

ABOUT THIS BOOK

This book is a compilation of important knowledge deemed beneficial for all Muslims, especially students of the Islamic sciences and those interested. It consists of three sections. The first is a concentrated introduction to the famous Schools of thought, the development of Islamic Jurisprudence, Islamic law and legislation methodology, Classification of the prophetic traditions, and finally, Monotheism and Islamic Philosophy. The second section tackles the most common misconceptions raised against the Qur'an, Prophet Muhammad P.B.U.H., and the Islamic law. It clarifies the Islamic teachings regarding each one of them supported by relevant evidences. An introduction to Spiritual Purification—commonly known as Sufism—is given at the end of Section II. The third section is a concise chronology for the history of the people of the book.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Ehab Shawky is an Egyptian Author and Engineer. He holds two Bachelor degrees. The first is B.Sc. in Mechanical Power Engineering, received from Cairo University, class 2002. The second is BA in Islamic Studies, received with High Distinction from the Higher Institute for Islamic Studies, class 2016. Getting the chance to spend a lifetime learning about science and religion had its impact on his thoughts and perception. As such, in his writings, he usually tackles both sides, and tries to integrate them into one harmonious structure. His opinion is that, *“There is no contradiction between those two. Rather, they complete one another and should never be separated.”*



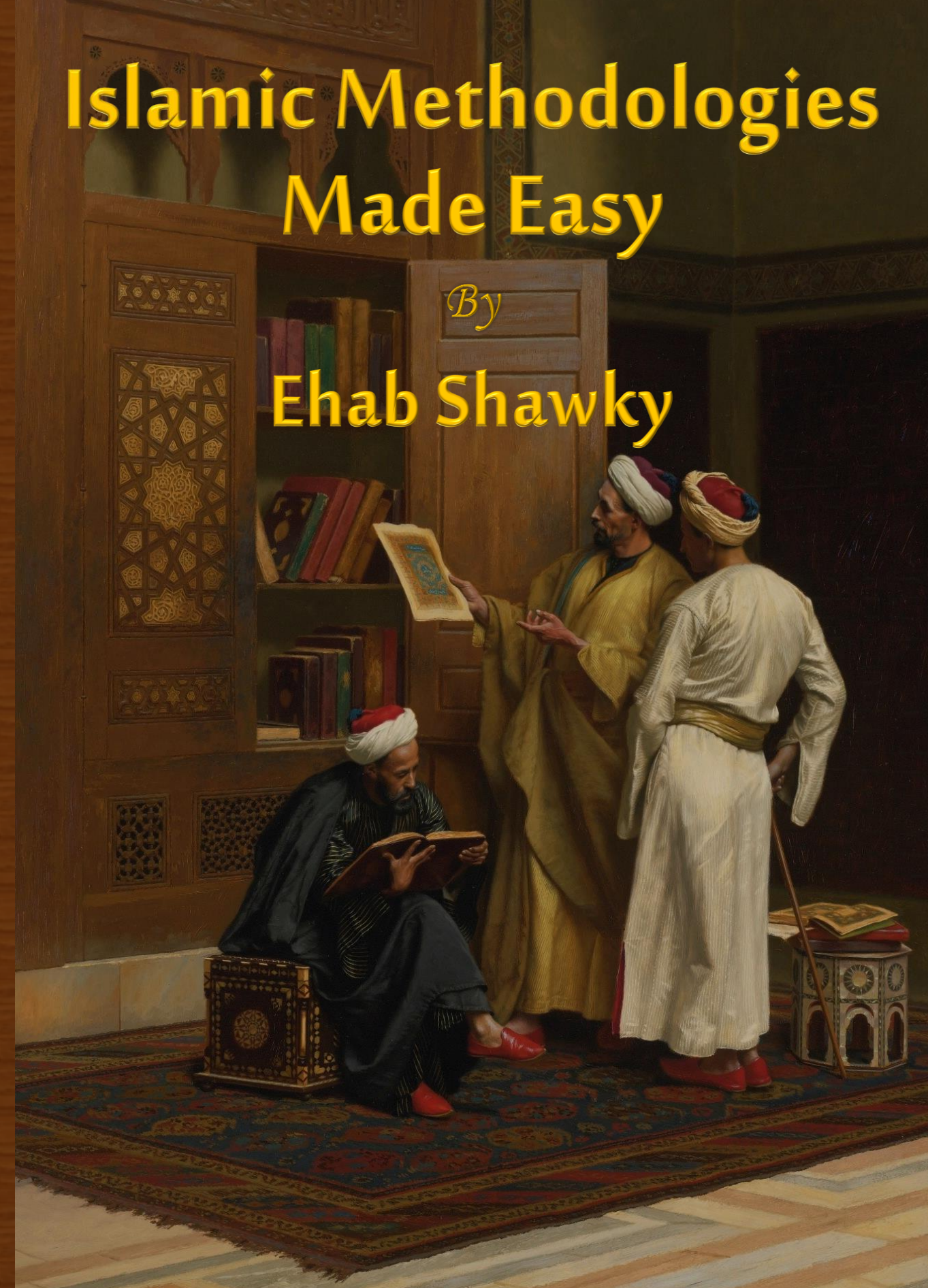
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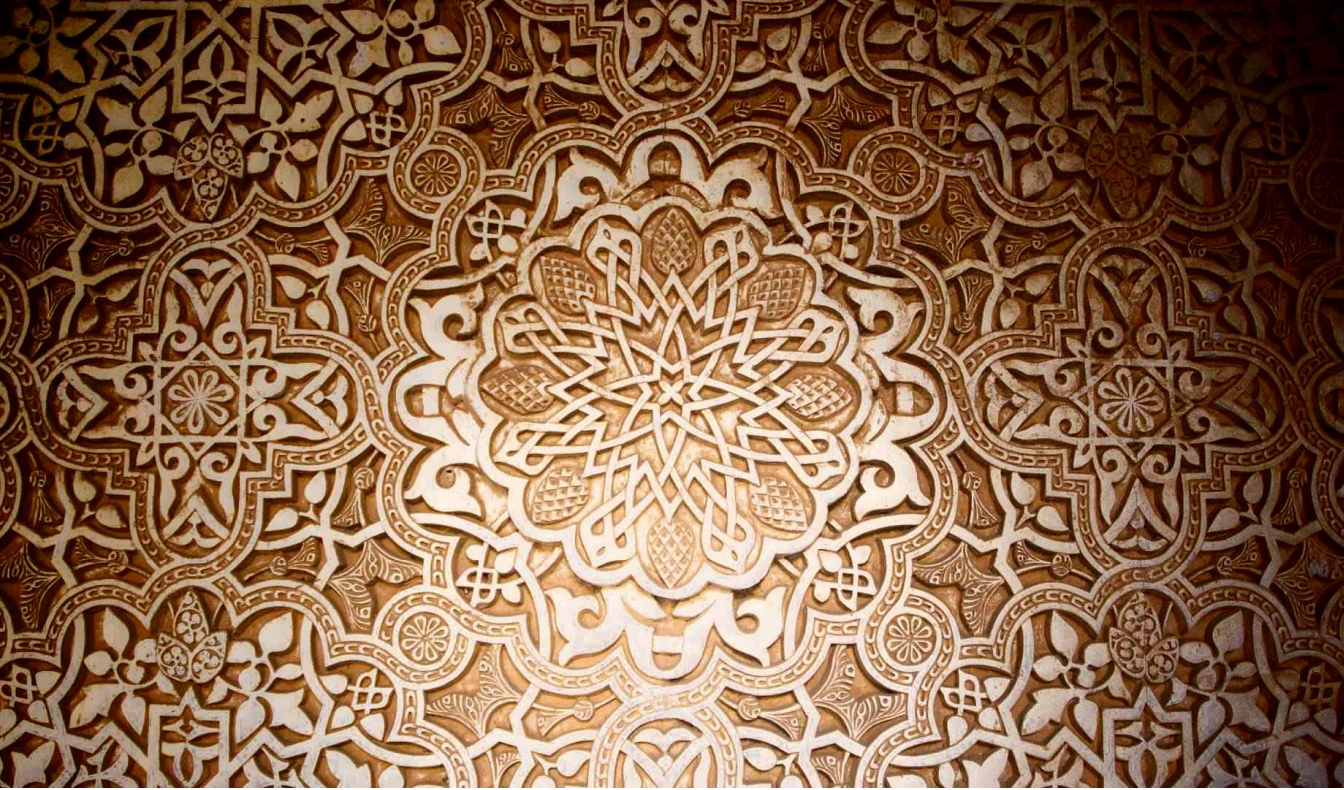
Islamic Methodologies Made Easy  Ehab Shawky

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By

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Second Edition: November 2021
Revised and Enriched

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Free Pdf version is available on the book's blog

Limited Edition
Date 15/11/2021

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Printed in Egypt



In The Name Of Allah,
The Most Gracious, The Most Merciful



Preface

All praises be to Allah, may His peace and blessings be upon Prophet Muhammad, the rest of the prophets and those who follow their righteous path till the judgment day comes, Amen O Lord of all people.

The Qur'anic revelations began with the word "READ." The only time in which the Qur'anic verses order Muslims to ask Allah for increase in anything is in "KNOWLEDGE." Allah says that His wrath shall be cast upon those who do not use their "REASON." Truth seeking and acquiring knowledge form the foundation of Islam. Prophet Muhammad P.B.U.H. said, "*One knowledgeable Muslim is stronger in facing Satan's seductions than 1000 worshippers.*" We can all agree that our daily pursuit after the means of living holds us back from attaining enough knowledge about our religion. From this takeoff point, the idea of this book evolved.

This book is intended for provident Muslims. It is a simplified made-easy compilation including general knowledge about the main branches of the Islamic sciences. It is written in a simplified manner that allows the reader acquire basic knowledge about the emergence of these sciences, the notable figures involved in their development, and the urge behind that. This is followed by some introductory knowledge about the methodologies developed under the spotlight of these sciences.

In the second section of the book, the issue of preaching Islam is discussed, followed by a detailed explanation of the most common misconceptions and accusations held against Islam. This section tackles many of the laws included in the Qur'an and *Sunnah*. It should be noted here that the first time I wrote this section was back in 2010, and I submitted it in Al-Azhar research institute in 2011 under the name, "In response to the attacks on Islam," this is its renewed version.

The final section is a concise chronology for the history of the people of the book. The main stops in their history, among other information deemed important for the Muslim student to know are included. May the benefit of the book be completed.

The knowledge presented in this book is semi preliminary - semi inclusive, fashioned in an amiable manner to suit all readers. In short, this is a concise compilation of general Islamic knowledge that could benefit provident students and laymen evenly.

This book is about Islam, not about Muslims. Among Muslims there are those who abide by Islam, and there are those who abide by their own whim and will. People's attitudes vary from person to another; as such, it should not be taken as evidence on the original methodology of religion.

Finally, I would like to address the reader not to take everything he or she reads as if it were the absolute truth or correct opinion. Always have a critical mind. Teach yourself how to think logically and criticize whatever you read before you adopt a single idea from it. In other words, "Don't be a Flunky." Knowledge could only be acquired through learning, so don't waste your time listening to others; grab the Qur'an, start reading it, and write down your own ideas and thoughts on each and every verse you read. Don't be afraid to ponder over the verses. Work your mind into their meanings as clarified inside this text. Always prepare yourself spiritually before embarking on the Holy Book, and Allah shall lend you all the help you need. I believe that this is the Muslims' way out from the current deep dark well they have fallen into.

I hope the reader will find this book interesting and beneficial. I invoke Allah to make out of this book a guide to truth and a support for truth seekers. May Allah grant it success in holding some good between its pages for all mankind. May Allah bestow his peace and blessings upon those who search for the truth and are not arrogant. May our Creator guide us all to His righteous path, may He guide us to the truth, Amen.

*Ehab Shawky Abd El-Khalek
Cairo, Egypt
August, 2014*

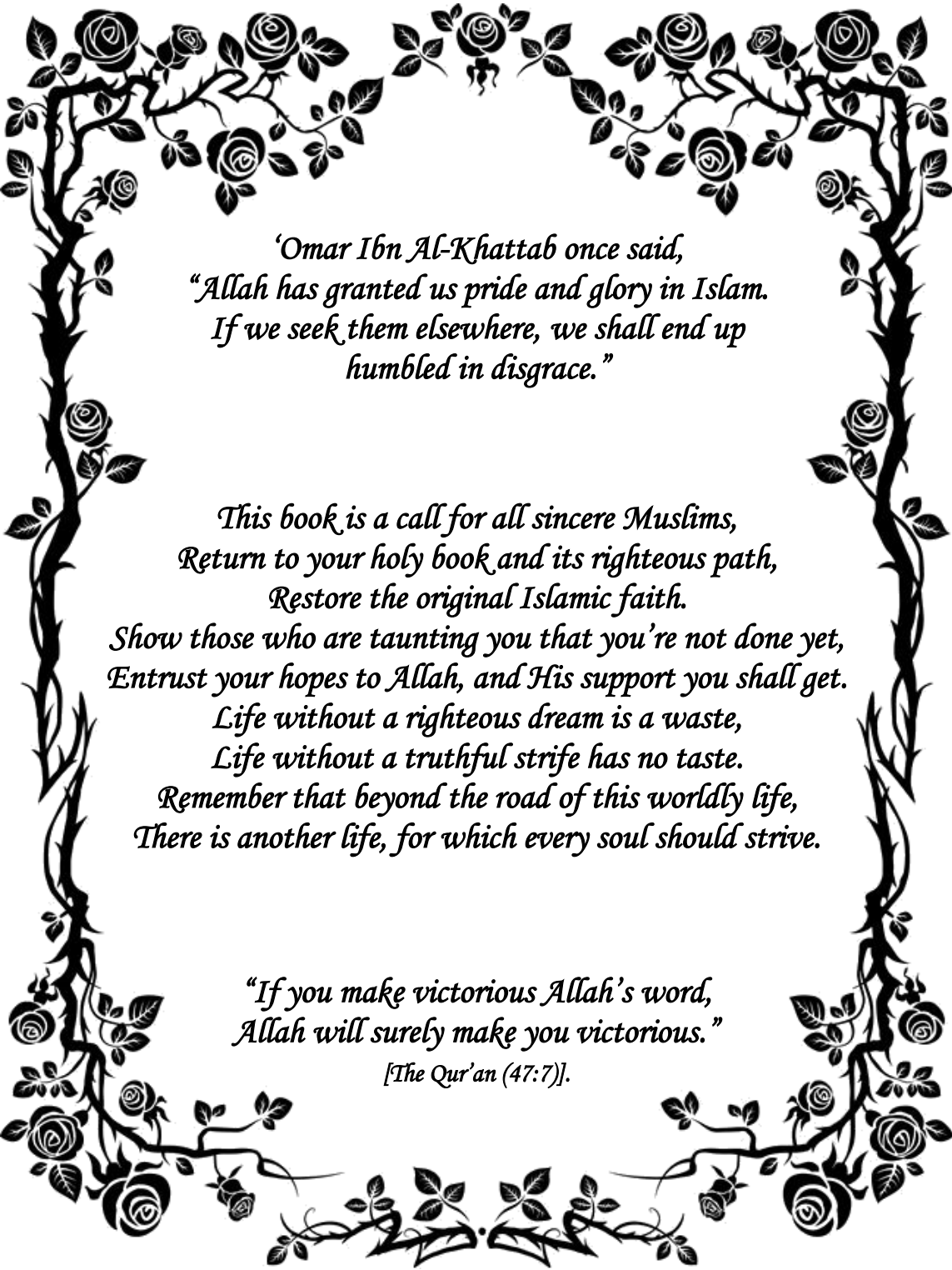
Note: If the reader is a student, then I recommend reading the book cover to cover. Most subjects are simplified in 10-30 pages atmost to facilitate the reading process. Visit the book's blog for links to audios, videos, books, and articles. If you wish to contact the author, kindly use the blog's contact form or the email on the copyrights page. Please include your questions in the body of the email. Don't include attachments as they shall be ignored. Make sure to place your questions in a simplified clear direct language. Emails longer than 100 words are spamed.

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Let’s Start Our Journey



*'Omar Ibn Al-Khattab once said,
"Allah has granted us pride and glory in Islam.
If we seek them elsewhere, we shall end up
humbled in disgrace."*

*This book is a call for all sincere Muslims,
Return to your holy book and its righteous path,
Restore the original Islamic faith.
Show those who are taunting you that you're not done yet,
Entrust your hopes to Allah, and His support you shall get.
Life without a righteous dream is a waste,
Life without a truthful strife has no taste.
Remember that beyond the road of this worldly life,
There is another life, for which every soul should strive.*

*"If you make victorious Allah's word,
Allah will surely make you victorious."*

[The Qur'an (47:7)].

The Methodology of Reformation in Islam

The main purpose of religion is to help us get to know the Creator who has originated everything, understand the task for which He has created us, and follow the **path** that can lead us to fulfill this task. When the Qur'an was first revealed to Prophet Muhammad P.B.U.H., its teachings and provisions were mainly concerned with reforming people's moralities and ethics. It laid down a **morally righteous path** that can lead them to the delight of knowing their Creator, fulfill the task for which He had created them, and make His teachings prevail above any other.

Prophet Muhammad P.B.U.H. said,

"Verily I was not sent except to perfect the moral standards."

The words are in the sense that this was his most important task. Anyone who studies Prophet Muhammad's attitude in different situations throughout his life—even before prophethood—will instantly understand this. The most important thing that anyone can learn from studying the lives of prophets, righteous humans, and those who followed their path, is how to live like they lived, and how to be endowed with a pinch of their characters. By all means, "*Fiqh*," or the true understanding of religion, is to acquire the spirit with which we should live and perform our rituals, not merely adopting a certain appearance while performing them, or the knowledge of the Dos and Don'ts in our religion. Our sheikhs used to say,

"Raising righteous Muslims is what matters, not building Mosques."

If you read the Qur'an and ponder over its verses, you will find that it does not speak about establishing mosques or Islamic states, it speaks about the characters and morals of those who should inhabit them. Its main concern is raising righteous persons with sound hearts. Prophet Muhammad said, "*Allah never looks at your faces or physical appearances, but He observes the hearts inside your chests.*" The reader here should understand that whenever the Islamic teachings speak of hearts, they are not referring to the organ that pumps the blood through your body, they are referring to the main instrument through which you get to sense the reality of things, and differentiate between wrong and right. Allah says in the Qur'an:

"Have the people not travelled through the land to make their hearts understand and let their ears hear, verily, it is not the eyes that go blind, but the hearts inside chests." [The Qur'an (22:46)].

Allah tells us in the Qur'an that Prophet Abraham invoked Him saying,

"[O Lord] do not disgrace me on the Day when all people are resurrected: the Day when wealth and children will be of no avail, when the only one who will be saved is the one who comes before [You] Allah with a sound heart." [The Qur'an (26:87-89)]. Later on, Allah describes him saying, "*Abraham was of the same faith [as Noah], he drew near to his Lord with a sound heart.*" [The Qur'an (37:83-84)].

