wisdom. He has created all cosmic worlds without a prior model. He, Exalted is His Name, has said, “Wonderful Originator of the heavens and the earth! How could He have a son when He has no consort, and He (Himself) created everything, and He knows all things?” (Qur’ān, 6:101).

Badee` means: originator; one who does something new, originating its existence. *Bid`a* بدعة means something new, an innovation, simply because nobody before had said or advocated it. Allāh is the Originator of all things without following a prior model. He did not learn their creation from anyone else; rather, He initiated the creation of all beings, so He is their Maker, the One Who started their existence. The Almighty, *al-Badee`*, has brought everything into existence without the use of a tool or any material, without being limited to time or space in order to be able to do that.

By the way, the subject of *bid`a* بدعة is quite somber in Islam: Whenever an Islamic sect does not understand or appreciate a practice done by another sect, it labels it as *bid`a*. It is a serious plague and an indication of short-sightedness, close-mindedness and ignorance.

Al-Badee` has manifested the wonderful things of what He has done and the extraordinary proofs of His wisdom. He is the Absolute One Who has no peer similar to Him in His qualities, wisdom, or

anything related to Him; He, and only He, is the Absolute *al-Badee'* Who has created everything without following a prior model.

Since there is none like Him in His essence, characteristics, actions, or anything related to Him..., this makes Him the Absolute Originator. If such a thing is known commonly, it cannot be called *badee'* at all; so, this Attribute does not fit anyone besides Allāh. None was ever be like Him, nor ever will; therefore, His example never existed at all and never will, and whatever exists besides Him exists because of Him; He, and He alone, is the Originator since time immemorial and forever.

Anas ibn Mālik is quoted as saying that the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ once heard a man supplicating thus, "Lord! I plead to You by the fact that to You is all Praise due; there is no god but You; You are the One Who never stops giving, Who originated the heavens and the earth, the One to Whom all Glory and Honor belong! I plead to You to grant me a place in Your Paradise, and I seek refuge with You against the fire," whereupon the Prophet ﷺ said, "He surely has pleaded to Allāh by His Attribute which, if one pleads to Him by it, He grants the plea and gives what He is asked."

A believer's share of this Glorious Attribute is that if he repeats it quite often, Allāh will cause the springs of wisdom to flow from his tongue; he will be wise in his intentions, for intention is the bedrock of action. A servant of Allāh who remembers and repeats this Attribute quite often, being fully aware of its meanings, will be subjected to the beauty of its light. Allāh, the Truth, Exalted and Blessed is He, will permit him to enter into the circle of invention; He will make him a master obeyed by others. One of the norms of conduct of whoever mentions this Attribute quite often is the avoiding of innovations in the creed and full adherence to the Sunnah.

96. *Al-Bāqi* الباقي

Allāh, Glory and Exaltation are His, has said, "... Allāh is better and more abiding (Qur'ān, 20:73).

Al-Bāqi is one of Allāh's Attributes the root word of which is *baqā'* بقاء: the opposite of extinction. It also means: obedience to Allāh and awaiting His rewards, or the lingering status of goodness.

The reality of *al-Bāqi*, Glory to Him, is in His ever-enduring existence; endurance is one of His characteristics. *Al-Bāqi*, Glory to Him, always exists and His existence is necessitated by virtue of His own merits. He is ever-Present. He remains existing forever, from the beginning of any beginning and for eternity. The Absolute *al-Bāqi* is the One the duration of Whom never ends, and such a duration is described as *abadi*, perpetual, eternal, endless. The Absolute *al-Qadeem* is the One the time of Whose beginning, if there is such a thing, goes back to the very beginning of time, and such a duration is called *azali*, eternal. When you say that His existence depends on His own merits, this Attribute will then include both meanings.

What affects the determining of the “past” and “present” are certain variables; both words describe time, and nothing measures time other than change. One Who is above change by virtue of motion is above being affected by time; therefore, neither “past” nor “future” can apply to Him. The Truth, Exalted is He, is before time, since He Himself created time, and nothing in Him changed. He was before time, and He remains after His creation of time just as He has always been and will always be. Those who have claimed that duration is a characteristic added to the essence of *al-Bāqi* are far from the truth, and still further from the truth than them are those who claim that time is an additional quality in as far as the Eternal One is concerned. There is no need to bother the reader with details about such confusion regarding existence, duration, and which qualities endure.

Allāh's existence stands on its own merits and is self-necessitating, that is, it does not accept extinction in any way. The duration of anything which is self-sustaining during the past and will remain so in the future as well as it did in the past is called old, timeless, and its duration in the future is called existence.

The subject of enduring and duration attributed to Allāh has been referred to in the text of the Holy Qur'ān in more than one place. Examples are the following:

... The sustenance of your Lord is better and more abiding. (20:131)

And there will endure forever the person of your Lord, the Lord of glory and honor. (55:27)

... What is with Allāh is better and more lasting for those who believe and rely on their Lord. (42:36)

... Ever-abiding good deeds are with your Lord best in recompense and best in yielding fruit. (19:76)

The good fortune a servant of Allāh may receive if he remembers this Attribute quite often is that the Almighty will reveal to him enduring facts and will make him observe the perishing trails, so he will flee eagerly to *al-Bāqī* and decorate his conduct with the meanings its qualities and moral code suggest.

97. *Al-Wārith* الوارث

Allāh has said,

... Allāh's is the heritage of the heavens and the earth, and Allāh is aware of everything you do. (3:180)

Al-Wārith, Glory to Him, remains after the extinction of all beings. He inherits everything after the extinction of everyone and everything. He is the Heir: On the Day of Judgment, it will be loudly called out, "To whom does the kingdom belong this Day? [The answer will come:] To Allāh, the One, The Subduer (of all)" (Qur'ān, 40:16).

The root word of the Attribute *al-Wārith* is *waratha*, inherited: He will inherit all beings after their extinction. He is the only One Who remains after those who used to think that they possessed wares and items, the things which He had given them, will be gone; their

existence, as well as that of what He has given them, is dependent on Him, and on none else. He has said, “And most surely We bring to life, and We cause death, and We are the heirs” (Qur’ān, 15:23).

What Allāh's servants used to own will go back to Him; there is no partner with Him. *Al-Wārith* is the One to Whom all possessions will go back after the death of their “owners”. He will be the One Who will call on that Day, the Day of Judgment, as in 40:16, “To whom does the kingdom belong this Day?” and He will be the One Who will answer by saying, “To Allāh, the One, The Subduer (of all)” (Qur’ān, 40:16). Most people mistakenly think that they have possessions which are their own, but the reality of the matter will be unfolded before their eyes on that Day. This call represents a fact which will then be revealed to everyone.

Reference to the subject of heritage as applied to the Almighty occurs in some Qur’ānic verses such as the following:

And most surely We bring to life and cause death, and We are the heirs. (15:23)

Surely We inherit the earth and all those on it and to Us shall they all be returned. (19:40)

And We desired to bestow a favor on those who were deemed weak in the land and make them the Imāms and make them the heirs. (28:5)

Lord! Do not leave me alone, and You are the best of inheritors. (21:89)

The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ used to supplicate saying, “Lord! I plead to You to grant me the enjoyment of my hearing and vision, and to make them my heirs.”

98. *Ar-Rasheed* الرشيد

Allāh *subḥānahu wa Ta`ālā* has said,

And when My servants ask you concerning Me, surely I am very

near: I answer the prayer of the suppliant when he calls on Me; therefore, they should answer My call and believe in Me so that they will be rightly guided. (2:186)

The Attribute *ar-Rasheed* is derived from *rushd* رشد, its root word, which means: guidance, righteousness and uprightness, the antithesis of straying and crookedness. Its derivation accepts two possibilities: One is *ar-Rasheed*, which means the same as *al-Rāshid*, the Wise One, so Wise is He that there is nothing among His deeds that can be regarded as wasteful or wrong. The other is that it may mean the same as *al-Badee'*, and Allāh's *irshād*, that is, His leading His servants to the right path, is due to His *hidāya*, guidance. *Ar-Rasheed* is the One Whose management of all affairs achieves its objectives without anyone else besides Him directing or assisting it, Who is none but Allāh, Glory to Him. *Ar-Rasheed* pleases whomsoever He wills by providing him with His guidance, making whomsoever He wills miserable by distancing him from His guidance. He is the One in Whose management there is no lapse, and in Whose assessment there is no fault.

Ar-Rasheed is characterized by complete perfection, great wisdom, ultimate guidance. He is the One Whose management of all affairs reaches its ultimate goal and success. He guides His creatures and leads them to what is best for them. He guides them through His wisdom towards the attainment of their well-being in the life of this world and in the life to come. *Ar-Rasheed* has made those with whom He is pleased happy, Who guided His friends to Him; there is no negligence in His management of the affairs nor in His assessment, and He is known for His justice and favors.

Ar-Rasheed is *al-Murshid*, the One Who inspires right guidance for those who obey Him, and He has led all beings to His guidance, the One Whose rope is strong, Whose command is wise.

In Sūrat al-Kahaf, we read the following verse: “Lord! Grant us mercy from You, and provide for us a right course in our affairs” (Qur’ān, 18:10), and, “... Whomsoever He causes to err, you shall not find for him any friend to lead (him) rightly” (Qur’ān, 18:17).

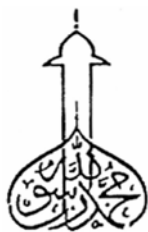
If a servant of Allāh wishes to be on the right track, his guidance will be proportionate with his terse management in the attainment of his secular and religious objectives. One must deal with his Lord, *ar-Rasheed*, in a way whereby he properly relies on his Lord to guide him. His Lord will then lead him to reform his own self first, to refer all his affairs to Him, to seek refuge with Him whenever evil touches him and to plead for His help whenever he is afflicted, just as Allāh has told Moses to do: “And when he (Moses) turned his face towards Midyan, he said: Maybe my Lord will guide me to a course nearer to the right path than this” (Qur’ān, 18:24).

A servant of Allāh must thus behave: When he wakes up, he should rely on his Lord, and when a weighty matter faces him, he should seek Allāh's help in its regard then await what signal his heart will respond to it. The Almighty will then help him do whatever he needs to do and will suffice him regarding all his affairs. If he does contrary to what Allāh guides him, He will then reprimand him so that he would know that his Lord found him to be insolent, hence he abandons his self-reliance and forsakes following his own mind and trickery. A servant of Allāh ought to quite often remember the Attribute *ar-Rasheed* and cling to its meaning so that he may be led to the commendable conduct, and Allāh will then grant him wisdom and bestow His blessings on him.

99. *Aṣ-Ṣaboora* الصبور

The Praised and Glorified One has said,

... nor did they weaken, nor did they abase themselves, and Allāh loves those who are patient. (3:146)



Aṣ-Ṣaboora is an Attribute of Allāh which is linguistically derived from the noun *ṣabr* صبر which means: withholding one's self from expressing its overwhelming grief. *Aṣ-Ṣaboora* is most patient, the One Whose patience is greater than anyone else's. The month of Ramadan is called the month of patience and perseverance: During its days, the believer withholds

himself/herself from yielding to the desires and temptations.

Aş-Şaboor, Glory to Him, is the Clement One Who does not surprise those who disobey Him by suddenly inflicting His penalty on them; rather, He forgives and postpones carrying out such a penalty. *Aş-Şaboor* does not rush to do anything too early; rather, He manages the affairs according to a measure; He conducts them according to a well-defined plan of His; He does not delay them from reaching their destined courses out of laziness or laxation, nor does He advance their execution. Rather, He does everything exactly at its right time, in the best way, as it ought to be. All of this He does without facing hardship which may frustrate His will. *Aş-Şaboor* gives you and is true to you even when you are rude to Him. He comes to you forgiving even when you shun Him and revolt against Him.

Aş-Şaboor does not rush to penalize those who disobey Him or to chastise those who sin. He does not do anything except when it is most opportune due to His wisdom, honor, and sublimity. He is not harmed by those who commit sins. He takes the guilty by the forelocks. *Aş-Şaboor* commands and respites those to whom He issues His command; He observes and does not rush, nor does He do anything prematurely. He commands and His command is according to a certain measure. He cancels the penalty even after it becomes due. *Aş-Şaboor* inspires patience and perseverance for all His creatures. The meaning of the Attribute *aş-Şaboor* is very close to that of the other Attribute *al-Ḥaleem*. The difference between the first and the latter is that with *aş-Şaboor*, nobody can feel safe against His penalty, as is the case with *al-Ḥaleem*.

In Sūrat Āli-`Imrān, the Almighty says, “O you who believe! Persevere, excel in patience, and remain steadfast” (Qur’ān, 3:200), that is, be patient while obeying Allāh, make your hearts accustomed to tolerating affliction in the cause of Allāh, and train your innermost conscience to be eager for Allāh. It also means: Be patient for the sake of Allāh; persevere while seeking Allāh's Pleasure; remain in Allāh's camp. Patience regarding what Allāh decrees is a trial, and patience for the sake of Allāh is hardship, while patience *with* Allāh

is loyalty [to Him]. The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ has said, “None is more patient regarding the pain of what he hears than Allāh: They ascribe sons to Him even as He grants them good health and sustenance.”¹

One of the manifestations of a believer's good conduct in deriving a moral code from the inspiration of the Attribute *aṣ-Ṣaboor* is that he keeps in mind its beautiful meanings, so he is patient under all circumstances. One who examines how Allāh treats His servants, how He is patient in the face of their rudeness and disobedience, while He keeps giving them one respite after another, will learn how to treat people applying Allāh's manners to the best of his ability. Whenever patience is repeated by a servant of Allāh, it becomes a habit, and he will then be following its guiding light. Such is the status of those who persevere in the sight of Allāh, Glory and Praise to Him, as explained in the text of the Holy Qur'ān. We are told that the group of those who were patient will be advanced before others by the token of the verse saying, “Those who are patient, and the truthful, and the obedient, and those who spend (benevolently) and those who ask forgiveness in the morning...” (Qur'ān, 3:17). Thus, such a group will have a higher status than that of other groups of His servants. The Praised One has said, “If there are twenty patient ones among you, they shall overcome two hundred, and if there are a hundred, they shall overcome a thousand of those who disbelieve” (Qur'ān, 8:65). This is victory with regard to prowess and number granted by Allāh whereby He blesses those from among His servants who persevere. “Lord! Pour down on us patience, and make our steps firm, and assist us against the unbelieving people” (Qur'ān, 2:250), “Lord! Pour on us patience and cause us to die as Muslims” (Qur'ān, 7:126).

الحمد لله رب العالمين و الصلاة و السلام على سيد المرسلين طه الأمين و
على آله الطيبين الطاهرين و أصحابه الغر الميامين

¹al-Bukhāri, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, Vol. 9, p. 206.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

﴿لِلَّهِ مَا فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَإِنْ تُبْذَرُوا مَا فِي أَنْفُسِكُمْ أَوْ تُخْفَوُهُ يُحَاسِبْكُمْ بِهِ اللَّهُ فَيَغْفِرُ لِمَنْ يَشَاءُ وَيُعَذِّبُ مَنْ يَشَاءُ وَاللَّهُ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ﴿١﴾ أَمَنْ الرُّسُلُ بِمَا أُنْزِلَ إِلَيْهِ مِنْ رَبِّهِ وَالْمُؤْمِنُونَ كُلُّ أَمَنْ بِاللَّهِ وَمَلَائِكَتِهِ وَكُتُبِهِ وَرُسُلِهِ لَا تَفَرَّقُ بَيْنَ أَحَدٍ مِنْ رُسُلِهِ وَقَالُوا سَمِعْنَا وَأَطَعْنَا غُفْرَانَكَ رَبَّنَا وَإِلَيْكَ الْمَصِيرُ ﴿٢﴾ لَا يُكَلِّفُ اللَّهُ نَفْسًا إِلَّا وُسْعَهَا لَهَا مَا كَسَبَتْ وَعَلَيْهَا مَا اكْتَسَبَتْ رَبَّنَا لَا تُؤَاخِذْنَا إِنْ نَسِينَا أَوْ أَخْطَأْنَا رَبَّنَا وَلَا تَحْمِلْ عَلَيْنَا إَصْرًا كَمَا حَمَلْتَهُ عَلَى الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِنَا رَبَّنَا وَلَا تُحَمِّلْنَا مَا لَا طَاقَةَ لَنَا بِهِ وَاعْفُ عَنَّا وَارْحَمْنَا أَنْتَ مَوْلَانَا فَانصُرْنَا عَلَى الْقَوْمِ الْكَافِرِينَ﴾

اللهم آمين يا رب العالمين

All that is in the heavens and on earth belongs to Allah. Whether you show what is on your minds or conceal it, Allah calls you to account for it. He forgives whom He pleases and punishes whom He pleases, for Allah has power over all things. ﴿١﴾ The Messenger believes in what has been revealed to him from his Lord, as do the men of faith. Each one (of them) believes in Allāh, His angels, His Books, and His Messengers. "We make no distinction (they say) between one and another of His Messengers." And they say, "We hear, and we obey: (We seek) Your forgiveness, Our Lord, and You are the end of all journeys." ﴿٢﴾ Allah does not place a burden on any soul greater than it can bear. It gets (the fruits of) every good that it earns, and it suffers every ill that it earns. (Pray:) "Our Lord! Do not condemn us if we forget or fall into error. Our Lord! Do not lay a burden on us like the one You laid on those before us. Our Lord! Do not lay a burden on us greater than we have the strength to bear. Blot out our sins, and grant us forgiveness. Have mercy on us. You are our Protector; help us against those who stand against faith." (Qur'an, 2:284-286) Āmeen!



PART THREE

UNITY OF GOD (*TAWHĪD*)

توحيد

Islam falls in the category of monotheistic creeds the adherents of which believe in the Oneness of God. This concept is referred to in Islam as *Tawhīd*, and it is so important and so vast that volumes of books have been written about it. `Allāma al-Majlisi¹, for example,

¹His full name is Muhammed Baqir ibn Muhammed Taqi al-Majlisi. He was born in 1037 A.H./1628 A.D. and died in Isfahan, Iran, in 1111 A.H./1699 A.D. He was the greatest writer in the 10th Hijri century, author of 25 titles in Arabic and 53 in Persian, his mother tongue. Many of these titles are in several volumes each. For example, one edition of Bihar al-Anwar runs in 111 (one hundred and eleven) volumes. His proficiency and

dedicates two entire volumes of his encyclopedic work *Bihār al-Anwār* to this most important tenet of Islam. Tawḥīd instructs Muslims that: There is only one God, one truth, one straight line between two points: God and His servants, one family, one pair of parents, Ādam and Even, one human race, one heaven (Paradise), and one hell. Had this tenet been practically implemented by the human race, no individual at all would have discriminated against another or thought that he is better than him. It is a universal code of human brotherhood and unity. We all are members of one and the same human family started by our father Ādam and mother Eve.

Since the space here is limited, we will have to be brief as much as possible. Had we been able to afford the space, we would have refuted the views of dualists and polytheists as well as those who believe in the concept of the Trinity and in God having a son, a daughter, a wife, or any family members or relatives!

I TAWḤĪD IN THE HOLY QUR'ĀN

The Holy Qur'ān is an inexhaustible source of knowledge for those who seek to discuss this subject. We have preferred here to be very brief in bringing the reader the following aspects relevant to *Tawḥīd* as outlined in the Holy Qur'ān. Additional interesting and useful information shedding light on *Tawḥīd* is included in two chapters to follow.

a) Allāh is Unique, Peerless

Qur'ānic verses testifying to the fact that Allāh, Praise to Him, is One and peerless and can never have a partner in His authority, or a similitude, nor can He have a son, a daughter, a mother, an aunt, a grandmother or any kin, are numerous; here are some of them:

(He is) the Originator of the heavens and the earth; He made mates for you from among yourselves, and mates of (and for) the cattle, too, multiplying you (humans and animals) thereby; nothing is like Him; and He is the Hearing, the Seeing. (42:11)

prolific pen are truly baffling, unsurpassed.

Say: He, Allāh, is One. Allāh is He on Whom all (beings and things) depend. He does not beget, nor is He begotten, and none is like Him. (112:1-4)

He is Allāh, the One, the Subduer (of all). (39:4)

Say: Who is the Lord of the heavens and the earth? Say: Allāh. Say: Do you then take besides Him guardians who do not control any benefit or harm for themselves? Say: Are the blind and the seeing alike? Or can the darkness and the light be equal? Or have they set up with Allāh associates who have created creation like His, so what is created became confused to them? Say: Allāh is the Creator of all, and He is the One, the Supreme. (13:16)

The command “say” in the verses above refers to a divine order to the Prophet of Islam ﷺ to put forth these very important questions and answers before those who used to argue with him about the Holy One. All these verses, and many others, testify that Allāh is the One and Only God, negating the theories of dualists or polytheists.

b) He is the Only Creator

None besides Allāh has ever created anything out of nothing. He, and only He, is the Creator, whereas everything besides Him is a creation of His, including prophet ﷺ whom He sent to mankind to enlighten them. Everything in the cosmos, the stars and constellations, the earth and its mountains, oceans, rivers, vegetation, small or large beings, and the humans who live on it, are all among His creations. Verses stressing this fact abound in the Holy Qur’ān; among them are:

(Refer to 13:16 above)

Allāh is the Creator of everything and He has authority over everything. His are the treasures of the heavens and the earth; as for those who disbelieve in the communications of Allāh, they surely are the losers. (39:62-63)

Such is Allāh, your Lord, the Creator of everything; there is no God but He; whence are you then turned away? (40:62)

Such is Allāh, your Lord; there is no god but He, the Creator of all things; so, worship Him (and Him alone), and He has charge of all things. (6:102)

He is Allāh, the Creator, the Maker, the Fashioner; His are the most beautiful names; whatever in the heavens and on earth declares His glory, and He is the Mighty, the Wise. (59:24)

(Allāh is the) Wonderful Originator of the heavens and the earth! How could He have a son when He has no consort, and He (Himself) created everything? And He knows all things. (6:101)

O men! Call to mind the favor of Allāh on you; is there any creator besides Allāh who gives you sustenance from the heavens and the earth? There is no god but He; whence are you then turned away? (35:3)

Surely your Lord is Allāh Who created the heavens and the earth in six days (periods of time, stages, phases), and He is firm in power; He throws the veil of night over the day, which it incessantly pursues, and (He created) the sun and the moon and the stars (and) made them subservient (to you, serving you) by His command; surely His is the creation and the command; blessed is Allāh, the Lord of the worlds. (7:54)

c) The One in Godhead and in Nurturing His Beings

There is only One God for the entire cosmos, existence. He deals with it as He pleases without having anyone to share His authority, or to help Him. He manages the affairs through many agents, the most noteworthy of whom are the angels who outnumber by many, many times, all the residents of earth, and whose duties and ranks vary a great deal. They carry out His orders most efficiently and effectively; He enables them to do so. Consider the following verses:

Surely your Lord is Allāh Who created the heavens and the earth in six days (periods), and He is firm in power, regulating the affairs; there is no intercessor except with His permission. Such is Allāh, your Lord; so, worship Him; will you not then mind? (10:3)

Allāh raised the heavens without any pillars that you can see, and He is firm in power, and He made the sun and the moon

subservient (to you): each pursues its course to an appointed time; He regulates the affairs, making clear the signs so that you may be certain of meeting your Lord. (13:2)

He is the Supreme above His servants, and He sends keepers (protecting angels) over you until, when death comes to one of you, Our messengers (angels of death) cause him to die, and they are not remiss. (6:61)

Allāh takes the souls away at the time of death (through His agents, the angels of death), and those that do not die during their sleep, He withholds those on whom He has passed the decree of death and sends the others back till an appointed term; most surely there are signs in this for people who reflect. (39:42)

And seek assistance through patience and prayer, and most surely it is hard except for the humble ones. (2:45)

Say: Allāh's is the intercession all of it; His is the kingdom of the heavens and the earth, then to Him shall you all be brought back. (39:44)

And how many an angel is there in the heavens whose intercession does not avail at all except after Allāh has given permission to whom He pleases and chooses (to receive His mercy)? (53:26)

Say: None in the heavens and on earth knows the unseen except Allāh, and they do not know when they shall be raised. (27:65)

On no account will Allāh leave the believers in the condition in which you are till He separates the evil from the good, nor is Allāh going to make you acquainted with the unseen, but Allāh chooses as His prophets whomsoever He pleases; so, believe in Allāh and in His prophets, and if you believe and guard (yourselves against evil), you shall then have a great reward. (3:179)

And when I am sick, He restores health to me. (26:80)

And We reveal of the Qur'ān that wherein there is healing and mercy to the believers, and it adds only perdition to the unjust ones. (17:82)

Surely Allāh bestows sustenance, the Lord of Power, the Strong One. (51:58)

... And maintain them out of (the benefits thereof), and clothe them and speak to them words of honest advice. (4:5)

Have you considered what you sow? Is it you that cause it to grow, or do We not cause its growth?! (56:63-64)

... It delights the one that sows it, so that He may enrage the unbelievers on their account; Allāh has promised those who believe and do good from among them forgiveness and a great reward. (48:29)

... Allāh writes down (through His agents, the angels) what they decide by night; therefore, turn aside from them and trust in Allāh, and Allāh suffices as the Protector. (4:81)

Aye! And Our messengers (angels) are with them writing down (whatever they say and do)¹. (43:80)

As for those who do not believe in the hereafter, We have surely made their deeds fair-seeming to them, so they blindly wander on. (27:4)

And Satan made their deeds fair-seeming to them and said: No one

¹One may wonder whether the angels write down our innermost thoughts, too. I have read somewhere that they do not, but they can tell when someone is entertaining good or bad thoughts. The good thoughts are those to which the Almighty does not object or condemn. How do they do that? It is said that when someone is entertaining good thoughts, such as helping someone who is in dire need for help or visiting an ailing person, etc. a fragrant smell emanates from his head and spirals above it, shrouding and blessing him/her entirely. Likewise, if he/she entertains bad, evil, illicit, unlawful..., thoughts, stink comes out of his head that turns the angels off, offending them and prompting some of them to plead to the Almighty to protect and forgive him/her. This makes an interesting research, folks! Although this book contains a chapter about the angels, this subject is truly vast and very, very interesting. Unfortunately, the books I consulted for more material about angels seem to be too simplistic and shallow.

can overcome you this day, and surely I am your protector. But when the two parties came in sight of each other, he turned on his heels and said: Surely I am clear of you; surely I see what you do not see; surely I fear Allāh. And Allāh is severe in requiting (evil). (8:48)

And We have appointed for them comrades, so they have made fair-seeming to them what is before them and what is behind them. (41:25)

Say: Who gives you sustenance from the heavens and the earth? Or Who controls the hearing and the sight? And Who brings forth the living from the dead and the dead from the living? And Who regulates the affairs? They will then say: Allāh. Say: Will you not then guard (yourselves against evil)? (20:31)

Then those that regulate the affair (on behalf of and according to the instructions of Allāh)... (79:5)

... And you did not smite them when you smote (them, the enemy), but it was Allāh Who smote (them). (8:17)

Had there been in them any gods other than Allāh, they would have both been in a state of disorder; therefore, glory to Allāh, the Lord of the dominion, above what they attribute (to Him). (21:22)

Neither did Allāh take to Himself a son, and never was there with Him any (other) god; in that case, each god would certainly have taken away what he created, and some of them would certainly have overpowered others; glory to Allāh above what they describe! (23:91)

d) Allāh is the Only Source of Legislation

For the Muslims, Allāh is the only One Who legislates every rule of their lives. Such a code of legislation, i.e. the *Sharī'a*, regulates everyone's relationship with all others as well as with his/her Lord and Maker. The Holy Qur'ān clearly indicates that no manmade law or constitution is acceptable, that the only canon is the Holy Qur'ān. Verses requiring the believers to obey only Allāh are numerous; here are some of them:

You do not worship besides Him except names which you yourselves and your fathers have named; Allāh has not sent down any authority for them; judgment is only Allāh's; He has commanded that you should worship none but Him; this is the right religion, but most people do not know. (12:40)

Is it then the judgment of (the times of) ignorance (*jāhiliyya*) that they desire? And who is better than Allāh to judge for people who are sure? (5:50)

Surely We revealed the Torah in which there was guidance and light. With it, the prophets who submitted themselves (to Allāh) judged (matters) for those who were Jews, and the masters of Divine knowledge and the doctors, because they were required to guard (part) of the Book of Allāh, and they were witnesses thereof; therefore, do not fear the people but fear Me, and do not take a small price for My communications. Whoever does not judge by what Allāh has revealed, they are the unbelievers. And We prescribed to them in it that: a life for a life, an eye for an eye, a nose for a nose, an ear for an ear, a tooth for a tooth, and (that there is) reprisal in wounds. But whoever forgoes it, it shall be an expiation for him, and whoever does not judge by what Allāh revealed, those are they that are the unjust. And We sent after them in their footsteps Jesus son of Mary testifying to what was before him of the Torah, and We gave him the Gospel wherein there was guidance and light and testifying to what was before it of the Torah, and a guidance, and an admonition for those who guard (themselves against evil). And the People of the Book should have judged by what Allāh revealed in it, and whoever does not judge by what Allāh revealed, those are they that are the transgressors. (5:44-47)

The questions that force themselves on us here are: Are Muslims really following the Islamic *Sharī'a*? Are they deriving their laws from the Holy Qur'ān? Do their legal, social, and economic systems adhere to the Holy Qur'ān? What about their blind imitating of the un-Islamic and anti-Islamic Western way of life? Why do they brag about following the so-called "international law" while knowing that it is neither the law of the Holy Qur'ān, nor of the Bible, nor of the Torah..., that the Islamic *Sharī'a* makes no room for any manmade code of any kind whatsoever? Will they ever wake up? But they

have first of all to purge their countries of corrupt rulers who fear nothing more than the Islamic *Sharī`a* and who derive their strength not from public support but from the enemies of the Islamic *Sharī`a*.

e) The Only One to Obey

Only Allāh should be obeyed. Obedience of His commandments manifests one's submission to Him. A Muslim is required to do only what pleases Allāh and what He has decreed as permissible. Anything besides that is apostasy:

Be careful of (your duty to) Allāh as much as you can, and hear and obey (Him), and spend (of what He bestows on you); it is better for your souls (that you do so), and whoever is saved from the greediness of his soul, these it is that are the successful ones. (64:16)

And We did not send any prophet except that he should be obeyed by Allāh's permission. (4:64)

f) Allāh is the Only Judge

Allāh is the only Judge, the Judge of Judges, the One Whose authority is above that of anyone else's. His Word is the law, His injunctions are binding on everyone. To accept anyone else's judgment in preference to Allāh's is to commit *shirk*; we seek refuge with Him against doing so. Consider the following verses:

(Refer to 12:40 above)

Say: Surely I have a manifest proof from my Lord but you call it a lie; I have not with me (to bring about) that which you hasten; judgment is only Allāh's; He relates the truth and He is the best of those who decide. (6:57)

Then they are sent back to Allāh, their Master, the True One; surely His is the judgment, and He is the swiftest in taking account. (6:62)

O David! Surely We have made you a ruler in the land; so judge between men with justice and do not follow (your own personal) desire lest it should lead you astray from the path of Allāh. (38:26)

g) Rewards for Testifying that “There is no god but Allāh”

To articulate the testimony of *Lā ilāha illa-Allāh* لا اله الا الله (There is no god but Allāh) is regarded in Islam as an act of worship for which the believer will be richly rewarded. Such rewards are recorded starting from p. 20 of *Thawāb al-A`mal wa Iqāb al-A`māl* ثواب الأعمال و عقاب الأعمال by the great mentor Abū Ja`far Muhammed ibn Ali ibn al-Hussain ibn Babawayh as-Sadūq al-Qummi (d. 381 A.H./991 A.D.) and published in 1410 A.H./1989 A.D. by al-A`lami Establishment for Publications (Beirut, Lebanon). We would like to quote some of the very interesting and enlightening texts on those pages for the benefit of the dear reader:

Abū Sa`īd al-Khudri¹ quotes the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ as saying, “Allāh, the most Exalted and Sublime, said once to Moses son of `Imrān (Amram), `O Moses! Had the heavens and all those who reside therein, as well as those of the seven (layers) of earth, been placed on one scale and *Lā ilāha illa-Allāh* on the other, the scale containing *Lā ilāha illa-Allāh* would surely have weighed more.”

The great *ṣaḥābi* Jābir ibn Abdullāh al-Ansāri quotes the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ as saying, “Two most sure things are: 1) Whoever dies testifying that There is no god except Allāh will enter Paradise and, 2) Whoever dies associating anything with Allāh will enter the fire (of hell).”

Imām Ja`far as-Sādiq عليه السلام quotes his great grandfather the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ as saying, “Teach your dying persons to say: *Lā ilāha illa-Allāh*, for it will smash their sins all of them.” He was asked, “O Messenger of Allāh! What about one who says so while enjoying good health?” He said, “That is more smashing to them, more so, and still more! Indeed, *Lā ilāha illa-Allāh* is the best

¹His name is Sa`d ibn Mālik ibn Sinān al-Khudri al-Ansāri al-Khazraji, Abū Sa`īd. He was a great *ṣaḥābi* who for many years kept the Prophet company and participated in twelve of his military campaigns. He died in 74 A.H./693 A.D.

companion of anyone during his lifetime, when he dies, and when he is brought back to life again... Gabriel has said (to me): `O Muhammed! Were you only to see them when they are brought back to life again! Some are raised with white faces calling out: *Lā ilāha illa-Allāh! Allāhu Akbar!* And the faces of others will be black, and they will be crying out: *Yā Waylāh! Yā Thubūrāh!* يا ويلاه! يا ثوراه! (O woe unto me! O what a calamity!)”

The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ has said, “Whoever says: *Lā ilāha illa-Allāh* will have a tree planted for him in Paradise of red sapphire; it is planted in white musk, is sweeter than honey and is more white than snow; its fragrance is better than musk, its fruit looks like virgins' breasts, and it opens up for seventy outfits.”

Jābir ibn Yazīd al-Ju'fī¹ quotes Imām “Abū Ja'far” al-Bāqir عليه السلام

¹He is “Abū Muhammed” or “Abū Abdullāh” (or both), Jābir ibn Yazīd ibn al-Ḥarith ibn Yaghūth al-Ju'fī of the Azd Arab tribe, a *tābi'i* (one who learned directly from *ṣaḥābis* or *ṣaḥāba* صحابة, companions of the Prophet ﷺ) and a contemporary of both Imāms Muhammed al-Bāqir and Ja'far as-Sādiq عليه السلام, peace with them, whom he quotes, according to the genealogist al-Najjāshi. In his book titled *Ar-Risāla al-Adadiyya* الرسالة العددية, Al-Mufid lists him among few the *ḥadīth* they narrate has no room for doubt, nor is there anyone to find any fault with their characters or the knowledge they relay. Ibn Uqdah narrates saying that Imām aṣ-Ṣādiq عليه السلام used to say, “May Allāh have mercy on Jābir; he used to tell the truth about us (Ahl al-Bayt البيت), and may He curse al-Mughīrah ibn who used to tell lies about us.” Sufyān al-Thawri says, “Jābir al-Ju'fī is truthful when narrating *ḥadīth*, but he used to incline towards Shī'ism.” Notice the sick and contagious prejudice! There are many narratives and traditions which all indicate the depth of his knowledge and future predictions. He was a very highly spiritual and a most pious man. Among his works are: the *Faḍā'il al-fuṣṣanil* (virtues) book, a book about the Battle of the Camel, another about the Battle of Siffeen, another about the Battle of Nahrawān, another about the martyrdom of the Commander of the Faithful, Imām Ali ibn Abū Tālib عليه السلام, and one about the martyrdom of Imām al-Ḥussain عليه السلام. These books are detailed by al-Hussain ibn al-Ḥaseen al-Qummi. Jābir al-Ju'fī is regarded as an authority on *ḥadīth* by an-Nisā'i and Abū Dāwūd, and he is quoted by Shu'bah and Abū 'Awānah. Al-Dhahbī marks his name with the symbols of Abū Dāwūd and Abū 'Awānah as an indication that they both

who quotes the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ as saying, “For everything there is something else equal to it except Allāh, the Exalted, the Sublime, for nothing at all equals Him, and so is *Lā ilāha illa-Allāh*: nothing equals it. Nothing can weigh heavier than one's tear shed out of fear of Allāh. If it trickles down his face, neither exhaustion nor humiliation shall ever touch it (his face) thereafter.”

The Commander of the Faithful Imām Ali ibn Abū Tālib عليه السلام has said, “Whenever a servant of Allāh says: *Lā ilāha illa-Allāh*, it (the statement) ascends piercing every ceiling, wiping out his sins as it passes by them till it reaches its equivalent in good deeds. It is only there that it will stop.”

Abū Ja`far, Imām Muhammed al-Bāqir عليه السلام, has said, “Nothing is more rewardable than testifying that There is no god except Allāh, for nothing equates Allāh, the most Exalted One, nor is there any partner with him.”

Abū Sa`īd al-Khudri quotes the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ as saying, “I have not said anything, nor has anyone else before me, like: *Lā ilāha illa-Allāh*.”

“Abū Abdullāh” Imām Ja`far as-Sādiq عليه السلام has said, “The testimony of *Lā ilāha illa-Allāh* is the price of Paradise.”

The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ is quoted as saying, “Repeat *Lā ilāha illa-Allāh* and *Allāhu Akbar* as often as you can, for Allāh loves nothing more than them both.”

Of course the more you pronounce this short but very weighty statement, the more rewards you will earn. Imām Ja`far as-Sādiq عليه السلام has said, “Whoever repeats the testimony of *Lā ilāha illa-Allāh* a hundred times is better than all other people that day except one who has repeated it more often than him.”

quote his *aḥādīth*. The date of birth of Jābir al-Ju`fī is unknown, but he is said as having died in the year 132 A.H./750 A.D.

Imām as-Sādiq عليه السلام has also said, “If one says *Lā ilāha illa-Allāh* a hundred times prior to going to bed, Allāh builds him a mansion in Paradise, and whoever seeks Allāh's forgiveness a hundred times before going to bed, his sins will fall down as leaves fall down from the trees.”

II HOW SOME MUSLIMS VIEW ALLĀH

First of all, the references cited in this part are all written by some well known Sunni Muslim scholars of *ḥadīth*. The numbers of their books' volumes and pages reflect those of their original Arabic texts. Many of these books are yet to be translated into English. The translated ones, on the other hand, are quite often edited, and the editing includes the deliberate deletion of a good deal of the original text: the later the edition, the more the deletion.

Like Jews and Christians, some Muslims unfortunately view Allāh as having literally created Ādam “in His own image”. Reference to the Almighty creating Ādam in His image exists in the Book of Genesis of the Old Testament, and some people take it literally rather than metaphorically, symbolically.

On p. 1481, Vol. 4, of the English translation of Muslim's *Ṣaḥīḥ* (published in New Delhi, India, in 1977 by Nusrat Ali Nasri for Kitāb Bhavan), Abū Hurayra purportedly quotes the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ as saying, “Allāh, the Exalted and Glorious, created Ādam in His own image with His length of sixty cubits...”¹ *Astaghfirullāh* (I seek forgiveness of Allāh)...! In Bukhāri, we read how Allāh is described as having the same physical appearance given to man. Read Bukhāri's *Ṣaḥīḥ*, particularly the chapter on seeking permission to enter, p. 122, Vol. 2, where Sūrat az-Zumar is explained, p. 184, Vol. 6, “Kitāb at-Tawḥīd” (Book of the Unity of Allāh), where the verse saying, “... I created in My own hand,” p. 192, Vol. 6, where the verse saying, “[Some faces] on that Day shall be pleased,” in his

¹The maximum length of a cubit is 21 inches; hence, they claim that Ādam and the Almighty are each 15 feet tall... *Astaghfirullāh*...!

explanation of the verse saying, “On the Day when a leg shall be uncovered” which exists in Sūrat Noon (i.e. 68:42), in his exegesis of Sūrat Qāf (Ch. 50 of the Holy Qur’ān), in a chapter explaining the verse saying, “The mercy of Allāh is near to the doers of good” on p. 191 of Vol. 4, in his “Kitāb al-Tahajjud”, in a chapter dealing with supplications and prayers at the end of the night... and elsewhere. Other references are indicated in the footnotes below.

Some Muslims, as indicated above, claim that Allāh literally created Ādam in His image¹, that He has fingers², legs³ and feet⁴. As for

¹al-Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, “Kitāb al-Isti’tḥān كتاب الاستئذان” (Book of seeking permission to enter), in a chapter titled “Bab Bid’ as-Salām باب بديء السلام (a chapter dealing with initiating a greeting). Muslim, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, صحيح مسلم, “Kitāb al-Jannah wa ṣifat na’eemiha” كتاب الجنة وصفة نعيمها (Book of Paradise and the description of its bliss), في باب يدخل الجنة أقوام أفندتهم مثل أفندة الطير in a chapter titled “Bab yadkhul al-jannah aqwam af’idatuhum mithl af’idat at-tayr” (a chapter about Paradise being entered by people whose hearts are like those of birds’), Vol. 28; see also Vol. 115, كتاب البر، باب النهي، “Kitāb al-birr: Bāb an-nahi ‘an arb al-wajh” (Book of kindness: a chapter dealing with the prohibition of hitting the face. Ahmed ibn Hanbal, *Musnad*, مسند أحمد ابن حنبل Vol. 2, pp. 244, 251, 323, 365, 424, and 569.

²al-Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, Vol. 2, p. 122, where Sūrat az-Zumar is explained. It is also stated in Vol. 4, p. 186, where the verse “What stopped you (O Eblis) from prostrating to what I created with My own hand?” is explained. It is also stated in Vol. 4, p. 192, where the verse saying, “Some faces will on that Day be pleased” is discussed. Muslim, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, Vol. 19, pp. 21-22, where a description of the Day of Judgment, of Paradise, and of Hell, is given.

³al-Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, Vol. 4, p. 189, where verse 43 of Sūrat Noon (also called Chapter of the Qalam, i.e. 68 of the Holy Qur’ān) is explained in “Kitāb at-Tawhīd” (Book of the Unity of God).

⁴al-Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, Vol. 4, p. 191, where Sūrat Qāf (Ch. 50 of the Holy Qur’ān) is explained. At-Tirmidhi, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, صحيح الترمذي Vols. 35-38, where a discussion exists about Hell being entered by the tyrants and Paradise by the weaklings.

Allāh having fingers, readers who are not fluent in Arabic are referred to p. 1461, Vol. 4, of the English translation of Muslim's *Ṣaḥīḥ* where they will be reading about Allāh's alleged fingers in the following “tradition” narrated by the following narrators: Abdullāh ibn Mas`ūd¹, Mansūr, and al-A`mash. Both latter narrators narrate it in slightly different variations. Its unedited, hence the weak English, text is as follows:

A Jew scholar came to Allāh's Prophet ﷺ (peace with him, his progeny and righteous companions) and said: “Muhammed, or Abū al-Qāsim, verily, Allāh, the Exalted and Glorious, would carry the Heavens on the Day of Judgment on one finger and earths on one finger and the mountains and trees on one finger and the ocean and moist earth on one finger—in fact the whole of the creation on one finger, and then He would stir them and say: I am your Lord, I am your Lord.” Thereon Allāh's Messenger (peace with him) smiled testifying what that scholar had said.²

The same “tradition” is recorded in both its Arabic text and English translation on p. 113 of *The Divine Traditions*. In another “tradition” on the following page (p. 1462 of the English translation of Muslim's *Ṣaḥīḥ*), we are told that Allāh has hands. It is narrated by none other than Abū Hurayra who quotes the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ as saying, “Allāh, the Exalted and Glorious, will take in His grip the earth on the Day of Judgment and He would roll up the sky in His right hand and would say: I am the Lord; where are the sovereigns of the world?” With slightly different wording, the same “tradition” is narrated by Abdullāh ibn Omer, son of second caliph Omer ibn al-Khattab, and it is also reported by Abū Bakr ibn Abū Shaybah and is

¹His name is Abdullāh ibn Mas`ūd ibn Khafil ibn Habib al-Hathli, “Abū Abd ar-Rahmān,” one of the foremost *ṣaḥāba* in Islamic history. He was the very first person in Mecca to openly recite the Holy Qur`ān. He spent years serving and accompanying the Messenger of Allāh, being one of his confidants. Ibn Mas`ūd died in 32 A.H./652 A.D.

²This quotation is cited without any editing at all, hence its broken English! We wonder, since Allāh, according to this “tradition”, has fingers, whether He also has toes!

published in both languages on p. 114 of *The Divine Traditions*. Reference to Allāh's alleged hands exists in the following page (p. 1463 of the English translation of Muslim's *Ṣaḥīḥ*); here is its unedited text:

Abū al-Sa`id (Sa`īd or Sa`eed) Khudri¹ reported Allāh's Messenger (peace with him) as saying that the earth would turn to be one single bread on the Day of Resurrection and the Almighty would turn it in His hand as one of you turns a loaf while on a journey. It would be a feast arranged in the honor of the people of Paradise. He (the narrator) further narrated that a person from among the Jews came and he said: Abū al-Qasim, may the Compassionate Lord be pleased with you! May I inform you about the feast arranged in honor of the people of Paradise on the Day of Resurrection? He said: Do it, of course. He said: The earth would become one single bread. Then Allāh's Messenger (peace with him) looked towards us and laughed until his molar teeth became visible². He then again said: May I inform you about that with which they would season it? He said: Do it, of course. He said: Their seasoning would be *balam* and fish. The Companions of the Holy Prophet ﷺ (peace with them) said: What is this *balam*? He said: Ox and fish from whose excessive livers seventy thousand people would be able to eat.

Since when did the Prophet of Allāh ﷺ need the Jews to tell him about the Hereafter?! Could the Jews have told him better than archangel Gabriel? This is how Judaica crept into Islamic literature, thanks to Abū Hurayra and his likes, wreaking havoc in and corrupting the Islamic faith. Laughter is not at all dignifying. Whenever a Muslim laughs, he/she is supposed to seek Allāh's forgiveness and say, “*Allāhomma Lā tamqutni اللهم لا تمقطني* (O Allāh! Do not despise me!)” One can and should always smile and be optimistic, but he/she should not audibly laugh. Such is the Islamic code of etiquett. Yet there are numerous references to the Prophet

¹The correct spelling of his name is: Abū Sa`īd al-Khudri.

²The Messenger of Allāh was never reported as laughing; instead, he always smiled. He never audibly laughed.

ﷺ laughing in *ahādīth* the authenticity of which leaves much to be desired. Whenever you laugh, you ought to remember verse 82 of Sūrat Barā'a: "So they shall laugh a little and weep a lot as a recompense for what they earned" (Qur'ān, 9:82). Imām Ja'far as-Sādiq ﷺ quotes his forefathers citing the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ as saying, "A good deal of jesting is not at all dignifying, while a good deal of laughter wipes out *īmān* (conviction)."¹ Imām as-Sādiq ﷺ has also quoted his father Imām Muhammed al-Bāqir ﷺ as saying, "(Prophet) David ﷺ said to (his son, later Prophet) Solomon ﷺ: 'O son! Beware of laughing a lot, for a good deal of laughter leaves a servant of Allāh very poor on the Day of Judgment.'"² Abū Abdullāh, Imām Ja'far as-Sādiq ﷺ, has also said, "Three things invoke Allāh's contempt: one sleeps without having kept a vigil, laughs without having witnessed something extra-ordinary, and one who eats though his stomach is already full."³ One of the pieces of advice given by the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ to Abū Dharr al-Ghifārī was this one which is recorded in *Uyoon Akhbār ar-Riḍa*: "Strange it is how one who knows that there is the fire (of hell) and who still laughs." He has also said, "Beware of much laughter, for it causes the death of the heart."⁴ The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ always smiled but never laughed. As a matter of fact, to smile in the face of your Muslim brother is equivalent to paying charity, according to one *ḥadīth*. One day the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ passed by a band of young Ansāris who were talking and laughing heartily, so he said to them, "O folks! Anyone among you who is deceived by his hopes and is short of doing good deeds should look at the graves and be admonished about the life to come. And remember death, for it shall put an end to each and every enjoyment."⁵

¹as-Sadūq, *Amāli*, p. 324.

²al-Majlisi, *Biḥār al-Anwār*, Vol. 73, p. 58, citing *Qurb al-Isnād*.

³*Ibid.*

⁴*Ibid.*, p. 59.

⁵at-Tūsī, *Al-Āmāli*, Vol. 2, p. 136.

The readers may tolerate reading about the Prophet ﷺ laughing, but what is their conclusion when they come across the claim that our Maker and Creator, too, laughs?! References to Allāh laughing exist in lengthy “traditions” narrated supposedly by Mu’ath ibn Fudālah معاذ بن فضاله who quotes Hisham quoting Qatādah¹ quoting Anas ibn Mālik as recorded on pp. 119-120 of *The Divine Traditions*. It depicts one of the scenes on the Day of Judgment. A variation of it is narrated by Abd al-‘Azīz ibn Abdullāh who quotes Ibrahim ibn Sa’d quoting Ibn Shihab quoting ‘Ata ibn Yazīd al-Laythi quoting Abū Hurayra, and it is recorded by al-Bukhāri and cited on pp. 121-122 of *The Divine Traditions*. We do not think it is worth quoting here...

Some Muslims, due to their limited knowledge, unfortunately also claim that Allāh occupies a certain space and travels from one place to another, building their argument not on any Qur’ānic verse but on a tradition wherein the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ supposedly said, “Our Lord, before creating His creation, did not have anything with Him; underneath Him was air; above Him was air, then He created His throne on water.”² They also quote the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ as saying, “His ‘Arsh was over His heavens like this (then he demonstrated with his finger the shape of a dome), and He mounted

¹ Qatāda (or Qatādah) ibn al-Nu’mān قتادة بن النعمان was one of the *ṣaḥāba* (companions) رضى الله عنه of Prophet Muhammed ﷺ from among the Ansār. He had a famous grandson named Āsim ibn Omer ibn Qatāda ibn al-Nu’mān al-Ansāri (d. 120 or 129 A.H./738 or 747 A.D.). Qatāda’s *kunya*, surname, was "Abdul Khatīb", and he was *ḥāfiẓ*; he learned the entire text of the Holy Qur’ān by heart and transmitted many *aḥādīth*. During the battle of Uhud in 625 A.D., Qatādah was struck in his eye and his eyeball was hanging down onto his cheek. The *ṣaḥāba* wanted to cut it off, but first they solicited the Prophet's opinion. Prophet Muhammed told them not to do so. He then supplicated for Qatādah and placed his eyeball back in its place. Qatāda died in 11 A.H./632 A.D.

² Ibn Mājah, *Sunan*, Introduction. at-Tirmidhi, *Sunan*, where Sūrat Hūd is explained. Ahmed ibn Hanbal, *Musnad*, Vol. 4, pp. 11-12.

it as a rider mounts over the saddle of his beast of burden.”¹ They also quote him as saying, “Allāh descends at the last part of the night from the heavens to the lower earth and says, ‘Who is there to ask Me, so I may respond to him, and who is there to ask Me, so I may give him?’”² They also quote him as saying, “Allāh descends during the night of the middle of the month of Sha‘bān to the lower heavens where He forgives...”³ They also quote him as saying the following about the Day of Judgment: “It will be said to hell: ‘Are you filled up?’ It will say, ‘Is there any more?’ So the Lord, Blessed and Exalted is He, will put His leg into it, whereupon it will say, ‘Now I am full!’” In another version of this so-called “tradition”, Prophet Muhammed ﷺ is quoted as supposedly saying, “As to the fire (of hell), it will not be filled up until He puts His foot (this time it is not the whole leg but only the foot!) in it, whereupon it will say, ‘Now, only now, am I full!’ It is then that it will be full, and each of its parts will close in on the other.”⁴ Similar variations of this “tradition” are

¹ Abū Dāwūd, *Sunan*, “Kitāb al-Sunnah”. Ibn Majah, *Sunan*, Introduction. Muhammed ibn Abd al-Wahhāb, *Kitāb al-Tawhīd*. Ibn Taymiyyah, *Minhāj al-Sunnah*.

² al-Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, Vol. 2, pp. 233-235. Ibn Majah, *Sunan*, “Kitāb al-Salāh”. Ibn Mālik, *Mawta’*, “Kitāb al-Qur’ān”, Chapter 30. Ahmed ibn Hanbal, *Musnad*, Vol. 2, pp. 264, 267, 282, 419, 433, 487, 504, and 521.

³ at-Tirmidhi, *Sunan*, where he discusses the fast and the night of the middle of Sha‘bān. Ibn Mājah, *Sunan*, in a volume dealing with the prayers and with the night of the middle of Sha‘ban. Ahmed ibn Hanbal, *Musnad*, Vol. 2, p. 433.

⁴ Both “traditions” are narrated on the authority of the “ṣaḥābi” Abū Hurayra when al-Bukhārī, in Vol. 3, p. 128, of his *Ṣaḥīḥ*, explains Sūrat Qāf. They are repeated in Vol. 4, p. 191 of the same book in *Kitāb al-Tawhīd*. The “tradition” referring to Allāh's foot is narrated by Anas and is detailed in Vol. 4, p. 129, of the same *Ṣaḥīḥ*. To review more of such so-called “traditions” which most likely crept into Islam from Judaica through the Jew Ka‘b al-Ahbār, refer to “Kitāb al-Jannah كتاب الجنة” in at-Tirmidhi's *Sunan*, Vol. 10, p. 29, where the eternity of the residents of Paradise and those of hell is discussed. See also Ahmed ibn Hanbal's *Musnad*, Vol. 2, p. 396. Readers who are not well versed in Arabic may read the texts of these

narrated by Qatādah who quotes Anas ibn Mālik.

Some Muslims claim that Allāh will be seen by Muhammed, the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ, who will have audience with Him, as well as by everyone else on the Day of Judgment. They quote the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ as saying, “The believers will come to Me for intercession after all prophets refuse to intercede on their behalf, so I will set out and seek audience with my Lord [make an appointment?!], and I will be granted audience with Him. Once I see my Lord, I shall fall down prostrating... Then I shall seek His intercession, and He will draw a line for me, so I shall let them enter Paradise. Then I shall go back to my Lord. Once I see Him, I shall fall prostrating..., etc.”¹ According to this so-called “tradition”,² the Almighty is confined to a specific place where He is visited by the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ who recognizes Him on seeing Him... Imagine! An entire chapter in *The Divine Traditions* is dedicated to the believers allegedly seeing their Lord. It starts on p. 157. The narrators who narrate such “traditions” include: Ubaydullāh ibn Omer ibn Maysarah, Abd ar-Rahmān ibn Mahdi, Hammād ibn Salāmah, Thābit al-Bunāni, Abd ar-Rahmān ibn Abū Layla, Shuhayb, Jābir ibn Abdullāh, Saheeb, and others. They are recorded in the *hadīth* and *sunan* books of Bukhāri, Muslim, Ibn Majah, at-Tirmidhi, and al-Nisā'i. Some Muslims also quote the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ as supposedly saying, “Allāh, Blessed and Exalted is He,

“traditions” together with their English translations in *The Divine Traditions*, especially on p. 149 where the *verbatim* and unedited text reads as follows: “As for Paradise, (it will be filled with good people) because Allāh does not wrong any of His created beings, and He created for Hell whomever He will, and they will be thrown into it, and it will say thrice, ‘Is there any more?’ Till Allāh will put His Foot over it, and it will become full and its sides will come close to each other and it will say, ‘Enough! Enough! Enough!’ Bukhāri transmitted it.”

¹al-Bukhāri, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, Vol. 4, p. 185, “Kitāb at-Tawḥīd”. See also Vol. 4, p. 190 of the same reference.

²This “tradition” is cited on pp. 115-116 of *The Divine Traditions*.

will descend on the Day of Judgment to His servants in order to judge between them.”¹ They claim that he said, “You shall see your God with your own eyes.”² They claim that Muslims will see their God on the Day of Judgment just as they see the moon without suffering any pain while looking at Him.³ They go beyond that to cite the Almighty saying, “Whoever worships something, let him follow it.” So, they proceed to say, “Some people will follow the sun while others will follow the moon, while still others will follow the tyrants, and this nation shall stay *including its hypocrites*. Allāh will then come to them not in the *shape* whereby they know Him, and He will say, ‘I am your God.’ They will say, ‘We seek refuge with Allāh against you. We shall stay here till our God comes to us. So once our God comes to us, we shall recognize Him.’” It is then that Allāh will go to them in the *shape* whereby they know Him, and He will say, ‘I am your God.’ They will say, ‘You are our Lord,’ and they shall follow Him... etc.”⁴ Another “tradition” states the following:

So when nobody remains except the righteous and the libertine who worshipped Allāh, the Lord of the Worlds will come to them in the form wherein they saw Him, and He will ask them, “What are you waiting for? Each nation should follow what it used to worship.” They will say, “We are waiting for our Lord Whom we worshipped.” “I am your Lord,” He will say. They will twice or thrice respond by saying, “We do not associate any with Allāh...” He will ask them, “Is there any [distinguishing] *mark* whereby you can recognize Him?” They will say, “Yes, the leg.” So He will uncover His leg, whereupon they will fall prostrating. Then they will raise their heads and see Him in the *form* whereby they saw Him the first time. It is then that He will say, “I am your Lord.” They will say, “You are our Lord.”⁵

¹at-Tirmidhi, *Sunan*, Vol. 9, p. 229, “Kitāb al-Zuhd”.

²al-Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, Vol. 4, p. 188, “Kitāb at-Tawhīd”.

³*Ibid.*, Vol. 10, pp. 18 and 20.

⁴Muslim, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, Vol. 4, p. 188, “Kitāb al-ʾīmān”.

⁵*Ibid.*, p. 229, “Kitāb al-ʾīmān,” in a chapter about how to see. Al-Bukhārī

And Allāh supposedly speaks to His servants on the Day of Judgment and those near and far will hear His *voice* as we are told in the following “tradition” compiled and published in *The Divine Traditions (Al-Aḥādīth al-Qudsiyya)*; its text here exists on p. 226 and is unedited, hence its pathetic English:

Jābir (RAA)¹ narrated on the authority of Abdullāh bin Unais (RAA) who said, “Allāh will gather the people and call them with a Voice which will be heard by those who will be far away and those who will be near, by saying, ‘I am the King; I am the Daiyan (The one who Judges people on their deeds after calling them to account).’” Bukhāri transmitted it. (The Book [of] Monotheism; chapter: The statement of Allāh, “No intercession avails with Him except for him whom He permits” (Qur’ān, 34:23).

Some misled and misleading Muslims, therefore, believe that Allāh will *speak* to His servants who will be permitted to enter into His Paradise as the above cited quotation implies. There is another lengthy “tradition” on pp. 160-161 of *The Divine Traditions* transmitted by Sa’īd ibn al-Musayyab who met Abū Hurayra who informed him of it. A portion of it states, as the poorly translated text, which is cited here without being edited, reads, as follows:

Abū Huraira told that he asked, “O Allāh's Messenger, shall we see our Lord?” To which he replied, “Yes, are you in doubt about seeing the sun and the moon on the night when it is full?” On receiving the reply that they were not, he said, “Similarly you will have no doubts about the vision of your Lord, and no man will remain in that assembly without Allāh conversing with him, till he

words this “tradition” slightly differently in Vol. 4, p. 189 in his “Kitāb at-Tawhīd”. We wish those who saw their Lord and His leg would tell us all about it! They will then be doing us a great favor, indeed! *Astaghfirullāh...*

¹These acronyms, RAA, stand for *Raḍiya Allahu `Anhu*, Allah is pleased with him ﷺ.

says to one of them, 'So and so son of so and so, do you remember the day you said such-and-such?' And He will remind him of one of the dishonest things he did in the world. He will say, 'O my Lord, hast Thou not forgiven me?' And He will reply, 'Yes; by the widness¹ of my forgiveness you have reached this station of yours.'"²

This "tradition" is included in at-Tirmidhi's *Ṣaḥīḥ*, Vol. 2, pp. 89-90. There are many such "traditions" (*aḥādīth*) which the reader can review in Bukhāri, Muslim, Ibn Majah, and other recorders of *ḥadīth* who are regarded as being "reliable" by the vast majority of Muslims. Is the majority always right? We do not think so. Had we attempted to quote all of these so-called traditions here, this book would have become much larger than it already is.

Probably the most evident of the belief of some Muslims that Allāh has the same human physical attributes is what is recorded by their "imām of imāms", namely the great *ḥāfiẓ* and mentor, namely Muhammed ibn Ishāq ibn Khuzaymah (d. 311 A.H./923 A.D.), who **taught** *ḥadīth* to both Bukhāri and Muslim, being their mentor. He wrote a book with a rather lengthy title: *At-Tawḥīd wa ithbāt sifāt ar-rabb `azza wa jall allati wasafa bihā nafsah fī tanzeelih wa `alā lisān nabiyyih*

التوحيد و اثبات صفات الرب عز و جل اللتي وصف بها نفسه في تنزيله و على لسان نبيه

(The Unity of God and the proof about the characteristics of the Lord, the Unique and the Exalted One, whereby He described Himself in His Book and through His Prophet ﷺ). This book was published in 1378 A.H./1958 A.D. by Maktabat al-Kulliyat al-

¹This is how the text reads... The translator should have used "expanse", "spaciousness", "extent", "breadth", or the like in order to make more sense.

²— *The Divine Traditions*, Tr. Dr. Ibrahim al-Selek, Dar el-Fikr (Beirut, Lebanon, 1994), p. 160.

Azhariyya (Library of al-Azhar's Colleges) at Maydan al-Azhar (Al-Azhar Square), Cairo, Egypt. The titles of some of these books sound like a piece-by-piece list of the Almighty's alleged bodily parts: His face, shape, eyes, hearing, vision, hands, leg [just one leg?!]..., especially the leg, and a chapter on how all the believers will see Allāh on the Day of Judgment and will be able to recognize Him.

Another *ḥāfiẓ imām*, namely Othmān ibn Sa'īd al-Darmi (d. 280 A.H./893 A.D.), wrote a book as a rebuttal to the views of the Jahmites (Jahmis **الجهمية**)¹. Among its chapters are these: how the Lord seats Himself on the Throne and ascends to heavens, how He is different from His creation, how He descends on the night of the middle of Sha'ban, how He descends on the Day of 'Arafat, how He descends on the Day of Judgment for the great trial, how He descends to the residents of Paradise, and how He is seen...

This much should suffice to demonstrate to the discreet reader how some of our Muslim brethren, who look down at and discriminate against others who disagree with them, consider the Almighty as having a physical body quite like ours, how He comes and goes, ascends and descends, walks, talks, laughs and does I do not know what else...!

¹The Jahmi, or Jahmite, group (*firqa* **فرقة**) is named after its founder, Jahm ibn Safwān at-Tirmidhi **جهم بن صفوان الترمذي**, who was killed in 128 A.H./746 A.D. at the hands of an Umayyad leader, namely Salam ibn Ahwaz. Jahm ibn Safwān appeared publicly in Kūfa, Iraq, for the first time to declare his own personal beliefs about Allāh, the Qur'ān, *'imān* (conviction), Paradise and Hell and about seeing Allāh in the Hereafter, then he moved to Khurasan, Iran, to spread his beliefs. The Jahmi group claims to follow Islam, but it has violated the commonly agreed on principles of the Islamic creed in many of its beliefs; therefore, both Sunnis and Shī'ites regard it as being outside the folds of Islam. This group is now extinct, but its views unfortunately seem to have reflected themselves on the beliefs of some Muslims...

III HOW SHĪ'AS VIEW ALLĀH

The above views are adopted and recorded by some, mind you, not all, Muslims, and they are not at all endorsed by Shī'a Muslims who refute them by quoting verse 103 of Sūrat al-An`ām (6:103) that states the following:

Vision does not comprehend Him, while He comprehends all vision, and He knows all the subtleties, (He is) the Aware One.

In their view, the Almighty is not a physical form, hence, He does not occupy a space, nor does He move from one place to another, nor can He be seen by anyone. They contend that their brethren simply do not have the proper *tafsīr* (exegesis) of certain Qur'ānic verses such as the following:

Some faces will on that Day be bright, looking to their Lord. (75:22)

“Looking to their Lord” does not mean “looking at their Lord”; it means: they are waiting in optimistic anticipation for His rewards, prizes, forgiveness and a spacious Paradise, *Inshā Allāh*, may both ourselves and the kind reader be among its residents, *Allāhomma Āmeen* اللهم آمين. As regarding the Almighty seating Himself on the `Arsh, the Throne of Authority, Imām Ja`far as-Sādiq عليه السلام (peace with him), from whose *fiqh* Ithnā-`Asheri (Twelver) Ja`fari Shī'as derive their beliefs and *ahkām*, says the following:

Whoever claims that Allāh sits on the `Arsh considers Allāh as being conveyed (or mounted on something), implying that what conveys Him has to be stronger than Him (so it could carry and support His “weight”). And whoever claims that Allāh is present somewhere, or is on top of something, or there is a place where He is not there, or that He occupies a space..., would be attributing to Him characteristics which are strictly relevant to those whom He creates, whereas Allāh is the Creator of everything. He cannot be measured or compared by anything; He cannot be like people; He is not absent from anywhere, and He does not occupy a specific space.¹

¹al-Kulayni, *Usūl al-Kāfi*, Vol. 1, pp. 3, 7, and 9, “Kitāb at-Tawhīd”.

Shī'as also refute this claim by citing Imām Ali ibn Abū Tālib عليه السلام as saying,

Allāh does not descend, nor does He need to descend. Such is claimed by those who attribute to Him an increase or a decrease. Everything mobile needs what mobilizes it or what means whereby it moves. Beware, then, when you discuss His characteristics lest you should imply any increase or decrease to Him, any movement or mobilization, any departure or descending, any sitting or standing.¹

This is the view held by all other Imāms from Ahl al-Bayt عليه السلام; none of them contradicts the other; such is the true creed, one wherein there is no contradiction at all.

Allāh as Viewed by Commander of the Faithful Imām Ali عليه السلام

Two narrators, Muhammed ibn Abi Abdillāh and Muhammed ibn Yahya, narrate a tradition related by “Abū Abdullāh” Imām Ja'far as-Sādiq عليه السلام citing the Commander of the Faithful Imām Ali ibn Abū عليه السلام Tālib delivering a sermon once in order to solicit people's support in his second war against Mu'awiyah ibn Abū Sufyān. In it, the Commander of the Faithful عليه السلام says,

All praise is due to Allāh, the One and Only God Who is sought by all, the Unique One Who is neither created out of anything pre-existing, nor has He created anything out of something. Through His Might does He manifest Himself, and it is through His Might that anything manifests itself. None of His attributes can be fully comprehended, nor does He have any measure whereby He is compared. The tongue in any language is too crippled to describe His attributes, and the circumlocution of His attributes leads into nowhere but a blind alley. The sharpest of intellects are too puzzled to comprehend His kingdom; all comprehensive

Shaikh as-Sadūq, *At-Tawḥīd*, pp. 9-10, p. 12. al-Majlisi, *Biḥār al-Anwār*, Vol. 3, p. 311, “Kitāb at-Tawḥīd”.

¹*Ibid.*, Vol. 1, p. 18. al-Majlisi, *Biḥār al-Anwār*, Vol. 3, p. 311.

explanations are rendered short of delving into His kingdom. Unknown curtains obstruct the understanding of the lowest levels of His hidden knowledge, and the keenest insights are totally lost in comprehending the most (seemingly) superficial of His subtleties.

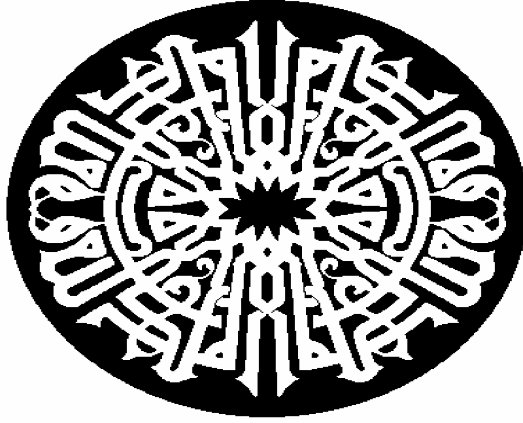
So Glorified is Allāh Who cannot be reached by the most ambitious of wills, nor can He be grasped by the deepest of insights. Exalted is He for Whom there is no measure of time, nor any fixed duration, nor any limited description. Praised is He Who has no beginning at all nor any end, nor any extinction. Glorified is He as He has described and Glorified Himself. Those who attempt to describe Him can never do so. He delineated the boundaries of all things when He created them without having modelled them after any pre-existing models, thus distinguishing Himself from their similitude. Never has He resided in them, so it could be said that He is contained therein, nor has He been apart from them, so a place outside them could be sought for Him. Rather, He, all Praise is due to Him, encompasses them in His knowledge and perfects their design and computes them. Even things beyond the curtains of the atmosphere are never hidden from His knowledge, nor are those obscurities within the depth of the dark, nor are those in the high heavens, nor are those in the lowest layers of the earth: For each and every thing in them there is a custodian and a keeper, each one of them surrounds the others, while His knowledge encompasses them all.

He is the One and Only God on Whom all depend for their existence and subsistence, the One Whom the passage of time never alters, nor does the creation of things tire Him. Whatever He wills, He says to it, "Be!" and it is. He created everything without following a pre-existing model or a precedent, and without encountering any fatigue or a prior planning. Whoever makes something makes it out of something else, whereas Allāh created everything out of nothing. Every scholar acquires knowledge after being ignorant, while Allāh is never ignorant, nor has He ever acquired knowledge out of what He creates. He encompasses all things in His knowledge before creating them. Nothing is added to His knowledge because of their coming into existence: His knowledge is the same before and after

He brought them into existence. He never created what He created in order to enhance His control, nor out of fear of its decay or loss, nor to seek help out of it against His adversary, nor to seek the upper hand over a progressive competitor, nor seeking to be the equal of a dominating partner; all creation is nurtured by Him; everyone and everything are humbled slaves before Him.

Glorified is He Who never feels weary on account of creating what He creates, nor in nurturing whatever He creates, nor does He, out of inability or slackness, terminate what He creates. He knows what He creates and creates what He knows. Whatever He creates He creates neither out of deliberating on any new knowledge, nor does any doubt entertain Him on account of what He creates. Rather, He creates out of His inviolable decision, firm knowledge, and exact command. He made Himself unique in His Mastership, peerless in unity, grandeur and sublimity. He remains peerless in praise and exalted in glory. He is far above parenthood, purified from and sanctified against any cohabitation.

He is too Great and too Mighty to seek any partners. Thus, none among what He creates opposes Him, nor is there any equal peer like Him from among His possessions, nor is there any partner in His Kingdom. He is the One, the Unique, the One sought by all, the Eternal, the Everlasting, the Lord of the cosmos Who has always been and shall always be, the eternally all alone before the beginning of time and after the end of all affairs. He will never terminate nor expire. Thus do I describe my Lord, the ignorant and the sinner that I may be and the weakling, so bear witness to it, O Reader, as I have stated it; there is no god except Allāh; Great is He and how Great! Glorified is He and how Glorified! Almighty is He and how Almighty! He is far above what the unjust ones say about Him, far, far above that!



PART THREE

HOW TO SUPPLICATE TO ALLĀH

Supplication is one of the methods for getting to know and be closer to the Almighty. It is a treasure house of knowledge about Him and about seeking His pleasure. But before addressing the issue of how to supplicate to Allāh, we need to tackle the subject of how are we to worship Him once we have come to know Him as much as humanly possible.

After Allāh, the Glorified and the Exalted One, had created us, after we admitted His Oneness and Might, and after He had taken from us a covenant and made us bear witness against our own selves that He is our Creator, He returned us to the loins of Ādam, made us in the loins of humans, each in the loins of his forefathers, then He brought us into this world whenever He willed, defining His reason for creating us, which is: to worship Him, and only Him. After having sent us prophets and messengers during various ages to warn us against worshipping anyone but Him and chosen the best of His messengers for us, namely our master Muhammed ﷺ, the best of creeds, namely Islām, and the best of divine books, namely the Holy Qur'ān..., after all of that, it becomes incumbent on us to answer

questions such as: How are we to adore Allāh? What are the best means to achieve this end?

The answers to these questions are provided by the best of creation, messengers and prophets, our master Muhammed ﷺ. Having been asked once what adoration was, he answered, “Supplication is adoration,” then he recited the Qur’ānic verse saying, “And your Lord says: Call on Me, I will answer you; surely those who are too proud to worship Me shall soon enter hell abased” (Qur’ān, 40:60).

In order to emphasize the fact that supplication is the zenith of adoration as the Holy Qur’ān states, we would like to present some Qur’ānic verses that highlight this fact and underscore the significance of supplication:

Say: My Lord would not care for you were it not for your *du`a'* (supplication). (25:77)

And who speaks better than he who calls unto Allāh while he himself does good [deeds] and says: I am surely of those who submit (to Allāh in Islam)? (41:33)

Those to whom they call on, they themselves seek the means of access to their Lord—whoever of them is nearest—and they hope for His mercy and fear His chastisement. (17:57)

And withhold yourself with those who call on their Lord morning and evening desiring His goodwill. (18:28)

Their sides draw away from their beds; they call on their Lord in fear and in hope. (32:16)

They used to hasten, one with another, in doing deeds of goodness and in calling on Us, hoping and fearing. (21:90)

To this then go on inviting, and go on steadfastly on the right way as you are commanded, and do not follow their low desires. (42:15)

And I will call on my Lord; maybe I shall not remain unblessed in

calling on my Lord. (19:48)

He is the Living, there is no god but He; therefore, call on Him, being sincere to Him in obedience. (40:65)

Praise to Allāh Who has given me despite old age Ishmael and Isaac; most surely my Lord is the One Who hears prayers. (14:39)

And when My servants ask you concerning Me, surely I am very near; I answer the prayer (supplication) of the suppliant when he calls on Me. (2:186)

These are only samples of what the Holy Qur'ān contains of verses stressing the importance of supplication for the creation, clarifying for them the status supplication enjoys with their Creator.

A SUPPLICATION CONTAINING ALLĀH'S GREATEST NAME

Imām al-Hussain ibn Ali ibn Abū Tālib ؑ is quoted narrating the following incident:

“We were making our *ṭawāf* around the Ka`ba when we heard someone reciting these verses of poetry:

*O You Who answers the distressed and those who, in the depth of
the darkness, utter their supplication,
O You Who removes the causes of the trials, the pain, together
with the tribulation,
Around Your Sacred House are Your guests who have come from
everywhere,
Supplicating while the eyes of Allāh never sleep, always aware,
I plead to You to grant me Your Forgiveness for the sins I have
committed, by Your Grace,
Your creation knows You, Lord, to be Most Gracious, so I plead to
You by the Light of Your Face!*

*If Your pardon never reaches a sinner nor does it bless,
Who is there to be gracious unto those who transgress?*

“My father, Ali ibn Abū Tālib عليه السلام,” the Imām عليه السلام continues, “said, ‘O Hussain! Do not you hear someone grieving about his sin, complaining to his Lord? Go and bring him here.’ So I hurried till I was able to reach the man. I found him to be a handsome man, his body looked free of deformity, his clothes seemed to be very clean, and I could smell the fragrance he was wearing. I also noticed that his right side was paralyzed. I approached him and ordered him to present himself before the Commander of the Faithful عليه السلام. He came and the Commander of the Faithful عليه السلام asked him, ‘Who are you, and what is your story?’ The man said, ‘O Commander of the Faithful! What is the case of a man who opted to do what is punishable while not performing what he is enjoined to perform?’ The Imām عليه السلام asked him again, ‘What is your name?’ The man answered, ‘Munāzil son of Laiq.’ The Imām عليه السلام asked him, ‘What is your story?’ He said, ‘I used to be quite famous among the Arabs for merry-making and sinning in my youth, without waking from my slumber. Now if I repent, my repentance will not be accepted from me, and if I try to amend my steps, I will not be able to do that either. So I prolong my transgression during the [sacred] months of Rajab and Sha’bān. My father used to be quite affectionate and compassionate towards me. He used to warn me against the outcome of my ignorance and the terrible end awaiting the transgressors. He used to say, ‘O son! Allāh sometimes manifests His might when He expresses His Wrath; so, do not tread the avenues of those who will be penalized with the Fire, for how often people have complained about you, and so have the sacred angels, and the sacred months, the nights, and the days?’ Yet whenever he persisted in admonishing and reprimanding me, I persisted in beating him. One day, when my conduct pressured him too much, he said, ‘By Allāh I am going to fast and will not break my fast, and I shall offer prayers and will not sleep...’ He fasted for one week, then he rode a lean camel and went to Mecca for the pilgrimage and said, ‘I shall go to the House of Allāh, and I shall plead to Allāh to side with me against you.’ He reached Mecca on the day of the Great Pilgrimage, took hold of the curtains of the Ka’ba and invoked Allāh against me saying,

*O One to Whom pilgrims come from far and wide,
 Those who come walking, and those who ride,
 Hoping to win the Grace of the One, the Dignified
 The One who Sustains, from Whom none can hide,
 This Munāzil never seems to cease, though I chide,
 So affect retribution; Your Judgment none can override,
 And do inflict pain on him, and do paralyze his side,
 You were never born, nor bears, but is always Glorified!*

“I swear by the One Who raised the heavens and caused the water to form springs that he hardly finished his statement when my right side was completely paralyzed, and I remained like a piece of wood lying somewhere in the precincts of the Sacred House. People used to come and go and say about me, ‘This is a man the plea of whose father Allāh has answered.’”