Allah describes the dwellers of Paradise in the hereafter saying,

"Paradise will be brought near to the righteous and will no longer be far away. This is what you were promised—this is for everyone who often turned to Allah and kept Him in mind, who feared the Compassionate One though He is unseen, and returned to Him with a sound heart." [The Qur'an (50:31-33)].

Prophet Muhammad explained the importance of purifying the hearts saying, *“Temptations are adorned for the hearts like a straw mat, straw by straw. Whichever heart is soaked with them, a black speck is implanted therein. And whichever heart rejects them, a white speck is implanted therein, until all hearts turn into one of two types: white like Safā (i.e. some kind of white hard stones), it is never harmed by any temptations as long as the heavens and the earth shall exist. The other is like a dusty black inverted jug [that holds no water within], it does not distinguish any good nor deny any evil except through what it has been soaked with from its fancies.”* [Recorded by Muslim].

This is why Allah tells us in the Qur’an that among the supplications of those who are knowledgeable is that they say, *“O our Lord, let not our hearts deviate after you have guided us and grant us from Yourself mercy, Indeed You are a Munificent Giver.”* [The Qur’an (3:8)].

Those with sound hearts always respect good morals and incline towards what’s right. They always try to make it victorious in the best of their capacities, and where it really matters, they might sacrifice their own lives just to see it prevail. They always seek after what’s beneficial for all people, not just for themselves. They are always cheerful, easygoing and they are never troublesome. Whenever they are asked for help, they grant it. Whenever they are treated ignobly, they show patience. They are never arrogant or self-conceited. They always remember their sins, not their good deeds. They never tell a lie, cheat or betray. Based on the reports of those who had lived with Prophet Muhammad, the previous manners and characteristics are just a pinch of his personality. Allah says in the Qur’an, *“Indeed there is a good example for you in the prophet for those who wish to meet with Allah, [receive His bounty] on the judgment day and they remember Allah constantly.”* [The Qur’an (33:21)]. Whenever Lady ‘Ā’ishah was asked about his character by her students, she said, *“His manners were a personification of the Qur’an.”* Of course, who could be more knowledgeable of the Qur’an than the Prophet?

From this, one may conclude that the first pillar upon which the methodology of reformation in Islam was built is, **“Raising sound hearts.”**



Among the moral characteristics that the Qur’an focuses on, and glorifies so much is “Justice.” The sense of justice seems to comprise a very big portion of one’s faith. Those who are just, are very likely to have faith even if they don’t profess so; while those who are unjust, are very likely to be hypocrites even if they don’t waste any of the rites and rituals of religion. Those with just hearts, are the true soldiers of faith without any regards to their color, age, rank, race, etc. In the Qur’an Allah confirms many times that believers must be just and He confirms that He loves those who are just. He says in the Qur’an:

“Allah commands you to render back your Trusts to those to whom they are due, and when you judge between people, judge with justice.” [The Qur’an (4:58)].

“O believers, stand out firmly for justice, as witnesses to Allah, even if against yourselves, or your parents, or your kin, and whether it be [against] rich or poor: for Allah can best protect both. Do not follow the lusts [of your hearts], lest you swerve, and if you distort [justice] or decline to do justice, verily Allah is well acquainted with all that you do. O believers, believe in Allah and His messenger, and the scripture which He has sent to His messenger and the scripture which He sent to those before him. Any who denies Allah, His angels, His Books, His messengers, or the Judgment Day, has gone far, far astray.” [The Qur’an (4:135-136)].

“O believers, Stand fast for Allah, as witnesses to fair dealing, and let not the others’ hatred to you make you swerve to what’s wrong or depart from justice. Be just, that is closer to piety: and fear Allah. Verily Allah is well acquainted with what you do.” [The Qur’an (5:8)].

“Say [O Muhammad], ‘My Lord has commanded you to act justly. Turn your faces up toward Him at every time and place of worship, and call upon Him, making yourselves sincere towards Him in religion. As He brought you into being, so you shall return.’” [The Qur’an (7:29)].

“Allah ordains upon you justice, kindness and showing liberality towards kith and kin, and He forbids all shameful deeds, injustice and transgression. He admonishes you so that you may take heed.” [The Qur’an (16:90)].

“Allah does not forbid you as regards to those who did not fight you on account of faith, and did not expel you from your homes, that you deal justly and kindly with them. Verily Allah loves those who maintain justice.” [The Qur’an (60:8)].

Prophet Muhammad said, *“Those who are just in this life, shall be resurrected standing upon pulpits of pearls on the judgment day.”* [Recorded by Al-Hākem].

He also said, *“Allah shall protect seven kinds of people from the blazing sun on the judgment day, the first kind is just rulers.”* [Recorded by Bukhari and Muslim].

From this, one may conclude that the second pillar upon which the methodology of reformation in Islam was built is, **“Rooting the sense of Justice.”**



When Islam was first introduced to the Arabs, it was not introduced as an exclusive religion; on the contrary, it was introduced as a message for all people throughout the ages. Hence, alongside justice, the sense of equality is extremely strong in the Islamic teachings. All people are equal in the sight of the Creator except on the criterion of piety. There is no superiority for any race or nationality above another. As mentioned earlier, our appearances and this outer shape that we call the body is not actually what Allah looks at, but it’s our hearts which He observes. Those who are most pious are His most beloved. Allah says in the Qur’an:

“O mankind! Be pious to your Lord, Who created you from a single soul and from its kind He created its match, and from them He created many men and women, so fear Allah through whom you demand (Your mutual rights), and do not sever the relations of the wombs. Verily, Allah is ever an All-Watcher over you.” [The Qur’an (4:1)].

“O mankind, We have created you from male and female, and made you into nations and tribes, so that you may know one another. Verily the noblest among you in Allah’s sight, are those who are most pious. Verily Allah is All-Knowing, All-Aware.” [The Qur’an (49:13)].

The above verses stipulate that all mankind are one family in Allah’s sight. It was His plan to disperse us into different nations and tribes to fill the planet entrusted to us so that we may learn different things, and exchange our knowledge through fair cultural interaction, not cultural subjection. Allah also stipulates that the noblest among all people are not Muslims, Jews, Christians, Arabs, Persians, Romans, etc., nothing of that sort; the noblest are the most pious. Some people are Muslims, they testify that there is no God but Allah and that Muhammad is His messenger, but their hearts are empty from the justice and piety of true faith. Islam is one thing and true faith is another. This is why we see a Muslim bribee, a Muslim thief, a Muslim criminal, etc. In the verse next to the one above, Allah says:

*“The Bedouins say, ‘We have believed.’ Tell them [O Muhammad], ‘You have not believed yet, you should rather say, ‘We have submitted to Islam,’ for **faith** has not yet entered your **hearts**. But if you obey Allah and His Messenger, [Allah] will not detract any of your good deeds. Allah is most forgiving, ever merciful.’ ”* [The Qur’an (49:14)].

Hence, unlike what most Muslims think, Islam is not the apex of faith, it’s just the doorway. Consequently, piety is not to utter the testimonies of faith, it’s a force linked only to true faith when it fills the heart. It’s a power concealed inside the hearts of believers and it always guides them to what’s fair and true. ‘Omar Ibn Al-Khattab is recorded to have said, *“I swear by Allah that if non-Arabs come on the judgment day with good deeds, and we (Arabs) come empty handed, then they shall be worthier of Prophet Muhammad than us.”*

From the above we may conclude that the Islamic teachings stipulate that all **mankind** are **“One Family.”** Of course, being one family doesn’t mean that we should hate or fight each other. It means that we should be “kind & Just” towards one another. It’s true that under the stress of the world injustices we are suffering from today, some semi-knowledgeable Muslims who don’t have enough understanding of Allah’s laws and Prophet Muhammad’s teachings reciprocate hatred towards non-Muslims instead of knowledge, but this is not from Islam. Actually, this contradicts the Islamic teachings in a manifest way endangering its doer to be misguided. Prophet Muhammad said in his farewell pilgrimage, *“O People, your God is one, your father is one. There is no superiority for an Arab on a non-Arab, or for a non-Arab on an Arab, nor for a white man on a black man, or for a black man on a white man. **Verily the noblest among you in Allah’s sight are the most pious.**”* [Recorded by Ahmad].

On mentioning equality, one can’t disregard fraternity. The Prophet’s morals and teachings were a personification of these attributes. *Anas Ibn Mālek*, the Prophet’s servant reported that, *“The prophet accepted any invitation even if he was presented barley bread and soup whose taste had changed.”* [Recorded by Al-Tirmidhī]. He always made *Anas* sit and eat with him from the same plate as reported by *Anas* himself.

He used to visit the poorest of ailing persons and urged all Muslims to do likewise as recorded by Bukhari. *Anas* also reported that the Prophet P.B.U.H. said, “*I am Allah’s servant, I eat like a servant and sit like a servant.*” [Recorded by Abu Yu‘la].

‘Abdullah Ibn Mas‘uod, the companion reported that, “*A man came to the prophet to ask him about something. When he saw the prophet he quivered, so the prophet P.B.U.H. said, ‘Take it easy man, I am but the son of a woman who ate jerked meat for sustenance.’*” [Recorded by Ibn Mājah].

‘Abdullah Ibn ‘Abbās, the prophet’s young cousin reported that, “*The prophet used to sit on the floor, eat on the floor, tether his sheep and accept a slave’s invitation.*” [Recorded by Tabarāni].

Anas reported that, “*The prophet was the most beloved person to us all, whenever we saw him approaching, we only wouldn’t get up [in his honor], for we knew how much he hated that.*” [Recorded by Tirmidhī] He would himself, however, stand up humbly for those who had taken care of him during infancy. He stood up to receive his foster mother who had reared him in infancy, and in respect he spread his own sheet for her and her husband. His foster brother was also given similar treatment.

Abu Dhar, the companion reported that, “*The prophet avoided sitting at a prominent place in any gathering. People coming in always had difficulty in spotting him, and had to ask which one was the Prophet.*” [Recorded by An-Nasā’ī].

‘Abdullah Ibn Abi-Aufa, the companion reported that, “*The prophet never disdained to walk along with widows, slaves, and the wretched until their needs were fulfilled.*” [Recorded by An-Nasā’ī].

On one of their journeys, the Prophet’s companions were preparing to roast a goat. One of them said that he would slaughter the animal, another said that he would skin it, while a third one said that he would cook it; the prophet then said that he would gather some wood and light the fire. Their response was, “*O Prophet, we can do everything.*” The prophet said, “*I have no doubt that you can, but I do not like distinctions to be made, nor does Allah like any one of His servants to exert any superiority over his companions.*” [Recorded by Abu Dāwood].

From the above few examples, one may conclude that the third pillar upon which the methodology of reformation in Islam was built is, “**Rooting the sense of Equality and Fraternity.**”



Now to the very important question that the reader here should ask him or herself, “*If Islam is a beautiful religion and its teachings are that terrific, then why are the Islamic countries so backward?! Why are Muslims killing Muslims everywhere?! Why are the most fanatic religious people today Muslims?!*” The previous, among hundreds other questions always give us a terrible headache when we think about them. No matter how different the answers maybe, there is always one thing in common. It comprises the most preferred reason stated by Muslim thinkers, and it comes in parallel with what we have explained in the previous few pages, they say:

“Muslims are extremely sick and in real urgent need for treatment. They have a heart condition. Their malady is the lack of piety and piousness.”

I hope you understood now why I found it so important to start this book with the title mentioned earlier, and why I said that the first pillar upon which the methodology of reformation in Islam was built is **“Raising sound hearts.”** The problem in my humble opinion is that in the course of time, Muslims’ faith declined from being built upon pondering over our Creator’s own words, working our hearts in understanding them and living with the guidance we find therein, into being built upon studying other books including different opinions written by men. The Muslims’ hearts were gradually emptied from the piety acquired from the words of our Creator, only to be filled with the opinions of men about God’s words. This is the true *Fitnah* or religious tribulation into which Muslims have fallen. Prophet Muhammad prophesized about this to his companions in many occasions, and he told us of the remedy. Our treatment is right between our hands, but we are too blind to realize it.

Prophet Muhammad P.B.U.H. said in the farewell speech, *“I am but a man, and my God’s messenger (i.e. angel of death) is about to come to me and I shall answer his call, but I leave with you two important trusts: the first of which is Allah’s book, in it is guidance and light, so whoever holds tight to it and follow its guidance, he shall remain on the righteous path, and whoever misses it, he shall go astray.”* [Recorded by Muslim].

Companion *Hudhaifah Ibn Al-Yaman* reported that the prophet P.B.U.H. informed him that after his departure, differences and conflicts will erupt. So *Hudhaifah* asked the prophet, *“O prophet, what do you order me to do if I live to see those times?”* The prophet answered, *“Learn the book of Allah, and abide by what you learn. Verily, inside it is the way out from all tumults.”* He repeated this thrice. [Recorded by Abu Dāwood, An-Nasā’ī, Al-Hākem and agreed on by Dhahaby].

If you ponder over the life of the early Muslims, you will find that this generation represents a great model for the Muslim nation today. Like us, they were lagging far behind the other nations, they were sinking in darkness and ignorance, fornication was something natural and widely spread during their times, so was drinking, usury, gambling, waylay, road robbery, polytheism, atheism, idolatry, burglary, burying female babies alive out of shame... you name it. In short, their conditions were close to ours today. When the persons of this generation, men, women and even perceiving children received the Qur’an in the correct manner, when they listened to the verses of the Qur’an and pondered deeply over their meanings, those who were the worst of all nations changed. Within few years, the Qur’an raised from them a unique generation that jumped from its position at the tail of all nations to the head. Muslims who were ignorant Bedouins were turned into being the best of all monks in their piety and worship, the best of all knights in their chivalry and bravery, and the closest in their manners and conduct to the prophets. This is why Sheikh *Qurāfy* (626-684 A.H.) said, *“If the prophet P.B.U.H. had no other miracle but his companions, they would suffice in confirming his Prophethood.”*

Sir *Muhammad Iqbal* (1877-1938 A.D.), the famous philosopher and convert to Islam said, *“The Qur’an is not just a book, it’s much more than that. When it enters the heart it changes the person, and if the person changes, the world changes.”*

The generation of the companions is enough as evidence on this. When they dealt correctly with the Qur'an and worked their hearts and minds in pondering over its meanings, it produced this fast marvelous result in less than 40 years.

One very famous example is *'Omar Ibn Al-Khattab*; speaking about the story of his faith, he said, *"When I heard the Qur'an, my heart softened, I wept and Islam entered my heart."* [Recorded by Ibn Hishām].

Afraid of its effect, the disbelievers used to make noise besides any Muslim reciting the Qur'an so that they may distract others from listening to what he says. Allah described their attitude saying, *"And those who disbelieved said, 'Listen not to this Qur'an and make noise amidst of its recitation that you may gain the upper hand'."* [The Qur'an (41:26)].

However, it is important to notice that: like no one can be affected by the sun's light except those who are subjected to it, so is the case with the Qur'an, it doesn't affect except those who ponder over its verses. Unlike what most Muslims think, our main duty towards the Qur'an is not memorizing its verses, but it's pondering over them. Allah says in the Qur'an itself:

"...and We have sent down unto you [O Muhammad] the Message, so that you may clarify to the people what was sent to them, and that they may give thought." [The Qur'an (16:44)].

"[Here is] a Book which We have sent down unto you, full of blessings, that they may ponder over its verses, and that people of understanding may receive admonition." [The Qur'an (38:29)].

"Do they not ponder over the Qur'an? If it had been from any entity other than Allah, they would have found therein many discrepancies." [The Qur'an (4:82)].

"So relate to them these stories may they ponder over them." [The Qur'an (7:176)].

"Thus We make plain Our revelations for those who reflect." [The Qur'an (10:24)].

"Do they not ponder over the Words (of Allah)?" [The Qur'an (23:68)].

If some cannot see the sun's light because it's cloudy, this doesn't mean that the sun is not there or that its effect doesn't exceed this fading light coming through the clouds. It just means that you have to show some perseverance until the clouds are dispersed by the light. So is the case with the Qur'an, its miracle will always be there preserved by its sender till the end of time. All we need to do is ponder enough over its verses till we reach the circle of its influence. It is a great regret that the long time we have spent away from this circle has caused us to stop believing in its existence and its unique capability of making a real change in our lives.

The more you ponder over the verses of the Qur'an, and connect the related verses together in order to extract the true meaning intended, the stronger will your heart be connected to it. You will find that your deeds are affected by its provisions all the time and even your speech. Try it yourself, write your notes on the empty margins of your own copy of the Qur'an so that you may return to them every time you read the same part again. Look up the meanings of the words you don't understand online or in Arabic dictionaries (*Ma'ajem Lughawyah*). Stop referring to voluminous exegesis for the meanings. Believe me when I say that this way, you will end up having a deeper and better understanding of Islam.

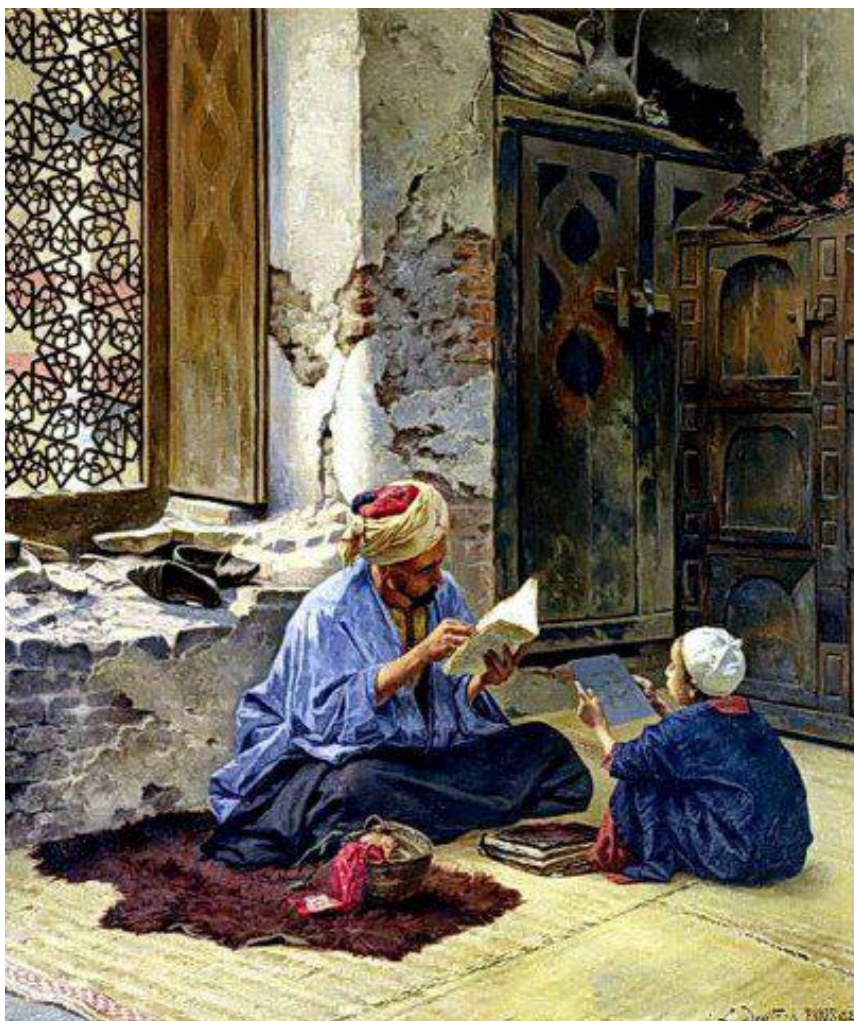
Nasr Ad-Deen Dinét (born as Alphonse-Étienne Dinét) (1861-1929 A.D.) was a French orientalist and painter. He embraced Islam in 1927. He said in his great book “The life of Prophet Muhammad,” “Nevertheless, there was one miracle, the only one placed to Mohammad’s credit, and which was the cause of great anxiety among the Quraysh idolaters: the miracle of the “Ayat,” a word generally rendered by “Verses,” but really meaning, “miraculous signs” of the Qur’an. The miracles wrought by earlier Prophets had been transient, so to say, and for that very reason, rapidly forgotten, while that of the Verses may be called “The Permanent Miracle.” Its activity was unceasing.”