Imām Ali عليه السلام asked him, “What did your father do?” He said, “O Commander of the Faithful! I requested him to invoke Allāh on my behalf in the same way he invoked Him against me, now since he reconciled and was pleased with me. I placed him on a she-camel and we rushed to reach the valley of Arak when a bird suddenly flew from a tree and scared the she-camel. My father fell and died on the way.” Ali عليه السلام said, “Shall I teach you certain invocations which I have learned from the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ and about which he said that nobody recites them without Allāh Almighty removing his distress from him?” He said, “Yes, please do!” Imām al-Hussain عليه السلام stood up and taught him the invocation. He recited it and was healed from his ailment and his complete health returned to him. I asked the man, “What did you do?” He said, “When all eyes calmed down, I recited it, then repeated it a second time, then a third, whereupon I heard someone saying, ‘Suffices you Allāh, for you have invoked Him by His Greatest Name which, if anyone implores Him by it, He will answer him, and if anyone requests him for something, He will grant it!’ So I slept and I saw the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ in my vision, and he said to me, ‘Truly Ali, my cousin, has told you the truth: it does contain Allāh's Greatest Attribute which, if one pleads to Him by it, He will oblige, and if one asks Him for something, He will grant it.’ Then I saw him a second time in a vision, so I said to

him, 'O Messenger of Allāh! I love to hear you reciting that invocation!' He said,

اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَسْأَلُكَ بِاسْمِكَ بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ يَا ذَا الْجَلَالِ وَالْإِكْرَامِ يَا حَيُّ يَا قَيُّوْمُ، يَا حَيُّ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا أَنْتَ، يَا هُوَ يَا مَنْ لَا يَعْْلَمُ مَا هُوَ وَلَا كَيْفَ هُوَ وَلَا أَيْنَ هُوَ وَلَا حَيْثُ هُوَ إِلَّا هُوَ، يَا ذَا الْمُلْكِ وَالْمَلَكُوتِ، يَا ذَا الْعِزَّةِ وَالْجَبَرُوتِ، يَا مَلِكُ يَا قُدُّوسُ، يَا سَلَامُ، يَا مُؤْمِنُ، يَا مُهَيِّمُ، يَا عَزِيزُ، يَا جَبَّارُ، يَا مُتَكَبِّرُ، يَا خَالِقُ، يَا بَارِي، يَا مُصَوِّرُ، يَا مُفِيدُ، يَا مُدَبِّرُ، يَا شَدِيدُ، يَا مُبْدِي، يَا مُعِيدُ، يَا مُبِيدُ، يَا وَدُودُ، يَا مَحْمُودُ، يَا مَعْبُودُ، يَا بَعِيدُ، يَا قَرِيبُ، يَا مُجِيبُ، يَا رَقِيبُ، يَا حَسِيبُ، يَا بَدِيعُ، يَا رَفِيعُ، يَا مَنِيعُ، يَا سَمِيعُ، يَا عَلِيمُ، يَا حَلِيمُ، يَا كَرِيمُ، يَا قَدِيمُ، يَا عَلِيٌّ، يَا عَظِيمُ، يَا حَنَّانُ، يَا مَنَّانُ، يَا دَيَّانُ، يَا مُسْتَعَانُ، يَا جَلِيلُ، يَا جَمِيلُ، يَا وَكِيلُ، يَا كَفِيلُ، يَا مُقِيلُ، يَا مُنِيلُ، يَا نَبِيلُ، يَا دَلِيلُ، يَا هَادِي، يَا بَادِي، يَا أَوَّلُ، يَا آخِرُ، يَا ظَاهِرُ، يَا بَاطِنُ، يَا قَائِمُ، يَا دَائِمُ، يَا عَالِمُ، يَا حَاكِمُ، يَا قَاضِي، يَا عَادِلُ، يَا فَاصِلُ، يَا وَاصِلُ، يَا طَاهِرُ، يَا مُطَهِّرُ، يَا قَادِرُ، يَا مُفْتَدِرُ، يَا كَبِيرُ، يَا مُتَكَبِّرُ، يَا وَاحِدُ، يَا أَحَدُ، يَا صَمَدُ، يَا مَنْ لَمْ يَلِدْ وَلَمْ يُولَدْ وَلَمْ يَكُنْ لَهُ كُفُوًا أَحَدٌ، وَلَمْ يَكُنْ لَهُ صَاحِبَةٌ وَلَا كَانَ مَعَهُ وَزِيرٌ، وَلَا اتَّخَذَ مَعَهُ مَشِيرًا، وَلَا احتَاجَ إِلَى ظَهِيرٍ، وَلَا كَانَ مَعَهُ مِنْ إِلَهٍ غَيْرُهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا أَنْتَ، فَتَعَالَيْتَ عَمَّا يَقُولُ الظَّالِمُونَ عُلُوًّا كَبِيرًا، يَا عَلِيٌّ، يَا شَامِخُ يَا بَادِخُ يَا فَتَاحُ يَا نِقَاحُ يَا مُرْتَاحُ يَا مُفَرِّجُ يَا نَاصِرُ يَا مُنْتَصِرُ يَا مُدْرِكُ يَا مُهْلِكُ يَا مُنْتَقِمُ، يَا بَاعِثُ يَا وَارِثُ يَا طَالِبُ يَا غَالِبُ، يَا مَنْ لَا يَفُوتُهُ هَارِبٌ، يَا تَوَّابُ يَا أَوَّابُ يَا وَهَّابُ، يَا مُسَبِّبُ الْأَسْبَابِ، يَا مُفْتَحُ الْأَبْوَابِ، يَا مَنْ حَيْثُ مَادَعِيَ أَجَابَ، يَا طَهُورُ يَا شَكُورُ يَا غَفُورُ يَا غَفُورُ، يَا ثَوْرُ الثُّورِ يَا مُدَبِّرُ الْأُمُورِ، يَا لَطِيفُ يَا خَبِيرُ، يَا مُجِيرُ يَا مُنِيرُ يَا بَصِيرُ يَا ظَهِيرُ يَا كَبِيرُ يَا وَثَرُ يَا فَرْدُ يَا أَبَدُ يَا سَنَدُ يَا صَمَدُ، يَا كَافِي يَا شَافِي يَا وَافِي يَا مُعَافِي، يَا مُحْسِنُ يَا مُجْمِلُ يَا مُنْعَمُ يَا مُفَضَّلُ يَا مُتَكَرِّمُ يَا مُتَفَرِّدُ يَا مَنْ عَلَا فَقَهَرَ، يَا مَنْ مَلَكَ فَقَدَّرَ يَا مَنْ بَطَنَ فَخَبَرَ، يَا مَنْ عَبَدَ فَشَكَرَ، يَا مَنْ عَصَى فَغَفَرَ، يَا مَنْ لَا تُحْوِيهِ الْفِكْرُ، وَلَا يَدْرِكُهُ الْبَصَرُ، وَلَا يَخْفَى عَلَيْهِ أَثَرُ، يَا رَازِقُ الْبَشَرِ، يَا مُقَدِّرُ كُلِّ قَدَرٍ، يَا عَلِيَّ الْمَكَانِ يَا شَدِيدَ الْأَرْكَانِ، يَا مُبَدِّلَ الزَّمَانِ، يَا قَابِلَ الْفُرْبَانِ يَا ذَا الْمَنِّ وَالْإِحْسَانِ يَا ذَا الْعِزَّةِ وَالسُّلْطَانِ يَا رَحِيمُ يَا رَحْمَنُ يَا مَنْ هُوَ كُلُّ يَوْمٍ فِي شَأْنٍ يَا مَنْ لَا يَشْغُلُهُ شَأْنٌ عَنْ شَأْنٍ يَا عَظِيمُ الشَّانِ، يَا مَنْ هُوَ بِكُلِّ مَكَانٍ يَا سَامِعُ الْأَصْوَاتِ يَا مُجِيبُ الدَّعَوَاتِ يَا مُنْجِحُ الطَّلِبَاتِ، يَا قَاضِي الْحَاجَاتِ، يَا مُنْزِلَ الْبَرَكَاتِ يَا رَاحِمَ الْعِبَرَاتِ، يَا مُقِيلَ الْعَثَرَاتِ يَا كَاشِفَ الْكُرْبَاتِ يَا وَلِيَّ الْحَسَنَاتِ يَا رَافِعَ الدَّرَجَاتِ يَا مُؤَنِّي السُّؤَالَاتِ يَا مُحْيِي الْأَمْوَاتِ، يَا جَامِعَ الشَّتَاتِ، يَا مُطْلِعًا عَلَى النَّبَاتِ، يَا رَادَّ مَاقَدِّ فَاتٍ، يَا مَنْ لَا تَشْتَبِيهِ عَلَيْهِ الْأَصْوَاتُ، يَا مَنْ لَا تُضْجِرُهُ الْمَسْأَلَاتُ، وَلَا تَغْشَاهُ الظُّلُمَاتُ، يَا ثَوْرَ الْأَرْضِ وَالسَّمَاءَاتِ، يَا سَابِغَ النَّعَمِ، يَا دَافِعَ النَّقَمِ، يَا بَارِي النَّسَمِ، يَا جَامِعَ الْأَلَامِ يَا شَافِي السَّقَمِ يَا خَالِقَ الثُّورِ وَالظُّلَمِ، يَا ذَا الْجُودِ وَالْكَرَمِ يَا مَنْ لَا يَظِلُّ عَرْشُهُ قَدَمٌ، يَا أَجُودَ الْأَجُودِينَ، يَا أَكْرَمَ الْأَكْرَمِينَ، يَا أَسْمَعَ السَّامِعِينَ، يَا أَبْصَرَ النَّاطِرِينَ، يَا جَارَ الْمُسْتَجِيرِينَ، يَا أَمَانَ الْخَائِفِينَ، يَا ظَهَرَ اللَّاجِينَ، يَا وَلِيَّ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ، يَا غِيَاثَ الْمُسْتَغِيثِينَ، يَا غَايَةَ الطَّالِبِينَ، يَا صَاحِبَ كُلِّ غَرِيبٍ، يَا مُؤْنِسَ كُلِّ وَحِيدٍ، يَا مُلْجَأَ كُلِّ طَرِيدٍ، يَا مَأْوَى كُلِّ شَرِيدٍ، يَا حَافِظَ كُلِّ ضَالَّةٍ، يَا رَاحِمَ الشَّيْخِ الْكَبِيرِ، يَا رَازِقَ الطِّفْلِ الصَّغِيرِ يَا جَابِرَ الْعَظْمِ الْكَسِيرِ، يَا فَائِدَ كُلِّ أَسِيرٍ، يَا مُغْنِيَ الْبَائِسِ الْفَقِيرِ، يَا عِصْمَةَ الْخَائِفِ الْمُسْتَجِيرِ، يَا مَنْ لَهُ التَّنْذِيرُ وَالتَّقْدِيرُ، يَا مَنْ الْعَسِيرُ عَلَيْهِ سَهْلٌ يَسِيرُ، يَا مَنْ لَا يَحْتَاجُ إِلَى تَفْسِيرٍ، يَا مَنْ هُوَ عَلَى كُلِّ

munificence, the ever-living, the One Who sustains everyone, the living Who is the One and only God, You, Lord, the One Who is the only One Who knows what He is, how He is, where He is! O One Who owns the kingdom and the domain, the dignity and the greatness, the King, the Holy One, the peace, the grantor of peace, the One in control, the most Exalted, the most Might, the proud, the creator, the initiator, the One Who forms, who benefits His creation, Who administers the affairs, Who is firm, Who initiates and Who repeats, the most affectionate One, the most kind, the most praised, the One Who is adored, the One Who is distant yet is near, the One Who answers the call, Who is ever-watching, Who holds everyone to account, Who perfects what He does, Who is so high, the One Whom nobody can harm, Who hears, Who knows, who is clement, generous, timeless, lofty, Great! O One Who is affectionate, Who grants boons, Who loans His servants, Who is sought for help, Who is so great, so beautiful! O One on Whom everyone and everything depends, the most great, the most beautiful, the One on Whom everyone and everything relies, Who suffices those who depend on Him, Who straightens what is crooked, Who enables His servants to achieve their pursuits, the most noble One, the One Who guides, Who initiates, the first and the last, the evident and the hidden, the standing, the everlasting, the One Who knows everything, Who is wise, Who judges, Who is just, Whose judgment is final! O One Who connects what is separated, Who is pure, Who purifies, Who is able and capable, magnanimous, proud, the One and Only, the lone One, the One on Whom all depend, Who never gave birth, nor was He ever born, nor is there any peer to Him, nor did He take a female (for a wife), nor a vizier, nor an advisor, nor did He ever need anyone to support Him, nor is there ever a god besides Him; there is no god but You; so, Sublime You are above what the unjust ones say, a great sublimity, O high, lofty, giver without count, the One Who opens, Who grants, the One at ease Who removes one's distress, who supports, who is always victor, Who saves, Who annihilates, Who avenges, Who brings life back, Who inherits everyone, Who demands, Who wins, the One from Whom nobody can flee! O One Who grants rewards, Who always returns to those who seek Him, O giver Who causes the causes, Who opens the doors, Who responds whenever He hears a plea, Who is pure, appreciative, forgiving, the light of light, the administrator of all affairs Who knows everything, Who grants asylum, Who lights the path, Who is all-seeing, supportive, big, the One and Only God! O single

One, eternal One, one's support Who suffices, heals, fulfills His promise, grants health, benevolent, beautifies, grants blisses, boons, initiates the giving, Who alone is so Exalted, He vanquishes, Who owns everything, so He measures sustenance, Who is so close to everyone, so He knows the innermost, Who is adored, so He appreciates, Who is disobeyed, yet He forgives, One Whom intellects cannot grasp, Whom vision cannot realize, from Whom no track can ever hide, the One Who sustains all humans, Who measures every measure, Whose place is so high, Whose corners are so formidable, Who changes time, Who accepts offerings, Who grants boons and benevolence, Who has the dignity and the authority! O Merciful One, the One Who every day administers the affairs, Who is never distracted by an affair from another, the Great One Who is everywhere, Who hears all voices, Who responds favorably to pleas, Who unables His servants to achieve their pursuits, Who dispenses their affairs, Who descends His blessings, Who has mercy on their tears, Who amends their slips, Who removes their distress, Who is the origin of all good thigns, the One Whose degrees are so high, Who is the ultimate end of pursuits, Who brings life back to the dead, Who gathers whatever disperses, Who is fully knowledgeable of intentions, Who brings back what is bygone, the One Who is not confused by sounds, Who is not bored by so many pleas, Who is never hidden by the dark, Who is the light of the earth and of the heavens, Who pours His blessings, Who protects others from His wrath, Who creates the breeze, Who gathers the particles, Who heals the sick, Who creates light and darkness, the One Who is all generosity and no foot can ever step on His Throne! O most generous of the generous ones, the most outgiving One, the One Who hears the most, Who sees the most, Who is the refuge of those who seek His refuge, the safety of those who are fearful, the support of those who resort to Him, the Master of the faithful, the help of those who seek His help, the ultimate end of those who seek, the One Who is the friend of every stranger, Who entertains everyone who is lonesome, the refuge of every fugitive, the shelter of everyone who is pursued, the protector of every thing that strays, the One Who is merciful to the old man, Who sustains the little child, Who mends the broken bones, Who releases those jailed, Who enriches the poor destitute, Who protects everyone who is afraid and who seeks His support, the One Who administers and manages, the One before Whom every difficult thing is easy, the One Who needs no explanation and can do anything at all, the One Who fully knows

everything, the all-Seeing, the One Who sends the winds, Who splits the aurora, Who brings the souls back to life, Who is all goodness and forbearance, the One in Whose hand there is the key to everything, the One Who hears all voices from Whose knowledge nothing is hidden and Who brings back to life all the dead! O my rations when I am in hardship, my protector when I am estranged, the One Who keeps me company when I am alone, my Master of bliss, my ultimate resort when choosing a path wears me out, when even my relatives abandon me and every friend betrays me! O One Who is the support of everyone who has no support, the backing of everyone who is not backed, the reserve of everyone who has no reserve, the protection of everyone who has no protection, the safe haven of one who has no safe haven, the treasure of one who has no treasure, the corner of one who has no corner, the refuge of one whom nobody grants asylum, the neighbor of one who has no neighbor! O my neighbor who is part of me, my reliable corner, my God by conviction, the Lord of the Old House, the most kind, the most affectionate: I plead to You to release me from the tight ring, to remove my every distress, concern and hardship, to keep away the evil of what I cannot bear, and to help me accomplish what I can! O One Who returned Joseph to Jacob, Who removed the harm of Job, Who forgave the fault of David, Who raised Jesus son of Mary and saved him from the hands of the Jews! O One Who responded to Johna's call in the dark, Who chose Moses with the Words, Who forgave Adam's fault, Who raised Idris high with His mercy, Who saved Noah from drowning! O One Who annihilated the early people of `Ad and Thamūd, leaving none of them alive, and so did He do to the folks of Noah before them; they were even more unjust and oppressive, having sunk deeper in sin! O One Who destroyed the people of Lot, Who poured His wrath over the people of Shu'yab, Who took Abraham for a friend, Who spoke to Moses and chosen Muhammed, peace of Allāh and blessings with him and all his progeny, as the one He loves the most! O One Who bestowed wisdom on Luqman, Who granted Solomon a kingdom that was suitable for none else after him, Who granted victory to Double-Horns over mighty kings, Who granted life to al-Khidr, returned the sun back to Joshua son of Noon after it had already set, Who strengthened the heart of the mother of Moses and protected the honor of Mary daughter of Amram, Who protected John [the Baptist] son of Zacharias from sinning and calmed the anger of Moses! O One Who sent the glad tiding of John to Zacharias, Who

ransomed Ishamel with a momentous sacrifice, Who accepted Able's offering and condemned Cain, Who granted Muhammed, peace and blessing of Allah with him and his progeny, victory over the coalitions..., I plead to You to bless Muhammed and the progeny of Muhammed as well as all Your messengers, the angels near to You and all those who obey You, and I plead to you in every plea with which those with whom you are pleased pleaded to You, so You decreed imminent positive response for it! O Allah, O Allah, O Allah, O most Gracious One, most Gracious One, O most Gracious One, O most Merciful One, O most Merciful One, O most Merciful One, the One with all Glory and Exaltation, with all Greatness and Munificence, with all sublimity and honrs, by it, by it, by it, by it, by it, by it, by it do I plead to You in every Name whereby You call Yourself or of which You revealed a portion in Your Books or kept it in the world of the unknown with You, and I plead to You in the knots of honor of Your Arsh, in the ultimate end of mercy in Your Book, in that which, had all the trees on earth been turned into pens and the seas into ink supplied by seven other seas, the words of Allah are not exhausted; surely Allah is the most Exalted One, the most Wise. And I further plead to You in Your most beautiful Attributes which You described in Your Book saying: "To Allah belong all the most beautiful Attributes," and You said, "Call on Me, and I shall answer your call," and You said, "If My servants ask you about Me, I am near (to them): I answer the call of a caller who calls on Me," and You said, "O my servants who have been extravagant with their souls, do not despair of Allah's mercy; surely Allah forgives all sins; surely He is the oft-Forgiving, the most Merciful...", and here I am, Lord, pleading to You, calling on You, begging You, Lord, coveting Your positive response, O Master, just as You promised me, and I have called on You as You commanded me; so, fare with me in a way that suits You, O most generous One, and all praise belongs to Allah, the Lord of the Workds, and Allah blesses Muhammed and all his progeny.

"So I woke up and I was healed." Ali عليه السلام said, "Uphold this supplication, for it is one of the treasures of Paradise."

ĀDAM AND EVE

To discuss Ādam عليه السلام, father of the human race and the first prophet to mankind, is, in fact, to open a huge Pandora's box. Numerous

questions will inevitably have to be dealt with not only about him but also about the other beings with whom he came in contact. We have no choice except to tackle cumbersome issues relevant to his creation, archenemy Eblis (or Iblis), the angels, the jinns, Paradise, heaven and hell, devils and demons, and how all this knowledge can affect our life. To avoid these questions is to surrender to the worst type of ignorance. Ignorance is one of the two deadliest of all enemies of man, the second being fear.

There was time when no Ādam was there at all, nor was there Paradise, *janna*, as it is called in the Holy Qur'ān, a word which means: a garden or an orchard. The earth before Ādam's time was populated by species called *jann* or *jinns*. These *janns* were embroiled in fights, shedding each other's blood and causing a great deal of mischief on earth. It is to their blood that the angels referred as cited in verse 30 of Sūrat al-Baqara (2:30). The angels were busy doing what Allāh had created them to do: adoring Him, praising and glorifying Him. The Almighty removed the veils from their eyes once and permitted them to look at the earth to witness the bloodshed going on there. What they saw horrified them; it was something they had never seen before. A band from among them was chosen to go to earth to discipline those beings, to kill the mischief-makers, to banish them from their homes, and to permit them to live only on islands, seas and oceans, and in forests, and so it was. Eblis was taken captive; his life was saved on account of his young age. Eblis grew up among the angels, doing what the angels were doing, so much so that they mistook him for one of them till he committed his disobedience and was cast away from the kingdom of heaven. This is his story in brief, and more light will be shed on it on the following pages.

Sa'īd ibn al-Musayyab ibn Hazan ibn Abū Wahab al-Makhzūmi al-Qarashi, "Abū Muhammed", was one of the *tābi'īn* (second generation narrators of *ḥadīth*), and one of the seven *faqīhs* of Medīna during the first Hijri century. He was born in 13 A.H./632 A.D. and died in 94 A.H./712 A.D. and was an ascetic, traditionist and a man of piety. Below is a statement by this Sa'īd ibn al-Musayyab which deals with these beings:

Angels are neither males nor females; they do not give birth, nor do they eat or drink. The jinns give birth to males or females [and, hence, multiply as humans do]; they live and die. Satans are males and females; they multiply by birth, but they do not die: they stay alive in this world till the end of time as is the case with Eblis.

Now let us discuss each of these species of beings separately.

Angels

Angels are very energetic and intelligent beings created from light. They cannot be seen by all humans; their light is too strong for our weak eyes, it blinds them. They will be seen when the veil from our eyes is removed at the moment of death; read the following verse in testimony of this fact:

... Now We have removed your veil from you, so your sight today is sharp. (50:22)

The “veil” referred to in this verse is the one the Almighty placed between us and other beings such as the angels and the jinns. Only prophets and messengers of Allāh and their deputies, as well as a number of ordinary people elevated by Allāh to a high spiritual station, can see them when they appear in human form¹. The angel who appeared to Virgin Mary looked as human as any man. Arch-angel Gabriel appeared to our Prophet ﷺ and to past prophets ﷺ mostly in a human form.

Before the time of Noah, people used to be pious and God-fearing, so much so that angels used to come to them in human form, looking and smelling the best, to shake hands with them. A testimony to the truth of this statement lies in an incident that took place during Prophet Muhammed's lifetime. One of his renown companions was `Imrān ibn al-Haeen² whom the angels used to visit and with whom

¹According to some accounts, Gabriel appeared sometimes to Prophet Muhammed ﷺ in the form of a bird.

²His full name is: `Imrān ibn Haeen ibn `Ubayd. He was one of the

they used to keep company. Then they ceased visiting him, and he sorely missed them. He; therefore, went to the Prophet ﷺ and said, “O Messenger of Allāh! Men used to come to me better than whose faces I have never seen, nor have I smelled better than their fragrance. But they stopped visiting me.” The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ asked him, “Did you receive a wound the incident involving which you kept to yourself?” The Prophet ﷺ was referring to a wound received in defense of Islam, on the line of duty of *jihād*. `Imrān answered him by saying, “Yes; it so happened.” The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ then said to him, “Had you kept its story to yourself and safeguarded its secret, the angels would have kept visiting you till your death.”¹ This incident demonstrates to us how much Allāh appreciates the doing of good and not talking about it.

A good Muslim may be able, if he tries hard enough, to communicate with his guardian angels, those in charge of protecting him from any potentially fatal incident till the time of his death with which they are familiar. Communicating with the angels is not at all impossible if you ascend a certain spiritual ladder. Here in America, communication with higher beings is a science referred to as “channeling”, the opening of a channel of communication between us and these beings. The world is actually full of beings, but our eyes are too weak to see them, our intellects are too feeble to understand them, and our means of transportation are still too rudimentary to reach them.

Abū Dharr al-Ghifārī² رحمه الله has quoted the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ as

scholars of the *ṣaḥāba* رحمه الله. He accepted Islam in 7 A.H./629 A.D. when the Jewish fortress of Khayber in Medīna was overrun by the Muslims. He was the standard bearer of the tribe of Khuzā`ah when Mecca was conquered by victorious Muslim troops. Ziyad appointed him governor of Basra where he died in 52 A.H./672 A.D.

¹al-Zamakhshari, *Rabee` al-Abrār*, Vol. 1, p. 307.

²His full name is Jundab ibn Junādah ibn Sufyān ibn `Ubayd, a great *ṣaḥābi* of Prophet Muhammed ﷺ. He was generous and truthful. He never treasured wealth at all, be it small or big. He lived in Damascus and

saying, “I can see what you cannot, and I can hear what you cannot. The heavens has screamed, and it is justified, for there is no space in it, even as much as a span, except that there is an angel in it standing, kneeling, or prostrating.” In another version of this tradition, the Prophet ﷺ is quoted as saying, “There is no place in it, as much as four fingers, except that there is an angel in it prostrating to Allāh. By Allāh! Had you known what I know, you would have laughed very little and cried much, and you would not have enjoyed women in bed; you would have come out to your courtyards tearfully crying to Allāh. By Allāh, I wish I had been a chopped tree.”

Individuals blessed with high spiritual knowledge will be able to identify many of the types of angels during the temporary period of the *barzakh*, that is, the life in the grave. It is the intermediate stage between our present life and the eternal one that will follow the Judgment, at the time of the Great Gathering, when everyone will be tried, when each person will have to go either to heaven (Paradise) or to hell after all disputes and claims are settled by the Supreme Judge, the Judge of judges. The denzines of hell are certainly created differently from the custodians of Paradise: fire does not affect them; they are the most ruthless of all angels.

Angels vary a great deal in ranks, but they all have a lot in common: They are very intelligent beings who are totally obedient to the Almighty. They do exactly what He commands them to do without any hesitation. Their chiefs, the arch-angels, enjoy a degree of freedom of choice as long as it does not contradict the will of the Almighty. Their greatest are: Gabriel, Michael, Isrāfīl, and Israēl. Gabriel supervises and sometimes directly gets involved in conveying the Almighty's instructions, commands, and other messages to the prophets and messengers sent to the human family.

undertook a mission urging the poor to demand their legitimate rights from the rich. He died in 32 A.H./653 A.D. in the Rabadha Desert to which he was banished by third caliph Othman ibn `Affān, after being instigated to do so by Mu`awiyah ibn Abū Sufyān, who could not tolerate his preachings.

He is regarded as the angel of mercy, since these prophets and messengers are sent as mercy from the Almighty to mankind. The status Gabriel enjoys with Allāh is quite supreme; he is the best of all angels; he is closer to and is loved by Allāh more than any other angel; he is referred to as the “peacock of the angels” **طاووس الملائكة**. Whenever he came to visit Prophet Muhammed ﷺ to convey to him a divine message from his Lord, Gabriel most often assumed a human form. Whenever the Prophet ﷺ talked about Gabriel, he always referred to him as his Brother. And surely Allāh knows best.

Next to Gabriel عليه السلام in the rank of greatness is Michael عليه السلام. As his name suggests, Michael عليه السلام is in charge of keeping track of the countless computations and measures. He balances the innumerable changes that take place in the cosmos every fraction of a second. Imagine the magnanimity of such a task! Do you have any idea about the number of stars and constellations, the orbits within which each turns, its weight, size, velocity, speed, and relationship to and distance from others? Can you imagine the drops of water, be they in the form of rain, or as oceans and rivers, wells and springs, how these waters evaporate then come down to earth in the form of rain without changing the weight of our planet? Can you imagine the air we and other earthly beings breathe, and can you imagine the task of tracing it, where it comes and where it goes, how it gets affected or contaminated by other gases, be they on the surface of the earth, above or underneath it, and all the living beings that inhale and exhale it? Can you imagine the number of the trees and their leaves, their species and interrelations? And what about the animals, the birds, the species of fish, the creatures that live in the oceans and the seas?! No mind can grasp all of that, but Michael, assisted by countless other angels, is empowered by his Creator to do a job so perfect and so complete, it baffles the mind. The credit goes to his Maker. A maker is known, identified and appreciated according to what he makes. Knowing Allāh is knowing what He makes, fashions, creates, forms, regulates, sustains..., etc. Add to this list the responsibility of keeping track of what is done by each and every human and other living beings.

To discuss only the subject of the angels charged with protecting,

praying for, and recording the deeds of each one of us is to write a good size book. And do you think that the animals are left out, that they are not being watched or supervised or kept track of?! Do you think that they are exempted from accounting for what they do? If your answer is positive, then you are dead wrong: read the following verse from Sūrat al-Takwīr which clearly tells you that animals, not only humans, will have to account for what they do: “And when the wild animals are made to go forth (assemble)” (Qur’ān, 81:5). The original Arabic word for what is loosely and feebly translated here in this verse as “made to go forth” is *ḥushirat* حشرت, a past participle of the present tense *yahshur* يحشر, gathers, assembles, herds. But their judgment will be nothing compared to ours. On the Day of Judgment, most humans will wish they had been animals, plants, or even inanimate objects...

Arch-angel Isrāfīl عليه السلام is known for his trumpet the first blow of which is referred to above. The second blow of the trumpet, or horn, will signal the returning of the souls back to their newly reconstructed bodies, much, much stronger and forever durable bodies. The time period between the first blow and the second is said to be forty years¹. We do not know if these years are calculated similarly to our earthly calculation system of days and hours or not. The Almighty will have during that period of time recreated all the bodies. Needless to say, the soul is indestructible; it does not die; only the body does. The latter will this time be quite durable, quite strong, and it will look the same like our present one, according to some Muslim theologians. Other theologians are not sure if our bodies in the hereafter will be similar to our worldly forms, saying that there are not many evidences pointing out to the exact form of the human body that will enable us to live eternally, either in bliss or in damnation. The new body, they concede, however, will not be as perishable as our present one, and nobody will need to go to the doctor, to the dentist, or to the optometrist!

What does Isrāfīl عليه السلام do besides blowing the trumpet? Surely he

¹al-Jazā'iri, *An-Noor al-Mubeen*, p 60.

would not be sitting idle, doing nothing. As his name suggests, it is derived from *isrāf* اسراف, extravagance, extremism, going to extremes, seeking no middle course, no compromise. All those who are guilty of extravagance need someone to deal with them, be they humans or non-humans, jinns or demons. All those who rob people of their hard earned livelihood under the name of “interest” or “usury”, and all those who permit themselves to kill tens of thousands of others so that they themselves will be safe, and all those who steal other people's land and make it their home, and all those who starve Muslims and strangle them economically and politically..., and all those rulers who call themselves Muslims, yet who are the worst enemies of Islam: They hoard wealth for themselves, relatives and friends, depriving the rest of their people of it; and all those who agree to be beasts of burden on whose submissive backs the enemies of the Muslims get a free ride, and the ride takes them wherever they want to go, even if that means to the detriment of the interests of their own people; and all those who build their thrones on the skulls of their subjects, who kill their scholars, who banish their intellectuals, who torture those who dare to criticize their savagery; and all those who despise others in general and Muslims in particular, and many, many such evil ones on whom we invoke the curse of the Almighty... have to be dealt with sooner better than later. To deal with such evil humans, with their feuds and in-fights, with the mischief they create on earth, with their wars and crimes..., is a task too big to conceive. But the task of handling the devils and demons, be they from among the humans or from among the jinns, and to put an end to the mischief they cause on earth¹, with their attempts to alter the balance of nature, the perfect order the Almighty has created..., may be a greater one, indeed. Yet Isrāfil عليه السلام is qualified to head his team, to organize their activities, and to make sure that things remain under control. Whenever Allāh wishes to wipe out an ungrateful and mischief-making nation, such as one which permits men to marry men or women to marry women without feeling ashamed of it, from the face

¹I could not find any clue suggesting that the *jinns* live anywhere else besides planet earth and its atmosphere, but I it will not be the first time I am proven to be wrong, nor will it be the last!

of earth, Isrāfil is always ready to do the job, and by God we wish he will do it soon! We supplicate to the Almighty to annihilate all those who bear grudge and animosity towards the Muslims of the world, to wipe them out and purge the earth of them, *Allāhomma Āmeen*.

Archangel Israel heads the team of angels charged with taking away the souls of living beings. We do not know whether these are confined to humans or whether they include others. Whenever someone's turn to die comes close, two angels are sent to him to do the job. Some scholars say that these two angels are actually created and assigned to countdown one's life as soon as he leaves his mother's womb. The process of dying is not a pleasant experience for most people. Angels who know that they are assigned to separate a sinner's soul from his body will pull life out of each and every living cell of his body, a very, very painful thought if you can only imagine it. In the words of prophet Moses, it is like skinning an animal while it is still alive. Imagine! Hardly any two humans die the same death. The method of each one's death will largely depend on his or her way of life, on the extent of righteousness, fear of the Almighty, and goodness to others, or on wickedness, malice, avarice, greed, the desire to acquire power at any cost, the hatred towards any other believer, the doing of the opposite of what Allāh has enjoined us to do... All these factors will be taken into consideration before the angels are assigned to do the job.

If a dying person is one with whom Allāh is pleased, the angels of death will come to him in human form. He will feel very comfortable on seeing them, and he will recognize them as the angels of death and will be respectful to them. They are faithful servants of the Almighty, and anyone who serves the Almighty faithfully deserves to be respected. But sinners will have no joy at the moment of death. Rough, ugly, demon-like angels will come to take their souls away, and they will do so in the most painful manner, beating their faces and backs (as in 8:50-51 below) as they pull life out of them. It will be most horrifying. The Holy Qur'ān describes the horrors of such soul snatching in many verses; here are some of them:

Had you only seen when the angels cause those who disbelieve to die, smiting their faces and their backs and (saying): Taste the punishment of the burning! This is for what your own hands have committed before, and because Allāh is not in the least unjust to the servants. (8:50-51)

Had you only seen when the unjust are in the agonies of death, (how) the angels spread forth their hands (saying): Give up your souls! Today shall you be recompensed with an ignominious chastisement because you spoke against Allāh other than the truth and (because) you showed pride against His Signs. (6:93)

But how will it be when the angels cause them to die, smiting their backs? That is so because they follow what displeases Allāh and are averse to His pleasure; therefore, He has made their deeds null. (47:27-28)

A close look at these verses in the light of *tafsīr*, exegesis, will cause anyone to shudder. People who live a clean and decent life, who help others, who pray for others, who console others, who do not envy others, who disseminate knowledge and guidance to others, who suffer so that others may live happily, who sacrifice themselves and everything they have for lofty morals and objectives... will have no reason to worry about when it is time for them to leave this fleeting life and start the first leg of their very, very long journey to eternity. That first step is called the *barzakh*, the waiting time that follows life as we know it and precedes resurrection and the Day of Judgment. Islam's concept of this *barzakh* seems to be close to that of the purgatory according to Catholics. It is a new life in the grave during which one is made to pay for his sin so his would will be purged and be prepped to receive salvation.

This life is your one and only opportunity, dear reader, to do good, to be kind to others, to benefit others, to pray for others, to earn as many good deeds as Allāh enables you to. Once you lose this opportunity, it will be too late to regret it. Do not be self-centered; instead, let self-denial be your motto. Do not talk about yourself if you do not have to. Whenever you mention someone's name, say something nice about him or her and supplicate to Allāh to bless and reward him or her. If there is nothing nice that can be said, say

nothing! If you want to condemn someone for having done something bad, concentrate your condemnation not on that individual but on the bad deed itself, and you do not have to mention the name of its doer, for the latter may repent and regret and be given a chance to make amends. Why do you let your steps lead you to hell because of others?! Let *them* go there, not you! Best yet, talk about Allāh, about His creation, His wonders, His miracles, His angels, His Books, His Day of Judgment, His Muslim *ummah*... These and many more subjects are a lot more worthy of your discussion than what this person or that has done or is doing, said or saying.

Let us go back to discuss arch-angel Israel, death, and the grave. Such a discussion leads one to wonder how he or she can be prepared for that inevitable moment. How can the agony and the pain of death be minimized or even eliminated altogether? The reader who wishes to pursue this subject is advised to read the famous book *Thawāb al-A`māl wa `Iqāb al-A`māl* by the great mentor “Abū Ja`far” Muhammed ibn Ali ibn al-Hussain ibn Babawayh al-Qummi as-Sadūq (d. 381 A.H./991 A.D.) رحمه الله where the rewards of good deeds and the penalties for the bad ones are detailed. For the benefit of the reader who cannot read this Arabic reference for any reason, we would like to provide him with some of the knowledge contained in it, perhaps it will lead him to earn great rewards, and perhaps he will recite Sūrat al-Fātiḥa for the soul of the author of this book and for his parents. This way, you will earn rewards, too. When it comes to reciting Sūrat al-Fātiḥa, nobody loses.

In order to save some space, the *isnād* of the following text has been eliminated:

Whoever visits the grave of a believer and seven times repeats the recitation of Sūrat al-Qadr (Chapter 97 of the Holy Qur`ān) will be forgiven, and so will the believer in the grave. When the soul of a believer is taken away, both angels (who take it away) will ascend to heaven and say, “Lord! Your servant so-and-so was always swift in obeying You, slow in his disobedience of You, and we have taken

his soul away; so, what do You order us now to do?" The Almighty will say, "Go down to earth and stay at the grave of My servant and praise, glorify, and unify Me there, and write down the rewards of doing so for My servant till I resurrect him from his grave." How did those angels know so much about that believer? Each one of them, as books dealing with the subject of death and the life hereafter tell us, will enter the deceased persons' body from underneath the skin of one of his feet's toes to examine every part of his body and record the sins he had committed relevant to that part. Once the recording is done, a book of deeds is written and is attached to the deceased person. The conclusion, whether the angels are sure he has a very good chance of going to Paradise, or whether they are sure he will not, is placed at the top of this book of deeds. This is how they determine their conclusion. Needless to say, Allāh has the privilege to over-ride their conclusions. And do not forget the subject of intercession: There are some holy men who may intercede with the Almighty on behalf of this sinner or that.

When a believer is resurrected from his grave, someone looking like him will also come out and will walk in front of him, leading him the way. Whenever the believer witnesses one of the horrors of the Day of Judgment, his like image will say to him, "Do not grieve, nor should you fret; rather, receive the glad tidings of happiness and honors from Allāh, the Exalted One, the Great." He will continue to assure him of happiness and honors from Allāh, the Exalted One and the Great, till he stands before Allāh Almighty Who will try him an easy trial then order His angels to escort him to Paradise. It is then that the believer will say to his like image, "May Allāh have mercy on you! How beautifully you have come out with me from my grave, and how you have kept giving me the glad tiding of happiness and honor from Allāh, the most Exalted One and the most Great, till I saw it with my own eyes! Who are you?!" His like image will say, "I am the pleasure which you brought your brother in the life of the world. Allāh created me so that I may convey to you such glad tidings."¹

¹as-Sadūq, *Thawāb al-A`māl wa `Iqāb al-A`māl*, p. 238.

Even consoling a bereaved Brother or Sister in Islam is rewardable, according to *ḥadīth*, with an outfit on the Day of Judgment to cover one's nakedness and to give him/her comfort, reassurance and hope for salvation.

Abān ibn Taghlib¹ narrates a tradition wherein he cites Imām Ja'far

¹He is “Abū Sa’īd” Abān ibn Taghlib ibn Rubah al-Kindi, of Kūfa. His date of birth is unknown, but he died in 141 A.H./758 A.D. and was a famous Qur’ānic reciter. He distinguished himself as being a *faqīh*, jurist, a scholar of exegesis and traditions, *ḥadīth*. He was a close companion of Imāms Ali “Zayn al-’Ābidīn” ibn al-Hussain, Imām Muhammed al-Bāqir and Imām Ja'far as-Sādiq عليه السلام, and he studied various branches of science particularly *ḥadīth* from them and attained a prominent position in the school of Imām as-Sādiq. Abān is famous for having quoted extensively from Imām as-Sādiq. It is reported that he narrated thirty thousand *aḥādīth* from him. He is also considered to be the most outstanding Qur’ānic reciter of his time, and his style of Qur’ānic recitation is very famous among reciters. Abān was considered as master in sciences relevant to the Qur’ān, traditions, jurisprudence, literature, syntax and philology. Shaikh (mentor) at-Tūsi رحمته الله has reported that once Imām as-Sādiq عليه السلام appointed Abān to conduct a scholarly discourse against one of the pretenders. Imām as-Sādiq عليه السلام said to him, "Sit in the Masjid of the Prophet صلى الله عليه وآله, and in the religious issues give verdict to the people. I love to have followers like Abān ibn Taghlib." Sunni scholars such as Ahmad ibn Hanbal, Yahya ibn Mu’īn, Abū Hātim and an-Nisā’i have all endorsed him. Al-Dhahbi has recorded his biography in his own *Mīzān* saying, “Abān ibn Taghlib of Kūfa is a persistent Shī’a. He, *nevertheless*, is truthful; so, we will rely on his truthfulness, and let him be punished for his innovation.” Notice the ugly prejudice, folks! Such prejudice surely stands in the way of a true Islamic brotherhood which is so badly needed these days. Muslims should not discriminate against each others, or against non-Muslims, simply because they think or belief differently. Differences of opinion are not only permitted in Islam, they are encouraged; they stimulate research and scholarship. Al-Dhahbi also says that Ahmed ibn Hanbal, Ibn Ma’īn and Abū Hātim put their trust in Abān. Al-Dhahbi goes on to describe Abān’s credentials, counting him as an authority relied on by Muslim and authors of the four Sunan books, namely Abū Dāwūd, at-Tirmidhi, an-Nisā’i and Ibn Majah, marking his name with the latter’s initials. Refe to his narraton of *ḥadīth* in Muslim’s *Ṣaḥīḥ*, in the four Sunan books through al-Hakam

as-Sādiq as saying, “Whoever dies during the time from Thursday's sunset till the time of *zawāl* (the time before noon) of the next Friday will be protected by Allāh from the grave's constriction.”¹ It is a good habit to learn to spend the time going to work every day reciting the Fātiḥa on the way to work and the Qadr on the way back home. Then, at the end of the day, you should offer the rewards of such recitation to the souls of all believing men and women, the living and the dead which will include you, too, of course. You will be rewarded with rewards the extent of which is known only by Allāh.

Let us now go back to the subject of the angels and try to find out whether the archangels, the greatest of Allāh's angels, die at all, including the angel of death himself. When the verse saying, “Every soul shall taste of death” (Qur’ān, 3:185) was revealed, the angels said, “Death has been decreed for all humans.” And when the verses saying “Everyone on it must pass away. And there will endure forever the person of your Lord, the Lord of glory and honor” (Qur’ān, 55:26-27) were revealed, the angels said, “Now we, too, must die.” Death will come to everyone when Isrāfīl blows his trumpet the first time. Sound kills. This is a scientific fact. When the verse saying, “And the trumpet shall be blown, so all those that are in the heavens (the angels) and on earth (humans, jinns, animals, etc.) shall be stunned except such as Allāh please...” (Qur’ān, 39:68)

and al-A’mash, in addition to Fudayl ibn Omer. Sufyān ibn ‘Ayīnah, Shu’bah and Idrīs al-Awdi quote him as recorded in Muslim’s book. The books compiled by Abān are now missing, but the books ascribed to him in the catalogues are as follows: 1. *Ma`āni al-Qur’ān*, 2. *Kitāb al-Qirā’āt*, 3. *Al-Gharīb fil-Qur’ān*, 4. *Al-Faḍā’il* and 5. *Kitāb Ṣifṭīn*.

¹*Ibid.*, p. 231. The grave's constriction is one of the horrors almost every deceased person will have to suffer. The deceased will experience such a psychological pain that is impossible to describe in any language in any manner. It is as though the corners of the grave crush his corpse and reduce it to ashes. May Allāh *Subḥānahu wa Ta`ālā* exempt us from having to endure it. There are numerous traditions dealing with this topic. Praise to Allāh, I have written about it Volume One of my 2-Volume *Dictionary of Islamic Terms* to which I refer the kind reader.

was revealed, Anas ibn Mālik says, some people asked the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ who those included in the exception referred to above, that is, “except such as Allāh please”, were. He said, “They are Gabriel, Michael, and the angel of death (Israel). Allāh will then ask the angel of death, ‘O angel of death! Who remains?’ and Allāh knows more than him. Isrāfil will say, ‘They are Gabriel, Michael, Isrāfil, and the angel of death (meaning himself) عليه السلام.’ ‘O angel of death!’ Allāh will say, ‘Take the life of Michael away,’ and so will it be. He will fall into the form in which Allāh created him: like a huge mountain. Then Allāh will ask, and He knows more, ‘O angel of death! Who remains?’ Israel will say, ‘Glory to You, Lord, the One with all Greatness and Honor! Gabriel remains.’ And Gabriel enjoys the status which has been mentioned to you. Allāh will address Gabriel saying, ‘O Gabriel! One of Us will have to die,’ whereupon Gabriel will fall down prostrating and saying, ‘Glory to You, Lord, and all the Praise! You are the Eternal One Who never dies, whereas Gabriel is a mortal and is to be annihilated by death.’ It is then that Allāh takes Gabriel’s life away, causing him to fall over Michael عليه السلام. The distinction he has over Michael عليه السلام is like that of a huge mountain over a very small one.”¹

Of course reference to angels having wings must not be taken literally. Angels do not need wings or feathers or even spaceships to move from one place to another. But it has been customary in world culture, not only in Islam, to imagine angels having wings in order to bring the picture closer to human comprehension.

In the Holy Qur’ān, we read the following:

He (Allāh) said, “O Eblis! What prevented you from doing obeisance to one whom I created with My hands? Are you proud, or are you (one) of the exalted ones?” (38:75)

According to Abū Sa’īd al-Khudri, as we are told by as-Sadūq in his book *Faḍā’il al-Shī’a*, a man once came to the Messenger of Allāh

¹al-Zamakhshari, *Rabee` al-Abrār*, Vol. 1, p. 310.

ﷺ and asked him about the verse cited above. “Who are *the exalted ones* referred to in this verse, O Messenger of Allāh, the ones whose status is higher even than that of the angels?” The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said, “They are: I, Ali, Fātima, al-Hassan, and al-Hussain. We were in the pavilion of the ‘Arsh making *tasbeeh* (praising the Almighty), and the angels were repeating after us, one thousand years before Allāh, the Exalted and the Almighty, created Ādam. When Allāh, the Exalted and the Almighty, created Ādam, He ordered the angels to prostrate to him, and He did not order us to do likewise. All the angels prostrated except Eblis. Allāh, Praised and Exalted is He, then asked Eblis, ‘Are you proud, or are you among the five persons whose names are inscribed in the pavilion of the ‘Arsh?’”¹

Those who do not take the time to learn about the fascinating world of the spirits, that is, the spiritual realm, will have a very hard time when they get there and see it for themselves. They will be unprepared, and they will be taken by surprise, puzzlement and confusion. Those endowed with spiritual knowledge will find no difficulty identifying spirits when they see them. There will be so much personification in the life to come that it really is a must to learn about that place before you get there, and you know that nobody is exempted from getting there. Not only will there be new beings whom you had never encountered, but everything which in this life is intangible, immaterial, will in the hereafter take a certain form and shape. Prayers, the fast, the pilgrimage, the Holy Qur’ān, the good and the bad deeds, repentance, ablution.... all will look like living beings; they will come and go; they will speak, and they will testify, and so will each of your five senses, bodily parts and skin. They will testify either for or against you. If you are good, they will plead to the Almighty on your behalf, and they will try their best to save your skin from the fire of hell. Each of the verses of the Holy Qur’ān will be personified and will have a certain form. Āyat al-Kursi (2:255) will be one of the mightiest of such personifications.

¹Sayyid Ni`mat-Allāh al-Jazā'iri, *An-Noor al-Mubeen fī Qaṣaṣ al-Anbiyā'* wal Mursaleen *النور المبين في قصص الأنبياء و المرسلين*, pp. 63-64.

Supplications will take a form. Hell will be a live being that speaks, screams, spits fire, curses and condemns, complains and roars. And so will be each of its flames. And those assembled for the judgment, all of them, will hear Hell speak, and most of them will not like what they will hear. One of the things Hell will say is this: “Where are those who used to go to mosques and talk about their own worldly affairs?! Where are those who used to build mosques only for show?! Where are those who used to sever their ties with their kinfolds?! Where are those who used to confiscate what belonged to the orphans?!” All this is recorded in reliable references; to go on may take us out of this book's scope.

In one of his sermons, the Commander of the Faithful Imām Ali ibn Abū Tālib عليه السلام has said the following about the angels:

“He (Allāh) split between the high heavens, filling them with many kinds of His angels: Some of them are prostrating who never kneel down, some kneeling who never stand, some fixed in their positions which they will never abandon, some praising Him without ever feeling tired of doing so, and their eyes never sleep, nor their intellects ever wane, nor their bodies ever weaken, nor their memory ever lapses. Some of them are His trustees with regard to His inspiration, bearers of His messages to His messengers; they wait for His decrees and commands. And some are protectors of His servants while others are the custodians of the gates of His Paradise. The feet of some of them are fixed in the lower heavens with their necks extending to the high heavens; their corners extend beyond the lands, their shoulders parallel the legs of the `Arsh, their eyes too humble to look at it. They wrap themselves with their wings underneath it; veils separate them from the `Arsh, veils of dignity and curtains of might. They never conceive their Lord in their imagination, nor do they apply to Him what is applied to His creation. They do not seek Him in a specific place, nor do they compare Him to anything at all.”¹

¹This text is recorded by the Mu`tazilite scholar Ibn Abūl-Ḥadeed in his voluminous commentary on *Nahjul-Balāgha*. This exact wording exists in

Having learned this much about the angels, we have now to turn our attention to the jinns to find out who they are and what they do.

The Jinns

The subject of jinns is intriguing, and probably the most intriguing is the discussion of the worst of the jinns: Satan who is known as: Eblis (or Iblis), Azazel, or Lucifer. Allāh tells us in 55:15 that “He (Allāh) created the jinns of a flame of (smokeless) fire.” There were two species of the janns who probably could not live anywhere except on earth: One was created of air and the other of water¹. Ādam was created of earth, hence he lived on earth and was fed by vegetables and fruits grown on it. All jinns, with the exception of Eblis and his evil offspring, live and die as humans do. The discussion of Eblis, Satan, and his tribe will *Insha-Allāh* be dealt with later.

al-Zamakhshari's book *Rabee` al-Abrār ربيع الأبرار*, Vol. 1, pp. 312-313. Speaking of *Nahjul-Balāgha*, the author of this book was blessed with the chance to edit this great book, so great it is regarded by millions of Muslims as being next only to the Holy Qur’ān. His edition was published in New York in 2005 and since then it has been reprinted *seven* times. The New York edition of *Nahjul-Balāgha* falls in 990 pages and you can order your copy through the Internet where a number of booksellers are selling it, especially www.amazon.com, www.barnesandnoble.com and many others. Its title is: *Nahjul-Balagha: Peak of Eloquence* by Imam Ali ibn Abū Talib with commentary by Martyr Ayatollāh Murtada Mutahhari, edited by the author of the book in your hands and published by Tahrike Tarsile Qur’ān, Inc. of Elmhurst, New York, U.S.A. The paperback edition bears this ISBN: 978-1-879402-34-8 and the casebound edition bears this ISBN: 978-1-879402-35-5. Its Library of Congress Catalog Number is 2005900698. This edition has been translated into French and is available for sale in France and other French-speaking countries, and it will be great to translate it into Spanish, too, although there are existing Spanish text of *Nahjul-Balāgha*.

¹Sayyid Ni`mat-Allāh al-Jazā'iri, *An-Noor al-Mubeen fī Qasas al-Anbiyā wal Mursaleen* النور المبين في قصص الأنبياء و المرسلين, p. 48.

Do you remember Sūrat al-Jinn (Chapter 72 of the Holy Qur’ān)? It narrates for us an encounter between Muhammed ﷺ, the Messenger of Allāh, and the jinns who went to meet the Prophet ﷺ in response to what they had heard from a group of other jinns. The latter happened to be passing by as they heard the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ reciting the Holy Qur’ān. This incident is narrated by the renown *ṣahābi* Abdullāh ibn Mas’ūd as well as by ‘Alqamah ibn Qays. Abdullāh ibn Mas’ūd narrates saying, “One night, while we were in Mecca, we missed the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ. We, therefore, thought that he was either killed or raised to heaven. We went out looking for him in the valleys till we met him leaving Hera cave behind him. We said to him, ‘O Messenger of Allāh! Where were you?!’ He said, ‘A deputy from the jinns came to me, so I went with them to recite the Qur’ān for them.’ He took us and showed us their footprints and the fires they had lit at the meeting place.” More details of this encounter are available in the books of *tafsīr* including the names of those jinns and that they were coming from the Jazeera area in northern Iraq and going to Yemen. Those jinns were fascinated by what they had heard, so they informed their people who selected a committee representing their various nations to meet with the Prophet ﷺ.

Anyone who has read the Holy Qur’ān must have come across the incident involving prophet Solomon (Sulayman) who asked those in his company who among them would bring him Balqees's throne, and an *‘ifreet* from the jinns, an audacious jinn, offered to bring it to him before his meeting was over, as we are told in verse 39 of Sūrat an-Naml (Ants, Ch. 27). But a learned human, namely Āsif ibn Barkhiya, offered to (and did) bring it to him in the twinkling of an eye. This proves the power of knowledge.

Who is this Āsif ibn Barkhiya? It is said that his name is Āsif, Astum, Natura, Asāf, Yilikha ben Barkhiya or Barkiya ibn Sham’iya ibn Mikiya. In Hebrew, his name is Benyahoo (or Ben-Yahoo). He was son of a sister of Solomon, his vizier, trusted friend and, according to some Arabic sources consulted for this text, commander of troops in charge of guarding Solomon’s magnificent palace and other numerous mansions. He, therefore, used to enter the

palace and any mansion day or night at will, being very highly trusted by Solomon who made him his scribe, advisor and executor of major state affairs of a vast kingdom over which Solomon ruled in the 11th century B.C. for 40 years. Āsif was blessed with a very pious, virtuous, learned and morally elevated character, so much so that Solomon chose him to be his *waṣī*. He was not a prophet but a very highly spiritual man who proved his superiority to an *ʿifrit* from among the jinns when he was able to bring the throne of Balqees, the Queen of Saba' (Sheba), from Yemen to Palestine in a twinkling of an eye. How could he do that? Āsif had in his knowledge one letter (portion) of Allāh's Greatest Name **اسم الله الأعظم** which he pronounced, causing the earth to cave in, enabling him to stretch his hand and grab the throne. This process of causing the earth to cave in is called **خسف الأرض** *khasf al-arḍ*. It is almost similar to a process whereby one crosses a vast distance equally fast which is called **طي الأرض** *ṭayy al-arḍ*, earth folding.

The Holy Qur'ān narrates to us this incident in verse 40 of Sūrat an-Naml, chapter of the ants, where Āsif is referred to as "one who had knowledge of the Book" thus:

One who had knowledge of the Book said, "I will bring it to you within the twinkling of your eye!"... Then when (Solomon) saw it placed firmly before him, he said, "This is by the grace of my Lord to test me whether I am grateful or ungrateful! And if any is grateful, truly his gratitude is (a boon) for his own soul, but if any is ungrateful, truly my Lord is free of all needs, supreme in honor! ..." (Qur'ān, 27:40)

Solomon was no less knowledgeable than Āsif, but he simply wanted to show everyone the powers his nephew had. Imām Muhammed al-Bāqir **عليه السلام** has said, "The Greatest Name of Allāh is comprised of seventy-two letters plus one which only Allāh, the Praised and Exalted One, has kept with Him in the unknown world." Imām Ja'far as-Sādiq **عليه السلام** has said, "Āsif brought the throne of Balqees via earth folding **طي الأرض**." Imām Ali al-Hādī **عليه السلام** has said, "The 'one who had the knowledge of the Book' was Āsif ibn Barkhiya. Solomon **عليه السلام** was not at all incapable of the knowledge

which Āsif had, but he loved the jinns and mankind to know his status, that he is to be the authority after him, and this is of the knowledge of Solomon عليه السلام, peace with him, which he had entrusted to Āsif by the command of Allāh Almighty. The most Exalted One bestowed on him such knowledge so there would be no dispute about his being the imām, leader, after Solomon عليه السلام; it was a clear evidence.”

Abū Hamzah al-Thumālī¹ is quoted as having said, “I came once seeking permission to meet with (Imām) Abū Jaʿfar (Muhammed al-Bāqir عليه السلام), peace with him, and I was told that some people were already in his company, and that I would be permitted to meet him once they had left. When they did leave, I saw them, and I did not recognize any of them, nor did I feel comfortable at all at seeing them. Then I was permitted to enter. I said to him, ‘May I be your

¹“Abū Hamzah” al-Thumālī أبو حمزة الثمالي, namely Thābit ibn Dīnār, was a close companion of Imāms Ali Zain al-ʿĀbidīn, Muhammad al-Bāqir and of Jaʿfar as-Sādiq عليه السلام, a man of piety and righteousness. Al-Najjāshi, the genealogist, said: “He was the best of our companions and the most reliable of them in narration and tradition.” It was reported on the authority of Imām Ali ar-Riḍa عليه السلام who said, “Abū Hamzah during his time is like Sulaymān (Solomon) during his time.” His supplication was accepted. His sons died martyrs with the great revolutionist, Zayd ibn Ali عليه السلام. He died in the year 150 A.H./767 A.D. Among his works were:

- *Kitāb fī Tafsīr al-Qurʾān al-Karīm* (An exegesis of the Qurʾān)
- *Kitāb an-Nawādir* (a book on rare very interesting incidents)
- *Kitāb al-Zuhd* (a book on asceticism).

Abū Hamzah al-Thumālī has related that during the month of Ramaḍān, Imām Ali Zain al-ʿĀbidīn عليه السلام used to spend a greater part of the night in prayers, and when it was the time of starting the fast, he would recite a supplication which later came to be known as Duʿa Abi Hamzah al-Thumālī (supplication of Abū Hamzah al-Thumālī). This supplication has been recorded in the book titled *Miṣbāḥ al-Mutahijjid* by Shaikh (mentor) at-Tūsī.

sacrifice! Is this the time of Banū Umayyah whose sword drips with blood?' He said, 'O Abū Hamzah! That was a Shī'a delegation from among the jinns who came to ask me about their creed.'"¹ This documented incident proves that Muslim jinns, like humans, are also divided in their Islamic creed into Shī'as and Sunnis. If there is a spirit of Islamic brotherhood, *Inshā-Allāh* there is nothing wrong with this division. Islam is like a tree that has one stem and two main branches.

The jinns are intelligent beings who cannot be seen by everyone: They are created of smokeless fire that blinds the mortals except some mortals who, by any standard, are spiritually higher than others. But some righteous people can, indeed, see them and even befriend them; they will come to humans in different forms than those in which the Almighty created them first. They have the ability to change their forms. And they do not all look alike: some are "beautiful" according to humans' standards of beauty, whereas most of them are not. Besides God's prophets and their deputies (*waṣīs*), those endowed with a high degree of supernatural power, parapsychologists, can see and talk to them and even draw a great deal of benefit for themselves and for others from such communication. Jinns reside wherever humans do not live around: deserts, oceans, uninhabited islands, forests..., etc. Some of them are good, but most of them are bad, as is the case with our human species. Jinns are also various species; here is a brief description of some of them:

One of their species is called *shiqq*. These are bedeviled jinns who look semi-humanoid, and they love to intercept travellers and aggravate them. Three of their species are so dangerous, those who are exposed to them may lose their sanity; they are: *tabi`*, *qareen*, and *khābil*. Those who reside in the seas and oceans are known as *dilhab*. Another species, *ri'ee*, also called *`arrāf*, are harmless; they love to share some of their knowledge with humans, so they select the most brilliant men from among the humans for their company.

¹al-Majlisi, *Bihār al-Anwār*, Vol. 5, p. 433.

Among the other harmful species of the jinns are: *`abqar* and *sa`lāt*, and they like to live in orchards and groves. Another species, *ghool*, prefers to assume various forms and shapes in order to inflict harm on humans. *Mārid* is also a harmful species of jinns, and so are the *nisnas* who look like the *shiqq* in form and shape; they have faces which look like humans but not exactly so. *Hātif* is a species of the jinns that prefers to use sound to do their mischief, preferring to be seen by humans only as forms rather than beings. *Hājis* jinns apply the method of intuition to communicate with humans, insinuating evil thoughts to them the same way Satan and his evil tribe do. All these species are mentioned in Vol. 1 of the encyclopedia titled *Rabee` al-Abrār* by the great Sunni scholar al-Zamakhshari¹.

Evil jinns are by far less harmful than devils, descendants of Satan. Abū Sulayman² has said, "The evil ones from among the jinns are harder for me to deal with than the Satans bedeviling humans. Satans may cling to me and cause me to commit a sin. But if I seek refuge with Allāh against an evil jinn, he will be too frightened of the Name of Allāh to come near me. Reciting Sūrat al-Falaq (Ch. 113) and Sūrat an-Nās (Ch. 114) will protect you from the mischief of both species of these evil beings." By the way, this man, Abū Sulaymān, was always sought by people for counsel and advice due to his wisdom, knowledge, and piety. A man once came to him and

¹Abūl-Qāsim Mahmūd ibn Omer al-Zamakhshari, *Rabee` al-Abrār wa Nusooos al-Akhhbār*, Vol. 1, p. 308. Al-Zamakhshari, a Mu`tazilite, is one of the most famous and highly respected Sunni scholars of the fifth Islamic century. He left for the Islamic library very precious books dealing with Arabic linguistics (although he was not an Arab), exegesis, *ḥādith*, and logic. He was born in Zamakhshar, a small town in Khawarizm, Iran, on a Wednesday, Rajab 27, 467 A.H./March 18, 1075 A.D. during the `Abbāsīd dynasty and died in Jurjan, Iran, on Dhul-Hijja 9, 538 A.H./June 13, 1144 A.D. May Allāh have mercy on his soul and reward him on our behalf with the best of His rewards for all the scholarly work he did, *Allāhomma Āmeen*.

²His name is Abd ar-Raḥmān ibn Aḥmed ibn `Atiyyah al-`Ansi al-Madhḥajī al-Dārānī. He was a pious ascetic, a philosopher, and a thinker. He lived in Darya, Damscus, where he died in 215 A.H./830 A.D.

complained about the insinuations of the devil. Abū Sulaymān said to him, “Whenever you feel that Satan is near you enticing you to do something prohibitive, you should feel elated, for once you do so, he will immediately forsake you. There is nothing Satan hates more than seeing a believer feeling happy. When you feel sad, he will come to increase your grief manifold.”¹

Jinns always like to stick their nose in other people's business, especially if such people are humans whom they very much despise. Jinns live and die, marry and multiply. They have their own courts and judicial system, depending on their creeds, and they have ranks one higher than the other. They live much longer than humans, and they travel faster than the speed of light. They easily cross countries and penetrate walls and doors. Good jinns try to help humans in various ways. Those who do so are held in contempt by other jinns who will shun them and shut them out of their communities. Witchcraft is accomplished with the latter's help. Jinns can change their appearance very easily and look like humans or animals, and the mischievous among them try to share residence with humans or get them out of there. Sometimes when a jinn family likes a house, rest assured the human family living there will have to live somewhere else; not many jinns like to share. Jinns are mentioned throughout the Holy Qur'ān, and this is not the place to elaborate on them more than what is indicated here. Books have been written about them to which the reader is referred for more information although most of such books are still in Arabic waiting for someone to translate them. If you wish to be on your guard against their mischief, recite two Qur'ānic Sūrats: Sūrat al-Falaq (Ch. 113) and Sūrat an-Nās (Ch. 114, the last chapter of the Book of Allāh) as often as you can especially before you go to bed. And make sure you are clean before you sleep. Both Jinns and Satans target unclean people, those who do not Islamically cleanse themselves. Do not make yourself an easy target of these mischievous beings. To befriend some good jinns and to get them to do you favors is an entire science, a very interesting one. The author of this book has

¹al-Zamakhshari, *Rabee` al-Abrār*, Vol. 1, p. 332. How beautiful!

had the good fortune of meeting some of those who succeeded in befriending not only some good jinns but also some angels, which is quite rare since angels have their own functions and jobs to do and their freewill is very limited.

A number of famous people have had first encounters with jinns. A number of the most wicked persons in the Islamic history have done likewise. Read about such encounters in Vol. 1 of al-Zamakhshari's encyclopedia titled *Rabee' al-Abrār*. Among those who encountered the jinns, the *ṣaḥābi* Abdullāh ibn Mas'ūd رضي الله عنه was one. Both 'Alqamah¹ and Harb² sons of Umayyah are said to have been killed by jinns. Jinns sometimes like to imitate humans; read in the reference cited above some of the poetry which they supposedly composed, though controversy revolves round such poetry, and you will find it not only similar to what other Arab poets may compose but even much superior in quality. Another victim of the jinns is Sa'd ibn 'Abādah ibn Dulaym who was killed in 11 A.H./632 A.D. inside his bath-house. His corpse suddenly appeared before the rest of his family and a voice was heard reciting two lines of Arabic poetry saying,

قد قتلنا سيد الخز * رج سعد بن عباده
ورميناه بسهمي * ن، فلم نخطيء فواده

¹Alqamah ibn Safwān ibn Umayyah is grandfather of Marwan ibn al-Hakam, seal bearer of caliph Othmān ibn 'Affān. During the time of *jāhiliyya*, he went out seeking to recover a debt owed to him. He met a *shiqq* jinn with whom he exchanged lines of poetry. The poetry composed by both of them, and the details of this incident, are all recorded on p. 206, Vol. 6, of *Kitāb al-haywān* by al-Jāhiz. Al-Jāhiz is "Abū Othmān" 'Amr ibn Bahr ibn Mahboub al-Kināni al-Laythi who died in 255 A.H./869 A.D. and was a Mu'tazilite writer; he died and a book was still on his chest, a first class and a very prolific author.

²He was Harb ibn Umayyah ibn 'Abd Shams, grandfather of Mu'āwiyah ibn Abū Sufyān ibn Harb. He died 36 years before the Hijra. To learn more about him, refer to p. 326, Vol. 3, of al-Mas'ūdī's *Murūj al-Dhahab*.

*We killed the master of the Khazraj, Sa'd ibn 'Abadah:
With two arrows did we shoot him, not missing his heart.*¹

These lines were heard but nobody was seen. Refer to a footnote on p. 4, Vol. 2, of *Al-Iṣābah* by Ibn 'Abd al-Birr for more details. There are, however, some scholars who cast doubt about the whole incident saying that the jinns need no bows or arrows to kill; they have their own ways, and surely Allāh knows best.

Jinns may kidnap humans for no reason other than as an act of stupid entertainment. Among documented kidnapping cases is one involving 'Amr ibn 'Ādiyy al-Lakhmi² and another involving 'Imārah ibn al-Walīd ibn al-Mughīrah al-Makhzūmi, brother of the famous military commander Khālīd ibn al-Walīd. A man from the tribe of 'Udhrah was once snatched by the jinns. Abdullāh ibn Fā'id wanted to know whether such an incident was someone's hallucination or imagination, so he went to see the Prophet ﷺ and to ask him about it. Prophet Muhammed ﷺ confirmed it.³ Of course, there are those who dispute the authenticity of reporting this incident, and they may have valid reasons.

¹For their original Arabic text, refer to p. 317, Vol. 1, of al-Zamakhshari's *Rabee' al-Abrār* where more poetry composed by the jinns is recorded.

²His full name is 'Amr ibn 'Ādiyy ibn Naseer ibn Rabee'ah al-Lakhmi. He was the first of the Lakhmi (or Lakhmid or Lakhmide) kings **اللمميون**, also called the Mundhiris **المناذرة**, who ruled Iraq during the time of *jāhiliyya*, making Heera, which was described at the time as Paradise on earth, their capital in 266 A.D. He became king following the death of his uncle Khuthaymah al-Abrash, and he resided at Heera, 3 kilo meters south of Kūfa on the bank of the Euphrates River. A Persian Sassanid army along with al-Munthir III ibn an-Nu'mān, one of their kings, and his army defeated the famous Byzantine general Belisarius at the Battle of Callinicum in 531 A.D. After the death of an-Nu'mān III, Arabs defeated the Persians in about 609 A.D. in the Battle of Dhi-Qār. Presently, Heera (or Hīra) is located within the borders of Iraqi Dhi-Qār governorate.

³al-Zamakhshari, *Rabee' al-Abrār*, Vol. 1, p. 318.

A parapsychologist friend of mine told me once that the largest concentration of jinns he had ever encountered was in the north-western area of Hijāz, Saudi Arabia, an area once inhabited by the people of `Ād. By the way, the people of `Ād were the residents of the *aḥqāf* أحقاف, high sands, and their capital was Iram the like of which, according to Qur'ānic verses, there was none at all anywhere else. Iram was located in southern Arabia near Hadramout between Yemen and Oman, as historian at-Tabari tells us in Vol. 1 of his *Tārīkh*. They were characterized by their mighty built bodies the length of which reached 50 meters. This is not exaggeration, folks. A company drilling for oil in Saudi Arabia's Empty Quarter area found a skeleton of a very, very tall man described to be one of those people of `Ād. The people of `Ād worshipped three idols: Sadaa', Samud (or Samood) and Habaa. The Almighty sent them Prophet Hūd عليه السلام whom they slighted, so He wiped them out of the face of earth.

Eblis and his tribe are not typical jinns: typical jinns live and die, whereas he and his tribe never die till the Hour. Let us shed some more light on this being who has filled the world with mischief.

Eblis: The Arch-Deceiver Jinn

Being familiar with your enemy is the very first step in defeating him. How Eblis works, who works for him or with him, how he approaches humans, how to deal with his temptations and insinuations..., are all topics which should be on the top of everyone's list of priorities.

Let us, first of all, explain the meaning of the word "Eblis", or "Iblis". Like "Satan", it is an Arabic word. Consulting the famous lexicon *Lisān al-`Arab* by Abul-Fadl Jamāl ad-Dīn Muhammed ibn Mukarram ibn Manzour, we find the following on p. 29, Vol. 6 (Dar Sādir, Beirut, Lebanon, 1300 A.H./1883 A.D. edition),

Root word: *balasa* or *ablasa* (both past tense verbs) from the mercy of Allāh: He lost all hope for the mercy of Allāh, and he regretted, hence Eblis, a name attached to Azazel (his original name).

Azazel is the name of Eblis in the Old Testament¹. “Eblis” is a noun used as a descriptive adjective. Consulting a good English-English dictionary, such as *The Random House College Dictionary* (Random House, Inc., New York, 1975), Azazel is described as “the scapegoat released on the Day of Atonement, or its destination, hell,” and as one of the “fallen angels”. “Satan” is an adjective used as a noun to connote him. Its origin is *shaytān* شيطان, someone irate, enraged, angry, furious, burning with the fire of anger. *Shiyāt* شياط means burning. In Greek, his name is Phosphorus. In Latin mythology, he is referred to as Lucifer, “the light-bearing”. This same Latin word also describes planet Venus, the morning star. In Isaiah 14:12, Lucifer is said to be king of Babylon. This must have been used metaphorically, for certainly most of Babylon's kings were devilish, very evil, conceited and arrogant. Moreover, there is no such name among all those who ruled not only the city capital Babylon but all of the kingdom of Babylonia. Like the Pharaohs of Egypt, for many centuries contemporaries of the kings of Babylon, these kings demanded their subjects to worship them as their gods. The story of prophet Abraham and Nemrud² is an example.

Azazel is mentioned in traditions transmitted by renown traditionists such as Tawoos al-Yamāni (d. c. 106 A.H./724 A.D.) and Mujāhid³ who both say that

Before committing his sin, Eblis used to be one an angel named Azazel. He was one of the residents of the earth, and he belonged to a group of angels known as the jinns⁴. None among the angels

¹See The Old Testament, The Book of Leviticus 16:8, 10, and 21. There, Azazel is portrayed as the personification of uncleanness.

²The name of Nemrud son of Kush son of Ham is also written as “Nimrod”. He is described in the Old Testament, the Book of Genesis 10.8,9, and also in 1 Chronicles 1.10, as the “mighty hunter” due to his proverbial passion for hunting and haughtiness.

³His full name is Mujāhid ibn Jabr, Abū al-Hajjāj, a renown traditionist.

⁴The word “jinn”, according to a number of sources, describes the angels who were charged with safeguarding the *janna*, the garden, where Ādam

was more diligent or more knowledgeable than him¹. When he disobeyed Allāh, He cursed him and made him a Satan and named him Eblis.²

According to Ibn `Abbās and al-Mas`ūdi³, before his fall, Eblis was beautiful, ennobled and honored, a ruler over the lower heavens stratum and the earth, and one of the keepers of the *janna*, Garden. When he fell from grace, the Almighty cursed him, deformed him and cast him away from His mercy. All of this is documented in at-Tabari's *Tafsīr*. All Eblis's offspring, therefore, are deformed and ugly, as a matter of fact, they are the ugliest of all *jinns*. Had humans only seen them, they would never have listened to them nor obeyed them.

There is another theory as to how Eblis came to be mixed with the angels. It is recorded by Sayyid Ali ibn Tāwūs on p. 33 of his book *Sa`d al-Su`ood*. He says that in the Tablets of prophet Enoch (Idris), there is a record of how the jinns were multiplying and how corrupt they were; so, Eblis pleaded to Allāh to save him from them and to let him be in the company of the angels instead, and that Allāh granted him his wish.

Eblis's *kunya* is “Abū Murra”. When the Meccans wanted to assassinate the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ in a plot very well documented in history books, a man named al-Shaykh al-Najdi appeared to them. He, in fact, was none other than Eblis. Eblis had

stayed for a very short while. According to some accounts, Ādam did not stay there for more than four to six hours of our own calculating.

¹According to a number of sources, Satan is said to have been one of the teachers of the angels or, say, one of those who taught the angels and shared his knowledge with them.

²at-Tibrisi, *Mujma` al-Bayān fī Tafsīr al-Qur`ān* مجمع البيان في تفسير القرآن, Vol. 1, p. 191, where Sūrat al-Baqarah is explained.

³His full name is Sharīk ibn Abdullāh ibn Abū Namīr. He died in about 140 A.H./757 A.D.

simply taken the form of that man and come to the plotters with the suggestion to select one man from each Meccan tribe for the execution of their scheme so that Muhammed's blood would be lost among them and Banū Hāshim, his clansmen, would simply be unable to face all the other tribes on their own. The *kunya* of that Najdi was “Abū Murra”. Eblis, therefore, was named likewise.¹

The *jinns* eat and drink, marry, and have their own social system. Some of them live for thousands of years. The respite granted to Eblis is referred to in Qur’ānic verses such as these:

He (Eblis) said: Lord! Grant me a respite till the time when they are raised (for judgment). He (Allāh) said: So surely you are of the respited ones, till the period of the time made known. (15:36-38)

This respite means an exemption from having to die, one that lasts till Isrāfīl blows his trumpet for the second, not the first, time, with a time period of forty years between both blows.² Some scholars, however, are of the view that this respite will terminate at the “minor *qiyāma*”, that is, when Imām al-Mahdi (عج), the Awaited Savior, will reappear to put an end to all tyranny and mischief and to start a period of peace and tranquility never enjoyed before in the entire history of mankind. Naturally, such an enjoyment can never be complete without first putting an end to Eblis's mischief-making, and Allāh knows best.

What did Eblis do before committing his disobedience? Here is a tradition transmitted by Ibn `Abbās that sheds light on this subject:

The first to dwell on earth were the jinns. They caused corruption on it and shed blood, killing each other. Allāh then sent Eblis to them with an army of angels to annihilate them. They were a tribal group called jinns. Eblis and the angels with him caused a bloodbath among them and eventually banished them to the

¹al-Zamakhshari, *Rabee` al-Abrār*, Vol. 1, p. 323.

²at-Tibrisi, *Mujma` al-Bayān fī Tafsīr al-Qur`ān*, Vol. 2, p. 620.

islands in the oceans and to the mountains. His success caused him to be proud and haughty. He said, "I have done something nobody has ever done before." Allāh was aware of how Eblis felt, but the other angels who were in his company were not.¹

Jameel ibn Durraj once asked Imām "Abū Abdullāh" as-Sādiq عليه السلام about Eblis, whether or not he was an angel. "He was not an angel," said the Imām عليه السلام, "... He was from among the jinns, and he was in the company of the angels. The angels regarded him as one of them, but Allāh knew that he was not; so, when He ordered him to bow down to Ādam, he did what he did (i.e. refused and rebelled, thus falling down from Divine Grace)."²

Eblis knew exactly what he was made of; he knew that unlike the angels who were created of celestial light (*noor*), he, being a jinn, was created of fire. In the following Qur'ānic verse, he admits this fact:

He (Allāh) said: What hindered you from making obeisance when I commanded you to? He (Eblis) said: I am better than him: You have created me of fire, while him have You created of dust. (7:12)

The Almighty Himself, Creator of everyone and everything, tells us that Eblis was one of the jinns in many verses; here is one of them:

And when We said to the angels: Make obeisance to Ādam, they made obeisance save Eblis (did not). He was of the jinns, so he transgressed the commandment of his Lord. (18:50)

This verse has confused some people: On one hand, the Almighty says that He addressed the angels, and Eblis was among those addressed; so, will that not make him one of them? Not necessarily according to the way Arabs speak their language. On the other hand,

¹at-Tabari, *Tafsīr*, Vol. 1, p. 155, where Sūrat al-Baqarah (The Cow) is explained.

²al-'Ayyāshi, *Tafsīr*, Vol. 1, p. 34, where Sūrat al-Baqarah is explained.

the very same verse very clearly states that “he (Eblis) was of the jinns.”

Ali ibn Ibrahim narrates a tradition traced to Imām Muhammed al-Bāqir عليه السلام who quotes the Commander of the Faithful Imām Ali ibn Abū Tālib عليه السلام stating the following:

Seven thousand years passed since two species, the jinns and the *nisnas*, were on earth when Allāh the Exalted wanted to create a new creation. He unveiled the curtains of the heavens and said to the angels: “Look at the residents of the earth from among My creation; look at the jinns and the *nisnas*.” When they saw all the sins they were committing, they deemed them monstrous and said, “Lord! You are the Exalted One, the Omnipotent, and there are Your weakling creatures being sustained by Your sustenance, yet they live in disobedience to You while You do not seek revenge for Yourself.” When He heard the angels say so, He said to them, “I am going to create a successor to them on earth who will be the *hujja* (argument or proof) on earth.” The angels then said, “Glory to You! Are You going to permit one who will cause corruption to live on it just as the *jāns* (jinns) have done? Make such a successor one of us, for we do not disobey You; rather, we always Praise, Glorify, and Sanctify You.” The most Exalted One said, “I know what you do not; I wish to create a creation Myself and to bring out of his offspring prophets and righteous servants as well as guided Imāms whom I shall appoint as successors (of one another) over My creation and on My earth, and I shall purge My earth of the *nisnas* and exile the tyrant ones from among the disobedient jinns and let them reside in the air and throughout the earth, and I shall create a curtain between the jinns and My creation.” The angels then said, “Lord! Do whatever You please.” Allāh then distanced them from the ‘Arsh as far as the distance of five hundred years. They gathered around it and pointed at it, whereupon the Lord looked mercifully at them and set up for them the *ma`moor* House and said to them: “Circle around it and leave the ‘Arsh alone,” so they circled it, and it is the House entered every day by seventy thousand angels who never return to it. Allāh, therefore, made the *ma`moor* House for the repentance of the residents of the heavens, then He made the Ka`ba (in Mecca)

for the repentance of the residents of the earth.¹

Imām Ali ibn Abū Tālib عليه السلام has also said the following about Eblis as recorded in *Nahjul-Balāgha*:

Conceit overcame him, so he boasted of the superiority of his origin over Ādam, and he became fanatical in his bias to his own. The enemy of Allāh, therefore, is the leader of fanatics, the ancestor of the proud, the one who set the foundations of fanaticism. He argued with Allāh with regard to His destiny, wearing the outfit of arrogance, taking off the robe of humility. Do you not see how Allāh, because of his pride, humiliated him and because of his arrogance abased him? He made him in the life of this world condemned, and He prepared for him in the hereafter the fire. Had Allāh desired to create Ādam of light that snatches the eye-sight and dazzles the minds, and had He made his fragrance breathtaking, He would have done just that. And had He done so, all would have submitted to him, and it would have been easier for the angels to tolerate him. But Allāh, the most Exalted One, tries His creation with a little of what they do not know in order to thus test them, in order to rid them of pride, in order to distance them from conceit; so, you should learn a moral lesson from what Allāh did to Eblis! He nullified all the good things he had done for such a very long time and all his endeavor, for he had adored Allāh for six thousand years, and we do not know whether they were years of this life's calculation or of that of the hereafter, all because of a moment's touch of pride!

Ali ibn Ibrāhīm², the renown *mufasssir*, has said,

¹Ni'mat-Allāh al-Jazā'iri نعمة الله الجزائري, *An-Noor al-Mubeen fī Qasas al-Anbiya' wal Mursaleen* النور المبين في قصص الأنبياء والمرسلين, p. 49.

²He is “Abū Hassan” or “Abul-Hassan” Ali ibn Ibrāhīm ibn Hāshim al-Qummi, originally from Kūfa, Iraq, one of the greatest Shī'ite narrators in the science of the Holy Qur'ān in the third Hijri century (9th Century A.D.), one of the companions of Imām al-Hassan al-Askari and among the mentors of Dhiqatul-Islām Muhammed ibn Ya'qūb al-Kulayni. He distinguished himself for his vast knowledge, works and credibility. The *Tafsīr* book attributed to him was actually compiled by one of his students, namely “Abul-Fadl” al-Abbās ibn Muhammed ibn Qāsim ibn Hamzah, son

Pride is the very first transgression whereby Allāh was disobeyed by Eblis. Eblis said, “Lord! Exempt me from having to prostrate to Ādam, and I (in return) shall worship You in such a way no angel near to You nor a sent messenger ever will.” Allāh said, “I have no need for your worship. I wish to be adored as I wish, not as you.” But he refused to prostrate, whereupon Allāh said to him, “Get out of it, for you are accursed.” Eblis said, “How so, Lord, while You are the Just One Who never oppresses? This means You will not reward me for all the good deeds I have done.” Allāh said, “No, I will not, but ask me whatever you wish of the affairs of the life as

of Imām Mousa ibn Jaʿfar al-Kādhim عليه السلام. He is described by the mentor of “*Al-kunā wal Alqāb* الكنى و الألقاب” (surnames and titles), Shaikh Abbās al-Qummi, as “One of the most prominent and senior narrators in Qum city and the first to disseminate the narratives of the people of Kūfa (where he had originally been born) in Qum. In fact, he is regarded as Qum’s mentor and most prominent personality,” as we read on pp. 561-66 (first edition), Vol. 2, of *Al-Kunā wal Alqāb* of mentor al-Qummi. Mentor [genealogist] al-Najjāshi says that he is “A personality with whom one feels comfortable when transmitting reliable narratives. His faith is firm, his belief is sound. He transmitted many narratives which he had heard from Shī’a mentors,” as we read on p. 260 of al-Najjāshi’s *Rijāl* (posted on the Internet by the Library of Ahl al-Sunnah). Al-Tibrisi [author of *Mujmaʿul Bayān fī Tafṣīr al-Qurʾān*] says this about him: “Ali ibn Ibrāhīm al-Qummi is one of the greatest narrators of *ḥadīth* and a contemporary of Imām al-Hassan al-Askari, peace and blessings of Allāh with him. Many of his narratives are quoted by Muhammed ibn Yaʿqūb al-Kulayni,” as we read in his biography as posted on the Internet by the Ansār al-Hussain Network. From among the top Sunni scholars, Abū Dāwūd mentions him in his *Rijāl* saying the following:

علي بن إبراهيم بن هاشم القمي، أبو الحسن، ثقة في الحديث ثبت معتمد صحيح المذهب

“Ali ibn Ibrāhīm ibn Hāshim al-Qummi, Abū al-Hassan, is trustworthy in *ḥadīth*, confirmed, having a sound creed,” as is recorded on p. 141 of *Rijāl ibn Dāwūd al-Halabi* by Ahl al-Bayt Library. Among his works are: نور التشريع *Al-Nāsikh wal Mansookh*, الناسخ والمنسوخ, القرآن *Noor al-Qurʾān*, فضائل أمير المغازي *Al-Maghāzi*, التوحيد والشرك *Al-Tawhīd wal Shirk*, فادائل المؤمنين (ع) *Fadāil Ameerul-Muʾminīn*, اختيار القرآن *Ikhtiyār al-Qurʾān* and الأنبياء *Al-Anbiyāʾ*. His year of birth is unknown, but he was born in the 3rd Hijri century/the 9th century A.D. and died in 307 A.H./919 A.D.

rewards for your good deeds, and I shall grant it to you.” The first thing Eblis asked for was to remain alive till the Day of Judgment, and Allāh, the most Exalted One, granted him his request. Then he asked Him to give him authority over Ādam’s offspring, and He granted him this one, too. Then he said, “Let me be as close to them as the blood in their veins,” and Allāh said, “I grant you this one, too.” Then Eblis said, “No son is born for them except that two are born for my service, and I shall see them while they cannot see me, and I shall appear to them in any form I wish.” Allāh said, “I grant it to you. Then he said, “Lord! Grant me more!” Allāh said, “I have made for you and for your offspring a home in their [humans’] chests.” Eblis then said, “Lord! You have given me enough!” It was then that Eblis said, as both verse 82 of Sūrat Saad (38:82) and verse 17 of Sūrat al-Aʿrāf (7:17) tell us, “By Your Might, I will surely make them live an evil life, all of them, except Your servants from among them, the purified ones” (Qurʾān, 38:82-83), and, “As You have caused me to remain disappointed, I will certainly lie in ambush for them on Your Straight Path, then will I certainly come to them from before them, from behind them, from their right side, and from their left, and You shall not find most of them thankful” (Qurʾān, 7:16-17).¹

On rare occasions, however, Eblis offered sound advice to a select few, knowing that he could not fool them. He offered advice to Noah and Moses عليهما السلام:

When Noah عليه السلام invoked his Lord to condemn his people and to inflict retribution on them, Eblis came to him and said, “O Noah! Remember me in three situations, for I am closer during them to any of the servants of Allāh: Remember me when you are angry; remember me when you have to arbitrate between two contenders, and remember me when you sit with a woman and nobody else is with you.”² When Noah عليه السلام landed from the ark after the flood was over, Eblis came to him and said, “Nobody on the face of earth has done me a bigger favor than you! You invoked Allāh against these sinners, so you relieved me of them. Shall I, then, teach you two merits? Beware of envy, for it did to me what it did. And beware of

¹al-Qummi, *Tafsīr*, Vol. 1, pp. 42-43.