The Palestinian poet “Nicola Joseph Hannah” (1923-1999 A.D.) described how the Qur’an touched him saying, “I read the Qur’an and it stunned me, I pondered deeply over its meanings and it fascinated me, I read it again and I believed. How couldn’t I believe when the miracle of the Qur’an is between my hands, and I’m looking at it and feeling its effect all the time? It’s a miracle not like any other, an everlasting divine miracle that stands as a proof on itself. It doesn’t need anyone to speak about it nor preach it.”

The Turkish scholar *Bediüzzaman Said Nursî* (1877-1960 A.D.) said, “I was confused for a long time, do I follow this scholar or that, and while I was tumbling in my confusion, a divine idea came to my heart and cried: ‘The source of all those springs, the origin of all schools of thought, and the sun for all those planets is the Qur’an; it is the unity of all, it is the ultimate guide and best teacher.’ Since then I embarked upon the Qur’an, I took shelter in it and obtained strength from it.”



Section I: The Islamic Sciences



Starting from this page and till the end of this section, this will be no more than a brief introduction to the different Islamic sciences in an easy simplified interesting manner. I hope that any Muslim reading this book will find it enough to help him or her form a good background about these sciences. Huge detailed books always force their readers to embark on them for long times; the end product is that they forsake the Qur'an and miss its spiritual purification effect. Purifying your heart and removing the dust from above your God-given pure innate characters is what truly matters.

*

Story of the Islamic Sciences

Islam is a very unique faith. Its holy book, the Qur'an, includes doctrinal teachings, historical information, legal provisions, verses of scientific implications, future events, etc. Under each of the previous titles, many issues were explained by Prophet Muhammad P.B.U.H. to his companions throughout 23 years of prophethood. The Qur'an alongside the prophetic teachings (*Sunnah*), were passed on by the companions to their followers and so on. Within the course of time, some kind of categorization was made, and many sciences were developed by the erudite Muslim scholars. The knowledge included in these sciences is divided into 3 main categories:

1. The first is concerned with doctrine and creed.
2. The second is concerned with spiritual purification.
3. The third is concerned with practical and legal provisions.

The order mentioned above is the order of foundation during Prophet Muhammad's life. Later on, when establishing the sciences discussing these categories, the above order was changed. That was an urge produced by the series of events that occurred, and this is the main topic of this section of the book.

After Prophet Muhammad passed away, a new era started, it is generally known in history books as the era of the rightly guided Caliphs (11-40 A.H.). The most important stop is concerned with the first 12 years of this era, during which Muslims were able to defeat the imperialist forces lurking to invade Arabia, enslave its people, and destroy the civilization rising therein. After many years of war and tens of battles, they succeeded in defeating both, the Roman and Persian empires. This resulted in the expansion of the Arab's authority over faraway countries like Persia, Iraq, Syria, Egypt, North Africa, etc. Many Muslims immigrated to these countries, where they established new cities and lived in them to secure Arabia from any attacks that could be launched from these regions. Among these cities are Basra and Kufa in Iraq, Fustāt in Egypt, Qayrawan in North Africa, etc. A book dedicated for this issue titled "*Al-Mudun Fil-Islam*" or "Cities built by Muslims," written by "*Shaker Mustafa*," mentions approximately 500 cities built by Muslims in the area extending between the Atlantic Ocean and India.

These extensions started during '*Omar Ibn Al-Khattab*'s reign. Following Prophet Muhammad's orders, '*Omar* confirmed that the natives living in the countries reached would not be harmed in any way, their possessions were not to be touched and their lands were not to be cut down. He ordered Muslims to establish new cities for themselves at the closest locations to Arabia avoiding any seas or rivers running in between if possible. After establishing their new cities, and since that the war had ended, Muslims started mingling with the native civilians living in these countries. After a few years of preaching Islam, new cultures and even complete societies started to melt rapidly into the new faith. Consequently, new issues and questions about daily routine lives were encountered, these had to be dealt with in a proper manner. Some of the new Muslims traveled to *Madinah* seeking to learn at the hands of the knowledgeable companions living there. Other times, the knowledgeable companions were the ones who immigrated to the new cities where they were sought by new Muslims, like '*Abdullah Ibn Mas'ud* who was instated by '*Omar* as the judge of Kufa. The efforts exerted by the students of the companions in learning about Islam and propagating what they learned was a corner stone in establishing the Islamic sciences.

Between (11-23 A.H.), Caliphs *Abu Bakr* and *'Omar* gathered around themselves the most knowledgeable companions. They relied upon mutual consultation (*Shura*) in facing new issues. Each one of them would make his own analysis (*Ijtihad*), and then they would try to reach unanimous agreement (*Ijma'*) on the matter. If it was not reached, the opinion of the majority was followed. Meanwhile, the Caliph had the right to overrule this opinion for a certain wisdom he deemed closer to what's right. Scholars summarize the approach of the rightly guided Caliphs in the following 5 steps:

1. The Caliph would seek to find an answer in the Qur'an.
2. If he couldn't find an answer, he would think of the prophet's *Sunnah*.
3. If the answer was still not reached, the Caliph would summon a meeting with the knowledgeable companions to discuss the matter seeking to reach consensus (*Ijma'*).
4. If consensus was not reached, the opinion of the majority would be followed.
5. If there was no decisive majority, the Caliph can make his own analysis and issue a ruling for the matter.

Here, the reader should note that this approach went on just fine during the period following Prophet Muhammad's departure. The companions—whether the ones contributing in these councils, or those who were less knowledgeable—were always “O.F.L.,” that is **open minded, flexible and liberals**. No one of them thought of his opinion as the absolute correct opinion; on the contrary, it is recorded that *'Omar Ibn Al-Khattab*, *'Abdullah Ibn Mas'ud* and other companions used to say, *“This is my opinion, if it was correct, then this is a blessing from Allah, but if it was wrong, then it is from me and from Satan.”* If any of them was presented with a prophetic tradition stating instructions different from his opinion, he would immediately withdraw his opinion without any hesitation. Finally, their respect for the freedom of thought and the different opinions was overwhelming. They never tried to force their opinions on anyone. In personal matters, every Muslim can follow the opinion, or the *Ijtihad* he deems most correct without any blame. This was taught to them by Prophet Muhammad P.B.U.H. when he said, *“That which is good, is what makes your soul be at peace, and that which is evil, is what weaves within your soul and welters inside your chest. Seek the counsel of your heart even if [the knowledgeable ones] give you their advisory opinions.”* [Recorded by Ahmad].

In public matters, the decisions reached by consultative councils were followed without any lingering. Allah says in the Qur'an, *“O believers obey Allah and obey His messenger and those in charge of your community. If you dispute about any matter then refer it back to Allah's provisions and [the teachings of] His messenger if you truly believe in Allah and the judgment day. This is way better and closer to the best understanding.”* [The Qur'an (4:7)].

Moreover, the role played by the less knowledgeable companions was extremely important in preserving the national security during that period. They never tried to interfere in the decisions taken by these councils or give their opinions without being asked to do so. They even directed the puzzling questions they received to the more qualified companions. They were never eager to give their advisory opinions all the time like the Muslims of today. In most occasions, the companions depended more on the Qur'an as the main source of guidance. The recurrent quotation of the prophetic traditions was not their preferable approach in resolving any issue except after looking thoroughly

into the Qur'an and pondering over its verses. The one among them whose evidence is from the Qur'an had the strongest opinion. In other words, the Qur'an was still the main source of guidance and light in that period.

The main features of the approach followed by the companions in issuing interpretative judgments, and deducing legal rulings are the following:

1. They only dealt with at-hand problems. They refused to give an opinion regarding any hypothetical matter.
2. They didn't place certain defined procedures in issuing an opinion or ruling. They simply pondered over the Qur'an and the prophet's teachings, and followed the guidance therein inclining towards what's more likely to be pleasing to Allah.
3. They were never keen on having their opinions recorded or written down. Their main concern was teaching the followers to depend on the Qur'an and the prophetic teachings without narrowing the path of discretion in their faces.
4. Reaching unanimous agreement (*Ijma'*) on public affairs was applicable.

The main ideas one gets when reading about the first 12 years of this era (11-23 A.H.) are the following:

1. The spiritual and moral reformation that was led by Prophet Muhammad P.B.U.H. was still close to its apex.
2. The Qur'an was the main and most treasured hoard.
3. Prophet Muhammad was still the sole model followed by Muslims in every aspect of their lives, especially the Caliphs.

The previous points played a very important role in holding all Muslims together without any division or factionalism. New Muslims didn't find any difficulty in melting into the Muslim community. You can instantly get this idea when you find out that most of the famous scholars and jurists who studied at the hands of the companions were non-Arabs. They all embraced Islam after it had reached far away countries, and they were the ones who recorded and preserved the companions' knowledge.

Near the end of 'Omar's reign, the numbers of people embracing Islam was huge and increasing. Some of them were traveling all over Arabia and the surrounding countries seeking to learn about Islam, which was a very good thing, but the need for answers to practical matters was increasing rapidly. Consequently, the practical and legal issues constituted the main portion of the learning done, while the spiritual and moral teachings gradually declined and faded away. Those who were half knowledgeable, who never learned from Islam except the words of the law not its spirit, were easily enticed by a bunch of hypocrites to ignite a terrible turmoil that caused the assassination of the third Caliph 'Othman Ibn Affan. Afterwards, tumults followed one after another and the Caliphate itself became an unbearable burden. It was reported that near the end of his life, Caliph 'Ali Ibn Abi-Taleb invoked Allah to pardon him and let him join his companions. One day, while going out to attend the dawn-prayer, a Muslim extremist attacked 'Ali and stabbed him with a poisoned sword. Caliph 'Ali died in the year 40 A.H., may Allah be please with him.



The reader here should understand the following 3 bulleted points:

- Unlike what most Muslims think, the prophet P.B.U.H. didn't explain all of the Qur'an to his companions, he only explained that which the companions inquired about. His explanations mainly depended on the other verses of the Qur'an that tackle the same issue. That is to say, he understood and explained the Qur'an through its own verses. Other times he gave short brief comments that may help the questioner understand the intended meaning.

Few examples for the prophet's explanations:

1. *'Abdullah Ibn Mas'ud* reported that when verse, "*It is those who believe and do not confuse their faith with sins that are (truly) in security, for they are on (right) guidance.*" [The Qur'an (6:82)] was revealed, the companions fell in distress wondering, "*Who is he who never sinned before?!*" The prophet P.B.U.H. responded saying, "*Didn't you hear what the faithful servant [Luqman] said, 'Verily false worship is a grave sin.'*" [The Qur'an (31:13)]. *It is false worship that's intended.*" [Recorded by Bukhari].
2. *Abu Bakr* reported that when verse, "*Neither your desires, nor those of the People of the Book (shall prevail): whoever sins, shall be requited accordingly.*" [The Qur'an (4:123)] was revealed, he fell in distress and asked the prophet, "*O prophet, how shall we make amends after this verse?!*" The prophet P.B.U.H. said, "*May Allah forgive you Abu Bakr (he repeated this 3 times). Don't you fall ill? Don't you feel sad? Don't you get afflicted and feel some pain every now and then?!*" So *Abu Bakr* said, "*Sure I do.*" Then the prophet said, "*And this is part of your requital in this life.*" [Recorded by Ahmad, Ath-Thawry, Al-Häkem and others].
3. *Jaber Ibn 'Abdullah* reported that the prophet P.B.U.H. said to his wife, *Lady Hafsa*, "*With Allah's will, no one from those who swore to fight till death when we were (few and outnumbered at Hudaybeyah) will be admitted into the hellfire.*" *Lady Hafsa* then said, "*Indeed they shall be O prophet, didn't Allah say: 'There is none of you but will arrive at it'*" [The Qur'an (19:71)]." So the prophet P.B.U.H. said, "*True, but then He said, 'But We shall save those who were pious, and We shall leave the evil-doers therein.'*" [The Qur'an (19:72)]." [Recorded by Muslim].
4. *Abu Hurayrah* reported that on explaining the verse, "*Alms are for the poor and the needy*" [The Qur'an (9:60)], Prophet Muhammad said, "*The needy one is not him who comes asking for some food, it's him who is poor and continent. No one knows of his poverty and provides for him, nor does he ask others for anything. Read as a proof, 'they beg not [for alms] importunately from all sundry.'*" [The Qur'an (2:273)]." [Recorded by Bukhari].

Hence, one should understand that the Qur'an is a self-explained book, if you do not understand any of its verses, search in the other related verses and ponder over them, and you shall always find an answer to your question. The prophet taught this to his companions through his answers. The prophetic teachings stand as a supporting agent in making the intended meanings clearer. The prophet's main task was to bring his followers closer to their Creator, and to set a model for them through his actions and morals. He was teaching them how to live on a righteous path, and how to interact properly with the message of their Lord.

- The companions were extremely affected by the Qur'an; they saw themselves in each and every verse they heard or read. Their knowledgeable ones followed the prophet's example in interpreting the Qur'an through its own verses and the circumstances in which they were revealed, alongside the prophet's actions and teachings. If they still couldn't reach the meaning intended, they would think of the most acceptable meaning linguistically.

Few examples for the companions' explanations and opinions:

1. A follower named *Sa'eed Ibn Marjanah* reported that he was once sitting with *'Abdullah Ibn 'Omar* when he recited the verse, "...whether you disclose what is in your minds or keep it hidden, Allah will bring you to account for it," [The Qur'an (2:284)] then he said, "If we will be requited according to this verse, we shall surely perish," and he cried until his beard was drenched by his tears. *Sa'eed* got up, went to *Ibn 'Abbās* and narrated to him what had just happened, so *Ibn 'Abbās* said, "May Allah forgive 'Abdullah, other companions reacted the same way when they first heard this verse. Thereafter Allah revealed: 'Allah does not charge a soul with more than it can bear,' [The Qur'an (2:286)]. Satan's temptations are among what the soul can't bear to prevent. Allah revealed to us that every soul shall be requited only according to what it has done from good or evil." [Recorded by Mujahed, Ibn Jareer and others].

In this example, you can see that *Ibn 'Abbās* didn't fall into the trap of misunderstanding the mentioned Qur'anic verse because he observed **the complete context** which cleared the dilemma. Reading the verses in their context is a key step towards a proper understanding of the Qur'an.

2. During the war between *'Ali* and *Mu'aweyah*, a follower named *Sa'eed Ibn Al-Jubair* reported that one day *'Abdullah Ibn 'Omar* passed by an assembly of the followers, one among them got up and asked him, "Why don't you fight while Allah says, 'Fight against them until there is no more fitnah (i.e. oppression in religion).' [The Qur'an (2:193)]" *'Abdullah* said, "May you perish! Do you understand what fitnah means? The prophet P.B.U.H. fought against the polytheists because they were trying to force Muslims to forsake their religion and return to polytheism again, and this was a fitnah. He was not fighting them for governorship." [Recorded by Bukhari].

In this example, you can see that *Ibn 'Omar* didn't fall into the trap of misunderstanding the mentioned Qur'anic verse because he knew very well **the circumstances under which the verse was revealed**, or what the scholars call the reasons of revelation. *Sa'd Ibn Abi-Waqas* agreed with *'Abdullah* in this opinion.

3. A follower named *Abi Al-Jawzā* reported that he once asked *Ibn 'Abbās*, "Tell us about the meaning of the verse which says, 'remember your Lord like you remember your own fathers, or even more fervently than that.' [The Qur'an (2:200)]. Sometimes a whole day might pass by and a man doesn't remember his father at all." *Ibn 'Abbās* replied saying, "That is not the intended meaning. The verse means that you should hate it when Allah is being disobeyed exactly like you would if your father was insulted, and even more fervently than that." [Recorded by Ibn Abi-Hātem].

In this example, you can see that *Ibn ‘Abbās* didn’t fall into the trap of misunderstanding the mentioned Qur’anic verse because he knew very well **the prophet’s morals and conduct**. *Hind Ibn Abi Hālah*, the companion and the prophet’s son in law, described the prophet P.B.U.H. saying, “*Not a single matter of this worldly life ever made him angry unless what’s right was violated. If so, He wouldn’t calm down until he corrects the situation; he never got angry for himself and he never avenged himself.*” [Recorded by Tirmidhī]. Likewise, lady *‘Ā’ishah* also described the prophet P.B.U.H. saying, “*He never avenged himself, but when the sanctity of Allah was violated he would, that would be for Allah not for himself. He was the last one to get angry and the first to be satisfied.*” [Recorded by Bukhari].

4. A follower named *Al-Aswad Ibn Helāl* reported that a man came to *‘Abdullah Ibn Mas‘ud* and said, “*I’m afraid I’m ruined.*” *‘Abdullah* asked, “*Why are you saying that?*” The man said, “*Allah says: ‘...those who are saved from “Shuh” are truly the successful ones,’ [The Qur’an (59:9)] and I’m a miser, I almost give nothing.*” *‘Abdullah* then said, “*What you described is not ‘Shuh,’ what you described is miserliness and verily it’s a shameful characteristic, but what Allah mentioned in the Qur’an is something else, it’s the greed that urges you to take what’s not yours unjustly.*” [Recorded by Ibn Abi Shaybah].

In this example, you can see that *Ibn Mas‘ud* didn’t fall into the trap of misunderstanding the mentioned Qur’anic verse because of his vast **knowledge of the Arabic language**. He knew very well the true meanings of the words, which helped him understand the intended meaning of the verse correctly. *‘Abdullah Ibn ‘Omar* also gave a similar explanation at another occasion.

From the previous one should be able to recognize that the doorway to properly understanding the Qur’an and entering its domain is crossed by four steps:

1. Understanding every verse within its complete context.
2. Learning about the circumstances in which the verses were revealed.
3. Learning about the prophet’s morals and conduct.
4. Learning the linguistic and idiomatic meanings of the words.

Hence, based on the 1st, 2nd and 3rd steps, the science of interpretation emerged “*‘Elm At-Tafseer*” and many exegesis were written. Some books were written gathering the reasons of revelation. The science of biography also emerged “*Sirah*” and many books were written about the life of Prophet Muhammad and his companions. Taking advantage of the emergence of these sciences, many liars started fabricating traditions and ascribed them to Prophet Muhammad. Later on, this resulted in the emergence of the science of traditions “*‘Elm Al-Hadith.*” Many scholars started collecting the prophetic traditions and purifying them by taking special precautions to avoid collecting fabricated ones. Based on the 4th step, many Arabic dictionaries were written explaining what each and every Arabic word means “*Ma‘ajem Lughawyah.*” Of course this doesn’t mean that you should not read the Qur’an except after acquiring enough knowledge from all of these books, but it means that whenever a verse bewilders you and you can’t find another verse in the Qur’an explaining the matter and clearing the issue, then don’t jump to building any opinions without returning to those books first, they are important helping tools.

Here you should be careful not to think that scholars are angels who never sin or make mistakes. Know by heart that all scholars are human, they are not angels or prophets. They sin and make mistakes, sometimes they build wrong opinions, etc. So never give up on trusting your natural disposition. Always weigh all things on the balance of piety and piousness (*Taqwah*), for it is the soul of Islam.

- Ever since the prophet P.B.U.H. passed away, there had always been different opinions among the companions in both, worldly life matters and religious issues. For the worldly life matters, this was something normal. For the religious issues, each companion built up his or her opinion based on the amount of knowledge he or she had received from the prophet P.B.U.H.

Few examples for their differences on worldly life matters:

1. *Abu Bakr* forbade the repenting apostates from joining the army out of fear from their treason. Later on, *'Omar* permitted them to join the army.
2. *Abu Bakr* instated trustable deputies on faraway cities, ordered them to be fair and just, then he trusted their decisions. On the other hand, *'Omar* trusted no one; he instated governmental inspectors to oversee the deputies' performance.
3. *'Omar* avoided instating any of his relatives as rulers over any Islamic protectorate, while *'Othman* saw nothing wrong with instating them as long as they are qualified and fit for the job.
4. *'Ali*, *'Ammar*, *Ibn 'Abbās* and others saw that executing the assassins of *'Othman* could cause a great turmoil that would result in more bloodshed. Meanwhile, *Talhah*, *Az-Zubair*, Lady *'Ā'ishah* and others saw that not executing them is against the Islamic law, and it could cause greater corruption. Other companions like *Ibn 'Omar*, *Abu Musa Al-Ash'ary*, *Sa'd Ibn Abi Waqqas* and others saw that both opinions shall lead to a great tumult in which more Muslims would die, so they isolated themselves from all parties.

Few examples for their differences on religious issues:

1. *'Omar* and *Ibn Mas'ud* saw that whoever had a wet dream and cannot find any water to wash up with, should not pray, while *'Ali*, *'Ammar*, *Ibn 'Abbās* and others saw that such person may perform dry ablution and pray normally.
2. *'Ali* and *Ibn 'Abbās* saw that the waiting period for a pregnant widow is 4 months and ten days, while *Abu Hurayrah* saw that it was only to give birth to her child. It is recorded that *Ibn 'Abbās* changed his opinion later.
3. *'Ali* burned those who said that he was God in flesh, while *Ibn 'Abbās* refused this action and said that if he were in his place, he wouldn't have done that as this is against the prophet's teachings.
4. *Ibn Mas'ud* saw that the word *Ma'oon* in chapter 107 of the Qur'an means "neighborly needs," while *Ibn 'Omar* saw that it is referring to the obligatory alms (*Zakah*).

The previous among many other examples, stand as a solid proof that there were always different opinions among the companions regarding all sorts of issues. This is something normal and natural as people will always have different understandings. The Islamic teachings are not against that, but they are against factionalism, and those closed Islamic groups that adopt vague positions and illogical opinions which lead to endless debates.

Their opinions neither resolve the issues at-hand, nor lead anywhere close to reasonable solutions or common grounds upon which all people can stand. Allah says in the Qur'an, "*O believers, if you yield to some of those who were given the Scripture [before you], they will cause you to renounce the truth after you have believed. But **how can you deny the truth when Allah's revelations are being conveyed to you, and His own Messenger is in your midst? He who holds fast to Allah is indeed guided to the straight path. O believers, fear Allah as is His due, and when death comes, be in a state of complete submission to Him. Hold fast to the cord of Allah and let nothing divide you. Remember the blessings He has bestowed upon you, you were enemies and then He united your hearts and by His grace you became brothers, you were on the brink of an abyss of Fire and He rescued you from it. Thus Allah makes His signs clear to you, so that you may find guidance.***" [The Qur'an (3:100-103)].

These verses from the Qur'an are a prescription from Allah to all believers; He is telling us that if we wish to remain united on the righteous path, we should follow the guidance of His message and the example of Prophet Muhammad. Those who are unjust always come up with biased opinions that create divisions among the people. If you don't have a sound heart which you may set as a judge on whatever you hear from others, you shall indeed go astray. This is why you can see some Muslims, who are deluded by false sheikhs, contribute in terroristic acts, accuse complete communities of infidelity, or deal with non-Muslims in an improper manner. Allah says in the Qur'an:

"There are some men whose views on the affairs of this life may please you. They even call on Allah to witness whatever is in their hearts, yet they are the most contentious of quarrelers. When he turns away, he sets out to spread corruption in the land, destroying crops and cattle. But Allah does not love corruption. When he is told, 'Have fear of Allah,' he is seized by pride which drives him to [more] wrongdoing..." [The Qur'an (2:204-206)].

Prophet Muhammad said, "*Islam is the natural religion with which people are born.*" And he also said, "*Seek the counsel of your heart.*" So if anyone tells you something that is against the innate characters and natural disposition of pious pure people, you should immediately doubt its correctness, even if it were your own parents or sheikhs who are speaking. This was a common practice among the companions. Even when the prophet himself would tell them something, or order them to do something that collides with the sound nature of pious persons, they would stop him and ask about the meaning of what he said. One famous example is the one reported by Anas, "*The prophet P.B.U.H. said, 'Be at the aid of your brother whether he is oppressive or he is oppressed.' The companions said, 'O prophet! It is all right to be at his aid if he is oppressed, but how should we be at his aid if he is oppressive?' The Prophet then said, 'By preventing him from oppressing others.'*" [Recorded by Bukhari].

From the above, one prescription for the doubt that creeps into one's heart sometimes against some actions is to ask himself: *If the prophet P.B.U.H. were alive amidst us today, would he have done that or approve to it?!*



After the assassination of *'Ali Ibn Abi Taleb* in 40 A.H., a new period in history having new characteristics started. This was followed by big changes in the style and methods of spreading knowledge about Islam. This period is known in history as the *Umayyad* dynasty (40-132 A.H.). During this period, the Caliphate was converted into a monarchy, especially when Caliph *Mu'aweyah Ibn Abi-Sufyan* nominated his son *Yazeed* as his successor. This was disapproved by most of the companions resulting in the dispersion of their knowledgeable ones away from the ruler. Consequently, the rulers took others who were less knowledgeable as their consultants. The end product was that the principle of consultative council (*Shura*) disappeared and consensus was indisputably no longer possible. Some may think that these political developments were pure evil; they may not be able to see any good in them. Others will say no, there was some good after all, as the dispersion of the knowledgeable companions away from the rulers gave them the chance to concentrate on educating the students coming from Iraq, Persia, Sham, Egypt, Yemen, Bahrain etc., which helped in spreading their religious knowledge, and later on, led to the evolution of different schools of thought, and the evolution of the Islamic sciences. Consequently, the knowledge of the companions was preserved.

Among the notable companions (1st generation) who contributed greatly in educating the followers (2nd generation) are the following:

- 1) *'Omar Ibn Al-Khattab*: He was among the closest companions to Prophet Muhammad P.B.U.H. who described him saying, "*I never saw a genius like 'Omar.*" He was the second Caliph and the minister of *Abu Bakr* during his Caliphate. He lived and taught in *Madinah* till his martyrdom in 23 A.H.
- 2) *'Ali Ibn Abi Taleb*: The prophet's cousin, foster child and son in law. He was entrusted to the prophet P.B.U.H. since infancy, and was among his most beloved companions. He was among the close consultants of *Abu Bakr*, *'Omar* and *'Othman* during their Caliphate. He was the judge of *Madinah* during *'Omar's* reign. He had some differences with *'Othman* and disapproved to many of his decisions; yet still, he was among those who went to defend him when he was besieged in *Madinah*. He was recognized as Caliph by most Muslims including the killers of *'Othman*. This was objectionable by many of the companions and resulted in a huge tumult, which *'Ali* failed to resolve. *'Ali* lived most of his life in *Madinah*. During the last 5 years of his life, he lived in *Iraq* where he received his martyrdom in 40 A.H.
- 3) *Lady 'A'ishah*: She was the prophet's wife and mother of believers. She spent 48 years after his departure teaching to the young followers. About 2210 of the prophetic traditions had been reported by her. The number of her students reached up to 250 students. She lived and taught in *Madinah* till her death in 58 A.H.
- 4) *'Abdullah Ibn 'Omar*: He was still young when his father embraced Islam. Since then he grew up following the prophet everywhere like his shadow. He lived and taught in *Madinah*. He refused to be instated as a judge during *'Othman's* reign. He refused the Caliphate several times. He also refused to join any of the fighting parties during *'Ali's* reign. He died in *Makkah* in 73 A.H. Some say that *Al-Hajaj Al-Thaqafy* was behind his death.
- 5) *'Abdullah Ibn Mas'ud*: He lived and taught for several years in *Kufa* where he was instated as the judge by *'Omar*. Later on he returned to *Madinah* and taught there till his death in 32 A.H.

- 6) *'Abdullah Ibn 'Amr*: He was among those who embraced Islam when the prophet was still in Makkah. He embraced Islam before his father and against his will. He was the only companion whom the prophet allowed to write down and record his teachings and traditions. He lived and taught in several places, among them are: *Egypt, Sham, Makkah* and *Madinah*. The date and place of his death are unknown, some say that he died in the year 65 A.H. in *Egypt*, while others say that he died in *Sham*.
- 7) *'Abdullah Ibn 'Abbās*: Nicknamed "Expounder of the Qur'an" (*Turjuman Al-Qur'an*). He traveled between *Makkah, Madinah, Ta'ef* and some other cities. He mainly taught in *Makkah*. Many of his students became notable scholars and worked on preserving his opinions. He died in *Ta'ef* in 67 A.H.
- 8) *Zayd Ibn Thābet*: The prophet's scribe. He was 12 years old when the prophet immigrated to *Madinah*. He received from the prophet a lot of knowledge. *Abu Bakr* chose him for the errand of gathering the Qur'an; later on, *'Othman* chose him to lead the committee responsible for unifying the synonyms, and duplicating the Qur'an. He lived and taught in *Madinah* till his death in 45 A.H.
- 9) *Mu'ādh Ibn Jabal*: He was among the deputies instated in Sham by *'Omar*. He lived and taught there till his death. He died in the year 18 A.H. during *'Emwas* plague when he was 38 years old.
- 10) *Abu Ad-Dardā'*: He lived and taught for several years in *Damascus* of *Sham*, where he was instated as the judge by *'Omar*. He died in *Alexandria* of *Egypt* in 32 A.H.

Among the notable followers (2nd generation) who contributed greatly in preserving the knowledge of the companions are the following:

- 1) *Sa'eed Ibn Al-Musayyab*: (14-94 A.H.) He learned at the hands of more than 100 of the companions. He lived, learned, taught and died in *Madinah*.
- 2) *'Urwah Ibn Az-Zubair Ibn Al-'Awwam*: (23-94 A.H.) He learned at the hands of many of the companions including his father. His main teacher was *Lady 'Ā'ishah* his aunt. He learned in *Madinah*, travelled to Basra and Egypt, then returned to *Madinah* and continued to teach to the followers till his death.
- 3) *Kharejah Ibn Zayd Ibn Thabet*: (Died 99 A.H.) He learned at the hands of many of the companions including his father. He lived, taught and died in *Madinah*.
- 4) *Al-Qāsem Ibn Muhammad Ibn Abu Bakr*: (35-108 A.H.) His parents died when he was 7 years old. He was taken to *Madinah*, and delivered to his aunt *Lady 'Ā'ishah*, who raised him up and became his main teacher. He also learned at the hands of many of the companions. He lived, taught and died in *Madinah*.
- 5) *Sulaimān Ibn Yassār*: (34-107 A.H.) He was the freed slave of *Lady Maimounah*, the mother of believers. He learned from her, and at the hands of many of the companions. He lived, taught, and died in *Madinah*.
- 6) *Salem Ibn 'Abdullah Ibn 'Omar*: (Died 106 A.H.) He learned at the hands of many of the companions including his father. He lived, taught, and died in *Madinah*.
- 7) *Abu Salamah Ibn 'Abdur-Rahman Ibn 'Awf*: (26-104 A.H.) He learned at the hands of many of the companions including his father. He lived and taught in *Madinah*.
- 8) *Mujahed Ibn Jabr*: (21-104 A.H.) He learned at the hands of the most knowledgeable companions. His main teacher was *Ibn 'Abbās*. He lived, taught, and died in *Makkah*.
- 9) *'Ata' Ibn Abi Rabah*: (27-114 A.H.) He was a Yemenite. He learned at the hands of *Lady 'Ā'ishah, Lady 'Um-Salamah, Abu Hurayrah, Ibn 'Abbās, Ibn 'Omar* and others. He lived and taught in *Makkah* till his death.

- 10) *Tawous Ibn Kaisan*: (11-106 A.H.) He was a Yemenite. He learned at the hands of more than 30 of the companions. His main teacher was *Ibn 'Abbās*. He was a traveler, but he mainly lived and taught in *Makkah* where he died.
- 11) *Al-Hassan Al-Basry*: (21-110 A.H.) Some say that he met more than 500 of the companions, and learned at the hands of many of them. In his mid-thirties he moved to *Basra* and taught there till his death.
- 12) *Muhammad Ibn Seereen*: (30-110 A.H.) He learned at the hands of more than 30 of the companions. He was among the scholars of *Basra* and he died in *Iraq*.
- 13) *'Alqamah Ibn Qays Al-Nakh'ey*: (Died 62 A.H.) He was among the elders of the followers. He learned from many of the companions. His main teachers were *Ibn Mas'uod* and *'Ali*. He lived most of his life in *Kufa*.
- 14) *Abu Idrees Al-Khawlany*: (9-80 A.H.) He was among the elders of the followers. He learned at the hands of the companions. His main teacher was *Abu Al-Darda'*. He was instated as the judge of *Sham* where he taught till his death.
- 15) *Yazeed Ibn Abi Hubayb*: (58-128 A.H.) Originally, he was a *Nubian* from Sudan. From the date of his birth you can notice that he was among the minor followers. He learned from *'Abdullah Ibn Al-Hareth Ibn Juz'* the companion, and received the rest of his knowledge from the older followers mentioned above. He lived in *Fustāt* in *Egypt* where he continued to teach till his death.

Towards the end of the first century A.H., all of the companions had departed except one or two. Their students were scattered all around in many countries extending from India in the east to Spain in the west. Scholars in major cities were mainly following the teachings and opinions of the most knowledgeable companions who lived and taught in their cities. Some scholars traveled to the famous learning centers (*Makkah*, *Madinah*, *Kufa*, and *Basra*) seeking to learn from the followers living there. Later on, they returned to their homelands and transferred the knowledge they acquired. The end product was a huge scattered unclassified compilation of prophetic traditions, alongside explanations and opinions given by the companions and their students from the 2nd generation.

Many discussions were made about all sorts of things: verses from the Qur'an, prophetic traditions, rituals and rites, obligations and prohibitions, spiritualities and materialism, and finally, the creed of faith. It was during one of the lessons given by *Al-Hassan Al-Basry* that one of his students debated with him about the Muslim who commits major sins (i.e. Adultery, backbiting, etc.), whether he or she should be considered a Muslim or not, and whether he shall be admitted into heaven or not. *Al-Hassan* saw that this person is still a Muslim and shall be recompensed according to all of his or her deeds, the good ones and the bad; if Allah wills, He shall forgive him, and if He wills, He shall punish him and later on admit him into heaven for being a believer. The student whose name was *Wāsel Ibn 'Ata'* (80-131 A.H.), rejected this opinion and said that the Muslim who commits major sins is a dissolute, he is neither a Muslim who has sincerely submitted to Allah nor a non-Muslim who disbelieved in Allah, but in a middle rank between having faith and disbelief; if he or she dies without sincere repentance, then he shall be admitted into the hellfire and shall never be forgiven. After rejecting his opinion, *Wāsel* retired from *Al-Hassan's* educational class, and formed a group along with those who accepted his creedal views. They were called "The Nonconformists" (*Al-Mu'tazilah*). Their creedal opinions were later on highly accepted by many Muslim scholars, and became the officially adopted opinion of the state during the first century of the *'Abbāsīd* Caliphate.

Meanwhile, with the rapid increase in the numbers of Muslims, the issues and questions about the Islamic rituals and the daily life practices increased. Whenever the need for advisory opinions from well learned jurists increased, the people sought the most notable and promising scholar in their city. Families started sending their children to learn about Islam at scholars' hands; consequently, coterie started to form and grow inside almost every Islamic city. These coterie grew into communities, and the fame they scored depended on the number of their members and their efforts in spreading the opinions they learned from their Imams. Now the evolution of different schools of thought (*Madhāheeb fiqheyah*) was something inevitable. Before the middle of the 2nd century, several schools of thought had already been formed by the intelligent scholars of the 4th generation. Among them are:

- The school of Imam *Abu Hanifah* (80-150 A.H.) was domineering in *Kufa*.
- The school of Imam *Mālek Ibn Anas* (93-179 A.H.) in *Madinah*.
- The school of Imam *Al-Awza'i* (87-157 A.H.) in *Sham*.
- The school of Imam *Al-Layth Ibn Sa'd* (94-175 A.H.) in *Egypt*.

Other schools of thought were formed during that time but they didn't have a huge number of followers and were never domineering. E.g., the school of Imam *Zayd Ibn 'Ali* (76-122 A.H.), and the school of Imam *Sufyan Ath-Thawri* (97-161 A.H.).