²Muhammed al-Ray-Shehri, *Mīzān al-Ḥikma*, Vol. 5, p. 94.

avarice, for it did to Ādam what it did.”¹

One of the pieces of advice Eblis offered prophet Moses once was the following: “Whenever you contemplate on offering charity, do it immediately, for whenever a servant of Allāh contemplates on paying something by way of charity, I, rather than any of my fellows, will keep him company in order to desist him from doing it.”²

Which people make Eblis's job easier? As we have learned from the above, angry people are on the top of the list, for when anger overtakes someone, the latter will be too weak to use commonsense, let alone wisdom. He will be rash and erratic. The Commander of the Faithful Imām Ali عليه السلام wrote a letter once to al-Hārith al-Hamadāni in which he said, “Beware of anger, for it is a great host of Eblis.” Besides anger, women play a major role in assisting Eblis in carrying out his schemes, I mean when people are overcome by their carnal desires for women who are not lawful for them. Eblis once said to Moses, “O Moses! You should never be in the company of a woman who is not permissible for you, for no man does so except that I, rather than any of my fellows, will keep him company.”³

Ādam

Now let us discuss our father Ādam and his descendants, having elaborated on other beings. Ādam's offspring are called *nās*; a human is called *insān*; so, where have these words come from and what do they connote?

The answer lies in verse 115 of Sūrat Taha which states: “And surely We gave a commandment to Ādam before, but he *forgot*, and We did not find in him any determination” (Qur’ān, 20:115). Due to this

¹*Ibid.*, p. 94.

²*Ibid.*

³*Ibid.*, p. 96.

forgetfulness, Ādam's offspring are referred to as the people who are afflicted with *nisyān*, forgetfulness, hence the word *nās*. A poet once said, “Had it not been for much forgetfulness, man would not have been called *insān*.”

رجحه أبو تمام - وهو من هو في معرفة كلام العرب - وذلك في قوله:

لا تنسين تلك العهود وإنما ***** سميت إنسانا لأنك ناسي

This meaning is supported by the renown Abbāsīd era Arab poet Abū Tammām (788 – 845 A.D.), namely Habīb ibn Aws, who is quite knowledgeable of the Arab tongue, composing this line of poetry in this meaning:

*Do not forget these promises because
You were called human because you forget.*

According to Ibn Ishāq¹, forty years passed since Allāh created Ādam's body. After that, He blew the soul into him. During that period, his body hardened till it became like a pot of baked clay without fire ever touching it.² It is to this hardened body that Allāh refers in this verse:

He created man from dry clay like earthen vessels. (55:14)

The next verse, 55:15, refers to His creation of the jinns: “And He created the jinns of a flame of (smokeless) fire.”

When Allāh Almighty decided to create Ādam, He inspired to the earth, “I shall create of you a creation among whose progeny there will be some who will obey Me and some who will not. So I shall permit whoever obeys Me to enter Paradise, and whoever disobeys

¹His name is Muḥammed ibn Ishāq. He was born in Medīna and is regarded as one of the earliest Arab historians. He resided in Baghdad where he died in 151 A.H./768 A.D.

²al-Zamakhshari, *Rabee` al-Abrār*, Vol. 1, p. 327.

me I shall lodge into Hell.” Then He sent Gabriel to planet earth to bring Him a handful of its soil. When Gabriel came to it to take a handful of its soil, the earth said, “I seek refuge with Allāh Who has sent you to take of me something of which the fire shall have a portion.” So Gabriel went back to his Lord without taking anything. Allāh Almighty sent the angel of death, Israēl. He came to the earth, and it likewise sought refuge with Allāh against his taking anything of it, so he said to it, “And I, too, seek refuge with Allāh against disobeying Him in anything.” So he took a handful of its soil from its four corners, from its uppermost and best quality soil, from its salty soil, from its mud, from its red clay, from its black soil, from its white soil, from its smooth soil and from its rugged terrain. Thus did the offspring of Ādam come to have from among them those who are good and those who are bad, those who are righteous, and those who are rebellious, those who are beautiful, and those who are ugly. And this is why their shapes and complexions differ. Allāh Almighty has said, “And one of His signs is the creation of the heavens and the earth and the diversity of your tongues and colors; most surely there are signs in this for those who know” (Qur’ān, 30:22).

The angel of death ascended after taking that handful of earth. Allāh Almighty ordered him to make it moist, then to let it ferment. He kneaded it with bitter water, sweet water, and salty water till it became moist, muddy, then he let it ferment. This is why humans’ manners are so diverse. Then He ordered Gabriel, peace with him, to bring him the white handful that is in the heart of the earth the glow and illumination of which was dazzling in order to create of it Muhammed, the Prophet and Messenger of Allāh ﷺ and the very best of His creation, from the early generations to the last. Accompanied by the esteemed archangels of Paradise and by the angels of the Highest Eminence, Gabriel descended and took hold of a handful of the earth from the place where now the grave of the Prophet ﷺ stands. At that time, it was purely white, and it was kneaded in the honoring water and treated till it became like a white pearl. Then it was dipped into all the rivers of Paradise. When it was taken out, the Almighty cast a look at that pure pearl and it shook out of awe of the Almighty, and as many as one hundred and twenty-

four thousand drops came out of it. The Almighty created of those drops all His prophets, and their light out of the light of Muhammed ﷺ. Then it was taken to tour the heavens and the earth, so the angels came to know Muhammed ﷺ by name even before knowing Ādam. After that, it was kneaded into Ādam's mold. Then it was left for forty years till it became a moist piece of mud. Then it was left for forty more years till it became like baked clay, the dry clay which would make a sound if beaten by hand. Then He made it like a body and it was placed on the pathway of the angels descending from heavens or ascending thereto. This is the meaning of the verse saying, "Has there not been over man come a long period of time when he was nothing (not even) mentioned?" (Qur'ān, 76:1). Ibn 'Abbās has said that by "man" it is meant Ādam, and the "long period of time" was forty years during which Ādam was a body placed at one of the gates of Paradise.

According to at-Tirmidhi's *Ṣaḥīḥ*, where a chain of narrators are quoted, the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ had said the following in his explanation of the first verses of *Sūrat al-Baqarah* (The Cow, Chapter 2 of the Holy Qur'ān): "Allāh created Ādam out of a handful of earth which contained specimens of what all the earth has, of its smooth plains, rocky mountains, black, white, and red clay, so [Ādam's] children came according to the colors of the earth." Abdullāh ibn Salām¹ asked the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ how

¹He is Abdullāh ibn Salām ibn al-Hārith, originally from the Banū Qainuqa' Jews, then he embraced Islam when the Prophet ﷺ migrated to Medīna. Prophet Muhammed ﷺ changed his name from al-Haseen الحسین to Abdullāh. Vol. 3 (1998 edition) of Ibn al-Athīr's *Usd al-Ghāba* details his biography and quotes him as saying that when the Prophet came to Medīna, "I came out to look as did many curious others. When I looked at his [Prophet's] face, I realized that it was not the face of a liar. The first I heard him say was this:

أفشوا السلام، و أطعموا الطعام، و صلوا الأرحام، و صلوا بالليل و الناس نيام، تدخلوا الجنة
بسلام

‘Disseminate the greeting of peace, feed others, maintain your ties with your kindsolk, offer prayers during the night while people are asleep, and

Allāh created Ādam. The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said, “Ādam's head and forehead were created from the soil of the Ka'ba, his chest and back from the soil of Jerusalem, his thighs from Yemen's soil, his legs from Egypt's soil, his feet from the soil of Hijaz, his right hand from the east of the earth, and his left hand from the west of the earth. Then He placed him on the gate of Paradise. Whenever a group of angels passed by him, they were dazzled by the beauty of his form and by his height. They had never seen anything like that or even close. Eblis passed by him and saw him, so he asked, 'For what purpose have you been created?' Then he struck him, but he noticed that it was hollow, so he entered inside him from his mouth and came out of his other end. Then he said to the angels, 'This is a hollow creature which cannot stand, nor can it keep itself together.' Then he asked the angels, 'Suppose this thing is given preference over you, what would you then do?' They said, 'We will obey our Lord's command in his regard.' Eblis then said to himself, 'By Allāh! If this thing is preferred over me, I will protest, but if I am preferred over it, I shall annihilate it.' To this does the Almighty refer in the verse saying, '... and I know what you manifest and what you hide'” (Qur'ān, 2:33).

Scholars have said that when Allāh wanted to breathe the soul into Ādam, He ordered the soul to enter through his mouth, whereupon the soul said, “It is an entrance deep and dark.” He repeated His order, and it repeated the same answer. The same happened a third time. In the fourth time, He said, “Enter into it against your wish, and come out of it likewise.” Having being thus ordered, the soul entered into him through his mouth. Once the soul was breathed into him, the first place it entered was his brain, and it remained in it the equivalent of two hundred years of our counting. Then it descended to his eyes. The wisdom in it is that Allāh Almighty wanted to show Ādam how his own creation started, and what his origin was, so that once blessings are heaped on him, he would not be proud or conceited. Then it descended to his nostrils, and he sneezed. Once he

you will then enter Paradise in peace.”” This is narrated by imām Aḥmed [ibn Ḥanbal] on p. 450, Vol. 5 of his *Musnad* from Yaḥya ibn Sa'īd from Awf from Zurārah.

finished sneezing, the soul descended to his mouth and tongue, so Allāh taught him to say, *Alḥamdu lillahi rabbil `ālamīn*, i.e. praise to Allāh, Lord of the worlds. This is the second verse of the first chapter, the Fātiḥa, the Opening of the Holy Qur'ān. That was the first statement uttered by Ādam, whereupon his Lord responded with: *Yarḥamuka rabbuka ya Ādam; lil raḥmati khalaqtuka*

يرحمك ربك يا آدم، للرحمة خلقتك

“Your Lord is merciful unto you, O Ādam; for the sake of effecting mercy have I created you.” Allāh then said, “O Ādam! You have praised Me! By My Honor and Dignity, had it not been for two of My servants whom I will create at the end of time, I would not have created you at all.” Ādam said, “O Lord! By their status with You, what are their names? The Almighty said, “O Ādam! Look in the direction of the `Arsh!” There, Ādam saw two rays of light. The first ray read: “There is no god except Allāh! Muhammed is the prophet of mercy; Ali is the key to Paradise.” The second line read: “I have taken on Myself to be Merciful on all those who accept their *wilāya* and to torment whoever antagonizes them.”¹

Allāh has said that He is more swift to be merciful than to be wrathful. Then the soul descended to his chest and rib cartilage, so he tried to stand up but he could not. This is the interpretation of the verse saying, “... And man is ever hasty” (Qur'ān, 17:11), and also, “Man is created of haste” (Qur'ān, 21:36). When the soul reached his stomach, he craved food, and that was the first need Ādam felt.

According to some accounts, when his Lord said to him, “Your Lord is merciful unto you, O Ādam,” Ādam stretched his hand and placed it on his head and said, “Oh!” Allāh asked him what was wrong with him, so he said, “I have committed a sin...” He asked him how he came to know that. Ādam answered, “I know it because mercy is for the sinners.” It became customary for everyone of his descendants to put his hand on his head when afflicted by a calamity or when

¹al-Rāwandi, *Qaṣaṣ al-Anbiyā'*, p. 52.

troubled. Then the soul spread to all parts of his body, and he became flesh, blood, bones, veins and muscles. Then Allāh Almighty outfitted him with nails, and he started becoming more and more beautiful every day. When he committed his sin, his outfit was changed for a skin, and the only remaining souvenirs of his days of glory were his nails so that he would remember how his life started and not forget.

When Allāh completed Ādam's creation and breathed the soul into him, He decorated him with ornaments and outfits from Paradise. Out of his joints, light started emanating like the rays of the sun, or like the glow of our Prophet Muhammed ﷺ. Then He had him conveyed on the angels' shoulders, instructing the angels thus: "Take him for a tour of My heavens so that he may see their wonders and what they contain, and his conviction (īmān ایمان) may increase." The angels said, "Yes, here we are, ever listening to You, Lord, and always obeying!" The angels escorted him on his tour of the heavens for a hundred years till he became familiar with their wonders and miracles. Among his escorting angels were both arch-angels Gabriel and Michael. Whenever he passed by a group of angels he said, *Assalamo alaikom yā malā'ikat-Allāh*, that is, "Peace with you, O angels of Allāh!" They responded by saying, *Wa alaikomis salām wa raḥmatullahi wa barakātuh*, i.e. "Peace with you, too, and the mercy of Allāh and His blessings." Allāh Almighty said to him, "O Ādam! This is the method of your greeting and the greeting of the believers from among your descendants to one another from now till the Day of Judgment."¹

Then Allāh Almighty taught Ādam the names of everything. Scholars differed regarding those names. Ar-Rabī' ibn Anas² has

¹ al-Jaza'iri, p. 64, quoting p. 126, Vol. 1, of *Ilal al-Sharā'i*.

² According to Vol. 6 of *Siyar A'lām an-Nubalā'* سير أعلام النبلاء of al-Ḥāfiẓ al-Dhahbi, where his biography is detailed, Ar-Rabī' ibn Anas ibn Ziyād al-Bakri al-Khurāsāni, of Merv, originally from Basra, learned *ḥadīth* from Anas ibn Mālik and Abū al-Aliyā ar-Riyāḥi, and he is cited by Sulaymān at-Taymi, al-A'mash, al-Hussain ibn Wāqid, Abū Ja'far ar-Rāzi, Abdul-Azīz ibn Muslim, Ibn al-Mubārak and others. He was the most prominent

said that they are the names of all the angels. Abd ar-Rahmān ibn Zayd ibn Aslam¹ has said that they are the names of his descendants. Ibn `Abbās and most others have said that He taught him the names of everything including the names of bowls small and big. Imām al-Hassan al-`Askari عليه السلام, however, has stated the following in this regard:

When Allāh Almighty created Ādam, He taught him the names of everything, then He displayed them before the angels. He displayed the spirits of Muhammed ﷺ, Ali, Fātima, al-Hassan, and al-Hussain عليه السلام, looking as five apparitions in the loins of Ādam. Their lights illuminated the depths of the heavens, the curtains, the *jannas*, the Kursi, and the `Arsh. Allāh, therefore, ordered the angels to prostrate to Ādam as a sign of respect, for He had honored him by making him the bearer of those apparitions whose light overwhelmed the horizons. They all prostrated with the exception of Eblis who refused to humble himself to our lights, we, Ahl al-Bayt عليه السلام, while all the angels did.²

The order Allāh gave to the angels is referred to in this verse: “So when I have made him complete and breathed into him of My spirit, fall down making obeisance to him” (Qur’ān, 15:29). Most scholars are of the opinion that that order was given particularly to the angels who were in the company of Eblis rather than the rest of them, and

scholar of Merv of his time. Abū Ḥātim describes him as being “truthful”, and Abū Dāwūd refers to his being jailed in Merv for thirty years. His *ḥadīth* is cited in the four books of Sunan السنن الأربعة. His date of birth is unknown, but he died in 139 A.H./756 A.D.

¹Abdur-Rahmān ibn Zayd ibn Aslam al-`Amri al-Madani, a brother of Usāmah and Abdullāh, was a scholar of the Holy Qur’ān in which he wrote an exegesis book and another in الناسخ والمنسوخ what abrogates and what is abrogated of the verses of the Holy Qur’ān. He quoted *ḥadīth* from his father, and he is quoted by Asbagh ibn al-Faraj, Qutaybah, Hishām ibn Ammār and others. His date of birth is unknown, but he died in 182 A.H./798 A.D.

²al-Jaza'iri, *An-Noor al-Mubeen*, p. 66.

that it was a token of respect and greeting, neither of supplication nor of adoration. When He ordered them to prostrate, they all prostrated except Eblis who “refused to be with those who made obeisance” (Qur’ān, 15:31), thus becoming haughty and a disbeliever.

Abū Abdullāh, Imām Ja`far as-Sādiq عليه السلام, has said,

Allāh Almighty created the souls two thousand years before creating their bodies, making their most supreme and honored of them those of Muhammed, Ali, Fātima, al-Hassan, al-Hussain, and the Imāms after them, blessings of Allāh with them all. Then He displayed them to the heavens, the earth and the mountains, and their light overwhelmed all of these. Allāh, Blessed and Exalted is His Name, said to the heavens, earth and mountains, “These are My *hujaj* (arguments) against My creation. For them and for those who follow them did I create My Paradise, and to those who differ from them and who antagonize them did I create My fire. So, whoever assumes their status with Me and their degree of greatness, I shall torment him with a torment the like of which I shall not torment anyone else of the worlds. And whoever submits to their *wilāya* and never shrinks from their status with Me, I shall place him with them in My gardens. Their *wilāya* is a trust among My creation. Which of you, then, shall bear it in all its weight and claim it for himself? The heavens, the earth and the mountains refused to bear it and were fearful thereof. They were fearful of claiming their status or even be hopeful of achieving their greatness with their Lord. But when Allāh, the most Exalted and Honored One, permitted Ādam and his wife to reside in Paradise, He said to them, “Eat of it with enjoyment wherever you wish, and do not come near this tree, for you will then be among the wrongdoers.” But they looked and saw the status reserved for Muhammed عليه السلام, Ali, Fātima, al-Hassan, al-Hussain and the Imāms after them عليه السلام and found it occupying the best of all places in Paradise. They, therefore, said, “Lord! For whom have You reserved this status?” Allāh, Glory and Exaltation are His, said, “Raise your heads and look at the leg of the ‘Arsh.” Having raised their heads and looked there, they found the names of Muhammed عليه السلام, Ali, Fātima, al-Hassan, al-Hussain and the Imāms after them عليه السلام, blessings of Allāh with them, inscribed on the leg of the

`Arsh. They both said, "Lord! How great is this status with You?" He said, "Had it not been for them, I would not have created you both; beware of looking at them enviously or wishing to reach their status with Me, for you will then enter into disobedience to Me and transgress the limits with Me." But Satan, though, insinuated to them and swore to them that he was only giving them an advice, convincing them in the end to covet their status. They, therefore, looked enviously at them, thus failing the test. They ate of the forbidden fruit. Once they ate of it, all the clothes and ornaments they were wearing fell down, leaving them naked. He (Allāh) called out to them, "Did I not forbid you from that tree and tell you that Satan is your open enemy?" They said, "Lord! We have wronged our own selves, and if You do not forgive us and have mercy on us, we will surely be among the losers." He said, "Get away from nearness to Me, for nobody comes near to Me in My Paradise if he disobeys Me." They descended from that status and started to rely on their own selves to stay alive. When Allāh, the Honored and the Great One, wanted to accept their repentance, Gabriel came to them and said, "You wronged your own selves by desiring to acquire a status reserved for someone better than both of you. Your penalty is to descend from your high status with Allāh, the Honored and the Great One, to His earth. You should plead to your Lord by the status reserved with Him for the names which you saw inscribed on the leg of the `Arsh to accept your repentance." They, therefore, said, "Lord! We plead to You by the dearest ones to You, Muhammed, Ali, Fātima, al-Hassan, al-Hussain and the Imāms ﷺ to accept our repentance and to have mercy on us." Allāh accepted their repentance. Since then, prophets of Allāh have been safeguarding this trust and informing their *waṣīs* and those faithful to them from among their nations not to accept to bear it, and to fear lest they should claim it for themselves... The origin of all oppression is man, hence the statement of Allāh, the Honored and the Great One, "Surely We offered the trust to the heavens, the earth and the mountains, but they refused to bear it and feared it, but man bore it; surely he is unjust, ignorant" (Qur'ān, 33:72).¹

¹al-Shaikh as-Sadūq, *Ma`āni al-Akḥbār*, p. 108 (second edition, Beirut, Lebanon, 1990).

It is in reference to such a plea by Ādam to his Lord that verse 37 of Sūrat al-Baqarah refers: “Then Ādam received (some) words from his Lord, so He turned to him mercifully; surely He is Oft-returning (to mercy), the most Merciful” (Qur’ān, 2:37).

The subject of how Ādam pleaded to Allāh to accept his repentance is truly inspiring. Without such repentance, there can be no hope for Paradise. Imām al-Hassan ibn Ali ibn Abū Tālib عليه السلام narrates an incident recorded in *‘Ilal al-Sharā’i’* and also in *Al-Āmālī* and is briefly quoted in *An-Noor al-Mubeen* as follows:

A group of Jews came once to the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ and asked him about a number of issues. Among them was this one: “Tell us about the five prayer periods appointed for your nation during the day and the night.” The Prophet ﷺ explained to them till he said, “... as for the *‘aṣr* (afternoon) prayers, it is the time during which Ādam ate of the (forbidden) fruit, so Allāh expelled him from Paradise. Then Allāh ordered Ādam's offspring to keep performing this prayer till the Day of Judgment, and He chose it specifically for my nation, for it is the one loved most by Allāh, the Exalted and the Almighty, and He commanded me to uphold it and honor it... As regarding the *maghrib* (sunset) prayers, it is the time during which Allāh accepted Ādam's repentance... Ādam offered three *rek`āt* (for the sunset prayers): one *rek`a* for his sin, another for Eve's sin, and the third for the acceptance of his repentance. Allāh, the Exalted and the Almighty, mandated these *rek`āt* on my nation.” They then said, “Tell us now why you have to make ablution to four places of the body which are the most clean of all bodily parts.” The Prophet ﷺ said, “When Satan insinuated to Ādam, and when Ādam came near the tree and looked at it, his face lost its glow. Then he stood up, and his feet were the first to walk towards committing a sin, then he took with his hand (of its fruit), touched then ate of it. All the ornaments and garments with which Allāh had decorated his body disappeared. Then Ādam wept, putting his hand on his head. When Allāh accepted his repentance, He mandated on him and on his offspring to wash these four places. And He ordered him to wash his face on account of his looking at the forbidden tree. He ordered him to wash the arms to the elbows on account of what he took of it. And He ordered him to wipe the feet on account of his walking to the

place where he committed his sin.” Then the Jews said to the Prophet ﷺ, “Tell us why did Allāh require your nation to fast during daytime for thirty days, whereas He had ordered Ādam to fast a longer period than that?” The Prophet said, “When Ādam ate of the (forbidden) fruit, what he ate remained in his stomach for thirty days; so, Allāh required Ādam's offspring to fast for thirty days in order to suffer hunger and thirst. What they eat (during the night) is out of the Favor of Allāh, the Exalted and the Sublime, unto them.”¹

Notice how Imām al-Hassan عليه السلام in the quotation above referred to Ādam losing all the clothes and ornaments whereby Allāh had decorated him after his creation. It is to this loss of clothes, the nudity, and to his and his wife's attempt to cover it that Allāh refers in the Holy Qur’ān saying, “... And they both began to cover themselves with the leaves of the garden” (Qur’ān, 7:22). When Ādam came out of the garden, archangel Gabriel came to him and said, “O Ādam! Did not Allāh create you with His own hands and permit you to reside in Paradise? Did He not permit you to enjoy all of it and clearly prohibit you from eating of that tree, yet you ate of it and thus disobeyed Allāh?” Ādam said, “But Eblis swore by Allāh to me that he was only offering me an advice, and I never thought that any of Allāh's creation can ever swear by Allāh to a lie.”² Imām Muhammed al-Bāqir عليه السلام has said, “Had Ādam not sinned, no believer would have ever sinned. And had Allāh, the most Exalted and the Almighty, not accepted Ādam's repentance, He would not have accepted it from any other sinner.”³

Could one interpret this incident of Adam and Eve falling from Divine grace as a moral lesson to mankind? Of course he can. Had Adam and Eve not fallen from Divine grace, neither I nor you nor

¹as-Sadūq, *Al-Āmālī*, pp. 159-162.

²al-Qummi, *Tafsīr*, Vol. 1, p. 225.

³al-Shaikh as-Sadūq, *ʿIlal al-Sharāʿiʿ*, Vol. 1, p. 105 (first edition, 1408 A.H./1988 A.D.).

anyone else would have populated this planet. After all, did the Almighty not create Earth so it would be populated by humans?

Where was the Garden: in Heaven or on Earth?

Another question to tackle is: “Where was Paradise from which Ādam was dismissed? Was it in heaven, or was it on earth?” In my view, this should be one of the easiest questions to answer despite the great controversy surrounding it. Ādam was created of earth; he was an earthling. So, it is only natural that he could live on earth; in it he was buried, and from it will he be resurrected, and on it will he be tried on the Day of Judgment. Imām Jaʿfar as-Sādiq عليه السلام was asked once the same question. He said, “It was one of the gardens of this world; the sun and the moon shone over it. Had it been one of the *jannāt* of eternity, he would never have been dismissed from it.”¹ Had it been the abode of eternity, it would have been eternal, it would not have had room for Eblis or any devil like him. Nobody would have committed any sin in it or told a lie; there is no room in it for sinning or sinners, lying or liars.

Another question raised is about how long Ādam remained in it. Some scholars say that he stayed in it for hundreds of years. There is nothing in the Holy Qurʾān that supports this claim which is based on traditions the authenticity of which is very difficult to verify.

Al-ʿAyyāshi quotes Abdullāh ibn Sinān² as saying, “Abū Abdullāh

¹al-ʿAyyāshi, *ʿIlal al-Sharaʿi*, Vol. 2, p. 325.

²His name is Abdullāh ibn Sinān ibn Tareef, a man who served Banū Hāshim and kept Imāms al-Bāqir, as-Sādiq and al-Kādhim عليه السلام company. His biography is detailed by al-Najjāshi, at-Tūsi, al-Hilli and Ibn Dāwūd. Mentor and genealogist al-Najjāshi says this about him in his *Rijāl* book: “He is a trustworthy man of Kūfā, one of our fellows, a highly dignified man whom nobody can criticize about anything,” as is stated on p. 214 of the said reference. On p. 710, Vol. 2 of *Ikhtiyār Maʿrifat ar-Rijāl* of mentor at-Tūsi, the latter says about him the following: “He was, may Allāh have mercy on him, one of those who were trusted by Imām Abū Abdullāh (as-Sādiq عليه السلام).” Allāma al-Hilli says this about him on p. 192 of his book *Khulāsat al-Aqwāl*: “A trustworthy man from among our fellows,

(Imām Jaʿfar as-Sādiq عليه السلام) was asked in my presence about how long Ādam and his wife remained in Paradise before they were dismissed from it. The Imām عليه السلام said, 'Allāh, Blessed and Glorified is His Name, blew of His spirit into Ādam after the time of the *zawāl* (shortly before noon) on a Friday. Then He created his wife then ordered His angels to prostrate to him. He resided in it (Paradise) that same day. By Allāh! He did not stay in it except for six hours of that same day before he disobeyed Allāh Who dismissed both of them from it after sunset. They were not even permitted to stay that night there. In the morning, they noticed their nakedness. Their Lord said to them, 'Did I not prohibit you from eating of that tree?' Ādam felt very ashamed. He prostrated and said, 'Lord! We have both done our souls injustice, and we have admitted our sins, so do forgive us.' Allāh said to them, 'Get out of it to My earth, for no disobedient servant of Mine can be near Me in My Paradise, nor can he be in My heaven.'"¹

a highly dignified man who is not charged of anything.” In his *Rijāl* book, Ibn Dāwūd al-Hilli describes him as a “trustworthy, highly dignified, above being charged,” as is stated on p. 120 of the said reference. Abdullāh ibn Sinān wrote traditions citing Imāms as-Sādiq and al-Kādhim عليه السلام as well as Abū Jarīr al-Qummi, Abdullāh ibn Abū Yaʿfour, Abū Hamzah al-Thumālī, Abul-Hassan al-Ahmasi, his own father Sinān, Abān ibn Taghlib, Ishāq ibn Ammār, Thareeh al-Muhāribi, Muhammed ibn Muslim and others. In books of *isnād*, as many as 1,146 of his traditions are cited. He wrote two books about prayers and another about various permissible and prohibitive things. Sources do not record his date of birth or death, but it is certain that he was one of the prominent scholars of the second Hijri century (the 8th century A.D.).

¹al-ʿAyyāshi, *Tafsīr*, Vol. 2, p. 10, where Sūrat al-Aʿrāf is explained. Notice also the distinction the Almighty makes between “Paradise” and “heaven”. The first is the earthly garden from which Ādam was dismissed. The second is the eternal abode where the righteous will be lodged to live forever, our father Ādam and all the good ones from among his offspring. “Paradise”, *firdaws*, is not an Arabic word. Some say it is Babylonian, and some say it is Persian.

Creation of Eve

There have been various views (as is always the case) with regard to the creation of Eve. There are two opinions as to how she was created. One of them is the most widely (but not necessarily accurate) concept of her creation from Ādam's rib. This theory has no support at all in the Holy Qur'ān; rather, it crept into the Islamic literature through the Christians and Jews with whom a number of early Muslim scholars came into contact.

Eve was Created from Ādam's Rib (or Was She?!)

Some scholars of exegesis have said that when Allāh Almighty permitted Ādam to live in Paradise, he used to walk in it alone, since he had nobody to keep him company or to entertain him. One day, Allāh Almighty caused him to sleep. Allāh took one of Ādam's left side ribs called *al-quṣairi*, the short rib, and created Eve from it without making Ādam feel it or suffer any pain. Had Ādam been hurt in the process, men would never have had any love for women. Then He outfitted her with the attires of Paradise and decorated her with all sorts of ornaments, then He seated her at his head. When Ādam woke up, he saw her sitting at his head. In order to test him, the angels asked him, "What is this, O Ādam?!" He said, "Woman." They asked him, "What is her name?" He said, "*Hawwā*", Eve." They said, "Yes, you have spoken the truth." Then they asked him, "Why is she called *Hawwā*?" He said, "She is named so because she was created of something *ḥayy*, live." They asked him, "Why did Allāh create her?" He said, "He created her so that she may incline to me and I to her." This is the meaning of the verse, "He it is Who created you from a single being and of the same (kind) did He make his mate so that he may incline to her" (Qur'ān, 7:189).

A controversial tradition quotes the Prophet as having said, "Woman was created of a crooked rib; so, if you try to straighten her, you will break her, but if you leave her, you will enjoy her despite her crookedness." According to some accounts, when Ādam saw Eve, he stretched his hand to her, whereupon the angels said, "O Ādam! *Meh* [wait]! He said, "Why should I, since Allāh has created her for me?!" The angels said, "Not before you pay her *Meh-r* (dower)." He asked them, "And what is her dower?" They said, "You have to

bless Muhammed and the progeny of Muhammed ﷺ thrice.” He said, “Who is Muhammed?” They said, “The last prophet among your descendants. Had it not been for him, you yourself would not have been created at all.”

But what purpose is served if the Almighty were to create Eve from one of Ādam's ribs? Would that not make Ādam the husband of a part of his own body?! And who says that a rib has all the ingredients needed to form a living being?! A bone is mostly calcium... Neither logic nor science supports the theory of Eve being created from a bone, from calcium. Also, to say that Eve was created from a crooked rib is to attribute crookedness to women, our mothers, sisters, and wives. This reflects a rotten male chauvinistic attitude which is far from being fair, while Allāh is fair to everyone, male and female. This proves to you that not all traditions are accurate, authentic, especially if they are reported by male chauvinistic..... narrators! Another point to make here is this: In the beginning of this section, Ādam supposedly tells the angels about Eve, who she is and for whom she is created, but he does not know who Muhammed is! Is this possible?! We think this is the fabrication of someone's imagination, and Allāh knows best. We request our Muslim brothers to open their eyes and minds before taking for granted any “tradition” that comes their way. Nobody should be that blind. He may be naïve but not blind.

Eve Was Not Created from Ādam's Rib

The other view, which seems to be more logical and comes from a much, much more reliable source, is stated in references like al-ʿAyyāshi's *Tafsīr* and al-Majlisi's *Bihār al-Anwār*, and in other reliable sources. Al-ʿAyyāshi quotes ʿAmr ibn al-Miqdām citing his father saying, “I asked Abū Jaʿfar (Imām Muhammed al-Bāqir عليه السلام): ‘What did Allāh create Eve from?’ ‘What do people say she was created from?’ asked the Imām عليه السلام in turn. ‘They say that Allāh created her from one of Ādam's ribs,’ said I. The Imām عليه السلام said, ‘They have surely lied.., as if Allāh could not create her from anything other than adam’s rib!’ I said, ‘May I be your sacrifice, O son of the Messenger of Allāh! What did He create her from?’ He informed me, quoting his fathers, that the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ

had said, 'Allāh, Blessed and Exalted is His Name, took hold of a handful of mud and mixed it with His right hand (and both His hands are right¹), so He created Ādam from it. There was a remnant of that mud (or mold) from which He created Eve.² Since Allāh was able to create Ādam from dust, He likewise was able to create Eve of the same.

Ādam Marries Eve

The romantic story of how Ādam and Eve got married is told by none other than Imām Ja'far as-Sādiq عليه السلام who never told a lie as long as he lived, thus earning his title "as-Sādiq" which means "the truthful one". It is here narrated as recorded in al-'Ayyāshi's book *Ilal al-Sharā'i'*:

As soon as Ādam saw Eve, he found her a very beautiful being, someone who looked like but not similar to him. She spoke to him, and he asked her, "Who are you?" "A being created by Allāh as you can see," said she. Ādam then addressed his Lord saying, "Lord! Who is this beautiful being whose presence and looking at whom has delighted me?" Allāh said, "She is My bondmaid Eve. Would you like her to be in your company so she would entertain you, talk to you and obey you?" Ādam said, "O yes, Lord! And I shall surely thank You for that and praise You as long as I live!" Allāh said, "Then ask for her hand from Me, and she may also be good for satisfying your desire." It was then that Allāh cast into Ādam the sexual desire. Before then, all he had was knowledge. Said Ādam, "Lord! I do ask You to marry me to her, but what is Your pleasure in this regard?" Allāh said, "I shall be pleased with you if you would teach her the injunctions of My creed." Ādam said, "You have the right to demand that of me, O Lord, and I shall do so if it pleases You." The most Exalted and Sublime One then

¹Allāh has neither hands nor feet. Reference to His hands made in the Holy Qur'ān is a figure of speech in order to bring a meaning closer to our comprehension. Unfortunately, some Muslims, including some narrators of hadīth, particularly one Abū Hurayra, as you will come to know in Volume Two of this book, take such verses literally.

²al-'Ayyāshi, *Tafsīr*, Vol. 1, p. 216, where Sūrat an-Nisā' is explained.

said, “Yes, it will please Me if you do so, and I have married you to one another, so join her to yourself.” It was then that Ādam asked Eve to come near him. “Come,” said Ādam, but Eve did not. “Rather, you should come to me.” Ādam was puzzled and did not know exactly what to do. The Almighty interfered and ordered him to stand up and go to Eve. Had he not done so, women would have sought men for themselves in marriage¹. Such is the story of Eve, blessings of Allāh with her.²

The First Human Family

One of the most pressing questions, in as far as Ādam and Eve are concerned, is this: “How was the first human family established?” Eve gave birth to sons and daughters who were brothers and sisters of one another. Did a brother marry his sister? If the answer is negative, then how else did they multiply?

We have to underscore here the sublime, pristine and irrefutable fact that what Allāh makes permissible stays so from the beginning of His creation and till the end of time; there is neither alteration nor adulteration to Allāh's canons. There is no truly revealed religion in the history of mankind that permits a brother to marry his sister. Ādam ﷺ was a messenger of Allāh to mankind, a prophet, and he conveyed the same truth conveyed by all other prophets and messengers who descended from his loins, each and every one of them, preaching the same commandments of our Lord and Creator. The Almighty does not have two faces, nor does he speak to one nation differently from that to the other. His truth is one and the same. People played havoc with their creeds, neglecting to safeguard

¹Islam permits women to propose to men, but they have to do it through a third party, maintaining their dignity and self-respect. They have to be modest about it. Remember that it was Khadīja daughter of Khuwaylid رضى الله عنها who proposed to Prophet Muhammed ﷺ. And the daughter of Prophet Shu'ayb رضى الله عنه indirectly (through her father) proposed to marry Prophet Moses رضى الله عنه, which she did. To fall in love is not a sin although this is not what my parents told me and the rest of the family!

²al-'Ayyāshi, *Ilal al-Sharā'i'*, Vol. 1, p. 29.

them, deliberately altering them in order to satisfy their own whims and desires or to serve their interests or to make money as hired fabricators of *ḥadīth*. This is why there are so many differences among the world's religions. All these differences are manmade; Allāh, God, Yaweh, الله, Dieu, Gott, θεός, Dio, ལྷ, ཇེའུ་ཇེའུའུ, Būh, Gud, Diyos, Jumala, भगवान्, Isten, Guð, Tuhan, Dia, 神, 하나님, Dia, zot, Bondye, خداوند, Bóg, deus, dumnezeu, 6or, boh, Dios, Mungu, Gud, கலவுள், ཏང, พระเจ้า, Tanrı, 6or, خدا, Thiên Chúa, Duw, ཡུ་ རྒྱལ་, ..., or whatever, has absolutely **nothing** to do with them. His word is one and the same; His religions are one and the same; His right and wrong is one and the same; His Fire and Heaven are the same for all. His divine law is one and the same. His *ḥalāl* and *ḥarām* are as everlasting as His sun and moon, and this will be so till the Day of Judgment. The Almighty never changes His word; people change His word; humans play havoc with divine creeds. So, He could not have allowed His first prophet, our father Ādam, to permit what all other prophets prohibited. The Almighty does not discriminate.

How did Ādam's offspring then multiply?

We would like to distance ourselves from some Muslims who claim that necessities justify violating laws, norms, rules and traditions. We do not buy their argument because it is based on the non-Muslim concept of “All means justify the ends.” They do not. What starts wrong can never end right and vice versa. All means do not justify the ends; this is not an Islamic slogan although some Muslims unfortunately adopt it and use it, and we pray for their and our forgiveness.

Zurārah¹ quotes Imām Jaʿfar as-Sādiq عليه السلام commenting in detail

¹He is “Abū al-Hassan” (or Abul-Hassan) Zurārah ibn Aʿyan ibn Sansan al-Shaybānī. “Aʿyan” means “wide eyes”. His family is one of senior scholars of Kūfa who specialized in *fiqh*, jurisprudence, but he is the most famous of his brothers. He did not leave any part of *fiqh* without deeply

about this matter. The Imām عليه السلام, a great-grandson of the Prophet of Islam ﷺ, was asked about his views with regard to some Muslims (as well as non-Muslims) claiming that there was time when it was the law of necessity to permit the brothers to marry their sisters in order to form the first human family. The Imām عليه السلام was quite emphatic in his denunciation of, even outraged at, such a preposterous claim. Here is the text of his statement as recorded in *Ilal al-Sharā'i*:

Woe unto such people! How far are they from a matter about which neither the scholars of Hijāz nor those of Iraq have differed in the least? Allāh, the most Exalted and Great, ordered the Pen to write on the Preserved Tablet¹ what will be till the Day of

delving into it, being for a long time a companion of Imāms al-Bāqir, as-Sādiq and al-Kādhim عليه السلام. In *Rijāl al-Kashi*, the author says the following about him: “The early companions of Abū Jaʿfar (Imām al-Bāqir عليه السلام) are all known for their truthfulness, and they are the pioneers in the science of *fiqh*. The best of these truthful *faqīhs* are six: Zurārah, Maʿrouf ibn Kharbuth, Burayd, Abū Busayr al-Assadi, al-Fudayl ibn Yasār and Muhammed ibn Muslim al-Tāʿifi,” as we read on p. 507 of al-Kashi’s work cited above. Zurārah was so knowledgeable, he was able to see the book written by Imām Ali ibn Abū Tālib عليه السلام (titled *Al-Jāmiʿah* الجامعة) which was dictated to him by the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ and contained numerous *ḥalāl* and *ḥarām* related issues. In addition to *Rijāl al-Kashi* رجال الكشي, he is detailed on p. 290 of *Rawḍat al-Wāʿiẓīn* روضة الواعظين, p. 34, Vol. 2 of *Jāmiʿ al-Ruwāt* جامع الرواة, p. 398, Vol. 1 of *Ikhtiyār Maʿrifat ar-Rijāl* اختيار معرفة الرجال, p. 61 of *Al-Ikhtisās* الاختصاص and p. 93, Vol. 2 of al-Ayyāshi’s *Tafsīr* تفسير العياشي. Zurārah’s exact year of birth is not known for sure, but it is said to be around 80 A.H./699 A.D., and he died in 150 A.H./767 A.D. almost two months after the martyrdom of Imām Jaʿfar as-Sādiq عليه السلام.

¹This is what is known as *al-Lawḥ al-Mahfooz* اللوح المحفوظ (the Preserved Tablet). There is a great deal of reference to it in the Holy Qurʾān and in the Sunnah, especially in *qudsi aḥādīth*. It is a record of what was and what will be of each and every matter, small or big, of Allāh’s creation. It is from this record that the Holy Qurʾān came. The closest of Allāh’s angels are the only ones who are acquainted with some of what is recorded in it. It is one of the unknown mysteries about which we are very much in

Judgment, one thousand years before the creation of Ādam. All the Books of Allāh, each and every one of them, were written by that Pen, and they all prohibit the sisters from marrying their brothers. This is one of the prohibitions which they contain. We all read the four divinely revealed Books which are famous the world over: the Torah (Old Testament, revealed to prophet Moses), the Injil (the Bible or the New Testament, revealed to prophet Jesus Christ, the Psalms (revealed to prophet David, now part of the Old Testament), and the Furqān (the Holy Qur'ān), revealed to Prophet Muhammed, Allāh's blessings with all of them. Allāh sent them down from the Preserved Tablet to His prophets. They do not permit anything like that. Anyone who claims otherwise or who says something similar only supports what the Zoroastrians¹ claim... Eve gave birth to seventy twins, each time giving birth to a male and a female, till Able was killed. Ādam felt very grieved about his murder to the extent that he had no desire to cohabit for five hundred years. Then he overcame his grief and cohabited with Eve, and Allāh granted him one single newborn. When Allāh wanted his progeny to be as numerous as you can see, and to effect what the Pen had written, that is, Allāh prohibiting the brothers from marrying their sisters, it was the time in the late afternoon, on a Thursday, when Allāh sent him from Paradise a *huri* named Nazla. Allāh, the Exalted and the Great, ordered Ādam to marry her off to Japheth (Yafith). He married her to him. Sheth (Seth), too, was blessed with a son at the same time when Japheth was blessed with a daughter. Allāh, the Sublime and the Great, ordered Ādam, when both newborns came of age, to marry Japheth's daughter to the son of Sheth, which he did. The result of that marriage was the choicest of prophets and messengers. We seek refuge with Allāh against what some people claim that the brothers

the dark. A thorough research of the Holy Qur'ān and the Sunnah will give the researcher a better idea about this divine Tablet.

¹Zoroastrianism is the religion preached by Zoroaster (or Zarathustra or, in some books, Zarathushtra) who lived from 628 - 551 B.C. in ancient Persia. Its scripture is called *Zend Avesta*, the commentary, or the law, written in ancient Pahlavi language. It falls in the category of dualistic religions, those that believe in the existence of everything in pairs. Nowadays, the Ghebers in Iran and the Parsis in India keep this "religion" alive.

(who descended from Ādam) married their sisters.¹

I, author of this book, would like to narrate the following incident as an example of how some Muslim imāms of mosques mislead their communities:

When I lived in Falls Church city, Virginia, a mosque was built nearby, something for which I praised and thanked the Almighty. But my excitement gradually faded when I saw how the imāms of that mosque were ignorant to an unbelievable degree. Here are two examples for their serious misleading ignorance: One of them kept telling others that it was perfectly alright if they bought meat on the market the animal from which it was taken was not slaughtered according to Islamic rules and regulations. He said to them, “All you have to do is to say ‘Bismillāh’ before you eat it, and it will become *ḥalāl* (Islamically lawful).” He even went further to say that he would carry the sins of all Muslims who did what he suggested while doubting that it was Islamic, thus clearing skeptics of the sin and bearing it on his back, “round my neck,” according to his expression. This is one example.

Another example for such very dangerously misleading ignorance was this: I was once inside the mosque when a Muslim came to inquire about some people, Muslims of course, who were circumcising their daughters. Remember that I am talking about Muslims living in the United States, not in some jungles in Africa or somewhere else. I thought that the mere idea was most repulsive and disgusting. To my great surprise, the imām of that mosque told the inquirer that not only was such circumcision “lawful in Islam, it was highly recommended”...

In both incidents, the logic was one and the same: It is an axiom that says in Arabic *عند الضرورات تنبأ المحظورات* *During times of necessities, what is prohibitive becomes permissible*. This is why they claim that Ādam’s sons “married” their sisters; necessity dictated it... *Astaghfirullāh!*

¹al-ʿAyyāshi, *ʿIlal al-Sharāʿi*, Vol. 1, pp. 30-31.

The account of the first children born for Ādam and Eve, and the story of Cain killing his brother Able, are both detailed in a very interesting tradition narrated by “Abū Abdullāh” Imām Jaʿfar as-Sādiq عليه السلام and recorded by *ʿallāma* al-Majlisi رحمته الله in Vol. 11 of his precious old edition encyclopedia titled *Bihār al-Anwār* (old edition is published in 111 volumes, that is right, one hundred and eleven); here is an excerpt from it for the reader:

When Ādam and Eve cohabited, a daughter was born for them whom Ādam named ʿAtaqa [which, by the way, means “emancipated from slavery, the slavery of sinning or disobeying the Lord”], and she was the first woman to commit sin from among the human race. Allāh, therefore, sent against her a large wolf and a large eagle that both killed her. After that, Cain was born. When he attained maturity, Allāh, the Exalted and the Sublime, sent him a woman from among the jinns named Jehana in a human form. As soon as he saw her, he fell in love with her, so Allāh inspired to Ādam to marry Jehana to Cain. Then Able was born for Ādam and Eve. When Able became adult, Allāh sent Ādam a *hūri* (from Paradise) named Nezla the *hūri*. When Able saw her, he fell in love with her, so Allāh inspired to Ādam to marry her to Able, which he did. Nezla the *hūri* thus became wife of Able son of Ādam. Then Allāh inspired Ādam to entrust the heritage of prophethood and the knowledge (relevant to it) to Able, which he did. When Cain came to know about it, he became angry and said to his father, “Am I not older than my brother and more worthy of what you did for him?” Ādam said, “Son! The affair is in the hands of Allāh, and it is Allāh Who chose him for what I did. If you do not believe me, let both of you offer a *qurbān* (a sacrificial offering). Anyone whose *qurbān* is accepted will be the one worthy of being preferred over the other.” During that time, the fire used to come and consume such *qurbāns* (as the Holy Qurʾān tells us in 3:183). Able was a land tiller, so he offered a bad quality wheat, whereas Able used to tend to sheep, so he offered a fat ram. The fire consumed Able's *qurbān* only. Eblis, Satan, went to Cain and said, “O Cain! Were you both to have offspring, and were you both to become numerous, his offspring would brag to yours about the favor bestowed on him by your father and about the fact that the fire accepted his *qurbān* and ignored yours. If you kill him, your father will have no choice

except to give you what he has given him.” Cain, therefore, leaped at Able and killed him. Then Eblis said, “The fire that accepted the *qurbān* is surely glorified; so, you, too, should glorify it. Build for it a house and assign people to look after it; worship it well, and look after it, so that your *qurbān* may be accepted, if this is what you want.” Cain did all of that, thus becoming the first human to worship the fire and to build a fire house. Ādam came to the place where Able had killed his brother and kept weeping there for forty days during which he condemned the spot that accepted his son's blood. It is the spot where the dome of Basra's (main) mosque now stands (in Basra, southern Iraq). On the day when Able was killed, his wife, Nezla the *hūri*, was pregnant. She later gave birth to a son whom Ādam named also Able. Allāh, the most Exalted and the Almighty, granted Ādam after Able another son whom he named Sheth and about whom he said, “This is *hibat-Allāh* (a gift from Allāh)!” When Sheth became adult, Allāh sent Ādam another *hūri* named Na`īma in a human form. As soon as he saw her, Sheth fell in love with her, so Allāh inspired Ādam to marry Na`īma to Sheth, which he did. She gave birth to a daughter whom Ādam named Ḥooriyya (*hūri*). When she became adult, Allāh inspired Ādam to marry her off to Able (Able II), which he did. The humans you all now see are from that marriage. When Ādam's period of prophethood came to an end, Allāh Almighty ordered him to pass on his knowledge and the relics of prophethood to Sheth, to order him to follow *taqiyya* (to be on his guard), to keep this matter to himself and not tell his brother about it lest the latter should kill him as Able was killed.¹

Imām Ja`far as-Sādiq عليه السلام was asked once about the meaning of the verse saying, “The Day when a man shall flee from his brother” (Qur`ān, 80:34). He said, “Cain shall that Day (of Judgment) flee from his brother Able.” He was also asked about why Wednesday is considered a bad omen day. He stated that Cain killed Able on a Wednesday.²

¹al-Majlisi, *Bihār al-Anwār*, Vol. 11, p. 226 (old edition; a newer edition of this encyclopedia was published by Ihyā' al-Kutub al-Islamiyya احياء الكتب الاسلامية of Qum, Iran, in 1427 A.H./2006 A.D.

²al-Jazā'iri, *An-Noor al-Mubeen*, p. 94.

The Status Ādam Enjoys With Allāh

The Praised and the Exalted One has said the following in the Holy Qur'ān: “Then Ādam received (some) words from his Lord, so He turned to him mercifully; surely He is the oft-Returning (to mercy), the Most Merciful” (Qur'ān, 2:37).

The son of Abū Nāji quotes Mujāhid¹ saying that those “words” were:

Lord! There is no god but You! All Glory and Praise are due to You! Lord! I have wronged my own self; so, forgive me, for You are the best of those who grant forgiveness! Lord! There is no god but You! Glory and Praise to You! ... We have been unjust to our own selves, and if You do not forgive us and have mercy on us, we shall surely be among the losers. (7:23).

Some Muslims, through transmitters of *ḥadīth* such as al-Hākim, al-Bayhaqī, and Ibn 'Asākir, quote Abd ar-Rahmān ibn Yazīd ibn Aslam citing his father citing his grandfather quoting caliph Omer ibn al-Khattab as saying that the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ has said, “When Ādam committed his sin, he invoked Allāh by saying, ‘Lord! I invoke You by the honor reserved with You for Muhammed and

¹He is “Abul-Hajjāj” Mujāhid ibn Jabr al-Makki (of Mecca) al-Makhzūmi (of the Makhzūm tribe) (21 – 104 A.H./642 – 722 A.D.). He is so famous in classic references, he is known in all of them as simply “Mujāhid”. He is an imām, a *faqīh*, a trusted scholar who narrated many *aḥādīth*, one who excelled in the recitation and interpretation of the Holy Qur'ān and in narrating the Prophet's *ḥadīth*. Mujāhid narrated a great deal of *ḥadīth* from Ibn Abbās from whom he also learned *fiqh* as well as the proper way to recite and interpret verses of the Holy Qur'ān, i.e. *tafsīr*. He also quotes Mother of the Faithful 'Ā'isha, Abū Hurayra, Sa'd ibn Abū Waqqās, Jābir ibn Abdullāh (al-Ansāri) and Abū Sa'īd al-Khudri. Many have quoted Mujāhid, too, including 'Ikrimah, Tāwūs, Atā' ibn al-Sā'ib, Sulaymān al-A'mash, Amr ibn Dīnār and others. As regarding the recitation of the Holy Qur'an, three imāms of recitation learned from him: Ibn Muhaisin, Ibn Kathīr and Abū Amr ibn Alā' al-Basri, according to the International Arabic Encyclopedia الموسوعة العربية العالمية.

the progeny of Muhammed to grant me Your forgiveness!' The Almighty asked him, 'How did you come to know about Muhammed since I have not created him yet?' He answered, 'Lord! When You created me and blew into me of Your soul, I raised my head and saw on the pillars of the Throne a writing saying: *There is no god except Allāh; Muhammed is the Messenger of Allāh*. So I came to know that You did not add someone's name to Yours except because he is most loved by You of all Your creation.' The Almighty said, 'O Ādam! You have spoken the truth! He is, indeed, the dearest to Me of all My creation, and if you invoke Me by his honor, I am bound to forgive you; had it not been for Muhammed, I would not have created you.'"

Allāh, the Exalted and the Almighty, has referred to His forgiveness of Ādam in the Holy Qur'ān in verses such as these: "... And Ādam disobeyed his Lord, so his life became evil (to him). Then his Lord chose him, so He turned to him and guided him" (Qur'ān, 20:121-122).



Adam's grave in Najaf, Iraq. Notice its length.

Where is Ādam Buried?

Ādam lived for one thousand years or, according to other accounts, one thousand and thirty years. Some of his offspring, such as Noah, lived much longer than that. "Abū Abdullāh", namely Imām Ja'far as-Sādiq عليه السلام, is quoted as having said, "When Ādam died, and his death brought joy to Eblis and Cain, the latter met on earth and celebrated the occasion with some sorts of musical instruments and merry making. Any music which pleases people is the product

thereof.”¹ The Imām ﷺ has also said the following about how and where Ādam was buried:

Allāh, Praised and Exalted is He, inspired to Noah, who was then in the ark, to circle around the House (Ka’ba) for a full week, which he did. Then Noah waded in the water to his knees as he took out a coffin containing Ādam’s remains. Then he came to [what is now] the gate of Kūfa and reached the midst of its [present day] mosque. Those who had been with Noah in the ark dispersed, so he took the coffin and buried it in the Ghari (Najaf, Iraq).²

He is also quoted as saying that Eve did not survive him except for one year. She fell sick for fifteen days, then she died and was buried beside Ādam.³

The Holy Qur’ān mentions Ādam twenty-five times.

ADAM'S SUPPLICATION

It is reported in the appendix to al-Kaf’ami’s *Misbah* that Ādam knelt down at the Yemeni corner, offered two *rek’as* then said, “O Almighty God! I pray You for a conviction whereby You gladden my heart,” up to the end of his invocation, whereupon the Almighty inspired him, “O Ādam! I shall grant those among your descendants who learn this invocation whatever they like and protect them against whatever they dislike; I will remove the love of this world from their heart and fill their minds with wisdom.” This invocation is recorded by Shaikh at-Tūsi in his *Misbah al-Mutahajjid*. It is as follows:

O You Who is my resort during the time of affliction, my Friend during the time of hardship, my Sponsor during the time of prosperity, my Refuge during the time of need! You cover my

¹*Furoo` al-Kāfi*, Vol. 6, p. 431, in a chapter dealing with singing.

²al-Majlisi, *Bihār al-Anwār*, Vol. 11, p. 268.

³*Ibid.*, p. 98.

shortcoming, You assure me when I am frightened; You bring my feet back to the right path after slipping; so, Lord, do forgive my sin! Lord! I pray You to grant me the humility of conviction before the humiliation of the Fire! O One! O Independent One Who neither begets nor is He begotten, nor can any be like Him! O You Who gives those Who ask Him out of his Kindness and starts giving (even before being asked)! You, Lord, are the best of those who are asked in Your everlasting Favours and Generosity! I pray You to send blessings unto Muhammed and the progeny of Muhammed, and to grant me a spacious and inclusive mercy whereby I achieve the best of this life and of the life to come! Lord! I seek Your forgiveness for whatever I committed even after my repentance, and I seek Your forgiveness for every good deed which I intended to solely achieve Your pleasure but was mixed with something which is not fit to be Yours! Lord! Send blessings unto Muhammed and the progeny of Muhammed and overlook my wrong-doing and sin by Your Clemency and Generosity! O Generous One Who does not disappoint anyone who pleads to Him, nor does He run out of giving, O One Who is so High that nothing is above Him and so near that nothing is nearer than Him! I pray You to send blessings unto Muhammed and the progeny of Muhammed and to have mercy on me! O You Who split the sea for Moses! Tonight, tonight, tonight! This hour; this hour; this hour! Lord! Purify my heart from hypocrisy, my actions from pretense, my tongue from telling lies, and my eyes from seeing what You have prohibited me from seeing, for You know when the eyes intrude and what the hearts conceal! Lord! This is the place of one who seeks help from You against the fire! This is the place of one who seeks refuge against the fire! This is the place where one flees to You from the fire! This is the place of one who admits his wrong-doing and repents and regrets his sin to his Lord! This is the place of the miserable wretch! This is the place of one frightened seeking shelter! This is the place of one who is grieved, distressed! This is the place of one who is a stranger, drowning! This is the place of one who is perturbed, frightened! This is the place of one who finds none except You to forgive his sin and remove his distress! O Allāh! O Generous One! Do not burn my face in the fire after having prostrated before You and lowered my head in humility, without doing You a favor by so doing; rather, to Your is all praise due, and yours are all the favours and bounties! So, have mercy, O Lord (and keep repeating "O Lord! till you are out of breath), have mercy on my weakness, my inability to help myself,

the thinness of my skin, the scattering of my limbs, flesh and body, my loneliness in my grave, and my impatience regarding the small portion of this life's hardships! Lord! I ask You to cool my eyes and bring happiness to me on the Day of sighs and regrets! Lord! Brighten my face on the Day when faces are darkened! Grant me security on the Day of the Greatest Fear! I pray You for glad tidings on the Day when hearts and visions are turned upside-down, and to grant me the glad tidings when I depart from this world! Praise is all due to Allāh Whose help I seek and none else, and if I seek help of anyone other than Him, I will surely be disappointed! All praise is due to Allāh in Whom I have set my hope, and if I set my hope on anyone else, my plea will surely bring me disappointment. Praise is all due to Allāh Who is the Bountiful, the ever-Giving, the ultimate end of the desirous, the One Who fulfills every need! Lord! Send blessings unto Muhammed and the progeny of Muhammed and bless me with conviction and with good thoughts about You, and make my hope in You firm in my heart and do not let me set my hope on anyone other than You so that I plead to none but You and trust none but You! O You Gracious One! Be Gracious unto me in all conditions, regarding everything You like and with which You are pleased! Lord! I am too weak to tolerate the fire; so, do not torment me in it! Lord! Have mercy on me and grant me my pleas, respond to my supplication, fear, humiliation and wretchedness; I seek help from You, and I rely on none but You! Lord! I am too weak to achieve my worldly gains, while Your Generosity is spacious; so, I pray You, Lord, by Your Might to do that and Your ability to do it, and Your lack of need to do it, and my own need for it, to bless me in this year, in this month, in this day, in this hour, with a sustenance which would make me too independent to covet what others have of Your lawful and good sustenance! Lord! To You do I pray, You do I seek, and You are worthy of all of this, and only You do I trust! O You Who is the Most Merciful of those who have mercy! I have wronged my own soul; so, forgive me and have mercy on me; grant me good health, O You Who hears every voice, Who sustains each and all, Who brings life back to the dead, Who is not overwhelmed by the darkness, nor can He ever be confused by voices, nor can anything divert Him from doing anything else! I pray You to grant Muhammed, peace and blessings of Allāh with him and his progeny, the best of what he has asked You, and the best of what You have been asked, and the best of what You are apt to give till the Day of Resurrection, and grant me good health

so that You enable me to enjoy life, and conclude my life with goodness so that sins do not harm me! Lord! Make me contented with what You have allotted for me so that I do not ask anyone for anything! Lord! Send peace and blessings unto Muhammed and the progeny of Muhammed and open for me the treasures of Your mercy and have mercy on me so that You do not torment me henceforth in this life nor in the life to come and grant me, out of Your Spacious Favors, good and lawful sustenance so that You do not make me, beyond it, in need of anyone other than You, and increase my thanks to You and need and want to You and overlooking what all but You have! O You Who is ever-Giving, ever-Bountiful! You are the King, the Omnipotent! I pray You to send blessings unto Muhammed and the progeny of Muhammed and to enable me to do whatever it is important for me that I should do, and judge me with kindness, and bless me in all my affairs, and enable me to achieve all my objectives! Lord! Make easy for me what I fear to be difficult, for doing so is surely easy for You, and facilitate for me whatever hardship I dread, and remove my distress, and keep away from me whatever I shun, and spare me whatever I deem as evil, O You Who is the Most Merciful of all those who are merciful! Fill my heart with love for You, and fear of You, and belief in You, and conviction in Your Book, and awe of You, and eagerness for You! O You Who is the One With Authority and Grace! Lord! You have obligated me to do certain things, so exempt me from them as an act of charity from You towards me, and I have obligations towards people, so, carry them out for me! Lord! Every guest deserves a boon, and I am Your guest; therefore, let Paradise be Your boon unto me tonight, O You Who grants Paradise, Who often grants forgiveness, and there is no might nor power except in You!



ENOCH (PROPHET IDRIS) عليه السلام

In the Holy Qur'ān, we read, “And mention Idris (Andreas?) in the Book; surely he was a truthful man, a prophet, and We raised him high in heaven” (Qur'ān, 19:56-57). Idris عليه السلام is the great-grandfather of prophet Noah. He was a tailor, the first to employ this profession, and it is said that Allāh, Glory to Him, taught him astrology, mathematics, and forms, making that his miracle. He was the first prominent descendant of Ādam after Sheth عليه السلام who was honored with Prophethood. He was Idris عليه السلام son of Bard, or Yarid, son of Mahail son of Kenan son of Anoosh son of Sheth son of Ādam عليه السلام. The name of his son was Akhnoo'. He was called “Idris” due to the extent of his study of the books and tablets of both Ādam and Sheth عليه السلام; his mother's name was Ashoot. Idris عليه السلام was the first to use the pen. Physically, he had a large belly and broad shoulders.

Wahab ibn Manbah1 has said, “Every day, he used to adore the Almighty as much as He was adored by all his contemporaries combined, so the angels were amazed at him, and the angel of death was eager to meet him. The latter asked permission of the Almighty

¹His full name is: Wahab ibn Kāmil ibn Sij ibn Dhi-Kibar, a scholar of narrative reports. His kunya is “Abu Abdullāh” al-Abnāwi, a man from Yemen's Dhīmār in Sanaa, and he is brother of Humām ibn Manbah, Ma`qil ibn Manbah and Ghilān ibn Manbah. He was born during the time of caliph Othmān in 34 A.H./654 A.D. and, according to al-Wāqidi, he died in 110 A.H./728 A.D., but other scholars provide different dates. Wahab was one of the *tābi`īn*, and he quoted (Abdullāh) Ibn Abbās, Abu Hurayra, when he believed that the latter's narrative was credible, as well as `Amr ibn Dīnār, Sammāk ibn al-Faḍl, `Awf al-A`rābi, `Āṣim ibn Rajaa ibn Haiwah, Yazīd ibn Yazīd ibn Jābir, Abdullāh ibn Othmān ibn Khathīm, Isrā'īl Abū Mūsa, al-Mughīrah ibn Hākīm and many others. He is known for the abundance of his knowledge especially of Judaicas and the gospels of the People of the Book. Here is one of the traditions which he narrated:

المؤمن ينظر ليعلم، و يتكلم ليفهم، و يسكت ليسلم، و يخلو ليقتنم.

“A believer looks in order to get to know, speaks in order to comprehend, remains silent in order to be safe and seeks seclusion in order to win.”

to do so, and permission was granted to him. The angel of death came to Idris عليه السلام in a human form. Idris عليه السلام used to always fast. When it was time for him to break his fast at sunset, it so happened once that he invited none other than the angel of death himself to share his food, but the latter refused to eat. Angels do not eat. He kept doing so for three days till Idris عليه السلام became suspicious of him. On the third night, he asked him, "I would like to know who you are." He said, "I am the angel of death. I have sought my Lord's permission to come and visit you and keep you company, and He granted me permission to do so." Idris عليه السلام said to him, "I have a favor to ask of you." He asked him, "What is it?" He answered, "Take my soul away." The Almighty inspired to the angel of death to take Idris's soul away, and so he did. Then the Almighty returned the soul back to Idris's body one hour later. The angel of death asked him, "What is the benefit of you asking me to take your soul away?" He answered, "So that I may taste of the tribulation of death and its agony and thus become better prepared for it." Then he said to him, "I have another favor to ask of you." The angel of death asked, "And what is it this time?!" He said, "I would like you to raise me to the heavens so that I may see it and to show me Paradise." The Almighty granted the angel of death permission to do so. When Idris عليه السلام came close to Paradise, he asked his escorting angel, "Is it possible that I ask you for another favor?!" He said, "And what exactly do you want?!" He said, "Ask Riwan [custodian of the eternal garden of bliss] to open the gates of Paradise for me so that I may see it." This, too, he was permitted to do, so he escorted Idris عليه السلام to Paradise and asked that its gates be opened, and they were opened, so Idris عليه السلام entered it. Then the angel of death ordered him to get out of it so that he would escort him back to his place, but Idris عليه السلام firmly took hold of one of its trees and said, "I shall never get out of it!" Allāh, therefore, sent an angel to arbitrate between Idris عليه السلام and the angel of death. The arbitrator asked him, "Why don't you leave?" He said, "Because Allāh Almighty has said, 'Every soul shall taste of death,' and I have tasted of it already. And Allāh Almighty has said, 'Each one of you shall come to it,' and I have already come to it! And the Almighty has also said, 'And they shall never be taken out of it,' so I do not wish to be taken out of Paradise!" The Almighty said to the angel of death, "Leave him! By

My permission has he entered Paradise, and by My permission shall he remain therein;” so, he remains alive there till the Day of Judgment. He sometimes adores the Almighty in the fourth heavens, and sometimes he enjoys Paradise, and Allāh knows best.

Idris عليه السلام had contemplated on the greatness of the Creator and said, “These heavens and this earth, and this great creation, have to have a God Who manages their affairs and keeps them aright; I wish I know how I can adore Him as He deserves.” He invited some of his people to share his views and started admonishing them, inviting them to worship the One Who created everything. One thousand from among them responded to his call from whom he hand-picked seven. He addressed everyone saying, “Let these seven men supplicate, and let the rest of you say, ‘Āmeen;’ perhaps this great Lord will lead us to the way we are supposed to worship Him.” They put their hands on the ground and kept supplicating for a long time, but nothing happened. Then they raised their hands to the heavens, and it was then that Allāh inspired to Idris عليه السلام how he and those who believed in him should worship their Lord. They kept worshipping Allāh without associating anything with Him till Allāh raised Idris عليه السلام to heaven and most of those who had followed his creed died. After that, people differed among themselves, introducing many innovations and doing so till the time of Noah.¹

“Abū Ja’far,” namely Imām Muhammed al-Bāqir عليه السلام, has said that at the beginning of Idris's prophethood, there was a tyrannical king who one day went out riding on an excursion. He passed by estates which were green and very pleasing to the eyes belonging to one of the believers. He liked the land very much and inquired of his viziers who exactly it belonged to. They said to him, “It belongs to one of the slaves of the king, so-and-so who rejects our form of religion.” The king asked the owner to sell him his land. “My children,” said the owner, “need it more than you.” He kept asking him to sell him his property and the man kept refusing, so much so that the king became very angry and went back annoyed. He contemplated on

¹ *Ilal al-Sharā'i*, Vol. 1, pp. 40-41.

what he should do. His wife looked at him and saw anger painted all over on his face, so he told her about the land and about its owner. She said to him, "If you hate to kill him without a valid reason, I can spare you his headache and legally transfer the ownership of his land to you." Her folks used to follow her creed, and they regarded the killing of those who refused to share their views perfectly permissible. This is similar to most Wahhābis and all Salafīs of our time, folks! She invited some of them to go to meet with her. She ordered them to testify against that man in the presence of the king that he had dissociated himself from the king's creed. They testified, so the king killed the man and confiscated his land. Allāh became very angry at what happened to the man who believed in Him. It was then that Allāh inspired to Idris عليه السلام thus: "When you see this tyrant, say to him, 'You killed a believer in God. As if that was not enough, you even confiscated his land and caused his family after him to be in a great deal of difficulty. God tells you that He will soon avenge his killing and take the kingdom away from you, reduce your town to rubble and feed the dogs with the flesh of your wife. You have taken God's Clemency for granted.'"

Idris عليه السلام went to the king and conveyed his Lord's message to him. The tyrant said to Idris عليه السلام, "Get out of here, Idris, lest I should kill you right now!" The king's wife said to him, "Do not be frightened on account of his Lord's message, for I shall dispatch someone to him to kill him and to thus void his Lord's message." He granted her permission to do so.

Idris عليه السلام had a number of those who believed in him, and he enjoyed their company very much. He informed these close friends about his Lord's message to the tyrant king, so they feared lest he should be killed. The queen sent Idris عليه السلام not one but forty men from among her own kinfolks to kill him. They came to his house but did not find him. Idris's friends saw those would-be assassins, so they went out seeking him till they found him. They said to him, "O Idris! You should be on your guard, for the tyrant is surely going to kill you. Get out of this town." Idris عليه السلام followed their suggestion and got out of that town accompanied by a number of his close friends.

Shortly before *fajr*, Idris عليه السلام supplicated to his Lord and complained to Him about the tyrant being bent on killing him. Allāh inspired to him saying, “Get out of his town, and let Me deal with him. By My Honor! I shall carry out what I had warned him about.” Idris عليه السلام said, “Lord! I have a plea to make to You!” Allāh said, “Name it.” He said, “I plead to You not to permit the rain to fall on this town and its surrounding areas till I ask You to do so.” Allāh said to him, “The town will then deteriorate, and its people will starve.” Idris عليه السلام said, “So what if it deteriorates and if they starve?” Allāh said, “I have granted you what you have pleaded Me for.”

Idris informed his friends that the rain would not fall, so they got out of the town, and they were twenty men. They scattered throughout the villages, and Idris عليه السلام became a household name throughout all the village because of his plea to Allāh. Idris عليه السلام sought seclusion in a mountain cave, and Allāh assigned an angel to send him food every evening. Allāh stripped that tyrant of his authority, reduced his town to ruins, and fed the dogs with the flesh of his wife on account of His wrath because of what happened to that believer.

But another tyrant appeared in that town, an oppressive one who did not believe in God. Twenty years passed by since Idris عليه السلام had left that town. During that entire period, no rain fell at all. People's condition was extremely bad, and they started begging food from other towns. They said, “What has befallen us is due to Idris عليه السلام pleading to his Lord not to permit the rain to fall till he asked Him to. We do not know where Idris now is, but God is more merciful to us than he is.” They all decided to repent to God and to plead to Him to let the rainfall. They put ashes on their faces, put on very coarse clothes, and kept pleading to the Almighty to have mercy on them. It was then that Allāh inspired to Idris عليه السلام saying, “The people of your town have returned to Me repentant, and I am the most Gracious, the most Merciful. I accept repentance, and I have decided to have mercy on them, and nothing stops Me from responding to their pleas with regard to the rain except My promise to you not to let it fall on them unless you ask me; so, Idris, do ask Me.”

Idris عليه السلام said, "Lord! I do not ask You to do it!" Allāh ordered the angel who used to bring food to Idris عليه السلام not to do so any more. When night came and Idris did not receive any food, he felt very sad and hungry. On the next day, no food came to him, either, so his hunger intensified. The same happened on the third night. He, therefore, addressed his Lord saying, "Lord! You have deprived me of Your sustenance even before taking my soul away!" Allāh inspired to him saying, "O Idris! You have lost your patience only three days and nights since I did not let any food reach you, and you did not feel sorry, nor did you show any concern about the hunger of your town's people and their pathetic condition which has lasted for twenty years! Then I informed you of their serious attempts to please Me and that I decided to be merciful to them, and that you should ask Me to let the rain fall on their land, but you did not! You were too miser to ask Me to do so; therefore, I wanted you to taste of hunger, whereupon you ran out of patience and you expressed your frustration! Get down from your place and seek your own sustenance, for I have entrusted seeking it to your own endeavor.

Idris عليه السلام had no choice except to get down from that mountain and look for food. When he entered the town, he saw smoke coming out of a house. He went in its direction and rushed to an old woman who was baking two loaves of bread. He said to her, "O lady! Please feed me, for hunger has taken its toll on me!" She said to him, "O servant of Allāh! Because of Idris's supplication, we have nothing beyond our means whereby we can feed anyone," and she swore to him that that was all the food she had had adding, "Ask someone else from the people of this town to feed you." He said to her, "Give me enough just to keep me alive so that my feet can carry me to where I can ask for food." She said, "I have only two loaves, one for me and one for my son. If I give you mine, I will die, and if I give you my son's, he will die." Idris عليه السلام said to her, "Half a loaf should be sufficient to sustain your son. It will keep him alive while the other half will sustain me." The woman ate her loaf and divided the other between Idris عليه السلام and her son. When her son saw Idris عليه السلام eating his loaf, he was shaken, and he instantly died. His mother said to Idris عليه السلام, "O servant of Allāh! You have now caused my son to die

on account of his fear for his food!” Idris عليه السلام said, “I shall, by the will of Allāh, bring him back to life; so, do not be upset.”

Idris عليه السلام took hold of the boy's arm and said, “O soul departing from the body of this boy! Return to it by the will of Allāh! I am Idris the prophet.” The soul went back to the boy with the permission of the Almighty. Having heard Idris عليه السلام say so, and having looked and seen her son coming back to life, the old woman went out and as loud as she could kept shouting, “Good news! Idris has entered your town!” Idris عليه السلام left and went to the town where the first tyrant had ruled, and it was on a hilltop. The residents of the town came to him and said, “O Idris! Won't you have any mercy on us?! Twenty years have annihilated us! We are starving and worn out; so, do supplicate to Allāh to bring us rain from the sky.” Idris عليه السلام said, “I shall not do so until your tyrant and all the people of the town come to me barefoot and beg me to do so.”

When the tyrant heard what Idris عليه السلام had said, he sent forty men to bring Idris عليه السلام to him. They came to Idris عليه السلام and said, “The king has dispatched us to you to bring you to him.” Idris عليه السلام supplicated against those men, so they died instantly. When the news of their death reached the tyrant, he this time sent five hundred men to bring Idris عليه السلام to him. They said to Idris عليه السلام, “The king has sent us to you so that we may escort you to him.” Idris said, “Look and see how I have caused those who came to me before you to perish!” They said, “O Idris! You have already killed us with starvation during the past twenty years, and you still threaten us with annihilation! Do you not have any mercy at all?” Idris عليه السلام said, “I shall not go to him, nor shall I plead to Allāh to let the rain fall on you till your tyrant comes to me barefoot and so should all the people of your town.” They went back and told the king about what Idris had said to them, and they requested him to go out with all the people of the town and walk barefoot to meet Idris عليه السلام. The king reluctantly agreed, and everyone came to Idris عليه السلام in submission pleading to him to pray Allāh to let the rain fall on them. It was then that Idris said, “Yes, now I shall do so.” He, therefore, pleaded to Allāh to permit the rain to fall on them and on all the surrounding areas. A cloud suddenly

appeared in the sky. Thunder and lightning followed, and rain instantly started pouring on the dead land. It kept raining so hard that they thought they would all be drowned. When they went back to their homes, water was now their problem!¹

DU`Ā IDRIS

Invocation by Idris (Enoch)

It contains Attributes of Allāh, forty in number, as many as the days of penitence. It is included by Shaikh at-Tūsi in his *Misbāh al-Mutahajjid*. It is also reported by Sayyid Ibn awoos in his *Muhaj al-Da`awāt* through al-Hassan al-Basri with a minor variation. He said that when Allāh Almighty sent Idris to his people, He taught him these attributes and inspired him to articulate them silently, not to reveal them to his people so they would call Him by them. Therefore, he invoked Allāh through them and was raised to a sublime status. Then Allāh Almighty inspired them to Moses son of `Imrān (Amram) عليه السلام then to Muhammed ﷺ who invoked Him through their power during the “war of coalitions”.

Al-Hassan al-Basri reports saying, “I had sought to hide myself from (the tyrant) al-Hajjaj ibn Yousuf al-Thaqafi², so I pleaded to Allāh through them and He kept his mischief away from me. Six times did he come to my house, and every time he did, I would plead to the Almighty through them, and He would make the man incapable of seeing me.” So, you, too, dear reader, ought to invoke Allāh's

¹as-Sadūq, *Kemāl ad-Deen*, pp. 76-77.

²His *kunya* was “Abū Muhammed”. Abd al-Mālik ibn Marāwn, the Umayyad king, appointed him commander of his army, so he killed the *ṣaḥābi* Abdullāh ibn az-Zubayr. Then Abd al-Malik installed him as governor of Mecca, Medīna, and aif, then added to them Iraq. He remained governor for twenty years. He built the city of Wasit (located between Kūfa and Basra) where he died in 95 A.H./714 A.D. He is proverbial in his passion for shedding blood, ridiculing the Sunnah and deliberately violating the Islamic code of conduct.

forgiveness from all sins through them, then state what you desire in this life or in the life to come, or in both, for your plea, by the Will of Allāh, will then be granted.

The Attributes mentioned in this invocation are forty. They are esteemed very highly by the Almighty Who appreciates them. They have merits too many to enumerate here, and the invocation is as follows:

Praise be to You, there is no god but You, Lord and Heir of everything You have created! O Lord of "lords highly Exalted! O Allāh, Who is praised in everything He does! You Are indeed Merciful and Compassionate to everything! You are the Everlasting while nothing alive needs to sustain Your domain! O You Sustainer of everything from Whose knowledge nothing escapes, nor keeping it tires You! O One Who remains when everything starts, then ceases to be! O You Who is Everlasting without an end, nor does Your domain ever cease to be! O One Who is unlike any other! O You Who starts the creation of everything, Who has no peer, nor can anyone truly describe Him! O Great One! No mind can ever grasp Your greatness! O Originator of everything without a peer, Unique! O Pure and Purifier of every ill through His sanctity! O You Who suffices everyone, Who gives His creation in abundance out of His bounty! O Pure of any injustice which displeases Him, nor does injustice ever mingle with His doings! O Compassionate One Whose mercy has encompassed everything! O Giver Whose bounty has overwhelmed all His creation! O One to Whom all servants owe everything, and through Whose power all are subdued! O Creator of those in the heavens and those on earth, and to Whom all shall return! O Helper of everyone who pleads to Him, everyone in distress, everyone who needs to be helped, and the One Who can be relied on! Lord! No tongues can ever do justice while attempting to describe the greatness and dignity of Your domain! O Originator of everything that needs to be originated, without being in need of Your creation to originate anything You please! O

Knower of the unknown! Nothing that you safeguard can tire You! O You Who shall repeat the creation after its extinction, when the creation are raised again, responding to and fearing Him! O Clement One, Patient! Nothing in Your creation may be compared to You! O You Whose deeds are praised, Who is ever-giving to His creation out of His Grace! O Gracious One Who has nothing in existence to compare to Him! O Vanquisher Whose Might is devastating, Whose revenge is unbearable! O Lofty One Who is near despite His Loftiness! O Powerful One Who makes everything easy through the might of His domain! O You, Light of Everything! Your Light dispels every darkness! O Holy and Pure One! There is nothing like You! O near One Whose nearness is nearer than everything else! O Sublime One in the heavens Whose loftiness is more sublime than anything else! O Originator of everything! You repeat the creation of things even after their extinction through Your might! O Great One Who is above everything! Justice is Your command; true is Your promise! O Glorified One Whose Glory no minds can ever conceive! O Generous One when Forgiving, Just! Your Justice has filled everything! O Great One worthy of all the best praise and glory! Your Greatness never humiliates! O Wonderful One! All tongues can never count Your Signs or utter the praise due to You! I pray You, on Whom I rely in every distress and with Whom I seek refuge in every calamity, by the greatness of these Attributes to grant me a security against the penalties of this life and the life to come, and I ask You to shun through them everything evil and everything I dread, and to divert the eyes of those wrong-doers who wish to inflict on me the wrong which You have prohibited of the evil of what they hide and change it into the goodness which they do not have and which none has other than You! O Glorious One! Do not let me, Lord, rely on my own self so I become unable to bear it, nor on people so they might inflict harm on me! I pray You not to disappoint me while I have set my hopes on You, and do not torment me while I have invoked You! Lord! I plead to You as You have enjoined me to plead; so, answer my plea as

You have promised! Fill my life-span with goodness and my fate too, and do not change the soundness of my body nor let my luck fail! I invoke You not to change my friend into a foe, and I seek refuge with You against all deadly illnesses, against poverty, humiliation, and bad company! Lord! Divert my heart from anything which does not benefit me on my journey to You, nor do I benefit from it on the Day when I meet You, be it permissible or prohibited, and grant me the ability to shun it and despise it seeking Your pleasure in its regard! O You Who Has mercy more than all those who are merciful! Lord! Praise is due to You for all Your generous gifts, and praise is due to You for all Your successive boons whereby You shielded me against evil consequences, and my deeds did not dissuade You from forgiving me, and You protected me and endeared to me the blessings with which You have blessed me and even continued to grant me out of Your generosity and forgiven the ugly sins I have revealed to You which I have committed! Lord! I pray You in every Attribute which is Yours and which obliges You to answer the plea when invoked! I pray You in the right of everyone who has a right with You of those who are Your servants to send blessings unto Muhammed, Your servant and Messenger, and unto his progeny, and to effect evil against anyone who plots evil schemes against me, to take away his hearing and sight from before him, from behind him, from his right side and from his left, and to keep him away from me through Your Might! O You with Whom there is no other god to call on! O You besides Whom there is no creator to be feared! And O You besides Whom there is no other god to be feared, nor a vizier to be approached, nor a care-taker to be bribed, nor a door-man to be called on! O You Who does not topple His generosity of giving except by giving even more, nor does He follow up His forgiveness of the sins except with more forgiveness! I pray You, Lord, to send blessings unto Muhammed and the progeny of Muhammed and to deal with me in a way worthy of You, for You are worthy of all piety and of forgiving. Lord! This is my plea, and from You do I seek the favor of a favorable response. This is my

endeavor and on You do I rely; and there is no power nor might except in Allāh, the Sublime, the Great.



الله نور السموات و الأرض...



PROPHET NOAH عليه السلام

Allāh tells us the following in the Holy Qur'ān:

We have surely sent Noah to his people, so he said: O people! Worship Allāh; you have no god other than Him; surely I fear for you the chastisement of a grievous Day. The chiefs of his people said: Most surely we see you in clear error. He said: O people! There is no error in me, but I am an apostle from the Lord of the worlds. I deliver to you the messages of my Lord, and I offer you good advice, and I know from Allāh what you do not know. What?! Do you wonder that a reminder has come to you from your Lord through a man from among you so that he may warn you, and so that you may guard (yourselves against evil), and so that mercy may be shown to you?! But they called him a liar, so We delivered him and those with him in the ark, and We drowned those who rejected Our communications; surely they were blind people. (7:59-64)

His full name is Noah عليه السلام son of Lamuch son of Methulach (or Enoch, prophet Idris عليه السلام) son of Yared son of Mahalalel son of Kenan son of Anosh son of Sheth (Seth) son of Ādam عليه السلام, father of mankind. He was born one hundred and twenty-six years after Ādam's death according to Jarīr at-Tabari and others.¹ How many sons did Noah عليه السلام have? They were Ham, Sam (or Shem), Japheth (Yafith), Yam (who is called by the People of the Book Canan and must not be confused with Canaan (Ken`ān) the Arab whose descendants constituted a majority in Palestine² by the year 1177

¹ al-Majlisi, *Bihār al-Anwār*, Vol. 11, p. 287.

² When the Greeks invaded Palestine in 449 B.C., they gave these Cananite Arabs who dwelt along the Mediterranean coast of Syria a new name:

B.C. after the outbreak of the Ma'rab Dam of Yemen),¹ and Abir (Eber). Which of these was the one who preferred to seek refuge on top of a mountain rather than respond to his father's call to join them in the ark? He was, according to most accounts, Yam. This means that Yam, or Canaan, did not leave any descendants because he drowned. But genealogists dispute this. Did Noah have any daughters at all? No names for Noah's daughters are provided for us by anthropologists and historians. The latter, however, concede that all the four daughters-in-law of Noah, including Yam's widow, were on board the ark.

If you trace the lifespan of each of his ancestors, you will have an idea about the time in history during which he lived. A chronology of his ancestors is available in Volume One of Tabari's *Tārīkh*. The chronology provided in the Book of Matthew (of the Old Testament) is, in our view, quite inaccurate. For example, it suggests that Noah lived for nine hundred and fifty years, whereas the Holy Qur'ān tells us that that was only the period during which Noah was preaching to his people. It neither includes the years he lived before inviting his people to mend their ways nor those he lived after the flood.

“Phoenicians” which means “people who work in the Tyrean purple,” a dye extracted from trees and used at the time to paint ships and boats. Phoenicians' Arab Semitic ancestors, as we are told on p. 25 of Vol. 1 of the sixth edition of *Civilization: Past & Present* (New York: Harper Collins Publishers, 1987 [1407 A.H.]), had migrated from Arabia early in the third millenium B.C.

¹Marab مارب came later in history to be the city capital of the Second Kingdom of Saba' (Sheba) which lasted from 650 to 115 B.C. The First Kingdom of Sheba ruled about one thousand years before the birth of Christ ﷺ. Balqees, or Bilqis, the Queen of Sheba, came to be the wife of prophet Solomon the Wise ﷺ who, according to scholars of biblical records, ruled from 970 - 935 B.C. Balqees was an Arab, a descendant of Saba' son of Ka'b son of Zayd son of Ḥimyar son of Yashjub son of Ya'rub son of Joktan (or Jochtan, as Qahtan قحطان, one of the fathers of the Arab nation, is called by Western scholars). Balqees is most often referred to as being “Ḥimyari,” a descendant of the Ḥimyar tribe. A large percentage of today's Yemenites are descendants of Ḥimyar.

In Arabic, Noah's name means: "he wails", laments, bemoans, mourns, weeps over others. Noah wept over his people's sins for the entire period during which he was admonishing them to renounce their evil ways, abandon idol worship, and accept Allāh as their Lord, a period of nine hundred and fifty years as the Holy Qur'ān tells us in verse 14 of Sūrat al-'Ankabūt:

And certainly We sent Noah to his people, so he remained among them a thousand years save fifty. And the deluge overtook them while they were unjust. (29:14)

Another meaning of his name is: one who *naḥa*, isolated, dissociated, or cleared himself from certain people; Noah cleared himself and his small band of believers from the rest of his people who disbelieved in his message. "Noah" is not his name but his attribute; it is an adjective, not a noun. What was, then, Noah's real name? A man from Syria once asked the Commander of the Faithful Imām Ali عليه السلام about Noah's name. The Imām عليه السلام told the inquirer that Noah's name was as-Sakan, and that he was called Noah because he wept over his people for nine hundred and fifty years.¹ Imām Ja'far as-Sādiq عليه السلام was asked once the same question, whereupon he said, "Noah's (real) name was Abd al-Ghaffār; he was called Noah because he mourned himself."² The same Imām عليه السلام was asked the same question on a different occasion, as Sa'īd ibn Janah, one of his companions, narrated. The Imām عليه السلام said, "Noah's name was Abd al-Mālik; he was called Noah because he wept for five hundred years."³ On yet another occasion, the Imām عليه السلام was asked the same question, and it was then that he gave Noah's name as "Abd al-A'lā." Why did the Imām thus give more than one name for Noah? Shaikh as-Sadūq answers this question by saying,

¹This is recorded on p. 435, Vol. 4, of at-Tibrisi's exegesis *Mujma' al-Bayān fī Tafsīr al-Qur'ān*.

²Refer to p. 21 of *Ilal al-Sharā'i'*.

³*Ibid.*, p. 21.

“Narrations with regard to Noah's name agree, not disagree, with one another, and they all convey that his name meant: ‘a servant of Allāh’; so, he is the servant of al-Ghaffār (the oft-Forgiving One), of al-Malik (the King), of al-A`lā (the most High).”¹

According to Wahab, as-Sadūq has indicated that Noah was a carpenter; his tanned face was thin and long, his eyes were large, his legs were thin but his thighs were huge, and so was his body in general. He is described by as-Sadūq as having been quite tall² with a large belly, a long beard and broad shoulders. He was very forceful when angry or when rebuking his people. When Allāh chose him to convey His message to the people, he was eight hundred and fifty years old. After the flood, he continued to live for seven hundred years; hence, he lived a total of two thousand and five hundred years. Ali ibn Amed quotes al-Asadi quoting Sahl quoting Abd al-Azeem al-Hassani as saying, as we are told by Shaikh as-Sadūq, “I heard (Imām) Ali ibn Muhammed al-`Askari عليه السلام saying that Noah lived for two thousand and five hundred years.”³

For three hundred years of the period during which Noah was admonishing his people, the latter used to bring their young sons to show them Noah and to warn them against listening to him. A father would say to his son: “Son! If you survive me, do not obey this

¹*Ibid.*

²On p. 102 of his book *Qaṣaṣ al-Anbiyā`*, Ibn Atheer quotes Bukhārī's and Muslim's *Ṣaḥīḥ* books citing the Messenger of Allāh saying, “When Allāh created Ādam, he created his length to be sixty yards, and his offspring kept getting shorter till our time.” The reader should not be surprised about this length. Humans were very tall, compared to the way they are now, and they used to live for thousands of years. Gradually, they became shorter and shorter and so was their lifespan.

³This quotation is recorded at least in two references: pp. 287-288, Vol. 11, of *Bihār al-Anwār* and p. 18 of *Ma`āni al-Akḥbār*, in addition to as-Sadūq's book *Ilal al-Sharāi`*.

madman.¹

Where did Noah عليه السلام Live?

One thousand years, according to p. 122, Vol. 1, of Tabari's *Tārīkh*, separate the time between our father Ādam and prophet Noah عليه السلام, a period during which all people followed one and the same creed, and all were on the right track of Islam by the token of the Qur'ānic verse saying,

(All) people used to be a single nation; so Allāh raised prophets as bearers of glad tidings and as warners, and He revealed with them the Book with the truth, so that it might judge between people in that in which they differed. (2:213)

Ibn 'Abbās is quoted in the same reference cited above saying, "Between Noah and Ādam, peace with them, there was a time period of ten generations during which people followed the right creed. Then they differed among themselves, so Allāh sent His prophets to them to bring them glad tidings and to warn them." He then went on to say that this is the meaning of the verse saying, "(All) people used to be a single nation..." cited above. Noah's long lifespan should not surprise anybody. "Abū Abdullāh" Imām Ja'far as-Sādiq عليه السلام is quoted by reporters of traditions and biographers as having said, "Noah's people used to live (at least) three hundred years each."²

Noah was the first of Ulul-'Azm prophets, and the first to warn people against a sure calamity. During his time, people were committing many different types of immoralities the like of which had never been seen before. These included wine drinking, distraction from worshipping Allāh, debauchery, and idol worship.

¹Quoted on p. 287, Vol. 11, of *Bihār al-Anwār* from the manuscript of *Ma'āni al-Akhbār*.

²This statement and the chain of its narrators are recorded on p. 289 of *Ikmāl ad-Deen wa Itmām al-Ni'ma*, and it is quoted on p. 289, Vol. 11, of *Bihār al-Anwār*.

Noah عليه السلام and Idol Worship

The names of the most renowned idols worshipped by Noah's people are listed in the Holy Qur'ān in verses such as this one:

Noah said: Lord! Surely they have disobeyed me and followed one whose wealth and children have increased only his loss. And they have planned a great plan. And they say: By no man should you leave your gods, nor should you leave Wudd, nor Suwā', nor Yaghūth, nor Ya'ūq, nor Nasr. (71:21-23)

In these verses, Noah عليه السلام complains to the Almighty against his people who preferred to disobey him and, instead, obeyed the wealthy among them. According to al-Qummi's *Tafsīr*, a number of pious and popular believers before the time of Noah died, so people grieved for them a great deal. Assuming a human form, Eblis brought them images of those popular and righteous individuals which they happily took to decorate their places of public meetings with. When winter came, they brought those images indoors. Another generation came and Eblis came again to say to them, "These are gods which your fathers used to worship," so they worshipped them, and a great number of them strayed, hence Noah's supplication to the Almighty to drown them.¹

Idol worship, then, dates back as far as the time of Noah, a practice which continued throughout Arabia till the advent of Islam in the sixth century A.D. According to the author of *Al-Durr al-Manthoor*, who is quoted by al-Bukhārī and is referred to by al-Tabatabāi in his *Tafsīr al-Mizān*,² Ibn 'Abbās said, "The idols and statues which the people of Noah used to worship came to be worshipped by the Arabs thereafter." Wudd, one of those idols, came to be worshipped by Banū Kalb who were residing at Dawmat al-Jandal; Suwā' became the god of Banū Huthayl; Yaghūth became the god of Banū Murād

¹Refer to p. 376, Vol. 2, of *Tafsīr al-Qummi*. The author is Abul-Hasan 'Alī ibn Ibrāhīm al-Qummi, one of the most distinguished scholars of the third Hijri century (9th century A.D.).

²Refer to pp. 38-39, Vol. 20, of *Tafsīr al-Mizān*.

then of Banū Ghateef who lived near Saba' (Sheba, Yemen). Banū Hamadan came to worship Ya'ooq, while Nasr was the god of Himyar tribesmen (ancestors of Queen Balqees who married prophet Solomon ﷺ). These idols were drowned in the flood, and these Arab tribes carved new ones modelled after them depending on their knowledge of such idols, the knowledge which was orally transmitted from one generation to another since the time of the flood and from those who survived it.

Noah's Ark

Scholars differ with regard to the number of those who accompanied Noah in the ark. Ibn `Abbās says that they, including their women, were eighty in number. Imām as-Sādiq ﷺ, Abū Abdullāh Ja'far ibn Muhammed ﷺ, is quoted in *Rawḍat al-Kāfi* as having said, "Noah built his ark by hand at the place where Kūfa's mosque now stands. He had to bring wood from a distance till he finished it." Then the Imām ﷺ turned to his left, pointed to Ibn al-Hakeem's house and added, "The Euphrates used to flow there." Having said so, he turned to one of his companions, namely al-Mufaddal, and said, "O Mufaddal! It was there that the idols of Noah's people were placed: Yaghūth, Ya'ooq, and Nasr."¹ This means that Noah lived in the southern part of today's Iraq, in what is now known as Kūfa. This same city became during the caliphate of Imām Ali ﷺ the capital of the Islamic world, being in the center. It was in its Grand Mosque, which still stands, renovated and great, till now, that the caliph and Imām ﷺ was martyred. The above quotation testifies to the fact that exists in the famous Sumerian epic of Gilgamesh, an ancient Babylonian version of the story of the flood written in Akkadian, the language then used in northern Babylonia. This epic was unearthed by Western archaeologists excavating at Nineveh in the library of the Assyrian king Ashurbanipal who ruled from 668 to 627 B.C. Five short poems written in Sumerian² (the language used in

¹*Ibid.*, p. 39.

²The Sumerians developed a cuneiform script alphabet of 600 simplified signs. Earlier, they had developed a written language using thousands of picture signs, or ideograms. The Gilgamesh legend and the new Sumerian

southern Babylonia) making reference to this epic were rendered by some anthropologists to the second millennium B.C. James Trager, author of *The People's Chronology*, however, places the Gilgamesh epic in the third, not the second, millennium. Gilgamesh was king of Erech (Uruk), today's town of al-Warkā' in Iraq. In this epic, reference is made to one man who survived the flood. His name in Sumerian is Utnapishtim. In the *Cultural Atlas of Mesopotamia and the Ancient Near East*, we read the following:

A later tradition made Ubar-tutu the father of Ziusudra (or Utnapishtim), the Babylonian Noah. Ut-napishtim, according to the Epic of Gilgamesh, built a boat on the advice of the god Enki and thus survived the deluge that had been sent by the gods to destroy humankind.¹

Two conclusions concern us from researching the Babylonian Gilgamesh epic; they are: 1) The time of the flood must have taken place at least shortly before the third millennium B.C., that is to say, probably 3200 or 3500 B.C., although in the chronological table provided in *Cradle of Civilization* by Samuel Noah Kramer and the editors of Time-Life Books, the earliest settlements by farmers in Babylon are dated 5000 B.C. whereas the Gilgamesh epic is given the approximate date of 2600 B.C.; 2) Utnapishtim could be the Sumerian equivalent of the hero of our story: prophet Noah عليه السلام. Babylonian languages, according to the New Webster's Dictionary,² are Semitic³. The Babylonians were descendants of Sam son of Noah. *Cradle of Civilizations* tells us that from the land of Akkad

alphabet are both based on those ideograms.

¹Michael Roaf, *Cultural Atlas of Mesopotamia and the Ancient Near East* (Oxford, England: Musterlin House, 1990 [1410 A.H.]), p. 84.

²The edition consulted is the large Deluxe Encyclopedic Edition published in 1984 (1404 A.H.) by the Delar Publishing Company, Inc.

³Louis al-Ma'luf, the Lebanese Jesuit author of the Arabic-Arabic dictionary *Al-Munjid* (published in Beirut, Lebanon, in 1973 (1393 A.H.) by Dar el-Mashriq), however, says they are non-Semitic.

came the name Akkadian given to the Semitic language that came into common use in Mesopotamia.¹

What Language Did Noah ﷺ Speak?

The answer to this question poses a very serious challenge to any researcher. One is tempted to believe that Noah ﷺ spoke some type of Arabic simply because his name or, rather, characteristic, is derived from *nawḥ* or *niyāḥ* which means in Arabic: crying, weeping or mourning. Our father's name "Ādam" is derived from the Arabic *adeem al-ard*, that is, an earthly composite. Yet if you carefully study the traditions quoted in al-Majlisi's encyclopedia titled *Bihār al-Anwār*, you will come across references to Noah speaking Syriac (eastern Aramaic). But Syriac neither existed in the fourth nor in the third millennium before Christ, nor was it spoken by the Babylonians; rather, it was the language developed by their offspring, the Chaldeans (or Caldeans), also known as the neo-Babylonians. They inhabited Chaldea,² southern Babylonia. In the fifth century B.C., they controlled all of Babylonia, establishing the Chaldean or neo-Babylonian empire. Their most famous king, Nebuchadnezzar, who took control in 604 B.C., conquered Jerusalem after having defeated the Egyptians in Syria. He destroyed Jerusalem in 586 B.C. and carried several thousand Jews captive to Babylonia. One of the descendants of those captives was the great hero of next Chapter's story: Abraham ﷺ.³ It was from Chaldea

¹Samuel Noah Kramer and The Editors of Time-Life Books, *Cradle of Civilization* (New York: Time, Inc.), pp. 38-39.

²This name is derived from settlers known as the Kaldu tribes. Ancient Greek and Hebrew use the name Chaldea to designate Babylonia.

³This should not mislead the reader into thinking that Abraham, peace with him, was a Jew. The descendants of Ya'qub ﷺ, Jacob, who is also called Israel, are called "Israelites," and these are classified by non-Muslims as "Jews". In Islam, all prophets of God, from Ādam to Muhammed ﷺ, including, of course, Abraham, peace with them all, are considered as Muslims, that is, people who surrender to the will of God. Verse 67 of Sūrat Āli 'Imrān (Ch. 3, Family of 'Imrān) reads: "Abraham was neither a Jew nor a Christian but an upright man, a Muslim, and he

that both Hebrew and Arabic languages descended. Chaldean regions such as Bit-Yakin (Bayt al-Yaqīn) never changed their Arabic names ever since. Merodach-baladan (as he is called in the Bible) or Marduk-apla-iddina II, as he was called in Chaldean, was chief of Bit-Yakin and came to be the ruler of Babylon.¹ The language spoken by Noah عليه السلام could not have been Syriac. Aramaic, one of the Syriac dialects, was the language spoken by Jesus Christ عليه السلام, a language which still exists and is spoken even today by a small number of Syrian Christians.

Noah's Character and Conduct

No other prophet was named as such before or after him, and he was named so because of the extent of his grieving; he was the first of the prophets who have brought the *Sharī`a*; he was the first caller sent by Allāh Almighty; he was the first to warn against polytheism; he was the first to be persecuted by his nation because of rejecting his call; he caused all the inhabitants of the earth to perish because of his supplication. It is said that Allāh Almighty inspired him after the flood, "I have created My creation and ordered them to obey Me, but they opted to go against My will, so My Wrath descended on them, and I caused even those who did not disobey me to be tormented just as those who did, and I have caused all My creation to suffer because of the sins of the descendants of Ādam. I have sworn by My Own Self that I shall never torment anyone among My creation in this same way [by flood], but I shall grant authority to various nations from among My servants, then I shall reward them according to their deeds when they are assembled to Me." Noah lived longer than any other prophet. He is referred to as the eldest among the prophets and the wise man among the messengers. His miracle is in his own self because he lived very long without losing a tooth or his strength weakening. No other messenger exerted as much effort in delivering the message as he had. He used to call on his people night and day, openly and secretly, and no other prophet received from his people as much beating, chiding, and all types of

was not one of the polytheists."

¹Michael Roaf, *Cultural Atlas of Mesopotamia*, p. 182.

harm and rudeness as he did. For these reasons, the Almighty has said, “And the people of Noah before; surely they were transgressing people” (Qur’ān, 51:46). He is also considered next only to the Chosen One Muhammed, peace and blessings with him and his progeny, with regard to the covenant and the inspiration; Allāh Almighty has said, “And We took from the prophets their covenant, and from you, and from Noah” (Qur’ān, 33:7). The Almighty has also said, “Surely We have revealed to you as We revealed to Noah and to the prophets after him” (Qur’ān, 4:163).

In as far as resurrection is concerned, Noah is the first person for whom the earth shall open up on the Day of Judgment, only after Muhammed ﷺ, peace and blessings of Allāh with him and his progeny. The Almighty had given him the ark and taught him how to make it; He protected it and its cargo and permitted him to sail over the water, and He even called him a grateful servant of His: “... the offspring of those whom We carried with Noah; surely he was a grateful servant” (Qur’ān, 17:3). The Almighty honored him with security and bliss, saying, “O Noah! Descend with peace from Us and blessings on you and on the people from among those with you” (Qur’ān, 11:48).

Muhammed ibn Ka`b al-Qarzi has said, “Every believing man and woman had entered into that peace and remained therein till the Day of Judgment. Noah made his offspring the only survivors; therefore, he is the first of [post-flood] humans and the origin of the human race.” Al-Hassan has quoted Samrah ibn Jandab saying that the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ has said, “Three sons were born for Noah ﷺ: Sam, Ham and Yafith (Japeth). Sam is the father of all Arabs, Persians, and Romans. Ham is the father of all the Black people. Yafith is the father of all the Turks, Gog and Magog.”

When Noah ﷺ and his offspring descended from the ark, he divided the earth among his three sons. He gave to Sam the center of the earth, where Jerusalem, the Nile, the Tigris and the Euphrates, Sehon and Jehon are, which is the area between Qaysoon up to the east of the Nile, and between the flow of the south up to the flow of the north. To Ham he gave the area west of the Nile and the lands

between the flow of the southern wind and beyond it up to Sehon to the flow of the west wind. To Yafith he gave the area from [Syrian] Qaysoon Mountain [also known locally as “Qasiyyoon”] and beyond it up to the foothills of Saba' [Yemen]. This is the explanation of the verse saying, “And We made his offspring the survivors, and We perpetuated to him (praise) among the later generations. Peace and salutation to Noah among the nations. Thus do We surely reward the doers of good. Surely he was of Our believing servants” (Qur’ān, 37:77-81).

Noah عليه السلام in the Holy Qur’ān

In addition to the verses cited above, the Holy Qur’ān records the following supplications of Noah عليه السلام:

Lord! I seek refuge in You against asking You for that of which I have no knowledge, and if You do not forgive me and have mercy on me, I will surely be among the losers. (11:47)

And certainly We sent Noah to his people, and he said: O my people! Worship Allāh; you have no god other than Him; will you not then guard (yourselves against evil)? And the chiefs of those who disbelieved from among his people said: He is nothing but a mortal like yourselves who desires to have superiority over you, and had Allāh pleased, He could certainly have sent down angels. We have not heard of this among our fathers of yore: he is only a madman; so bear with him for some time. He said: O Lord! Help me against their calling me a liar. So We revealed to him, saying: Make the ark before Our eyes and (according to) Our revelation, and when Our command is given and the valley overflows, take into it of every kind a pair, two, and your followers, except those among them against whom the word has already gone forth, and do not speak to Me in respect of the unjust; surely they shall be drowned. And when you are firmly seated, you and those with you, in the ark, say: All praise is due to Allāh Who delivered us from the unjust people. And say: O Lord! Cause me to disembark a blessed disembarking, and You are the best to cause a disembarking. Most surely there are signs in this, and most surely We are ever trying (men) (23:23-30).

And Noah said: Lord! Do not leave on the earth any dweller from among the unbelievers, for if You leave them, they will surely lead

Your servants astray and will not beget any but immoral, ungrateful (offspring); Lord! Forgive me and my parents and whoever enters my house believing, and the believing men and women, and do not increase the unjust in aught but destruction! (71:26-28).

He said: Lord! Surely my people charge me of telling a lie! Therefore judge between me and them with a (just) judgment, and deliver me and the believers with me. So We delivered him and those with him in the laden ark, then We drowned the rest afterwards. Most surely there is a sign in this, but most of them do not believe. And most surely your Lord is the Mighty, the Merciful. (26:117-122)

What is “at-Tannoor”?

Reference to *at-tannoor* exists in 11:40 which states: “When Our command came and water came forth from the *tannoor*, We said: Carry in it two of all things, a pair, and your own family, except those against whom the word has already gone forth, and those who believe.” According to most people, *at-tannoor* means the earth's surface; so, the meaning would be: “... and the earth gushed out of all its parts, so much so that even the *tannoor*, the surface of the earth, gushed forth with water.” Ibn al-Athīr, on p. 95 of his book *Qasas al-Anbiyā'*, quotes Imām Ali ibn Abū Tālib عليه السلام as saying, “The meaning of *al-tannoor* is daybreak and the light-bringing dawn, that is, its aurora and light rays.” The verse in question will then mean: It is then that you should carry in it two pairs of everything.

The story of Noah عليه السلام should teach everyone that no matter how long it takes, the end of those who do not worship the Almighty will be truly tragic. Those who attribute a son to Him, those who remember Him maybe once a week or only on certain occasions, and those who shun Him altogether..., will all sooner or later come to realize that there is a price for being on earth, a purpose, a mission to fulfill, and that their God did not create them then did He forget about them. He will hold them responsible for each and every word they uttered, for each and every deed they did. And His reckoning will not be easy at all...

INVOCATION BY NOAH ﷺ

These invocations are cited from the Holy Qur'ān:

Lord! I seek refuge in You against asking You for that of which I have no knowledge; and if You do not forgive me and have mercy on me, I will surely be among the losers (11:47).

And certainly We sent Noah to his people, and he said: O my people! Worship Allāh; you have no god other than Him; will you not then guard (yourselves against evil)? And the chiefs of those who disbelieved from among his people said: He is nothing but a mortal like yourselves who desires that he may have superiority over you, and had Allāh pleased, He could certainly have sent down angels. We have not heard of this among our father of yore: he is only a madman; so bear with him for some time. He said: O my Lord! Help me against their calling me a liar. So We revealed to him, saying: Make the ark before Our eyes and (according to) Our revelation, and when Our command is given and the valley overflows, take into it of every kind a pair, two, and your followers, except those among them against whom the word has gone forth, and do not speak to Me in respect of those who are unjust; surely they shall be drowned. And when you are firmly seated, you and those with you, in the ark, say: All praise is due to Allāh Who delivered us from the unjust people. And say: O Lord! Cause me to disembark a blessed disembarking, and You are the best to cause a disembarking. Most surely there are signs in this, and most surely We are ever trying (men) (23:23-30).

And Noah said: Lord! Do not leave on the earth any dweller from among the unbelievers, for if You leave them, they will surely lead Your servants astray and will not beget any but immoral, ungrateful (offspring); Lord! Forgive me and my parents and whoever enters my house believing, and the believing men and women, and do not increase the unjust in aught but destruction! (71:26-28).

He said: Lord! Surely my people charge me of telling a lie! Therefore judge between me and them with a (just) judgment, and deliver me and those who are with me of the believers. So We delivered him and those with him in the laden ark, then We

drowned the rest afterwards. Most surely there is a sign in this, but most of them do not believe. And most surely your Lord is the Mighty, the Merciful (26:117-122).



PROPHET HŪD ﷺ

The Almighty has said,

And to `Ād (We sent) their brother Hud. He said: O my people! Worship Allāh; you have no god other than Him; will you not then guard (yourselves against evil)? The chiefs of those who disbelieved from among his people said: Most surely we see you in folly, and most surely we think you are one of the liars. He said: O my people! There is no folly in me, but I am a messenger of the Lord of the worlds. I deliver to you the messages of my Lord and I am a faithful adviser to you. What?! Do you wonder that a reminder has come to you from your Lord through a man from among you so that he might warn you?! And remember when He made you successors after Noah's people and increased you in excellence of make; therefore, remember the blessings of Allāh so that you may be successful. They said: Have you come to us so that we may worship Allāh alone and give up [the worship of] what our fathers used to worship? Then bring us what you threaten us with, if you are of the truthful. He said: Indeed uncleanness and Wrath from your Lord have descended on you! What?! Do you dispute with me about names which you and your fathers have given? Allāh has not sent any authority for them; wait, then; I, too, with you am waiting. So We delivered him and those with him by mercy from Us, and We cut off the last of those who rejected Our communications and were not believers (7:65-72).

Prophet Hud is son of Arfkhshath son of Sam son of Noah ﷺ. He belonged to an Arab tribe called `Ād عاد, named after `Ād son of Aws son of Sam son of Noah ﷺ. They inhabited the Ahqaf (sand dunes) area separating Oman from Hadhramaut, in a land overlooking the Red sea called al-Shahr شهر, and the name of their valley is Mugheeth. According to Imām Muhammed al-Bāqir ﷺ, they were very tall people; anyone of them could hit a mountain with his bare hand and chop a piece of it.¹

According to the *Tafsīr* (exegesis) book of Ali ibn Ibrahim, `Ād's land was in the desert, and they were growing many trees, including

¹al-Jazā'iri, *An-Noor al-Mubeen*, p. 130.

a good number of palms. They used to live very long. They worshipped idols, so Allāh sent them Hud to invite them to Islam, but they refused and subjected him to a great deal of their harm. Allāh, therefore, kept the rain from falling on their land for seven years till the drought caused a famine. Hud was a farmer who used to water the farms.

A group of people came to his house once seeking to meet with him. A one-eyed woman whose hair was mostly gray came out to them. "Who are you?" she asked them. "We are people of such-and-such land, and our land has been hit by drought; so, we have come to Hud to request him to supplicate to Allāh on our behalf so that rain may fall on us and hence our land may become fertile again." She said, "Had Hud's supplication been heeded, he would have supplicated for himself! His plants have been drought burnt." "Where is he?" they asked her. She told them where they could find him, so they went there and said to him, "O prophet of Allāh! Our land has been afflicted with drought; so, ask Allāh to cause the rain to fall on it." Hud did, indeed, perform prayers followed by a supplication for them then said to them, "Go back, for rain has already fallen there." They said to him, "O prophet of Allāh! We have seen in your house something strange, a one-eyed woman most of whose hair is gray..," and they proceeded to inform him of the conversation between them and her. "That was my wife," said Hud, "and I invoke Allāh to let her live long." They were surprised to hear such an answer from him, so they asked him why. He said, "Allāh never created a believer without creating an enemy for him to harm him. She is my enemy. Having an enemy over whom I have control is better than facing one who controls me."¹

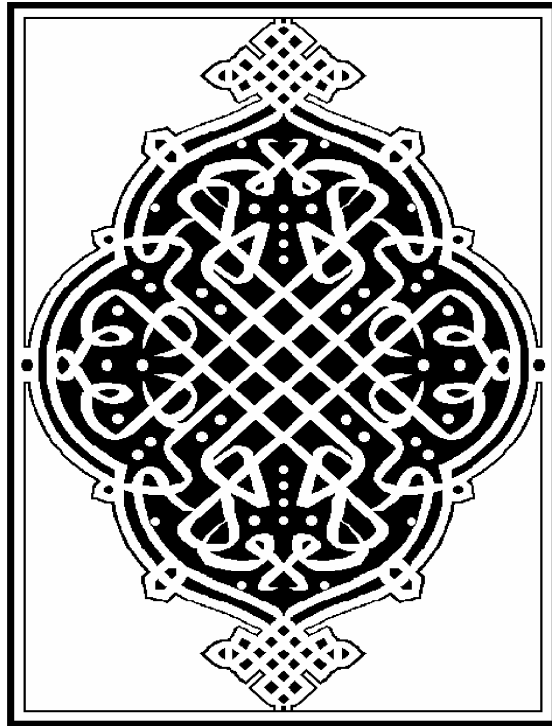
The people of `Ād were the first to worship idols after Noah's flood, and they had three idols: Sadd, Thamūd, and Hara. Reference to Hud عليه السلام in the Holy Qur'ān exists in seven places, and the Almighty has revealed an entire chapter named after him, i.e. Sūrat Hud عليه السلام.

¹*Ibid.*, pp. 131-132.

INVOCATION BY PROPHET HUD ﷺ

As is the case with the other invocations, this text is quoted from the Holy Qur'ān which states the following:

Surely I rely on Allāh, my Lord and yours; there is no living creature but He holds it by its forelock; surely my Lord is on the right path. But if you turn back, then indeed I have delivered to you the message with which I have been sent to you, and my Lord will bring another people in your place, and you cannot harm Him in the least; surely my Lord is the Preserver of all things. And when Our decree came to pass, We delivered Hud and those who believed with him with mercy from Us, and We delivered them from a severe chastisement (11:56-58).



ABRAHAM عليه السلام, THE FRIEND OF ALLĀH

His full name is Abraham عليه السلام son of Tarih son of Nahur son of Sarugh son of Arghu son of Faligh son of Abir (Eber) son of Shalikh son of Kenan son of Arfkhshath son of Sam son of Noah عليه السلام. The name given to Abraham's father by the latter's father, Tarih, was Abraham, but when Tarih came to be the custodian over the treasures of Nemrud's gods, he was named Azar. Azar, Abraham's father, was an adherent to Nemrud's creed, idol-worship. His name is mentioned in the Holy Qur'ān in verse 74 of Sūrat al-A`ām: "Abraham said to his sire Azar, 'Do you take idols for gods? Surely I see you and your people in manifest error!'"

But there are those who argue saying that no prophet is born to an unbelieving father, that prophets are begotten to God-fearing parents. Based on such reasoning, there are those who say that Azar was not Abraham's father but uncle, and Allāh knows best.

Abraham عليه السلام was born in Babylon during the reign of Nemrud (or Nimrod) son of Kenan. The time lapse between the flood and the birth of Abraham عليه السلام was one thousand two hundred and sixty years, that is, three thousand and thirty-seven years after the creation of Ādam, peace with him. Nemrud is son of Kenan son of Sinharib son of Korsh son of Ham son of Noah عليه السلام. According to one tradition, "The earth was ruled in its entirety by four persons: two of them were believers and the other two were unbelievers. The believers were Sulayman (Solomon) son of Dāwūd (David) عليه السلام and Dhul-Qarnain (Double-Horns). Some scholars believe that Double-Horns was Alexander the Great of Macedonia. The disbelievers were Nemrud and Bukhtnazzar. Nemrud was the first to crown himself and to oppress in the land. He even ordered people to worship him. He had in his service soothsayers and star-gazers. The latter said to him once, "This year, a boy will be born in your domain who will change the creed of the inhabitants of the earth; your own annihilation and the termination of your rule will take place at his hands." It is said that they had found such a prophecy written down

in the books of the prophets. As-Suddi¹ has said, “Nemrud saw once in a vision that a star appeared, eclipsing the light of both the sun and the moon, so much so that none of their lights remained. Nemrud was frightened very much, and he called to him the wizards, the soothsayers, and the fortune-tellers, and he ordered them to interpret his vision. They said, ‘There will be a newborn in your area this year who will cause your annihilation and that of your family;’ therefore, he ordered every male born in that area in that year to be killed. He also required men to be separated from their women, placing a trusted guard over each group of ten. When a woman reached her menstruation period, he would permit them to mingle if he trusted that they would not cohabit, and when she was clean, he would separate her from her man. Azar went back home to find his woman clean, and he cohabited with her while she was clean, thus Abraham was conceived.”

As-Suddi says, “Nemrud ordered the men to camp, and he separated them from their women out of fear of the new-born, and he kept doing so for some time. Then he had to return to the city for some government business, and he did not trust anyone among his people to watch over them except Azar. He called him and said to him, ‘I need a favor of you. I would like to ask you to do something for me. I have not asked for you except due to my trust in you. I ask you to swear that you will not come near your wife nor cohabit with her.’ Azar said, ‘I am more zealous about my faith than that!’ So he asked him to carry out some mission for him, then he sent him away. Nemrud entered the city and took care of his business. After that, Azar sought permission to go home to see how his family was doing. When he looked at Abraham's mother, he could not control himself, so he cohabited with her, and Abraham ﷺ was thus conceived.”

¹His name is Isma’il ibn Abdur-Rahmān, and he was born in Kūfa and was popularly known as as-Suddi. He learned the Qur’ān from Anas ibn Mālik and Ibn Abbās. He is regarded as one of the most reliable commentators of the Holy Qur’ān. There are two commentators with the nickname “as-Suddi”. Abdur Rahman is known as as-Suddi al-Kabeer, the Senior, whereas his grandson became known as as-Suddi Junior. His year of birth is unknown, but he is said as having died in 127 A.H./745 A.D.

Ibn `Abbās has said that when Abraham's mother became pregnant, the priests told Nemrud that the boy they were warning him of was already conceived that very night, so Nemrud ordered all newborns to be slaughtered. When Abraham's mother was about to deliver, she went out fearing someone would come to know about her birth and kill her baby. Having given birth to him, she put him at the bank of a dry river, wrapping him in a piece of cloth and putting him in a thicket of reeds. Then she returned home and told her husband about their son and his whereabouts. His father went out to the place and dug up a vault near the river, placed him in it, then closed its entrance with a rock for fear of being eaten by wild beasts. His mother used to visit him there from time to time.

Ibn Ishāq has said that Azar inquired of Abraham's mother as to what she had done about her pregnancy. She said, "I gave birth to a boy and he died." He believed her and did not press it any further. As for Abraham عليه السلام, during each day that passed, his growth was equal to that of a month, and each month was equal to a year, and he did not stay in the vault for more than fifteen days before coming to his father Azar to tell him that he was his son. Azar's wife told him what she had done in his regard, and Azar was quite happy about it.

When Abraham عليه السلام reached his youth while still in the vault, he asked his mother, "Who is my god?" She said, "I am. He asked her, "Then who is your god?" She said, "Your father." Then he asked her, "Then who is my father's god?" She said, "Nemrud." He asked once more, "Then who is Nemrud's god?" She said, "Hold your tongue, and he did. When she went back home, she said to her husband, "Do you remember the talk about the boy who, as gossip has it, will change the religion of the inhabitants of the earth? It is your son. She told him about their dialogue, so Azar came to see him. Abraham عليه السلام asked him, "Who is my god, father?" He said, "Your mother." Then he asked him, "Who is my mother's god?" He said, "I am." Then he asked him, "Then who is your god?" He answered, "Nemrud." So he asked him, "Then who is Nemrud's god?" Thereon he slapped him and told him to be silent. To this does the Almighty and the Exalted God refer when He says, "And

certainly We gave Abraham his rectitude before, and We knew him fully well” (Qur’ān, 21:51). Then he asked his parents to take him out of the vault, and they did. They set out with him till sunset, so Abraham ﷺ looked at the camels, cattle and horses being brought back home and he asked his father, “What are these?” He said, “They are camels, horses and cattle.” He asked him, “These have to have a god who created them.”

Abraham ﷺ then looked and contemplated about the creation of the heavens and the earth and said, “The One Who created me and sustained me, Who provided me with food and water, is surely my God; I have no other god but He.” Then he saw Jupiter, or Zeus, and that night was the last night of the month, so he saw that star before seeing the moon. He said, “This is my god!” Reference to this incident exists in the Holy Qur’ān in these verses:

So when the night overshadowed him, he saw a star; said he: “This my God.” But when it set, he said: “I do not love those that set.” Then when he saw the moon rising, he said, “This is my God.” When it, too, set, he said: “If my Lord does not guide me, I will certainly be of the erring people.” Then, when he saw the sun rising, he said: “This is my Lord! This is the greatest.” But when it (too) set, he said, “O my people! Surely I am clear of what you set up (with Allāh). Surely I have turned myself, being upright, wholly to Him Who originated the heavens and the earth, and I am not of the polytheists” (Qur’ān, 6:76-79).

It is said that Azar used to make idols; so, when he took Abraham ﷺ into his family (to raise him), he used to make idols and give them to Abraham ﷺ to sell them. Abraham ﷺ used to go and call out, “Who wishes to buy something which brings him harm and which does not bring him anything good?!” Nobody, of course, would buy anything from him; therefore, when the merchandise did not sell, he would go to a river and knock off their heads and say, “Drink! Nobody wants to buy you!” He was ridiculing his people as well as the inhabitants of his village, deriding their misguidance and ignorance, so much so that the talk about him finding fault with them and ridiculing them became widespread among his people and the inhabitants of his village. His people, therefore, started arguing

with him about his creed, and to them he said, according to the Holy Qur'ān, "Do you dispute with me regarding Allāh while He has indeed guided me?" (Qur'ān, 6:80). The argument is portrayed in the verses which follow this one and it ends with this verse, "And this was Our argument which We gave Abraham against his people; We exalt in dignity whomsoever We please; surely your Lord is Wise, Knowing" (Qur'ān, 6:83). He finally outwitted them in his argument, then he invited Azar to embrace his creed, saying, "O father! Why do you worship what neither hears nor sees, nor does it avail you in the least?" (Qur'ān, 19:42). And the story goes on, but Azra refused to respond favorably to his invitation. Then Abraham ﷺ started denouncing their form of worship publicly, making his creed known to them. He said, "Have you then considered what you have been worshipping, you and your ancient sires? Surely these are enemies to me, but not so the Lord of the world" (Qur'ān, 26:75-77). So they asked him whom he worshipped, and he said, "I worship the Lord of the worlds." They asked him, "Do you mean Nemrud?" He said, "No; He is the One ... 'Who created me, then He has shown me the way'" (Qur'ān, 26:78), up to the end of the story, thus making his call widespread among the people till the tyrant Nemrud came to know about it.

Nemrud ordered Abraham ﷺ to be brought to him. Nemrud said to him, "O Abraham! Have you seen your god Who has sent you, to Whose worship you have been inviting people, Whose might you have been revering, and to which you have been referring, claiming He is greater than everyone else? Who is He?" Abraham ﷺ said, "My Lord is the One Who brings life to the dead and Who causes the living to die." Nemrud said, "I bring life to the dead and I cause the living to die!" Abraham ﷺ asked him, "How do you bring life to the dead and cause the living to die?" He said, "I take two men condemned to be killed according to my command, and I kill one of them, thus causing him to die, then I pardon the other, thus leaving him as though I brought life back to him." Abraham ﷺ then said to him, "Allāh brings the sun from the east; so, cause it to come out from the west!" Nemrud was then baffled, and he could not answer him, being overtaken by his argument. To this does the Almighty and the Exalted One refer when He says, "Thus he who disbelieved

was confounded” (Qur’ān, 2:258).

After that, Abraham عليه السلام wanted to prove the weakness of the idols which his folks used to worship rather than Allāh, and their inability to do anything, bringing his argument against them home. He was waiting for an opportunity to do so and to devise a stratagem to achieve his objective.

As-Suddi has said, “They used to have an annual feast when they would come out and assemble. On returning, they would enter their temples and prostrate before their idols prior to going back home. When that feast approached, Abraham's father said to his son, ‘If you decide to come out with us to celebrate our feast, you will certainly like our faith,’ so Abraham عليه السلام went out with them. Having walked for a short distance, he fell and said that he was sick and his leg hurt him, so they left him thus and passed him by. To their last ones he swore, ‘By Allāh! I will certainly do something to your idols after you go away, turning back!’ (21:57). And they heard him say so.”

Mujāhid and Qatādah have said, “Abraham عليه السلام was not loud when he said so, and nobody heard him except one of their men, and that man was the one who revealed his scheme. Then Abraham عليه السلام went back from that highway and headed in the direction of the temple which housed their gods. He found it at a river bank. Facing the river a huge idol stood next to a smaller one at the gate that faced the river. He found that they had left food before their gods with the purpose to have it blessed by their gods on their return, and that they would then eat it. When Abraham عليه السلام looked at the idols and at the food offerings before them, he sarcastically said, ‘Why don't you eat?!’ Since they did not answer him, he said, ‘What is the matter with you that you do not speak?’ *Then he turned against them secretly, smiting them with the right hand* (Qur’ān, 37:92-93). So he kept smashing them with an axe in his hand, sparing only the largest of the idols on whose neck he hung the axe, then he went out. When people came back from their feast, they went to the place where they had kept their idols, and when they saw them in such a condition, they said, ‘Who has done this to our gods? Most surely he is one of

the unjust.’ They said: ‘We heard a youth called Abraham speaking [ill] of them’ (Qur’ān, 21:59-60), that is, ‘We think he is the one who did it.’”

The news of the incident reached Nemrud the tyrant and the dignitaries among his people. “Said they: Then bring him before the eyes of the people, perhaps they may bear witness” (Qur’ān, 21:61) that he was indeed the one who did so. It is the view of Qatādah and as-Suddi that they hated to penalize him without a clear evidence. Al-Dahaak says that probably they wanted them to witness what type of penalty they would inflict on him. Having brought him, they asked him, “Have you done this to our gods, O Abraham?” He said: Surely (someone) has done it; the chief of them is this, so ask them, if they can speak at all!” (Qur’ān, 21:62-63). The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ has said, “Abraham never told a lie except on three occasions all of which were for the sake of defending Allāh Almighty: when he said that he was sick [and his leg hurt him], when he said that it was done by the largest [of the idols], and when he told both the king who tried to harm him and Sarah that the latter was his sister.” Anyway, when Abraham ﷺ said the above, they admitted that they were doing that man injustice by asking him who did it while their gods were there and they should have asked them instead. His people said that they realized his point, and that they were themselves the wrongdoers for worshipping the small idols together with the big one. They lowered their heads in puzzlement, and they knew that they could neither speak nor harm anyone, so they said, “Certainly you know that they do not speak” (Qur’ān, 21:65). When the argument was clearly in favor of Abraham, he asked them, “What?! Do you then worship besides Allāh what brings you no benefit at all, nor does it harm you?! Fie on you and on what you worship besides Allāh! What?! Do you not then understand?!” (Qur’ān, 21:66-67). When his argument prevailed, and they were dumbfounded, they said, “Burn him and help your gods, if you are going to do (anything at all)” (Qur’ān, 21:68).

When Nemrud and his people unanimously agreed to burn Abraham ﷺ, they confined him to a house, and they built a structure like an animal shed. To this, the Almighty refers when He says, “They said:

Build him a furnace, then cast him into the burning fire” (Qur’ān, 37:97).

Ibn Ishāq says, “They kept gathering fire timber for one month. Having gathered enough, they lit the fire in every corner of the timber, and the fire was so strong that if a bird happened to pass above it, it would be burnt by its extreme heat. Then they came to Abraham عليه السلام and took him to the top of that structure and tied him up. Then, according to the suggestion of Eblis the accursed, they used a mangonel and put him in it, with his hands thus tied. The heavens, the earth, the mountains, the angels and the creation all of it cried out in one voice and invoked Allāh saying, ‘Lord! After Abraham عليه السلام, there will be none to worship You on Your earth, O Lord! So, should he be burnt in the fire? Permit us, Lord, to help him!’ The Exalted and Almighty said to them, ‘If he asks one of you to help him, lend him help, for I have granted you My permission to do so, but if he does not invoke anyone but Me, then I know about him more than anyone else, and I am his patron; so, I shall deal with him.’ When they wanted to hurl him into the fire, the angel of water came to him and said, ‘If you wish, I can put out the fire for you, for all the treasures of the waters and the rain are in my hands!’ The custodian of the wind, too, came to him and said, ‘If you wish, I can make the fire fly in the air!’ Abraham عليه السلام said to both of them, ‘I have no need for either one of you.’ Then he raised his head towards the heavens and said, ‘Lord! You are the One and Only God in the heavens and on earth! There is none on earth who worships You besides me.’”

Al-Mu’tamir quotes Ubayy ibn Ka’b¹ citing al-Arqam saying that

¹His full name is Ubayy ibn Qays ibn Zaid ibn Mu’āwiyah ibn ‘Amr ibn Mālik ibn an-Najjār, and his mother is said to be Ḥudaila. He was one of the *ṣaḥāba* of the Prophet of Islam ﷺ, Allāh be pleased with the righteous ones from among them, and he is quoted by main narrators of *ḥadīth* such as ‘Abādah ibn aṣ-Ṣāmit, Ibn ‘Abbās and Abdullāh ibn Khabāb. He is also quoted by his son at-Tufayl ibn Ubayy. Reference to him is made by at-Tirmidhi who cites some of the traditions which Ubayy had narrated about the Prophet ﷺ. He also was one of the Prophet’s appointed judges and one of his scribes. His date of birth is unknown, and controversy revolves

having been tied up and was prepared to be hurled into the fire, Abraham عليه السلام said, "There is no god but You! Glory to You, Lord of the worlds! To Your is all Praise due, and Yours is all the domain; there is no partner with You!"

Then they hurled him into the fire using the mangonel from a good distance. Gabriel visited him and said, "O Abraham! Do you need any favor at all?" Abraham عليه السلام said, "From you, I do not." So Gabriel said to him, "Then invoke your Lord." Thereon Abraham عليه السلام said, "Suffices me regarding my quest is that He knows my condition; so, Allāh suffices me, and Great indeed is the One in Whom I have placed my trust." It is said that Abraham عليه السلام was saved because of saying, "Allāh suffices me, and Great indeed is the One in Whom I have placed my trust (*ḥasbiya-Allāh wa ni'mal wakeel*). Allāh, therefore, ordered the fire thus: "O fire! Be a comfort and peace to Abraham" (Qur'ān, 21:69).

It is also said that Abraham عليه السلام had been placed on the plate of the mangonel, a sort of catapult, which was made for them by a Kurdish man named Hay-Zun who was the first man to make such a war machine, so Allāh caused the earth to swallow him, and he has been there screaming in shrill ever since, and he will continue to do so till the Day of Judgment. While he was being chained and tied, Abraham kept saying, "There is no god but You! Glory to You, Lord of the world! To Your is all Praise due, and Yours is all the domain; there is no partner with You!"

When the Friend of Allāh عليه السلام was placed on the mangonel, chained and tied, then hurled into the fire, he again said, "Allāh suffices us,

round the date of his death which is said by some historians as having taken place in 10 A.H./631 A.D. or 20 A.H./641-2 A.D. or 22 A.H./643 or 32 A.H./652 A.D. Most references, however, suggest that he died during the government of caliph `Omer ibn al-Khattāb, as we read on pp. 69-71, Vol. 1, of Ibn al-Athīr's encyclopedia titled *Al-Isāba fī Ma'rifat aṣ-Ṣaḥāba*. The edition used for this book is published in Beirut, Lebanon, in 1419 A.H./1998 A.D. by Dar al-Fikr which is one of its references.

and Great indeed is the One in Whom I have placed my trust!” According to al-Bukhārī, who relies on the authority of Ibn `Abbās, the Islamic nation’s scribe and one of many immediate cousins of the Prophet ﷺ, this statement (i.e. Qur’ānic verse) was said for the first time by Abraham on being hurled into the fire, then by Prophet Muhammed ﷺ when it was said to his companions, “*Surely men have gathered against you; therefore, fear them,*” but this increased their faith, and they said: “*Allāh is sufficient for us, and most excellent is the Protector.*” So they returned with favor from Allāh and (His) grace; no harm touched them” (Qur’ān, 3:173-174).

As-Suddi¹ has said, “It was Gabriel who cried it out according to the command of Allāh.” According to Imām Ali ibn Abū Tālib عليه السلام and to Ibn `Abbās, “Had He (Allāh) not added (in His order to the fire) ‘and peace,’ Abraham would have died because of its coolness, and each and every fire on earth would have been put out.”

As-Suddi has also said, “The angels, thereon, took hold of Abraham's arms and put him on the ground. Immediately, a spring gushed forth, and there were bushes of red roses and narcissus. It is said that Abraham عليه السلام remained in the fire for seven days. Al-Minhāl ibn `Amr² has said that Abraham عليه السلام, the friend of Allāh,

¹Refer to a footnote about Suddi above.

²There is only one single *ṣaḥābi* mentioned in Ibn Kathīr’s *Iṣāba*, and his name is not exactly “al-Minhāl ibn `Amr” but is identified as “al-Minhāl Abū Abdul-Malik al-Qaisi” who is said to be cited by his son Abdul-Malik. Even his first name is not known for sure to scholars some of whom say it is “al-Milḥān الملحان”. As is the case with names of many other companions of the Prophet ﷺ, there is no information available in biography books about his years of birth and death. This tells the reader how difficult it is for any researcher writing about early Islamic history to verify information especially in the light of the fact that there are hundreds of supposedly “ṣaḥābis” who, according to some researchers, did not actually exist at all. For example, one senior contemporary scholar, namely Murtaḍa al-`Askari, wrote a book titled *خمسون ومائة صحابي مختلف* in which he proved that 150 names described in some Islamic books as being those of “ṣaḥābis” were all fabricated in order to serve certain vested interests.

had said that he never lived more happily than during those days which he spent inside that fire pit.

Ibn Ishāq has said, “Allāh sent the angel of shade in human form, and he sat beside him and kept entertaining him. Gabriel عليه السلام brought him a silk shirt and said, ‘O Abraham! Your Lord says to you: Have you not come to know that the fire does not harm those whom I love?’ Then he outfitted him. Nemrud looked over the fire from a high tower, and he had no doubt that Abraham had perished. But he saw him sitting in a garden, and he saw that he had company, while the fire was around him burning whatever timber they had gathered for it. Nemrud shouted at him, ‘O Abraham! Can you get out of it?!’ He answered, ‘Yes.’ He asked him again, ‘Are you afraid that it might harm you if you remain in it?’ ‘No!’, he answered. So Nemrud said, ‘Then stand up and get out of it,’ whereupon Abraham walked till he was out of it. Having come out, he was asked by Nemrud, ‘O Abraham! Who is that man who looked just like you and whom I saw sitting beside you?’ He said, ‘That was the angel of shade sent to me by my Lord to keep me company and to entertain me.’ Nemrud said, ‘O Abraham! I am offering a sacrifice for your God due to what I have witnessed of His might and determination regarding dealing with you when you refused to worship anyone but Him and insisted on believing in His unity. I shall slaughter for Him four thousand cows.’ Abraham عليه السلام said to him, ‘Allāh will not accept any sacrifice from you so long as you keep following your creed till you forsake it and accept my faith.’ He said, ‘O Abraham! I cannot leave my kingdom, but I shall slaughter them for Him anyway.’ So he slaughtered them, distributed their meat to the poor and abandoned all his intentions to further harm Abraham عليه السلام. Then he said to Abraham عليه السلام, ‘Great, indeed, is your God, O Abraham!’”

Ibn Ishāq has said, “A group of men belonging to Nemrud's people responded to Abraham عليه السلام after having seen how Allāh Almighty dealt with him and how He made the fire cool and peaceful to him, despite their fear of Nemrud and their own folks. Lot, his nephew, was one of them, and he was Lot son of Haran son of Tarih. Haran was brother of Abraham عليه السلام. The Almighty refers to this in the following verse: “And Lot believed in Him, and he said: I am fleeing

to my Lord, surely He is the Mighty, the Wise” (Qur’ān, 29:26).

When Allāh Almighty saved His Friend Abraham عليه السلام, some people believed in him and followed him despite the opposition of their people and their own open dissociation from their beliefs, as stated above. They said, “We dissociate ourselves from you and from what you worship besides Allāh! We disbelieve in you, O objects worshipped besides Allāh, and enmity has become apparent between us and you and so has hatred, O you worshippers, till you believe in Allāh Alone.” Then Abraham went out migrating in the Cause of Allāh followed by Lot, peace with him. Allāh Almighty has said, “And We delivered him as well as Lot (relocating them) to the land which We had blessed for all people. And We gave him Isaac and Jacob, a son's son, and We made them all good. And We made them Imāms who guided (people) by Our command, and We revealed to them the doing of good, and the keeping up of prayer, and the giving of alms, and Us (alone) did they worship” (Qur’ān, 21:71-73).

Characteristics of Abraham, the Friend of Allāh

His name is Abraham عليه السلام, and his title is “Friend of Allāh”. Allāh Almighty has said, “And Allāh took Abraham for a friend” (Qur’ān, 4:125). According to the *ḥadīth*, Prophet Muhammed ﷺ was addressed once by some of his companions as “master of mankind”, whereupon he told them that, “This is the title of Abraham.” He is also called custodian of the guests. He never ate his lunch nor his dinner except in the company of a guest, and he may have had to walk for two miles or more till he could find a guest whom he would invite to enjoy his hospitality. This hospitality is the blessed tree about which the Almighty says, “... lit from a blessed olive-tree” (Qur’ān, 24:35). It is true that he had prayed Allāh to confine prophethood to his offspring, and his prayer was answered, making it restrictively to both his sons Ishmael and Isaac. Anas ibn Mālik is quoted as saying that the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ has said, “I have been sent after eight thousand prophets: four thousand of them were from the Children of Israel.” He is the one granted “a truthful tongue” on the Day of Judgment; so, no other prophet will be held as truthful by his entire nation, nor preferred, nor respected, as he will be. All this is due to his own invocation, “And ordain for me a

goodly mention among posterity” (Qur’ān, 26:84). Abraham عليه السلام is the one who was tested with numerous tests and to him others bear witness regarding his trustworthiness. Allāh Almighty has said, “And when his Lord tried Abraham عليه السلام with certain words, he fulfilled them” (Qur’ān, 2:124), and also, “And (of) Abraham who fulfilled (the commandments)” (Qur’ān, 53:37), that is, he carried out all divine instructions faithfully. He is the “exemplar” according to the verse, “Surely Abraham was an exemplar, obedient to Allāh, upright, and he was not one of the polytheists” (Qur’ān, 16:120). The meaning implied in this verse is that he was a role model for others in teaching the avenues of goodness, and his personality combined all the merits of goodness and virtue.

Abraham عليه السلام is the first to receive full wisdom even before reaching adulthood; he is the Imām of monotheists. The Almighty provided him with a tongue pronouncing His argument, saying, “That was Our argument which We gave to Abraham” (Qur’ān, 6:83). He is the first to have been called by the Almighty *ḥaneef*, one who is upright, as this verse indicates “... he was an upright man, a Muslim” (Qur’ān, 3:67). The Almighty cleared him of the claims of the Jews and Christians (that his creed was the same as theirs), testifying that he was a follower of Islam, a believer in the unity of Allāh, saying, “Abraham was neither a Jew nor a Christian but an upright man, a Muslim, and he was not one of the polytheists” (Qur’ān, 3:67). He was also the first to be circumcised. He is the first to grow gray hair, and when he saw it, he asked the Almighty what it was, whereupon the Almighty told him that it was a sign of sedateness. He, therefore, invoked the Almighty to increase him in sedateness and dignity. He is the first to uphold the rituals, the ways of devotion to the Almighty: He invoked the Almighty saying, “... and show us our ways of devotion” (Qur’ān, 2:128), and the Almighty responded to his plea. He is the first person to offer a sacrifice; and he is the one whom the Almighty instructed how to locate the site of the Ancient House, saying, “And when We assigned to Abraham the place of the House...” (Qur’ān, 22:26). He is the first prophet to be hurled into the fire because of inviting people to believe in Allāh, and the one Who made the fire cool and peaceful unto him. He is the first prophet for whom Allāh resurrected the dead due to his own request:

“And when Abraham said: Lord! Show me how You give life to the dead...” (Qur’ān, 2:260).

When Abraham عليه السلام was travelling, and he missed Sarah and eagerly desired to see her, the Almighty lifted the veil (of distance) which separated them from one another, so he was able to see her. On the Day of Judgment, he will be outfitted with a white outfit and placed on a throne on the left side of the Almighty's `Arsh, symbol of the divine throne of authority. The Prophet has said, “People on the Day of Resurrection will be brought back to life without clothes and without shoes, looking like the brutes, and the first to be outfitted will be Abraham, Friend of the Most Merciful One.” He migrated for the sake of Allāh; the Almighty says, “And Lot believed in Him, and he said: I am fleeing to my Lord; surely He is the Mighty, the Wise” (Qur’ān, 29:26). The place where he used to stand to preach became the *qibla* for all people; the Almighty has said, “Appoint for yourselves a place of prayer at Abraham’s standing-place” (Qur’ān, 2:125). And the Almighty made him an Imām for people, saying, “Surely I will make you an Imām of men” (Qur’ān, 2:124). The Almighty has also said in his praise, “Indeed, there is for you a good example in Abraham” (Qur’ān, 60:4). The Almighty even ordered Muhammed ﷺ, the best of His prophets, and his nation to follow Abraham's creed, saying, “Then We revealed to you: Follow the faith of Abraham, the upright one, and he was not one of the polytheists” (Qur’ān, 16:123), and also, “Say: Nay! (We follow) the religion of Abraham, the *ḥaneef*, and he was not one of the polytheists” (Qur’ān, 2:135). He gave him the attributes of “forbearing”, “tender-hearted”, and “oft-returning (to Allāh)” as is clear in this verse, “Most surely Abraham was forbearing, tender-hearted, oft-returning (to Allāh)” (Qur’ān, 11:75). The first attribute means the dignitary who controls his passion when angry. The second means: the one who, because of his tender-heartedness, sighs depressingly whenever sins are mentioned. The third attribute means the person who inclines with his heart solely to his Lord.

It is narrated that Allāh Almighty inspired Abraham عليه السلام thus: “O Abraham! Because you provided your wealth for your guests, your son for sacrifice, your own self to the fire, and your heart to

conviction, We have taken you for a friend.”

Abraham's Demise

When Allāh Almighty decided to take the soul of Abraham عليه السلام to Him, he sent him the angel of death in the form of a very old man. As-Suddi narrates a consecutively reported (*mutawātir*) tradition which states that Abraham used to feed and host people quite often. While he was busy one day feeding some people, a very old man came walking, so Abraham sent him a donkey to carry him so that he could be brought to him. When he came to him, he offered food to him. The old man kept taking each morsel and trying to reach his mouth with it, but instead of stuffing it in his mouth, his hand kept reaching his eye once and once his ear. When he finally managed to make his hand reach his mouth, and he ate the morsel, it would immediately and involuntarily come out of his other end. Abraham had prayed his Lord not to take his soul away except after he himself prayed Him to do so. Having seen the pathetic condition of that old man, he asked him why he was doing so, and the man answered him saying that that was due to old age. Abraham عليه السلام asked him how old he was, and the old man told him of his age. Abraham found out that he himself was only two years younger than that old man. He, therefore, asked him, “When I reach your age, am I going to act like you?” The “man” answered him in the affirmative, whereupon Abraham prayed the Almighty to take his life before then. So the “old man”, who was not human at all, stood up and took Abraham's soul away; the old man was none other than the angel of death. Abraham عليه السلام was two hundred years old. Some say he was one hundred and ninety-five years old. He was buried near Sarah's grave in the Jabroun farmland (in Hebron, Palestine). His name is mentioned in the Holy Qur’ān a record sixty-nine times. One of the Chapters of the Holy Qur’ān is named after him: “Sūrat Ibrāhīm”, Abraham Chapter (Ch. 14).

Abraham's Statements and Invocations

The Almighty has said,

And when his Lord tried Abraham with certain words, he fulfilled them. He said: Surely I will make you an Imām of men. Abraham

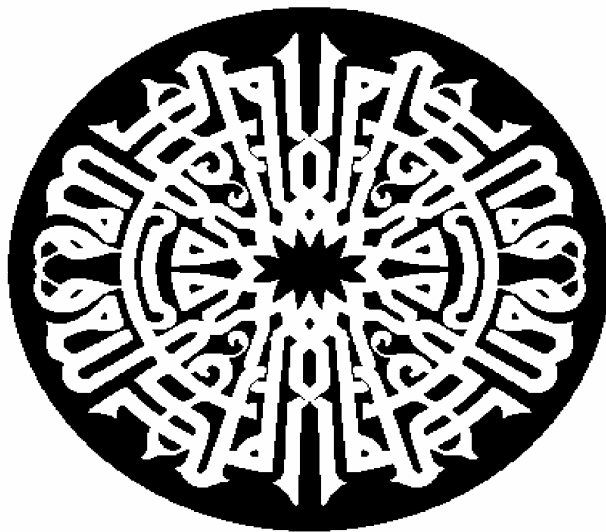
said: And of my offspring? My covenant does not include the unjust, said He. And when We made the House a pilgrimage for men and a (place of) security, and: Appoint for yourselves a place of prayer on the standing-place of Abraham (Ibrahim). And We enjoined Abraham and Ishmael (Isma'il) saying: Purify My House for those who visit it, and those who abide in it for devotion, and those who bow down and those who prostrate. And Abraham said: Lord! Make it a secure town, and provide its people with fruits, those of them who believe in Allāh and the last Day. He said: And whoever disbelieves, I will grant him enjoyment for a short while, then I will drive him to the chastisement of the Fire, and it is an evil destination. And when Abraham and Ishmael raised the foundations of the House (they said): Lord! Accept from us; surely You are the Hearing, the Knowing. Lord! And make us both submissive to You and (raise) from our offspring a nation submitting to You, and show us our ways of devotion and turn to us (mercifully); surely You are the oft-Returning (to mercy), the Most Merciful. Lord! And raise up in them a prophet from among them who shall recite to them Your communications and teach them the Book and the wisdom, and purify them; surely You are the Mighty, the Wise. (2:124-129)

... Who created me, then He has shown me the way, and He Who gives me to eat and gives me to drink, and when I am sick, He restores health to me, and He Who will cause me to die then give me life, and Who, I hope, will forgive my sins on the Day of Judgment. Lord! Grant me wisdom, and join me with the good. (26:78-83)

And Abraham said: Lord! Make this city secure, and save me and my sons from worshipping idols. Lord! Surely they have led many men astray; then whoever follows me, he is surely of me, and whoever disobeys me, surely You are Forgiving, Merciful. Lord! Surely I have settled some of my offspring in a valley unproductive of fruit near Your Sacred House, O Lord, so that they may keep up prayer; therefore, make the hearts of some people yearn towards them and provide them with fruits, haply they will be grateful. Lord! Surely You know what we hide and what we reveal, and nothing on earth nor in the heavens is hidden from Allāh. Praise be to Allāh Who has given me in old age Ishmael and Ishāq; most surely my Lord is the Hearer of prayer. Lord! Make me keep up prayer and from my offspring too, O

Lord, and do accept my prayer. Lord! Grant me protection and my parents and the believers on the Day when the reckoning comes to pass! (14:35-41)

O People of the Book! Why do you dispute about Abraham since the Torah (Old Testament) and the Gospel (New Testament) were not revealed till after him? Do you not then understand? Behold! You are they who disputed about that of which you had knowledge; why, then, do you dispute about that of which you have no knowledge? And Allāh knows while you do not. Abraham was neither a Jew nor a Christian but an upright man, a Muslim, and he was not (one) of the polytheists. Most surely the nearest of people to Abraham are those who followed him and this Prophet (Muhammed) and those who believe (Muslims), and Allāh is the guardian of the believers. (3:65-68).



PROPHET JOB (AYYŪB) ﷺ

Allāh Almighty has stated, “Remember Our servant Job (Ayyūb) when he called on his Lord: Satan has afflicted me with toil and torment (Qur’ān, 38:41).

Job ﷺ was son of Amoos son of Tarih son of Room son of Ayees son of Abraham. Allāh bestowed on him a great deal of wealth: cattle, money, and land. In addition to that, Allāh blessed him with a good number of offspring, men and women, and he used to be God-fearing, compassionate towards the poor, supportive of the widows and orphans, and generous to his guest. He used to seek travellers to help them, and he used to be quite grateful for all the blessings which Allāh had bestowed on him, following His commandments in their regard. He proved to be a formidable foe of Eblis by not yielding to conceit, arrogance, merry-making or forgetfulness about Allāh's commandments relevant to our life on this earth as may be the case with others on becoming wealthy. There were three persons with him who believed in him and who came to know his virtues: a man from Yemen named Eleifen, and two men from his own country: one named Mālik and the other Zāfir, and each one of them had reached the age of maturity and wisdom.

Gabriel enjoyed a status of being near to Allāh and of being virtuous like no other angel. Gabriel was charged with recording everyone's statements. So, when a servant of Allāh praises his Lord, what he says will be recorded first by Gabriel then by Michael and the angels around him who are near to Allāh and who surround the Throne. If that statement is propagated among the angels near to Allāh, those who reside in the heavens will be required to bless him, and when he

is blessed by the angels of the heavens, Gabriel will instruct the angels of the earth to do likewise. Eblis was never prohibited from being present anywhere in the seven heavens, and he used to be wherever and whenever he pleased. This is how he was able to reach Ādam and succeed in getting him dismissed from Paradise. When Allāh Almighty raised Jesus Christ ﷺ to heavens, Eblis was prohibited from reaching the fourth heavens, so he used to make his mischievous schemes in the first three heavens. But when Allāh sent Muhammed ﷺ as His Messenger, Eblis was then prohibited from those three, too. He and his army, therefore, are prohibited from reaching any of the heavens till the Day of Resurrection "... except those who steal a hearing and are followed by a clear dart of lightning" (Qur'ān, 15:18).

Eblis heard how the angels were responding and blessing Job ﷺ whenever Allāh mentioned him and praised him, and he was overcome with spite and jealousy, so he swiftly ascended and stood where he used to stand to petition his Maker. He said, "Lord! I have looked into the affairs of Your servant Job, and I have found him to be a servant on whom You have bestowed Your blessings; he has expressed his gratitude for that, and You granted him good health, and he praised You for it. Then I noticed that You have not put him to test by exposing him to hardship or tribulation, while I am the foremost in my ability to do just that. If You afflict him with an affliction, he will surely disbelieve in You and forget all about You. Allāh Almighty said, "Go to him, for I have given you a free hand over his wealth." Eblis, the open enemy of Allāh and mankind, went to earth and gathered the mightiest among his devils and said to them, "What do you have of might and knowledge, for I have been given a free hand over Job's wealth? The disappearance of one's wealth is surely the worst of all calamities and the trial which men cannot withstand." One of the mighty devils said, "I have the ability to turn myself, if I wish, into a hurricane of fire that can consume everything in its way." Eblis said to him, "Then go to his camels and burn them and their shepherds as well." So that devil set out and approached the camels just as they had started grazing. People suddenly felt the earth underneath them explode into a ball of fire blown in the wind, burning everyone and everything in its way. He

kept doing that till he burnt everyone, including the shepherds.

Once that devil finished, Eblis himself assumed the form of their main shepherd and sought Job عليه السلام. He found him standing saying his prayers. He said to him, "O Job!" He responded by saying, "At your service!" Eblis said, "Do you know what your God, the One Whom you chose and adored, has done to your camels and their shepherds?" Job عليه السلام said, "They are His wealth which He lent me, and He is more worthy of them than I. If He wills, He may leave such wealth [for me to enjoy], or He may take it away. I am convinced and pleased with my conviction that I and everything I own are doomed with death and extinction." Eblis said, "Your God has sent over them a fire from the sky which burnt all of them, and people remained puzzled and bewildered about them. Some of them said, 'Job did not really worship anything, and he was only vain,' while others said, 'If the God of Job Whom he has been worshipping is able to do anything at all, He would have prohibited the burning of the camels that belonged to His servant.' Still others were saying, 'Rather, He is the One Who has done this in order to please his enemy and sadden his friend.'" "Praise to Allāh," said Job عليه السلام, "Who has granted me and whenever He pleases takes it away from me. Naked did I leave my mother's womb, naked shall I be returned to the grave, and naked shall I be returned to my Lord. You should not feel pleased when Allāh loans you a loan, nor should you despair when He takes away what He had loaned you, for He is more worthy than you regarding your own self and everything which He had given you. If Allāh had known any good in you, O servant of His, He would have taken your soul away as He had taken the souls of others and made you a martyr among the martyrs, but He knew that there is evil in you, so He delayed you and rid you of tribulation just as the pure grain is separated from everything else."

Having heard all of that, Satan went back to his followers disappointed, feeling humiliated. He said to them, "What might and knowledge is there with you, for I have not been able to cause him to be angry?" One of their mighty ones said, "I have the ability, if I wish, to let out a cry which, when one hears it, his soul will immediately leave his body." Eblis said to him, "Then go to his

cattle and put an end to them and to their shepherds.” So the devil set out and approached the cattle till he stood in their midst. He cried out and all the cattle as well as their shepherds died instantly. Eblis then went out disguised as the caretaker of all the shepherds and came to Job عليه السلام who was then standing saying his prayers. He said to him as he had said before. Job عليه السلام answered him just as he had done before, so Eblis went back to his fellows again and said, “What might is there with you, for I have not been able to grieve Job yet?” One of their mighty ones said to him, “I have the ability, if I wish, to turn myself into a storm that can dry up everything in its way till it reduces it to naught.” Eblis said to him, “Then go to his acres and all his lands and do what you can.” The devil set out and approached the land as children of its tillers were playing. Before they knew it, a storm blew up and dried everything in its way as if it had never been there in the first place. Eblis this time went out assuming the form of their caretaker and approached Job عليه السلام as he was standing saying his prayers. He said to him something similar to what he had said the first time and Job عليه السلام answered him just as he had answered him the first time. Eblis kept thus ruining Job's wealth one item after another till he finished them off, all of them.

Whenever Job عليه السلام came to know about the destruction of one of the items of his wealth, he praised Allāh and glorified Him and demonstrated his acceptance of destiny. His determination to persevere increased till there was nothing left for him of all his fortune. Having seen that he had ruined all Job's wealth without being successful in any of his vile attempts, Eblis felt very much annoyed, so he swiftly ascended the heavens and stood where he used to stand to make a plea. He said, “Lord! Job is of the view that so long as You keep his health and his offspring, that by itself is a fortune to him; so, are You going to grant me a free hand to deal with his offspring, for it is a trial that causes people to stray, and the calamity about which men cannot be patient?” Allāh Almighty said, “Set out, for I have granted you a free hand over his offspring.”

Eblis went and lifted the mansion where Job's family lived, then he turned it upside down. Then he went to Job عليه السلام assuming the form of the mentor who was teaching them wisdom, with his head

wounded and blood running down his head. He told him about what had happened adding, “O Job عليه السلام! If only you could see with your own eyes how your children have been hurt, how the mansion was turned upside-down, with them being inside it, and how their heads became overturned, their blood and brains running down their nostrils and lips..., if you only saw how their stomachs were gouged, and their insides scattered around.., your heart would surely have been rent to pieces...!” He kept saying so and repeating it till Job's heart softened; he cried and took a handful of dust and put it on his head whereupon Eblis took that opportunity to swiftly ascend with the news of Job's impatience, feeling glad about seeing him finally breaking down. But it did not take Job عليه السلام long before he returned to himself and contemplated on his condition; so, he sought Allāh's forgiveness and thanked Him anyway. Both angels charged with accompanying him all safeguarding his life till the time for its termination were more swift than Eblis, and Allāh knows what exactly happened. Eblis stood disappointed, humiliated, and said, “Lord! What has made the importance of wealth and children insignificant in the eyes of Job is the fact that he sees that no matter how You permit him to enjoy himself, You can always bring wealth and children back to him; so, are You going to permit me to have a free hand over his soul and body, for I can prove to You that if You try him in his body, he will forget You, disbelieve in You and renounce Your blessing on him?” Allāh Almighty said, “Set out, for I have granted you authority over all part of his body, but you have no authority over his tongue, heart, or mind.”

Allāh knew more than anyone else that He was not permitting Eblis to have a free hand over Job عليه السلام except so that it would be a means of mercy for him, to increase his share of rewards, to make him a role model for all those who persevere and a remembrance for the pious whenever they are afflicted, so that they may follow his example of perseverance in the hope of receiving their rewards. The enemy of Allāh swiftly descended and found Job عليه السلام prostrating. Before Job عليه السلام raised his head, Eblis approached him from the ground from the spot where he had placed his face, and blew into his nostrils one blow whereby he burnt his body. He was stunned, and from his head to his toes there were abscesses as huge as animal

humps, all full of pus, and he was afflicted with an uncontrollable itch. He scratched his body with his nails till his nails fell off. Then he scratched with a wooden piece till he cut it, then with a brick of baked clay and rough stones. He kept scratching till his flesh fell off into pieces, changed color and started stinking. The people of the village dismissed him from their village, put him on a pile of garbage, and made a shack for him there. With the exception of his wife, Rahma daughter of Ifrathim son of Joseph son of Jacob, peace with them, nobody else cared about him. Despite all this calamity, Job عليه السلام did not cease mentioning the Name of Allāh Almighty, praising Him, and persevering regarding his affliction. So the enemy of Allāh Eblis let out one cry whereby he assembled a group of his hosts from all parts of the earth because of his frustration at seeing how patient and persevering Job عليه السلام was.

Having assembled around Eblis, the devils asked him, “What do you need?!” He said, “This servant of Allāh has made me run out of tricks. I had asked my Lord to grant me a free hand over his wealth and children, and I left him neither wealth nor children, yet all of that did not increase him except perseverance and praises for Allāh. Then I was granted authority over his body, and I left him looking like puss himself, thrown on a pile of garbage, and nobody cares to come near him except his wife, and my Lord has now seen me for what I am! Now I need your help to deal with him.” They said to him, “Where is your scheming? Where is your knowledge whereby you caused past generations to perish?” He said, “All of it did not work with Job; so, you tell me now what you suggest that I should do.” They said, “We suggest you approach him in the same manner whereby you approached Ādam when you succeeded in having him dismissed from Paradise. Where did you approach him from?” He said, “From his wife.” They said, “Then do likewise with Job: Approach him from his wife, for he is not able to go against her will, and nobody else but she comes near him.” He agreed and set out till he came to Job's wife who was begging for alms. He assumed the form of a man and said to her, “Where is your husband, O bondmaid of Allāh?” She said, “There he is scratching his abscess as the worms feast on his flesh.” Having heard that answer from her, he raised his hope that that was an indication of her impatience with her

husband. He insinuated to her, reminding her of the good life and of the wealth she used to enjoy. He brought her back memories of Job's good looks and youth and how much harm has now afflicted him and how his condition was hopeless. According to al-Hassan, she screamed, whereupon Eblis knew that she had lost all her patience, so he brought her a goat and said to her, "Let Job slaughter this goat for me, and he will heal." She came screaming and said to Job عليه السلام, "O Job! For how long will your God keep tormenting you and not have mercy on you?! Where is our wealth?! Where are the cattle?! Where are the children and the friends?! Where is your beautiful outfit?! Everything has changed and become like ashes..., and where is your healthy body?! It has worn out and worms are now eating it up! Slaughter this goat and rest yourself!" Job عليه السلام said to her, "The enemy of Allāh has approached you and blew of his breath in you, and you responded! Woe unto you! Do you see how now you cry for wealth, children, and health?! Who bestowed them on us?" She said, "Allāh." He asked her, "For how long did He permit us to enjoy them?" She said, "For eighty years." He said, "How long has it been since Allāh tested us with this trial?" She said, "Seven years." He said, "Woe unto you then! By Allāh, you have not been fair or just to your Lord! Why can't you be patient regarding this affliction whereby He has tried us for eighty years just as we were tried with ease? By Allāh, if Allāh heals me, I will whip you one hundred lashes for telling me to slaughter something not for the Name of Allāh, and the food and drink which you will bring me will be prohibited for me; I shall not taste anything you will bring me after having said what you have said; so, get away from me; I do not ever wish to see you again." Thus did he dismiss her.