During the last three decades of the 'Umayyed dynasty, several attempts were made pursuing to collect Prophet Muhammad's traditions in one book so that it could be kept as a reference which people return to when they have questions. This started during the reign of Caliph 'Omar Ibn 'Abdul-Aziz (61-101 A.H.). The earliest attempt was that of *Muhammad Ibn Shehab Az-Zuhry* (58-124 A.H.), a minor follower. He collected 2200 traditions, but his book did not reach us although hundreds of his narrations did. The most famous early attempt was that of Imam *Mālek Ibn Anas*. He collected the traditions upon which he built his jurisprudential opinions in one book which he named *Al-Muwatta'*, (i.e., that which has been made easy). About 1850 traditions were gathered in that famous book. It was the prototype for the books that followed. Meanwhile, many attempts were also made pursuing to tamper with the teachings of Prophet Muhammad. Some fabricators started attributing to the prophet what he never said, did or even approved to.

Near the end of the 'Umayyed dynasty, the 'Abbāsids were making their underground efforts preparing to seize the Caliphate from the 'Umayyeds. The 'Umayyeds were known of their inclination to the Arabs in running the affairs of all Islamic states, they didn't instate Muslim Persians or Turks in the leading positions, they saw that they represented a threat to Arabia. Hence, when the 'Abbāsīd movement took Iraq as its main headquarters, many Persians joined it longing to recapture some of their lost prestige. In need for all the help they can get, the 'Abbāsids took the Persians as their allies until they seized the Caliphate in 132 A.H.

The 5 centuries of the 'Abbāsīd Caliphate (132-656 A.H.) witnessed the rising of many competing powers: Persians in the east, Turks in the North, *Fatimids* in the west, etc. The end product was the dismantling of the caliph's authority bit by bit. Within 300 years, many lands were seized and ruled by these rising powers. Finally, after another 200 years of declination, the 'Abbāsīd Caliphate fell under the attacks of the Mongols and was destroyed. This book is only concerned with the first 200 years of the 'Abbāsīd Caliphate for they witnessed huge events in the emergence of the Islamic sciences.

During the early period of the 'Abbāsīd Caliphate, the profession of fabricating *Hadith* peaked. By that time, all of the companions and their followers were dead, and so the opportunity was much bigger than before. The reasons behind fabricating *Hadiths* were various. It started emerging very early ever since the war between 'Ali and *Mu'aweyah* flared. The political changes played a very big role in this. The supporters of 'Ali fabricated many *hadiths* glorifying 'Ali, *Lady Fatimah* and their progeny, raising them to the level of infallible prophets. Of course, their blood relation to the prophet helped in this. Some Qur'anic verses were misinterpreted to support this view. In response, some *hadiths* were fabricated supporting the other team as well. Within the course of time, this entailed more fabrications with every quarrel rising between two or more Muslim groups. Each group would try to come up with what supports its opinions and actions. Also those who sought leadership, or a prominent place among their society, fabricated many *hadiths* and mingled them with other authentic ones so that the people would believe, respect, and follow them. Even some ascetics fabricated *hadiths* urging Muslims to read certain chapters of the Qur'an more than others, this later on contributed in destroying people's understanding of the Qur'an as their interest was concentrated on certain parts of the book aside from the others. Actually, this continues till the moment of writing this.

The greatest fabrications of all were made in Iraq. It is recorded that Lady 'Ā'ishah said, "*O people of Iraq, the people of Sham are more faithful than you. Many of the prophet's companions lived among them, and their students never reported to us what we don't know. While to you, a small number of companions traveled, but yet, their students reported to us what we know and know not.*" [Recorded by Bukhari].

Since that the Qur'an had already been collected during the reign of *Abu Bakr* and could not be tampered with; and since that there were no books of exegesis, jurisprudence, spiritual purification, etc., written yet that could have been used to infiltrate the pure teachings of Prophet Muhammad; therefore, *hadith* was the only remaining doorway. The previous made the compilation of the prophetic traditions a necessity and the Science of "*Hadith*" evolved. This resulted in the splitting of jurists into 2 main groups:

- **The people of reason (*Ahl Ar-Ra'y*):** Its main capital was *Kufa*. It was established by Imam *Abu Hanifah* and his students. They depended on logical reasonable thinking in responding to the questions that had no answers in the Qur'an, or the *hadiths* that had reached them. The reason behind this was that the grand compilations of *hadiths* and their authentication did not take place except after the departure of *Abu Hanifah*. The scholars of this school depended only on widely spread *hadiths* (*Mash-hoor*) circulated in the region where they lived. Meanwhile, Iraq was turning into a global center in which many cultures melted together producing a vast number of situations and events that had never been faced before. This increased the need for "interpretative judgment" (*Ijtihad Ar-Ra'y*) in every particular case.

- **The people of traditions (Ahl Al-Hadith):** Its main capital was *Hejaz*. *Hejaz* held the majority of the companions and their students for a long time; their knowledge and teachings was preserved there. Also the transfer of the Islamic capital from *Madinah* to *Kufa* then to *Sham* then to *Baghdad* helped in keeping *Hejaz* a very calm place, which is the perfect environment for learning and spreading knowledge. Besides the Qur'an, jurists of this group depended on the prophetic traditions in issuing an opinion. The problem with this approach in resolving any case is that traditions were always short quotes from the prophet's sayings. In most cases, those quotes were recorded out of context. Consequently, the proper and correct understanding of the quote at hand becomes extremely difficult and needs a lot of research and analysis. This is why Imam *Al-Layth Ibn Sa'd* used to say, "Traditions drive those who are not knowledgeable astray."



With the increase in the centers of learning, the spread of debates and discussions was immense. Based on the availability of traditions in the cities where they lived, the acceptance and employment of traditions in analytical deductions differed from one jurist to another. For example, Imam *Abu Hanifah* accepted widely spread well known traditions (*Mash-hur*), while Imam *Mālek* stipulated that the tradition must not contradict the deeds and practices of the people of *Madinah*. Since that the analytical deductions and opinions of prominent scholars were extremely important in winning off debates, preserving them became a necessity. These opinions were either written down by the scholars themselves or by their students. We have already given a hint about Imam *Mālek's Muwatta'*, it was mainly a compilation of the prophetic traditions upon which *Mālek* built his jurisprudential opinions. The traditions were recorded after stating their chain of narrators, which made the book one of the most authenticated books during its time. On the other hand, Imam *Abu Hanifah* dictated his opinions and their explanations to his students, and ordered them to write down their opinions as well.

After the departure of the two great Imams, their students took a different path. The most famous student of Imam *Abu Hanifah* was Judge (*Al-Qady*) *Ya'qoub Ibn Ibrahim Al-Ansary* (113-182 A.H.), nick named *Abu Yousef Al-Qady*. He wrote a book named *Al-Kharaj*. In his book, he tackled several matters concerning judicial and financial issues. This book clarified the methodology of the *Hanafists* (i.e. Imam *Abu Hanifah* and his followers) in building their jurisprudential opinions. Many traditions were mentioned to support each opinion, but the chains of narrators were mentioned in a simplified unclear manner. Another very famous scholar was *Muhammad Ibn Idris Ash-Shāfe'i* (150-204 A.H.), he was one of Imam *Mālek's* students. He also studied at the hands of *Muhammad Ibn Al-Hassan Ash-Shaybany* (one of *Abu Hanifah's* most famous students) among other scholars in *Hejaz* and *Iraq*. He wrote several books explaining both, the sources of jurisprudence, and his jurisprudential opinions. Among the books he wrote were two very famous ones, "*Al-'Um*," in which *Ash-Shāfe'i* explained his jurisprudential opinions; and "*Ar-Resalah*," in which he explained the methodology he followed in deducing his opinions. Imam *Shāfe'i* only accepted authentic traditions (i.e. traditions having continuous chain of narrators) in building his opinions alongside the "*mursal*," or ascribed traditions of *Sa'eed Ibn Al-Musayyab*, whose narrations were highly authentic, and was known to have learned at the hands of more than 100 companions in *Madinah*.

An Ascribed tradition is a hadith whose chain of narrators lacks the name of the companion who reported the tradition from the prophet.

Later on, some scholars began to think of gathering all of the prophetic traditions scattered all over the countries to which the companions traveled and taught in. Their main concern was to end the debates among the Muslims. The first famous scholar to start this task was the Arabian-Iraqi scholar, *Imam Ahmad Ibn Hanbal* (164-241 A.H.). He collected nearly 30,000 *hadiths* in one book and named it “*Al-Musnad*.” The traditions compiled in this book were reported by approximately 900 of the companions. The book contained all of what the Imam accepted to be describing the prophet’s *Sunnah*; a portion of these traditions were later on classified as weak, or even fabricated by liars. *Imam Ahmad* considered weak traditions to be admissible in his deduction of legal rulings. (This shall be discussed in more details later on.)

After the Imam’s death, his students carried forward his mission. They started the process of authenticating the prophet’s *Sunnah*. Among those were the two famous traditionists, *Muhammad Ibn Isma‘il Al-Bukhari* (194-256 A.H.) from Uzbekistan, and *Muslim Ibn Al-Hajaj Al-Naysaboree* (206-261 A.H.) from Nishapur in Eastern Persia. They were both among the students of *Imam Ahmad*. Their approaches in authenticating the traditions were similar. *Al-Bukhari*’s method was more cautious, this is why his book is considered by most scholars as the most dependable book describing the prophet’s teachings. It contains approximately 7500 traditions. When neglecting the repeated narrations implying the same meaning, they are reduced to about 2200 traditions.

As stated earlier, traditions are short quotes from the prophet’s sayings. In most cases those quotes were recorded out of their context, meaning that the complete conversation or story behind the quote is unknown. Consequently, the proper and correct understanding of the quote becomes extremely difficult, and needs a lot of analysis. This is why you can find many traditions that apparently contradict each other. Scholars have taken different paths in resolving these contradictions. Some gave preference to the more authentic traditions (*Tarjeeh*). Others combined those traditions in one acceptable sense (*Jam‘*). *Imam Abu Ja‘far At-Tahawy* (239-321 A.H.) wrote two very important voluminous books which he named “*Sharh Ma‘any Al-Athar*,” (Explaining the meanings of traditions) and “*Mushkel Al-Athar*,” (The Problematic traditions). In those books, he tackled most of those traditions, and explained them according to his “interpretative judgment” (*Ijtihad Ar-Ra’y*) resolving the contradictions between them. Those two books are considered two of the most important books in the Hanafist literature.

Within the course of time, other books of jurisprudence were written by the scholars of each school of thought. The end product was that the students of every school became more attached to the opinions rather than the legal text (*Al-Nas Al-Shar‘i*) of the Qur’an and the *Sunnah*. Consequently, futile debates evolved among scholars, and the seeds of rigid thinking were sowed. Later on, this led some scholars to make extensive studies in comparative jurisprudence (*Fiqh Muqaran*), comparing the different opinions of jurists, and stating the evidences that support each opinion. This approach was, and still is highly noble; it gave Muslims a chance to understand the jurisprudential issues in a deeper manner, work their minds into analyzing them, practice their own interpretative judgment, and decide for themselves which opinion to favor; or as the prophet said, “*Seek the Counsel of your heart even if all people deliver to you their advisory opinion.*”

This approach clarified that building different opinions is something normal and healthy; but it must be done in accordance with a certain sequential manner which instigates objective thinking, and helps in concluding what's more correct and useful in facing the new cases which evolve in Muslims' daily life.

Some might say that this was something good as it helped in acquiring a deeper understanding of the texts of *Shari'ah*. Others will say that this was destructive as the nation ended up scattered between different schools of thought without any consensus. A third opinion will say that understanding the texts of *Shari'ah* and the proper manner of applying them is way different from being a sincere Muslim having a sound heart; there is a huge difference between the practical application of the law and the spiritual adoption of these applications. Our nation should be united spiritually even if they differ on understanding the proper manner in which the laws should be applied.



We spoke earlier about the *Mu'tazilah* and how the development of their creedal views started. Caliph *Al-Ma'moon* (170-218 A.H.) was the first caliph to adopt the *Mu'tazilah's* creedal opinions. Among those opinions was the very famous one: that the Qur'an was "*Makhlouq*," i.e., brought into being (*The explanation of this view shall be discussed in the section speaking about the monotheistic creed*). In 212 A.H., *Al-Ma'moon* decided to declare his conviction about the Qur'an. He even held some court debates with several scholars who rejected this opinion, and he left the final decision for the people to decide for themselves which opinion to follow. Later on, in 218 A.H., seeing that debates ensued, *Al-Ma'moon* made an interpretative judgment and decided to gather all people on his creedal conviction. He ordered that all scholars must be cross-examined in this issue. If they yield to what he thought was the truth, then they may continue to teach and spread their ideas. If they refuse, then they should await punishment for their blasphemy. After many debates, most scholars accepted this opinion except two, one of them was Imam *Ahmad Ibn Hanbal*. He was cuffed in chains and led to *Al-Ma'moon*—who was at war with the Romans—in his camp near Tarsus, but Caliph *Al-Ma'moon* died that same year before meeting with the Imam and discussing the issue with him.

This tribulation did not end with the departure of *Al-Ma'moon*, but it deflagrated. *Al-Ma'moon's* successor was his brother *Al-Mu'tassem*, who was not a man of vast knowledge like his late brother, but a brilliant military commander. He left the philosophical and creedal debates in the hands of those whom his late brother favored. The end product was a torture campaign led against their opposition, mainly *Ahmad Ibn Hanbal*. Because of this unjust campaign, *Ibn Hanbal's* ideas and opinions were later on highly appreciated and accepted by many scholars.

The creedal views were now divided into two main doctrines, the *Hanbali* doctrine, and the *Mu'tazilahs'* doctrine. *Hanbalis* are usually referred to in modern times as "*Salafists*," a word that indicates that its holder follows the pure creed of the early Muslims, or at least claims to do so. It's worth mentioning here that the issue of bringing the Qur'an into being was never discussed during the prophet's life, not even during the reign of the rightly guided Caliphs and their companions.

In the early years of the fourth century A.H., a famous *Mu'tazily* scholar named *Abu Al-Hassan Al-Ash'ary* (260-324 A.H.) ascended the pulpit of the mosque in Baghdad, and declared his repentance from adopting the *Mu'tazilah* creedal views. Thereafter, he started writing about these views and refuting them. His followers were named "The Ash'aries" (*Al-Asha'erah*). Meanwhile, another scholar from Persia named *Abu Mansour Al-Matureedy* (258-333 A.H.) also wrote many books explaining the correct creed of the Muslims based on his vast knowledge and understanding. His followers were named "The Matureedies" (*Al-Matureedeyah*). The previous four doctrinal schools are the most notable in the Islamic history; for centuries, they found a wide base of acceptance among main stream Muslims. Many other doctrinal schools rose alongside those four, but they never prevailed, nor were they ever widely accepted among Muslims.

I guess it would be interesting to have a summarized background about all of the previously mentioned schools of thought, doctrinal opinions, methods of collecting the prophetic traditions, etc., how and why they differed, in addition to tackling some of the scholarly opinions for better understanding.



The Methodology of Legislation in Islam

During the era of Prophet Muhammad, the science of Jurisprudence (*Fiqh*) was founded. Linguistically, *Fiqh* means true understanding, grasp of knowledge, complete apprehension, etc. Idiomatically, the term *Fiqh* refers to the correct understanding and practice of the Islamic teachings as intended in its legitimate sources. Technically, the science of *Fiqh* is defined as the science that deals with deducing the Islamic provisions, and their practical application from their legitimate sources in the Islamic law (*Shari'ah*)—namely, the Qur'an and the prophetic teachings—based on the understanding of the erudite scholars (*Fuqaha'*). This is why jurisprudential opinions (*Ra'y fiqhy*) differ, while *Shari'ah* is fixed. It's exactly like how the understandings of people for the same book differ, while the book itself remains unchanged. This is also why *Shari'ah* is general, while *Fiqh* is detailed.

During Prophet Muhammad's life, the only sources of legislation were the Qur'an, alongside his explanation and practical application of its provisions and injunctions (*Sunnah*). The Qur'an was not revealed as one unit altogether, but its verses (*Ayat*) descended upon the Prophet throughout a period of 23 years. Some verses were inspired to the Prophet circumstantially based on the different incidents which faced Muslims. According to the situation at hand, the verses brought answers, new obligations, legal rulings, stories of previous nations and their Prophets, etc. Whenever Muslims faced a new situation, or directed new questions to the Prophet, Qur'anic verses were revealed holding answers amidst their context for the developing nation.

Throughout the Qur'an, you can read verses that startup with, “*They ask you [O Muhammad] concerning,*” then the thing about which the Muslims were asking is mentioned followed by the words, “*Say [O Muhammad],*” and the answer is mentioned. Other times the answer is mentioned directly without the previous approach based on the textual context. Likewise, the *Sunnah* also includes many answers and explanations given by Prophet Muhammad P.B.U.H. All these issues form the foundation of the sciences of jurisprudence (*Fiqh*) and traditions (*Hadith*).

Allah says in the Qur'an, “*He (i.e. your Creator) has ordained for you of the religious laws what He enjoined upon Noah and that which We have revealed to you and what We enjoined upon Abraham, Moses and Jesus, that you **setup the religion and do not be scattered therein.***” [The Qur'an (42:13)].

He also says, “*We then sent you [O Muhammad] on **a juridical path, so follow it and do not follow the whims of those who know not.***” [The Qur'an (45:18)].

Understanding the Qur'an is the peak of all knowledge in Islam. It gathers under its umbrella full knowledge of our Creator's injunctions, and their interpretation through Prophet Muhammad's explanation and illustration in different situations. He or she who has strong understanding of the Qur'an is considered an erudite scholar (*Faqih*). People turn to him or her for religious counsel and worldly advice. In the previous section we took a glimpse at how the jurisprudential schools of thought emerged, and we alluded to the reasons behind the division of Islamic jurisprudence into different schools of thought. Now let's indulge further into the methodology of legislation in Islam, and get to know a bit more about the scholars' opinions.

When a jurist states an opinion, he states the evidence on the correctness of his opinion. The stronger the evidence, the higher is the probability of its correctness. This evidence must be a lawfully accepted one, derived from the sources of the Islamic religion, or what jurists call a “legitimate evidence” (*Daleel Shar‘y*). They categorized any legitimate evidence with regards to its authenticity or credibility (*Thuboot*) into one of two kinds: **Decisive or Speculative**. The authenticity of the Qur’an and recurrent traditions (*Mutawāter*) is agreed upon to be decisive (*Qat ‘y*). All other reports, even the ones having highly reliable chains of narrators like widely-spread traditions (*Mash-hur*), are considered speculative (*Thanny*).

Jurists also used the same categorization with regard to the evidence’s meaning (*dalalah*), the meaning of the evidence itself could either be decisive or speculative. Decisive evidence from the Qur’an is like the verse which says, “*Allah instructs you concerning your children, for the male twice the share of the female*” [The Qur’an (4:11)]. There is no way to understand this verse in different ways; therefore, it has a decisive meaning. Speculative evidence from the Qur’an is like the verse which says, “*Let the divorced women wait for three periods (Qur’s)*” [The Qur’an (2:228)]. Here the word (*Qur’*) has a shared literal meaning, it could either mean “Purity period,” or “Menstrual period.” Consequently, the verse has a speculative meaning.