Having seen how he dismissed his wife although he had nothing to eat nor drink, nor any friend to rely on, Job عليه السلام prostrated to Allāh and said, "Lord! Harm has afflicted me..." (Qur'ān, 21:83). Then he referred his affair to his Lord and submitted thus: "... and You are the most Merciful of the merciful ones" (Qur'ān, 21:83). He was ordered to raise his head since his supplication was honored, to run where a spring gushed forth for him. He washed; none of the signs of his illness remained, and Allāh removed his ailment. Then he kicked the ground whereupon another spring gushed forth for him,

and he drank of it, and all the ailments in his stomach disappeared. He stood looking very healthy, and he was given a good outfit. He kept looking right and left and he could see that Allāh Almighty had given him back twice as much as he had lost. He came out and sat in an honorable fashion as his wife kept asking herself whether she should let him die of starvation. He had not eaten or drunk anything since the time he had dismissed her. "Will he wander around and be eaten by the wild beasts?", she asked herself. "By Allāh, I shall go back to him," she said, and she did. This time she did not see the same pile of garbage nor the sight with which she had become familiar for so many years; everything seemed to have changed. She kept wandering around the place where the pile of garbage was, crying. Job عليه السلام was witnessing all of that. She esteemed the person wearing that outfit too much to ask him about her husband, so he sent her someone who brought her to him, and he asked her, "What do you want, O bondmaid of Allāh?" She wept and said, "I want that afflicted person who was an outcast thrown on a pile of garbage in this place... I do not know whether he wandered around or what happened to him." Job عليه السلام, peace with him, asked her, "If you see him, can you recognize him?" She said, "Can I...?! How can I not?" Then she kept looking at him while being in a state of awe... After a while she said, "Had he been enjoying his normal health, he would most certainly have looked, more than any of Allāh's creation, just like you." He said, "Then I am Job! You required me to slaughter something for Eblis; so I obeyed Allāh and disobeyed the devil, and He has brought me back what you can see."

Job عليه السلام suffered for seven long years. He overcame Eblis, cursed him, and did not enable him to have any influence over him. According to one narrative, it was then that Eblis approached Job's wife looking far more than ordinary human beings would look in physique and elegance, riding in a chariot which no human had ever seen, with all signs of pomp, power, and prestige, glowing with glory and beauty, and so did everything around him. He said to her, "Are you the wife of Job the afflicted man?" She said, "Yes." He said, "Do you recognize me?" She said, "No." He said, "I am the god of earth, and I am the one who did to your husband what I have done because he worshipped the God of the heavens and did not

worship me and thus angered me. If he prostrates only once to me, I will bring you back all what you both have lost of wealth and children, for they are all with me.” Then he showed her all of them in the heart of the valley where they had met. Then he said to her, “If only your husband eats food on which the Name of Allāh was not invoked, he will surely be healed from the affliction in which he finds himself, and Allāh knows best.”

I have read in some books that Eblis said to Rahma, “If you wish, prostrate for me once so that I may bring your children and wealth back and heal your husband,” so she went back to Job عليه السلام and told him of what Eblis had said to her and what he had wanted. Job عليه السلام said, “The enemy of Allāh wanted to divert you from your creed.” Job عليه السلام at that moment said, “Harm has afflicted me...” (Qur’ān, 21:83) because Eblis was ambitious to have his wife prostrate to him, and he invited both of them to be unfaithful to their Lord. Some scholars say that Allāh Almighty was Merciful unto Rahma, Job's wife, due to her patience with him, and He wanted to lighten her burden and, at the same time, free Job عليه السلام from his oath; so, He said, “And take in your hand a green branch and [lightly, symbolically] beat her with it and do not break your oath” (Qur’ān, 38:44). She used to earn her living by working for others and thus be able to buy him food and bring it to him, so when her affliction was prolonged, people were tired of her, and nobody wanted to employ her. One day, she felt hungry and found nothing to eat all. She could not do anything except pulling a lock of her hair and selling it for one loaf which she wanted to share with her husband who noticed what had happened to her hair. On coming to know of what she had done, he said, “Harm has afflicted me...” (Qur’ān, 21:83).

Invocation By Prophet Job عليه السلام

Allāh Almighty has said,

And Ayyūb (Job) cried out to his Lord (saying): Harm has afflicted me, and You are the Most Merciful of the merciful. Therefore We responded to him and removed what harm he had had and We bestowed on him his family and the like (of their number) with them: a mercy from Us and a reminder to the

worshippers. (Qur'ān, 21:83-84)

And remember Our servant Ayyūb when he called on his Lord: Satan has afflicted me with toil and torment. Urge with your foot; here is a cool washing-place and a drink. And We gave him his family and the like of them with them as a mercy from Us, and as a reminder for those with understanding. And take in your hand a green branch and beat her with it and do not break your oath; surely We found him patient, most excellent servant! Surely he was frequent in returning (to Allāh). (Qur'ān, 38:41-44)



MOSES ﷺ, MESSENGER AND PROPHET OF ALLĀH

He is Moses (Hebrew: מֹשֶׁה, Modern *Moshe* Tiberian *Mōšēh* ISO 259-3 *Moše*; Greek: Μωϋσῆς *Mōūsēs*; Arabic: موسى *Mūsa*) (Moses in Latin, Moshe in Hebrew).

Allāh has said, “And mention Moses in the Book; surely he was one of the purified, and he was a messenger, a prophet” (Qur’ān, 19:51). His name is Moses ﷺ son of `Imrān (Amram) son of Yashir son of Qahith son of Lawi son of Jacob, and his mother was Yu-Khaeel or Jochebed. She gave birth to Aaron and Moses ﷺ. At the time of the birth of his son Moses, Moses' father was seventy years old, and he lived to be a hundred and thirty-seven.

The Almighty describes Moses ﷺ in the above cited Qur’ānic verse as “purified”. “Abū Abdullāh” Imām Ja`far as-Sādiq ﷺ is quoted as having said, “Allāh inspired to Moses son of `Imrān, ‘Do you know, O Moses, why I selected you from among My creation and preferred you over them to hear My word?’ ‘No,’ Moses said, ‘O Lord!’ Allāh said, ‘I cast a look at the inhabitants of the earth and found none among them more humble than you.’ It was then that Moses prostrated on the ground, rubbed his cheeks on the dust as a sign of humility to His Lord, the most Honored, the most Exalted, so Allāh inspired him saying, ‘Raise your head, O Moses, and pass your hand over the place where you prostrated then wipe your face with it and whatever you can touch of your body, for this will be your security against any sickness or ailment, against any affliction or handicap.’¹

Birth

Ancient Egyptians regarded their Pharaohs as the embodiment of the “gods”, the soul of the government, the ones responsible for the rise and fall of the Nile, the yield of the soil, the health of the commerce,

¹at-Tūsi, *Āmāli*, p. 103.

the fortunes of the army and the maintenance of the peace. He was owner of the land and of the people who lived on it. The word “Pharaoh” means “the great one, the greatest in the land.” From 3100 to 341 B.C., thirty dynasties of Pharaohs ruled Egypt. The Babylonians, who also had the king worship custom, ruled Babylonia from approximately 2000 B.C. to 1000 B.C., hence, they were contemporaries of the first 21 of the 30 dynasties of Pharaohs.

The first Pharaoh to rule Egypt was Menes عليه السلام who united both upper and lower Egypt into one kingdom and built Memphis to be his capital. He is known in Arabic as al-Rayyan, and his name in some references is said to be Chenephres, and he was contemporary of prophet Joseph عليه السلام (Yousuf). Prophet Moses عليه السلام was contemporary of two Pharaohs: Seti I and his son Ramses II, although some references disagree. Both ruled from 1320 to 1200 B.C. This gives the reader an idea about the time during which Moses عليه السلام was sent to the Israelites as a messenger of God; it was during the 19th dynasty of Pharaohs. These dates also give the reader an idea about the time lapse from prophet Joseph عليه السلام to prophet Moses عليه السلام, both having spent a good part of their lifespans in Egypt. Ramses II, whose reign of oppression lasted for 67 long years, built a temple for the gods at Thebes, the Hypostyle Hall at the Karnak, and a rock-cut temple at Abū Simbel. The historic scene or, say, the encounter between Moses and Ramses II and the magicians, according to the research I undertook, seems to have occurred at the magnificent Hypostyle Hall at the Karnak. Instead of using the name Ramses II, from now on I will refer to him only as Pharaoh.

Pharaoh was the most open enemy of Allāh and the most cruel and oppressive in speech and in action, a most hard-hearted tyrant. His reign, as indicated above, was the longest, and his treatment of the Children of Israel was indeed the very worst. He used to torture them and enslave them, and he made them servants and workers without wage in his kingdom. He classified their chores thus: some of them were to build, others were to till the land, while still others were to undertake the most menial and filthy of chores. He required those who were unable to work to pay protection tax (*jizya*) as Allāh

Almighty has said, “They were treating you with the most cruel of treatment” (Qur’ān, 2:49).

Pharaoh (Seti I) had married a woman from among those Israelites called Āsiya daughter of Muzahim عليها السلام, may Allāh be pleased with her, who was one of few very pious women in all the history of mankind. Her full name was: Āsiya daughter of Muzahim son of Ubayd son of al-Rayyan son of al-Waleed, the Pharaoh contemporary to prophet Joseph I. She embraced Moses' faith. Muqātil ibn Hayyān¹ says, “Only three Egyptians accepted the true faith: Āsiya, Izekeiel, and Mary daughter of Tamoosi who led Moses to Joseph's grave-site.”

When Allāh wanted to save the Israelites from their misery, He sent them Moses عليه السلام who started his mission when Pharaoh saw in a vision that a fire had come from the direction of Jerusalem and set all the houses in Egypt on fire, burning the homes of the Copts, but leaving those of the Children of Israel unscathed². He invited all his priests, wizards, fortune tellers and star gazers and asked them about his vision. They said to him, “A boy will be born for the Children of Israel who will rob you of your kingdom and overpower you and even get you and your people out of your land and change your

¹Muqātil ibn Hayyān was born in 4 A.H./625 A.D. and is believed to have died around 150 A.H./767 A.D. although Ibn al-Athīr does not narrate his biography in his *Isāba*. He was son of Dawāl-Dor, a traditionist who is held as reliable by some Muslim scholars. He was originally from Balkh, and he quoted al-Sha’bi, Mujāhid, al-Dahhāk, Ikrimah, Ibn Buraydah, Shahr ibn Hawshab, Sālim ibn Abdullāh ibn al-Mubārak, Omer ibn al-Rammāh, Īsa Ghanjar, Maslamah ibn Ali al-Khashni, Abdur-Rahmān al-Muhāribi and many others, and his *ḥadīth* is recorded by Muslim in his *Ṣaḥīḥ*. He fled away from Khurasān during the time of Abū Muslim al-Khurasāni to Kabul (Afghanistan) where he invited people there to embrace Islam, so many people accepted the new faith. The reader must not confuse him with Muqātil ibn Sulaymān, the scholar of exegesis, who lived for years after the death of Muqātil ibn Hayyān, and there is a footnote about Muqātil ibn Sulaymān in this book.

²*Ibid.*, Vol. 13, p. 75.

creed, and the time of his birth has already approached.” So Pharaoh ordered each boy born for the Children of Israel killed. He gathered all midwives in his kingdom and said to them, “No boy born for the Children of Israel falls in your hands except that you should kill him, and no girl is born for them except that you should spare her life,” assigning men to be watchdogs over them. They did as he had ordered them.

Allāh Almighty has said in the Holy Qur’ān,

In the Name of Allāh, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful. Tā Sīn Mīm. These are the verses of the Book that makes (things) clear: We recite to you from the account of Moses and Pharaoh with the truth for people who believe. Surely Pharaoh exalted himself in the land and made its people into parties, weakening one party from among them; he slaughtered their sons and let their women live; surely he was one of the mischief-makers. (28:1-4)

The Children of Israel, too, used to talk about confirmed traditions citing Abraham عليه السلام saying that a son from among his offspring would put an end to the authority of the king of Egypt, and Pharaoh came to know about these tales. Pharaoh's main concern, therefore, became the birth of such a boy, but no precaution can ever overrule destiny. What Allāh has decreed none can repeal. The boy whose birth Pharaoh dreaded and because of whom he killed seventy thousand boys was to receive his upbringing, nursing and residence inside the palace of Pharaoh himself so that Pharaoh and all other human beings might come to know that Allāh is the Lord of the heavens and the earth, and that He does exactly what He pleases.

Death overwhelmed the Children of Israel. The chiefs of the Copts rushed to meet with the Pharaoh; they said to him, “The elderly among the Children of Israel are dying, while you are slaughtering their children and leaving their elderly to die. Soon all tasks will have to be performed by only us...” Pharaoh, therefore, ordered to kill the sons one year and to leave them another. Aaron was born during the year when no boys were to be killed, whereas Moses was born in the year during which they used to kill boys. When his mother gave birth to Aaron, the news of his birth was made public.

But when the year during which the newborn males were to be killed came, she was pregnant with Moses ﷺ without any signs of pregnancy appearing on her¹, and when she wanted to give birth to him, she was very sad and distressed. Allāh Almighty inspired her thus, “Nurse him, then, and when you fear for him, cast him into the river, and do not fear, nor should you grieve; surely We will bring him back to you and make him one of the prophets. And the family of Pharaoh took him up so that he might be an enemy and a grief for them; surely Pharaoh and Haman and their hosts were wrongdoers. And the wife of Pharaoh said: A refreshment of the eye to me and to you! Do not slay him! Maybe he will be useful to us, or we may take him for a son, and they did not perceive” (Qur’ān, 28:7-9).

Some non-Muslim references give the name of this wife of Pharaoh as Merris. The mother of Moses, whose name in Hebrew is Jochebed, took a small coffin box made by Izekiel (or Kharbil, as he is known in Arabic), the first man to believe in Moses from among Pharaoh's family. He is referred to in the Holy Qur’ān as the one who came to urge Moses to leave the town because an order had been issued to have him killed. He had already been a believer in Abraham's faith. She put in it ginned cotton, then she placed Moses in it and tied his head. Then she cast him in the Nile after having nursed him for only three months. Having done that, and after Moses had disappeared from her sight, the devil insinuated some of his evil thoughts to her. She said to herself, “Oh! What have I done with my son?! Had he been killed in my presence, and had I shrouded and buried him myself, it would have been far better for me than casting him with my own hands in the river and yielding him to its beasts!” But Allāh protected her, and the water took Moses ﷺ away; its waves would raise him up and lower him down. While he was in the coffin, he was sucking his thumb which, by the will of Allāh, provided him with milk². Finally he came among the trees in the garden belonging to Pharaoh; it was the watering place for his concubines. Near it was a large river inside the mansion’s garden.

¹*Ibid.*, Vol. 13, p. 15.

²*Ibid.*, Vol. 13, p. 55.

Pharaoh's concubines went out to bathe and to drink, and they found the coffin. They took it away thinking it had a treasure in it. They brought the unopened coffin to Āsiya, wife of the Pharaoh. When the latter opened it and found a baby boy inside it, Allāh Almighty cast affection in her heart for him, and she loved him very much. When the men charged with killing the males of the Children of Israel came to know about it, they brought their knives and came to Āsiya to kill the boy. Āsiya said to them, "Go away! This boy is not going to increase the number of the Children of Israel. I shall go to Pharaoh and ask him to give it to me; so, if he agrees, you will have shared in a good deed, but if he orders you to kill him, then I will not blame you if you do so." She brought him to Pharaoh and said, "This is a pleasure for my eyes and yours! Do not kill him; maybe he will be of some use to us," whereupon Pharaoh said, "He may be a pleasure to your eyes; as for me, I have no need for him." The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ has said, "I swear by the One in Whose Name all oaths are sworn, had Pharaoh agreed that he (Moses عليه السلام) would be a pleasure to his eyes as she had done, Allāh would have led him to true guidance through him just as He led his wife to true guidance, but Allāh decreed to deprive him of it." Pharaoh wanted to kill him, saying, "I fear lest this should be the boy from the Children of Israel who will bring about our destruction and the disappearance of our authority," but Āsiya kept pleading to him till he agreed to grant Moses to her. When Āsiya feared no more, she wanted to give him a name which fit his condition, so she called him Mo-Shé because, as Muqātil ibn Sulaymān tells us, he was found between water and trees. In the Coptic language, "mo" means water, and "shé" means trees¹; then it was Arabized to Mūsa. In Egypt's Nubia area, people still call water "mō-yè".

Moses' mother said to his sister Maryam (Miriam), "Follow him till you hear that he is alive or that the beasts of the river have killed him." She had forgotten what Allāh had promised her. She saw him from a distance, and people did not know that she was his sister. Āsiya, Pharaoh's wife, ordered her maids to find a nurse for Moses

¹*Ibid.*, pp. 7-8.

عليه السلام. Whenever a woman took him to nurse him, he refused to suck her breast, so much so that Āsiya worried he might die because of not being nursed, and she was very distressed. Then she ordered to have him taken to the market place so that people might assemble around him in the hope of finding a nurse he would accept and whose breast he would suckle, but again he did not accept the breast of any woman. To this does the Almighty and the Sublime refer when He says, “And We ordained that he refuse to suck any foster mother before” (Qur’ān, 28:12). Moses' sister, having seen how her brother persisted in refusing anyone to nurse him, said, according to the Holy Qur’ān, “Shall I point out to you the people of a house who will take care of him for you, and they will be kind to him?” (Qur’ān, 28:12). They seized her and asked her, “How do you know about their taking care of him and their kindness to him? You seem to know this boy; so, take us to his family.” She said, “I do not know who they are, but I know that their desire to attain the king's rewards will entice them to take good care of him and be kind to him,” so they let her go. She rushed to her mother and told her about what had happened, and his mother came to him, put him in her lap and his head on her breast, whereupon instantly her milk filled his mouth.

Bearers of glad tidings rushed to Āsiya to tell her that a foster mother was found for him, so she ordered to have that woman brought to her. When she noticed how the baby was treating his mother, she said to her, “Stay with us and nurse my son, for there is nothing else I love more than him.” His mother answered her saying, “I cannot leave my house and let my children wander unattended, but if it pleases you, you may give him to me and I take him to my house and children and he will be with me and I will take very good care of him; otherwise, I am not going to leave my house and my children.” Moses' mother now remembered the promise Allāh had made her, and she stood firmly behind her word, feeling confident that Allāh Almighty would surely fulfill His promise to her. Soon thereafter, she went home with him.

The period from the time when Moses عليه السلام had parted with his mother till his return was three days. When she brought Moses to his

mother, the latter almost slipped and said that he was her son, but Allāh Almighty protected her from saying so, and this is the explanation of these verses: “And the heart of the mother of Moses ﷺ was free (from anxiety); she would almost have disclosed it, had We not strengthened her heart so that she might be of the believers. And she said to his sister: Follow him up. So she watched him from a distance while they did not perceive, and We ordained that he refuse to suck any foster mother before, so she said: Shall I point out to you the people of a house who will take care of him for you, and they will be benevolent to him? So We returned him to his mother so that her eye might be refreshed, and so that she might not grieve, and so that she might know that Allāh's promise is true, but most of them do not know” (Qur’ān, 28:10-13).

When he grew up, Āsiya said to Moses' mother, “I would like you to bring my son back to me, so she promised to bring him to her on a particular day.” Āsiya said to those close to her and to her housekeepers, “Each one of you should welcome him back with a present, for I am sending a trusted person who will take account of what each housekeeper will do.” Presents and precious items started showering him as soon as he came out of his mother's house and till he entered the residence of Pharaoh's wife. When he came to her, she received him with generosity and was very glad to see him. She admired the good effect his mother had had on him. Then she said to her, “Take him to Pharaoh so that he may be gracious to him.”

When Moses' mother brought him to Pharaoh, the latter took him and put him in his lap. Moses ﷺ took hold of Pharaoh's beard and pulled it and some of his hair came in his little hand. It is said that Pharaoh slapped him. According to other accounts, when Moses was playing with Pharaoh, he had a small rod in his hand, and he struck Pharaoh with it on his head, whereupon Pharaoh was very angry. He saw it as a bad omen and said, “This is most definitely the enemy I have been seeking.” He ordered those in charge of killing the sons of the Israelites to come and kill him. When Pharaoh's wife knew about it, she rushed to Pharaoh and said to him, “What do you have against this child whom you had granted to me?” He informed her of what Moses ﷺ had done. She said, “He is only a baby and he does not

know what he is doing. I will prove this fact to you, and I will put ornaments of gold and sapphires in one basin and I will put burning timbers in another. If he stretches his hand to the sapphires, we will say that he does know, and you may then kill him, but if he takes the timber, you will then know that he is only a child.” She took two wash basins in one of which she put gold and sapphires and in the other she put burning pieces of timber. Moses stretched his hand to take the sapphires, but archangel Gabriel ﷺ moved his hand away from that basin, so he grabbed a piece of burning timber and put it in his mouth and it burnt his tongue, causing a permanent lisp. It is to this lisp that the Almighty refers in the Holy Qur’ān in this verse: “... and untie a knot of my tongue so that they may comprehend my speech” (Qur’ān, 20:27). Āsiya, therefore, turned to Pharaoh and said, “Don't you see what he has done? He is only a child and he does not know what he is doing.” Pharaoh abstained from killing him and Allāh saved him from his evil. Moses lived in honors and dignity at Pharaoh's magnificent palace, and Allāh endeared him to all people.

When Moses son of `Imrān ﷺ reached the prime of his strength, he became accustomed to riding in Pharaoh's chariots, wearing just as Pharaoh¹ used to wear, and he was called “Prince Moses son of Pharaoh”. Seti I, the then Pharaoh, was much less ruthless than his son Ramses II, so the Israelites were able to save themselves a great deal of oppression and servitude, and people did not know that all of that came as the by-product of Moses ﷺ being nursed at the Egyptian imperial palace. Pharaoh one day rode and Moses ﷺ was not in his company, and when Moses ﷺ came, he was told that Pharaoh had already left, so Moses ﷺ went out seeking to join his company. At noon, he reached a city called Manaf which he entered at midday. Its markets, because of the hot weather, had closed down and there was nobody on its streets. It is the city to which the Almighty refers in this verse: “And he went into the city at a time of non-vigilance on the part of its people” (Qur’ān, 28:15). While

¹This Pharaoh was Seti I, also known as Sethos I. He ruled from 1310 to 1304 B.C.

walking in it, he saw two men fighting. One of them was an Israelite and the other was a Copt, a subject of Pharaoh, as Allāh Almighty says, “So he found therein two men fighting, one being from his party and the other from his foes” (Qur’ān, 28:15). The one who was “from his party” was a Samaritan, and the one from his foes was a baker of Pharaoh called Fatūn who had bought some firewood which he wanted the Samaritan to carry for him without paying him, as was the custom, and the Samaritan refused. When Moses passed by them, the Samaritan sought his help against the Copt. Moses told the Copt to leave the man alone. The baker said to Moses, “Rather, I require him to do what your father would have required him to do,” and he refused to let him go. Moses ﷺ became angry and he overpowered him and released the Samaritan from his grip. The Copt argued with him, so Moses ﷺ struck him with his fist and unintentionally killed him according to the following verse: “So Moses struck him with his fist and killed him. He (Moses) said: This is on account of Satan's doing; surely he is an enemy, openly leading (mankind) astray” (Qur’ān, 28:15), adding, “Lord! Surely I have done myself harm, so do protect me. So He protected him; surely He is the Forgiving, the Merciful” (Qur’ān, 28:16).

Allāh Almighty inspired Moses son of Imrān: “By My Dignity and Greatness! Had the person whom you killed had recognized Me as the Sustaining Creator even for a twinkling of an eye, I would have made you taste of the torment, but I forgave you because he did not admit at any time that I am the Sustaining Creator.”

When Moses killed the Copt, nobody witnessed the incident except Allāh and the Israelite. Having killed a man, he became afraid in the city expecting to hear some news. People came to Pharaoh and said that the Israelites had killed one of Pharaoh's subjects, and they wanted him to seek revenge on their behalf and not to permit the Israelites to get away with it. Pharaoh said, “Bring me the killer and a witness, for it is not fair to make a judgment without evidence, and no government can last long if it is based on iniquity; so, go and seek them.” While they were looking for an evidence, Moses ﷺ passed in the early morning and saw the same Israelite fighting with another subject of Pharaoh, and the Israelite once more sought his

aid in fighting Pharaoh's subject. This happened while Moses عليه السلام felt remorseful on account of what had happened the day before; he did not like what he saw and felt angry; so, he stretched his hand with the intention to overpower Pharaoh's subject and said to the Israelite, "You are most surely one who is erring manifestly" (Qur'ān, 28:18). The Israelite, thinking that Moses عليه السلام intended to strike him because of speaking rudely to him, ran away angrily. When Moses عليه السلام came to his rescue and stretched his hand, he thought that Moses عليه السلام was bent on killing him, so he said to him, "O Moses! Do you intend to kill me as you killed a person yesterday?" (Qur'ān, 28:19). In reality, Moses عليه السلام did not intend to kill him but to overpower Pharaoh's subject. Having thus argued, Pharaoh's subject went and testified to what he had heard the Israelite saying, adding that it was Moses عليه السلام who had killed that man the day before. This agrees with the axiom which says that the wise enemy is more worthy of your attention than the unwise friend. When Pharaoh came to know about it, he ordered those charged with killing the males from among the Israelites to go and kill Moses عليه السلام. He said to them, "Go find him! He is a young man who cannot be brought to the right track."

Moses عليه السلام suddenly found himself a fugitive. All the glory of living at Pharaoh's palace had then come to an end. He, therefore, started avoiding the beaten streets. He took the main highway where he met one of his followers who had come from the farthest end of the city to warn him. His name was Izekiel who was an adherent of the original faith of Abraham عليه السلام. He was the first to testify to the truth brought by Moses عليه السلام and thus be the foremost in believing in his message.

The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ is quoted as saying, "The foremost of all nations who never disbelieved in Allāh even for a twinkling of the eye are three: Izekiel the believer from the people of Pharaoh, Habib the carpenter who believed in Christ عليه السلام, and Ali son of Abū Tālib عليه السلام, who is their best."

Izekiel, the believer from the people of Pharaoh, came and informed

Moses ﷺ of Pharaoh's order to have him killed. He had chosen a short cut in the route, thus reaching Moses ﷺ before the killers could have, and he informed him of the news. It is to this meeting between both men that the Almighty refers in this verse: “And a man came running from the remotest part of the city. He said: O Moses! Surely the chiefs are consulting together to slay you; therefore, depart (at once); surely I am of those who wish you well” (Qur’ān, 28:20). Moses ﷺ was confused and did not know where to go, so an angel came to him in the form of a man riding a horse and released a goat before him, ordering him to follow it, thus showing him the way to Midian (or Madyan). Midian (Hebrew: מִדְיָן), or Madyan (Arabic: مَدْيَن), or *Madiam* (Greek: Μαδιάμ, Μαδιανίτης for a Midianite) is a geographical place and a nation mentioned in the Bible and the Qur’ān. It is believed to be in northwest Arabia on the east shore of the Gulf of Aqaba and the northern Red Sea; this is what non-Muslim references tell us.

But let us stop here for a moment and try to further find out where this Midian is or was, and who her people were. Midian is named after the son of Abraham ﷺ and Keturah. This city and its district are situated on the Red Sea south-east of Mount Sinai, on the Syria-Hijaz highway, about two hundred miles north of the Sinai Peninsula. Originally, it was called Midian of Abraham's son. According to p. 92, Vol. 5, of Yaqūt al-Hamawi's *Mu`jam al-Buldān*, Midian is also the name of an Arab tribe. Midianite tribesmen were the travellers who took prophet Joseph ﷺ out of the well then sold him into slavery in Egypt. Midian the city parallels Tabūk, where one of the Prophet's expeditions took place in about 628 A.D. Scholars of classic Arabic poetry quite often come across Midian in pre-Islamic poetry. Such poetry may be a good source of information for those who seek to know more about those Midianites if they wish to research them. The Holy Qur’ān tells us in 11:94 that the people of Midian, whose prophet at the time was Shu`ayb ﷺ, were wiped out of the face of earth by an earthquake because of the way they treated prophet Shu`ayb ﷺ, father-in-law of Moses ﷺ and great-grandson of Abraham ﷺ. This kinship to Abraham ﷺ suggests that the destruction of Midian may have taken place sometime in the 18th century B.C. according to the best

estimates based on anthropology as well as authenticated archaeological finds.

Sa`īd ibn Jubayr quotes Ibn `Abbās as saying, “Moses ﷺ left Egypt for Midian. The journey lasted eight nights. Some say it [his trip] is about the same distance between Kūfa and Basra. He did not have any food other than tree leaves. When he reached it, his sandals had already been worn out, and you could have seen his stomach turning green because of the vegetation with which he had to sustain himself. Moses ﷺ had left without taking any food provisions with him, without even wearing shoes, only light weight sandals.”

Moses ﷺ Enters Midian, Marries Shu`ayb's Daughter

After those eight days and nights were over, Moses ﷺ reached Midian and sat under the shade of a tree underneath which there was a well and to which Allāh Almighty refers in this verse: “And when he came to the water of Midian, he found on it a group of men watering, and he found besides them two women keeping (their flocks) back. He asked them, “What is the matter with you?” They said, “We cannot water until the shepherds take (their sheep) away from the water, and our father is a very old man” (Qur`ān, 28:23). Both women were too weak to fight the shepherds over the water. Once those shepherds had watered their herds, they would water theirs. Their father, who was a very old man, was none other than prophet Shu`ayb ﷺ, one of four Arab prophets¹. The name of the eldest daughter of Shu`ayb was Liya (or Leah or Hanuna according to some sources), and the name of his younger daughter was Safra who became the wife of Moses ﷺ, according to Arab references. When Moses ﷺ heard the ladies say so, he felt sorry for them and there was a well on top of which there was a huge rock which required a number of men to move. Moses lifted the rock and took their bucket and told them to bring their herds so that he would water them. Thus, they returned to their father quickly before others had reached their homes, while Moses ﷺ was still seeking shelter

¹The other three are: Hūd, Šālih (Methusaleh?), and Muḥammed, peace and blessings of Allāh with them all.

under the shade of that tree, "... and said: Lord! Surely I stand in need of whatever good You may send down to me" (Qur'ān, 28:24).

Ibn `Abbās has said, "Moses said so because he was very hungry, so he had to pray Allāh for something to eat other than the leaves of trees which by then had filled his stomach. Had anyone had the opportunity to look at his stomach, he would have seen how green it had turned." "Abū Ja`far", namely Imām Muhammed al-Bāqir عليه السلام, has said, "He (Moses عليه السلام) said so because he was in need for as little as half a date." When the women returned to their father, he asked them, "You make me wonder: How quickly you have come back today!" They said, "We found a righteous man who felt sorry for us and watered our herd for us," so he told one of them to go back and invite him over. One of them came back to him looking shy and said, "Our father invites you to reward you for having watered our flocks." Moses عليه السلام stood up and she walked in front of him in order to lead him to the way as he followed her. Wind blew and caused her robe to stick to her rump. Moses hated to see something like that, so he said to her, "Walk behind me and lead me the way. If I take the wrong way, throw a stone before me so that I may take another route, for we descendants of Jacob عليه السلام do not look at women's rumps." She told him the route to her father's house and walked behind him till he entered in the presence of Shu`ayb عليه السلام. Shu`ayb عليه السلام asked Moses عليه السلام about his condition and story, and Moses عليه السلام told him everything, whereupon he عليه السلام said to him, "Fear no more! You are secure from (the mischief of) the wrongdoing people" (Qur'ān, 28:25). He then invited him to have supper with them, whereupon Moses, despite his pangs of hunger, said, "I seek refuge with Allāh against doing that!" "Why?", Shu`ayb عليه السلام asked him, "Are you not hungry?" Moses عليه السلام said, "I am, but I am afraid you will regard this supper as my compensation for having watered for them, and I am from a family that does not sell any deed intended for the hereafter even if the price were the fill of the earth with gold." Shu`ayb عليه السلام said to him, "No, by Allāh, O young man! This is only my custom and the custom of my forefathers: We always shelter and feed our guests." It was then that Moses عليه السلام sat

and ate.¹

The woman who was sent as messenger to Moses ﷺ said to her father, "O father! Employ him! Surely the best of those that you can employ is a man who is strong, trustworthy" (Qur'ān, 28:26). The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ has said, "The most unerring in veracity among all women are two both of whom discerned Moses and were right about him. One of them was Pharaoh's wife who said, 'A pleasure of the eye for me and for you; do not slay him!' (28:9). The other was Shu'ayb's daughter who said, 'O father! Employ him! Surely the best of those that you can employ is a man who is strong, trustworthy!' (28:26)." The reason why she said that he was strong and trustworthy is due to the fact that he was able to remove the huge rock which required many men to move. Her father asked her, "Let us suppose that you witnessed his strength; how did you know that he is trustworthy?" She told him how Moses ﷺ required her to walk behind him, so Shu'ayb ﷺ became more eager to strengthen his ties with him. He said to him, "I desire to marry one of these two daughters of mine to you on condition that you work for me for eight years; but if you complete ten, it will be of your own free will, and I do not wish to be hard on you; if Allāh please, you will find me one of the righteous." He said: This shall be (an agreement) between me and you; whichever of the two terms I fulfill, there shall be no wrongdoing to me, and Allāh is Witness to what we say" (Qur'ān, 28:27-28).

The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ was asked once which period Moses ﷺ had fulfilled. He ﷺ answered, "He fulfilled the most complete of them and the best," or, according to other narrations, "He fulfilled the most lengthy of them and married the youngest," that is, ten years.

As you can see, dear reader, the Holy Qur'ān is not without stories of romance and true and pure love.

¹al-Majlisi, *Bihār al-Anwār*, Vol. 13, p. 21.

His Staff

Scholars have differed regarding its name, benefits, and the miracles it performed by the will of Allāh. As-Suddi says that Shu'ayb عليه السلام ordered his daughter to bring him a staff to give to Moses عليه السلام to help him as he was tending to his herds, so she brought him a staff which was entrusted to him by an angel in a human form. Shu'ayb عليه السلام gave it back to her and ordered her to bring him another staff, and she kept bringing him the same one simply because whenever she put it back where it was, and whenever she wanted to take another, it somehow fell in her hands, and she kept doing so till Shu'ayb عليه السلام took it and gave it to Moses عليه السلام. Having given it to him, he felt regretful because it had been entrusted to him, so Shu'ayb عليه السلام asked him to give it back to him, but Moses عليه السلام refused. They disputed till they agreed to accept the judgment of the first man who would meet them. An angel in human form came to them walking, and they sought his judgment. The angel said, "Put it on the ground; anyone who can carry it will be its owner." Moses عليه السلام put it on the ground, and the old man tried to lift it but could not, so Moses عليه السلام held it in his hand and lifted it. Having seen that, Shu'ayb let him have it. Another narration says that when Moses عليه السلام stayed with Shu'ayb عليه السلام for as long as Allāh permitted him to, he then sought his permission to depart, and Shu'ayb عليه السلام granted him permission, saying, "Enter this room and take a staff that will be with you to keep wild beasts away from you and from your sheep." The staff of prophets at that time was with Shu'ayb عليه السلام. When Moses عليه السلام entered the room, the staff leaped and came to be in his hand, and he went out carrying it. Shu'ayb عليه السلام then said to him, "Put it back and take another." Shu'ayb عليه السلام had been told about that staff but did not know that Moses عليه السلام was actually its rightful owner. Moses عليه السلام put it back in the room to take another, but it again leaped and came to be in his hand, and it did that several times. Shu'ayb عليه السلام again reminded him to take another staff, so Moses عليه السلام said to him, "I returned it several times, and every time I returned it, it leaped till it somehow came to be in my hand," so Shu'ayb عليه السلام realized that that was something which Allāh Almighty willed; therefore, he told him to take it.

Ibn `Abbās has said, “The ruler of Rome wrote a letter to Mu`āwiyah once asking him about four things that were never conceived in a womb. When Mu`āwiyah read his letter, he said, ‘May Allāh shame him! How would I know?!’ Some people suggested to him to write to Ibn `Abbās to ask him, and so he did. I wrote him back saying, ‘The four that never stirred inside a womb are: Ādam, Eve, the ram whereby Ishmael was ransomed, and the staff of Moses which he dropped and it became a serpent.’”

Most scholars have said that Moses' staff was taken from a tree in Paradise. Its length was ten cubits, the height of Moses himself. It was carried by Ādam out of Paradise to the rest of this earth, so prophets inherited it one from another till it reached Shu`ayb عليه السلام who gave it to Moses عليه السلام, and Allāh knows best.

Moses عليه السلام Addressed by Allāh, Becomes His Prophet and Messenger

“So when Moses had fulfilled the term, he journeyed with his family” (Qur`ān, 28:29), that is, he left Midian on his trip back home. The time was winter, and Moses عليه السلام was accompanied by his wife and cattle. His wife was big with child and she was then expecting to deliver any day or night. He set out in the Syrian desert, avoiding the major metropolises and main cities for fear of the kings who were ruling Syria then, and his main concern at that time was to see his brother Aaron and to get him out of Egypt if he could. Moses walked in the desert without being familiar with its routes till he reached the right side of the Mount of Sinai during an extremely cold night. The sky kept thundering and lightning as it rained. Add to all of this, his wife was overtaken by the pangs of child-birth, so Moses عليه السلام took his stick of fire drill but could not ignite it. He was perplexed, so he kept standing and sitting. He was not familiar with such sort of fire-producing gadget, and he kept discerning everything near and far, annoyed and frustrated. Then he kept listening for a long time for any sound or movement. While he was in such a condition, he was heartened to see some light on the side of the mountain, and he thought that its source was a fire. He, therefore, “... said to his family: Wait! I have seen a fire! Maybe I will bring you from it some news or a brand of fire so that you may warm

yourselves!” (Qur’ān, 28:29), that is, he hoped to see someone who could lead him the way, and he had lost his way while thus wandering.

When Moses came close to the fire, he saw a great glow extending from the highest point in the sky and ending at a huge tree there. Scholars differ regarding what tree it was. Some say it was a boxthorn, while others say it was a vine. Moses ﷺ was bewildered, and he was overtaken by fear when he saw a huge fire which did not have a smoke burning from the belly of a green tree that kept getting greener and greener as the fire grew more intense. When Moses ﷺ came closer to it, it went back. Having seen that, he retreated in fear, then he remembered how badly he needed a fire, so he returned to it. It was then that “... a voice came from the right side of the valley in the blessed spot of the tree saying, O Moses!” (Qur’ān, 28:30). When he looked, he did not see anyone. He was addressed, “... Surely I am Allāh, the Lord of the worlds!” (Qur’ān, 28:30). Having heard that, he knew that it was his Exalted Lord. His Lord called him and ordered him to get closer, and when he got closer to the tree and heard the call, and when he saw the divine Grandeur, his heartbeat increased and his tongue was tied; he felt extremely feeble. He became like a dead form of life, yet life lingered within him without being able to mobilize him. Allāh sent him an angel to support him and to strengthen his heart. When he fully recovered his senses, he was addressed, “... take your shoes off; surely you are in the sacred valley of Tuwa!” (Qur’ān, 20:12). The reason why he was ordered to take his shoes off was, as we are told by Abdullāh ibn Mas’ūd who quotes the Prophet ﷺ, due to the fact that they were made of donkey skin. He was required to take his shoes off so that his feet might touch the blessed earth and its blessing may thus touch him, for it had been blessed twice. Sa’īd ibn Jubayr has said, “Allāh told him so because walking barefoot is a sign of humility and respect. He was told to tread the ground barefoot just as the Ka’ba is thus entered by one seeking the blessing of its valley.”

Let us stop here for a moment and learn from what went on between Moses ﷺ and his Maker. This is not a bed-time story, nor is it written to entertain anyone but to admonish everyone who ap-

preciates admonishment, and not many people do.

What the Almighty Said to Moses ﷺ

Moses ﷺ occupies a sublime status in Islam. Like Prophet Muhammed ﷺ, he is a law-giver, not a law-abider. He saved his nation from bondage after having abandoned all the riches at Pahraoh's mansion and traded them for the simple life of a shepherd. Moses ﷺ was great in all the meaning this word implies. Allāh Almighty has said, "So when Moses had fulfilled the term, and he journeyed with his family, he perceived on this side of the mountain a fire. He said to his family: Wait, I have seen a fire; perhaps I will bring you from it some news or a brand of fire so that you may warm yourselves. And when he came to it, a voice was heard from the right side of the valley in the blessed spot of the tree saying: O Moses! Surely I am Allāh, the Lord of the worlds!" (Qur'ān, 28:29-30). Allāh has said the following to His greatest prophet Muhammed son of Abdullāh ﷺ as recorded in Sūrat Ṭāhā (Ch. 20) of the Holy Qur'ān:

«Has the story of Moses come to you? When he saw a fire, he said to his family: Stop, for surely I see a fire; haply I may bring you therefrom a live coal or find a guidance at the fire. So when he came to it, a voice was uttered: O Moses! Surely I am your Lord; therefore, take your shoes off; surely you are in the sacred valley of uwa, and I have chosen you, so listen to what is revealed: surely I am Allāh; there is no god but I; therefore, worship Me and keep up prayer for My remembrance: Surely the Hour is coming, I am about to make it manifest, so that every soul may be rewarded as it strives: Therefore, do not let any who does not believe in it and follows his own low desires turn you away from it else you should perish. And what is this in your right hand, O Moses?! He said: This is my staff: I recline on it, and I beat the leaves with it to make them fall on my sheep, and I have other uses for it. He said: Cast it down, O Moses! So he cast it down, and Lo! It was a serpent running! He said: Take hold of it and do not be afraid; We will restore it to its former state.» (20:9-21)

The reason why the Almighty asked Moses ﷺ about his staff, and He knew of it better than him, ordering him to cast it down, is to

calm his heart and to remove his confusion; it is as though He wanted to distract him for a short while, to calm him down, to divert his attention a little. Having cast it down, its split ends became its mouth, and its hook turned into a tail. As it shook, its fangs showed, appearing in the form in which Allāh wanted it to appear. Moses عليه السلام saw in it something horrible, so he ran away without looking behind him, whereupon his Exalted Lord called on him not to run away like that but to return. He wanted him not to worry, for he was granted security, and that Allāh would return it to its former shape, i.e. a staff. It is said that the wisdom in Allāh's order to Moses عليه السلام to cast the staff down before going to Pharaoh was: so that he would not be frightened by it once he saw it like that in the presence of the Pharaoh of Egypt.

In his celebrated book *Al-Āmālī*, as-Sadūq quotes Imām Ali al-Hādī عليه السلام, grandfather of the Awaited Saviour, Imām al-Mahdi (عج), saying that when prophet Moses عليه السلام was addressed by Allāh, the most Honored and the most Great, Moses عليه السلام asked Him, “O Lord! What is the reward of one who testifies that I am Your prophet and messenger, and that You spoke to me?” The Almighty said, “O Moses! My angels shall visit him to convey to him the glad tidings that he is included among the residents of My Paradise.” Moses عليه السلام said, “Lord! What then is the reward of one who stands before You to pray to You?” He said, “O Moses! I shall brag about him before My angels whenever he bows down, or prostrates, or stands, or sits, and anyone about whom I brag before My angels I shall not torment.” Moses عليه السلام said, “Lord! What is the reward of one who feeds an indigent person seeking Your Pleasure?” He said, “O Moses! I shall order a caller on the Day of Judgment to call before all creation and say that so-and-so is one of those who are freed from the fire.” Moses عليه السلام said, “Lord! What is the reward of one who joins his ties of kinship?” He said, “O Moses! I shall delay his death, and I shall decrease his agony at the time of death, and the keepers of Paradise shall then call on him saying, ‘Hurry and come to us, and enter from any gate you choose!’” Moses عليه السلام said, “Lord! What is the reward of one who mentions You by his tongue and by his heart?” He said, “O Moses! I shall shade him on the Day of Judgment under the shade of My `Arsh, and I shall include him in

My protection.” Moses ﷺ again said, “Lord! What is the reward of one who recites Your moral lessons audibly and inaudibly?” He said, “O Moses! He shall pass on the *Ṣirāṭ*¹ as fast as lightning. Moses said, “Lord! What is the reward of one who tolerates people's harm and taunting, seeking Your Pleasure? He said, “I shall assist him against the perils of the Day of Judgment.” Moses ﷺ said, “Lord! What then is the reward of one who sheds his tears out of fear of You?” He said, “O Moses! I shall protect his face from the heat of the fire, and I shall grant him security on the Day of the Greatest Consternation.” Moses ﷺ said, “Lord! What then is the reward of one who abandons treachery because of being shy of You?” He said, “O Moses! I shall grant him security on the Day of Judgment.” Moses ﷺ said, “Lord! What then is the reward of one who loves those who are obedient to You?” He said, “O Moses! I shall prohibit My fire from touching him.” Moses ﷺ said, “Lord! What then is the penalty of one who kills a believer deliberately?” He said, “I shall not look at him on the Day of Judgment, nor shall I bring him back to the right course.” Moses ﷺ said, “Lord! What is the reward of one who invites a disbeliever to Islam?” He said, “O Moses! I shall accept from him to intercede on the Day of Judgment on behalf of whoever he wants.” Moses ﷺ said, “Lord! What then is the reward of one who performs the prayers on time?” He said, “O Moses! I shall grant him whatever he asks for, and I shall permit him to enter My Paradise.” Moses ﷺ then asked his Lord again saying, “Lord! What is the reward of one who perfects his ablution fearing You?” He said, “I shall resurrect him on the Day of Judgment with

¹For a description of this *Ṣirāṭ*, that is, *as-Ṣirāṭ al-Mustaqeem*, refer to pp. 584 - 590 of my book titled *Kerbala and Beyond: an Epic of Immortal Heroism* which AuthorHouse, its Publisher, made available to the public on August 31, 2011. More details will be included in my next book, Volume One of *Dictionary of Islamic Terms* which will *Inshā-Allāh* be published in the U.S. following the publication of Volume Two of this book. Most Muslims do not have a clear and thorough idea about this *Ṣirāṭ* although they mention it daily in their prayers and will all have to pass over it, each and every one of them, including prophets and messengers of Allāh ﷺ.

light shining between his eyes.” Moses عليه السلام said, “Lord! What is the reward of one who fasts during the month of Ramadan hopeful of Your rewards?” He said, “O Moses! I shall grant him on the Day of Judgment a status wherein no fear shall touch him.” Moses عليه السلام then asked his Lord saying, “Lord! How will You reward one who fasts during the month of Ramaḍān seeking to show off before people?” He said, “O Moses! His reward will be similar to that of one who never fasted it at all.”¹

Citing a chain of narrators, as-Sadūq tells us that the Almighty said the following to Moses عليه السلام :

O Moses! I created you, selected you, empowered you, and ordered you to obey Me and forbade you from being disobedient to Me; so, if you do obey Me, I shall help you when you seek to do so, but if you disobey Me, I shall not assist you in your disobedience, and the favor is Mine if you choose to obey me, while I shall have a proof against you should you opt to disobey Me.²

Moses عليه السلام asked his Lord saying, “Lord! Who shall reside in the sacred precinct?” Allāh said, “It is those whose eyes never witnessed adultery, nor did usury ever taint their wealth, nor did they ever accept bribes when they judged among the people.” He also admonished Moses عليه السلام saying, “O Moses! Do not humiliate the indigent person, nor should you envy a rich man on account of the abundance of his wealth.”³ Al-Majlisi quotes Imām Ja`far as-Sādiq عليه السلام stating that the following text was among the admonishments whereby Allāh admonished Moses عليه السلام :

O son of `Imrān! Liar is one who claims that he loves Me and

¹as-Sadūq, *Al-Āmālī*, pp. 185-186. al-Majlisi, *Bihār al-Anwār*, Vol. 13, pp. 327-328.

²al-Majlisi, *Bihār al-Anwār*, Vol. 13, p. 329.

³*Ibid.*, p. 329.

when the night approaches, he sleeps without remembering Me. Is not every lover likes to spend some time of seclusion with the one he loves? Here I am, O son of `Imrān, discerning the ones who love me, those whom I shall distract from what they like to do when the night approaches, and I show them My torment as though they see it with their own eyes! They address me when they thus see it, and they speak to Me as if I am present with them. O son of `Imrān! Grant me of your heart submission, of your body obedience, and of your eyes their tears in the darkness of the night, and call on Me, for you shall find Me near to you, answering your call.¹

Abū Ja`far, namely Imām Muhammed ibn Ali al-Bāqir عليه السلام, says that Moses عليه السلام pleaded to his Lord to admonish him. Allāh said, "I admonish you to always be mindful of Me." Moses عليه السلام repeated his request, whereupon the Almighty repeated the same, and this recurred thrice. Moses عليه السلام again pleaded to his Lord to admonish him, whereupon the Almighty said, "I admonish you with regard to your mother," and this was also repeated thrice. Then the Almighty said, "I admonish you with regard to your father." It is, hence, said that two thirds of kindness are the share of the mother, while the father's is the remaining third.² Abdullāh ibn Sinan³ was one of the

¹*Ibid.*, pp. 329-330.

²as-Sadūq, *Al-Āmālī*, pp. 305-306.

³His full name is: (Governor) Abū Muhammed Abdullāh ibn Muhammed ibn Sa`īd ibn Yahya ibn al-Hasīn ibn Mahmūd ibn al-Rabee`, famous as "Ibn Sinān" al-Khafāji al-Halabi (of Aleppo, where he is buried) (d. 466 A.H./1074 A.D.). He was appointed *wāli* (provincial governor) of Qal`at I`zaz by Mahmūd ibn Sālih. He was a famous poet who tried to emulate al-Sharīf al-Radi, the man who is credited with the compilation of *Nahjul Balāgha* book. Hundreds of lines of his poetry are compiled in Vol. 8 of *A`yān al-Shī`ah* encyclopedia. Ibn Sinān was a scholar, a theologian, a traditionist whose knowledge was so vast, he was called during his time "the second Majlisi". He was also a philosopher who contemplated on morals and wisdom. He is author of more than fifty-two books (many of which are still in manuscript form, though, waiting for someone to remove the dust from them and to show them the light), including his *Dīwān* of

companions and disciples of Imām Ja'far as-Sādiq عليه السلام. He quotes the Imām عليه السلام as saying, "Among what Allāh, the most Exalted One, the most Great, inspired to Moses son of 'Imrān عليه السلام was this: 'O Moses! Be like an old robe, a pure heart, and be confined to your home, vigilant during the night, so that those in the heavens may be acquainted with you, while you remain obscure to those on earth. O Moses! Beware of obstinacy, and do not go to any place unless necessity takes you there, and do not laugh without having seen something out of the ordinary, and do weep over your sin, O son of 'Imrān!'"¹

During the forty days' communion between Moses عليه السلام and his Lord, the Almighty admonished Moses عليه السلام with the following beautiful admonishment:

O Moses! Do not have high hopes about the life of this world else your heart should harden, and one whose heart is hard is distant from Me. Cause your heart to die² through fear of Me. Wear old clothes and a new heart so you may be unknown to the people of the earth, well known to the people of the heavens. Cry out to Me on account of the abundance of sins like one fleeing from his foe, and seek My assistance in doing so, for I am the best of those who assist. O Moses! I am Allāh above the servants, and the servants are under my control, and they shall all be gathered (to Me); so, indict your own self, and do not feel secure from your offspring with regard to your creed except when your offspring love the righteous just as much as you love them. O Moses! I admonish

poetry and *Sirr al-Fasāha* (secrets of oratory) which deals with literary criticism. He once started writing a book after the evening prayers and finished it by midnight... Tell me, dear reader, if all Western countries have produced such a prolific genius! I surely do not know any such author although I, author of the book in your hands, spent a significant portion of my lifespan studying both English and American literature.

¹al-Majlisi, *Bihār al-Anwār*, Vol. 13, p. 331.

²This is an idiom meaning: "Do not follow your own whims and desires, and do not yield to temptation."

you like One Who is most concerned about your well-being with regard to the son of the virtuous one, Jesus son of Mary, the man who rides the she-ass, who wears the burnoose, who loves oil, olives, and the prayer place! And after him I admonish you with regard to the one who rides the red camel, the good one, the pure and the purified, for his description in your Book is a believer who fully controls all Books, who bows down, who prostrates, whose brethren are the indigent, whose supporters are those who are not his own people¹, and during his time there will be hardships, trials, tribulations, and bloodshed. His name is Ahmed, Muhammed, the trusted one, from the foremost remnant; he shall believe in all the Books and testify to the truth of all the messengers. His nation shall receive mercy and blessings. They shall have fixed times during which they call for the prayers. In him should you believe, for he is your Brother! O Moses! He is My trust, and he is a truthful servant of Mine; blessed is everything he touches and so is everything he blesses; such is he in My knowledge, such is the way I created him. Through him shall I start the Hour, and through his nation shall I seal the world. Order, therefore, the oppressors from among the Children of Israel not to obliterate his name nor to betray him, and they shall do just that. Loving him I regard as good as the giving of charity, and I am with him and with his party, and he is in My party, and My party are the winners. O Moses! You are My servant, and I am your Lord! Do not look on the insignificant poor person with humiliation, nor should you envy the rich person for the plenty that he has, and be submissive whenever My Name is mentioned. Worship Me and do not associate anything with Me. I am the Great Master; I created you from a drop of an abased water, from a piece of mud which I took

¹When Prophet Muhammed ﷺ brought the message of Islam, his folks, the tribesmen of Quraysh, were most antagonistic towards him. Non-Arabs have responded to the Islamic message better than the Arabs. Nowadays, Arab governments are among the most bitter enemies of the Islamic message, and Arab rulers are among the worst hypocrites. But this is changing. The Arab people are waking up and smelling the rose, and they do not find it smelling like a rose, so they are demanding change. Meanwhile, the West, because of faulty economic systems, are becoming more and more worried about their foreign and domestic debts, actually too worried about them to craft schemes to enslave other nations, Arab and non-Arab.

from a land rubbed with humility, so you became a human. I am the One Who created it, so Blessed is My Countenance, and Sanctified is My undertaking; there is nothing like Me! I am the everlasting One Who never dies. Through My Torah should you bring life to the days of the world and teach My Praise to those who are ignorant thereof; remind them of My Signs and bounties, and tell them not to go to extremes in their error, for when I take someone, I take him with extreme torment.

O Moses! Should you ever be deprived of My love, none else will ever love you; so, worship Me, and stand before Me as an insignificant slave; censure your own soul, for it ought to be, and do not use My Book to seek the upper hand over the Children of Israel. This should suffice as an admonishment for your heart, and as a light, and it is the speech of the Lord of the World, Glorified and Exalted is He, O Moses!

O Moses! Whenever you call on Me, you shall find Me, for I shall forgive what you will forgive. The heavens glorifies Me in fright, and the angels are fearful of Me. My earth glorifies Me in anticipation, and all beings praise Me even against their own will. Uphold prayers, for it enjoys a great status with Me, and it has with Me a sure covenant, and I shall join to it whatever *zakāt* is offered from good wealth and food, for I accept only what is good whereby My Pleasure is sought. I shall join to it the maintaining of the ties of kinship, for I am the most Gracious, the most Merciful, and such ties I created out of My mercy so that My servants may thereby love one another, and it has with Me a special status on the Day of Resurrection; I shall sever my ties from those who sever them and join those who join them, and thus do I do with those who suffer My commandments to loss.

O Moses! Be gracious to the beggar when he comes to you either by answering his plea in a beautiful way or by giving him generously, for there will come to you those who are neither humans nor jinns, the angels of the most Merciful One, to try you to see how you fare with regard to what I have commanded you to do, and how you safeguard the trust with which I have entrusted you. Humble yourself to Me, therefore, through pleading to Me, and weep and wail when you recite the Book, and be advised that I call on you as a Master calls on his slave so that he may raise his status to an honorable station, and such is My favor unto you and

unto your forefathers.

O Moses! Never should you forget Me no matter what, for forgetting Me renders the hearts hard, and with the abundance of wealth comes an abundance of sins. The earth is obedient; the sky is obedient; the seas are obedient; whoever disobeys Me will be a wretch, for I am the most Merciful One at all times. I bring hardship after ease and ease after hardship, and I let kings succeed kings, while My domain stands and never disappears. Nothing is hidden from Me on earth or in the sky, and how can anything be hidden from Me while from Me it started?! And how can you help asking Me for what I have while to Me you will inevitably return?!

O Moses! Make Me your security, and leave with Me your treasure of good deeds; be fearful of Me, and fear none but Me; surely to Me is the ultimate return.

O Moses! Never should you put off your repentance, and postpone the sin, and take your time when you stand before Me for the prayers; do not plead to anyone but to Me; make Me your protection against hardships, and the surety against hard times.

O Moses! Compete with the doers of good, for goodness is like its own name, and let evil be the concern of every afflicted one.

O Moses! Let your tongue reflect what is on your mind so you will be safe, and mention Me a great deal during the night and the day so you will be successful, and do not commit sins so you will be regretful, for the sinners are promised the fire.

O Moses! Speak beautifully to those who abandon sins, and keep them company, and take them as brethren even when they are absent from your sight, and strive hard to be with them so that they may strive hard to be with you.

O Moses! Anything intended to please Me is much though it may be little, and what is sought to please others is a little though it may be much. The best of your days is the one ahead of you, so see what day it is and prepare for it the answer, for it shall be made to stand to testify (either for you or against you). Seek your admonishment from time and its people, for what is lengthy of time is in fact short, and what is short thereof is lengthy, and

everything shall (in the end) come to naught. Act as though you see the reward of your deeds so that it will be in the hereafter even more so, there should be no doubt about it. What is left of the life of the world is like what has already passed, and every doer does according to his mind and in the following of the footsteps of someone else. Be your own guide, O son of `Imrān, perhaps you will be a winner tomorrow when you are asked, and it is there that the followers of falsehood shall lose!

O Moses! Be satisfied with forsaking the world, and stay aloof from it, for it is not for you, nor are you for it; why should you be concerned about the abode of the oppressors except for the doing of goodness, for it will only then be a good one?

O Moses! The life of this world and its people are trials to one another. Anything decorated contains what it contains, and for the believer, it is the hereafter that is decorated: he always looks at it incessantly. His desire for it acts as a barrier between him and life's pleasures, so it carries him even during the night just as a rider is swiftly carried to his destination! He remains forlorn, and he welcomes the night grieved; so, congratulations to him; had the curtain been removed from his eyes, he would have witnessed what pleasure awaits him!

O Moses! Whenever you see riches coming your way, you should say, "A sin for which the punishment comes hastily!" And if poverty comes your way, you should say, "Welcome to the distinctive mark of the righteous!" Do not be an oppressive tyrant, nor should you be a friend of the oppressors.

O Moses! What good is there in a lengthy life-span if its end is abhorred?! And what harm should it be in what is hidden from you if its end is praiseworthy?!

O Moses! The Book has cried out to you with regard to what you are undertaking, so how can the eyes sleep despite that, or how can anyone enjoy the pleasure of life except when he goes to extremes in being heedless and in enjoying one pleasure after another, and even the foremost among the truthful could not bear much less than that?!

O Moses! Enjoin My servants to call on Me with regard to what

has already passed after recognizing Me as the most Merciful of those who are merciful. I shall then respond to the call of the ones in need, and I shall remove evil from them. I shall then change their times and bring them ease and thank them for the little and reward them for it with much. I shall then enrich the poor, and I am the Everlasting One, the Honored, the Omnipotent. Anyone who comes to you after having committed a sin, you should welcome him saying, "Welcome! Welcome! To the most spacious of courtyards have you come, the courtyard of the Lord of the Worlds! And seek My forgiveness for them, and behave as though you were one of them. Do not see yourself as being better than them because of what I have bestowed on you of My favor, and tell them to ask Me for My favor and mercy, for none has them besides Me, and I am the One with the great favor. I am the haven of the sinners, the companion of the destitute, the One Who forgives the sinners. You enjoy with Me a favorable status, so supplicate to Me with a pure heart and a truthful tongue, and be as I have commanded you: Obey My commandment; do not seek the upper hand over My servants with something the start of which is not in your hands; seek nearness to Me, for I surely am near to you. I never asked you for anything the weight of which hurts you or overburdens you; rather, I asked you to call on Me so I may respond to you, to ask Me so I may give you, and to seek nearness to Me through that the meaning thereof you took from Me, and I am to complete its revelation.

O Moses! Look at the earth, for it shall soon be your grave; raise your eyes to the sky, for above you there is a great angel; weep over your soul as long as you are in the life of this world; beware of perdition and annihilation, and do not let the decoration of the life of this world and its beauty deceive you; do not accept injustice, and do not be unjust to others, for I lie in ambush to the oppressor till I take out of him what he had taken away from those whom he oppressed.

O Moses! A good deed earns ten times its reward, and the penalty of one sin is perdition¹. Do not associate any with Me; it is not

¹This statement is truly awesome. One sin can dynamite all what one built through good deeds. It is much easier and faster to demolish than to build. Reflect on this statement, dear reader, and be on your guard, perhaps Allāh will have mercy on you and not cause your feet to slip away from His path.

lawful for you to associate anything with Me. Take to moderation and watch your steps; supplicate like one hopeful for what I have, regretful about what he has committed, for the darkness of the night is dispelled by the light of the day, and so is the bad deed: it wipes out the good one. The darkness of the night overtakes the light of the day, and so is the sin: it overtakes the good deed and blackens it.¹

I find it hard to imagine anyone reading these beautiful words and is not impressed by them unless he has no heart at all, nor does he have a tint of reason, nor an iota of belief in God. I cannot imagine the rich coming across such jewels of wisdom and not spending some of the wealth given to them by the Almighty to promote it, to make it available to others, to disseminate it especially here in America where every day old sins are committed and new ones are invented, where the Almighty is forgotten or is associated with. I cannot imagine any reader who reads these beautiful words of wisdom and not desire to share them with someone else he loves; sharing, caring and giving are the marks of true love. Had I had more resources at hand, I, author of this book, would have provided the reader with more of such beautiful texts, with three volumes of this book instead of just two. But book publishing is very expensive, and I have very limited resources. Compared to non-Muslims, the Muslims of the world spend very little on the promotion of their creed, the very best creed ever revealed to mankind. The love for this world has taken control of their hearts, so they prefer to spend on what will bring them nothing but loss, barring few. Only a small number of them are the exception to this rule. May Allāh *Ta`ālā* include us among these select few... I remember one dialogue that will take place on the Day of Judgment. Allāh will on that Day order our father Ādam to pick from among his offspring the fuel for the fire of hell. "How many, O Lord?" he will ask Him, and the answer will come, "From each hundred, ninety-nine." This is included in a documented *ḥadīth* the discussion of which will *Inshā-Allāh* be included in another book I hope Allāh will enable me to write. I sincerely solicit the reader's *du`a* to make this wish come true. A believer's good supplication for

¹al-Majlisi, *Bihār al-Anwār*, Vol. 13, pp. 332-338.

another believer is always accepted, *Inshā-Allāh*.

Indeed, there are many Pharaohs these days, including many who claim to be Muslims... Indeed, many tyrants ruled the Muslims throughout history in the name of Islam and they still do.

How the Staff Benefitted Moses

Let us now find out what other benefits that staff had for Moses ﷺ, since it was one of his prophetic miracles. It had two split ends. At the bottom of both ends there was a hook and iron spearheads. If Moses ﷺ had to enter a cave at night, and there was no moon, its split ends would light for him as far as his eyes could see. And when he needed water, he used to dip it in a well; it would then extend up to the bottom of the well and its head would become like a bucket, so he would drink. If he needed food, he would strike the ground with it and food enough for one day would come out for him. If he desired to eat a particular type of fruit, he would plant it in the ground, so the branches of the tree he desired would come out and instantly provide him with that fruit. It is also said that the staff was of an almonds tree. Whenever he felt hungry, he would plant it in the ground, so it would shoot leaves and produce its fruit, and he would eat almonds from it. If he met an enemy, on both of its split ends would appear two dragons. He used to strike with it the rough terrain of a mountain, or stones and thorny bushes, and it would make a path for him. If he wanted to cross a river without a boat, he would strike it with it: it would split open and a path would appear for him. Thus did he make a path in the sea for the Israelites to pass over, while the pursuing army of Pharaoh perished. He used to drink honey out of one of its ends and milk out of the other. When he was tired of walking, he would ride it, and it would take him to wherever he wanted to go without having to run or to move. And it used to lead him to the way and fight his foes for him. If he wanted it to provide him with perfume, it would emit a fragrance, so he would perfume himself and his clothes. If the highway had fearsome robbers, the staff would speak to him and instruct him to take one route rather than the other. He used to use it to tend to his sheep, and to defend them and himself against wild beasts, harmful insects and snakes. Whenever he went on a journey, he would put it on his

shoulder and hang his luggage and belongings on it, including his nosebag, slingshot, clothes, food, water, etc.

Ibn Haban has said, “Shu`ayb said to Moses عليه السلام on the occasion of marrying him to his daughter and giving him his sheep to herd, ‘Take these sheep, and when you reach a crossroad, turn to your left and not to your right even if the pasture looks greener, for there is a huge beast there because of which I fear for your safety and that of your sheep.’ When the sheep reached the crossroad, the sheep took to their right. Moses عليه السلام tried very hard to make them change their direction but they did not heed him, so he had to leave them do what they willed, then he slept while they were grazing. The beast came, and the staff fought it and killed it, then it came and lay down beside Moses stained with blood. When Moses عليه السلام woke up, he saw the blood-stained staff and the slain beast. He thus came to know that it was not an ordinary staff. This is what the staff could do when it was in his hand. If he laid it down, he could see that it would turn into a snake greater than anyone can see, black in color, looking as though it had four legs. Its split ends would turn into a mouth in which there were twelve fangs. It would make a terrible noise, and fire would come out of it. Its hook would turn into a tail looking like a flame of fire; its eyes would shine like lightning emanating wind that would burn everything in its way. It would pass by a rock and swallow it as though it had been a small she-camel, and rocks would crack inside its belly¹. It would pass by a tree and cut it with its fangs, crushing then swallowing it. Then it would look around, agitated, as though it was looking for something else to eat, and it would appear as a huge serpent, as swift as a jinn, and as smooth as a snake. To this does the Almighty refer in the Holy Qur’ān when He describes it: “... a clear serpent” (Qur’ān, 7:107), “... as if it had been a snake” (Qur’ān, 27:10), “... it was a serpent running” (Qur’ān, 20:20).

Allāh Almighty has said, “He said: Take hold of it and fear not; We will restore it to its former state. And put your hand in your side-pocket; it shall come out white without evil: another sign. Go to

¹ *Ibid.*, Vol. 13, p. 61.

Pharaoh; surely he has exceeded all limits” (Qur’ān, 20:21-24). The reason why the Almighty ordered him to press his hand to his side-pocket is due to the fact that his garment had tight sleeves; when he placed his hand into his side-pocket and took it out, it was glowing with light which almost blinded the eyes of the beholder. When he put it back into it and took it out again, it came out just as it used to look before.

Time came for Moses ﷺ to fulfil the mission for which Allāh created him: to warn Pharaoh and to save the Israelites from their yoke of bondage. Moses ﷺ remembered that he was still a fugitive, so he said, “Lord! Surely I killed one of them; therefore, I fear lest they should slay me. And my brother Aaron is more eloquent than me; therefore, send him with me as an aide to testify to my truthfulness; surely I fear lest they should reject me. He said: We will strengthen your arm with your brother, and We will give you both an authority so that they shall not reach you; (go) with Our signs; you both and those who follow you shall have the upper hand” (Qur’ān, 28:33-35). Moses at that time was wearing a shirt of wool which he had pierced with pegs, and an outer garment, also of woven wool. All his clothes and head-dresses were woven of coarse wool as Allāh Almighty was speaking to him and giving him His support and commandments.

The Almighty said to him, “O Moses! Set out with My Message, and you are being observed by My vision and hearing, and My power and vision are with you. I have commissioned you to a weak being of what I have created who has underestimated My blessings on him, felt secure against My designs, worshipped others besides Me. The life of this world caused him to be so arrogant that he forgot My right and might and denied My being his Lord, claiming that he does not know Me. I swear by My Dignity and Greatness, had it not been for the argument and might which I placed between Me and My creation, I would have ruined him like a Mighty One for Whose Wrath the heavens and the earth, the oceans, the mountains, the trees, and the animals would also be terrified. Had I permitted the sky, it would have crushed him, or the earth, it would have swallowed him, or the mountains, they would have smashed him, or

the oceans, they would have drowned him. But he became too insignificant in My eyes, and his affair seemed too easy (for any of that), and he dwarfed before My might, yet even My mercy included him, while I am the One Who has no need for him, nor for any, nor for all of My creation, and this is one of My own rights. I am the Creator of the rich and the poor, and there is nobody who is wealthy except one whom I have granted, nor is there anyone who is poor except one whom I have impoverished. So convey My message to him and invite him to worship Me and believe in My unity, and be sincere in worshipping Me, and warn him against My wrath and might, and remind him of My signs, and inform him that nothing at all can stand in the way of My wrath. Speak to him, even as you do so, from time to time, a kind word, maybe he will remember or fear, and respect him as you address him, and do not let the ornaments of the life of this world which I have bestowed on him cause you to be in awe of him, for his forelock is in My hand: he does not see, nor speak, nor breathe, except with My knowledge. Tell him that I am more swift to forgive and overlook than to be angry and inflict retribution. Tell him: Respond to your Lord, for His mercy is quite spacious, and He has granted you a respite this entire period during which you claim to be the god rather than Him, turning away from worshipping Him. Yet during this entire period, He permits the heavens to pour its rain over your land and the earth to bring forth its vegetation, while keeping you in good health so that you may not get very old nor sick nor become impoverished nor vanquished. Had He willed, He would have, a long time ago, inflicted His wrath on you and took away everything He had given you, but He surely is Most Munificent.”

The Almighty ceased addressing Moses ﷺ for seven days and nights, then He ordered him to respond to what He had spoken to him, so he said, “Lord! Expand my chest for me, make my affair easy for me, loosen the knot of my tongue so that they may understand my speech, and give me an aide from my family, Aaron, my brother. Strengthen my back through him, and associate him (with me) in my affair, so that we should glorify You much, and remember You oft. Surely You are seeing us” (Qur’ān, 20:24-35). The response of the Almighty came thus: “You are indeed granted

your petition, O Moses!” (Qur’ān, 20:36).

The Almighty thus continued his instructions to Moses ﷺ, admonishing him and his brother to strive and persevere. Moses ﷺ thought that Pharaoh was quite powerful with his huge army, while he himself had nobody except his brother, so the Almighty said to him, “Do not overestimate his might, for his forelock is in My hand, nor should you admire what I have permitted him to enjoy of the decoration of the life of this world and of the ornaments of the extravagant. Had I willed, I would have decorated you in such a way that if Pharaoh were to see it, he would realize his inability to attain it. But I do not want you to be like that, so I shall keep the enticements of this life away from you, and thus do I do to My friends: I keep them away from its riches as the shepherd keeps his herd away from the places of perdition.”¹

Having provided this brief narration of the story of prophet Moses ﷺ, we have to stop here, since the goal is not to narrate his biography, or to be a story teller to entertain and amuse the reader, but it is to deal with his prophetic mission as conveyed by himself and his brother Aaron ﷺ and the supplication whereby they both invoked the Almighty.

“Abū Omer” Muhammed al-Faryani quotes a series of narrators that ends with Ibn `Abbās saying, “The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ has said, ‘When Moses ﷺ was given the Tablets, he looked at them and said: ‘Lord! You have granted me a grace which You have not granted anyone else from among all people.’ This is what is meant by the verse saying, ‘He said: O Moses! Surely I have preferred you over the people with My messages and with My words, therefore take hold of what I give you and be grateful’ (7:144), that is, be strong, diligent and consistent in doing so, and you shall love Muhammed, My peace and blessings with him and his progeny.” Moses ﷺ said, ‘Lord! Who is Muhammed?’ He said, ‘He is Ahmed whose name I have inscribed on My Throne two thousand years

¹*Ibid.*, Vol. 13, p. 49.

before I created the heavens and the earth. He is My prophet, the one I have chosen for Myself, and the very best of all of My creation. He is more dear to Me than all My creation and angels.' Moses عليه السلام said, 'Lord! If Muhammed is more dear to You than all your creation, then have You created a nation more gracious in Your regard than mine?' Allāh Almighty said, 'The favor of the nation of Muhammed over all other nations is like My favor over all My creation.' He said, 'Lord! How I wish to see him and them!' He said, 'O Moses! You shall not see them, but if you desire to hear their speech, I shall let you hear it.' He said, 'Lord! I do wish to hear their speech!' The Almighty said, 'O nation of Muhammed!' The Messenger continued, "It was then that we responded to His call from the loins of our fathers and the wombs of our mothers saying, '*Labbayka Allāhomma!* Here we are, Lord, ever at Your service, Lord! All Praise is due to You, all bliss, and all authority! Yours, they are; there is no partner unto You in Your domain!' Whereupon Allāh Almighty said, 'O nation of Muhammed! My mercy has preceded My wrath, and My forgiveness has preceded My punishment! I have granted you even before you ask Me, and I have answered you even before you call on Me, and I have forgiven you even before you transgress: whoever comes on the Day of Judgment bearing witness that There is no god except Allāh, and that Muhammed is My servant and messenger, shall enter Paradise even if his sins were as many as the sea's meerschaum.'" This is a reference to the verse saying, "And you were not on the western side (of Mount Sinai) when We revealed to Moses the commandment, and you were not among the witnesses" (28:44) and also, "... and you were not on the side of the mountain (of Sinai) when We called" (28:46).

Demise of Moses عليه السلام

Imām Ja'far as-Sādiq عليه السلام was asked by one of his disciples about how Moses عليه السلام died. This is what the Imām عليه السلام said:

When the time for his departure drew nigh, when his term came to an end, and when his life was to terminate, the angel of death came to him and said, "*Assalamo Alaikom*, O one who spoke to Allāh!" Moses عليه السلام said, "*Alakomis-Salām*; who are you?" "I am the angel of death," came the answer. Moses عليه السلام asked him, "What brought

you here?" The angel said, "I have come to take your soul away." Moses asked him, "Where are you going to take it out from?" The angel said, "From your mouth." Moses ﷺ said, "How so since I spoke from it to my Lord, the Great One, the most Exalted One?" The angel said, "Then from your hands." Moses ﷺ said, "How so since with them did I carry the Torah?" The angel said, "Then from your feet." Moses ﷺ said, "How so since they trod Mount Sinai?" "Then from your eyes," said the angel. Moses ﷺ said, "How so since they have always been looking to my Lord with hope?" The angel said, "Then from your ears." Moses ﷺ said, "How so since through them did I hear the words of my Lord, the Great, the most Exalted One?" It was then that Allāh inspired to the angel of death saying, "Do not take his soul away till he is the one who asks you to do so." Moses ﷺ remained in this world for some time thereafter. He then called on Joshua son of Nūn, his *wasi*, and asked him to keep the news of his death to himself. He also told him who he should choose as his own *wasi* after him. Then Moses ﷺ disappeared from his people. He happened once to pass by a man digging a grave. "Shall I help you dig this grave?" Moses ﷺ asked him. The man responded in the affirmative. Moses ﷺ helped him dig it till the work was completed. Moses ﷺ lied down in it to see how it felt to be inside a grave. It was then that the veil was removed from his eyes, and he saw his place in Paradise. "Lord!", said Moses ﷺ, "Do take my soul away to You!" The angel of death took his soul right there and then and buried him in that same grave, healing the soil on him. The man whom Moses ﷺ had helped dig the grave was the same angel of death who had assumed a human form. On his death, a voice coming from the heavens was heard saying, "Moses has died! Who does not?"¹

Some Muslim "scholars" claim that when the angel of death went to Moses ﷺ to take his soul away, the prophet of Allah ﷺ did not want to die and slapped the angel on his face, causing him to lose one of his eyes! The poor angel will have to see an optometrist and perhaps get a pair of new spectacles! Who has seen the angels and

¹*Ibid.*, Vol. 13, pp. 365-366.

reported that an angel has two eyes just like humans? But some Muslims, due to some narrators of fabricated *ḥadīth*, claim that even the Almighty looks like and behaves similarly to humans, depicting him as walking and talking, moving from one place to another, wrestling with demons, laughing and leading the faithful behind Him into Paradise, putting His leg in the Fire in order to fill it without getting it burnt...! Do you buy all of that?! I doubt it! You will read more about these claims in this book. Can you imagine, dear reader, that a prophet of the Almighty would resist his Lord's orders and half blind His messenger?! Is not Islam all about unconditionally surrendering to the will of the Almighty? These naïve claims are typical of old hags' tales at the fireplace, but the problem is that there are many Muslims who blindly believe them only because this particular narrator of *ḥadīth* narrated them, thus giving their commonsense a vacation. This is taking *ḥadīth* quite lightly, folks, and not looking into it with magnifying glasses to read between the lines. It is really a dangerous trend.

Moses عليه السلام was one hundred and twenty years old when he died. He is mentioned in the Holy Qur'ān by name as many as one hundred and thirty-six times. It is narrated that Joshua (Yousha') son of Nūn, his *waṣī*, saw Moses once in a vision after Moses عليه السلام had died and asked him, "O prophet of Allāh! How did you find death?" "It is like the skinning of a she-camel while it is still alive," said Moses عليه السلام.

SUPPLICATION BY PROPHET MOSES عليه السلام

The following is excerpted from the Holy Qur'ān:

Moses said to his people: O my people! Remember the favor of Allāh on you when He raised prophets from among you and made you kings and gave you what He had not given any other nation of the world. O my people! Enter the holy land which Allāh has prescribed for you and do not turn your backs, for you will then turn back losers. They said: O Moses! Surely there is a strong race in it, and we will on no account enter it until they get out of it; so, if they get out of it, surely we will then enter. Two men of those

who feared, on both of whom Allāh had bestowed a favor, said: Enter on them by the gate, for once you have entered, you shall surely be victorious, and on Allāh should you rely if you are believers (in Him). They said: O Moses! We shall never enter it so long as they are in it; go therefore you and your Lord and you both fight; surely we will sit down here. He said: Lord! Surely I have no control (over any) but my own self and my brother; therefore, make a separation between us and the nation of transgressors. He said: So shall it be forbidden to them for forty years. They shall wander about in the land; therefore, do not grieve for the nation of transgressors. (5:20-26)

[Moses said:] O my people! How is it that I call you to salvation while you call me to the fire? You call on me that I should disbelieve in Allāh and associate with Him that of which I have no knowledge, while I call you to the Almighty, the Most Forgiving? (40:41-42)

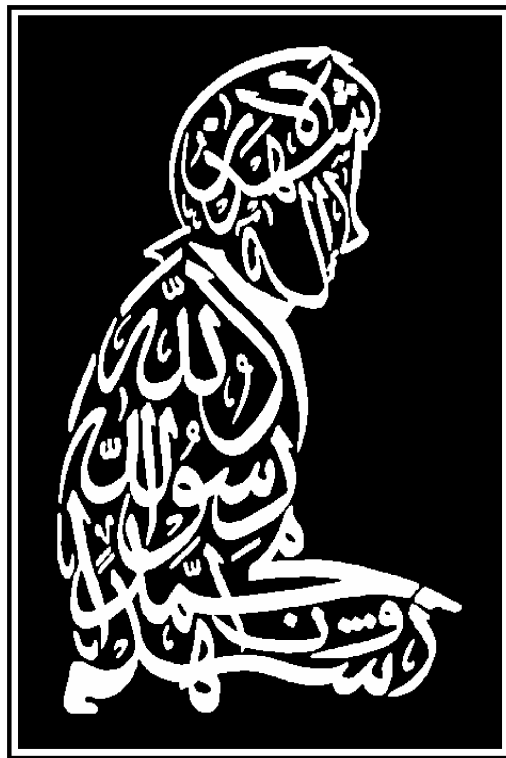
And when Moses came at Our appointed time and his Lord spoke to him, he said: Lord! Show me (Yourself), so that I may look at You. He said: You cannot (bear to) see Me, but look at the mountain; if it remains firm in its place, then will you see Me; but when his Lord manifested His glory to the mountain, He made it crumble and Moses fell down in a swoon; when he recovered, he said: Glory to You! I turn to You, and I am the first of the believers. (7:143)

Moses عليه السلام has also said, as the Holy Qur'ān records,

Lord! Surely You have given Pharaoh and his chiefs finery and riches in the life of this world, to this end, Lord, so that they may lead (people) astray from Your way. Lord! Destroy their riches and harden their hearts so that they may not believe until they see the painful punishment. He said: The prayer of you both has indeed been accepted; therefore, continue in the right way and do not follow the path of those who do not know. (10:88-89)

The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ asked his companions once, “Shall I inform you of the words which Moses spoke when he crossed the sea with the Children of Israel?” They said, “O Messenger of Allāh! Please do!” He said, “These were his words: *Lord! All Praise is due*

to You; to You is our complaint, and from You do we seek help, and on You do we rely. There is no power nor might except in Allāh, the Exalted, the Great.”



PROPHET DAVID (DĀWŪD) ﷺ

Allāh Almighty has said,

O David! Surely We have made you a ruler in the land. (38:26)

Prophet David ﷺ is the son of Eisha son of Awfayth son of Yu`az son of Solomon son of Yakhshun son of Amenothab son of Hasrun son of Baris son of Yahuda son of Jacob son of Isaac son of Abraham, the Friend of Allāh, blessings of Allāh with them all and many, many salutations.

David ﷺ was a servant and prophet of Allāh and His Vicegerent in Jerusalem. Allāh Almighty has said, “And Allāh granted him kingdom and wisdom” (Qur’ān, 2:251). Allāh has also said, “We gave David the Psalms” (Qur’ān, 4:163) which are now part of the Old Testament. Allāh never gave any of His creation a voice as sweet as the one which He bestowed on David ﷺ who used to recite the Psalms in seventy different tones. Whenever he sat alone by the mountains praising Allāh, the mountains would respond with praises of their own; so did all species of animals and birds, even the wild beasts and the lions. They would all get near him and praise the Almighty with him as soon as they heard his voice. The flowing water stood still, and so did the wind. Allāh Almighty has said, “And certainly We gave David excellence from Us: O mountains! Sing praises with him, and the birds, and We made the iron pliant to him” (Qur’ān, 34:10). Allāh Almighty has also said, “Surely We made the mountains sing the glory (of Allāh) in unison with him at the evening and at sunrise, and the birds gathered together; all joined in singing with him” (Qur’ān, 38:18-19).