It should be clear now that any evidence is categorized to be decisive or speculative with regards to 2 characteristics: its authenticity and its meaning. For decisive evidences with speculative meanings, the meaning intended could properly be sought through further search and analysis of the related legitimate evidences. Every jurist will build his own opinion based on the related evidences he finds most fitting for the issue at hand, but his opinion shall remain speculative based on his understanding and intellectual capabilities.

Jurists are like astronomers, every one of them is trying to reach the most accurate results through his measurements and calculations. In this process he builds up a telescope which he deems most fitting for the job. He places lens after lens until he gets the best view possible. The following table will make this easier to understand:

Table of Juristic Telescopes

<u>Imam Abu Hanifah’s Juristic Telescope</u>	<u>Imam Mālek’s Juristic Telescope</u>
Lens 1: The Qur’an.	Lens 1: The Qur’an.
Lens 2: Widely spread prophetic traditions.	Lens 2: Prophetic traditions.
Lens 3: Consensus of companions.	Lens 3: Practices of the Madeenites.
Lens 4: Individual opinions of the companions.	Lens 4: Consensus of companions.
Lens 5: Analogy (<i>Qiyas</i>).	Lens 5: Individual opinions of the companions.
Lens 6: Preference (<i>Istihsān</i>).	Lens 6: Analogy (<i>Qiyas</i>).
Lens 7: People’s Customs (‘Urf).	Lens 7: Individual practices of Madeenites.
	Lens 8: Public welfare (<i>Masāleh Mursalah</i>).
	Lens 9: People’s Customs (‘Urf).

<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Imam Zayd’s Juristic Telescope</u></p> <p>Lens 1: The Qur’an. Lens 2: Prophetic traditions. Lens 3: The opinions of ‘Ali Ibn Abi-Taleb. Lens 4: Consensus of companions. Lens 5: Analogy (<i>Qiyas</i>). Lens 6: Reason (Al-‘Aql).</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Imam Shāfe’i’s Juristic Telescope</u></p> <p>Lens 1: The Qur’an. Lens 2: Authentic prophetic traditions. Lens 3: Consensus of companions. Lens 4: Individual opinions of the companions. Lens 5: Analogy (<i>Qiyas</i>). Lens 6: Accordance (<i>Istishāb</i>).</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Imam Ahmad’s Juristic Telescope</u></p> <p>Lens 1: The Qur’an. Lens 2: Prophetic traditions. Lens 3: Consensus of companions. Lens 4: Individual opinions of the companions. Lens 5: Weak traditions. Lens 6: Analogy (<i>Qiyas</i>).</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>NOTE</u></p> <p>Scholars agreed on 2 primary sources for legislation, they are the Qur’an and the <i>Sunnah</i>. They also agreed on 2 secondary sources, the consensus of the companions and analogy. They had different opinions regarding the legitimacy of the other sources, these are the bold ones in this table.</p>

The previous juristic telescopes are the apparatuses which every jurist employed in his search for legal evidences, and deduction of legal rulings. These telescopes are what scholars call “The origins of jurisprudence” (*Usool Al-Fiqh*). The lenses are the sources of legitimate evidences (*Daleel Shar’y*) used in the deduction of juristic opinions (*Ra’y fiqhy*). The sources of legitimate evidences that were agreed upon by the jurists are summed up in the verse which says, “*O you who believe, obey Allah and obey His messenger and those in charge of your community. If you dispute over anything, then refer it back to Allah’s laws and (the teachings) of His messenger if you truly believe in Allah and the judgment day. This is way better and closer to the best understanding.*” [The Qur’an (4:59)].

The order to obey Allah and His messenger, is an order to follow Allah’s injunctions in the Qur’an, and Prophet Muhammad’s teachings and traditions. The order to obey those in charge of the community, is an order to follow the laws promulgated by the governmental personnel responsible for legislation. In the previous section of the book, it was explained how the Caliph gathered around him the most knowledgeable companions, and used to consult them regarding every new matter that arose. Whatever they agreed upon, he issued as a law for all Muslims. They were the Caliph’s congress. Today’s democratic system is similar to this process but on a bigger scale. It’s a necessity produced by the expansion of nations, and the vast increase in people’s numbers and needs.

The order to refer the matters of dispute back to Allah and His messenger was applicable during the prophet’s life, after the prophet’s departure this order was still followed by the knowledgeable companions in the form of analytical deduction. This is mentioned clearly later on in the same Qur’anic chapter where Allah says: “*If they refer that (i.e. which they dispute about) back to the messenger, and to the leaders of their community, then those who are capable of deducing correct conclusions would surely know about it.*” [The Qur’an (4:83)].

Based on the previous verse, whenever there was no decisive text or consensus, the companions performed analytical deduction. In short, this is a process in which the new at-hand incident is connected to another similar one whose ruling is known, and having the same effective cause (*'Il-lah*). This was the legislation path described in the Qur'an and followed by the rightly guided Caliphs after the prophet's death. Now, it would be beneficial to acquire deeper understanding of the previously mentioned "**Sources of Legislation,**" for they constitute the first pillar upon which the methodology of legislation in Islam was built.



The First Source... The Qur'an

The message of our creator through which we can get to contact him, learn about His attributes, know what He desires from us, and live rightly through its guidance. Its main characteristic is that it was preserved in writing, and through memorization during the prophet's time. It was delivered from one generation to the next in a recurring manner that assures its correctness and authenticity.

In order to stand as evidence and guide for all people ever since its revelation till the end of time, the Qur'an was made miraculous in many facets. Its linguistic construction is the most perfect, its artistic depictions are breath taking, its verses allude to scientific facts in several fields that match the discoveries made centuries after it was revealed, and it foretold future events that actually happened later on proving its legitimacy as a true message from the Omniscient Creator who has created everything.

Injunctions in the Qur'an are divided into 3 main categories:

1. Creedal injunctions: These are related to the creed of Muslims, their understanding of their Creator, His messages and messengers, this worldly life and the hereafter, etc.
2. Moral injunctions: These are related to spiritual purification, and the moral and ethical values that a faithful believer should be characterized with.
3. Practical injunctions: These are related to the deeds and acts of Muslims, whether they are acts of worship like praying, fasting, performing pilgrimage, etc., or acts of dealing and interacting with others, whether individuals, groups of people, or other nations.

This third type is the one placed under the telescope of the science of *'Usool Al-Fiqh*, and consequently the science of *Fiqh*. They are the foundation of a complete series of laws related to every aspect of our life. Some jurists reckoned, summarized, and categorized these verses as follows:

1. Family and personal status injunctions: 70 verses.
2. Civil rights: 70 verses.
3. Penal Code: 30 verses.
4. International injunctions: 25 verses.
5. Pleading injunctions: 13 verses.
6. Economical injunctions: 10 verses.
7. Constitutional injunctions: 10 verses.

The injunctions tackling these seven issues in the Qur'an are guide lines upon which the lawmaker should base his or her analogy and legislation. They are not detailed laws, nor does the Qur'an stand as a book of law. This is to allow a space of freedom for law makers to introduce any modifications necessary according to the circumstances of their community without colliding with the Qur'anic text.

The Second Source... The Prophetic Traditions (*Sunnah*)

Sunnah is everything that the prophet P.B.U.H. did, said, or approved to during his life. Therefore it is practical, verbal, or just an advisory approval.

1. Practical *Sunnah*: The acts and deeds of Prophet Muhammad in different occasions and situations, like his performance of prayers, pilgrimage, giving obligatory alms (*Zakah*), etc.
2. Verbal *Sunnah*: The sayings, and explanations of Prophet Muhammad in different occasions and situations, like when he was asked by some companions whether they can perform ablution using sea water or not, he responded to their question saying, *"Its water is pure and its caught lifeless fish is lawful to eat."*
3. Advisory approval *Sunnah*: The acts of the companions that were approved by the prophet P.B.U.H., either by his consent or non-denial. This is like when the prophet dispatched companion *Mu'adh Ibn Jabal* to Yemen, he asked *Mu'adh*, *"How shall you judge between the people?"* *Mu'adh* said, *"I shall judge between them with the injunctions I find in the book of Allah (i.e. the Qur'an), if the case at-hand was not in it, then I shall look into your teachings prophet, if I couldn't find the case in it either, then I shall make my own interpretative judgment."* The prophet P.B.U.H. approved to that and said, *"Praise be to Allah who has guided the messenger of His messenger to what's right."*

Scholars agree that whatsoever had been attributed to the prophet P.B.U.H., whether practical, verbal, or his advisory opinions, and has reached us through an unbroken trustworthy chain of narrators—whether its implication and meaning are decisive or speculative—is considered a legitimate evidence for all Muslims alongside the Qur'an. Allah says in the Qur'an:

"Say [O Muhammad], if you love Allah, then follow my way and Allah shall love you and forgive your sins" [The Qur'an (3:31)].

"Whosoever obeys the prophet, he has obeyed Allah" [The Qur'an (4:80)].

"Indeed there is a good example for you in the prophet for those who wish for Allah's [protection and aid in this life] and the hereafter." [The Qur'an (33:21)].

"Whatever the prophet orders you to do, obey him, and whatever he forbids you from doing, then abstain from doing it." [The Qur'an (59:7)].

Among many other verses that stipulate the same meaning.

There was a consensus among the companions on the obligation of following the prophet's *Sunnah*. They never differentiated between the laws promulgated through the Qur'an or those promulgated by the prophet, neither during the prophet's life nor after his departure. Finally, the orders promulgated in the Qur'an were given in their general outlined wording; the only way to understand their application is through Prophet Muhammad's application and explanation.

It's worth mentioning here that injunctions in the *Sunnah* are one of two kinds:

1. Assuring and explaining a summed up matter in the Qur'an.
2. Promulgating new commandments not mentioned in the Qur'an.

Hence, no conflict could arise between the Qur'an and the *Sunnah*.

Reports of the *Sunnah* are classified according to their chain of narrators into 2 kinds:

1. Recurrent (*Mutawāter*): Reports that are delivered by a large number of narrators whose agreement on a lie is inconceivable. The minimum number of narrators is debatable among scholars, they agree that it should not be less than 6, and the preferred opinion is at least 10 narrators on every level in the chain of narrators (*Isnād*).
2. Narrations of individuals (*'Āhād*): Reports that are delivered by less than 6 narrators on every level in the chain of narrators.

The authenticity of the first kind is considered decisive, while that of the second kind needs further investigation that shall be discussed with more details in the next chapter. The meanings of the traditions of both kinds could either be decisive or speculative, that's based on its wording, the availability of information about the circumstances surrounding the tradition, and its complete context.

The student of *fiqh* should understand that the prophet P.B.U.H. was a human being. Whatever he did as a person acting naturally from sitting, walking, standing, sleeping, etc., and was reported by his companions to the next generations is not considered an order or injunction in the Islamic law (*Shari'ah*). Whatever was recorded from the prophet's deeds or sayings regarding worldly life matters, e.g., agricultural advices, army preparation techniques, describing a certain medicine for a disease, etc., is not considered a legitimate law in *Shari'ah*. Whatever was recorded to indicate that a certain act was something personal and only the prophet was entitled of doing, is also not part of *Shari'ah*. Hence, only what was recorded from the prophet's deeds and sayings, which he had done as a prophet promulgating a law or a certain provision for all Muslims, is what stands as a legitimate evidence in *Shari'ah* and a law by which Muslims should abide.

The Third Source... Consensus (*Ijmā'*)

Consensus refers to the agreement of the well learned knowledgeable Muslim jurists—at any time after the prophet's death—on one ruling for a specific well defined issue. If only one of those jurists whose knowledge and rank is acknowledged was absent, or had a different opinion, then the opinion of the majority is not considered consensus, and their opinion is not binding for all Muslims to abide by it.

The occurrence of consensus is something debatable. It was possible when jurists were few in number and living in one place, like during the reign of Caliphs *Abu Bakr* and *'Omar*. After this, the knowledgeable companions were scattered all over the Arab countries, and consensus was no longer possible. Imam *Ahmad Ibn Hanbal* said, "Whoever claims to have reached consensus on a religious matter is a liar, maybe others have a different opinion while he doesn't know; let him say, 'I do not know for people have different opinions.' "

This is why whenever consensus is mentioned in this book, it is usually followed by the words “of the companions.” It is important to understand that there is no decisive evidence on consensus as a legitimate source of legislation neither in the Qur’an, nor in the *Sunnah*. In my opinion, it is a process built upon logic. The bigger the number of knowledgeable jurists who agree on a certain opinion, the higher is the probability of its correctness. Likewise, if all jurists agree on exactly the same opinion, then the probability of its correctness is the highest, and its adoption by laymen is an obligation. My personal opinion in its occurrence is that it’s impossible except with analogous cases having decisive effective causes. This shall be further understood through the next source.

The Fourth Source... Analogy (*Qiyas*)

Analogy is a process in which a comparison is carried out between two cases, one of them is old with an established legitimate ruling reached through one of the previous 3 evidences, and the second is a new case that has no ruling yet, but has a similar effective cause (*‘Il-lah*). This makes the comparison applicable, resulting in the establishment of a connection between the rulings of both cases. Let’s take a quick example for better understanding:

Allah says in the Qur’an, *“Indeed wine, gambling, idols and divination stones are abominations from Satan, so stay away from them. Satan only wishes to produce animosity and hatred between you through intoxicants and gambling, and to avert you from the remembrance of Allah and from your prayers, so will you not desist.”* [The Qur’an (5:90-91)].

Drinking wine makes the mind befogged, consequently, a person who is drunk may commit horrible things unaware of what he or she is doing. Hundreds of people die annually for driving under the effect of alcohol, others commit adultery and wake up unaware of what they have done or with whom, etc.; this leads to the destruction of families and the community. All crimes are committed by those whose minds are befogged, and far away from the remembrance of Allah. Based on the previous facts, jurists concluded that whatever puts a person in such a state is forbidden, like whisky, Hashish, Marijuana, etc. It is not known that any acknowledged jurist at any time or place declared a different opinion, which makes this a consensus.

Besides the previously mentioned verses of Chapter 4 that prove analogy to be a legitimate source of legislation in the Islamic *Shari’ah*, Allah says in different places in the Qur’an, *“Verily in this is an example,” “Seek an example in...,”* and many other expressions of similar meaning. Allah is ordering us to ponder over the Qur’anic injunctions, narratives, etc., and compare them to the situations which we face in our daily lives so that we may learn the legitimate action we should follow. This is a direct order to perform analogy.

Another example from the Qur’an is where Allah says, *“Man asks ‘Who may revive bones after they have turned to dust?’ Say (O Muhammad), ‘He shall revive them, him who had created them the first time, He is All-Knowing of all creation.’ ”* [The Qur’an (36:78-79)].

In this verse, Allah is ordering Prophet Muhammad to tell those who refuse the concept of resurrection to perform analogy. They don't deny that humans were once nothing, and then later on, they came to exist. After a while—may it be long or short—they shall die and return to be nothing. It doesn't take a rocket scientist to understand that the One who brought them to being the first time can repeat his action without any difficulty. Other verses address the minds of atheists, and hold scientific facts as evidence on the fallacy of their logic and reasoning.

The previous few verses prove the legitimacy of analogy from the Qur'an. Now let's look into the *Sunnah*; besides the tradition of companion *Mu'adh Ibn Jabal* mentioned earlier, it's important to learn more about the prophet's approach in educating the companions:

1. A young woman once came to Prophet Muhammad and said, "*O prophet, my father died without performing pilgrimage, would it be accepted if I perform it on his behalf?*" The prophet responded saying, "*If your father was indebted, and you fulfilled his debt, would it be accepted?*" The young woman said, "*Sure.*" The prophet then said, "*Then Allah's debt is worthier of fulfilling.*"
2. *'Omar Ibn Al-Khattab* once asked the prophet about a man kissing his wife while fasting, does it break his fasting or not? The prophet responded saying, "*If you rinse your mouth with water while fasting, does this break your fasting?*" *'Omar* said, "*No.*" The prophet then said, "*So is your case, but don't cross that limit.*"

The above two traditions, among many others, prove the authenticity of analogy as a legitimate evidence and source of legislation. The recorded traditions do not only prove its legitimacy, but you can immediately get the sense that the prophet P.B.U.H. was urging his companions to follow this method in deducing the proper actions in different situations, exactly like Allah urges us to do the same thing in the Qur'an.

The companions followed the prophet's path. Whenever they couldn't find direct guidance in the Qur'an or the *Sunnah*, they performed analogy, and tried to reach a unanimous agreement on the best opinion introduced. One famous example is what they did the second day after the prophet's departure, they compared the Caliphate to leadership in religious matters, and agreed to choose *Abu Bakr* as their leader after the prophet P.B.U.H. They said, "*The prophet chose him to lead us in religious matters, so won't we accept him as our leader in worldly life matters?*"¹

When *'Omar Ibn Al-Khattab* was instating *Abu Musa Al-Ash'ary* as the judge of *Basra*, he said to him, "*Understand well whatever is laid between your hands from people's cases. If they are not mentioned in the Qur'an or the Sunnah, then compare between matters seeking their likes, and chose the ruling you deem closer to Allah's content and closer to what's right.*"

'Ali Ibn Abi-Taleb also said, "*People of intellect reach what's right through analogy.*"

After we have proven the legitimacy of analogy, let's now learn about the most important tool in its utilization as a method of legislation, which is the effective cause or *'Il-lah*.

1: Unfortunately many groups throughout the Islamic history have mobilized people, and took Islam as a front in their pursuit of power and leadership without being qualified for such a position. They took this analogous opinion as their evidence on attacking any ruler. In this process thousands of Muslims were killed thinking they were dying for Islam, while actually they died for false leaders. May Allah save all Muslims from their lies and schemes.

The Effective cause ('Il-lah):

Behind any injunction in the Qur'an or the *Sunnah*, there is an effective cause ('*Il-lah*). Jurists divided injunctions into two main kinds: Devotional injunctions ('*Ahkam Ta'ab-budyah*) and Rational injunctions ('*Ahkam ma'qulat Al-Ma'na*). Allah kept the knowledge of the effective causes of the first kind for Himself, while He guided us to those of the second kind either through the context, or through logic and reason; these are the ones that could be utilized in analogy. Examples of the first kind are: the number of units of prayer in each of the 5 prayers, we don't know why the Morning Prayer is 2 units and not 1 or 3, so is the case with the rest of our daily prayers. Likewise, we don't know why do we bow and prostrate while praying? Why don't we just pray standing like Jews for instance? We don't know why we bow only once while we prostrate twice in every unit of prayer, etc.

As for the second kind, jurists agreed that the effective cause ('*Il-lah*) is the focus and token of any injunction provided in the Islamic *Shari'ah*. They also agreed that Allah never promulgated any injunction except for the good of mankind either by preventing something harmful or by producing what's beneficial and bringing about ease from hardship. The following are quick examples:

1. Permitting those who are sick or travelling to break their fasting.
2. Killing murderers for the sake of protecting people's lives.
3. Cutting off the hands of thieves to preserve people's possessions.

They differentiated between the effective cause of an injunction, and the wisdom (*Hikmah*) behind it. For example: shortening the prayers is a divine permission for those who are traveling. The effective cause here is traveling, while the wisdom behind it is in bringing forth ease for the traveler who already has a lot to worry about. Based on the type of ride the traveler is taking, there could be various kinds of danger, like bandits and dangerous animals or reptiles for those traveling on camels in the desert; reaching the airport on time and boarding the luggage in the proper manner that ensures their arrival on the same plan for those traveling by air; high speed accidents, flat tires, or any mechanical breakdown for those driving their cars, etc. Here a person will say, "*But it is not a must that all travelers worry about those things; some people are used to traveling all the time, and nothing dangerous ever happens.*" Well that's true, but how can a jurist be sure that nothing will ever happen? That's totally speculative, and no ruling could be issued based upon speculative evidence. Hence, jurists agreed that the presence of the wisdom in every case is something evaluative and indecisive, while the effective cause is more clear and decisive. Therefore, they placed a juristic principal which says:

"Legal rulings are based on their effective causes."

They also placed some **conditions for accepting any suggested effective cause:**

1. It must be an evident, clearly described, perceivable cause.
2. It must be suitable and appropriate as a cause for the ruling issued.
3. It must be extendable to all similar cases, not confined to one case.
4. It must secure the wisdom and guard the law.

In the previous example, it was made clear that one traveler may find hardship, while another may not; one may feel afraid, and another may not. In many cases, fear and hardship are unperceivable; therefore, the wisdom of bringing forth ease from hardship is something unclear and indecisive. On the other hand, traveling as a cause for shortening the prayers is something clear, decisive, suitable, and applicable for any person traveling from one city to another. (*Please note that: Jurists differed in determining the minimum distance that could be considered travelling.*)

Methods of determining the effective cause:

1. **From the context:** The context of the Qur'an, or the prophetic tradition, may clearly state the effective cause behind the injunction promulgated. In this case the effective cause mentioned could directly be utilized in analogy. A quick example from the Qur'an is where Allah says, "*The month of Ramadan is the month in which the Qur'an was sent down as guidance for mankind with clear proofs of guidance, and the criterion by which to distinguish right from wrong. Therefore, whoever of you witnesses that month, let him fast, but he who is ill or on a journey shall fast a similar number of days later on. Allah desires ease for you, not hardship.*" [The Qur'an (2:185)].
2. **From consensus:** If jurists at any time make analogy, and agree unanimously on the effective cause of a certain injunction, their consensus is considered legitimate evidence on the correctness of such cause. The example given for intoxicants stands for this case.
3. **Limitation and Evaluation (As-Sabr Wat-Taqseem):** If there exists a certain passage promulgating a certain legal ruling without stating its effective cause, and there was no consensus among the jurists of earlier generations on its cause, then this analytical method may be adopted in deducing the cause.

Example for the third method: There is a tradition banning usury in exchanging barley with barley, meaning that if someone was in need for pure barley, and he wanted to buy it in exchange for a bigger amount of impure barley, this is usury and it's forbidden in Islam. It's called "Favored usury" (*Reba Fadl*). The problem here is that the tradition didn't state clearly the effective cause behind this banning, nor is there any recorded consensus among the companions or the jurists of the next generation on the cause. Jurists of the 4th generation analyzed the issue by **limiting** all the possible causes for this prohibition. For simplicity, the main causes they suggested were the following:

1. Barley is an essential nutrient.
2. Barley is a nutrient that could be stored for future use.
3. Barley is something that could be weighed and its proper price estimated.

Hanafists **evaluated** every cause from the previous ones 1300 years ago, they stated that, being an essential nutrient could not be the cause, as banning favored usury is also applied on gold which is not food. The second cause was also refused, as it allows favored usury for important nutrients that could not be stored for future use, like fruits and meat. The only remaining cause is that barley is something that could be weighed, meaning that its quantity is measurable, and its proper price could be estimated. Therefore, to prevent any exploitation or injustice, the person having the impure barley should sell it first, then buy with its price pure barley. From this, Hanafists deduced that when the quality differs, usury is generally forbidden in exchanging any measurable matter with its kind.

Other jurists limited this ruling for nutrients, gold and silver only as they are the ones specified in the prophetic traditions.

Therefore this process is carried out through the following 5 steps:

1. Analyzing the legal ruling under discussion.
2. Limiting all possible effective causes for this ruling.
3. Evaluating every cause utilizing the related evidences from the previous 3 sources, **plus the individual opinions of the companions** that have great importance in this case¹.
4. Disqualifying the causes found unsuitable.
5. Preponderance of the effective cause deemed most suitable.

This process does not depend on conjecture like some scholars stated, it's totally an academic approach built upon logic and reason. Though jurists have always differed in their preponderance of the most suitable effective cause for their analogy, still, their differences are something normal and beneficial, it grants Muslims a wider spectrum of opinions and choices.

This process is even found in several places in the Qur'an. One clear example is where Allah says, "*Were they created without a creator or did they create themselves?*" [The Qur'an (52:35)]. In this verse, Allah is teaching us how to use the method of limitation and evaluation in order to reach the truth about His existence. Allah is displaying for us the possible effective causes for our own existence:

1. We have come to exist without the need for an Omniscient Creator.
2. We created ourselves and the earth on which we live.
3. There exists an Omniscient creator who has created us and everything else.

The physical laws and rules that govern each and every component in this universe make the first assumption void. If the books written explaining these laws in all science branches were to be used as bricks, they would build huge cities. Imagine if the people receiving those books claim that they had no knowledgeable intelligent authors, but were the result of an explosion that occurred in a publishing house, causing the ink to scatter over the paper sheets forming the books! Of course, we can't imagine something like this happening. Hence, the question here is why do some people imagine that the universe has come to exist with all of its constellations, planets, stars, etc., guided by all of these physical laws merely through some kind of creative chaos, without any need for organization and guidance from an "Intelligent Capable Designer," or an "Omniscient Omnipotent Creator"?!

As for the second assumption, of course we know that we are not the creators of the universe, we cannot create one bee even if all humans on earth were to cooperate in such a project. This only leaves us with the third assumption, that the effective cause behind existence is an Omniscient Omnipotent Creator, praise be to Him our sustainer, He guides us from intellectual darkness to light.

1: If the companions performed analogy regarding the issue at-hand during their time, and they had different opinions, then their opinions must be considered and given great attention for they were the most knowledgeable of this nation, and at least one of them must have known the correct ruling. The jurist may give preponderance to the opinion he deems most correct, but he cannot neglect all of their opinions, or else he or she is an innovator.

One final thing that is extremely important to mention before we move on to the next evidence, Islam is built on reason and logic, no one truly believes except if his or her faith is based on reasonable thinking, and this is the beauty of Islam. Allah says in the Qur'an, "*Had your Lord willed [O Muhammad] He would have made all people become believers all together, are you then going to compel people to become believers. No soul believes except with the will of Allah, and He casts His wrath upon those who do not use their reason.*" [The Qur'an (10:99-100)].

The previous four "sources of legitimate evidences," were the ones agreed upon by the major schools of thought. Now, let's grab some knowledge about the most important controversial sources mentioned in the table of juristic telescopes.

The Fifth Source... Preference (*Istihsān*)

Hanafists define "Preference" as a process of evaluation in which the jurist waives a ruling deduced through clear direct analogy, and adopt another deduced indirectly; or he passes an old well-established legal ruling excluding part of it for a reason he deems closer to the higher objectives of the Islamic law.

An example for the first kind of preference described in the definition:

Based on preference, if a person entails a piece of agricultural land for the public welfare, the irrigation water passages and the crossing passages are both included in the contract whether this is mentioned or not. Direct analogy will compare entailment with selling contracts that do not include these services, but with preference, entailment is compared to renting contracts, this is because the purpose of entailment here is to donate the outcome of the land into the public treasury, and this necessitates the presence of those services.

An example for the second kind of preference described in the definition:

Based on the Qur'anic injunctions, any Muslim can bequeath one third of his or her possessions to whomever he or she likes, on the condition that this person or entity is not already among the inheritors. The other two thirds are distributed on his or her spouse, children, parents, brothers and sisters, each according to the shares prescribed in chapter 4 of the Qur'an. If this person was found incompetent because of any mental disease for instance, the bequest written under this condition is considered void. But with preference, the bequest is accepted if it was for a charitable cause that deserves the donation.

Hanafists took the following verse as evidence on the legitimacy of this source:

"Give glad tidings to my servants, those who follow the best of the opinions they listen to, they are the ones Allah has guided and they are the people of intellect."

[The Qur'an (39:18)].

And from the *Sunnah*, they mention the tradition in which the prophet says, "*Whatever Muslims find preferable, then it is preferable in Allah's sight.*"

Some jurists refused this understanding; they stated that the mentioned verse and tradition do not indicate this particular approach. Among the famous jurists who refused this source totally are Imam *Shāfi'i* and Imam *Ibn Hazm*. Some other jurists accepted the logic of the approach, but refused many of the Hanafists' opinions that were built upon it.

My personal opinion is that “Preference” has always been practiced ever since the prophet P.B.U.H. passed away. Take the following as quick examples:

1. During the year of famine, Caliph ‘*Omar Ibn Al-Khattab* stopped the application of the theft punishment. He was afraid that hunger would force people to steal, and those who are forced to commit a crime should not be punished. One may think that stopping the application of the theft punishment during famine will encourage people to steal even more. Direct analogy leads to stopping the application of the punishment on those who steal small portions of food, but ‘*Omar* preferred to stop the punishment totally without stating any conditions till the famine is over. He waived the ruling deduced through clear direct analogy to another deduced indirectly for a reason he deemed closer to the higher objectives of the Islamic law, which is preference of the first kind.
2. When distributing the alms during his caliphate, ‘*Omar* terminated the application of giving a share to those whose hearts are reconciled towards Islam. When he was asked about this and faced with the Qur’anic verse which says, “*Alms are only for: the poor and the destitute, for those who collect zakah, for conciliating people’s hearts, for freeing slaves, for those in debt, for the cause of Allah, and for travelers in need. It is a legal obligation enjoined by Allah. Allah is All-Knowing and Wise.*” [The Qur’an (9:60)]. ‘*Omar* responded saying, “*This verse was revealed when Muslims were weak and needed to gain more allies, but now, Allah has made us victorious and increased our numbers, so Islam is no longer in need to conciliate anyone’s heart.*” In this example ‘*Omar* passed the well-established legal ruling of *Zakah* excluding part of it for a reason he deemed closer to the higher objectives of the Islamic law. This is preference of the second kind.
3. The first legal ruling issued by ‘*Ali Ibn Abi-Taleb* when he was recognized as Caliph in Hejaz was delaying the punishment of those who assassinated his predecessor, ‘*Othman Ibn Affan*. Although killing murderers is a well-established legal ruling in Islam, ‘*Ali* saw that applying it right-away will incite the killers’ kin to revolt against him; consequently, more Muslims shall die in a horrible civil war. He preferred to delay the application of the punishment, seeking to calm people down, and unify all Muslims on his Caliphate first. He wanted to gain the political and military support that may enable him apply the law on the multinational killers. In this example, ‘*Ali* passed a well-established legal ruling excluding part of it for a reason he deemed closer to the higher objectives of the Islamic law. This is also preference of the second kind.

I think that preference is a legitimate source for legislation. It’s a tool of fine-tuning the results of analogy and generating solutions that are more matching to the higher objectives of *Shari’ah*. Nonetheless, it should be practiced and discussed in jurisprudential congregations, not individually. The Individual practice of preference is closer to supposition than what’s truly beneficial for all people. In other words, if the process defined above was carried out by an **officially acknowledged** congregation of jurists in a certain country, and they all agreed on a certain preferred opinion regarding a specific issue, then their opinion should be well accepted as legitimate evidence by the Muslims living in this country.

The Sixth Source... Public welfare (*Masāleh Mursalah*)

Mālekies define “Public welfare” as any beneficial matter for which there is no mentioned legal ruling neither in the Qur’an nor the *Sunnah*, and there is no evidence that gives preponderance to its consideration or negligence.

As mentioned earlier, all injunctions promulgated in the Qur’an and *Sunnah* are for the good of mankind. They either prevent something harmful, or produce what’s beneficial. Hence, the main purpose of legislation is to serve and protect the public welfare. Since that people’s needs and circumstances have no limits, nor could they be confined in the injunctions of the Qur’an and *Sunnah*, the need for continuous legislation is something crucial from which there is no escape.

For example: *Abu Bakr* gathered the Qur’an, *‘Omar* established judicial and postal systems, the companions built prisons in which criminals were locked, they also built coinage workshops, etc. In modern times, marriages are recorded in official records through contracts to guarantee the rights of both parties and their children. Any person must have an I.D. card for the prevention of fraud. No one can drive unless he or she has a driving license that ensures his or her knowledge of the driving rules and ability to drive, etc. All of the previous were either political decisions or legal rulings issued for the public welfare.

The companions promulgated many laws that serve people’s welfare. They didn’t have any direct evidence—neither from the Qur’an nor from the *Sunnah*. Actually, achieving the public welfare is the main target of law making. This is why the famous scholar *Abu Al-Wafa’ Ibn ‘Uqail* (431-513 A.H.) said, “*Politics is every decision taken seeking to improve people’s lives and fight corruption, even if it was a decision that the prophet P.B.U.H. never took, nor is there any injunction in the Qur’an referring to it. Whoever says, ‘There is no politics except for the matters that the Shari’ah has tackled,’ is surly mistaken and claiming that the companions were innovators.*”

Jurists placed some conditions for accepting to consider a legal ruling a matter of public welfare:

1. Issuing the rule should actually be achieving true benefits or preventing harm. Supposition has no role in the process.
2. The issue at hand must be of public nature, not confined to an individual case. Legal rulings should only be issued for the good of all people.
3. The ruling issued should not contradict another one that has been promulgated based on legal text or consensus.
4. The ruling must be rationally acceptable by people of sound reason.

Some scholars say that this source is the same as “Preference” in essence, but with restrictions and guiding rules. The main purpose of them both is achieving the main objectives of the Islamic law while providing a proper space of freedom for the legislators, which is what really matters.

The Seventh Source... People's Customs (*'Urf*)

Linguistically speaking, *'Urf* is whatever the people are used to. In legislation, it is whatever people are used to and does not contradict any legal text. According to many jurists, people's recurrent, prevailing customs must be taken into consideration by the legislators because it coincides with people's interests and welfare.

For example: Because of the tough economic conditions, Egyptians are accustomed to dividing the dowry into 2 halves, one is paid before the marriage is consummated, and the other is considered a debt on the groom, he pays it whenever he can. Although this practice is not mentioned in any of the legal texts of the *Shari'ah*, it is accepted by most jurists, and considered legitimate based on *'Urf*. Likewise, if the fathers of the bride and groom cannot agree on a certain dowry, then the customary dowries of the people living in the place should stand as an arbiter between them both, etc.

Thus, Imam *Mālek* based many of his opinions and legal rulings on the practices of Madeenites. Imam *Abu Hanifah* also differed with his students on many issues; the reason was the different customs each one of them had based on the place he came from. Imam *Shāfe'i* too changed his jurisprudential opinions when he moved from Iraq to Egypt because he was faced by a totally different community having different customs and habits; this is why whenever someone states one of his opinions he says, "*In his old school of thought (madhab), or in his new school of thought.*"

Some scholars say that this source is a completion of the "Public welfare." Only through its knowledge at any place, the proper legal rulings could be issued.

The Eighth Source... Accordance (*Istishāb*)

Shāfe'ies define "Accordance" as a process of issuing a legal ruling regarding any matter according to its initial condition until new evidence arises proving that this condition is changed. It is more concerned with denying a claim, not establishing it.

For example: If a person is missing, he or she is considered alive according to the last known condition in which he was seen. This ruling stands as long as there is no solid evidence proving death or any change in the initial condition. Consequently, any legal suits brought against a court of law demanding inheritance, divorce, etc., is rejected.

Some conformity juristic principals form the foundation of this source, e.g.:

1. "Certainty could not be nullified by doubt."
2. "Every person is presumed innocent until convicted of a crime."
3. "All things are lawful except that which has been prohibited by a decisive legitimate text."

This source is the final lens that any jurist considers looking through when studying a certain case. Its utilization in legislation is considered by most jurists when there is no guiding evidence found in the previous sources.



Objectives of the Islamic Law (*Shari'ah*)

After we have discussed the sources of legislation upheld by the famous schools of thought, and tackled some of their differences, it's extremely important to speak about the vast areas of agreement. Jurists agree that the revelation of the Qur'an occurred in two periods, the first one is the Makkan period. This one held knowledge mainly about: our Creator and His attributes; the previous nations and their prophets; the judgment day and the next life; alongside intellectual challenges to those who reject the Qur'an. This was the period of setting the foundations of faith for the new nation; hence, **"Sound faith comes first."** The second period is the Madinian period. It held knowledge mainly about: legal provisions, family affairs, people of the book, striving in the cause of Allah (*Jihad*) and Muslim hypocrites. This was the period of building an Islamic state; hence, **"State of justice comes second."**

In this course, when the Qur'an was first revealed to Prophet Muhammad P.B.U.H., its teachings and provisions were considerate not to destroy the standing civilization, but it looked over everything it tackled from the perspective of human welfare. What was useful was confirmed, and what was harmful was prohibited, either instantly or gradually, based on the capacity and ability of the recipients to adapt to this new way of life. Scholars agree that the injunctions and teachings in the Qur'an and *Sunnah* have **5 main objectives**:

1. Protecting people's lives.
2. Protecting people's religion.
3. Protecting people's honor (i.e. the unity of the family).
4. Protecting people's possessions.
5. Protecting people's intellect.

These 5 objectives are called **"Objectives of the Islamic law"** (*Maqāsed Al-Shari'ah*). They constitute the Second pillar upon which the methodology of legislation in Islam was built. The following are few examples on each of the 5 objectives from the Qur'an:

Objective No. 1: Protecting people's lives.

"No believer should kill another believer, unless it be by mistake. Anyone who kills a believer by mistake should free a believing slave, and pay blood money to the victim's relatives unless they forego it as an act of charity. If the victim belongs to people at war with you, but is a believer, then the compensation is to free a believing slave. If he belongs to people with whom you have a peace treaty, then blood money should be handed over to his relatives, and a believing slave set free. Anyone who lacks the means must fast for two consecutive months. Such is the penance imposed by Allah. Allah is all knowing and wise. If anyone kills a believer deliberately, his reward shall be eternal Hell. Allah will condemn him and reject him, and prepare for him a terrible punishment." [The Qur'an (4:92-93)].