The Messenger of Allāh Muhammed ﷺ has said, “The most favored prayers to Allāh were those of David, and the most favored of fast to Allāh was that of David: He used to sleep only half the night and stand for prayers one third of it, then sleep during its remaining sixth. He used to fast a day and break it another, and he never ran away whenever he was challenged.” This tradition is recorded by al-Bukhārī. Al-Bukhārī has also stated that, “Muhammed ibn Abdullāh

has quoted al-Awwām as saying that he once asked Mujāhid about the prostration in Sūrat Ṣād (chapter 38). Mujāhid said that he had asked Ibn `Abbās the same question, and that the latter had informed him that it was the prostration made by David عليه السلام in repentance and in thanksgiving.

Allāh, Praised is His Name and Exalted is He in the heavens and on earth, has said, “And We made the iron pliant to him, saying: Make ample (coats of mail)” (Qur’ān, 34:10-11). When David عليه السلام came to rule the Children of Israel, he used to go out to the public disguised. Whenever he saw a man who did not recognize who he (David عليه السلام) was, he would come and ask him what he thought of David عليه السلام, so the man would praise him and express his satisfaction. While he was one day doing that, Allāh sent him an angel in human form. David عليه السلام, as usual, came and asked him what he thought of him. The angel answered, “He is a very good man had it not been for a fault in him.” David عليه السلام asked him, “And what is that, O servant of Allāh?” He answered, “David eats and feeds his family from the government's treasury.” So he عليه السلام realized it and invoked Allāh to help him do something whereby he would not need the treasury but would instead spend some of his earnings by way of charity. Allāh, therefore, taught him how to make coats of mail, and he was the first person to make them. Before then, they used to use pieces of tin. It is said that he used to sell each coat of mail for four hundred dirhams. He would eat and feed his family from its price then give some of it to the poor and destitute. This is referred to in this verse: “And We taught him the making of coats of mail for you so that they might protect you in your wars” (Qur’ān, 21:80), and also, “And make the coats of mail according to a measure” (Qur’ān, 34:11), that is, neither very small, else they should stick to one's body and thus harm it or obstruct his movements, nor too big, else they should break the rings. He used to do that and he thus made a fortune.

It is narrated that Luqman the wise saw David عليه السلام making a coat of mail, and he was surprised at it but did not know what it exactly was. He wanted to ask him about it but he was too shy. He kept silent till David finished making it. David عليه السلام then stood and put it on saying, “What a shirt for the warrior!” Luqman, hence, understood what it

was for, so he said, "Silence is wisdom, and few are those who uphold it."

Allāh Almighty has said, "Has there come to you the story of the litigants when they made an entry into the private chamber (of David) by climbing over the walls? They entered on David, and he was frightened of them" (Qur'ān, 38:21). Scholars have disputed regarding the reasons why Allāh Almighty had put His prophet David عليه السلام to the sin test. Some of them reason saying that he one day invoked his Lord to grant him the status which He had granted his forefathers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob عليهم السلام, peace with them all, asking Him to test him with the same whereby He tested them, and to grant him of the honor as much as He had granted them. Both as-Suddi and al-Kalbi quote Muqātil who, in turn, quotes his mentors saying, and their statements support one another, that David عليه السلام divided his days into three portions: a day to arbitrate among people, a day to enjoy his women in private, and a day to worship his Lord and read. While reading, he used to quite often read about the distinction of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob عليهم السلام, peace with them all, so he said, "Lord! I see that all goodness has gone with my fathers who came before me." Allāh inspired him that they were tried with trials with which nobody else was ever tried, and that they remained steadfast. Abraham عليه السلام was tried with Nemrud's fire and with the attempted slaying of his son. Isaac عليه السلام was tried with the possibility of his being slain, while Jacob عليه السلام was so grieved because of losing Joseph عليه السلام that he lost his eye sight, "While you yourself were never tried with anything like that," the Almighty told him. David عليه السلام said, "Lord! Try me, and grant me as You granted them!" Allāh, therefore, inspired him that he would be tried on such-and-such a month, on such-and-such a day; so, "seek refuge against failing the test with perseverance," the Almighty added.

On the appointed day, David عليه السلام entered his private chamber and kept saying his prayers and reciting the Psalms. While he was doing that, Satan came to him in the form of a golden dove decorated with every beautiful color imaginable. It fell within his reach, so he stretched his hand to it to catch it. According to some narratives, he

wanted to give it to one of his young sons. As he stretched his hand to catch it, it flew a short distance away, so he followed it. Then it flew and fell in a hole. He went to catch it, but again it flew away from the hole. David kept watching it to see where it would fall again so that he would send someone to hunt it for him. Meanwhile, he looked and, according to al-Kalbi, he saw a woman bathing in an orchard by the river. As-Suddi says that he saw her on her house's rooftop. He found her to be the most beautiful woman his eyes had ever seen, and he admired her beauty. Soon she turned and noticed him, so she spread her hair to cover her entire body, causing him to admire her even more. He inquired about her, and he was told that she was Sabigh (Bathsheba) daughter of Shayea and wife of Uriah son of Hanan, the Hittite army general. References to her story are in the Old Testament; see 2 Samuel 11; 12; 1 Kings 1; 2; and the New Testament, Matthew 1.6. Her husband was then participating in an invasion of the Balkan areas together with Job son of Soorya, a nephew of David ﷺ. David ﷺ wrote his nephew Job, who was commander of the troops, to send Uriah to a particular place and to advance him before the Ark of Covenant, sacred symbol of the Israelites¹. Anyone who was presented before it, according to their traditions, was not permitted to retreat till Allāh enabled him to achieve either victory or martyrdom. The reader is now reminded that the concepts of *jihād* and martyrdom are not Islamic inventions; they exist in other religions, too, and the story of Uriah's martyrdom is just one testimony. The Crusades were nothing but a form of "Christian" *jihād*, as the Church of the time portrayed to the public, thus deceiving them and creating a lot of harm to both Christians and "heathens", as they used to call non-Christians. Uriah was sent on that mission. Victory was on his side, and the nephew wrote David ﷺ to inform him of the good news. David ﷺ then sent him another letter ordering him to send Uriah to another campaign

¹This Ark of Covenant was so sacred to the Hebrews that they regarded it as representative of God. Touching it was a desecration punishable by death. Its presence implied victory, so it was always carried into battle by poles thrust through rings on its sides. It was brought by David ﷺ to Jerusalem and placed by Solomon ﷺ at the Temple, then it disappeared.

wherein the foe was mightier, but this time Uriah was martyred. When the waiting period [of grief] for his wife was over, David ﷺ married her and she came to be the mother of prophet Solomon ﷺ the wise, peace with him.

When David ﷺ married Uriah's wife, he enjoyed his marriage for a short period of time before Allāh sent him two angels in human form. They sought audience with him. They found out that that day was the one he had scheduled, as was his habit, to adore his Maker, so the guards did not permit them to enter. But they were able to climb over his private chamber while he was saying his prayers, and he was frightened by seeing them thus entering without permission. To this does this verse refer: “Has there come to you the story of the litigants when they made an entry into the private chamber by climbing over the walls? When they broke into David’s chamber, he was frightened of them. They said, “Fear not; two litigants of whom one has acted wrongfully towards the other; therefore, decide between us with justice, and do not act unjustly, and guide us to the right way. Surely this is my brother; he has ninety-nine ewes and I have a single ewe” (Qur’ān, 38:21-23).

When one of them said that his brother had ninety-nine ewes, David ﷺ asked the other, “What do you have to say?” He said, “I have ninety-nine ewes and he has one ewe, and I want to take it and complete my ewes to a hundred.” He ﷺ asked him, “Even against his will? He said, “Yes.” David ﷺ said, “We do not permit you to do that, and if you try to do it, we will whip this and this of you,” meaning the tip of his nose and forehead. So the man said, “O David! You are more deserving than me to be whipped, since you have ninety-nine wives whereas Uriah had only one wife. Why did you expose him to death till he was killed and you married his widow?” David ﷺ had passed his judgment before listening to the argument of the other opponent. Some scholars say that David ﷺ then looked around and did not find anyone, so he realized what had befallen him, that they were not humans. This is the meaning of the verse saying, “David was sure that We had tried him, so he sought the protection of his Lord, and he fell down bowing and turned time after time (to Him)” (Qur’ān, 38:24).

Of course there are some Muslim scholars who dispute the story of the bird altogether, saying that all prophets of the Almighty are protected from sinning, and that the story was the product of imagination of some Israelites who mixed less facts with more fiction in their creed. Surely Allāh knows best.

Zakariyya quotes Anas ibn Mālik saying that he heard the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ saying, “When David looked at that woman, he made a covenant to the Children of Israel and instructed the ruler of al-Balqan (the Balkans) that if the foe was there, he should present so-and-so before the Ark of Covenant. They used the Ark to seek (Divine) assistance, and anyone who was presented before it was not to return till he was either killed or caused the enemy to flee. The woman's husband was killed. Two angels came down to narrate his tale. This is how David ﷺ realized what he had done, so he prostrated and remained for forty nights prostrating and weeping till vegetation grew from his tears around his head, and the ground eroded his forehead while saying, as he prostrated, ‘David has slipped a slip further than the east from the west. Lord! If You do not have mercy on David's weakness and forgive his sin, his sin will be the tale of the creation after him.’ Gabriel came to him after forty nights and said, ‘O David! Allāh Almighty has forgiven the distress that has overtaken you, and now you know that Allāh is Just and does not oppress. Regarding so-and-so,’ meaning Uriah, ‘when he comes on the Day of Judgment and says, ‘Lord! Where is my blood which David had spilled?’ Why don't you ask your Lord about that? If you wish, I can do that myself.’ He said, ‘Yes, do it.’ So Gabriel asked his Lord, and David ﷺ went back to his prostration and kept prostrating as long as Allāh willed. Then Gabriel descended again and said, ‘O David! I have asked Allāh about the matter regarding which you had sent me, and Allāh Almighty has said: Tell David that Allāh will gather you both on the Day of Judgment and say to Uriah: Grant what David owes you to Me, and he will agree, then I will say: You may remain in Paradise as long as you wish and you will have in it whatever you want in place of your blood.’

Supplication by Prophet David ﷺ

According to the reference known as *Arā'is al-Tha`labi*, when Prophet David ﷺ was visited by the two angels and passed a judgment which indicted his own self, the latter went back to their original form and ascended to heavens saying that the man had indicted his own self. David ﷺ realized that that was a test from the Almighty, so he prostrated and kept prostrating for forty days during which he never lifted his head except for an extreme urgency or to perform the prescribed prayers. He neither ate nor drank but kept crying till grass grew around his head while he was still invoking his Lord and praying Him to accept his repentance. As he prostrated, he kept repeating the following :

الويل لداود ثم الويل لداود، سبحان الله خالق النور. الويل لداود ثم الويل له حين يؤخذ
بذقته فيدفع الى المظلوم، سبحان الله خالق النور. الويل لداود ثم الويل الطويل له حين
يسحب على وجهه مع الخاطنين الى النار، سبحان الله خالق النور. الويل لداود ثم
الويل الطويل له حين تقربه الزبانية مع الظالمين الى النار، سبحان الله خالق النور.

Woe unto David, then woe unto David, Praise to Allāh, Creator of the light. Woe unto David then a lengthy woe unto him when he is taken by the chin and pushed to the one whom he oppressed, Praise to Allāh, Creator of the light. Woe unto David then a lengthy woe unto him when he is dragged on his face with the sinners into the fire, Praise to Allāh, Creator of the light. Woe unto David then a lengthy woe unto him when the denzines of hell lodge him with the wrongdoers into the Fire, Praise to Allāh, Creator of the light.

According to the same reference, David also kept invoking his Lord thus:

سبحان الله الملك الأعظم الذي يبتلي الخلق بما يشاء، سبحان الله خالق النور. الهي لم
أتعظ بما وعظت به غيري، سبحان الله خالق النور. الهي أنت خلقتني وكان في سابق
علمك ما أنا صائر اليه، سبحان الله خالق النور. الهي، يغسل الثوب فيذهب درنه و
وسخه، و الخطيئة لازمة لي لا تذهب عني، سبحان الله خالق النور. الهي أمرتني أن
أكون لليتيم كالأب الرحيم وللأرملة كالزوج العطوف، فنسيت عهدك، سبحان الله خالق
النور. الويل لداود اذا كشف عنه الغطاء فيقال هذا داود الخاطيء، سبحان الله خالق
النور. الهي، بأي عين أنظر اليك يوم القيامة و انما ينظر الظالمون من طرف خفي؟
الهي بأي قدم أقوم أمامك يوم تزل أقدام الخاطنين؟ سبحان الله خالق النور. الهي
الخطيئة لازمة لي، سبحان الله خالق النور. الهي من أين يطلب العبد المغفرة الا من

عند سيده؟ سبحان الله خالق النور. الهي مطرت السماء، و لم تمطر حولي، سبحان الله خالق النور. الهي أعشبت الأرض و لم تعشب حولي لخطيئتي، سبحان الله خالق النور. الهي أنا الذي لا أطيق حر شمسك، فكيف أطيق حر نارك؟ سبحان الله خالق النور. الهي أنا الذي لا أطيق صوت رعدك، فكيف أطيق صوت جهنم؟ سبحان الله خالق النور. الهي كيف يستتر الخاطئون من خطاياهم و أنت شاهدتهم حيث كانوا؟ سبحان الله خالق النور. الهي قرح الجبين و رق القلب و جمدت العينان من مخافة الحريق على جسدي، سبحان الله خالق النور. الهي تسبح لك الطير بأصوات ضعاف تخافك، و أنا العبد الخاطيء الذي لم أرع وصيتك، سبحان الله خالق النور. الهي الويل لداود من الذنب العظيم الذي أصاب، سبحان الله خالق النور. الهي أسألك يا اله ابراهيم و اسماعيل و اسحق و يعقوب أن تعطيني سؤلي فان اليك رغبتي، سبحان الله خالق النور. اللهم برحمتك اغفر لي ذنوبي و لا تباعدني من رحمتك بهواي. اللهم اني أعوذ بك من دعوة لا تستجاب و صلاة لا تقبل و عمل لا يقبل، سبحان الله خالق النور. اللهم اغفر لي بنور وجهك الكريم ذنوبي التي أوبقتني، سبحان الله خالق النور. الهي قررت بذنوبي و اعترفت بخطيئتي فلا تجعلني من القانتين و لا تخزني يوم الدين، سبحان الله خالق النور. الهي قرح الجبين و فثيت الدموع و تآثر الدود من ركبتني و خطيئتي ألزم بي من جلدي؛ سبحان الله خالق النور.

Glory to Allāh, the Greatest King Who tries the creation however He pleases; Glory to Allāh, Creator of light! Lord! I have not sought admonishment from what You have admonished others, Glory to Allāh, Creator of light! Lord! You are my Creator, and You knew in advance what I would do, Glory to Allāh, Creator of light! Lord! The garment is washed, and its filth and uncleanness is thus removed, whereas the sin lingers and never goes away from me; Glory to Allāh, Creator of light! Lord! You ordered me to be like a kind father to the orphan, to the widow like a compassionate husband, but I forgot the promise I made to You; Glory to Allāh, Creator of light! Woe unto David when the curtains are removed, and it will be said, "This is David the sinner!" Glory to Allāh, Creator of light! Lord! With what eyes shall I look at you on the Judgment Day while the oppressors look only stealthily? Lord! With what feet shall I stand before You on the Day when sinners' feet shall slip away? Glory to Allāh, Creator of light! Lord! The sin never parts with me, Glory to Allāh, Creator of light! Lord! From whom does a slave seek forgiveness save from his master? Glory to Allāh, Creator of light! Lord! The sky has poured its rain, but it did not rain around me, Glory to Allāh, Creator of light! Lord! The ground has produced its vegetation but not around me because of my sin; Glory to Allāh, Creator of light! Lord! I am the one who can be frustrated by the heat of Your sun; so, how shall I be able to withstand the fire of Your inferno? Glory to Allāh, Creator of light! Lord! I am the one who cannot withstand the

sound of the thunder You cause, so how shall I bear the sound of Hell? Glory to Allāh, Creator of light! Lord! How can the sinners shield themselves from their sins while You see them wherever they may be? Glory to Allāh, Creator of light! Lord! The forehead now has pus, the heart is weakened and the eyes are frozen out of fear of the fire on my body; Glory to Allāh, Creator of light! Lord! The birds sing Your praise with feeble voices, fearing You, while I am Your weak sinful servant who did not heed Your advice; Glory to Allāh, Creator of light! Lord! Woe unto David because of the great sin which has afflicted him, Glory to Allāh, Creator of light! Lord! I plead to You by the status reserved with You for my forefathers, Abraham, Ishmael, Isaac and Jacob, to grant me my plea, for I direct it to You; Glory to Allāh, Creator of light! Lord! By Your mercy, forgive my sins and do not distance me from Your mercy because of my inclinations. Lord! I seek refuge with You from a supplication which is not heeded, a prayer which is not accepted, a good deed which is not appreciated, Glory to Allāh, Creator of light! Lord! By the Light of Your Gracious Countenance, forgive my sins which have dragged me into the pit, Glory to Allāh, Creator of light! Lord! I have escaped with my sins and admitted my transgression, so do not cause me to despair, and do not shame me on the Judgment Day, Glory to Allāh, Creator of light! I have escaped from my sins to You, and I have admitted my sin; so, do not make me among the despondent and do not shame me on the Day they are raised again; Glory to the Creator of light! Lord! My forehead now has pus, my tears have dried up, worms have scattered from my knees, while my sin is closer to me than my skin; Glory to Allāh, Creator of light!

At that time he heard a call, “Are you hungry so that you will be fed or thirsty so that you will be given water, or oppressed so that you will be redressed?” No reference was made in the call to his sin, so he let out one cry whereby everything around him was stirred in motion, then he cried out, “Lord! The sin I have committed!” He was addressed, “O David! Raise your head, for your Lord has forgiven you.” But he did not raise his head, so Gabriel عليه السلام came to him and lifted his head up. David عليه السلام heard his Lord's call saying that He had forgiven him, so he said, “Lord! How so while You do not wrong anyone?” He said, “Go to Uriah's grave and call on him, and I shall enable him to hear you, then ask him to forgive you.”

David عليه السلام went out till he came to Uriah's grave, and he had put on the most coarse of clothes and sat near his grave. Then he called on him, "O Uriah!" Uriah answered, "Here I am! Who has interrupted my pleasure and woke me up?" David عليه السلام said, "I, David, have!" He said, "What brought you to me, O prophet of Allāh?" He عليه السلام said, "I have come to ask for your forgiveness." Uriah said, "What sin have you committed against me?" David عليه السلام answered, "I caused you to be killed." He said, "You exposed me to the reward of Paradise, and you are forgiven." Allāh then inspired this to David عليه السلام: "Have you not come to know that I am Just and I do not rule except equitably? Why don't you tell him that you married his wife?" So David عليه السلام went back to Uriah's grave and called on him again, "O Uriah!" He answered, "Who has now interrupted my pleasure?" He said, "I, David, have." He said, "O prophet of Allāh! What do you need now? Haven't I forgiven you?" He عليه السلام said, "Yes, but I did not do what I did to you except because of your wife, and I have married her." So Uriah remained silent, and he did not answer him. David عليه السلام called on him again, and Uriah did not answer him. David stood up and healed the dust over his head and wailed thus,

Woe and woe unto David! Glory to the Creator of light! Woe unto David, and a prolonged woe unto David! Glory to the Creator of light! Woe unto David and eternal woe unto David when the scales are set up on the Day of Judgment! Glory to the Creator of light! Woe unto David and eternal woe unto David when he will be dragged on his face with the sinners into the fire! Glory to the Creator of light! Woe unto David and eternal woe unto David when the custodians of Hell bring him and the wrongdoers to the fire! Glory to the Creator of light!

The call from heavens came again: "O David! I have forgiven your sin and I have had mercy on you. I have pitied your prolonged stay, answered your plea and corrected your step." He عليه السلام said, "Lord! How do You forgive me and my fellow has not?" He said, "O David! Whether he forgives you or not, I shall grant him on the Day of Judgment what his eyes never saw nor his ears ever heard, then I shall say to him, 'O servant of Mine! Are you now pleased?' He

shall say, 'Where did all this come from and I did not earn it myself?' I shall then say, 'This is a compensation to you for the sake of My servant David,' then I shall ask him to grant your blood to Me, and he will do so." David عليه السلام then said, "Lord! Now I have come to realize that You have, indeed, forgiven me." This is the meaning of the verse, "... and most surely he had nearness to Us and an excellent resort" (Qur'ān, 38:25).



PROPHET SOLOMON (SULAYMĀN) ﷺ

Allāh has stated the following in the Holy Qur'ān:

And Solomon was the heir of David. He said: O men! We have been taught the language of birds, and we have been given all things; most surely this is the manifest grace. (27:16)

Prophet Solomon ﷺ enjoyed a kingdom greater than that of his father David ﷺ, and he was more efficient in governing it. After his marriage with Queen Balqees al-Ḥimyarīyya (of the Ḥimyar tribe, a reference to the Queen of Sheba) of Yemen, his kingdom extended from the Mediterranean to the Indian Ocean, thus becoming the largest in his contemporary world. You can say that he ruled the whole world. His father David ﷺ was more ascetic than him. When he was granted by Allāh kingdom and wisdom, Solomon ﷺ was only thirteen years old. Ibn 'Abbās quotes the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ as saying, “The world in its entirety was ruled by four: two believers and two unbelievers. The believers were Solomon and Dhul-Qarnain (Double-Horns, probably Alexander the Great), and the unbelievers were Nemrud (Nimrod) and Nebuchadnezzar (604 - 561 B.C).”

Solomon invoked Allāh saying, “Lord! Do forgive me and grant me a kingdom which is not fit for (inheritance by) anyone after me” (Qur'ān, 38:35). The Almighty has said, “We made the wind subservient to him; it followed his command to run gently wherever he desired” (Qur'ān, 38:36). And He has also said, “And Solomon's hosts of the jinns and men and birds were gathered to him, and they were formed into groups” (Qur'ān, 27:17), at his service, ready to carry out his orders.

How was Solomon ﷺ more efficient in governing than his father

David ﷺ? Allāh Almighty tells us a story in the Holy Qur’ān which starts with this verse, “David and Solomon gave judgment concerning the field when the people's sheep grazed therein at night, and We were bearers of witness to their judgment” (Qur’ān, 21:78). Sheep raked havoc in it, grazing at night without a shepherd tending them. Two men met David ﷺ in this regard. One of them was the owner of the sheep, whereas the other was the owner of the pasture or field. The latter said, “This man's sheep came at night into my field and did not leave anything in it.” David said, “Go, for the sheep are now yours,” thus making him the owner of both the field and the sheep. Both men later on happened to pass by his son Solomon ﷺ who asked them how his father ﷺ had judged between them, and they told him of it, whereupon he sought permission to have audience with his father. His father asked him, “How would you have judged between both men, had you been the judge?” He said, “I would have given the sheep to the owner of the field for one year so that he would take their young, wool, and other benefits, while the owner of the sheep would sow the seeds in the field as though he were its owner. In the next year, when the field goes back to the way it used to be, I would give it back to its rightful owner and take the sheep back from him.” David ﷺ approved of the judgment of his son Solomon ﷺ.

Allāh Almighty sent prophet David ﷺ a book containing thirteen thousand questions. Allāh then inspired him to ask his son Solomon ﷺ about them: If he proved to be capable of correctly answering them, he should be his successor. David ﷺ invited seventy priests and tribal chiefs and seated Solomon before them. He then addressed him saying, “O son! Allāh has sent down to me a book wherein there are questions, and He ordered me to ask you about them. If you are able to answer them correctly, you are to be the king after me.” He said, “Let the prophet of Allāh ask whatever he pleases.” So he put forth before him a number of very complex questions, as complex as puzzles; his son answered all of them correctly. David ﷺ, therefore, ascended the pulpit, praised the Almighty then said, “The Almighty has ordered me to appoint Solomon as my successor over you.” The Children of Israel became angry and said, “How can a

young boy be our ruler when there are among us those who are better than him and more knowledgeable?” David ﷺ invited the chiefs of the tribes from among the Children of Israel a second time and said to them, “What you have said has come to my knowledge; so, let me see your staffs. If any staff becomes a tree and bears fruit, its owner shall take charge after me.” They agreed, and they brought their staffs after each one of them had written his name on it, then all the staffs were put in a room and the door was closed and secured with locks. The chiefs of the tribes of Israel guarded the room themselves. In the next morning, he said the congregational prayers with them, then he came and opened the door and took their staffs out, and they were just as they had left them, except Solomon's staff which had shot leaves and produced its fruit. They, therefore, submitted to David ﷺ. When David ﷺ saw that, he praised Allāh, conveyed Solomon ﷺ behind him and went about the residences of the Children of Israel saying, “This man shall be my successor over you after me.”

Wahab ibn Manbah has said, “When David ﷺ appointed his son Solomon ﷺ as his successor, he admonished him saying, ‘O Son! Beware of jesting, for its benefit is little, while it incites enmity even among brothers. Beware of anger, for anger demeans the angry one. Uphold the fear of Allāh and obedience to Him, for they both will conquer everything. Beware of being over-jealous about your wife without a reason, for that will cause the others to be suspicious. Do not covet what people have, for this is wealth in its true meaning. Do not be greedy, for greed is an ever present poverty. Beware of things for which you will have to apologize by word or by deed. Accustom yourself and your tongue to saying the truth, and always be benevolent. If you can make your day better than the day before, then do just that. Say your prayers with tearful eyes, and do not keep company with those who concern themselves with frivolous things. Do not argue with a learned scholar, and do not make any show of your creed. If you feel angry, go somewhere else, and seek the mercy of Allāh, for His mercy surely encompasses everything.’”

Solomon ﷺ and the Ants

Sūrat an-Naml (Chapter of the Ants, Ch. 27 of the Holy Qur’ān)

narrates an interesting encounter between Solomon ﷺ and an ant at the valley of the ants. Some scholars say it is a valley in Ṭā'if, not far from Mecca, whereas others say it is in Syria. The latter possibility seems to be more plausible especially in the light of the fact that Solomon's capital was the ancient city of Jerusalem¹. Syria (ancient Aram, the land of those who speak Aramaic, mother tongue of Jesus Christ ﷺ and the first language wherein the gospels of the Bible were written) used to include today's Syria in addition to Jordan, Lebanon, and Palestine. In the said Qur'ānic Chapter, we are told the following:

And his (Solomon's) hosts of the jinns and men and birds were gathered to him, and they were formed into groups. When they came to the valley of the ants, an ant said, "O ants! Enter your homes lest Solomon and his hosts should crush you while they do not know. So he smiled, wondering at her word, and said, "Lord! Grant me that I should be grateful for Your favor which You have bestowed on me and on my parents, and that I should do good with which You are pleased, and make me enter, by Your mercy, into (the company of) Your servants, the good ones. (27:17-19)

The name of that ant, the head of her group, was Takhia. She called on the other ants to protect themselves by seeking shelter inside their holes. Wind carried what everyone said to Solomon's ears. Solomon ﷺ heard the ant's statement from the distance of three miles, so he alighted and ordered Takhia brought to him, and she was. He asked

¹One of the oldest cities in the world, Jerusalem dates back to about 1400 B.C. Prophet David, Solomon's father ﷺ, peace with them both, made it his capital after taking it from the Jebusites, tribesmen who used to occupy it before then. In 586 B.C., it fell to the Babylonians, and the Roman emperor Titus razed its buildings in 70 A.D. Its name in Hebrew is Ur-o-Shalom, the city of peace, and in Arabic al-Quds, the sacred city. It is also known in pre-Islamic Arabic literature as Eilya' إيلياء and is discussed on pp. 348-349, Vol. 1, of *Mu'jam al-Buldān* of Yāqūt al-Hamawī (Beirut, Lebanon, Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyya, 1410 A.H./1990 A.D.). According to one opinion, it is named after Eilya' (perhaps Elijah) son of Iram son of Sam son of Noah ﷺ, brother of Damascus, Hims (or Homs), Jordan, and Palestine.

her, “Why did you warn the ants? Have you not come to know that I am a fair prophet of Allāh? Why were you afraid lest I and my hosts should smash you all?” Takhia said, “O prophet of Allāh! I did not mean the smashing of the bodies but the smashing of the hearts! I feared lest we should desire what you have been granted and become dazzled and thus be distracted from praising the Almighty!” Having heard her terse statement, He ﷺ said to her, “Admonish me.” Takhia asked Solomon, “Are you greater than your father David or was he greater?” Solomon ﷺ said, “My father David (was greater).” She said, “If so, then why is the number of letters in your name greater than those in the name of your father David?” Solomon ﷺ said, “I do not know why.” The ant said, “Your father had treated his wound with *wudd*, compassion, so he was called Dāwūd, and I wish you, O Solomon, will join your father’s company.” Then she asked him, “Do you know why has the wind been made subservient to you in particular from all other regions of the kingdom?” Solomon said, “I have no knowledge of that.” The ant said, “The Almighty, the most Exalted One, has meant to say this to you: ‘Had I put all the kingdom under your control just as I have done with this wind, it will have slipped from your hands just as wind slips away.’ It was then that he smiled on account of her statement.” Ibn `Abbās is quoted as saying that the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ was ordered by the Almighty not to kill four types of beings: hoopoes, surrad birds, bees, and ants.

The following is narrated in a book titled *Da`awāt ar-Rāwandi*:

“Solomon ﷺ was sitting by the sea shore once when he saw an ant carrying a grain which it took to the sea. Solomon ﷺ kept watching her till she reached the water. It was then that a frog took its head out of the water then opened its mouth. The ant entered inside its mouth and the frog dived into the sea. After a long time, Solomon ﷺ kept thinking about what he had witnessed. Then the frog came out of the water, opened its mouth, and the ant came out of it, and the grain was not in its mouth. Solomon ﷺ called on her and asked her what she was doing and where she had been. She said, ‘O prophet of Allāh! There is in the bottom of the sea before your eyes a hallow rock, and inside it there is a blind worm. Allāh, the most Exalted

One, created it there, and it cannot get out of it to seek its sustenance, and Allāh assigned to me the task of carrying its food to it; therefore, I carry it so it may be sustained thereby. And Allāh assigned to this frog the task of carrying me, and the water does not harm me, being inside its mouth. The frog then places its mouth on the rock and I get out of it.” Solomon ﷺ asked her, “Did you ever hear that worm celebrating the praises of Allāh?” “Yes,” the ant said, adding, “It said the following: ‘O One Who does not forget me, though I am in the depth of this rock, in the depth of this water, I plead to You by Your own sustenance of me not to forget Your believing servants, and to include them in Your mercy.’”¹

Solomon's Ring

According to Imām Ja`far as-Sādiq ﷺ, Allāh had placed Solomon's power and authority in his ring. Whenever he put it on, the jinns, the humans, the demons, the birds, and all animals would be under his power and would obey him. He would then sit on his throne and Allāh would send the wind to carry the throne and his train of demons, birds, humans, animals, horses, etc., and would go wherever Solomon ﷺ desired. This is the meaning of verses 12 and 13 of Sūrat Saba' (Ch. 34) and also 21:81-82. Notice the name of this Chapter: Saba' is known in English as “Sheba”, the land where Balqees Queen of Sheba and her Arab folks used to live. Solomon ﷺ would say his morning prayers in Syria and his noon prayers in Persia. He used to order the devils to carry building stones from Persia and sell them for him in Syria. But when he slashed the horses' necks and legs, as we are told in 38:33, Allāh deprived him of his domain. How did that happen? Here is one view, and there are many others:

Solomon ﷺ was very fond of horses. He used to like them and enjoyed seeing them parading before him from time to time. It is said that he had inherited a thousand of horses from his father. One day, the parading took too long; it lasted till sunset, causing him to

¹al-Majlisi, *Bihār al-Anwār*, Vol. 14, p. 97-98, quoting *Da`awāt al-Rāwandī*, a manuscript.

forget about saying his afternoon prayers. He was very sad about that, so he supplicated to Allāh to bring the sun back so that he could say his afternoon prayers. The Almighty brought the sun back, so Solomon ﷺ performed his prayers. Then he ordered the horses to be brought back to him again. He now took a sword and kept slashing their necks and legs till he killed all of them. This is the meaning of the verse saying, “Bring them back to me (said Solomon), so he kept slashing their legs and their necks” (Qur’ān, 38:33).

Whenever he went to the toilet, Solomon would give his ring to one of his servants or wives. It so happened once, as we are told by ar-Rāzi, that Solomon ﷺ heard about a city on an island. He invaded it and killed its king who had a very beautiful daughter named Jarāda. Solomon ﷺ took her captive, and she accepted his faith, Islam, the surrendering to the One and Only God, the same creed preached by each and every prophet of the Almighty no matter what it is called nowadays by His servants, for a rose in any language is still a rose; it looks, feels and smells the same. Solomon ﷺ loved Jarāda very much and married her. But she was very much grieved about her father whom she missed very much, so Solomon ﷺ ordered one devil to carve an image of her father for her, which he did. Jarāda used to go to that image every morning and evening accompanied by her maids, and they would all prostrate before it. Āsif ibn Barkhiya, his scribe, relative, army commander and confidant, informed him of what was going on, so Solomon ﷺ reduced that image to pieces and punished his wife for thus worshipping it. He also blamed himself for being the cause of it in the first place and went out to the open fields feeling very forlorn and regretful. He heaped dust on his head, sat and wept over his sin, praying Allāh to accept his repentance.

Solomon ﷺ had another wife named Ameena. Whenever he went to the toilet, or to visit one of his women, he entrusted her with his ring. One day, he left it with her when a sea Satan saw it. The latter assumed Solomon's form, came to Ameena and ordered her to return his ring to him. He put it on, and soon the devils, the jinns, the humans, the birds, and all animals put themselves under his

command. When Solomon went out and sought the ring, he did not find it. He, therefore, fled out and passed by the sea shore. The Children of Israel were disgusted to see how Satan assumed the form of Solomon ﷺ. They first went to his mother and asked her, "Have you noticed anything about Solomon's conduct which you find to be reprehensible?" She said, "He used to be the most kind of all people towards you, and now he openly disobeys me." They went to his wives and concubines and asked them the same question. They said, "He never approached us during our menstruation, and now he does." When that Satan was afraid they would discover him, he threw the ring in the sea (Mediterranean). Allāh sent one fish that swallowed it, and that particular Satan fled away. The Children of Israel kept looking for Solomon ﷺ for forty days. This is how long Solomon's wife kept worshipping her father's image as her idol. Solomon ﷺ, meanwhile, spent his time wandering by, begging people to feed him. If he happened to tell them that he was Solomon ﷺ, they would throw dirt at him, insult and ridicule him. He felt very regretful and repented to Allāh on account of what he had done. After those forty days were over, he passed by a fisherman fishing and he asked him saying, "Shall I help you provided you give me some of your catch?" The fisherman agreed, so Solomon helped him catch some fish. The fisherman, therefore, gave Solomon ﷺ a fish. Solomon ﷺ took it, cut it open and went to wash it. He found the ring inside it, so he put it on. It was then that all the devils, jinns, humans, birds, and animals went back to their previous obedience to him. He sought that particular Satan who had done what he had done as well as his hosts who had assisted him. He found and took them all, had them tied, then confined some of them in the bottom of the sea and others in the depth of the stones, invoking on them Allāh's Attributes (*asmā Allāh al-ḥusna*). They are, ever since, jailed there, and they shall remain confined till the Day of Judgment.¹

Prophet Solomon ﷺ had finished the reconstruction of the Jerusalem temple which was originally built by his father David ﷺ. Most or all of it was demolished after the demise of Solomon ﷺ by

¹al-Majlisi, *Bihār al-Anwār*, Vol. 14, pp. 99-100.

the Babylonian king Bukhtnuzzar who looted everything of value in it. Having finished reconstructing it in 975 B.C., Solomon عليه السلام said, "Lord! You have granted me this kingdom out of Your favor on me, and You have made me Your vicegerent on Your earth and blessed me thereby even before I was anything at all; so, all Praise is due to You. Lord! I plead to You to grant whoever enters this place of worship: that none enters it and offers even two prostrations in sincerity should come out of his sins just as his mother had first given birth to him, and nobody enters it and he is a sinner except that You accept his repentance, nor anyone enters it in fear except that You grant him security, nor anyone enters it and he is sick except that You heal him, nor anyone enters it who is impotent except that You make him fertile and You grant him wealth."

Solomon is the one who disseminated the unitarian creed and the worship of Allāh in the kingdom of Saba' (Sheba).

I wish I had enough space in this book to narrate to the reader the very interesting story of how Solomon came to marry the Queen of Sheba, namely Balqees daughter of al-Shar who belonged to the Arab tribe of Himyar, Yemen, but I have no choice except to stop here in order to conserve space and cut on expense. It suffices to provide the reader with a glimpse of this woman whose kingdom in southern Arabia rivalled that of Solomon in Syria and the Mediterranean. The commanders of her army troops numbered twelve thousand, each commanding one hundred thousand soldiers, and you do the math about the total number of her troops. The remnants of the temples she had built for the sun and the moon gods can still be seen and are a source of immeasurable interest to archaeologists and anthropologists, and very little has been published about such temples or about their builder. But I have to stop here feeling sad and wishing that there had been Muslim philanthropists who could finance the publication of a book as interesting as this one and twice or three times as big. The best Islamic literature is still in Arabic awaiting those who would dig up its treasures then translate them into other languages, especially European languages...

LUQMAN THE WISE

The story of Luqman is that of a very wise man. Allāh Almighty has said, “Certainly We granted Luqman wisdom” (Qur’ān, 31:12). Such wisdom is evident when we read the following beautiful verses of the Holy Qur’ān wherein the Almighty quotes Luqman admonishing his son:

Luqman said to his son while admonishing him: O son! Do not associate aught with Allāh; most surely polytheism is a grievous iniquity. And We have enjoined man regarding his parents—his mother bears him with weakness on weakness, and his weaning is in two years—saying: Be grateful to Me and to both your parents; to Me is the eventual return. And if they contend with you that you should associate with Me that of which you have no knowledge, do not obey them, and keep company with them in this world kindly, and follow the way of one who turns to Me, then to Me is your return, then will I inform you of what you did. O son! Surely if it is the very weight of the grain of a mustard-seed, even though it is in (the heart of) a rock, or (high above) in the heavens, or (deep down) on earth, Allāh will bring it (to light); surely Allāh is Knower of subtleties, the Aware. O son! Keep up prayers and enjoin goodness and forbid evil, and bear patiently that which befalls you; surely these acts require courage. And do not turn your face away from people in contempt, nor go about in the land exultingly; surely Allāh does not love any self-conceited boastful. And pursue the right course in your going about, and lower your voice; surely the most hateful of voices is the braying of the asses. (31:13-19)

His name is Luqman son of Ba’oor son of Na’oor son of Tarih. The latter was father of Abraham عليه السلام, peace with him. Mujāhid has said that Luqman was a black man with huge lips and cuts on his face. He was from the Nubia¹ of Egypt, a black man with very thick lips.

¹Nubia is an ancient region in northeastern Africa extending from the Nile Valley eastward to the Red Sea, southward to the Sudanese capital, Khartoum, and westward to the Libyan Desert. Under the pharaohs of ancient Egypt, it was called Cush (or Kush). Some of Egypt’s Pharaohs were born there.

He is mentioned in the Holy Qur'ān by name twice, and Chapter 31 of the Holy Qur'ān, from which the quotation above is excerpted, bears his name.

Some scholars concede that he was a wise man, not a prophet, with the exception of `Ikrimah who used to say that Luqman was a prophet. Abū Mansoor al-Khamshawī, through a chain of narrators, has informed us that Luqman was a prophet, while other scholars have said that Luqman was given the choice between Prophethood and wisdom and that he chose wisdom.

Imām “Abū Abdullāh” Ja`far as-Sādiq عليه السلام was asked once about Luqman and his wisdom mentioned by Allāh in His Book, the Holy Qur'ān. The Imām عليه السلام said,

By Allāh! Luqman was not granted wisdom on account of his descent, wealth, offspring, physical prowess, or beauty. Rather, he was a man whose belief in Allāh was very strong. He was pious, quiet, silent most of the time, far-sighted, meditative, sharp in insight, wealthy with morals. He never slept during the day, nor did anyone ever see him using the toilet or even bathing due to his being extremely bashful, to his deep thinking and reservations. He never laughed at anything at all for fear of sinning, nor was he ever seen angry. He never joked with anyone. He never expressed his delight at something of this life's wares which he earned, nor did he ever grieve about anything. He married a number of women and had a number of children, but many of his children died before coming of age, yet he never wept over the death of any of them. He hardly passed by two men contending or fighting without reconciling between them, and he never left them before resolving their dispute or coming to peaceful terms. Whenever he heard someone saying something which he appreciated, he asked for its explanation and who he had learned it from. He quite often attended the meetings of *faqih*s and men of wisdom. He often visited judges, kings, and sultans, so he would pity the judges because of their trials and seek Allāh's mercy for the kings and sultans because of being deceived about Allāh and because of their taking Him for granted. He derived wisdom and taught himself that which would help him overcome his own inclinations and struggle against his own desires and seek refuge through it from

Satan. He used to heal his heart with meditation and console himself with moral lessons. He never travelled to a place except for a cause that concerned him. This is how he was granted wisdom and protection against sinning. Allāh, Blessed and Exalted is He, ordered certain groups from among the angels at midday, when most people slept¹, to go and address Luqman. He could hear but not see them. They said to him, “O Luqman! Would you like Allāh to make you a vicegerent on earth so you may judge between people with justice?” He answered, “If Allāh permits me to make a choice, I prefer good health over the affliction (of government); but if He has already decreed the matter, then I shall listen and obey, for I know that if this is His will, He will surely help me and protect me.” The angels asked him why so. He said, “It is so because the ruler is in the most precarious and agonizing of all situations: pressure overwhelms him from everywhere if he is right; so I hope he can save himself. But if he is wrong, he will miss the path to Paradise. Anyone in this life is better off humiliated rather than being in a position to humiliate others. Whoever prefers the life of this world over the life to come will be rejected by life itself, and only the hereafter is the one that remains forever.” The angels admired his eloquence, so he slept and was granted wisdom as he slept, making him the wisest man of his time. When he woke up, his speech was indicative of wisdom. Later on, David (prophet Dāwūd) was addressed likewise, and he accepted what Luqman had rejected. Luqman used to assist him with his wisdom, so David used to say to him, “Congratulations, O Luqman! You have been granted wisdom and affliction was turned away from you!” David was granted authority, so he was tested with many trials and tribulations.²

The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ is quoted as having said, “The truth is what I say: Luqman was not a prophet; rather, he was a servant of Allāh, and Allāh Almighty protected him against sinning. He used to meditate a great deal. His belief was very good, so Allāh loved him

¹It is a custom in hot climate countries to take a midday nap to ward off the heat. Luqman was born and grew up in a hot country. According to some, he is regarded as "Black".

²al-Majlisi, *Biḥār al-Anwār*, Vol. 13, pp. 409-411.

and bestowed the favor of wisdom on him.”

Ibn Fathawayh, through a chain of narrators, quotes Khālīd ar-Rabī saying, “Luqman was a black Ethiopian slave who worked as a carpenter. Once his master told him to slaughter a she-camel, which he did. Then he told him to bring him two of its choicest parts. He brought him the tongue and the heart. He asked him, ‘Is there really anything in it tastier than these pieces?’ ‘No,’ Luqman answered, so his master remained silent. Then he told him to slaughter another she-camel. This time he asked him to bring him the very worst parts of it, whereupon Luqman brought him the tongue and the heart. He, therefore, said to him, ‘I ordered you to bring me the two most tasty parts of it and you brought me the tongue and the heart, then I ordered you to bring me the very worst two pieces of it and you still brought me the tongue and the heart...!’ Luqmān said, ‘There is nothing more tasty than them if they are good, and nothing is worse than them when they are bad.’

Abdullāh ibn Hamīd, through a chain of narrators, informs us that Muhammed ibn ‘Ajlān has said that Luqman the wise had said, “No wealth is better than good health, and no bliss is like good-heartedness.”

A man passed by Luqmān and saw how people were surrounding him. He asked him, “Are you the black slave who used to tend the sheep in such-and-such a place?” Luqman said, “Yes.” He asked him again, “Then what caused you to be in this status [of prominence]?” He answered, “Speaking the truth, giving the trust back to its rightful owner, and staying away from anything which does not concern me.”

Al-Hussain ibn Muhammed quotes his father as saying that Luqmān has said, “The beating by the father [as a disciplinary act] of his son is like water for the plants.” Abdullāh ibn Dīnār is quoted as saying that Luqmān once came back from one of his trips and was met by a boy on the highway, so he asked him, “What has my father done?” He answered, “He has died.” Luqmān said, “Praise to Allāh! Now I am in charge of my own affairs.” Then he asked him, “What has my

wife done?” He answered, “She has died, too.” He said, “Now my bed has been changed.” “What has my sister done?” asked he. “She has also died.” Luqmān said, “My honor has been safeguarded; what has my brother done?” “He, too, has died,” came the answer. To this, he answered saying, “Now truly my spine has been split...”

Al-Hussain ibn al-Hassan ibn Muhammed, who quotes a chain of narrators ending with Shaqeeq, has said that Luqmān was asked once, “Who is the most evil of all people?” He answered, “The one who is indifferent when seen erring.” Someone once said to Luqmān, “How ugly your face is!” He asked that person in turn, “Are you finding fault with the inscription or with the Inscriber?”

Imām Ja`far as-Sādiq عليه السلام has informed Hammād ibn `Isa al-Juhni¹, one of his faithful disciples, that Luqmān had said the following to his son Natan:

O son! Ever since you came to this world, you left the life of this world behind you, turning your face in the direction of the life hereafter; so, an abode to which you are going is nearer to you than one from which you are departing. O son! The life of this world is like a deep sea in which many people have indeed

¹His full name is Hammad ibn `Isa ibn at-Tufayl, “Abū Muhammed”, of Kūfa, then of Basra. He was more than ninety years old when he died in 208 or 209 A.H. (824 or 825 A.D.) by drowning at Juhfa (in today’s Saudi Arabia) in a valley called Wadi Qanāt which then flowed from al-Shajara area in the outskirts of Mecca to Medīna as he was on his way to perform the pilgrimage. He learned two hundred traditions from Imām Ja`far as-Sādiq عليه السلام, and he was contemporary also of Imāms al-Kāzim, al-Riḍa, and al-Jawād عليه السلام, peace with them all. He wrote about *zakāt*, prayers, and a book containing maxims and morals. He is one of a very small number of Shī`a reporters of *ḥadīth* whose traditions are accepted without question by Sunnis and Shī`as alike. For more information about this great man, refer to pp. 221-223, Vol. 6, of the encyclopedia titled *A`yān al-Shī`ah* by the renowned Imām al-Sayyid Muhsin al-Amīn (Beirut, Lebanon: Dār al-Ta`āraf lil Matbū`āt, 1406 A.H./1986 A.D.). This encyclopedia is one of the references consulted for writing this book and others bearing al-Jibouri’s name.

drowned. Let your boat be the fear of Allāh, your rafter the belief in Allāh, and its mast the reliance on Allāh, for then you may be secured. So if you reach the haven of safety and security, it is only because of Allāh's mercy on you, but if you perish, it will be due to your own sins. O son! How can people not dread their decree while their lives are shortened every day? O son! Choose from this world its wisdom, and do not indulge in its affairs too much else you should harm your life hereafter, nor should you reject it else you should become a burden on others. Fast in a way that would sever its desire, and do not fast in a way that would render your prayers void, for the prayers are greater in the sight of Allāh than the fast. O son! Do not seek knowledge just to boast of it before others, nor make a pretense of it before the fools, nor seek eminence at gatherings. And do not abandon knowledge out of underestimating its value or desiring ignorance. O son! Choose the assemblies through discerning them carefully; so, if you see people mentioning the Name of Allāh, seek their company, for if you then learn something from them, your knowledge will benefit you, and they will thus increase your share of knowledge. If you are worthy of achieving knowledge, they will not hesitate to teach you, and Allāh may look at them mercifully, so His mercy may then include you, too. If you see people not mentioning the Name of Allāh, do not seek their company, for if you learn from them, your knowledge will not avail you in the least, and if you do not know, they will only increase your ignorance, for Allāh may look at them angrily, and His Wrath may include you, too. O son! Do not do a favor except to someone who is worthy of it, for just as there is no truce between the lamb and the fox, there can be no friendship between the virtuous and the sinners. Whoever relishes to be praised in public will be taunted; whoever drags his feet to the avenues of mischief will be accused thereof; whoever seeks the company of the wicked will never be safe, and whoever has no control over his tongue will always regret. O son! Opt to be a slave of the righteous rather than a friend of the wicked. O son! Be trustworthy, so you will be wealthy, and do not give people the impression that you fear Allāh while in your heart you are a sinner. O son! Seek the assemblies of the scholars and crawl to them on your knees; do not argue with them else they should deprive you of speaking to you; be nice to them when you ask them else they should ignore you; and do not embarrass them else they should be bored of you. O son! Do not run away from a matter, nor should you be reluctant to face it, for that will cause you to be weak in

thinking, feeble of mind. O son! If you are disciplined when young, you will benefit when old. O son! Do not enjoin people to do good deeds while forgetting it yourself else your similitude should be like a lamp that lights for people while burning its own self. O son! Do not underestimate small matters, for the small shall tomorrow become big. O son! Beware of telling lies, for telling lies will corrupt your creed and make people despise you. You will then lose your modesty, glory, and dignity; you will be subjected to insults, and nobody will care the least about what you say. There is nothing good in living like that. O son! Beware of bad manners, bickering, and impatience, for then nobody can befriend you, and everyone will avoid you. Train yourself to be gentle in all what you do, patient no matter what, and treat everyone with a good conduct, for whoever improves his conduct and smiles to others will be preferred by the good ones, loved by the righteous, and shunned by the bad ones. O son! Do not bury your mind with distress, and do not let grief occupy your heart. Beware of greed and be satisfied with your destiny and with what Allāh has allotted for you; your life will then be worry free; you will be pleased with your own self, and you will find life enjoyable! If you want all the riches of the world to be yours, do not ever covet what others have, for the prophets and the righteous did not reach their status except after cleansing themselves of coveting what others had. O son! The wares of the life of this world are but few, and your life-span in it is short, and what remains thereof is a little of very little indeed! O son! Do favors to those who appreciate them, and do not do them for those who do not, else you should lose them in the life of this world and be deprived of their rewards in the life to come. Be frugal and do not be extravagant. Do not hold wealth as though you do not want to part with it, nor should you give it away extravagantly. O son! Uphold wisdom so that you may be dignified thereby, and esteem it so that you, too, will be held in high esteem. The best of wise manners is the religion of Allāh, the most Exalted One, the Great. O son! There are three marks of the spiteful one: he backbites his friend in his absence, flatters him in his presence, and is pleased when trouble afflicts him!¹

There is a great deal of literature available on Luqmān and the pearls

¹al-Majlisi, *Bihār al-Anwār*, Vol. 13, pp. 411-412.

of his wisdom collected by the great mentor `allāma Muhammed Bāqir al-Majlisi and incorporated in Vol. 13 of his 111-volume (old edition) of encyclopedia titled *Bihār al-Anwār al-Jami`a li Durar Akhbār al-A`immah al-Aṭhār* بحار الأنوار الجامعة لدرر أخبار الأئمة الأطهار to which we refer the reader who seeks precious knowledge and rich wisdom. Its new edition carries the date of 1427 A.H./2006 A.D. and falls in 24 Volumes of different sizes. Its copyrights are registered for Qum's مؤسسة احياء الكتب الاسلامية, and it is the one cited in this book, being one of the main sources for writing this and other books bearing this author's name. Truly Allāh has said the truth when He said, "And whoever is granted wisdom, he indeed is granted a great deal of good" (Qur'ān, 2:269). May Allāh *Ta`āla* bestow wisdom on all of us, *Allāhomma Āmeen*.



Prophet's Mosque at dusk, Medīna, Saudi Arabia



MARY AND JESUS ﷺ IN ISLAM

Before we go into detail discussing Jesus Christ, peace with him and his virtuous virgin mother, let us highlight the major differences between Christianity and Islam. In the next chapter, these differences will be itemized and discussed.

The Church has taught that Jesus ﷺ is the Messiah whom the Jews were expecting but whom they rejected, accusing him of being born of fornication: “You dishonour me. Yet I do not seek my own glory; there is One who seeks it and He will be the judge” (John 8:49-50). In 4:155-162, the Holy Qur’ān condemns and curses all those who blasphemed the honour of Mary ﷺ, and here is the exact text for you:

﴿فِيمَا تَقْضِيهِمْ مِّيثَاقَهُمْ وَكَفَرَهُم بآيَاتِ اللَّهِ وَقَتْلُهُمُ الْأَنْبِيَاءَ بِغَيْرِ حَقٍّ وَقَوْلِهِمْ قُلُوبُنَا غُلْفٌ بَلْ طَبَعَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهَا بِكُفْرِهِمْ فَلَا يُؤْمِنُونَ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا ۖ وَكَفَرَهُمْ وَقَوْلِهِمْ عَلَى مَرْيَمَ بُهْتَانًا عَظِيمًا ۖ وَقَوْلِهِمْ إِنَّا قَتَلْنَا الْمَسِيحَ عِيسَى ابْنَ مَرْيَمَ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ وَمَا قَتَلُوهُ وَمَا صَلَبُوهُ وَلَكِنْ شُبِّهَ لَهُمْ وَإِنَّ الَّذِينَ اخْتَلَفُوا فِيهِ لَفِي شَكٍّ مِمَّنْ لَهُمْ بِهِ مِنْ عِلْمٍ إِلَّا اتِّبَاعَ الظَّنِّ وَمَا قَتَلُوهُ يَقِينًا ۖ بَلْ رَفَعَهُ اللَّهُ إِلَيْهِ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ عَزِيزًا حَكِيمًا ۖ وَإِنْ مِنْ أَهْلِ الْكِتَابِ إِلَّا لِيُؤْمِنَنَّ بِهِ قَبْلَ مَوْتِهِ وَيَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ يَكُونُ عَلَيْهِمْ شَهِيدًا ۖ فَبِظُلْمٍ مِّنَ الَّذِينَ هَادُوا حَرَّمْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ طَيِّبَاتٍ أُحِلَّتْ لَهُمْ وَبِصَدَاقِهِمْ عَنِ سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ كَثِيرًا ۖ وَأَخَذَهُمُ الرَّبُّ وَقَدْ تَوَلَّوْا عَنْهُ وَأَكْلِهِمْ أَمْوَالَ النَّاسِ بِالْبَاطِلِ وَأَعْتَدْنَا لِلْكَافِرِينَ مِنْهُمْ عَذَابًا أَلِيمًا ۖ لَكِنَّ الرَّاكِبِينَ فِي الْعِلْمِ مِنْهُمْ وَالْمُؤْمِنُونَ يُؤْمِنُونَ بِمَا أُنْزِلَ إِلَيْكَ وَمَا أُنْزِلَ مِنْ قَبْلِكَ وَالْمُقِيمِينَ الصَّلَاةَ وَالْمُؤْتُونَ الزَّكَاةَ وَالْمُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ أُولَٰئِكَ سَنُؤْتِيهِمْ أَجْرًا عَظِيمًا ۖ﴾

(They have incurred divine displeasure:) In that they broke their covenant, that they rejected the Signs of Allāh; that they killed the messengers in defiance of right; (so much so) that they said, “Our hearts are the wrappings (which preserve God’s Word; we need no more);” No, Allāh has set the seal on their hearts for their blasphemy, and little is it that they

believe. That they rejected faith; that they uttered a grave false charge against Mary. That they (boasting) said, "We killed Christ Jesus, the son of Mary, the Messenger of Allāh." But they did not kill him, nor did they crucify him, but so it was made to appear to them, and those who differ in this are full of doubts, with no (certain) knowledge but only conjecture to follow, for surely they did not kill him. No, Allāh raised him up to His presence, and Allāh is Exalted in power, Wise. And all of the People of the Book must believe in him before their death, and on the Day of Judgment he will be a witness against them for the iniquity of the Jews, We made certain good and wholesome (foods) unlawful for them which had been lawful for them; since they hindered many from God's way, since they took usury, though they were forbidden, and they devoured men's substance wrongfully; We have prepared a grievous punishment for those among them who reject faith. But those among them who are well-grounded in knowledge, and the believers, believe in what has been revealed to you, and (especially) those who establish regular prayer and practice regular charity and believe in Allāh and in the Last Day: We shall soon bestow a great reward upon them.

Notice Verse 162 above and see how Islam's God, Allāh, does not discriminate between the Muslims and the Jews or others but rewards all for their good deeds: *But those **among them** who are well-grounded in knowledge, and the believers (Muslims), believe in what has been revealed to you (O Muḥammed!), and (especially) those who establish regular prayer and practice regular charity and believe in Allāh and in the Last Day: We shall soon bestow a great reward upon them.*

Islam accepts Jesus son of Mary ﷺ as the *Maseeh* مسيح, the anointed one, advocating the prophecy of Christ and recognizing his virgin birth as one of his miracles, even calling him the "Word of Allāh." It defends his mission and reproaches all those who rejected it, endorsing the original Bible¹ as a revelation from the Almighty to

¹"Bible" is a Greek word which means "books." The original Bible, which was written in Aramaic, mother tongue of Jesus Christ, was lost. John, Mark, Matthew and Luke rewrote it from memory, putting a great deal of their own personal views in it, thus altering the original pristine message brought by Jesus.

him. Islam does not preach that Jesus ﷺ was crucified or killed but did ascend to heaven.¹ Many Christians regard Jesus ﷺ as a deity and worship him as a god, addressing him as “Lord,” a title fit only for the Almighty God. But they differ a great deal among themselves with regard to his deification, yet they all certainly regard him as much more than a human being. They call him “the son of God, part of the Trinity.” The Unitarian Church² stresses the Unity of God (what Muslims call *Tawhīd*), and the fact that Jesus ﷺ was a human being. For this reason, it is not considered “Christian” and is not a member of the Federal Council of Churches, nor is it a member of any church federation. Islam repudiates in the strongest of terms the divinity or deity of Jesus Christ ﷺ and the concept of the Trinity. The Christian doctrine preaches that Jesus ﷺ died voluntarily, nailed to the cross, in order to atone for mankind's sins. Jesus ﷺ is believed as having offered himself as an atoning sacrifice in order that mankind might earn salvation. Islam unequivocally rejects the notion that sins can be transferred from some to others by any means, holding each and every individual accountable for his or her actions. The Almighty, Islam teaches,

¹Jesus is not the only one who is believed to be alive and living in heaven. Enoch (Idris) is also believed to be alive. Both al-Khidr (Andreas) and Imām al-Mahdi ﷺ are believed to be alive and living on earth.

²Beliefs of the Unitarian Church are referred to as Unitarianism. This branch of Christianity began in Reformation under leaders such as Michael Servetus (1511 - 1553 A.D.), a Spanish theologian and physician who is known in Spanish as Miguel Serveto, and Fausto Sozzini (1539 - 1604), nephew of Laelius Socinus (or Lelio Sozini), an Italian religious reformer. Both men organized this anti-Trinitarianism movement because of which they were subjected to a great deal of persecution by other Christians. In order to escape the merciless Catholic Court of Inquisition, Servetus had to flee to Lyons where he edited Ptolemy's geography works, and to Paris, where he studied medicine. He was jailed by orders of the Inquisition but escaped and made for Italy where he was seized on orders issued by John Calvin, tried then burnt alive at the stake. The religious belief of this Church (or Christian sect) is based on the concept that God is one person, thus contrasting that of the one in three persons, or Trinitarianism.

forgives the sinners who repent and make amends. Repentance, then, in addition to prayers, fast, and charity can atone for one's sins. God does not overburden any of us; He fully knows our weaknesses and limitations. Christianity considers Jesus ﷺ as a mediator between man and God. Christians pray "in the name of our Lord, Jesus Christ," appealing to God through him. Islam recognizes no mediator between man and God: everyone can be in direct contact with God and actually does so when he performs his prayers. Intercession, however, is permitted by the Almighty Who grants it to individuals whom He chooses and who will intercede, with His permission, on behalf of their friends. As a matter of fact, the Almighty's mercy will reach on the Day of Judgment the ultimate limit when God permits ordinary people with whom He is pleased or whom He forgives to intercede on behalf of others. Such is His mercy... There are many other Christian beliefs and practices which we cannot discuss here due to the limitation of space and which include the belief in the reincarnation, the cremation of the dead, a tradition which the Christians learned from Hindus and Buddhists, the singing and dancing at their churches, the choir (an adaptation from the pagan chorus), the appointment of women as top church "officials," the endorsement of homosexuality and the appointment of gay and lesbian "ordained" ministers...

The Major Differences Between Islam and Christianity

Following are ten points marking the major differences between Islam and Christianity¹:

1. Today's Christianity preaches belief in the Triune God; Islam, contrariwise, stresses the Unity of God, *Tawhid*. Muslims everywhere declare: *La ilāha illa Allāh!* (There is no god except Allāh). Not to accept *Tawhīd* implies *shirk*, apostasy.

¹Here, I have to some extent utilized Mawlana Fazlul-Raḥmān Anṣārī's book *Islam and Christianity in the Modern World* (The World Federation of Islamic Missions, Karachi, Pakistan, 1965 [1384 A.H.]), but most of this text is mine. This is one of the best books written by Muslims on this subject. May Allāh reward Mawlana Anṣārī with the best of His rewards, *Allāhomma Āmeen*.

2. Christians preach that Jesus ﷺ is “the only begotten son of God.” Islam preaches that Jesus ﷺ was a human being who received Divine Inspiration and was thus empowered to perform all the miracles which he, by permission of his Creator and Maker, was able to perform. He was a prophet and a great teacher of mankind, a man of God.

3. Christians claim that Eve was the first to be deceived by Eblis in the Garden of Eden, that she was responsible for tempting Adam to eat the forbidden fruit. They, therefore, place the curse of God on woman, calling her “the organ of the Devil,” “The foundations of the arms of the Devil whose voice is the hissing of the serpent,” “the gate of the Devil,” “the road of iniquity,” “the sting of the scorpion,” “a daughter of falsehood, a sentinel of hell, the enemy of peace and of the wild beasts the most dangerous...,” etc. These are the words of renown Christian Saints: St. Bernard, St. Anthony, St. Bonaventure, St. Cyprian, St. Jerome, St. John Damascene, and others. In Islam, Adam and Eve both were simultaneously deceived. Women, therefore, enjoy equal status with men in as far as their rights and obligations are concerned. The Almighty does not distinguish between His servants based on their gender. Christians, however, accuse Muslims of pushing women back into their *harems* and discouraging them from educating themselves and competing with men in all fields and professions. This is one of their numerous false charges which are all based on ignorance of the religion of Islam and a genuine feeling of prejudice if not sheer malice and spitefulness. Christians have been encouraging their women to bare themselves so that they would look at them, fornicate with them and beget by them millions of illegitimate children who are either killed by abortion or who grow up not knowing who their parents are. At the same time, they do not pay women the same wages they pay men, and they discriminate against them in all fields and professions. In fact, they enslave women.

4. The sin of Adam and Eve was not forgiven; therefore, every child is born in sin. Such is the belief held by Christians. In Islam,

Adam and Eve regretted, repented, and were given the chance to be forgiven even while they were here on earth. Every child is born sinless and capable of achieving the ultimate limit of human perfection. Parents often corrupt their children, causing them to deviate from the right creed, victimizing them, thus adding their children's sins to those of their own. Sin is acquired by one's intentional desire to ignore God's laws, to surrender to temptation, and to acquire by vile means what rightfully belongs to others. Sins are committed by one's misdeeds and miscalculations; nobody inherits sin.

5. Jesus' mission was "to wash away humanity's sins with his own blood," Christians claim. In Islam, his mission was: to teach mankind the right way of leading an upright life. He was not sent to atone for humanity's alleged sin. He is regarded as one of the greatest prophets of God, and the original Bible revealed to him was surely the Word of God. He was born to Virgin Mary عليها السلام who is described in Islam as one of the four most perfect of all women in the history of mankind in each and every aspect of human perfection.

6. Christianity claims that man can attain salvation only by believing in Jesus عليه السلام as "the only begotten son of God", and that Jesus عليه السلام had given his blood to wash the sins of mankind. In Islam, the essential condition for attaining salvation is to combine righteous deeds with a sound belief. Mere passive belief is meaningless. The Islamic system, which comprehends all problems of mankind and provides solutions for them, must be followed in its entirety.

7. Christians say that we cannot approach God without the mediation of a priest. In Islam, everyone, man or woman, is his or her own priest or priestess and can approach God without the mediation of anyone. God is near to everyone and the gates of His mercy are always wide open to receive those who repent and are willing to make amends. Islam strongly stresses the significance of one's dignity and self-respect. One who admits his sins to someone else will in all reality be humiliating himself before another human being. He should do so before his Maker, and only before his Maker,

each and every hour of his life. Muslims seek Allāh's forgiveness every day before, during, and after their five daily prayers. Humility before God is what Islam condones, not self-humiliation before another human being, even if such a human wears a collar and is a man of the Church.

8. Ascetic life according to Christianity is a saintly one; Jesus ﷺ and the saints are models in this regard, and celibacy is preferable over marriage for the attainment of spiritual eminence. Not so in Islam. Asceticism is unnatural; it clashes with our human nature and deprives us of enjoying the lawful pleasures of this life—including and especially sexual pleasures—so that we may thank the Almighty Who provides us with them. Life is to be enjoyed; it is the greatest gift of the Almighty to the living. Take His gifts and thank Him for them; do not deprive yourself of what is lawful. “I have not enjoyed of your world,” says Prophet Muḥammed, “except three: prayers, perfumes, and women!” Prayers bring one closer to his Maker, provide him with comfort against his worries, and pave the way for his salvation. They also are healthy daily physical exercises. Perfume, for both men and women, is very highly commended in Islam; one who wears it and thus smells good will not be shunned by others; rather, he or she will be loved, cherished and respected not only by other people, but also by the angels and by God Himself; He surely loves those who are clean physically and spiritually. Sex is one of the blessings of the Almighty on His servants as long as it is lawful and is not followed by remorse. No pleasure is pleasing if it is followed by remorse or, worse, by AIDS...! Whenever you cohabit with your wife, the Prophet teaches us, you earn a blessing, a good deed... Such is the beauty of Islam.

9. Christianity preaches the separation of the religion from the State, from politics. Islam, contrariwise, provides a socio-political system wherein politics are mixed with religion just as water is mixed with milk; they are inseparable. Today's “Muslim” governments are mostly hypocritical because they are not trying to please Allāh but to please the enemies of Allāh: Western politicians who are Christian only by name and who wish to suck the blood of the Muslims dry, buying their natural resources, especially oil, for

very cheap prices while refusing to sell them their technology¹, selling them their manufactured goods at very high prices. The mosque used to be the place where people's problems were solved and criminals punished, the place where people get their marriage blessed. It is the place where they learn their creed. Nowadays, in many Muslim countries, there are more “security” and “intelligence” agents frequenting mosques than there are worshippers! Pro-Western hypocritical rulers of the Muslim world fear nothing more than Islam even as they lie and claim to be its adherents and defenders. This is so because they are constantly pressured by “Christian” Western politicians to keep people away from Islam, to encourage the opening of more bars and night clubs and the closing of more mosques and religious centers.

10. According to the admission of many Biblical scholars, the Bible contains “irrational beliefs, crude science and indecent tales.”² Today's Bible is far from being the revelation that descended upon Jesus ﷺ. It was not put together during the life of Jesus Christ ﷺ, so it cannot be regarded as representative of the message of Christ ﷺ. The Holy Qur’ān, on the other hand, was written down during 23 years under the direct supervision of Prophet Muḥammed ﷺ, and not a single syllable in it has been changed. It is divinely protected against any alteration, addition, or deletion. Moreover, it essentially is rational, scientific, and modern in its spirit and shall always remain so. No other sacred scripture can ever be described as such, ever...

¹Westerners seldom acknowledge Muslims' contributions to science and technology. One is tempted to say that they are ingrates by nature. During my stay in the U.S., I noticed that the best minds in the U.S. are not American, and that the Americans do not work as hard as foreigners; they feel they do not have to. Why should they, especially since there are many, including heads of Arab and Muslim States, who are ready to be their obedient servants and faithful lackeys?! These servants and lackeys are the ones who facilitate for the enemies of Islam to spy on or even to attack other Muslim countries, thus becoming their accomplices and disclosing to the world and to history their ugly hypocrisy.

²This is the statement of Canon Barnes.

These are the basic differences between Islam and Christianity presented to the reader in brief. Now let us research the life of Jesus ﷺ and his saintly mother, starting from the latter, then learn something about the Bible, its authors and message.

Maryam (Mary) ﷺ Daughter of `Imrān (Amram)

An entire Qur'ānic Chapter (Sūra) is dedicated to Mary mother of Christ ; it is “Sūrat Maryam”, Chapter 19. Not even the Bible honors her like that... And she is mentioned throughout the Holy Qur'ān in several other places. For example, Allāh Almighty says the following in the Holy Qur'ān:

﴿إِنَّ اللَّهَ اصْطَفَىٰ آدَمَ وَنُوحًا وَآلَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَآلَ عِمْرَانَ عَلَى الْعَالَمِينَ ۝ ذُرِّيَّةَ بَعْضُهَا مِنْ بَعْضٍ وَاللَّهُ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ ۝ إِذْ قَالَتِ امْرَأَةُ عِمْرَانَ رَبِّ إِنِّي نَذَرْتُ لَكَ مَا فِي بَطْنِي مُحَرَّرًا فَتَقَبَّلْ مِنِّي إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ ۝ فَلَمَّا وَضَعَتْهَا قَالَتْ رَبِّ إِنِّي وَضَعْتُهَا أُنْثَىٰ وَاللَّهُ أَعْلَمُ بِمَا وَضَعْتَ وَلَيْسَ الذَّكَرُ كَالْأُنْثَىٰ وَإِنِّي سَمَّيْتُهَا مَرْيَمَ وَإِنِّي أُعِيذُهَا بِكَ وَذُرِّيَّتَهَا مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ الرَّجِيمِ ۝ تَقَبَّلَهَا رَبُّهَا بِقَبُولٍ حَسَنٍ وَأَنْبَتَهَا نَبَاتًا حَسَنًا وَكَفَّلَهَا زَكَرِيَّا كُلَّمَا دَخَلَ عَلَيْهَا الْمِحْرَابَ وَجَدَ عِنْدَهَا رِزْقًا قَالَ يَا مَرْيَمُ أَنَّىٰ لَكَ هَذَا قَالَتْ هُوَ مِنْ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَرْزُقُ مَنْ يَشَاءُ بِغَيْرِ حِسَابٍ ۝﴾

Surely Allāh favored Adam and Noah and the descendants of Abraham and the descendants of `Imrān over the nations: offspring, one from the other, and Allāh is Hearing, Knowing. `Imrān's woman said: Lord! Surely I vow to dedicate to You what is in my womb, to be devoted (to Your service); accept, therefore, from me; surely You are the Hearing, the Knowing. So when she gave birth to her, she said: Lord! Surely I have given birth to a female—and Allāh knew best what she had given birth to—and the male is not like the female; I have named her Maryam, and I commend her and her offspring into Your protection from Satan the accursed. So her Lord accepted her with a good acceptance and made her grow up a good growth and gave her into the charge of Zakariyya (Zacharias). Whenever Zakariyya entered the sanctuary (to see her), he found with her food. He said: O Maryam! Whence comes this to you? She said: It is from Allāh. Surely Allāh bestows His grants unto whomsoever He pleases without measure. (3:33-37)

Scholars have said that Mary's mother was Hanna daughter of Faqooth, grandmother of Jesus Christ ﷺ. Ibn `Abbās has said that `Imrān (Amram) is the son of Madhān. There is no kinship between him and `Imrān father of prophet Moses ﷺ since one thousand and eight hundred years separate one from the other. The descendants of Madhān were the chiefs of the Children of Israel; they were their rabbis and kings. Muḥammed ibn Ishāq¹ has said, "He is `Imrān son of Sahim son of `Amoor son of Meeshan son of Izekeiel son of Aharef son of Baoom son of Izarya son of Amsiy son of Nawoos son of Nootha son of Baridh son of Yehusha Faz son of Radim son of Abiyya son of Rehobom son of Solomon son of David, peace be upon him." Zakariyya² (Zacharias or Zachary) son of Barkhiya and `Imrān son of Madhān were married to sisters. One of those sisters was the wife of Zakariyya son of Barkhiya, namely Eisha (Elizabeth) daughter of Faqooth, Yaḥya's mother. The other was the wife of `Imrān: Hanna daughter of Faqooth, Maryam's mother.

Hanna had almost lost hope of having a son when she became very old. Hers was a family upon whom Allāh had bestowed His favors and whom He held in high esteem. While she was sitting under a tree, she saw a mother bird feeding her chicks. The instinct of motherhood stirred within her, and she invoked Allāh Almighty to

¹Abū Bakr Muḥammed ibn Ishāq (d. 151 A.H./768 A.D.) is a well known scholar from Medīna who was contemporary to the `Abbāside ruler Abū Ja`far Abdullāh al-Manṣūr who came to power in June 754 A.D./Dhul-Ḥijjah 136 A.H. and who commissioned ibn Ishāq to write the very first complete biography of Prophet Muḥammed ﷺ. His work, however, which became the basis of Ibn Hishām's *Seerat*, had to be continued by Muḥammed ibn Omer al-Wāqidi (747 - 822 A.D./129 - 206 A.H.), mentor of Muḥammed al-Zuhri, better known as Ibn Sa`d, who died in 230 A.H./845 A.D. and who is a traditionist and a historian born in Baṣra and died in Baghdad. Ibn Sa`d's most famous work is *Kitāb al-Ṭabaqāt al-Kabīr*, or *Ṭabaqāt Ibn Sa`d*.

²Zacharias was father of John the Baptist (prophet Yaḥya). His name in Hebrew is Zachariah, the same as it is in Arabic. "Zakariyya" is a variation of it.

grant her a son. She, as the Holy Qur'ān tells us, said, "Lord! Surely I vow to dedicate to You what is in my womb to be devoted (to Your service)" (Qur'ān, 3:35), that is, that her child would be free from the bondage of this life and its entanglements, and he will dedicate his time for the worship of Allāh and for the service of His cause. It was the custom then to bring such a dedicated person to Jerusalem to worship Allāh and to serve His creed.

Always males, those dedicated servants of Jerusalem were not expected to leave the house of worship till they reached their adolescence. Once one of them reached his adolescence, he would be given the choice to either stay or go wherever he wanted. There was hardly any family among the Children of Israel that did not make such a dedication. Only boys were dedicated; girls would not be fit for such a service due to the menstruation and the inconvenience associated with it. But Maryam's mother had already made that dedication, so her husband 'Imrān said to her, "Look what you have done! Did you consider the possibility that you were big with a female, and the female is not fit for such a dedication?" He was quite distressed. 'Imrān died while his wife was pregnant with Maryam.

When she delivered, she found out that her child was a girl. She had prayed for a son. Seeking to apologize to Allāh Almighty, she said, "Lord! Surely I have given birth to a female, and the male is not like the female," that is, she is not fit for the service of the house of worship in Jerusalem due to her weakness and menstruation. She named her Maryam (Mary) مريم. In their tongue, it meant "the worshipper," the one who serves her Lord. Maryam (عليها السلام) was the most beautiful of all her contemporary ladies and her conduct was the very best.

The Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) is quoted as having said, "Four among the women of mankind are most cherished: Maryam daughter of 'Imrān, Āsiya wife of Pharaoh, Khadīja daughter of Khuwaylid¹

¹Her full name is: Khadīja daughter of Khuwaylid son of Asad son of Abdul-'Uzza son of Quṣayy, of the clan of Banu Hāshim, of the tribe of

(wife of Prophet Muḥammed), and Fāṭima daughter of Muḥammed.” She continued to implore her Lord saying that she sought refuge with Him on her behalf to forbid Satan the accursed from having any access to her progeny. The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ is also quoted as saying, “There is no infant born except that Satan would touch it, so it would scream because of such a touch, except Maryam and her son.” It is recommended to recite the following verse at the birth of any newborn baby girl:

﴿وَإِنِّي أَعِذُّهَا بِكَ وَذُرِّيَّتَهَا مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ الرَّجِيمِ﴾

... and I commend her and her offspring into Your protection from Satan the accursed (Qur’ān, 3:36).

Shu’ayb ibn Muḥammed, according to his chain of narrators, has said, “Every human being is hit by Satan on the side at birth except Jesus and his mother عِيسَى. A barrier was placed to protect them. Satan could not penetrate it; therefore, they were not harmed.”

Banu Asad. Quṣayy was the ancestor of all clans belonging to Quraysh, Prophet Muḥammed's tribe. Quraysh's real name was Fahr, and he was son of Mālik son of Maḍar son of Kanānah son of Khuzaimah son of Mudrikah son of Ilyās son of Mazar son of Nazār son of Ma`ad son of `Adnān son of prophet Ishmael son of prophet Abraham son of prophet Sam son of prophet Noah. Khadīja was born in 565 A.D. and, according to a number of historians, died in 623 A.D. at the age of 58. Her mother, a distant relative of Prophet Muḥammed, was Fāṭima daughter of Zā'idah son of al-Asam, of Banu Āmir son of Luayy son of Ghālib. Her mother's date of birth is unknown but historians say that she died in or around 575 A.D. Khadīja's father, Khuwaylid, belonged to the `Abd al-`Uzza clan of the tribe of Quraysh. He died in 585 A.D. Needless to say, Khadīja, through both of her parents, was a distant cousin of Prophet Muḥammed who also belonged to Banu Hāshim. I included my research of the life of this great lady, the events involving her marriage with Prophet Muḥammed, as well as the chronology of her past marriages and offspring, in my best work yet titled *Allāh: The Concept of God in Islam* which was published in 1418 A.H./1997 by Anṣāriyān Publications and is scheduled to be reprinted in two volumes in the United States very soon, *Inshā-Allāh*.

Neither one of them committed any of the sins commonly committed by humans. Allāh Almighty has said,

﴿فَتَقَبَّلَهَا رَبُّهَا بِقَبُولٍ حَسَنٍ وَأَنْبَتَهَا نَبَاتًا حَسَنًا وَكَفَّلَهَا زَكَرِيَّا كُلَّمَا دَخَلَ عَلَيْهَا زَكَرِيَّا الْمِحْرَابَ وَجَدَ عِنْدَهَا رِزْقًا قَالَ يَا مَرْيَمُ أَنَّى لَكِ هَذَا قَالَتْ هُوَ مِنْ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَرْزُقُ مَنْ يَشَاءُ بِغَيْرِ حِسَابٍ﴾

“So her Lord accepted her with a good acceptance and made her grow up a good growth” (Qur’ān, 3:37).

The meaning of this verse is that He created her without any increase or decrease of her physique, so she was growing during a short period as much as an ordinary infant would grow during quite a lengthy one.

When Maryam عليها السلام was born, her mother Hanna carried her to the temple. The descendants of Aaron, who then numbered thirty, looked after the temple at Jerusalem in the same zeal the caretakers look after the Ka’ba. They placed her in the hands of the rabbis. She said to them, “Do look after this dedicated infant,” whereupon they competed with one another in looking after her since she was the daughter of their leader. Zakariyya said to them, “I am more worthy of her than you since her aunt lives in my house.” The rabbis said, “We shall not let you decide that, for if she were to be left with the person who is most worthy of her and her nearest in kin, she should have been left with her mother who gave birth to her. But we shall cast the lots about her, and she will be looked after by the one whose arrow wins.” They agreed to do so.

Nineteen men came to the Jordan River. They threw their arrows, or their pens whereby they used to write the Torah, in the water. The pen or arrow belonging to Zakariyya surfaced over the water while the rest were submerged. Ibn Ishaq and a group of other scholars, including as-Suddi¹, have all said that Zakariyya's pen pierced the

¹His name is Isma’il ibn Abdur-Raḥmān, and he was born in Kūfa and was popularly known as as-Suddi. He learned the Qur’ān from Anas ibn Mālik and Ibn ‘Abbās. He is regarded as one of the most reliable commentators

water and stood up in it as though its water were mud, while their pens were washed away by the tide. Allāh Almighty has said,

﴿ذَلِكَ مِنْ أَنْبَاءِ الْغَيْبِ نُوحِيهِ إِلَيْكَ وَمَا كُنْتَ لَدَيْهِمْ إِذْ يُلْقُونَ أَقْلَامَهُمْ أَيُّهُمْ يَكْفُلُ مَرْيَمَ وَمَا كُنْتَ لَدَيْهِمْ إِذْ يَخْتَصِمُونَ﴾

“You were not with them when they cast their pens (to decide) which of them should have Maryam in his charge” (Qur’ān, 3:44).

Thus did Zakariyya, who was their high rabbi and prophet, win, and this is why Allāh Almighty has said that Zakariyya took custody of and looked after her.

Muḥammed ibn Ishāq¹ has said, “When Zakariyya took charge of her, he gave her to her aunt, Yaḥya's mother, and asked her to nurse her till she reached womanhood. It was then that he built a room for her in his place of worship to be her sanctuary, placing its door in the middle.” Whenever he entered to see her, he noticed that she had

of the Holy Qur’ān. There are two commentators with the nickname “as-Suddi”. Abdur Raḥmān is known as as-Suddi al-Kabeer, the Senior, whereas his grandson became known as as-Suddi Junior. His year of birth is unknown, but he is said as having died in 127 A.H./745 A.D.

¹Muḥammed ibn Ishāq (Isaac) ibn Yasār ibn Khayār (according to some sources, ibn Khabbār) إسحاق بن يسار بن خيار was the son of Isaac, an Arab Muslim historian and hagiographer who collected oral traditions that formed the basis of the most important extant biography of the Prophet of Islam. His biography is usually called *Sīratu Rasūl Allāh* سيرة رسول الله "Life of the Messenger of God". He was born in 85 A.H. /704 A.D. in Medīna and died in Baghdad in 150–153 A.H./767–770 A.D. Ibn Isḥāq was the grandson of a Christian man, Yasār, who had been captured in one of Khālīd ibn al-Walīd's campaigns and taken to Medīna as a slave. His grandfather became the slave of Qays ibn Makhramah ibn al-Muṭṭalib ibn Abd Manāf ibn Quṣayy and, having accepted Islam, he was emancipated. Yasār's three sons, Mūsa, Abd ar-Raḥmān and Ishāq, were all known as transmitters of reports of major Islamic events. They collected and recounted tales of the past. Ishāq married the daughter of another *mawla* and from this marriage Ibn Ishāq was born.

unseasonable fruits, that is, summer fruits were with her during the winter, and *vice versa*, so he would ask her where she had received them from, and she would say that they were from Allāh, from the fruits of Paradise.

Muḥammed ibn Ishāq has also said that the Children of Israel were then inflicted with a famine, yet she kept receiving her sustenance thus, as Zakariyya was becoming increasingly unable to look after her. He, therefore, went out to the Children of Israel and said, “O Children of Israel! You know, by Allāh, that I have become quite old and too weak to look after the daughter of `Imrān; so, which one of you will look after her when I am gone?” They said, “By Allāh we, too, are worn out and are in difficulty as you can see.” Each of them would recommend to the other to be the one to look after her, and they kept doing so till they did not find anyone ready to do it. They decided to cast their lots this time too, and the arrow this time came to be that of a righteous carpenter from among the Children of Israel named Joseph son of Jacob son of Matan, and he was Maryam's cousin. So he took her. Maryam saw in his face the weight of the burden, whereupon she said to him, “O Joseph! Think well of Allāh, for He will sustain us.” Joseph started receiving sustenance on account of her, and he would bring her every day of what he had earned to take care of her needs. Whenever he brought it to her and she was in the house of worship in Jerusalem, Allāh would multiply it for him and increase it. Whenever Zakariyya entered to see her, he used to see a remnant of sustenance that was more than what Joseph had brought her, hence his question to her,

﴿فَتَقَبَّلَهَا رَبُّهَا بِقَبُولٍ حَسَنٍ وَأَنبَتَهَا نَبَاتًا حَسَنًا وَكَفَّلَهَا زَكَرِيَّا كُلَّمَا دَخَلَ عَلَيْهَا زَكَرِيَّا الْمِحْرَابَ وَجَدَ عِنْدَهَا رِزْقًا قَالَ يَا مَرْيَمُ أَنَّى لَّكَ هَٰذَا قَالَتْ هُوَ مِنْ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَرْزُقُ مَنْ يَشَاءُ بِغَيْرِ حِسَابٍ﴾

“O Mary! Whence comes this to you? She said: It is from Allāh. Surely Allāh gives to whomsoever He pleases without measure” (Qur’ān, 3:37).

Christians have for years been debating about Mary عليها السلام, whether she was the “mother of God,” as some call her, or whether she was

an ordinary pious lady. We do not wish to contribute to such a debate, preferring to leave them wandering forever in their wilderness as they please...

Birth of Jesus son of Mary ﷺ According to Islam

Allāh Almighty has said,

﴿ وَادْكُرْ فِي الْكِتَابِ مَرْيَمَ إِذِ اتَّخَذَتْ مِنْ أَهْلِهَا مَكَانًا شَرْقِيًّا ۖ فَاتَّخَذَتْ مِنْ دُونِهِمْ حِجَابًا فَأَرْسَلْنَا إِلَيْهَا رُوحَنَا فَتَمَثَّلَ لَهَا بَشَرًا سَوِيًّا ۖ قَالَتْ إِنِّي أَعُوذُ بِالرَّحْمَنِ مِنْكَ إِنْ كُنْتَ تَقِيًّا ۖ قَالَتْ إِنَّمَا أَنَا رَسُولُ رَبِّكِ لِأَهَبَ لَكِ غُلَامًا زَكِيًّا ۖ قَالَتْ أَنَّى يَكُونُ لِي غُلَامٌ وَلَمْ يَمْسَسْنِي بَشَرٌ وَلَمْ أَكْ بَغِيًّا ۖ قَالَ كَذَلِكَ قَالَ رَبُّكَ هُوَ عَلَيَّ هَيِّنٌ وَلِنَجْعَلَ آيَةً لِلنَّاسِ وَرَحْمَةً مِّنَّا وَكَانَ أَمْرًا مَّقْضِيًّا ۖ فَحَمَلَتْهُ فَانْتَبَذَتْ بِهِ مَكَانًا قَصِيًّا ۖ فَاجَاءَهَا الْمَخَاضُ إِلَى جُذْعِ النَّخْلَةِ قَالَتْ يَا لَيْتَنِي مِتُّ قَبْلَ هَذَا وَكُنْتُ نَسِيًّا مَّسِيًّا ۖ فَنَادَاهَا مِنْ تَحْتِهَا أَلَا تَحْزَنِي قَدْ جَعَلَ رَبُّكِ تَحْتَكِ سَرِيًّا ۖ وَهَزِّي إِلَيْكِ بِجُذْعِ النَّخْلَةِ تُسَاقِطُ عَلَيْكَ رَطْبًا جَنِيًّا ۖ فَكُلِّي وَاشْرَبِي وَقَرِّي عَيْنًا فِيمَا تَرَيْنَ مِنَ الْبَشَرِ أَحَدًا فَقُولِي إِنِّي نَذَرْتُ لِلرَّحْمَنِ صَوْمًا فَلَنْ أَكَلِمَ الْيَوْمَ إِنْسِيًّا ۖ فَأَتَتْ بِهِ قَوْمَهَا تَحْمِلُهُ قَالُوا يَا مَرْيَمُ لَقَدْ جِئْتِ شَيْئًا فَرِيًّا ۖ يَا أختَ هَارُونَ مَا كَانَ أَبُوكَ امْرَأَ سَوْءٍ وَمَا كَانَتْ أُمُّكَ بَغِيًّا ۖ فَأَشَارَتْ إِلَيْهِ قَالُوا كَيْفَ نُكَلِّمُ مَنْ كَانَ فِي الْمَهْدِ صَبِيًّا ۖ قَالِ إِنِّي عَبْدُ اللَّهِ آتَانِيَ الْكِتَابَ وَجَعَلَنِي نَبِيًّا ۖ وَجَعَلَنِي مُبَارَكًا أَيْنَ مَا كُنْتُ وَأَوْصَانِي بِالصَّلَاةِ وَالزَّكَاةِ مَا دُمْتُ حَيًّا ۖ وَبَرًّا بِوَالِدَتِي وَلَمْ يَجْعَلْنِي جَبَّارًا شَقِيًّا ۖ وَالسَّلَامُ عَلَيَّ يَوْمَ وُلِدْتُ وَيَوْمَ أَمُوتُ وَيَوْمَ أُبْعَثُ حَيًّا ۖ ذَلِكَ عِيسَى ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ قَوْلَ الْحَقِّ الَّذِي فِيهِ يَمْتَرُونَ ۖ ۝﴾

And mention Mary in the Book when she drew aside from her family to an eastern place; so she took a veil (to screen herself) from them; then We sent her Our spirit, and he appeared to her as a perfectly ordinary man. She said: "Surely I seek refuge against you with the Beneficent God, if you are God-fearing." He said: "I am only a messenger of your Lord to give you [the glad tiding of] a pure boy." She said, "How can I have a boy while no mortal has yet touched me, nor have I been unchaste?" He said. "Even so; your Lord says: It is easy for Me, and so that We may make him a sign to men and a mercy from Us, and it is a matter already decreed." So she conceived him [Jesus], then withdrew with him to a remote place. And the throes (of childbirth) compelled her to betake herself to the trunk of a palm tree. She said: "Oh, would that I had died before this and had been a thing quite forgotten!" Then (the newly-born) called out to her from beneath her: "Do not grieve! Surely your

Lord has made a stream flow beneath you, and shake towards you the trunk of the palm tree; it will drop on you fresh ripe dates; so eat and drink and cool your eyes. Then if you see any mortal, say: Surely I have vowed a fast to the Beneficent God, so I shall not speak to any human this day.” And she came to her people carrying him. They said: “O Mary! Surely you have done a strange thing! O sister of Aaron! Your father was not a bad man, nor was your mother unchaste!” But she pointed to him. They said: “How should we speak to one who is a child in the cradle?” He [Jesus] said: “Surely I am a servant of Allāh; He has given me the Book (Bible) and made me a prophet, and He has made me blessed wherever I may be, and He has enjoined on me prayers and zakāt as long as I live, and dutiful to my mother, and He has not made me insolent, unblest. And peace be with me the day I was born, the day I die, and the day I am raised (back) to life.” Such is Jesus son of Mary; (this is) the saying of truth about which they dispute. (19:16-34)

Prophets' biographers have said that when three days had passed since Mary ﷺ was pregnant with Jesus ﷺ, she was either thirteen or fifteen years old. One of those individuals who dedicated their time to serve the temple with her was her above-mentioned cousin Joseph the carpenter. He was a thoughtful man who used to offer charity from his earnings. Joseph and Mary ﷺ used to take turns in serving the temple. When they ran out of water, each would take the pitcher and go to the cave to obtain water then return to the temple. The day that she met Gabriel was the longest and the hottest day of the year. She had run out of water, so she asked her cousin, “Shall we go together, O Joseph, to obtain water?” He said, “I have some water left which will suffice me for today.” She said, “But I, by Allāh, am out of water!” She took her pitcher and went out alone till she came to the cave where she met Gabriel whom Allāh made to appear to her as an ordinary man. He told her that Allāh had sent him to grant her a pure boy. She said,

﴿قَالَتْ إِنِّي أَعُوذُ بِالرَّحْمَنِ مِنْكَ إِنْ كُنْتَ تَقِيًّا﴾

“Surely I seek refuge from you with the Beneficent God if you are God-fearing” (Qur’ān, 19:18), that is, a pious man, one who is

obedient to his Lord. Imām `Ali ؑ has said, “I have come to know that a pious person is one who has compassion for others and is merciful, and she thought that he (Gabriel) was a man, a human.” `Ikrimah has said, “Gabriel appeared to her in the form of a young beardless man with curly hair, and in perfect form.” Wise men have said that Allāh Almighty sent him in human form so that Mary ؑ would be able to remain self-composed and listen to his speech. Had he appeared in his normal form, she would have been frightened by him and would have shunned him. When Mary ؑ sought refuge with Allāh against him, he said to her,

﴿ قَالَ إِنَّمَا أَنَا رَسُولُ رَبِّكِ لِأَهَبَ لَكِ غُلَامًا زَكِيًّا ۖ قَالَتْ أَنَّى يَكُونُ لِي غُلَامٌ وَلَمْ يَمْسَسْنِي بَشَرٌ وَلَمْ أَكْ بَغِيًّا ۖ قَالَ كَذَلِكَ قَالَ رَبُّكِ هُوَ عَلَيَّ هَيِّنٌ وَلِنَجْعَلَهُ آيَةً لِلنَّاسِ وَرَحْمَةً مِنَّا وَكَانَ أَمْرًا مَّقْضِيًّا ۖ ﴾

“I am only a messenger of your Lord to give you (the glad tiding of) a pure boy. She said: How can I have a boy while no mortal has yet touched me, nor have I been unchaste? He said: Even so; your Lord says: It is easy for Me, and so that We may make him a sign to men and a mercy from Us, and it is a matter already decreed” (Qur’ān, 19:19-21).

Having heard his statement, she submitted to Allāh's decree, whereupon Gabriel blew in the pocket of her loose outer garment. By then, she had taken it off. Once he had left, Mary ؑ filled her pitcher with water, put her outer garment on, instantly and unconsciously conceiving of Jesus ؑ, then went back to the temple.

Yet one cannot help wondering about this tale of Gabriel blowing in the pocket of Mary’s loose outer garment, thus causing her to conceive. The author of this book humbly finds this odd; instead, he thinks that it is quite likely the fruit which the angels used to bring Mary ؑ from Paradise may have enabled her to conceive. The evidence for this argument is the story of how Khadīja daughter of Khuwaylid ؑ, the first wife of the Prophet of Islam ﷺ, conceived of Fāṭima ؑ after the Prophet ﷺ had eaten fruits brought to him

by angels who also told him to cohabit with his wife as soon as he had eaten them, which he did, thus causing Khadija to conceive of Fāṭima عليها السلام, and surely Allāh knows best. It is not difficult at all to imagine Fāṭima and Jesus عليه السلام as being composed of the fruits of Paradise, and surely Allāh knows best.

Another story of how Mary عليها السلام conceived is narrated, or say suggested, by as-Suddi and `Ikrimah who have said that she عليها السلام used to remain in the temple as long as she was clean (having no menstruation). Once she started her period, she would go to her aunt's house till she became clean again and would then return. While Mary عليها السلام was bathing after her period was over, having chosen a sunny spot because it was then winter and that day was the shortest day of the year and placed a curtain between her and the rest of the house residents, archangel Gabriel appeared. He gave her the glad tidings of Jesus عليه السلام, then he blew in the pocket of her outer loose garment. Al- Ḥassan says that the Nazarenes had taken the east as their *qibla* because Mary عليها السلام had taken a place facing the east [prior to her conception]. When she was big with Jesus عليه السلام, her cousin Joseph the carpenter was in her company, and they were both going to the temple one day near Mount Zion. That temple was their greatest. They used to repair it, heat it, and sweep it, and nobody knew anyone more diligent or dedicated than both of them. The first person who found it objectionable that she should be pregnant was this same cousin and fellow servant of the temple, Joseph the carpenter. When he saw what had happened to her, he thought it was monstrous and horrible, and he did not know what to do or say to her. Whenever he contemplated on charging her, he remembered her uprightness, adoration and innocence and the fact that she was never out of his sight even for one hour. If he desired to think of her as innocent, he saw the signs of her pregnancy. When he could not keep it to himself any longer, he decided to discuss it with her.

The first thing he said to her was, “I have noticed something about you to which I have found myself reacting, and I have been trying to keep it to myself, but I finally decided that discussing it with you may ease my mind.” She said to him, “Say it nicely.” He asked her, “Tell me, Mary, has there been any trees growing without seeds?”

She said, "Yes!" He asked her again, "Then has there been trees growing without rain?" She said, "Yes!" Then he said, "Can there be children without parents?" She said, "Yes! Don't you know that Allāh Almighty caused all the trees to grow when He created them without first sowing their seeds, for seeds come from trees? Have you not come to know that Allāh caused the trees to grow without rain, and through His might He caused the rain to sustain the species of trees after having created each species separately? Or do you say that Allāh is not able to grow trees without the help of water, and that without it, He could not have been able to grow them?!" Joseph said to her, "No, I do not say that, but I say that Allāh Almighty is capable of doing anything; all He has to do is to say to it, 'Be!' and it is!" Mary ﷺ then said, "Don't you know that Allāh created Adam and his wife without parents?" He answered in the affirmative. Her last statement convinced him that what had happened to her must have been something which Allāh Almighty had decreed, and that it was not fitting for him to ask her about it due to the secrecy she seemed to maintain in its regard. Then Joseph took charge of all the maintenance chores needed to be performed at the temple and spared her having to do anything at all.

Scholars say that when Mary ﷺ came close to giving birth, Allāh Almighty inspired her that the Jerusalem temple was one of His houses which was pure and was built so that His Name would be praised therein. "Go to a place where you can seek seclusion," the Almighty inspired her. Mary ﷺ went to the house of her aunt, the mother of Yahya (John the Baptist). When the latter stood up to greet her and welcome her, she found herself in need of Mary ﷺ to support her to stand up. Then she asked her, "O Mary! Can you imagine me being pregnant?!" Mary said, "I, too, am pregnant!" Zakariyya's wife said, "Then I find the one in my womb prostrating to the one in yours!" To this does the Almighty refer in the verse saying, *مُصَدِّقًا بِكَلِمَةٍ مِّنَ اللَّهِ* "... testifying to a Word from Allāh" (Qur'ān, 3:39). When she felt comfortable at her aunt's house, the Almighty inspired her, "If you give birth among your people, they will taunt you, charge you, and kill both you and your son; so, get away from them."

Scholars have differed regarding how long it took Mary عليها السلام to conceive and deliver. Some say that the duration of her pregnancy was nine months like all other women, while others say it was eight, and that that was another miracle: no new-born who stayed in his mother's womb for only eight months survived except Jesus عليه السلام. Other scholars say it was six months, still others say it was three hours, and some even say it was only one hour. Ibn 'Abbās has said, "It was only conception then delivery, and the time from the conception to the delivery and the seclusion she sought was only one hour, for Allāh Almighty did not mention any separation between them when He said, **فَحَمَلَتْهُ فَانْتَبَذَتْ بِهِ مَكَانًا قَصِيًّا** 'So she conceived him then withdrew with him to a remote place' (19:22), that is, far away from her people." Muqātil¹ has said, "His mother conceived him in one hour; he was formed in one hour; he was delivered in one hour when the sun had just set, and she was twenty years old, having had only two menstrual periods before conceiving Jesus عليه السلام."

Mujāhid² has said, "Mary, peace with her, has said, 'Whenever I sought seclusion, Jesus عليه السلام would speak to me, and I would speak to him. If a human distracted me from that, he would praise the Almighty while being in my womb, and I would hear his praising,'" and Allāh knows best.

When the pain of childbirth intensified, she sought to support herself with the trunk of a tree, and it was a dry palm tree with neither leaves nor a live trunk, only a dead stump. The angels did not like the sight of that palm tree, and they were surrounding her in rows,

¹He is Abū al- Ḥassan Muqātil ibn Sulaymān al-Balkhi (d. 150 A.H./767 A.D.), a *mufasssir* who moved to Baghdad then to Baṣra where he died. His most important work is *At-Tafsīr al-Kabīr* (the great book of exegesis).

²He is Abū Bakr Mujāhid ibn Aḥmed ibn Mūsā (d. 324 A.H./936 A.D.), a *qārī*, actually the imām of *qāris* of his time, a traditionist, and a linguist from Baghdad. All the books he wrote deal with the Holy Qur'ān.

and that palm tree was at a village called Bethlehem¹. When her crisis reached its zenith, she said in agony, “Oh! Would that I had died before this and had been a thing quite forgotten” (Qur’ān, 19:23), whereupon she was addressed, “Grieve not! Surely your Lord has made a stream flow beneath you, and shake towards you the trunk of the palm tree, it will drop on you fresh ripe dates” (Qur’ān, 19:24-25). The original Arabic text of the first verse, that is, “Then he called out to her from beneath her” (Qur’ān, 19:24), can be recited in two different ways: *min taḥtiha* مِنْ تَحْتِهَا, that is, from under her, connotes a reference to the one who called upon her from the mountain side, namely Gabriel. Or it can be recited *man tahtaha* مَنْ تَحْتِهَا, the one *who* was underneath her, that is, Jesus Christ ﷺ, after having emerged from his mother's womb. He addressed her by the Will of Allāh. Allāh caused a river to flow for her after she had given birth to Jesus ﷺ. Its water would be sweet and cool if she wanted to drink of it, lukewarm if she wanted to wash herself with it. Ibn ‘Abbās has said, “Jesus, or Gabriel ﷺ struck the earth, whereupon water gushed forth, and the dry tree was brought back to life after its dryness. Its branches cascaded, and it brought forth its produce and excelled in it. She was told to shake the trunk of the palm tree to her so that it would cause fresh dates to fall upon her.” Ar-Rabee’ ibn Khaytham has said, “There is nothing better for a woman in her postnatal period than fresh dates, nor for any patient better than honey.” Omer ibn Maymūn has said, “I cannot think of anything better for a woman having difficulty delivering than fresh dates.”

Wahab has said, “When he [Jesus ﷺ] was born, all idols were seen

¹“Bethlehem” is a Hebrew word with two meanings: 1) the house (Hebrew *beth*, Arabic *bayt*) of bread, or 2) the house of the goddess Lahmu, twin deity of Lahamu. In Mesopotamian mythology (which spread beyond the valley of the Tigris and the Euphrates), these were the first gods to be born from the chaos created by the merging of the watery deep surrounding the earth and the salt waters. They represent silt, but in some texts they seem to take the form of serpents. Bethlehem is located in south Jerusalem. In Genesis 35:16-20 and 48:7, in 1 Samuel 16:17, and in 2 Samuel 23:13-17, it is referred to as Ephrath or Ephratah.

falling on the ground headlong in each and every land, so much so that the demons were frightened and did not know why. They rushed to Satan, Eblis, the accursed who was on a throne which he had made for himself on the surface of a lake mocking the Almighty's Throne when it was first on the water. They came to him when six hours of the day had passed. When Eblis saw their throngs, he felt very upset and alarmed because he had never seen them assembling like that since he scattered them throughout the world to do their mischievous deeds. He used to see some of them now and then but never all of them at the same time. He asked them what had happened. They told him that something must have happened on earth that caused all the idols to be smashed without any human touching them. Nothing was more instrumental than those idols in bringing destruction to the descendants of Adam. Now this new event that has occurred caused humans to think very low of those idols, and the devils were concerned that humans were not going to worship idols any more. "Be informed," they said, "that we have not come to you here before looking for its cause throughout the world, in the seas, and everywhere else, but we did not increase but in ignorance regarding what has happened." Eblis said to them, "This must have been a momentous event; so, remain where you are."

Eblis immediately flew away for three hours during which he passed by the place where Jesus ﷺ was born. When he saw the angels gazing at that spot, he realized that that was the scene of the event. He wanted to approach it from above, but the heads of the angels and their shoulders acted as a shield. He wanted to approach it from under the ground, but he noticed that the angels' feet were planted firmly in it. He then wanted to penetrate through their ranks, but they forbade him from doing so as testified to this fact by the statement of the Prophet saying, "Every human being is hit by Satan on the side upon its birth except Jesus son of Mary ﷺ; Allāh Almighty shielded Jesus ﷺ from him, so he kept trying [unsuccessfully] to penetrate the shield."

Having facilitated the delivery for Mary ﷺ, Allāh Almighty prepared her to meet her people. "Eat, O Mary," the Almighty inspired her, "of the fresh dates, and drink of the sweet and cool

water; cool your eyes and be contented. If you see any human, and he asks you about your son, or makes a serious charge against you in his regard, tell him that you pledged to abstain (from speaking to anyone) for the sake of achieving the Pleasure of the Most Merciful One.” The “fast” referred to in chapter 19 (*Sūrat Maryam*), verse 26, meant abstention from speaking. Fast during that period was abstention from eating, drinking, and speaking, “... so I shall not speak to any man today” (Qur’ān, 19:26), Mary عليها السلام was instructed to say. Another reference to abstention from speaking to people is made in the first verses of the Qur’ānic Chapter named after Mary عليها السلام, the same *Sūrat Maryam* referred to above: “He (Zakariyya عليه السلام) said: Lord! Give me a sign (*āya*). He said: Your sign is that you will not speak to the people for three nights though being in sound health” (Qur’ān, 19:10). Sometimes staying away from people and remaining in constant contact with the Almighty enables one to reach a very high spiritual plain. Remember how Prophet Mūḥ ammed, prior to the initiation of his historic mission, used to seek seclusion from people at the Hīrā’ cave of Mount Thawr in order to meditate and to clear his thoughts.

Mary عليها السلام brought her infant Jesus عليه السلام to her people carrying him.

Al-Kalbi¹ has said, “Joseph the carpenter took Mary and Jesus عليه السلام inside a cave and kept them there for forty days till she recovered fully from the pains of childbirth, then he brought her back carrying him, being forty days old, whereupon Jesus عليه السلام spoke to her on the way saying, ‘Mother! Congratulations! I am the servant of Allāh and His Messiah!’ When she came to her family with the infant, all members of her family were so grieved, they wept. It was a family of righteousness. They said to her, ‘O Mary! You surely have done a

¹His full name is Muḥammed ibn al-Sā’ib al-Kalbi (d. 763 A.D.), a genealogist, traditionist, linguist, and chronologist from Kūfa. He fought Miṣ’ab ibn az-Zubayr then retired and dedicated his entire time to study Arabic and history. He studied in Kūfa and lived for some time in Baṣra.

strange thing' (19:27), that is, 'Where did you get this son from?' She beckoned to them to ask Jesus ﷺ. They were now angry and said, 'How can we speak to one who is a child in the cradle?' (19:29).” Wahab has said that Zakariyya ﷺ came to her while she was debating with the Jews about him; he said to Jesus ﷺ, 'Speak up and produce your proof if you were indeed ordered to do so.' Jesus, who was then forty days old, said,

﴿قَالَ إِنِّي عَبْدُ اللَّهِ آتَانِيَ الْكِتَابَ وَجَعَلَنِي نَبِيًّا ۖ وَجَعَلَنِي مُبَارَكًا أَيْنَ مَا كُنْتُ وَأَوْصَانِي بِالصَّلَاةِ وَالزَّكَاةِ مَا دُمْتُ حَيًّا ۖ وَبَرًّا بِوَالِدَتِي وَلَمْ يَجْعَلْ لِي جَبَرًا ۖ شَفِيعًا ۖ وَالسَّلَامُ عَلَيَّ يَوْمَ وُلِدْتُ وَيَوْمَ أَمُوتُ وَيَوْمَ أُبْعَثُ حَيًّا﴾

'I am a servant of Allāh; He has given me the Book and made me a prophet, and He has made me blessed wherever I may be. He has enjoined on me prayer and *zakāt* as long as I live, and (to be) dutiful to my mother, and He has not made me insolent, unblessed. And peace be on me the day I was born, the day I die, and the day I am raised to life” (Qur’ān, 19:30-33). Thus did Jesus ﷺ admit his submission to the Will of Allāh at the very beginning of his speech, belying the claim of the “Christians” and making his argument against them.

Imām Muḥammad ibn ‘Ali al-Bāqir¹ ﷺ, is quoted as saying, “When Jesus ﷺ was born, in each day he grew up as much as infants would grow in a month. When he was nine months old, his

¹He is the great grandson of Prophet Muḥammad and one of the most brilliant persons who ever walked on the face of earth, with knowledge so vast, he was said to “pierce through the knowledge of prophets.” He was Imām Muḥammad son of Imām ‘Ali son of Imām al-Ḥussain son of Imām ‘Ali son of Abū Ṭālib ﷺ peace and blessings of Allāh with all of them. He was born in Medīna on Rajab 1, 57 A.H./May 10, 677 A.D. and was killed on Dhul-Ḥijjah 7, 114 A.H./January 28, 733 A.D. by a poisoned saddle given to him as a present by the Umayyad tyrant Hishām ibn Abd al-Malik.

mother took him by the hand, brought him to the class and seated him before the teacher. The teacher asked him to say *Bismillāhir-Raḥmānir-Raḥīm*, which Jesus ﷺ repeated. The teacher then required him to repeat the alphabets after him, whereupon he raised his head and asked him whether he knew what the alphabets meant. The teacher raised his stick aiming to hit him, but he quickly said to him, 'Do not hit me, O teacher! If you do not know, ask me, and I shall explain them to you.' The teacher asked him to explain them to him, so he stated the following,

Alīf ا is derived from *La ilāha illa-Allāh* (there is no god except Allāh);

Bā ب is derived from *Behjatullāh* (the Splendor of Allāh);

Jeem ج is derived from *Jalāl-Allāh* (the Greatness of Allāh);

Dāl د is derived from *Dīn-Allāh* (the Creed of Allāh);

Hā ه is derived from *Hāwiya*, Hell, the pit of fire;

Wāw و is derived from *Waylun li ahlin-nār* (Woe unto the people of the Fire!);

Zā ز is derived from *Zafeeru-Jahannam*, the exhalation of Jahannam (or *ge hen Hinnom*¹), Hell, the eternal Fire;

¹“Ge hen Hinnom,” Hebrew for “the valley of the son of Hinnom,” the Jews believe, is a place near Jerusalem where, according to Jeremiah 19:5, [Gentile] children were burnt in sacrifice to Baal. The latter was the fertility god of then polytheist Canaanites (Arabs, descendants of Ken'an, who inhabited Greater Syria. According to Vol. 1, p. 24 of *Civilization: Past and Present*, “Phoenician' is the name which the Greeks gave to those Canaanites who dwelt along the Mediterranean coast of Syria, an area that is today Lebanon.”). The Greeks, then, were the ones who called those Arabs "Phoenicians". *Ge hen Hinnom* is Arabized as “Jahannam.” Before the advent of Islam, Arabs believed neither in heaven nor in hell. They, therefore, did not have any concept of the afterlife and had no words for Paradise or hell in their very rich and extensive vocabulary. “Janna,” by the way, means: a garden, an orchard, but it really does not describe Paradise fully. Paradise is a lot more than an orchard or a garden. It is a whole world by itself. Incidentally, the word “Paradise” (*firdaws*) is also a loan word, some say from Persian, others from Babylonian.

Ḥuṭṭi حطي is derived from *Ḥuṭṭatil khataya `anil mustaghfirīn* (the sins have been removed from those who seek His forgiveness);
Kilman كلمن is derived from *Kalāmullahi ghayr makhlooq walā mubaddila li kalimātih* (the Speech of Allāh is not created, and there is no alteration to it);

Ṣa`af صاعف is derived from *Ṣā` bi ṣā` wal jazā` bil jazā`* و صاع بالصاع (a measure for a measure, and a reward for each good deed);

Qirshat قرشة is derived from *taqrushuhum ḥeena taḥshuruhum* تقرشهم حين تحشرهم (it gathers them together as it inflicts its pain upon them).”

The teacher said to Mary عليها السلام, “Woman, take your son away, for he needs no teacher.”

The reader is referred to the Glossary of this book for more details about both the Basmala and the Fātiḥa. Al-Ḥussain ibn Muḥammed ibn al-Ḥussain, a scholar of exegesis, has informed us through his chain of narrators which goes back to Abū Sa`īd al-Khudri who quotes the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ as saying, “Jesus ﷺ was sent by his mother to learn, so the teacher required him to say *Bismillāh* (in the Name of Allāh), whereupon Jesus asked him what that meant. The teacher told him he did not know, so Jesus explained it to him. He said, ‘The B means *Bahāullāh* (the Splendor of Allāh), the *sīn* [the ‘s’ in *bismillāh*] means *Sanāullāh* (the Majesty of Allāh), and the *mim* [the ‘m’ in *Bismillāh*] means *Mamlakatullāh* (the Kingdom of Allāh, the Exalted, the Sublime),” and Allāh knows best.

Jesus and Mary عليها السلام Leave for Egypt

Jesus ﷺ was born forty-two years after the ascension of Augustus¹

¹“Augustus” is his title which means “revered.” His name was Octavius or Caius Octavius, and he lived from 63 B.C. to 14 A.D. He was a contemporary of Jesus Christ and a grand nephew of Julius Caesar. He also was the first Roman emperor. (Caius) Julius Caesar (102 B.C. - 44 B.C.), who extended Rome's control to France (then land of the Gauls, original inhabitants of the France before Celtic Germanic tribes kicked them out and occupied their land in the third century B.C.) and Britain, adopted him

[of the Roman Empire], fifty-one years after the king of the Ashkanites¹, kings of the sects, had passed away. Today's Syria and its surrounding areas were under the authority of Caesar of Rome who had appointed Herod² as the king on his behalf. When Herod, who was ruling over the areas then inhabited by the Children of Israel, came to know the story of the Messiah, he wanted to kill him. The Children of Israel saw a star according to whose appearance they, utilizing their books, calculated the date of his birth. Allāh sent an angel to Joseph the carpenter to warn him against Herod and his evil scheme, ordering him to flee with the boy and his mother to Egypt and to return once Herod was dead. Joseph transported Mary and her son on a donkey till they reached a place in Egypt to which the Almighty refers in this verse:

﴿وَجَعَلْنَا ابْنَ مَرْيَمَ وَأُمَّهُ آيَةً وَآوَيْنَاهُمَا إِلَى رَبْوَةٍ ذَاتِ قَرَارٍ وَمَعِينٍ﴾

“And We made the son of Mary and his mother a sign, and We gave them a shelter on a lofty ground having meadows and springs” (Qur’ān, 23:50).

Mary and Jesus ﷺ Return Home

Wahab has said that when Herod died, twelve years after the birth of

and named him Caius Julius Caesar Octavianus. After his (Caesar's) assassination, Augustus gained power in Rome. In 31 B.C., he defeated Queen Cleopatra of Egypt (69 B.C. - 31 B.C.) at Actium, Greece, on September 2, 31 B.C. It was then that he became master of the Roman world.

¹Or Ashkenazim, one of the two major Jewish sects; the other is the Sephardim.

²It was through Marc Antony (83 B.C. - 30 B.C.), a protege of Julius Caesar, that Herod (or Herod the Great) secured such a position which he maintained from 37 B.C. to 4 B.C. In his last years, he fell a victim to insanity, executing his sons Aristobulus, Alexander, and Antipater. He is the one who ordered the mass massacre of children.

Jesus ¹عليه السلام, Allāh inspired Mary telling her of Herod's death, ordering her to return with her son Jesus and cousin Joseph the carpenter to Syria. They did, settling near the Galilee mountain at a village in north-northeast of Bethlehem (Bayt Laḥam بيت لحم) called Nazareth after which Christians are called "Nazarites" or "Nazarenes." Its Arabic name is "an-Nāṣira الناصرة". There, Jesus ^{عليه السلام} kept learning in one hour what others would learn in a day, and in a day what others would in a month, and in a month what others would in a year, and such is the Almighty's design with His messengers. When he became thirty years old, Allāh inspired him to come out to the public and to invite them to worship the One and Only God, Allāh, through the medium of parables, empowering him to heal the sick, to cure those afflicted with permanent handicaps, to give sight back to the blind, to heal the mentally retarded, to suppress the power of evil, to forbid people from committing misdeeds, and to subject the devils to humiliation by permitting goodness to thus prevail. He did as he was ordered, so people loved him and enjoyed his company. His followers started increasing in number. Soon he became quite famous, and at times he may have had as many as fifty thousand patients or handicapped persons to heal. Those who could walk to him did so, and those who could not

¹There is no definite date given for the birth of Jesus Christ even by Christians themselves! Most books say that he was "probably" born between 8 B.C. and 4 B.C. The angel referred to above is described in Christian books as "the heavenly host." In Islam, this may either be arch-Angel Gabriel or one of the angels working under his command. "Jesus" is a Greek noun derived from the Hebrew "Joshua" which means: "savior." "Christ" is a Greek translation of the Hebrew "Messiah" which means "anointed." In Arabic, his name is 'Īsa. Jesus Christ is cousin of John the Baptist who is described by the People of the Book as "an ascetic preacher." In Islam, he is a prophet referred to in the Holy Qur'ān as Yaḥya son of Zakariyya (Zacharias). He is mentioned in 3:39 where he is described as "an honourable, chaste, a prophet from among the good ones," in 6:85 and 19:12-15 where he is described as one whom the Almighty granted wisdom even as a youth, and in 21:90 where he and his family are described as those who "used to hasten, one with another, in (the doing of) deeds of goodness."

he himself sought, the messenger of God that he was. Those who could not reach him, he managed to reach them, and such is the mark of distinction of men of God. The only medicine he applied to the patients who had a full conviction in him and in his Lord was his supplication.

Mary's Death and Prophethood of Jesus ﷺ

According to a number of accounts, Mary conceived Jesus ﷺ when she was thirteen years old. She gave birth to him at Bethlehem, a suburb of Jerusalem, fifty-one years after the beginning of the reign of the Ashkelonites (or Ashkenazim). Allāh sent the *wahi* (inspiration) to him at the age of thirty, and He raised him up from the temple at Jerusalem on Laylatul-Qadr (the Night of Power) during the month of Ramadān when he was thirty-three years old; so, his prophethood continued for only three years. His mother lived after his being raised to heavens for six years, and Allāh knows best.

The Disciples

Allāh Almighty has said,

﴿فَلَمَّا أَحَسَّ عِيسَىٰ مِنْهُمُ الْكُفْرَ قَالَ: مَنْ أَنْصَارِي إِلَى اللَّهِ؟ قَالَ الْحَوَارِيُّونَ: نَحْنُ أَنْصَارُ اللَّهِ، آمَنَّا بِاللَّهِ وَأَشْهَدُ بِأَنَّا مُسْلِمُونَ﴾

“But when Jesus perceived disbelief on their part, he said: Who will be my helpers in Allāh's way? The disciples said: We are helpers (in the way) of Allāh: We believe in Allāh and bear witness that we submit (to Him in Islam)” (Qur’ān, 3:52). The Almighty has also said,

﴿وَإِذْ أَوْحَيْتُ إِلَى الْحَوَارِيِّينَ أَنْ آمِنُوا بِي وَبِرَسُولِي، قَالُوا آمَنَّا وَأَشْهَدُ بِأَنَّا مُسْلِمُونَ﴾

“And when I inspired the disciples saying: Believe in Me and in My messenger, they said: We believe and (you) bear witness that we are Muslims (submitters to the will of Allāh)” (Qur’ān, 5:111), that is, Allāh enabled the disciples to believe in His messenger. They were the elite from among those who believed in Jesus son of Mary ﷺ and who followed him. They were his supporters and viziers, and they were twelve in number. Their names are: Simon al-Safa who is

also called Peter, his brother Andrews, Jacob son of Zebedee, his brother John, Philip, Bartholomew, Thomas, Matthew “al-Ashshar العشار” (collector of the عشر `ushr tax, the tithe¹), Jacob son of Halfa, Leah who is also called Thaddaeus, Simon the Canaanite, and Judas Iscariot. Biblical lists of them, however, differ from this one.

The “saints” who wrote the Gospels named after them are: John, Mark, Luke, and Matthew. Let us see what Christians tell us about them²:

St. Mark was a friend of Saints Peter, Paul, and Luke. He is John Mark; his mother is believed to be the owner of the house where the Last Supper (where the Table of Viands, or *al-Mā'ida*) was held. His Gospel is the shortest and simplest, the only one which stands out from among all the other three in context and in spirit. Some Biblical critics are of the view that it was the first to be composed. It narrates the life of Jesus عليه السلام from his baptism by John the Baptist to the passion and alleged “resurrection”.

St. Luke, a man from Antioch³, Syria, was said to be a doctor, a

¹It is a tax on agricultural produce, goods, or personal items set aside as an offering to God. Very few Christians nowadays pay it, and the same applies to the “majority” of Muslims who no longer pay the *khums* خمس, one-fifth mandatory religious tax. Here in the U.S., taxes collected by federal, state, social security, insurance, etc. take out about 30% of one's hard earned income, leaving him in need for charity himself!

²The following text material is excerpted from two sources: *The Columbia Viking Desk Encyclopedia* (The Viking Press, New York, 1968), and the *Encyclopedia Britannica III*.

³The city of Antioch is situated on the banks of the river al-Āsi (Orontes). It was founded about 300 B.C. by Seleucus I (Nicator) who died in 280 B.C. Seleucus I was a general of Alexander the Great. Antioch is the city where the followers of Jesus Christ were called “Christians” (rather than Nazarenes) for the first time. It is the seat of a Melchite, or Maronite, and a Jacobite patriarch. It fell to the Persians in 538 A.D., to the Arabs in 637 (16 A.H.), to the Byzantians from 969 - 1084 (358 - 477 A.H.), to Seljuk

physician, and a friend and companion of Saints Paul and Mark. Christian tradition, however, says that he was a painter and that he died as a martyr. He is described as “a disciple of the Prophets”¹ which clearly means he learned not directly from Jesus ﷺ but from his twelve Prophets. His Gospel provides an account of the birth of Jesus ﷺ, tells of his ministry and ends with the passion and alleged “resurrection”. He is author of a twelve-volume literary work, the Gospel and the Acts, and is the most literary of the New Testament writers. The approximate date of his death or “martyrdom” is given as 66 A.D.

St. Matthew, also named Levi, is said to be a publican (tax collector) of Capernaum, a city in northeast Palestine on the Sea of Galilee. He was employed as a tax collector by Herod Antipas, tetrach of Galilee. He is described as one of the twelve disciples of Jesus Christ ﷺ. He is author of the first synoptic Gospel which, like the rest, gives an account of the birth of Jesus ﷺ, tells of his ministry, and ends with the passion and alleged “resurrection”. The Bible offers scanty and uncertain information about him. Everything about his character, conduct, conviction and life is subject to debate and is never ascertained... He wrote his Gospel, the first of the four, in Hebrew. His Gospel is also attributed to Matthew who is said to be one of the twelve Prophets or disciples.

St. John is the son of Zebedee, a fisherman from the Galilee, and Salome. He is the younger brother of St. James the Greater, also one of the twelve disciples of Jesus ﷺ. Jesus Christ ﷺ, we are told, also had a brother named James...! Ancient Christian tradition claims that John is the author of all the four Gospels comprising the

Turks in 1085 (478 A.H.), to the Crusaders in 1098 (491 A.H.), to Egyptian Mamlukes in 1268 (666 A.H.), and to Ottoman Turks in 1516 (922 A.H.). It was transferred to Syria by Western powers in 1920 (1339 A.H.) but restored to Turkey in 1939 (1358 A.H.). This is why the reader sometimes sees Antioch identified as a Syrian town and sometimes as a Turkish one! What a busy little town!

¹*Encyclopedia Britannica* II, Vol. 11, p. 178.

Bible..., in addition to three epistles and the Book of Revelation. Is he really?! This is the subject of debate among Christians; so, let us leave them debating and arguing till the Day of Judgment! He is described in Christian books as a “divine,” theologian, and as an Evangelist, a writer of the four Gospels. No date of his birth or death is available, and even the place where he died is not known for sure. Some writers admit that what is written about him is more of a legend than a fact.

One is tempted to ask: “Why is it that there are four Gospels instead of one? Why is there so much duplication and difference between one Gospel and another? Whose Gospel is the right or the more reliable one? Since they cannot all be right, which one is right? If those Gospels were all written by St. John, as stated above, why, then, are they divided into four with each one of them bearing the name of an Prophet? Had they all been written by St. John, why was not the Bible called the Book of John?” My bet is that if you ask a priest or even the most learned Christian cleric, he will never give you a straight answer to any of these legitimate questions.

Saint Barnabas

According to the Gospel of Matthew, and to be exact Ch. 10, verse 4, the list of the twelve disciples of Jesus Christ ﷺ is as follows: Simon (or Peter), Andrew (Peter's brother), James (son of Zebedee), John (James' brother), Philip, Bartholomew, Thomas, Matthew (the tax collector), James (son of Alphaeus), Thaddaeus, another Simon who is said to be “a member of ‘The Zealots,’ a subversive political party,” and Judas Iscariot. Why is the name of Saint Barnabas not among them, and how did he come to write his own Gospel, the only one accepted by Muslims as the true Bible? With all their prejudices, speculations, sectarian motivations, it is unwise to accept what today's or yesterday's Christians tell us about Saint Barnabas and his Bible, or about the other disciples. *The Encyclopedia Britannica III*, for example, describes those who believed that Christ was human and not divine as heretics, and so do many Christian writers and theologians. An independent research, therefore, will yield better results, that is for sure. One such research has been undertaken by M.A. Yusseff who published his findings in a very interesting book

titled *The Dead Sea Scrolls, the Gospel of Barnabas, and the New Testament* which was published in 1405 A.H./1985 A.D. by the American Trust Publications of Indianapolis, Indiana.¹ Saint Barnabas was originally called Joseph the Levite or Joses the Levite and is better known as Matthai or Matthias. In the Christian document known as *Recognitions*, Matthias is identified as another name for Prophet Barnabas, which is correct. In another document known as *Homilies*, Barnabas is said to be a personal Prophet of Jesus ﷺ, “a strict servant of the Law,” and, hence, one of the original twelve Disciples (or Prophets) of Jesus Christ ﷺ. Scholars of the Jewish faith, too, list his name among not twelve but five Prophets, the remaining four being: Naki, Nester, Buni, and Todah. But we find the name “Lebbacus” among these disciples in Matthew 10:13, that of “Judas son of James” in Luke 6:16 and Acts 1:13, both contradicting other Biblical accounts; so, which one is correct and which one is not?!

Saint Barnabas was born in Cyprus in the first century A.D. Other references to him are recorded in the Bible in Acts 11:19 and 15:41. He is said as having joined the Jerusalem church “after the alleged crucifixion of Jesus ﷺ²,” which is not true, sold his property, and gave the proceeds as a donation to his community. He founded the church in Antioch (Turkish Antakya), where he preached. Inviting Paul of Tarsus (Turkey) to be his assistant, he undertook missionary activity and then went to Jerusalem. Shortly after 48 A.D., a conflict separated both men, and Barnabas sailed home to Cyprus. Where did he write his Gospel and when? Nobody seems to know. How did he die? Nobody seems to know, yet he is called a martyr... We are also told that he knew St. Mark. In 488 A.D., his grave was discovered

¹For the benefit of our reader, the full address of the said Publisher is: ATP, 10900 W. Washington Street, Indianapolis, IN 46231, U.S.A. I think this book ought to be in every personal and public library. May the Almighty bless and reward its author and publisher, *Allāhomma Āmeen*.

²This misleading statement exists in Vol. One of the world renowned *Encyclopedia Britannica III*. How many other errors exist in this Encyclopedia?!

near the Monastery of St. Barnabas in the Cypriot city of Salamis. A copy of his Gospel was found buried with him¹. The accurate list of the twelve disciples of Jesus ﷺ exists in the Gospel of St. Barnabas himself who records the following:

Jesus, having returned to the region of Jerusalem, was found again of the people with exceedingly great joy, and they implored him to abide with them, for his words were not as those of the scribes, but were with power; for they touched the heart.

Jesus, seeing that great was the multitude of them that returned to their heart for to walk in the law of God, went up into the mountain, and abode all night in prayer. When the day came he descended from the mountain and chose twelve whom he called Prophets, among whom is Judas, who was slain upon the cross². Their names are: Andrew and Peter his brother, fishermen; Barnabas, who wrote this, with Matthew the publican, who sat at the receipt of custom; John and James, son of Zebedee; Thaddaeus and Judas³; Bartholomew and Philip; James, and Judas Iscariot the traitor. To these he always revealed the divine secrets. He made Iscariot Judas his dispenser of that which was given in alms, but he stole the tenth part of everything. (The Gospel of Barnabas 14)

The Gospel of St. Barnabas is the one that contains the true teachings of Jesus Christ; it will be discussed later how it refers to

¹That copy was later deposited at the Imperial Library at Vienna. It was at a much later date translated into English and edited by Lonsdale and Laura Ragg.

²This statement, among many others in the Gospel of St. Barnabas, agrees with what we, Muslims, have in the Holy Qur'ān. Jesus Christ was not crucified. Indeed, it was Judas Iscariot who was crucified. Let the Christians of the world stand corrected. But they will never accept this correction simply because it means undermining the very foundation of their present day's creed.

³The reader can easily see that there were two men among the disciples of Jesus named Judas; one of them was crucified, so he was rewarded in heaven, and the other was not, so he was rewarded by the Romans for his treachery. The latter is Judas Iscariot.

Prophet Muḥammed ﷺ as the “Paraclete,” a Greek word meaning “Messenger” and “Comforter,” in Arabic *al-Amīn* الأمين... Even if you set aside the Gospel of St. Barnabas, a good Greek translation of the original text of John 14:16 will read as follows: “And I will Pray the *Patera*, and he shall give you another *Paraclete*, so that he may abide with you forever.” The Greek word *Patera* is erroneously translated as “the Father,” a reference to the Almighty, in a “modern” version of the Bible which gives the following text for John 14:16-17: “And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counselor to be with you forever—the Spirit of Truth.”¹ No man of righteousness has earned the title of “the Spirit of Truth” (in Arabic aṣ-Ṣādiq الصادق) more than Prophet Muḥammed ﷺ. A good scholar of Greek will do better than that; he will translate *Patera* into “Nourisher” or “Sustainer,” and *Paraclete* into “Comforter,” *al-Amīn* in Arabic, a title given to Prophet Muḥammed ﷺ even before he had started his prophetic mission. The translation of what John has in 14:16-17 should instead run as follows:

And I will request the Nourisher (God) to send you another Messenger, so that he may be (your) guide always, the inspired, the Truthful, whom the world at large will not welcome because it will not comprehend or appreciate him, but you (believers) will recognize him. He will dwell with you and (his message) will find a place in your hearts.

A testimony to the truth of the statement saying “... and (his message) will find a place in your hearts” is that most converts to Islam used to follow one sect of Christianity or another. Upon acceptance of Islam, such converts do not abandon Christ عليه السلام; they simply rediscover him and get to know the real Christ عليه السلام whose message has been and is still being distorted. The best Christians in the world are the Muslims. Muslims wholeheartedly honour Jesus Christ عليه السلام and his true and pristine message presented by Prophet Muḥammed ﷺ; read the following verses of the Holy Qur’ān and

¹*The Great News: The New Testament* (Colorado Springs, Colorado: International Bible Society, 1984).

see for yourself how such message is described:

﴿إِذْ قَالَ اللَّهُ يَا عِيسَى ابْنِي مَرْيَمَ اذْبَحْكِ وَرَأَيْكَ إِلَىٰ وَمُطَهِّرَكُم مِّنَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَجَاعِلُ الَّذِينَ اتَّبَعُوكَ فَوْقَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا إِلَىٰ يَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ ثُمَّ إِلَيَّ مَرْجِعُكُمْ فَأَحْكُمُ بَيْنَكُمْ فِيمَا كُنْتُمْ فِيهِ تَخْتَلِفُونَ﴾

“Behold! Allāh said, ‘O Jesus! I will take you and raise you to Myself and clear you (of the falsehoods) of those who blaspheme; I will make those who follow you superior to those who reject faith until the Day of Resurrection: Then all of you shall return to Me and I will judge between you concerning what you argued about’” (Qur’ān, 3:55).

Carefully examine the above verse especially this portion: “... and make those who follow you above those who disbelieve to the Day of Resurrection” and see how the Almighty raises the status of those who follow Jesus above those who disbelieve in him till the Day of Judgment, and remember that a Muslim cannot be a Muslim at all unless he believes in Jesus ﷺ and follows his guidance just as he follows the guidance of Prophet Muḥammed ﷺ and all other Prophets ﷺ. Those who truly believe in Jesus Christ ﷺ and who follow his pristine message are none other than the Muslims, whereas the rest may be divided into two groups: 1) those who have distorted the message of Jesus Christ ﷺ and lied about it one generation after another and are still doing so, and 2) the Jews who disbelieved in him and in his message and disbelieved in his virgin birth.





'Allāma al-Majlisi عز الدين

Let us go back to the argument about the *Paraclete*. This is not the first time such an argument is raised. 'Allāma al-Majlisi (above sketch) records an incident which took place during the time of the 'Abbāside ruler al-Ma'mūn and is narrated by al-Ḥassan ibn Muḥammed al-Nawfali involving Imām Ali ibn Mousa ar-Riḍa عليه السلام debating with a Catholic high priest, some sources say an archbishop, about the authenticity of the existing four Gospels comprising the Bible. It went on as follows:

The Imām عليه السلام asked the Catholic, "O Christian! Are you familiar with a statement in the Bible wherein Jesus عليه السلام says, 'I am going to my Lord and your Lord, and the *Paraclete* is coming who shall testify to my truth just as I testified for him, and he shall explain everything to you, and he shall be the one to expose all the sins of nations, and he shall be the one to smash the pillar of apostasy'?"¹

¹This is a rough translation of the original Arabic text. A thorough research of the Bible may yield better results and reveal the exact Biblical verse to which the Imām was referring. Unfortunately, the Imām did not specify which of the four Gospels he was quoting. Consulting a Bible in Arabic may also produce the same anticipated result: the number of the exact verse and the name of the Gospel which the Imām had in mind.

The Catholic said, "We admit all what you have just quoted of the Bible." The Imām ﷺ asked him, "Do you testify that such a statement is actually fixed in the Bible?" "Yes," said the Catholic. Imām ar-Rida ﷺ said, "O Catholic! Could you tell me about the first Bible, how you lost it then found it, and who put your existing Bible together?" The Catholic said, "We did not lose the Bible except for one single day then we found it fresh; John and Matthew brought it back to us." Imām ar-Rida ﷺ said, "How little your knowledge of the Bible and its scholars is! If such is your claim, then why do you dispute with one another about the Bible? Rather, controversy has always revolved around the Bible which is in your hands today. Had it been the same as the first one was, you would not have thus disputed (with one another) about it, but I shall inform you of such controversy myself."

The Imām ﷺ went on to state the following:

"Be informed that when the first Bible was lost, the Christians gathered around their scholars and said to them, 'Jesus son of Mary has been killed, and we do not know where the Bible is. You are the scholars; so, what do you have with you?' Luke and Mark said to them, 'We have learned the Bible by heart; so, do not grieve in its regard, and do not forsake the churches, for we shall recite to you one Gospel after another on each Sunday till we put it all together.' Luke, Mark, John and Matthew sat together, and they put this Bible of yours for you after you had lost the first (original) one. These four men were students of the early disciples; are you aware of that?!" The Catholic answered, "This I did not know and now I do. It is also now clear to me how much you know about the Bible, and I have heard from you things with which I was familiar and to which my heart testifies to be the truth. I have, therefore, gained a better understanding." Imām ar-Rida ﷺ then said to him, "How do you, then, find the testimony of these men?" "Accurate," said the Catholic, "since they are the scholars of the Bible, and everything to which they testified is the truth." Imām ar-Rida ﷺ then turned to al-Ma'mūn and his company and said, "Bear witness to what he has just said." They said, "We testify." Then the Imām turned to the Catholic and said, "I challenge you to swear by the son and his

mother whether you know if Matthew had said, 'The Messiah is David son of Abraham son of Isaac son of Jacob son of Yehuda son of Khadrun', and that Mark said about the lineage of Jesus son of Mary ﷺ that he was 'The word of God which He placed in the human body, so it became human', and that Luke said, 'Jesus son of Mary and his mother were humans of flesh and blood, so the Holy Spirit entered into them'. Then you testify that Jesus had himself said the following about his creation, 'I tell you the truth: None ascends the heavens except that he descends therefrom except the man who rides the camel, the seal of the prophets, for he shall ascend to the heavens then shall he descend;' so, what do you say about that?" The Catholic said, "This is the speech of Jesus, and we do not deny it." Imām ar-Riḍa ﷺ said, "If so, what do you say about the testimony of Luke, Mark, and Matthew with regard to Jesus and what they had attributed to him?" The Catholic said, "They lied about Jesus..." Imām ar-Riḍa ﷺ turned to the audience and said, "O people! Has he not (a moment ago) testified to their truthfulness and said that they were the scholars of the Bible and what they said is the truth?!" The Catholic said to the Imām ﷺ, "O scholar of the Muslims! I would like you to excuse me from having to discuss these men." After a while, the Imām ﷺ turned to that high-ranking Catholic cleric, an archbishop, and said, "In the Bible, it is written: 'The son of the virtuous woman is departing, and the *Paraclete* is coming after him, and he shall lighten the burdens and explain everything to you, and he shall testify for me as I have testified to you. I have brought you the parables, and he shall bring you the interpretation.' Do you believe that such a text exists in the Bible?" The Catholic answered in the affirmative.¹

The Holy Qur'ān, moreover, tells us in Sūrat aṣ-Ṣaff (Ch. 61) that

¹al-Majlisi, *Biḥār al-Anwār*, Vol. 14, pp. 331-333. Again, since this text is my translation from the Arabic original, the Imām's quotations may not be exact. Consulting a Bible written in Arabic will be worthwhile and will provide the numbers of the chapters and verses to which the Imām here refers. Unfortunately, I do not at the moment have a copy of the Bible in Arabic.

﴿وَإِذْ قَالَ عِيسَى ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ يَا بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ إِنِّي رَسُولُ اللَّهِ إِلَيْكُمْ مُصَدِّقًا لِمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيَّ مِنَ التَّوْرَةِ وَمُبَشِّرًا بِرَسُولٍ يَأْتِي مِنْ بَعْدِي اسْمُهُ أَحْمَدُ فَلَمَّا جَاءَهُمْ بِالْبَيِّنَاتِ قَالُوا هَذَا سِحْرٌ مُبِينٌ﴾

“Jesus son of Mary said: O Children of Israel! I am the prophet of Allāh to you testifying to that which is before me of the Torah and giving the glad tidings of a Prophet who will come after me; his name is Ahmed; but when he came to them with clear arguments, they said: This is clear magic” (Qur’ān, 61:6). Compare this Qur’ānic verse with the following text in the Gospel of St. Barnabas:

Thereupon said the disciples, “O master, it is thus written in the book of Moses, that in Isaac was the promise made.”

Jesus answered with a groan, “It is so written, but Moses wrote it not, nor Joshua, but rather our rabbins, who fear not God. Verily, I say to you that if you consider the words of the angel Gabriel, you shall discover the malice of our scribes and doctors. For the angel said: ‘Abraham, all the world shall know how God loves you, but how shall the world know the love that you bear to God? Assuredly it is necessary that you do something for the love of God.’ Abraham answered, ‘Behold the servant of God, ready to do all that which God shall will.’

“Then spoke God, saying to Abraham, ‘Take your son, your firstborn Ishmael, and come up the mountain to sacrifice him.’ How is Isaac firstborn, if when Isaac was born Ishmael was seven years old?”

Then answered Jesus, “Verily I say to you that Satan ever seeks to annul the laws of God. Therefore, he with his followers, hypocrites and evildoers, the former with false doctrine, the latter with lewd living, today have contaminated almost all things, so that scarcely is the truth found. Woe to the hypocrites, for the praises of this world shall turn for them into insults and torments in hell.

“I therefore say to you that the messenger of God is a splendor that shall give gladness to nearly all that God has made, for he is adorned with the spirit of understanding and of counsel, the spirit of wisdom and might, the spirit of fear and love (of God), the spirit of prudence and temperance. He is adorned with the spirit of charity and mercy,

the spirit of justice and piety, the spirit of gentleness and patience, which he has received from God three times more than He has given to all his creatures. O blessed time, when he shall come to the world. Believe me that I have seen him and have done him reverence, even as every prophet has seen him. Seeing that of his spirit God gives to them prophecy. And when I saw him my soul was filled with consolation, saying, O Muḥammed, God be with you, and may he make me worthy to untie your shoe latchet, for obtaining this I shall be a great prophet and holy one of God.”

(The Gospel of Barnabas 44)

“... unworthy to untie your latchet” above brings to memory what St. Mark said in 1:7: “And this was his message: ‘After me will come one more powerful than I, the thongs of whose sandals I am not worthy to stoop down and untie.’” The speaker is undoubtedly Jesus and the one whose coming he is predicting is none other than Prophet Muḥammed ﷺ. But people look at things and make them appear as they would like them to be rather than as they really are. Such is the truth which all other disciples, with the exception of Barnabas, had deliberately hidden.

The reader is encouraged to obtain a copy of the Gospel of Saint Barnabas¹ and compare it with other existing Bibles, be they those accepted by the Catholics or those endorsed by the Protestants and judge for himself as to how much distortion the message of Christ has suffered and is still suffering...

Al-Ḍaḥḥāk² has said that the disciples (in Arabic *ḥawariyyūn*

¹Since there is no copyright on The Gospel of Barnabas, the copy of it which I consulted for the writing of this book does not contain the Publisher's name or the place or date of publication.

²His name is “Abul-Qāsim” ibn Muzāḥim al-Hilālī, and some call him “al-Khurāsānī”. He lived in Balkh, Samarkand and Naishapur. According to Ibn Kathīr’s book *Al-Bidāya wan-Nihāya*, he was a highly respected *tābi’i* who narrated from Anas, [Abdullāh] ibn Omer [ibn al-Khaṭṭab, the second caliph], Abū Hurayra and a group of other *tābi’is*. Some scholars say that he neither quoted Ibn ‘Abbās nor any other *sahābi*. Sufyān al-Thawri regards him as an “imām of *tafsīr*,” counting four such top imāms:

(حواريون) were called so due to their pure hearts. Apparently he gave them more credit than they deserved, seeing how much distortion they inflicted on the message of Jesus even as early as the very first century. As a matter of fact, one very famous Christian writer, George Bernard Shaw, described these disciples very well when he said the following on p. 72 of *The Adventures of a Black Girl in Her Search for God*: “Jesus could be reproached for having chosen his disciples very unwisely if we could believe that he had any real choice. There are moments when one is tempted to say that there was not one Christian among them and that Judas was the only one who showed any gleams of common sense.” Imagine! Abdullāh ibn al-Mubārak has said that they were called so because their faces were shining with the mark of adoration, its glow and whiteness. The Arabic root word, *hūr*, means: intense whiteness. Al-Ḥassan has said that it means “supporters” or “helpers,” while Qatādah thinks that it means “the ones most fit to be successors of their master.”

Did those disciples or Prophets deserve all these compliments? Let us examine how they dealt with their master:

The night preceding the “imprisonment” of Jesus Christ ﷺ was truly a testing night for the faith of those disciples. On that night, those disciples joined him in his concealment. Jesus ﷺ knew perfectly well what they were; so, he recommended them to devote themselves to prayer so that they might not fail the test. On that occasion, they made a great profession of faith and integrity. One said, “I will shed my blood where a drop of your perspiration falls.” Another said, “I will die before anyone hurts a hair of your body.” Despite all these protests and professions, they could not keep even the night's vigil along with Jesus ﷺ. Jesus ﷺ said to them, “Stay here with me keeping the night's vigil along with me...” Then he came to the disciples and saw them fallen asleep. He then said to Peter, “Can you not keep even a moment's vigil with me? Keep vigil and keep yourself engaged in prayers lest you should fail the test...”

Mujāhid, `Ikrimah, Sa`īd ibn Jubayr and al-Ḍaḥḥāk. His date of birth is unknown, but he died in 100 A.H./718 A.D.

Then, coming out again, he saw them sleeping the second time, and their eyes were heavy with sleep..., and he saw them the third time sleeping. If you have a copy of *The New Testament in Today's English Version* (third edition, New York), turn to p. 73 and see for yourself.

Ibn `Abbās has said that they were fishermen. Some of them were. Jesus ﷺ passed by them once and asked them what they were doing. "Fishing," said they. He asked them, "Would you like to come with me so we may fish for people?" They asked him, "How can that be?!" He said, "We invite them to the way of Allāh." They asked him who he was, and he answered them that he was Jesus son of Mary ﷺ, a servant and messenger of Allāh ﷻ. "Is there any other prophet whose status is higher than yours?" they asked him. "Yes," he answered, "the Arabian Prophet ﷺ," so they followed him, believed in him, and joined his march. This is what we, Muslims, would like to think of these disciples, but how do Christians look at us? Contrary to what we, Muslims, are taught by our Islamic code of ethics, Christians do not recognize our religion or any other religion besides theirs. To them, anyone who does not recognize Jesus ﷺ as the "son of God," His "only begotten son," and who is not baptized, can have no place in heaven. Adherents of all religions in the world, and those who have no religion, have the right to wishful thinking. Compare this with the tolerance Islam demonstrates in the following verse of Sūrat al-Baqara and judge for yourself, dear Reader, whether you are a Muslim or not:

﴿إِنَّ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَالَّذِينَ هَادُوا وَالنَّصَارَى وَالصَّابِئِينَ مَنْ آمَنَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ
وَعَمِلَ صَالِحًا فَلَهُمْ أَجْرُهُمْ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ وَلَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ﴾

Surely those who believe (Muslims), and those who are Jews, and the Christians, and the Sabeans¹ (Sabians), whoever believes in

¹Some Arab writers say that the Sabeans (Sabians) were a certain sect of unbelievers who worshipped the stars secretly and openly professed to be Christians. According to others, they are followers of the religion of Sabi' son of Seth son of Adam, which is more accurate, for the Holy Qur'ān includes them in the above quoted verse among the believers. Other writers

God and in the Last Day and does good, they shall have their reward from their Lord, and there is no fear for them, nor shall they grieve. (2:62)

Such is the tolerance of Islam, and such is the perfect code of Islamic ethics. This verse should set the cornerstone for a true brotherhood among the followers of the greatest three religions in the world: Judaism, Christianity and Islam. Such brotherhood is needed now more than ever before. Only such brotherhood can protect the followers of these three creeds from fanatics such as the Takfiris who are the parasites of our time and who apparently overlook such verses, giving them their own twisted meanings, that is, if they read the Holy Qur'ān at all. Islam does not excommunicate anyone, nor does it allow one to harm an insect, let alone a human being or an animal.

The Holy Spirit

Among the signs of the prophethood of Jesus ﷺ is that he was assisted by the Holy Spirit. The Almighty has said,

﴿وَلَقَدْ آتَيْنَا مُوسَى الْكِتَابَ وَقَفَّيْنَا مِنْ بَعْدِهِ بِالرُّسُلِ وَآتَيْنَا عِيسَى ابْنَ مَرْيَمَ الْبَيِّنَاتِ وَأَيَّدْنَاهُ بِرُوحِ الْقُدُسِ أَفَكُلَّمَا جَاءَكُمْ رَسُولٌ بِمَا لَا تَهْوَى أَنْفُسُكُمْ اسْتَكْبَرْتُمْ فَفَرِقْنَا بَيْنَكُمْ وَفَرِيقًا تَقْتُلُونَ؟!﴾

“We gave Jesus son of Mary clear arguments and strengthened him with the Holy Spirit” (Qur’ān, 2:87);

﴿إِذْ قَالَ اللَّهُ يَا عِيسَى ابْنَ مَرْيَمَ اذْكُرْ نِعْمَتِي عَلَيْكَ وَعَلَى وَالِدَتِكَ إِذْ أَيَّدْتُكَ بِرُوحِ الْقُدُسِ تُكَلِّمُ النَّاسَ فِي الْمَهْدِ وَكَهْلًا وَإِذْ عَلَّمْتُكَ الْكِتَابَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ وَالتَّوْرَةَ وَالْإِنْجِيلَ وَإِذْ تَخْلُقُ مِنَ الطِّينِ كَهَيْئَةِ الطَّيْرِ بِإِذْنِي فَتَنْفُخُ فِيهَا فَتَكُونُ طَيْرًا بِإِذْنِي وَتُبْرِئُ الْأَكْمَةَ وَالْأَبْرَصَ بِإِذْنِي وَإِذْ تُخْرِجُ الْمَوْتَى بِإِذْنِي وَإِذْ كَفَفْتُ بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ عَنْكَ إِذْ جِئْتَهُم بِالْبَيِّنَاتِ فَقَالَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِنْهُمْ إِنْ هَذَا إِلَّا سِحْرٌ مُبِينٌ﴾

say that their religion is pretty much what Christianity teaches except that their *qibla* was towards the south. Still others say that they followed the religion of Prophet Noah, and surely Allāh knows best.

“Then [on the Judgment Day] Allāh will say, “O Jesus son of Mary! Recount My favor to you and your mother. Behold! I strengthened you with the Holy Spirit, so that you spoke to the people in childhood and in maturity. Behold! I taught you the Book and wisdom, the Law and the Gospel. And behold! You made the figure of a bird out of clay, as it were, by My permission, and you breathed into it, and it became a bird by My permission, and you healed those born blind and the lepers by My permission. And behold! You raised the dead by My permission. And behold! I restrained the Children of Israel from (violence to) you when you showed them the clear Signs, and the unbelievers among them said, ‘This is nothing but obvious magic.’” (Qur’ān, 5:110).

Scholars have differed regarding the Holy Spirit (*rūḥ al qudus* رُوح القدس). Ar-Rabee’ ibn Anas¹ has said that it is the spirit that blew the breath of life into him, and that Allāh attached it to His own Name as an act of honoring. The *qudus* is Allāh Almighty according to the verse, “... and a spirit from Him” (Qur’ān, 4:171), and also, “... so We breathed into her of Our *rūḥ*” (Qur’ān, 21:91). Other scholars have said that what is meant by the *qudus* is purity, hence *ar-rūḥ al qudus* means “the pure spirit.” Jesus عليه السلام is also called *rūḥ* for the simple reason that he was not carried in men's loins, nor was he carried by the wombs of married women; rather, he was an order decreed by the Almighty. As-Suddi says that *ar-rūḥ al qudus*, the Holy Spirit, is Gabriel, and that this phrase means: “supporting Jesus

¹His name is ar-Rabee’ ibn Anas ibn Ziyād al-Bakri ربيع بن أنس بن زياد البكري, of Khurasan, originally of Baṣra. He learned from Anas ibn Mālik, Abū al-Āliya ar-Riyāḥi and al-Ḥassan al-Baṣri. He is quoted by Sulaymān al-Taymi, al-A’mash, al-Ḥussain ibn Wāqid, Abū Ja’far ar-Rāzi, Abdul-Azīz ibn Muslim, Ibn Mubārak and others. He was during his time the top scholar of Merv, and he met Sufyān ath-Thawri. He is described by Hātim as being truthful. Abū Dāwūd tells us that ar-Rabee’ was jailed in Merv for thirty years. The *aḥādīth* he narrates are included in the Four Books of Sunan (*al-sunan al-arba’a* السنن الأربعة). These four Sunan books were written by the following: an-Nisā’i, at-Tirmidhi, Ibn Mājah and Abū Dāwūd. Al-Bakri’s year of birth is unknown, but he died in 139 A.H./756 A.D.

ﷺ through Gabriel” ﷺ, since he was his companion, friend, and guard, walking with him wherever he walked till he ascended to heavens. Sa`īdibn Jubayr and `Ubayd ibn `Umayr say that it is Allāh's Greatest Name, and through it did he (Jesus ﷺ) bring the dead back to life and perform those miracles to people.

Miracles of Jesus ﷺ

As-Suddi has said that when Jesus ﷺ was at his class, he used to tell his fellows what their parents were doing. He would tell one of them, “Go home and see that your family has eaten such-and-such food,” or “they have left such-and-such for you,” so he would go home and ask his parents to let him have it. The family would in turn ask him how he came to know about it, and he would say that Jesus ﷺ had told him. For this reason, the parents prohibited their children from having anything to do with Jesus ﷺ, telling them that he was a sorcerer. They once gathered them all together at a house, and Jesus ﷺ came and wanted to see them. When he asked who were confined inside the house, it was maliciously said to him, “Pigs.” He said, “So shall they be,” whereupon the door of the house was opened and indeed pigs came out of the house, and the news of the incident became widespread.

The Children of Israel felt fed up with Jesus ﷺ. They wanted to get rid of him. When his mother sensed the danger, she conveyed him on a donkey and went out to Egypt¹.

When Jesus and his mother ﷺ, came out wandering about in the land, they left the Children of Israel behind and came to a villager

¹The discreet reader realizes that reference to Egypt does not mean today's Egypt. We are talking not about now but about two thousand years ago. At that time, Egypt was a “superpower” that had extended its domination to a large part of its contemporary world. This statement means: “Mary ﷺ conveyed Jesus on a donkey and went out to the lands under Egypt's control.” Mary ﷺ was avoiding the brutality of the Romans and those who worked for them. Some parts of Palestine (Greater Syria) at that time fell under Egypt's control.

who hosted them and was very kind to them. The king during that time was a stubborn oppressor, so their host one day came back home looking very depressed. He entered his house while Mary عليها السلام was in his wife's company. Mary عليها السلام asked his wife why her husband looked so depressed, whereupon she said to her, "Our king compels every man to take care of feeding him and his soldiers and serve them wine; anyone who refused would be penalized. Today is our turn to host him, and we are not able to handle such a burden." Mary عليها السلام asked her to tell her husband not to worry, since he was kind to her and to her son, and that she would ask her son to invoke Allāh on his behalf, and that his invocation would alone be sufficient. Then Mary told Jesus عليه السلام of it, whereupon he said that if he were to do so, there would be some mischief [due to wine drinking]. "It does not matter," Mary عليها السلام said, "for he has surely been very kind to us." Then Jesus عليه السلام told his host to have his pots and containers filled with water, then to inform him once they were all full. The man did so, whereupon Jesus عليه السلام invoked his Lord and the water in the pots turned into meat and gravy, while the water in the containers turned into wine¹. People had never tasted anything like it before. When the king came, he and his men ate, and when he drank of that wine, he asked his host where he had obtained it from. When the man told the king where he had obtained it from, the king said to him, "The wine I am served at my palace is brought to me from that land, and it surely does not taste like this one." The host had to change his story, but the king pressured him to tell him the truth. Finally, the man gave up and said, "The truth is that there is, at my house, a child who is granted by Allāh the answer to any of his pleas, and he is the one who invoked Him to turn the water into wine."

¹This incident can be found narrated in the Bible. Some Christians find no harm in wine drinking, basing their argument on Jesus turning water into wine, but little do they consider the fact that Jesus never drank that particular wine at that particular time nor at any other time and we, Muslims, challenge them to prove otherwise. Prophets of God are not wine drinkers; sinners are.

It so happened that that king had a son whom he very much wished to succeed him as monarch, but that son had died only a few days ago. He loved him more than anyone else. The king said, “A man who invokes Allāh to turn water into wine and Allāh answers his plea is surely capable of bringing my son back to life.” Jesus ﷺ was brought to him, and he discussed the matter with him. Jesus ﷺ said to him, “Do not do that, for if he is brought back to life, a great deal of evil shall take place.” The king said, “I am not concerned about that after seeing him again.” Jesus ﷺ asked him, “If I bring him back to life, are you all going to leave me and my mother to go wherever we want?” The king said, “Yes.” Jesus ﷺ, therefore, invoked the Almighty Who did, indeed, bring that son back to life. When the king's subjects saw him, they rushed to grab their weapons and said, “This king has plundered our wealth and now wants to appoint his son as his successor over us so that he, too, will do what his father has been doing...” They fought among themselves. Jesus and his mother left them and continued their journey.

Another of his miracles is that he created out of clay birds, as Allāh Almighty tells us in the Holy Qur’ān, 3:49:

﴿أَنِّي قَدْ جِئْتُكُمْ بِآيَةٍ مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ أَنِّي أَخْلُقُ لَكُمْ مِّنَ الطِّينِ كَهَيْئَةِ الطَّيْرِ فَأَنْفُخُ فِيهِ فَيَكُونُ طَيْرًا بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ﴾

“... I have come to you with a sign from your Lord, that I determine for you out of mud like the form of a bird, then I breathe into it and it becomes a bird with Allāh's permission,” and in 5:110:

﴿وَإِذْ تَخْلُقُ مِنَ الطِّينِ كَهَيْئَةِ الطَّيْرِ بِإِذْنِي فَتَنْفُخُ فِيهَا فَتَكُونُ طَيْرًا﴾

“... and when you determined out of mud a thing like the form of a bird by My permission, then you breathed into it and it became a bird by My permission.”

Among his other miracles was his curing the leprous and those born blind, as Allāh Almighty has said,

﴿وَتُبْرِئُ الْأَكْمَةَ وَالْأَبْرَصَ بِإِذْنِي﴾

“... and you healed the [born] blind and the leprous by My permission” (Qur’ān, 5:110). The reason why these two ailments were particularly mentioned is due to the fact that nobody among the physicians of the time could find any cure for them. Jesus ﷺ lived during a time when medicine was considered the most prominent branch of knowledge, so he was able to demonstrate to them miracles in it which nobody else could.

Still another of his miracles was his bringing the dead back to life by the Permission of Allāh Who says,

﴿وَإِذْ تُخْرِجُ الْمَوْتَىٰ بِإِذْنِي﴾

“... and when you brought forth the dead [back to life] by My permission” (Qur’ān, 5:110). Among the dead whom he brought back to life was Lazarus (as he is called in Latin, a word which means “one helped by God,” or Eleazar in Hebrew), a friend of his. He, his sisters Martha and Mary were friends of Jesus ﷺ. His sister Mary ﷺ sent Jesus ﷺ a message saying that her brother had died three days ago. Some people suggested to her to escort them to his grave. She did, and it was inside a closed vault. Jesus ﷺ supplicated to his Lord saying, “Lord! Creator of the seven heavens and the seven earths! You have sent me to the Children of Israel to invite them to Your creed, and I have told them that I can bring the dead back to life with Your permission; therefore, do bring Eleazar back to life, O Lord!” Lazarus came back to life and got out of his grave on his own. He lived and even fathered a number of children. References to this incident exist in three of modern day's versions of the Gospels¹: Matthew, John, and Luke.

¹These Gospels have continuously been undergoing changes, editing, distortions, additions, deletions, linguistic variations, mistranslations, etc. due to errors in translation, sectarian biases and prejudices and other factors. The only Gospel accepted by Muslims as accurate is that of St. Barnabas, a Cypriot companion of St. Paul (originally Saul), which was not canonized by the Council of Nicaea of 325 A.D. That Council was called for by the Byzantine emperor Constantine I (288 - 337 A.D.), or

The son of an old woman was another. This story says that while touring the land in the company of his disciples, Jesus ﷺ passed by a city and said, "This city has a treasure; who among you would like to go and take it out?" They said, "O *Rūḥullāh* (spirit of Allāh)! No stranger enters this town without being murdered by its people." Jesus ﷺ said, "Stay here, all of you, till I come back." He went and entered it. He came to the door of a house and said, "*Assalāmo `Alaikum*, O residents of the house! This is a stranger asking you to feed him!" An old woman said to him, "Are you not satisfied with the fact that I do not go to the governor and tell him about you, yet you have the courage to ask for food?!" While Jesus ﷺ was thus standing at the door, her young son joined them. Jesus ﷺ said to him, "Please do host me tonight!" The young man repeated what his old mother had said. Jesus ﷺ then said to him, "But if you do host me, I will enable you to marry the king's daughter." The young man said, "You must be either a mad man or Jesus son of Mary!" Jesus said, "I am Jesus," whereupon he agreed to host him. He offered to let him stay there for the night. The next morning, he said to his host, "Go to the king's palace and tell him that you had come to ask for his daughter's hand. He will order to have you beaten and kicked out." The youth stood before the king and told him that he wished to ask him for his daughter's hand. The king ordered him to be beaten; he was beaten and kicked out.

The youth came back and told Jesus ﷺ what had happened, whereupon Jesus ﷺ said to him, "Tomorrow, go back and ask for his daughter's hand; what will happen to you will be different from what has happened to you today." The youth did as he was told, and

Constantine the Great, who built the Turkish city Constantinople in 330 A.D. to dedicate it to Jesus' mother, Virgin Mary ﷺ. Constantine's objective behind holding the Nicaea Conference was to settle the disputes among various Christian sects as to what constituted Christianity, but the said Conference created more problems than it solved. It was also boycotted by a number of Christian sects who did not endorse its decisions.

he was given a beating worse than the one he had received the day before. He told Jesus ﷺ about what had happened to him, and Jesus ﷺ said to him, "Go one more time back to him, for he will tell you that he will marry her to you on his own terms, and that his terms will be a gold and silver mansion with everything in it made of gold, silver and chrysolite. Tell him that you will do that. If he sends someone with you, you will find your quest, and do not say anything about it to him." The youth entered the king's palace for the third time and again approached the king regarding his marriage to his daughter. The king asked him, "Do you accept to pay her dowry if I decide it?" He asked him what the dowry was, and the king told him what Jesus had already told him to expect. He said, "Yes, I do; so send someone to see it." The king sent a number of men with him, and he did, indeed, show them what he had promised to, and people were quite impressed. The king married him to his daughter, and the youth found it hard to believe that he finally married into the royal family. He said to Jesus ﷺ, "O *Rūḥullāh*! How can you do all of this while you yourself look in such a (shabby) condition?!" Jesus ﷺ said, "I have preferred what will last to what will perish." The youth said to him, "I, too, am willing to abandon what perishes, and I desire to accompany you." He actually renounced this vanishing world and became a follower of Jesus ﷺ who took him by the hand and introduced him to his disciples. "This," said Jesus ﷺ, "is the treasure I had told you about!" The son of that old woman remained in the company of Jesus till he died. Jesus ﷺ passed by and saw his corpse lying in state on a bed, so he invoked Allāh and the dead man came back to life and sat on the edge of the bed. He was carried by other men from the bed and given clothes to wear. He put the carrier on his shoulders then went back home. He remained with his family and fathered a number of children.

Another miracle of Jesus ﷺ: He brought Sam son of Noah back to life. Jesus ﷺ was once describing the ark of Noah to his disciples when the latter asked him, "Is it possible that you bring to life one of those who were aboard it so that he may describe it for us?" Jesus ﷺ stood up and went to a hill, took a handful of its soil and said, "This is the grave of Sam son of Noah. If you wish, I can bring him

back to life for you.” They welcomed the idea, so he invoked Allāh by His Greatest Name **إِسْمُ اللَّهِ الْأَعْظَمِ**, struck the hill with his staff then said, “Come back to life by the Will of Allāh,” whereupon Sam came out of his grave with half of his hair looking gray. Immediately Sam inquired, “Has the Day of Judgment come?” Jesus **عليه السلام** said, “No, but I have called upon you in Allāh's Greatest Name.” During the time of Noah, old age never changed the color of people's hair; only during the time of Abraham did all of that start to change. Sam lived five hundred years maintaining his youthful look. He told them about the story of the ark. After that Jesus **عليه السلام** ordered him to die, and Sam responded with, “On one condition! That Allāh spares me the agony of death!” Jesus **عليه السلام** invoked Allāh and included Sam's wish in his invocation, and Allāh responded favorably to his plea.

Another of the miracles of Jesus **عليه السلام** was his walking on water. Jesus **عليه السلام** once went out on one of his trips accompanied by a short and faithful follower of his. When Jesus reached the sea¹, he said, “*Bismillah*, in health, and in conviction,” then he started walking on the water. The man was quite amazed and said to himself, “This is Jesus **عليه السلام**, the spirit of Allāh, walking on the water's surface!” Having inaudibly said so, he fell into the water. Fearing drowning, he sought help from Jesus who took hold of him and pulled him out. Jesus **عليه السلام** said to him, “O Shortie!² What did you say to yourself?!” He told him about it, whereupon Jesus **عليه السلام** said, “You placed yourself in a position in which Allāh did not place you; therefore, Allāh despised you for having said what you said; so, do regret and repent.” The man regretted and repented, so he went back to the status with which Allāh had blessed him. Thus did Jesus **عليه السلام** provide us with a lesson in piety and admonish us not to envy one another.

¹Most likely, this is the Sea of Galilee, or Tiberias (in Arabic *Baḥr Ṭabariyyah*) in northeast Palestine. During the lifetime of Jesus Christ **عليه السلام**, nine cities were flourishing on its shores. Some disciples of Christ **عليه السلام**, the fishermen, were from that area.

²Jesus Christ **عليه السلام** had a most beautiful and attractive conduct and a brilliant sense of humor. This quotation testifies to this fact.

Another tale says that Jesus ﷺ passed once by a man who used to sit quite often by a grave. He saw him doing so quite often; therefore, he decided to find out why. Jesus ﷺ came to him and said, "O servant of Allāh! I see that you spend a lot of time sitting by this grave." The man said, "O *Rūḥullāh*! This grave contains my wife's corpse, a woman of beauty and affinity, and I have a trust with her." He asked him, "Do you like that I pray Allāh and He brings her back to life for you?" The man warmly welcomed the suggestion. Jesus ﷺ made his ablution and offered two prostrations, then he invoked Allāh Almighty to bring the person inside that grave back to life. A coal-black man came out of the grave looking like a burnt stump of a tree. He asked him who he was, so he answered him by saying, "O *Rūḥullāh*! I am a man being tormented for the past forty years, and at this hour, it was said to me to respond to your call, so I did," adding, "O messenger of Allāh! I have seen so much torment that if Allāh ever returned me to this world, I would grant Him my covenant that I shall never disobey Him in anything; so, please do pray Allāh on my behalf." Jesus ﷺ felt sorry for him, and he invoked Allāh Almighty on his behalf, then he told him to go away, and he did. The man who used to frequently sit by the grave then said, "O messenger of Allāh! I have made a mistake about identifying this grave! Her grave is over there!" Jesus ﷺ invoked Allāh again, and a very beautiful young woman came out of the grave. Jesus ﷺ asked him, "Do you know her?" "Do I know her?!" the man retorted adding, "Of course I do! She is my wife." Jesus invoked Allāh to reunite her with her husband, and the latter took her by the hand till they came to a tree under which he slept, putting his head on her lap. The son of the king happened to pass by, and he looked at her and she looked at him, and they instantly admired each other. He beckoned to her, so she moved her husband's head away from her lap and followed the prince. Later, her husband woke up. He looked for her and could not find her, so he went out looking for her till he was able to get hold of her. He held her and said that she was his wife, while the prince kept saying that she was his bondmaid. As they argued thus, Jesus happened to pass by. The husband said to the prince that that man was Jesus. Having heard the husband tell his story, Jesus asked the woman, "What do you have to say?" She said, "I am the bondmaid of this man, and I do not know

the other.” Jesus said to her, “Give us back what we have given you.” She said, “I have done so,” falling dead. Jesus retorted, “Have you seen anything more strange than this?! A man whom Allāh caused to die as a disbeliever is brought back to life to believe, and a woman whom Allāh caused to die as a believer, then He brought life back to her, chose to disbelieve!”

The Table of Viands

Allāh Almighty has said,

﴿إِذْ قَالَ الْحَوَارِيُّونَ يَا عِيسَى ابْنَ مَرْيَمَ هَلْ يَسْتَطِيعُ رَبُّكَ أَنْ يُنْزِلَ عَلَيْنَا مَائِدَةً مِنَ السَّمَاءِ
قَالَ اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ﴾

The disciples said: O Jesus son of Mary! Will your Lord consent to send down to us food from heavens? He said: Be careful of (your duty to) Allāh if you are believers. (5:112)

What was that table all about? How was it sent down and what did it contain? These questions are answered differently by different people, each according to the extent of his knowledge or depth of his imagination! Qatādah has quoted Jabir quoting `Ammār ibn Yāsir citing the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ saying, “The table was sent down with bread and meat on it because they had asked Jesus for food to eat, and that it would not be exhausted. He said to them, ‘I shall do so, and it shall always come to you as long as you do not become malicious or betray (me), for in the latter case, you will be tormented.’ It was only one day after its descent upon them that they became malicious, and they betrayed (Jesus).”

Atā ibn Abū Rabāḥ¹ is quoted as citing Salmān al-Fārisi رحمه الله (the Persian) saying that Jesus never committed any wrong deed, nor did he rebuke an orphan, nor did he burst laughing, nor did he drive flies

¹Atā’ ibn Abū Rabāḥ (d. 114 A.H./732 A.D.) was a renown *tābi`i* who learned from the *ṣaḥāba* and reported *ḥadīth* from them. He was once the *mufti* of Mecca.

away from his face¹... When the disciples asked him to bring them Table of Viands, he said, as we are told in a Qur'ānic Chapter named after this Table: "al-Mā'ida":

﴿قَالَ عِيسَى ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ اللَّهُمَّ رَبَّنَا أَنْزِلْ عَلَيْنَا مَائِدَةً مِنَ السَّمَاءِ تَكُونُ لَنَا عِيداً لِأَوَّلِنَا وَآخِرِنَا وَآيَةً مِنْكَ وَارْزُقْنَا وَأَنْتَ خَيْرُ الرَّازِقِينَ﴾

"Lord! Do send down to us food from heavens to be for us an ever-recurring happiness, to the first of us and to the last, and a sign from You, and grant us means of subsistence, and You are the best of Providers" (Qur'ān, 5:114). A red table between two clouds, one above it and one underneath it, came descending upon them as they looked at it till it settled on the ground before them. Jesus wept and said, "Lord! I implore You to count me among those who are grateful to You! Lord! Make it a sign of mercy from You rather than one of penalty!" When they saw it, they found it something which they had never seen before, and similar to its fragrance they had never inhaled. Jesus said to them, "Whoever is most righteous in deeds among you should uncover it and mention the Name of Allāh over it then eat of it." Shemon (Simon) al-Safa said, "You are more fit to do so than any of us." Jesus stood up, made his ablution, offered lengthy prayers and kept weeping for quite some time. Then he removed the sheet that had covered it saying, *Bismillāh* (in the Name of Allāh), the best of sustainers." It was a roasted fish the scales and the bones of which had already been removed. So fat it was that it seemed as if it was floating over oil. At its head there was salt, and at its tail there was vinegar, and it was surrounded by many types of vegetables with the exception of leek. There were five loaves of bread on it. On the first of them there were olives. On the second there was honey. On the third there was oil, and on the fourth there was jerked meat. On the fifth there was cheese.

Simon said, "O *Rūḥullāh*! Is this earthly, or is it from the food of the afterlife?" Jesus said, "What you see is neither the food of the life of this world nor of that of the Hereafter. Rater, it is something which Allāh has innovated through His overwhelming Might; so, eat of

¹This is a figure of speech which means: "He never hurt anyone."

what you have asked for, and He will provide you with an increase of His favors.” They said, “O *Rūḥullāh!* Could you please show us a miracle derived from this one?” Jesus said, “O fish! Come back to life by the permission of Allāh!” The fish shook and its scales and bones came back to it, whereupon the disciples were frightened of it. Jesus asked them, “What is the matter with you that you ask for things which, when granted, you dislike?” Then he added, “How worried I am about you that you should ever be chastised! O fish! Go back to your former state by the permission of Allāh!” The fish resumed its former state, a roasted fish, just as they had seen it before. They said, “O *Rūḥullāh!* Be the first to eat of it, then we will eat after you.” Jesus said, “God forbid that I should eat of it; rather, those who asked for it shall eat of it.” But they were apprehensive of eating of it; so, Jesus invited the indigent, the sick, the leprous, and those afflicted with other ailments to come and eat of it. He said to them, “Eat of the sustenance of your Lord! Yours shall be the joy, and affliction shall be others' lot!” So they ate of it. As many as one thousand and three hundred men and women from among the poor, the sick, the handicapped, and those afflicted with ailments ate of it to their fill. Then Jesus looked at the fish, and it appeared just as it had come the first time from the heavens.

The table after that ascended as they looked on and disappeared. All those who were sick and ate of it were healed, and so were all those with permanent handicaps, and Allāh enriched of His favor the poor who partook of it till their death. The disciples regretted having missed the opportunity to eat of it, and so did those who could not. Whenever it descended, the young and the old, the men and the women, would crowd around it. It kept coming to them for forty days in the late morning and before noon. It would remain with them till they all had enough, then it would fly away before their very eyes. It used to come one day and skip another, just as the she-camel of the people of Thamūd. Allāh Almighty inspired Jesus to “Make My table and sustenance for the benefit of the poor rather than the rich,” so the rich were very displeased about that, so much so that they complained about it and they started casting doubt about the table, saying, “Do you believe that a table can really come down from the heavens?!” Jesus said to them, “Be prepared, then, to

receive the penalty of Allāh.”

Allāh Almighty inspired Jesus: “I have made two provisions regarding those who belie it. Those who disbelieve after I have sent it down will be tormented a torment with which I will not torment anyone else from among the people of the world.” Jesus, thereupon, said, as the Holy Qur’ān tells us,

﴿إِنْ تُعَذِّبُهُمْ فَإِنَّهُمْ عَبْدُكَ، وَإِنْ تُغْفِرْ لَهُمْ فَإِنَّكَ أَنْتَ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ﴾

“If You chastise them, surely they are Your servants, and if You forgive them, surely You are the Mighty, the Wise” (Qur’ān, 5:118). This contradicts the “guarantee” given by many Christian clergymen to Christians that Christ ﷺ washed away their sins with his blood, so they have nothing to worry about and, by implication, they can go on and commit any immorality or sin they wish since they are guaranteed to go to Heaven. This, from the Muslims’ viewpoint, is nothing but wishful thinking.

Christ turned three hundred men from among them, those who had spent their night in bed with their wives, into pigs running in the alleys and frequenting the places where garbage is collected, eating filth. When people saw that, they were alarmed, and they came to Jesus son of Mary ﷺ horrified. They wept over those of their families who were turned into pigs. When the pigs saw Jesus ﷺ, they wept and kept turning around him. Jesus ﷺ called them by their names, and they came, one by one, crying and nodding with their heads as he called out their names, unable to speak. They lived for three days, then they perished.

The Almighty Admonishes Jesus

Abū Busayr quotes Abū Abdullāh, Imām Ja`far aş-Şādiq ﷺ saying that the Almighty, Glory and Exaltation are His, admonished Jesus son of Mary ﷺ thus:

O Jesus! You are the Messiah by My command; you bring the dead back to life by My Word, so let your desire be My Pleasure, and be fearful of Me, for you shall find no refuge from Me except with Me.

O Jesus! I admonish you as one Who is Compassionate to you: Seek My mercy though I granted you authority, and seek whatever pleases Me, for blessed you are as a grown-up, and blessed you are as a child, wherever you may be. I testify that you are My servant and the son of My bondmaid. O Jesus! Let My status with you be your ultimate concern, and remember Me so that such remembrance will be treasured when you return to Me. Seek nearness to Me through optional (*nafl*) acts of worship; rely upon Me so that I may make you independent of others; do not rely on others else My Wrath should overtake you.

O Jesus! Be patient when tried, and be contented with your lot. Be as I would like you to be, and I would like to be pleased with you, for My pleasure is that I am obeyed and never disobeyed. O Jesus! Let your tongue ever mention My Name, and let your heart ever be filled with love for Me. O Jesus! Be aware in the times of heedlessness, and judge with beautiful wisdom seeking My Pleasure. O Jesus! Desire My Pleasure, fear My wrath, and kill your heart with fear of Me. O Jesus! Observe the night as means to seeking My Pleasure, and deprive yourself of water during your day seeking to treasure it for the Day when you will very much be in need of Me. O Jesus! Compete with others in the paths of goodness as much as you can so that you will be identified with goodness wherever you go. O Jesus! Judge among My servants as I have advised you, and effect My justice among them, for I have revealed to you that which heals the hearts from Satan's ailments. O Jesus! Do not sit with one who is tried with tribulations. O Jesus! What I say is the truth: No creature truly believes in Me except that he humbles himself to Me, and no creature feels awe of Me except that he is hopeful of My rewards. I, therefore, testify to you that such a person is secure against My punishment so long as you do not alter My way. O Jesus son of the righteous Virgin! Weep over your soul like one who bids his family farewell, who has no desire for this life, who leaves life for those who seek it, desiring only what is with Allāh.

O Jesus! Be, moreover, kind in speech, disseminating the greeting, awake when the eyes of the doers of good are asleep, being apprehensive of the Hereafter, of the tremendous quakes, of the horrors of the Day of Judgment when no family nor offspring nor wealth will be of any avail. O Jesus! Decorate your eyes with grief when the idle ones laugh. O Jesus! Be submissive and persevering,

for congratulations to you when you obtain what those who persevere shall receive. O Jesus! Live your life day by day, and taste what lost its taste, for the truth is what I say: You have only your hour and your moment, so derive lessons from the passage of time, and let what is coarse (of clothes) and what is most simple (of food) suffice you, for you have seen what your final destiny shall be, and that whatever you take and whatever you consume is already preordained. O Jesus! You shall be questioned, so have mercy on the weak just as I have been Merciful unto you, and do not cause any grief to the orphan.

O Jesus! Mourn your own soul when you perform your prayers, and let your feet take you to the places where prayers are held, and let Me hear the sweetness of your mentioning My Name, for I have treated you beautifully. O Jesus! How many nation have I caused to perish on account of a sin from which I protected you? O Jesus! Be kind to the weak, and raise your exhausted eyes to the sky and supplicate to Me, for I am near to you, and do not supplicate to Me except when you are pleading to Me, having one and only concern, for whenever you thus call upon Me, so shall I answer your call. O Jesus! I never wanted the life in this world to be the reward of those who preceded you nor a penalty to those against whom I sought revenge. O Jesus! You shall perish, whereas I shall always remain; from Me comes your sustenance, and with Me is the time of your death, and to Me is your return, and upon Me is your judgment; so, plead to Me and to none else so that your plea may be good, and so that I will be the One to answer it.

O Jesus! How numerous are people, yet how few are those who persevere! Trees are many, yet those that bear tasty fruit from among them are few; so do not let the beauty of a tree allure you till you taste of its fruit. O Jesus! Do not be allured by one who is rebellious against My wish; he eats My sustenance while worshipping someone else other than Me, then he calls upon Me at the moment of affliction, and I still respond to his call, then he goes back to what he used to do! Is it against Me that he rebels, or is he challenging My wrath? By My own Self do I swear that I shall take him in a way from which he shall have no recourse, nor shall he have any refuge. Where shall he flee? From My sky, or from My earth?! O Jesus! Tell the unjust ones from among the Children of Israel: Do not supplicate to Me as long as you harbor usury and the idols are at your homes, for I have sworn never to answer the prayer

of anyone who thus prays to Me, and that I shall make My answer to their prayers a curse upon them till they disperse. O Jesus! How beautiful is My patience and how beautiful is what I seek, yet people are heedless, returning not to Me! Words come out of their mouths without their hearts comprehending them till they become the object of My contempt, and till they try to please the believers seeking My pleasure.

O Jesus! Be merciful seeking mercy for others, and treat the servants as you wish them to treat you, and quite often remember death and separation from the family. Do not be distracted, for distraction corrupts, and do not be heedless, for the heedless are distant from Me, and remember Me with good deeds so that I may likewise remember you.

O Jesus! Seek My forgiveness after you commit any sin, and remind those who often return to Me of Me. Believe in Me, and seek nearness to Me by being near to those who believe in Me. Enjoin them to join you in supplicating to Me, and beware of the supplication of the oppressed one, for I took upon Myself to open for it a gate in the heavens, and that I shall answer his call even if it may be after a while. O Jesus! Be informed that the wrongdoer entices others, and that befriending the evildoer hurls one into the pit; so, know who your friend is before you befriend him, and choose for your own company brethren from among the believers. O Jesus! Repent to Me, for there is no sin too great for My forgiveness, and I am the most Merciful of those who have mercy. O Jesus! Perform acts of righteousness for your soul as long as you live and before time comes when none else can do so on your behalf, and worship Me for the sake of a Day as lengthy as a thousand years of your own reckoning, for I reward a good deed with ten-fold, and the sin stains the sinner. Compete with others in the doing of good deeds, for how many meetings adjourned with a safeguard from the fire!

O Jesus! Keep away from that which shall perish and cease to be, and visit the ruins of those who were before you: call upon them and ask them to respond to you; can you feel the presence of any of them at all? So seek wisdom from them, and be informed that you shall soon join their company together with those who soon will.

O Jesus! Tell whoever rebels and revolts and deceives to await My

punishment and to expect My annihilation; he shall be burnt among those who shall perish. Congratulations to you, O son of Mary, and many congratulations if you emulate the manners of your Lord Who, out of His Mercy, is Compassionate unto you, Who starts the giving out of His generosity, Who is always there for you during your each and every calamity. Do not disobey Him, O Jesus, for it is not lawful for you to disobey Him. I have taken a covenant from you just as I had taken it from those before you, and I am for that a Witness.

O Jesus! I have never granted My creation anything better than My religion, nor have I blessed them with anything better than My Mercy! O Jesus! Wash with water that which appears of your parts, and heal with good deeds those that do not, for to Me you shall surely return. O Jesus! I have granted you of My blessings an abundance without dreariness, and I have sought of you a loan for the goodness of your own soul, but you were too miser to do so, hence you may be one of those who perish. O Jesus! Decorate yourself with the decoration of faith, with love for the needy, and walk on earth gently, and perform your prayers on all the tracts of the earth, for they are all clean.

O Jesus! Be prepared, for whatever comes is near, and recite My Book when you are pure, and let Me hear you reciting it in a somber voice. O Jesus! There is no good in a pleasure which does not last, nor in life that will depart. O son of Mary! Had your eyes only seen what I have prepared for My good friends, your heart would have dissolved and your soul would have come out of your body in anxiety for it, for there is no home like the Hereafter where the righteous are neighbors of one another; angels near to Me visit them, and they are secure from the horrors of the Day of Judgment, a home wherein happiness never changes, nor does it ever depart from its people. O son of Mary! Compete for its sake with those who compete, for it is the desire of those who have a desire; it pleases those who see it. Congratulation to you, O son of Mary, if you are among those who work for it from among those who do so in the company of your fathers: Adam and Abraham, in the Gardens and felicity with which you do not wish to trade anything else at all and from which you never desire to be diverted; thus do I deal with the pious. O Jesus! Flee to Me with those who flee from a fire with flames, a fire with chains and torment; no rest shall there ever enter it, nor any of its torments shall be diminished; it is as though it were

pieces of pitched darkness. Whoever is saved from it is a winner, and none will be spared from it if he is written down among those who shall perish; it is the abode of the tyrants and oppressors and everyone who is rude and haughty, conceited and arrogant. O Jesus! Evil is the abode of those who feel comfortable with it, and evil, indeed, is the abode of the wrongdoers. I warn you against your own soul; so, take admonishment from Me.

O Jesus! Wherever you may be, you should be on your guard concerning Me, and testify that I created you, and you are My servant; I shaped you and to the earth sent you. O Jesus! No mouth can have two tongues, nor one chest can have two hearts, and such are the minds, too. O Jesus! Do not wake up in disobedience, and do not come to your senses finding yourself heedless, and wean yourself from desires that cause you to sin. Any desire that distances you from Me you should abandon, and be informed that you are to Me as a trusted messenger; so, be forewarned of Me, and be informed that your life shall in the end bring you back to Me, and that I shall take you with My knowledge. Be humble whenever My Name is mentioned, submissive of heart whenever you yourself mention Me, awake when the heedless sleep. O Jesus! This is My advice to you and My admonishment; so, take it from Me, for I am the Lord of the Worlds.¹

If you discern these exhortations, and if you compare them with what the Almighty admonished His prophet and messenger Moses عليه السلام or His Prophet and Messenger Muḥammed ﷺ, or any of His prophets and messengers, you will find a great deal of similarity between them. The Almighty is One and the same, and so is His Wisdom and Creed; so is His word. His speech is one and the same, praise be to Him. Very few, however, realize this simple and pristine fact.

Invocations by Jesus عليه السلام

Muḥammed, the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ, is quoted as saying that Jesus son of Mary عليه السلام was the first person to speak as an infant. He glorified the Almighty a good deal in a way no ear had ever heard

¹al-Majlisi, *Biḥār al-Anwār*, Vol. 14, pp. 289-293.

before, leaving no sun, nor moon, nor mountain, nor spring, without including it in his glorification. He said,

You are the One Who is near despite Your Sublimity, High in nearness, Above everything You have created. You are the One Who created seven [heavens] in the space by Your Words in complete level formations; in awe of You did they respond to Your call even when they were mere smoke, so they came in obedience to Your Command. In them are angels glorifying Your Holiness. And You made in them a light despite the blackness of the dark, and a light from the light of the sun during daytime. You made in them the thunder that glorifies Your praise; so, it is through Your Might that it came to shatter the darkness which You created. You made in them [stars as] lanterns whereby one seeks guidance when puzzled and lost. So Blessed be You, Lord, in the way You have raised the heavens, in the way You spread the earth, causing it to float above the water, holding it against the torrent of overwhelming sea waves, bringing all things to submit to You as they appeared. Their stiffness became softened through submission to You; their affairs submitted to Your Command; their waves surrendered to Your Greatness. You caused rivers following seas to gush forth, then You made small rivulets succeeded by brimful springs, then You brought out of the rivers and trees fruits, then You placed on the surface of the earth the mountains as pegs even above the water, and their stones and rocks submitted to You. So blessed be You, Lord! Who can ever be called as You are called, or who can ever reach Your status? You spread the clouds, free those in bondage, and affect equity, and You are the best of those who judge. There is no god but You; You ordered us to seek Your forgiveness for each and every sin of ours; there is no god but You; You have veiled the heavens from the (vision of the) people; there is no god but You; the wise among Your servants are the ones who fear You; we bear witness that You are not a god whom we invented, nor one whose worship comes to an end, nor is there any partner with You to call upon while forsaking You, nor to help You in creating anyone so that we might suspect Your having created us. We testify that You are the One and Only One, on Whom all depend, the One Who does not beget, nor is He begotten, and none at all is like Him.

Supplication by Jesus ﷺ Whereby he Brought the Dead Back to Life
As regarding his supplication whereby he used to cure the sick and

bring the dead back to life, it was as follows:

Lord! You are the Lord of those in the heavens and those on earth; there is no god in them except You. You are the Omnipotent in the heavens and the Omnipotent on earth; there is no Omnipotent in them except You. You are the King of those in the heavens and the King of those on earth; there is no king in them except You. You are the Judge of those in the heavens and the Judge of those on earth; there is no judge in them except You. Your Might on earth is the same as it is in the heavens; Your Authority on earth is the same as it is in the heavens; I plead to You by Your Glorious Attributes, for You can do anything at all.

And here is another supplication of his for the kind reader:

Lord! I have dawned unable to avoid what I hate to face; I do not have the benefit of what I wish to have, and the decision is out of my hands. I have become pawned by my deeds, so none is more in need than I am. Lord! I invoke You not to make my foe feel pleased at my own expense, nor a friend of mine to think ill of me, and do not cause me to undergo a catastrophe related to my creed, and do not make the life of this world the greatest of my concerns, and do not place me at the mercy of one who will have no mercy on me, O ever-Living One, O self-Sustaining!

Was Jesus ﷺ Crucified?

Sa'īd ibn Jubayr is quoted as having cited Ibn `Abbās as saying that when Allāh wanted to raise Jesus ﷺ to heaven, Jesus ﷺ went out to meet his followers at a house where all his twelve disciples assembled. He went out to them from a well in the house and his hair was dripping with water. He said, "Among you are those who will disbelieve in me twelve times even after having believed in me." Then he added, "Which one of you agrees to look like me and be killed in my place and enjoy the status reserved for me with my Lord?" Their youngest stood up, but Jesus told him to sit down. He repeated the question to them, and the same young man stood up again, whereupon Jesus ﷺ said, "Then you shall be the one." He immediately was made to look just like Jesus, then Jesus was raised

to heaven. The Jews¹ came and took the disciple who looked just like Jesus ﷺ, killed him, then crucified him; thus, some of them disbelieved in him twelve times after having believed in him, and they were divided into three sects: One of the sects said that God was among them, then He ascended to heaven. These are the Jacobites². The other sect said that “the son of God” stayed with them as long as God willed, then God raised him up to Him, and they are called the Nestorians³. The third sect said that “the servant

¹According to the distorted story of Jesus ﷺ, soldiers of the Roman empire (which then ruled Palestine) crucified Jesus ﷺ. Muslims believe that: 1) The Jews, not the Romans, crucified a man thinking that he was Jesus ﷺ, that the plot against him was not politically but religiously motivated; 2) The real Jesus ﷺ was not crucified but was raised to heaven and is still alive. He will come back near the end of life on this planet to fight those who distorted his message. There are millions of Christians who believe in this second coming of Jesus ﷺ, but they, as usual, differ among themselves as to how it will be. Some claim that Jesus ﷺ will not come back in person, whereas other Christians believe that his second coming means nothing but a revival of his faith...

²Named after Jacob Baradaeus, this sect of Christianity spread in the 6th century throughout Syria, Iraq, and India. Its views sharply contradict those held by Roman Catholics and by the Orthodox. Its head is the patriarch of Antioch (at Syrian Homs), and it uses Syriac as its sacred language. Christ spoke (Northwest Semitic) Aramaic. Syriac is an Aramaic language, a dialect of the Semitic subfamily of Afro-Asiatic languages. Some Syrian Christians still speak Aramaic even this day and time. The first and authentic Bible was written in Jesus' mother tongue, Aramaic, but it was lost... Greater Syria, by the way, used to be called the land of Aram, hence Aramaic means “the language spoken in Aram.” It is named after Aram, a descendant of Nahor, grandfather of Prophet Abraham (Ibrāhīm) ﷺ. Its capital, Damascus, is one of the most ancient cities in the world. It dates back to 3000 B.C., hence it is now more than five thousand years old.

³They are named after Nestorius, 5th century patriarch of Constantinople. Followers of this Church reject the labeling of Virgin Mary, mother of Christ ﷺ, as “the Mother of God,” saying that she bore Jesus ﷺ as a man. It flourished in Syria and ancient Persia, and one of its adherents, Nestor (which could either be his first name or a reference to his being

of Allāh¹ and His messenger” remained among them for as long as Allāh willed, then Allāh raised him up to Him, and these are the Muslims. Both previous sects collaborated against the Muslim one, wiping the latter out. Islam, hence, remained hidden, obscure, forgotten, till Allāh sent Prophet Muḥammed ﷺ to revive it.

Allāh Almighty has said,

﴿ذَلِكَ عِيسَى ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ قَوْلَ الْحَقِّ الَّذِي فِيهِ يَمْتَرُونَ ﴿٥١﴾ مَا كَانَ لِلَّهِ أَنْ يَتَّخِذَ مِنْ وَلَدٍ سُبْحَانَهُ إِذَا قَضَىٰ أَمْرًا فَإِنَّمَا يَقُولُ لَهُ كُنْ فَيَكُونُ ﴿٥٢﴾ وَإِنَّ اللَّهَ رَبِّي وَرَبُّكُمْ فَاعْبُدُوهُ هَذَا صِرَاطٌ مُسْتَقِيمٌ ﴿٥٣﴾ فَاخْتَلَفَ الْأَحْزَابُ مِنْ بَيْنِهِمْ فَوَيْلٌ لِلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِنْ مَّسْهَدٍ يَوْمٍ عَظِيمٍ﴾

“Such is Jesus son of Mary; (this is) the saying of truth about which they dispute². It does not befit Allāh to take to Himself a son; Glory to Him; when He decrees a matter, He only says to it: ‘Be!’ and it is. And surely Allāh is my Lord and your Lord; therefore; worship Him; this is the right path. But parties from among them disagreed with one another, so woe unto those who disbelieve because of their presence on a great Day” (Qur’ān, 19:34-37).

Nestorian), met young Prophet Muḥammed ﷺ when he was in the company of his uncle Abū Ṭālib on a business trip to Syria. Salmān al-Fārisi رحمه الله, one of Prophet Muḥammed's early disciples and traditionists, had converted from Zoroastrianism to Nestorianism then to Islam.

¹Notice that I did not use the word “Allāh” for the previous sects. This is due to the fact that those sects did not have the correct concept of the Almighty. The word “Allāh” here refers to the complete and perfect concept of God. Refer to my book titled *Allāh: The Concept of God in Islam* for more details about why Muslims worldwide prefer to use the word “Allāh” to refer to the Almighty rather than any other word in any language, including their own.

²Christians have been disputing with one another about Jesus Christ and will continue doing so till the end of time. Some of them went as far in their apostasy as charging him of being homosexual..., *Astaghfirullāh* (I seek refuge with Allāh). Some Christian “churches” in the United States and other Western countries have been solemnizing same-sex “marriages”: “Men” marry men or “women” marry women... What will they do next?!

Abū Sāliḥ, Shu'ayb ibn Muḥammed al-Bayhaqī, through his chain of narrators, has informed us that the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ had said, “Prophets are brothers of one another: their mothers may be different, but their creed is one (and the same). I am the most worthy of Jesus son of Mary عليه السلام, because there is no prophet separating me from him (chronologically). The son of Mary عليه السلام is about to be sent to you as a just judge, and he shall come to my nation and be my *khalīfa* over them; so, if you see him, you will find him square of face, his complexion is reddish white, his hair is straight as though it drips while not being wet at all. He shall come down between two scepters to smash the cross, kill the pig, enforce the *jizya* (protection tax), receive the funds (religious taxes) and make the pilgrimage or the *umra* or both, and he will fight people in the defense of Islam, so much so that all creeds will be vanquished except Islam, and everyone will prostrate to Allāh, the Lord of the World, and Allāh will annihilate during his time the lying anti-Christ. Security shall prevail over the earth to the extent that lambs will graze side by side with lions, tigers with cattle, and wolves with sheep. Children will play with snakes, and neither will harm the other. After that, he shall remain on earth for forty years. He shall marry and have children, then he shall die and the Muslims shall perform the funeral prayers for him and bury him in Medīna.”

Ḥussain ibn Aḥmed ibn Muḥammed ibn `Ali, through his chain of narrators, quotes Ibn `Abbās citing the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ saying, “How shall Allāh annihilate a nation in whose vanguard is myself, and among whose last generation is Jesus عليه السلام, while al-Mahdi عليه السلام is in its midst?”

After Jesus: The “Son of God” and “The Trinity”

Jesus Christ عليه السلام never claimed to be the “son of God,” nor did he ever say that he was God. The concept of the Trinity (God the father, God the son, and the Holy Spirit) was foreign to Christianity for about three hundred years. Anyone who conducts a research to find out how this concept crept into the Christian faith will conclude that it is one of several Pagan concepts that somehow found their way to Christianity, the faith not of Christ but of his disciples barring St.

Barnabas. A small number of Biblical scholars testify to this fact. Let us read what one of them says:

There is ample evidence in the Bible that the Israelites had always regarded Yahweh (Jehovah) as the Creator of all. Another original characteristic of the Israelite God was that He stood alone, without any family connections, whether consort, son or daughter.¹ This concept agrees with Islam's concept of God. There are many similarities in beliefs between Judaism and Islam and also between Christianity and Islam. All these three religions are regarded as the world's greatest. Islam calls the followers of Christianity and Judaism أهل الكتاب, *ahl al-kitāb*, People of the Book, because divine books were revealed to them, books which suffered a great deal of alteration and distortion. Despite such alteration and distortion, both Christianity and Judaism are very highly respected in Islam, yet the followers of these creeds seldom show respect for Islam and Muslims, and these days many of them attack Islam and Muslims in the most vicious way.

Such "Israelites" include the Prophets of Jesus عليه السلام. Another scholar, Col. J. Garnier, clearly points out to the fact that Pagan gods have incorporated three deities in one god. So is the concept of the Trinity.

It is of importance to notice first that all the various gods and goddesses of the ancients, though known by many names and different characteristics, can yet all be resolved into one of the persons of a Trinity composed of a father, mother and son; and that this fact was well known to the initiated. It should also be observed that the father and the son constantly melt into one; the reason being that there was also a fabled incarnation of the son who, although identified with him, was yet to be his own son by the goddess.²

¹William F. Albright, *From the Stone Age to Christianity*, Doubleday & Co., Inc., Garden City, New York, 1957, p. 261.

²Col. J. Garnier, *The Worship of the Dead*, Chapman & Hall, Ltd., 1904, p. 12.

We will not discuss the Trinity here but will instead concentrate on the concept of Jesus ﷺ as the “son of God,” a concept more emphasized by St. John than any other disciple, that is to say, if we regard these authors of the Gospels as disciples of Jesus Christ ﷺ. St. John's Gospel has since the dawn of Christianity been the subject of controversy, debate, and discussion, and it still stands out as quite different from all other Gospels. The credibility of what St. John wrote in his Gospel is doubted by numerous scholars of the Bible in the past and in the present:

I do not think the writer [St. John] distinguished in his own consciousness between what he remembered (or had derived from the reminiscences of others) and what he felt must have been true, and I greatly doubt whether we can distinguish often in that Gospel what is derived from tradition and what is derived from imagination.¹

In the Pagan theology of the fertility cult, that is, of agricultural propagation, the god is said to be incarnated as his own son to walk upon the earth in human form and be slain and resurrected as the personification of the harvest and plant life. This same Pagan theme occurs in John 1:14 where we read the following: “And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the father), full of grace and truth.” This clearly reflects the fact that St. John was fully knowledgeable of Pagan doctrines to the extent that he sometimes borrowed his themes from them. We can go on and on highlighting the sharp differences between the Gospel of St. John and those of the other Saints, but this will be an undertaking that will surely be laborious and exhaustive. Let us, instead, read the following from the only true though “unofficial” Gospel:

Jesus ﷺ departed from Jerusalem after the Passover, and entered

¹*History of Christianity in the Light of modern Knowledge, A Collective Work*, p. 209.

into the borders of Caesarea Philippi¹. There the angel Gabriel having told him of the sedition which was beginning among the common people, he asked his disciples, saying, "What do men say of me?" They said, "Some say you are Elijah, others Jeremiah, and others one of the old prophets."

Jesus ﷺ asked, "And you, what do you say that I am?" Peter answered, "You are Messiah, Son of God." Then Jesus was angry and rebuked him, saying, "Begone and depart from me, because you are the Devil and seek to cause me offence!" And he threatened the eleven, saying, "Woe to you if you believe this, for I have won from God a great curse against those who believe this." And he was ready to cast away Peter, but the eleven besought Jesus for him, who did not cast him away, but again rebuked him, saying, Beware that you never again say such words, because God would reprobate you."

Peter wept and said, "Sir, I have spoken foolishly. Beseech God that He pardons me."

Then said Jesus, "If our God willed not to show himself to Moses His servant, nor to Elijah whom he also loved, nor to any prophet, do you think that God should show Himself to this faithless generation? But know you not that God has created all things of nothing with one single word, and all men have had their origin out of a piece of clay? Now, how shall God have a likeness to man? Woe to those who suffer themselves to be deceived of Satan!"

And having said this, Jesus besought God for Peter, the eleven and Peter weeping, and saying, "So be it. O blessed Lord our God."

Afterward Jesus departed and went into Galilee in order that this vain opinion which the common folk began to hold concerning him might be extinguished. (The Gospel of Barnabas 70)

This agrees with what we, Muslims, have in our Book, the Holy Qur'ān, where Christ ﷺ will on the Day of Judgment deny having required people to worship him and his mother besides the One and Only God:

¹Caesarea Philippi is an area in north Palestine at the foot of Mt. Hermon built by Philip the Tetrarch.

Allāh will say (on the Day of Judgment):

﴿وَإِذْ قَالَ اللَّهُ يَا عِيسَى ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ أَأَنْتَ قُلْتَ لِلنَّاسِ اتَّخِذُونِي وَأُمِّي إِلَهَيْنِ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ؟ قَالَ سُبْحَانَكَ مَا يَكُونُ لِي أَنْ أَقُولَ مَا لَيْسَ لِي بِحَقٍّ، إِنْ كُنْتُ قُلْتُهُ فَقَدْ عَلِمْتَهُ، تَعْلَمُ مَا فِي نَفْسِي وَلَا أَعْلَمُ مَا فِي نَفْسِكَ، إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ عَلَّامُ الْغُيُوبِ﴾

O Jesus son of Mary! Did you say to men: Take me and my mother for two gods besides God? He will say: Glory to You! It did not befit me to say what I had no right to say; had I said it, You would indeed have known it; You know what is in my mind, and I do not know what is in Your mind; surely You are the great One Who knows the unseen. (5:116)

In fact, the Holy Qur’ān strongly condemns those who attribute godhead to Jesus or call him “the son of God,” labelling them as apostates, disbelievers in Him:

﴿لَقَدْ كَفَرَ الَّذِينَ قَالُوا إِنَّ اللَّهَ هُوَ الْمَسِيحُ ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ وَقَالَ الْمَسِيحُ يَا بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ اعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ رَبِّي وَرَبَّكُمْ إِنَّهُ مَنْ يُشْرِكْ بِاللَّهِ فَقَدْ حَرَّمَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ الْجَنَّةَ وَمَأْوَاهُ النَّارُ وَمَا لِلظَّالِمِينَ مِنْ أَنْصَارٍ ﴿١٣٠﴾ لَقَدْ كَفَرَ الَّذِينَ قَالُوا إِنَّ اللَّهَ ثَالِثُ ثَلَاثَةٍ وَمَا مِنْ إِلَهٍ إِلَّا إِلَهٌ وَاحِدٌ وَإِنْ لَمْ يَنْتَهُوا عَمَّا يَقُولُونَ لَيَمَسَّنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِنْهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ ﴿١٣١﴾ أَفَلَا يَتُوبُونَ إِلَى اللَّهِ وَيَسْتَغْفِرُونَهُ وَاللَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ ﴿١٣٢﴾ مَا الْمَسِيحُ ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ إِلَّا رَسُولٌ قَدْ خَلَتْ مِنْ قَبْلِهِ الرُّسُلُ وَأُمُّهُ صَدِيقَةٌ كَانَا يَأْكُلَانِ الطَّعَامَ انْظُرْ كَيْفَ نُبَيِّنُ لَهُمُ الْآيَاتِ ثُمَّ انْظُرْ أَنَّى يُؤْفَكُونَ﴾

“Certainly they disbelieve those who say: Surely God is the Messiah son of Mary, and the Messiah (himself) said: O Children of Israel! I worship God, my Lord and your Lord. Surely whoever associates (others) with God, then God has forbidden him from (entering) the garden, and his abode is the fire, and there shall be no helpers for the unjust. Certainly they disbelieve those who say: Surely God is the third (person) of the three¹; and there is no god but the One God, and if they do not desist from what they say, a painful chastisement

¹This is the Almighty's reference to the concept of the Trinity. Advocates of the Trinity claim that the God exists in three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

shall befall those among them who disbelieve. Will they not then turn to God and His forgiveness? And God is Forgiving, Merciful. The Messiah son of Mary is but a prophet; prophets before him have indeed passed away, and his mother was a truthful woman; they both used to eat food. See how We make the Signs clear to them, then behold how they are turned away (from the right track)!” (5:72-75).

Notice reference in the verses above to both Mary and Jesus ﷺ eating food. The implication is that they were both humans who needed to sustain their bodies with food just like all other humans. Also by implication, they both did what all other humans do to get rid of bodily waste. This strongly emphasizes their human nature.

Allāh Almighty has also said the following Qur’ānic verses in this regard:

﴿وَقَالَتِ الْيَهُودُ عِزَّىٰرُ بْنُ اللَّهِ وَقَالَتِ النَّصَارَى الْمَسِيحُ ابْنُ اللَّهِ ذَلِكَ قَوْلُهُمْ بِأَفْوَاهِهِمْ يُضَاهَوْنَ قَوْلَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِنْ قَبْلُ قَاتِلْهُمْ اللَّهُ أَنَّى يُؤْفَكُونَ﴾

“The Jews say: Uzair¹ is the son of Allāh, and the Christians say: The Messiah is the son of Allāh; these are the words of their mouths;

¹“Uzair” is Arabic for Hebrew Ezra. This is the only verse in the Holy Qur’ān where such a reference is made. Who is this alleged Jewish “son of God”? After the Babylonian conquest of Jerusalem in 597 B.C. at the hands of Nebuchadnezzar, then king of the neo-Babylonian Empire and builder of the famous Hanging Gardens of Babylon, the Torah was lost. Since there was none who remembered the law when the Jews returned from captivity, God raised up Ezra from the dead a hundred years after his death. When the Jews saw him thus raised from the dead, they said he must be the son of God. This is the contested view of some scholars. This raising from the dead is confused with another incident which actually took place to someone else and which is narrated in the Holy Qur’ān in 2:261. It involves Bal’am (Balam) ibn Ba’ūr, a learned Israelite, who passed by a dead town (some say Antioch or one of its suburbs) and wondered how God would bring it back to life. The Almighty caused him to die then raised him back to life to see for himself that He can do anything at all.

they imitate the saying of those who disbelieved before; may Allāh destroy them; how they are turned away!” (9:30)

﴿يَا أَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ لَا تَغْلُوا فِي دِينِكُمْ وَلَا تَقُولُوا عَلَى اللَّهِ إِلَّا الْحَقَّ إِنَّمَا الْمَسِيحُ عِيسَى ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ وَكَلِمَتُهُ أَلْقَاهَا إِلَى مَرْيَمَ وَرُوحٌ مِنْهُ فَآمِنُوا بِاللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ وَلَا تَقُولُوا ثَلَاثَةً انْتَهُوا خَيْرًا لَكُمْ إِنَّمَا اللَّهُ إِلَهٌ وَاحِدٌ سُبْحَانَهُ أَنْ يَكُونَ لَهُ وَلَدٌ لَهُ مَا فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَكَفَى بِاللَّهِ وَكِيلًا ﴿٣٠﴾ لَنْ يَسْتَنْكِفَ الْمَسِيحُ أَنْ يَكُونَ عَبْدًا لِلَّهِ وَلَا الْمَلَائِكَةُ الْمُقَرَّبُونَ وَمَنْ يَسْتَنْكِفْ عَنْ عِبَادَتِهِ وَيَسْتَكْبِرْ فَسَيَحْشُرُهُمْ إِلَيْهِ جَمِيعًا ﴿٣١﴾ فَأَمَّا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ فَيُوَفِّيهِمْ أُجُورَهُمْ وَيَزِيدُهُمْ مِنْ فَضْلِهِ وَأَمَّا الَّذِينَ اسْتَنْكَفُوا وَاسْتَكْبَرُوا فَيُعَذِّبُهُمْ عَذَابًا أَلِيمًا وَلَا يَجِدُونَ لَهُمْ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ وَلِيًّا وَلَا نَصِيرًا﴾

O People of the Book! Do not exceed the limits in your religion, and do not speak (lies) against Allāh, but (speak) the truth; the Messiah son of Mary is only a prophet of Allāh and His Word which He communicated to Mary and a spirit from Him; believe, therefore, in Allāh and in His prophets, and do not say Three. Desist, it is better for you; Allāh is only One God: far be it from His Glory that He should have a son; whatever in the heavens and in the earth is His, and Allāh is sufficient for a Protector. The Messiah does by no means disdain that he should be a servant of Allāh, nor do the angels who are near to Him, and whoever disdains His service and is proud, He will gather them all together to Him. As for those who believe and do good deeds, He will pay them fully their rewards and give them more out of His Grace; as for those who disdain and are proud, He will chastise them with a painful chastisement. And they shall not find for themselves besides Allāh a guardian or a helper. (4:171-173)

﴿إِنْ مَثَلٌ عِيسَى عِنْدَ اللَّهِ كَمَثَلِ آدَمَ خَلَقَهُ مِنْ تُرَابٍ ثُمَّ قَالَ لَهُ كُنْ فَيَكُونُ﴾

Surely the likeness of Jesus is with Allāh as the likeness of Adam: He created him from dust then said to him: Be! and he was. (3:59)

﴿الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي أَنْزَلَ عَلَى عَبْدِهِ الْكِتَابَ وَلَمْ يَجْعَلْ لَهُ عِوَجًا ﴿١﴾ قَيِّمًا لِيُنْذِرَ بَأْسًا شَدِيدًا مِنْ لَدُنْهُ وَيُبَشِّرَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ الَّذِينَ يَعْمَلُونَ الصَّالِحَاتِ أَنَّ لَهُمْ أَجْرًا حَسَنًا ﴿٢﴾ مَا كَثُرَتْ فِيهِ آيَاتٌ ﴿٣﴾ وَيُنْذِرَ الَّذِينَ قَالُوا اتَّخَذَ اللَّهُ وَلَدًا ﴿٤﴾ مَا لَهُمْ بِهِ مِنْ عِلْمٍ وَلَا لِآبَائِهِمْ كَبُرَتْ كَلِمَةً تَخْرُجُ مِنْ أَفْوَاهِهِمْ إِنْ يَقُولُونَ إِلَّا كَذِبًا﴾

All praise is due to Allāh Who revealed the Book to His servant (Muḥammed) and did not make in it any crookedness, rightly directing, so that he might give warning of a severe punishment from Him and give glad tidings to the believers who do good deeds that they shall have a goodly reward (Paradise), staying in it forever. And warn those who say: Allāh has taken a son. They have no knowledge of it, nor had their fathers; a grievous word it is that comes out of their mouths; they speak nothing but a lie. (18:1-5)

﴿قَالُوا اتَّخَذَ اللَّهُ وَلَدًا، سُبْحَانَهُ هُوَ الْغَنِيُّ، لَهُ مَا فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ، إِنْ عِنْدَكُمْ مِنْ سُلْطَانٍ بِهَذَا؟ أَتَقُولُونَ عَلَى اللَّهِ مَا لَا تَعْلَمُونَ؟﴾ قُلْ: إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَفْتَرُونَ عَلَى اللَّهِ الْكَذِبَ لَا يُفْلِحُونَ ﴿مَتَاعٌ فِي الدُّنْيَا ثُمَّ إِلَيْنَا مَرْجِعُهُمْ ثُمَّ نُذِيقُهُمُ الْعَذَابَ الشَّدِيدَ بِمَا كَانُوا يَكْفُرُونَ﴾

They say: Allāh has taken a son! Glory to Him; He is the self-Sufficient; His is whatever in the heavens and in the earth; you have no authority for this; do you say against Allāh what you do not know? Say: Those who forge a lie against Allāh shall not be successful. (It is only) a provision in this world, then to Us shall be their return, then shall We make them taste a severe punishment because they disbelieved. (10:68-70)

﴿وَمَكَرُوا وَمَكَرَ اللَّهُ وَاللَّهُ خَيْرُ الْمَاكِرِينَ﴾ إِذْ قَالَ اللَّهُ يَا عِيسَى ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ اذْكُرْ مَا كُنْتَ عَمَلًا مَحْسُودًا ﴿إِنِّي مُتَوَفِّيكَ وَرَافِعُكَ إِلَيَّ وَمُطَهِّرُكَ مِنَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَجَاعِلُ الَّذِينَ اتَّبَعُوكَ فَوْقَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا إِلَى يَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ ثُمَّ إِلَيَّ مَرْجِعُكُمْ فَأَحْكُمُ بَيْنَكُمْ فِيمَا كُنْتُمْ فِيهِ تَخْتَلِفُونَ﴾

And they planned and Allāh (also) planned, and Allāh is surely the best of planners. And Allāh said: O Jesus! I am going to terminate the period of your stay (on earth) and cause you to ascend unto Me and purify you of (the charges of) those who disbelieve and make those who follow you above those who disbelieve till the Day of Resurrection; then to Me shall be your return, so I shall decide between you concerning that in which you differed. (3:54-55)

In the following verses, which are quoted on previous pages, the Almighty starts by chastising the Jews then the Christians:

Therefore, for the breaking of their covenant and their disbelief in

the Signs of Allāh and their killing the prophets wrongfully and their saying: Our hearts are covered. Nay! Allāh set a seal upon them because of their disbelief, so they shall not believe except a few. And for their disbelief, and for their having uttered against Mary a grievous calumny. And (for) their saying: Surely we have killed the Messiah Jesus son of Mary, the prophet of Allāh, and they did not kill him, nor did they crucify him, but it appeared to them so, and most surely those who differ therein are only in a doubt about it; they have no knowledge in its regard but only follow conjecture, and surely they did not kill him at all. Nay! Allāh took him up to Him, and Allāh is Mighty, Wise. And there is not one of the People of the Book but most certainly believes in this before his death, and on the Day of Resurrection he (Jesus) shall be a witness against them. (4:155-159)

When Qur'ānic texts such as these agree with what St. Barnabas had written in his Gospel, the truth will shine, but how many sincere seekers of the truth are there in our world?

Finally, is it Christianity or Paganism?

Is Today's form of Christianity really the creed revealed by the Almighty to Jesus son of Mary ﷺ, or is it a revival of ancient Paganism? This question may raise some eyebrows, and it may wake up a drowsy reader, but it is a question quite valid and relevant. If one traces pagan doctrines, he will be struck with similarities between what the pagans used to practice (and some still do) and what today's Christians practice at their churches. The traces of paganism in Christianity can be seen in: 1) the concept of Christ as the "son of God," 2) the Trinity, 3) the Incarnate Saviour, 4) the Second Advent, 4) the Virgin Birth, 5) the Sacraments, and 6) the Communion of Saints. You can also add to this list the organized order of saints, the choir (an offspring of the pagan chorus), the singing and dancing..., etc. All these are very well known practices of paganism in various parts of the world and by various cultures. Were we to discuss each one of them, we would need not one but many volumes; so, let us be contented with discussing the most important of all of them: the concept of Jesus Christ ﷺ as the "son of God."

This concept is directly linked to the pagan “sun god,” or god of the sun, hence Sunday¹, the day when the sun god, in his various names and attributes, is worshipped. If we study these sun gods, we will see the link between their worship and the concept of Jesus Christ ﷺ as the “son of God.”²

When Jesus Christ came to this world, sun worship was a religion that prevailed throughout the world. Well known sun gods whose worship had been popular throughout the Mediterranean countries at one time or another are: Attis of Phrygia (central Asia Minor), Adonis of Syria, Dionysius or Bacchus of Greece, Bel (or Bāl) of Babylon, Osiris and Horus of Egypt, and Ithras or Mithra of Persia. Here is a brief account of these sun gods, one from which the reader can see the link between these “sun gods” and the “son of God” concept introduced into the Christian faith and officially endorsed at the Nicaea Conference referred to above:

Attis

He was born of a virgin named Nana and was regarded as the “only begotten son” and “saviour”. He was bled to death on March 24th at the foot of a pine tree and his votaries believed that his blood had renewed the fertility of the earth and thus brought a new life to humanity. He, however, rose from the dead, and his resurrection along with his death was celebrated by his votaries. Every year on the 24th day of March, they would first fasten his image to a pine tree and then lay it in a tomb with wailing mourning. On the next day,

¹According to *The Columbia Viking Desk Encyclopedia*, early Christians observed the first day of the week (Monday) as their Sabbath “in commemoration of the Resurrection.” Some sects, such as Seventh-Day Baptists, have reverted to Saturday. “Monday,” by the way, was the Babylonian day when the moon—hence moon-day, Monday—was worshipped. Saturday was “Saturn's day,” the day when Saturn, god of the harvest, was to be worshipped. This is another proof of the pagan roots in Christianity.

²In the text to follow, I have benefitted from Fazlul-Rahmān Anṣārī's great book *Islam and Christianity in the Modern World*.

they would find the tomb empty and celebrate the resurrection with great rejoicing. Sacramental meal and baptism of blood were special features of his “church.”

Adonis or Tammuz

Adonis was a young man loved by the goddess Aphrodite. When he was killed by a wild boar, goes on the legend, Aphrodite persuaded the gods to let him live for six months of each year. His death and resurrection, hence, were celebrated in midsummer festival in Adonia, Greece, symbolizing yearly growth and decay. He was the virgin-born “saviour” of Syria. He suffered death for the redemption of mankind but rose again in the Spring. His resurrection was commemorated by a great annual festival. The Old Testament, in Izekiel, viii:14, refers to the weeping and wailing of women over his idol. On p. 113, Vol. 2, of *Mythology of the Aryan Nations*, Rev. Sir G.W. Cox calls him the crucified Tao (that is, divine love personified). In his *Hebrew Lexicon*, Dr. Parkhurst remarks: “I find myself obliged to refer Tammuz to that class of idols which were originally designed to represent the promised Saviour [meaning Jesus ﷺ], the desire of all nations.”

Dionysius or Bacchus

God of wine, he was the “only begotten son” of Jupiter and was born of a virgin named Demeter (or Semele) **on December 25th...** Christians celebrate Christmas, the supposed birth of Christ, on December 25th. He was a “redeemer, liberator and saviour.” “It is I,” says Bacchus to mankind, “who guide you; it is I who protect you and who save you; I am Alpha and Omega.”¹ Wine had an important place in the festivals of his cult. It is today in the Christian theology, representing “the blood of Jesus.” Imagine one drinking the blood of...! He was slain for redeeming humanity and was called “the slain one,” “the sin-bearer,” “the redeemer.” Notice the striking similarity between these words and what Christians preach. Is it a coincident? We do not think so. Bacchus's passion play was celebrated every year representing his death, descent into hell and resurrection. Passion plays used to be part of the Christian festivals during the

¹Godfrey Higgins, *Anacalypsis*, Vol. 1, p. 322.

Middle Ages. The main surviving Passion Play is that of Oberammergau, Bavaria.

Osiris

God of the underworld, he was born on December 29th of a virgin called by the Egyptians the “virgin of the world.” He preached the gospel of gentleness and peace. Wine and corn were regarded as his celebrated discoveries. He was betrayed by Typhen, slain and dismembered. He was interred but came again to life after remaining in hell for two or three days and three nights. After his death, it was the custom of his votaries to keep his image in a box and bring out the image at the time of worship with the cries of “Osiris is risen!”

“The sufferings and death of Osiris,” says Rawlingson in a footnote on p. 260, Vol. 3, of *Herodotus*, “were the great mystery of the Egyptian religion. His being the divine goodness, and the abstract idea of ‘good’, his manifestation upon earth (like an Indian god), his death and resurrection, and his office as judge of the dead in a future life, look like the early revelation of a future manifestation of the deity converted into a mythological fable.” Needless to say, “the early revelation of a future manifestation of the deity” in this quotation is a reference to the alleged incarnation of God in Jesus.

“Belief in the god-man in the form of Osiris,” says Sir Richard Gregory on p. 54 of his book *Religion in Science and Civilisation*, “became the chief element in Egyptian religion, and remained for thousands of years the faith of the people through the tangled skein of religious life in Egypt until Osiris passed into the form of the god-man Jesus Christ.”

Mithras or Mithra

His name in ancient Persian means “friend,” and he was an ancient cultic god of Persia and India who became in the 5th century B.C. the chief Persian god. His cult extended into Mesopotamia and Armenia, thus becoming a world-wide religion. He was the virgin-born sun god of the Persians, the perfect prototype of Jesus Christ ﷺ and the founder of an international Church, Mithraism, in which Christmas and Easter are the most important festivals. “This divine

saviour came into the world as an infant. His first worshippers were shepherds; **and the day of his nativity was December 25th**...! His followers preached a severe and rigid morality, chief among their virtues being temperance, chastity, renunciation and self-control. They kept the seventh day holy, and the middle day of each month was a special feast of Mithra, which symbolised this function of Mediator. They had seven sacraments of which the most important were baptism, confirmation, and Eucharistic supper, at which the communicants partook of the divine nature of Mithra under the species of bread and wine.”¹

Bel or Baal: Striking Similarities Between the Babylonian and the Christian Passion Plays

Bel (or Baal) in the Old Testament is a term used for god or gods of Canaan. He is symbolized by the sun, and he was gradually promoted to become the chief deity, the source of life and fertility. His worship extended beyond Babylon; Baalbek (the city of Baal, Lebanon) was devoted to his worship, hence it is called in Greek Heliopolis, the city of the sun, or of the sun god. The story of his life is extremely astonishing: his passion play has a very close resemblance with the Christian passion story even in details. The Jews had passed a long time in captivity in Babylon during the reign of Nebuchadnezzar² II (630 – 562 B.C.), and this accounts for the

¹*The Nineteenth Century*, September 1905, p. 496.

²Nebuchadnezzar (reigned 605-562 B.C.) was a king of Babylon during whose long and eventful reign the Neo-Babylonian Empire attained its peak and the city of Babylon its greatest glory. Nebuchadnezzar - more properly Nebuchadrezzar - is the biblical form of the name Nabukudur-utsur (which means "NABū has set the boundary", NABū being the Babylonian god of wisdom and writing). He was the son of Nabopolassar, a Chaldean chief who in 626 B.C. led a revolt against Assyria, proclaimed himself king of Babylon, and, in alliance with the Medes and the nomadic Scythians in Babylonia and Assyria, succeeded in overthrowing the vast Assyrian Empire and destroying Nineveh in 612 B.C. Nebuchadnezzar, as crown prince, was given command of the Babylonian army harrying the remainder of the Assyrians in northern Syria. Early in 605 B.C., he met Necho, then pharaoh of Egypt, in battle and defeated him at Carchemish, an ancient Hittite and Assyrian city on the Euphrates River in present-day

close resemblance. Here is the proof for such striking similarities¹:

Modern archaeological researches have brought to light very bewildering facts which go to prove that Babylonian mythology played a very important role in the early stages of Christianity. In 1903-4, German excavators at Kala Shergat (the site of Assur, the ancient Assyrian city whose surrounding areas are also called Nimrud even now and is located in present day's Iraq) discovered two cuneiform documents. When deciphered, they were found to contain the narrative of the Passion Play of Baal. An English journal, namely *The Adventures of a Black Girl in Her Search for God*, published its translation along with the story of the Christian Passion

southern Turkey. Necho is better known as Necho II (or sometimes Nekau), and he was a king of the Twenty-sixth dynasty of the pharaohs of Egypt. A few months later, Nabopolassar died, and Nebuchadnezzar hastened home to claim his throne. He soon returned to the west in order to secure the loyalty of Syria and Palestine and to collect tribute; among those who submitted were the rulers of Damascus, Tyre, Sidon, and Judah. In 601 B.C., Nebuchadnezzar attempted the invasion of Egypt but was repulsed with heavy losses. Judah rebelled, but Jerusalem fell in March 597 B.C., and the ruler, Jehoiakim, and his court were deported to Babylon. Eight years later another Jewish rebellion broke out; this time Jerusalem was razed and the population carried into captivity. Expeditions against the Arabs in 582 B.C. and another attempt at invading Egypt in 568 B.C. receive brief mention in Nebuchadnezzar's later records. Nebuchadnezzar built temples in many of the cities of his kingdom, but the main achievement of his reign was the rebuilding of Babylon, on a scale and with magnificence never before envisaged. The city covered some 500 acres and was protected by massive double fortifications. The Euphrates River, which bisected it, was spanned by a bridge. In the great palace, built to replace Nabopolassar's, he created the terraced cloister known to the Greeks as the Hanging Gardens of Babylon (remains of which can still be seen in Hilla, metropolis of today's Babylon governorate) and reckoned among the Seven Wonders of the World. It was said that he built it to please his mountain-born wife, Amytis, daughter of Cyaxares, the king of Media.

¹In the following text, I have utilized Fazlul Rahmān Anṣārī's excellent book *Islam and Christianity in the Modern World*, pp. 70-72.

Play. In its text, he is referred to as Bel; so, henceforth we will keep referring to him as such. On the next two pages is an exact reproduction of what page 72 of that journal had included:

The Babylonian Passion Play

1. Bel is taken prisoner.
2. Bel is tried in the House on the Mount (the Hall of Justice).
3. Bel is smitten (wounded).
4. Bel is led away to the Mount.
5. Together with Bel a malefactor is led away and put to death. Another, who is also charged as a malefactor, is released, thus not taken away with Bel.
6. After Bel had gone to the Mount, the city breaks out into tumult, and fighting takes place in it.
7. Bel's clothes are carried away.
8. A woman wipes away the heart's blood of Bel flowing from a drawn-out weapon.
9. Bel goes down into the

The Christian Passion Play

1. Jesus is taken prisoner.
2. Jesus is tried in the House of the High Priest and the Hall of Pilate.
3. Jesus is scourged.
4. Jesus is led away to crucifixion in Golgotha.
5. Together with Jesus, two malefactors are led away water and blood (John). Mary Magdalene was put to death. Another (Barnabas) is released to the people and thus not taken away with Jesus.
6. At the death of Jesus, the veil in the temple is rent (Synopt.), the rocks are rent asunder, the graves are opened and the dead come forth into the holy city. (Matthew)
7. Jesus' robe is divided among the soldiers. (Synopt., John Cp. Ps. XXII, 18)
8. The lance-thrust in Jesus' side and outflow of two other women busy themselves with the (washing and) embalming of the body. (Mark, Luke)
9. Jesus, in the grave, in the

Mount away from sun and light, disappears from life and is held fast in the Mount as in a prison.

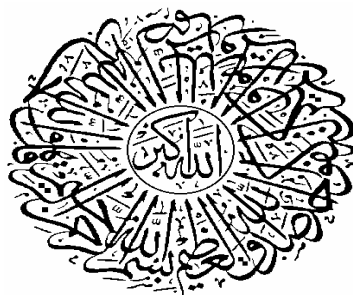
rock tomb (Synopt.), goes down into the realm of the dead (1 Pet. III, XII, 40; Acts, II, 24; Rom. X, 17; "the descent into hell" dogma).

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| <p>10. Guards watch Bel imprisoned in the stronghold of the Mount.</p> <p>11. A goddess sits with Bel; she comes to tend to him.</p> <p>12. They seek for Bel where he is held fast. In particular, a weeping woman seeks for him at the "Gate of Burial." When he is being carried away, the same lamented: "O my brother! O my brother!"</p> <p>13. Bel is again brought back to life (as the sun of spring); he comes again out of the Mount.</p> <p>14. His chief feast, the Babylonian New Year's festival in March at the spring equinox, is celebrated also as his triumph over the powers of darkness.</p> | <p>10. Guards are set over the tomb of Jesus. (Matthew)</p> <p>11. Mary Magdalene and the other Mary sit before the tomb. (Matt., Mark)</p> <p>12. Women, in particular Mary Magdalene, come to the tomb to seek Jesus where he is behind the door of the tomb. Mary stands weeping before the empty tomb because they have taken her Lord away. (John)</p> <p>13. Jesus' restoration to life, his rising from the grave (on a Sunday morning).</p> <p>14. His festival approximately at the spring equinox is also celebrated as his triumph over the powers of darkness (Cp., e.g., Col. II, 15).</p> |
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Having stated all the above, it really leaves no room for doubt that Christianity has suffered so much distortion and alteration, it definitely is no longer the faith of Jesus Christ ﷺ, the Prince of Peace, as he is called by Muslims. Even if you set aside all the theological controversies with which the Church is rife, a look at the conduct of average Christians today, especially in the West, will

make one wonder whether Jesus Christ ﷺ can ever be proud of those who claim to be his followers. Fornication and adultery, abortion, boyfriend and girlfriend, homosexuality..., etc. are quite commonly the practices of the day. Abortions take place daily and, thus, thousands of babies are being killed. Promoters of homosexuality are not ashamed but are “proud” of their abnormality and are vocal in demanding “their rights”... Family ties are very loose, children hardly respect their parents, wives hardly respect their husbands, students hardly respect their teachers. Those who have money can do anything at all with their wealth, including buying government positions. The “legal system” is bought, sold, and traded. The news media creates demons and angels as per the instructions of their sponsors, the “special interest groups” that pump millions and millions of dollars into their coffers which they regain from unsuspecting readers and audiences after brainwashing and misleading the latter. Pornography is so widespread, it is sickening... All these immoralities and injustices are quite common and widespread, yet the Church “officials” stand spectators and, much worse, sometimes get themselves involved in many of them. Is this the product of a healthy creed? We do not think so. Is this the faith which Jesus Christ ﷺ introduced to the world? It certainly is not. True, pure, unadulterated and authentic Christianity or Judaism is nothing but Islam, rest assured.

Jesus son of Mary ﷺ is mentioned by name in the Holy Qur’ān thirty-six times; twenty-five of which as Jesus ﷺ, and eleven times as the Messiah, the *Maseeh*, the anointed one. The name of his mother occurs in the Holy Qur’ān thirty four times, and surely Allāh knows best.



CONCLUSION:

It is sincerely hoped that the discreet reader has benefitted from this book, that it has brought him closer to His Maker, the One Who created him for one and only reason: to worship Him, and only Him. It is hoped that this book has brought him closer to the Almighty Who is known by His creation. This book contains “specimens” of individuals whom the Almighty created and whose biographies provide the reader with many moral lessons, with admonishment and wisdom.

Certainly, whoever bases his belief in the Almighty on solid foundations will be the winner in this life and in the life to come, and the most solid of all foundations is one built on knowledge and conviction, not on ignorance, nor on taking things for granted, nor on hiding the truth or distorting it. This address is directed specifically to new Muslim converts in the West in general and in the U.S. in particular. This book is meant to strengthen their belief, their faith, and it provides them with many arguments to use with others to attract them towards Islam and to get them to embrace this great faith. It assures them all that if they embrace Islam, they will never abandon Christ or Moses or any other prophet ﷺ, but they will simply re-discover him through Islam.

One authentic *ḥadīth* says, “For everything there is a *zakāt*, and the *zakāt* of knowledge is its dissemination.” The reader who reads this book ought *not* keep what he/she has learned to himself/herself but share it with others, believers or non-believers. It will then enhance the conviction of the believers and plant the seed of *īmān* in the hearts of the unbelievers. Who knows? Maybe one day that seed will grow. It is the Almighty Who permits its growth, and He does so at the right time, the time which He chooses. Pass this book on to a relative or a friend. Translate it into another language. Let on-line computer services benefit from it. Make photocopies of some of its contents and distribute them to others. Write a dissertation or a thesis utilizing its text. Extract excerpts from it for inclusion in your newsletter or magazine, book or booklet. Or write one like it or better. All these options are yours; so, do not sit idle. Move to

action, and let the Almighty use you as His tool for disseminating useful knowledge.

Do you, dear reader, think that you have a choice whether to disseminate the knowledge included in this book with others or not? If you think that you do, read the following statement of the great grandson of the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ, namely Imām Mūsā ibn Ja'far عليه السلام, who quotes his forefathers citing the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ saying,

One who reneges from his oath of allegiance, or who promotes what misleads people, **or who hides some knowledge with him**, or who confines some wealth with him unjustly, or who knowingly aids an oppressor in committing oppression while being fully aware of his oppression, is outside the folds of Islam.

This tradition is recorded on p. 67, Vol. 2, of al-Majlisi's *Biḥār al-Anwār*. It clearly demonstrates that one who hides knowledge is on the same level with that who deliberately assists oppressors and tyrants. We, therefore, should spare no means to share what we know with others, with those who listen and who follow the best of what they listen to. Earn rewards by bringing the servants of Allāh closer to their Creator Who made and sustained them, Who will try them and place them either in His Paradise or in His hell. If acts of worship are based on shallow conviction, they are as good as nothing. Strengthen your brethren's conviction through this book. They will surely appreciate it and, above all, Allāh, too, will.

If the reader appreciates the time and effort exerted in writing this book, as brief as it is, I, the author, kindly request him/her to recite Sūrat al-Fātiḥa for the soul of my parents and for the souls of all believing men and women, the living and the dead. If you do so, rest assured that you, too, will be rewarded for reciting it, and your rewards will be with the Most Generous of all those who reward: Allāh Almighty Who appreciates even the smallest of good deeds. Why do I request the kind reader to recite Sūrat al-Fātiḥa for my parents? Well, this is the least a son can do for his deceased parents who worked very hard to raise him as a Muslim. My father was a

qāri of the Holy Qur’ān who refused to read any other book besides the Qur’ān as long as he lived, a man who never intentionally hurt anyone all his life. And my mother, though illiterate, sat next to my father as he recited the Holy Qur’ān so she would learn as much as she could. Not only will my parents receive blessings when you recite Sūrat al-Fātiḥa for their souls, but you, too, dear reader, will get your rewards as well. How will you be rewarded? This book’s Glossary discusses Sūrat al-Fātiḥa, and perhaps you should read what is written there before you go on to the next paragraph. Here is a glimpse of what you will *Insha-Allāh* receive:

On p. 88, Vol. 1, of *Mujma` al-Bayān fī Tafsīr al-Qur’ān*, aṭ-Ṭibrisi cites a tradition through a chain of narrator wherein the Prophet of Islam is quoted as saying, “Whoever recites Sūrat al-Fātiḥa will be rewarded as though he had read two thirds of the Holy Qur’ān and will be (in addition to that) given rewards as though he gave charity to each and every believing man and woman.” Just imagine how generous the Almighty is! Ubayy ibn Ka’b is cited in the same reference saying, “I once recited Sūrat al-Fātiḥa in the presence of the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ who said to me, ‘I swear by the One Who controls my life, Allāh never revealed any chapter in the Torah, the Gospel, the Psalms, or (even) in the Qur’ān like it. It is the mother of the Book, and it is the seven oft-repeated verses. It is divided between Allāh and His servant, and His servant will get whatever he asks Him for.’” The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said once to Jābir ibn Abdullāh al-Anṣārī, one of his greatest *ṣaḥāba*, may Allāh be pleased with all his good *ṣaḥāba*, “O Jābir! Shall I teach you the merits of a Sūra which Allāh revealed in His Book?” Jābir said, “Yes, O Messenger of Allāh! May both my parents be sacrificed for your sake! Please do!” The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ taught him Sūrat al-Ḥamd, the “Mother of the Book,” then said to him, “Shall I tell you something about it?” “Yes, O Messenger of Allāh,” Jābir responded, “may my father and mother be sacrificed for your sake!” The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said, “It cures everything except death.” Imām Ja’far aṣ-Ṣādiq (عليه السلام) is quoted on the same page as saying, “Anyone who is not cured by the Book’s Fātiḥa cannot be cured by anything else.” Imām `Ali ibn Abū Ṭālib (عليه السلام) has said,

The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ has said, “Allāh, the Exalted One, the Sublime, said to me: ‘(O Muḥammed!) We have bestowed upon you seven oft-repeated verses and the Great Qur’ān (verse 87 of Sūrat al-Ḥijr); so, express your appreciation for it by reciting the Book’s Fātiḥa,’ thus comparing it to the entire Qur’ān.” Sūrat al-Fātiḥa is the most precious of the treasures of the *‘Arsh*. Allāh specifically chose Muḥammed to be honoured by it without having done so to any of His prophets with the exception of prophet Sulaymān (Solomon) who was granted (only this verse) of it: *Bismillāhir-Raḥmānir-Raḥīm* (verse 30 of Chapter 27, Sūrat an-Naml); don’t you see how He narrates about Balqees¹ saying, “O Chiefs (of Yemen’s tribes)! Surely an honourable letter has been delivered to me; it is from Solomon, and it is: In the Name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Merciful...” (27:29-30)? So whoever recites it sincerely believing that he/she is following in the footsteps of Muḥammed ﷺ and his progeny *‘ālihi*, abiding by its injunctions, believing in its apparent as well as hidden meanings, Allāh will give him for each of its letters a good deed better than all this world and everything in it of wealth and good things. And whoever listens to someone reciting it will receive a third of the rewards the reciter receives; so, let each one of you accumulate of such available goodness, for it surely is a great gain. Do not let it pass you by, for then you will have a great sigh in your heart about it.”²

Rewards of reciting Sūrat al-Fātiḥa are also recorded on p. 132 of *Thawāb al-A`māl wa Iqāb al-A`māl* ثواب الأعمال و عقاب الأعمال cited

¹Balqees Queen of Saba’ (Sheba) belonged to the Arab tribe of Ḥimyar which for centuries has been residing in Yemen. Her people used to worship the sun and the moon and other stars, and some of the ruins of the temples she had built for them can still be seen in Saba’. Solomon (Sulaymān), on the other hand, was headquartered in Jerusalem (Ur-o-Shalom, the city of peace, as it is called in Hebrew; the Arabs used to refer to it as Eilya. This is why Syria used to be called Aram, the land of the Aramæans. Aramaic is still spoken in some part of Syria even today.

²aṭ-Ṭabari, *Tārīkh*, Vol. 1, p. 88.

above. Abū Abdullāh Imām Ja'far aṣ-Ṣādiq عليه السلام has said, “Whoever recites Sūrat al-Baqara and Sūrat al-Fātiḥa, they will both shade him like two clouds on the Day of Judgment. And if the reader wishes to read more about the merits of the *Basmala* (*Bismillāhir-Raḥmānir-Raḥīm*), he is referred to pp. 70-71 of my book *Fast of the Month of Ramaḍān: Philosophy and Aḥkām* (ISBN 978-964-438-172-0). As for the merits of Sūrat al-Fātiḥa, I would like to quote for you here what is published on pp. 71-73 of the same book:

Aṭ-Ṭibrisi, in his exegesis *Mujma'ul-Bayān fī Tafsīr al-Qur'ān* مجمع البيان في تفسير القرآن, provides nine names for the first chapter of the Holy Qur'ān, namely Sūrat al-Fātiḥa: 1) *al-Fātiḥa* الفاتحة, the one that opens, for it is like a gate: when opened, it leads one to the Book of Allāh; 2) *al-Ḥamd* الحمد, the praise, for its verses are clearly praising the Almighty; 3) *Ummul-Kitāb* أم الكتاب, the mother of the Book, for its status is superior to all other chapters of the Holy Qur'ān, or like the war standard: it is always in the forefront; 4) *as-Sab'* السبع, the seven verses, for it is comprised of seven verses and the only one whose verses are seven, and there is no room here to elaborate on the merits of the number 7 especially since most readers of this book are already aware of such merits; 5) *al-Mathāni* المثاني, the oft-repeated Chapter, for no other Chapter of the Holy Qur'ān is repeated as often as this one; 6) *al-Kāfiya* الكافية, the chapter that suffices and that has no substitute; you simply cannot replace its recitation with that of any other chapter of the Holy Qur'ān in the first two *rek'āts* of the prayers, whereas it can substitute others; 7) *al-Asās* الأساس, the basis or foundation or bed-rock, a connotation of its being the foundation upon which the Holy Qur'ān stands just as the *Basmala* (“*Bismillāhir-Raḥmānir-Raḥīm*”) is the foundation of the Fātiḥa; 8) *ash-Shifā'* الشفاء, the healing, due to the fact that the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ has said that the Fātiḥa heals from all ailments except death, and 9) *aṣ-Ṣalāt* الصلاة, the prayers, or the basic requirement of the daily prayers, one without the recitation of which no prayer can be accepted. The Prophet has quoted the Almighty as saying, “The prayers have been divided between Me and My servant: one half for Me, and one for him;” so when one recites it and says, “*Alḥamdu lillāhi Rabbil-'Ālamīn*,” the Almighty says, “My servant has praised Me.” And when he says, “*Ar-Raḥmānir-*

Rahīm,” the Almighty says, “My servant has lauded Me.” And when he says, “Māliki Yawmid-Dīn,” Allāh says, “My servant has exalted Me.” And when he says, “Iyyaka Naʿbudu wa iyyāka nastaʿīn,” Allāh will say, “This is a covenant between Me and My servant, and My servant shall be granted the fulfillment of his pleas.” Then if he finishes reciting the Fātiḥa to the end, Allāh will again confirm His promise by saying, “This is for [the benefit of] My servant, and My servant will be granted the answer to his wishes.”

The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ is quoted by Abū ʿAlī al-Faḍl ibn al-Ḥassan ibn al-Faḍl aṭ-Ṭibrisī, may Allāh have mercy on his soul, saying that one who recites al-Fātiḥa will be regarded by the Almighty as though he recited two-thirds of the Holy Qurʾān and as though he gave by way of charity to each and every believing man and woman. “By the One in Whose hand my soul is,” the Prophet continues, “Allāh Almighty did not reveal in the Torah, the Gospel, or the Psalms any chapter like it; it is the Mother of the Book and al-Sabʿ al-Mathʿāni (the oft-repeated seven verses), and it is divided between Allāh and His servant, and His servant shall get whatever he asks; it is the best Sūra in the Book of the most Exalted One, and it is a healing from every ailment except poison, which is death.” He is also quoted by al-Kaḥḥāmi as saying, “He (Allāh) bestowed it upon me as His blessing, making it equivalent to the Holy Qurʾān, saying, ‘And We have granted you *al-Sabʿ al-Mathʿāni* and the Great Qurʾān (Sūrat al-Ḥijr, verse 87).’ It is the most precious among the treasures of the ʿArsh.” Indeed, Allāh, the most Sublime, has chosen Muḥammad ﷺ alone to be honoured by it without doing so to any other Prophet or Messenger of His with the exception of Solomon عليه السلام who was granted the *Basmala*. One who recites it, being fully convinced of his following in the footsteps of Muḥammad ﷺ and his Progeny عليه السلام, adhering to its injunctions, believing in its outward and inward meanings, will be granted by Allāh for each of its letters a blessing better than what all there is in the world of wealth and good things, and whoever listens to someone reciting it will receive one third of the rewards due to its reciter.

Many readers of my *Memoirs*, to which reference is made in the Preface to this book, wrote me saying that they thought that their

text ought to be turned into a documentary film! As for my book on the fast, I have been overwhelmed by the flood of letters from readers all over the world expressing appreciation of the effort invested in writing it, how it is quite different from any other book dealing with the same subject-matter. It is hoped that their response to this book will not be any less.

There is no doubt that you, dear reader, know that it is very costly to print books, and philanthropists in the Muslim world are rare species. Once you find one, you will find out that he is willing to spend money on anything except on a book! This is very sad, very tragic, very shameful. Islam spread through a Book, the Holy Qur'ān. That was all the early generations of Muslims needed besides the presence of the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ. But times have changed; we do not have the presence of the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ in our midst to ask him whenever we need to know, and his Sunnah has suffered acutely of alteration, addition, deletion, custom-designing and tailoring to fit the needs of the powerful politicians of the times, so much so that it is now very hard to find the pristine truth among all the numerous different views and interpretations. This is why the reader has to spend more effort to get to know the truth; nobody is going to hand it to you on a golden platter. You have to work hard to acquire it. "Easy come, easy go." Yet readers who would like to earn a place in Paradise through their dissemination of Islamic knowledge, such as the knowledge included in this book, are very much needed and are advised in earnest to send their contributions to the Publisher of this book in order to help him print more copies of it and make them available to those who cannot afford to purchase them. Some readers erroneously surmise that book publishers are wealthy people who make a lot of money selling books, but, alas, this applies mostly to non-Muslim publishers. After all, Allāh will judge our actions according to our intentions, and if you help promote a book seeking the Pleasure of Allāh, rest assured that you will be richly rewarded. It remains to see how strong you are against the temptations of Satan who will try his best, and his worst, to dissuade you from doing so. He very well knows that nothing in the world stands between him and corrupting the minds of Muslims more than accurate knowledge about Allāh

and the men of Allāh. May Allāh Ta`ālā include us among the latter, *Allāhumma Āmeen*.

May Allāh Ta`ālā accept our humble effort; may He forgive our sins and shortcomings; may He take our hands and guide us to what He loves and prefers, *Allāhomma Āmeen, Wassalāmo Alaikom wa Raḥmatullāhi wa Barakātuh*.

و آخر دعوانا أن الحمد لله رب العالمين و الصلاة و السلام على سيد
المرسلين طه الأمين و على آله الطيبين الطاهرين و أصحابه الغر الميامين