"Whoever kills a human being—except as a punishment for murder or for spreading corruption in the land—shall be regarded as having killed all mankind, and whoever saves a life shall be regarded as having saved all mankind." [The Qur'an (5:32)].

“Say [O Muhammad], ‘Come! I will tell you what your Lord has strictly forbidden on you, do not associate anything with Him, be good to your parents, and do not kill your children out of fear of poverty—We shall provide sustenance for you as well as for them—refrain from committing indecent deeds, whether openly or in secret, and do not take the life which Allah has made sacred, save by right. That is what He has enjoined upon you, so that you may understand.’” [The Qur’an (6:151)].

“Do not take lives which Allah has made inviolate—except by right. If anyone is killed wrongfully, We have given authority to his heirs to demand retribution, but let them not transgress the prescribed limits in exacting retribution, for then they shall be assisted [by the law enforcer].” [The Qur’an (17:33)].

Objective No. 2: Protecting people’s religion.

“They say, ‘Be Jews or Christians, and you shall be rightly guided.’ Say, ‘By no means! We believe in the faith of Abraham, who was ever inclined [to Allah], he was not one of those who set up partners with Allah.’ Say, ‘We believe in Allah and what was revealed to us, and what was revealed to Abraham, Ishmael, Isaac, Jacob, and their descendants, and what was given to Moses and Jesus and what was given to the [other] prophets by their Lord. We make no distinction between any of them. It is to Him that we surrender ourselves.’ If they believe as you have believed, then they are rightly guided, but if they turn back, then know that they are entrenched in hostility. Allah will surely suffice to defend you against them, for He is All Hearing, All Knowing. We take on Allah’s own dye. Who has a better dye than Allah’s? We worship Him alone. Say, ‘Do you dispute with us about Allah, while He is our Lord and your Lord? We have our actions and you have your actions. We are devoted to Him alone. Do you claim that Abraham and Ishmael and Isaac and Jacob and their descendants were all Jews or Christians?’ Say, ‘Do you know better or does Allah? And who could be more unjust than one who conceals a testimony given to him by Allah? Allah is not unaware of what you do.’” [The Qur’an (2:135-140)].

“Let there be no compulsion in religion: true guidance has become distinct from error. Whoever refuses to be led by Satan and believes in Allah has grasped the strong handhold that will never break. Allah is all hearing and all knowing. Allah is the patron of the faithful. He leads them from darkness to the light. As for those who deny the truth, their supporter is Satan, who brings them out of light into darkness. They are the heirs of the Fire, and there they will remain forever.” [The Qur’an (2:256-257)].

“O Believers, obey Allah and obey the Messenger and those who have been entrusted with authority among you. If you are in dispute over any matter, refer it to Allah and the Messenger, if you truly believe in Allah and the Last Day: this is best, and best in the end. Have you not seen those who profess to believe in what has been revealed to you and [to other prophets] before you? They seek the judgment of evil people, although they were commanded not to obey them. And Satan wants to lead them far astray. When they are told, ‘Come to what Allah has sent down and to the Messenger,’ you see the hypocrites turn away from you. How will it be when an affliction befalls them because of what they themselves have done? They will come to you, swearing by Allah, saying that they were seeking nothing but goodwill and conciliation. But Allah knows all that is in their hearts, so ignore what they say, admonish them and speak to them in such terms as will address their minds.” [The Qur’an (4:59-63)].

“Allah has ordained for you the same religion which He enjoined on Noah, and which We have revealed to you, and which We enjoined upon Abraham and Moses and Jesus, so that you should remain steadfast in religion and not become divided in it. What you call upon the polytheists to do is hard for them, Allah chooses for Himself whoever He pleases and guides towards Himself those who turn to Him. They became divided only after knowledge had reached them, out of mutual jealousy. Had it not been for a decree already passed by your Lord, [to reprieve them] till a specified period, the matter would surely have been decided between them. Those who inherited the Book after them are indeed in grave doubt, amounting to suspicion about it. So call people to that faith and hold fast to it yourself as you are commanded, and do not be led by their desires, but say, ‘I believe in the Book which Allah has sent down, and I am commanded to do justice between you: Allah is our Lord and your Lord, we are responsible for what we do and you are responsible for what you do. There is no contention between us and you. Allah will gather us together, for to Him we shall return.’ As for those who argue about Allah after He has been accepted, their arguments will carry no weight with their Lord, and His wrath will fall upon them. Severe punishment awaits them. It is Allah who has sent down the Book with the truth and the scales of justice.” [The Qur’an (42:13-18)].

Objective No. 3: Protecting people’s honor (i.e. the unity of the family).

“Divorced women should wait for three menstrual cycles, it is unlawful for them, if they believe in Allah and the Last Day, to hide what Allah has created in their wombs. Their husbands have the right to take them back within that time, if they desire to be reconciled.” [The Qur’an (2:228)].

“It shall be no offence for you to hint at a proposal of marriage [to divorced or widowed women] or to cherish them in your hearts. Allah knows that you will bear them in mind. But do not enter into any secret arrangement with them, beyond conveying some indication to them of your inclination. Do not proceed with tying the marriage knot before the end of their waiting period. Know that Allah has knowledge of all your thoughts. Therefore, take heed and bear in mind that Allah is forgiving and forbearing.” [The Qur’an (2:235)].

“Do not approach unlawful sexual intercourse, indeed it is ever an indecent thing and an evil course.” [The Qur’an (17:32)].

“Allah has not placed two hearts in any man’s body, nor has He made your wives—whom you forsake saying, ‘Be as my mother’s back’—your [real] mothers, neither has He made your adopted sons as your own sons. These are merely words which you utter with your mouths; but Allah speaks the truth and gives guidance to the right path. Call them after their own fathers—that is closer to justice in the sight of Allah. If you do not know their fathers, regard them as your brothers in faith and your protégés. You will not be blamed if you make a mistake, you will be held accountable only for what in your hearts you have done intentionally. Allah is forgiving and merciful.” [The Qur’an (33:4-5)].

Objective No. 4: Protecting people's possessions.

“Give the orphans their possessions, do not exchange good things with bad and do not consume their property by adding it to your own. Verily, this is a great crime.” [The Qur'an (4:2)].

“Do not give those who are of immature mind your property which Allah has granted you as a means of support: make provision for them out of it, and clothe them, and give them good advice. Keep a close check on orphans till they attain the age of marriage, then, if you find them to be mature of mind, hand over their property to them. Do not consume it by wasteful spending, before they come of age. If the guardian is affluent, let him abstain altogether, and if he is poor, let him have for himself what is just and reasonable. When you hand over their property to them, call witnesses in their presence, Allah is sufficient as a Reckoner. Men shall have a share in what parents and relatives leave behind, and women shall have a share in what parents and relatives leave behind, whether it be little or much. This is ordained [by Allah]. If other relatives, orphans or needy people are present at the time of the division, then provide for them out of it, and speak kindly to them. Those who are concerned about the fate of their own helpless children if they should die and leave them behind should show the same concern for orphans. Let them fear Allah and uphold justice. Those who consume the property of orphans unjustly are actually swallowing fire into their own bellies, soon they will burn in the blazing Flame.” [The Qur'an (4:5-10)].

“Allah commands you to hand back your trusts to their rightful owners, and when you judge between people, to judge with fairness. Allah's instructions to you are excellent. Allah hears and sees all things.” [The Qur'an (4:58)].

“Stay well away from an orphan's property—except with best intentions—before he comes of age. Give full measure and weight, according to justice; We never charge a soul with more than it can bear. When you speak, observe justice, even though it concerns a close relative, and fulfill the covenants of Allah. That is what He has enjoined upon you so that you may take heed.” [The Qur'an (6:152)].

Objective No. 5: Protecting people's intellect.

“If you are in doubt about the revelation We have sent down to Our servant, then produce a single chapter like it, and call upon your helpers besides Allah, if you are truthful.” [The Qur'an (2:23)].

“Do they not ponder over the Qur'an? If it had been from anyone other than Allah, they would have found much inconsistency in it.” [The Qur'an (4:82)].

“Say, ‘Who provides [sustenance] for you from the heavens and the earth? Who is it who controls [the functioning of] the ears and the eyes? Who brings forth the living from the dead, and the dead from the living? And who governs all affairs?’ They will say, ‘Allah’. Then say, ‘Will you not then fear Him? That is Allah, your true Lord. What is there, besides the truth, but error? How then can you turn away?’ Thus the Word of your Lord is proved true against those who are disobedient. They will not believe. Ask then, ‘Can any of your partner-gods originate creation, and then reproduce it?’ Say, ‘It is Allah who originates creation and then restores it: how then are you so misled?’ Say, ‘Does any of your partner-gods guide one to the Truth?’ Say, ‘It is Allah who guides to the truth.

Then, is He who guides to the truth more worthy to be followed or one who cannot find the way himself unless he be guided? What is the matter with you? How ill you judge!’ Most of them follow nothing but mere conjecture. But conjecture is of no use against the Truth. Allah is well aware of what they do. This Qur’an is not such as could have been produced by anyone but Allah. It fulfills that [the predictions] which came before it and gives a fuller explanation of the [earlier] Revelations. There is no doubt about it: it is from the Lord of the Universe. Do they say, ‘He has fabricated it?’ Say, ‘Bring me one chapter like it. Call on whom you may besides Allah to help you, if what you say be true’! Indeed, they are denying something which they cannot comprehend, the reality not yet having dawned on them. Likewise those before them rejected the truth. So look at the end of the wrongdoers. Some of them will believe in it, while others will not. And your Lord is fully aware of the evil-doers. If they should reject you, say, ‘My deeds are mine and your deeds are yours. You are not held accountable for my actions, nor am I held accountable for what you do.’” [The Qur’an (10:31-41)].

“If you ask them who it is that has created the heavens and the earth and subjugated the sun and the moon, they will say, ‘Allah.’ How then are they turned away?” [The Qur’an (29:61)].

“Were they created out of nothing, or are they their own creators? Did they create the heavens and the earth? No! They have no faith.” [The Qur’an (52:35-36)].

The previous were examples on the 5 main objectives of the Islamic Law (*Shari‘ah*) from the Qur’an. Those who study the History of Prophet Muhammad and his teachings, may acquire deeper understanding of the practices undertaken for their preservation. The following verses sum up the five objectives; they stress on the fact that: *truthful faithful believers always observe them:*

“The true servants of the Gracious One are those who walk upon the earth with humility and when they are addressed by the ignorant ones, their response is, ‘Peace;’ and those who spend the night prostrating themselves, and standing before their Lord, they say, ‘Our Lord, ward off from upon us the punishment of Hell, for its punishment is a dreadful torment to suffer. Indeed, it is an evil abode and evil dwelling-place.’ They are those who are neither extravagant nor niggardly, but keep a balance between the two, those who never invoke any other deity besides Allah, nor take a life which Allah has made sacred, except with the right to do so, nor commit adultery. Anyone who does that shall face punishment: he shall have his suffering doubled on the Day of Resurrection and he will abide forever in disgrace, except for those who repent, and believe, and do good deeds. Allah will change the evil deeds of such people into good ones: He is most forgiving and most merciful. He who repents and does good deeds has truly turned to Allah. And those who do not bear false witness, and when they pass by frivolity, they pass by with dignity, who do not turn a blind eye and a deaf ear to the signs of their Lord when they are reminded of them, who say, ‘Lord, grant us joy in our wives and children and make us a model for the righteous. These are the ones who will be rewarded with lofty mansions in Paradise, for their steadfastness. They will be received therein with greetings of welcome and salutations of peace. There they shall abide forever: a blessed dwelling and a blessed resting place.” [The Qur’an (25:63-76)].



Promoting Simplicity...Conformity Juristic Principles

Unlike what many Muslims think, the methodology of legislation in the Qur'an was built upon promoting facilitation and disfavoring difficulty. In the Qur'an you can read verses like the following:

"Allah desires ease for you, not hardship." [The Qur'an (2:185)].

"Allah does not charge a soul with more than it can bear." [The Qur'an (2:286)].

"Allah wishes to lighten your burdens; man has been created weak." [The Qur'an (4:28)].

"We do not burden any soul with more than it can bear." [The Qur'an (7:42)].

"We charge no soul with more than it can bear." [The Qur'an (23:62)].

"Allah does not burden any person with more than He has given him. Allah will soon bring about ease after hardship." [The Qur'an (65:7)].

The above among many other verses confirm the same meaning, that the provisions sent by our Creator in the Qur'an are not intended to make our lives harder, but to make them easier. This was also stressed on by the prophet P.B.U.H. all the time throughout the 23 years of prophethood. *Anas Ibn Mālek* reported that the Prophet said, *"Make things easy for the people and do not make it difficult, bode them well [with glad tidings] and do not repulse them."* [Recorded by Bukhari].

Lady *Ā'ishah* described his conduct P.B.U.H. saying, *"Whenever the prophet P.B.U.H. was given the opportunity to choose between two affairs, he always chose the easiest and most convenient among them, but if he was certain that it is sinful, he would stay as far as possible from it. He never avenged himself, but if the sanctity of Allah was violated he would, that would be for Allah not for himself (i.e. obeying Allah's laws). He was the last one to get angry, and the first to be satisfied. His hospitality and generosity were matchless. His gifts and endowments manifested a man who does not fear poverty."* [Recorded by Bukhari].

The prophet P.B.U.H. said, *"Verily, the best [of opinions] in your religion are the easiest, the best [of opinions] in your religion are the easiest."* [Recorded by Ahmad].

"Verily this religion [was built upon] promoting simplicity. No one will ever try to complicate any of its matters except that [the other teachings of the religion] will cause him to fail." [Recorded by Bukhari and Muslim].

"Those who are merciful are treated mercifully by the 'All merciful' (i.e. Allah). So be merciful to those on earth and you shall receive mercy by the One in heavens." [Recorded by Tirmidhī].

"Verily those who are over strict [in their opinions] shall perish [in the hereafter]." [Recorded by Muslim].

The previous were just the tip of the ice berg when it comes to promoting facilitation. Therefore, those Muslims who think that the stricter they try to be, the closer they are to the Islamic teachings, have totally got it backwards. Actually it's the opposite, the more merciful and boding well they try to be, and the keener they are on people's welfare, the closer they are to what Islam is all about. In order to protect jurists from straying away from the objectives of the Islamic law, in the 3rd century A.H., some jurists took the initiative of placing some jurisprudential principals (*Qawā'ed Fiqheyah*) that govern the process of issuing any legal ruling or advisory opinion.

Jurists deduced these principals from the Qur'an and the *Sunnah*. Their main task is to facilitate the memorization of the effective causes behind the different legal rulings, and govern the process of issuing any advisory opinion (*Fatwa*) so that they may conform to the legal texts. Among these principles are the following important ones:

1. "Hardship entails facilitation."

Although it is obligatory to fast Ramadan, Allah allowed those who are ill or traveling to break their fasting. He says in the Qur'an, "*The month of Ramadan is the month in which the Qur'an was sent down as guidance for mankind with clear proofs of guidance, and the criterion by which [you] may distinguish right from wrong. Therefore, if any of you witnesses the month, let him fast, but he who is ill or on a journey may fast a similar number of days later on. Allah desires ease for you, not hardship.*" [The Qur'an (2:185)].

2. "Necessity renders some forbidden acts lawful."

Although it is forbidden to eat pork, Allah permits those who are driven by necessity (e.g. starving to death) to eat it. He says in the Qur'an, "*He has forbidden for you carrions, blood, the flesh of swine, and any flesh that is consecrated except in the name of Allah. But for one who is driven by necessity, neither craving nor transgressing the limits, there is no sin upon him. For Allah is Oft-forgiving and Most-Merciful.*" [The Qur'an (2:173)].

Likewise, many other juristic principles were deduced by jurists, and carefully observed as guiding rules when issuing an opinion regarding any matter. This approach forms a huge part in the methodology of legislation in the Islamic law (*Shari'ah*). In a very simplified manner, and for the benefit of the reader, the following are some of the most important juristic principals that every Muslim should be aware of, and consider before taking important decisions. Each principal is followed by its evidence from the Qur'an or the *Sunnah*.

3. "Warding off harm is given precedence over producing benefits."

Although drinking alcoholic beverages and gambling could be enjoyable for some people, both acts were rendered unlawful by Allah in the Qur'an because their harmful effects outweigh their benefits. Allah says in the Qur'an, "*They ask you about intoxicants and gambling. Say [O Muhammad], 'There is great sin in both, although they have some benefit for the people, but their harm is greater than their benefit.'*" [The Qur'an (2:219)].

4. "Private harm should be endured for the sake of lifting public harms."

Although Prophet Muhammad was subjected to insults, beatings, being targeted to kill all the time, etc., Allah ordered him to be patient and endure this personal harm for the sake of all people's welfare. Allah says in the Qur'an, "*Call to the way of your Lord with wisdom and fair exhortation, and reason with them in the best manner. Your Lord knows best those who have strayed away from His path, and He knows best those who are rightly guided. If you want to retaliate, retaliate to the same degree as the injury done to you. But if you are patient, it is better to be so. Endure with patience, truly, your patience is possible only with the help of Allah. Do not grieve for them, or feel distressed because of their schemes, for Allah is with those who are righteous and those who do what's good.*" [The Qur'an (16:125-128)].

5. “Harm could not be lifted by harm.”

Although Prophet Muhammad was continuously threatened as we have just stated, Allah ordered him to retaliate with what’s good. From the Qur’an we read, “**Repel evil with what is best**, We are well aware of the things they say, and say, ‘My Lord, I seek refuge with You from the prompting of the devils...’ [The Qur’an (23:96-97)].

Also read where Allah says, “**Good and evil are not equal. Repel evil with what is better**, then you will see that the one who was once your enemy has become your dearest friend, but no one will be granted such goodness except those who exercise patience and self-restraint—no one is granted it save those who are truly good.” [The Qur’an (41:34-35)].

6. “If inevitable, lesser harm is given preference over graver harm.”

Although he was innocent, Prophet Joseph P.B.U.H. preferred to be imprisoned over falling into the dark well of fornication and sinning. From what is told in the Qur’an of his story, “*She said, ‘This is he about whom you have been blaming me! And indeed, I did try to make him yield to me, but he was unyielding. Now, however, if he does not do as I bid him (i.e. surrender to her seduction), he shall certainly be put in prison and be humiliated.’ Joseph said, ‘O my Lord! I prefer prison to what these women are inviting me to do. If You do not avert their guile from me, I may yield to them, and so become one of the ignorant.’ So his Lord answered his prayers, and warded off their guile. He is All Hearing and All Knowing.*” [The Qur’an (12:32-34)].

7. “Whatever is necessary for accomplishing an obligation is also obligatory.”

Although praying and performing ablution are two different deeds, they are interconnected, meaning that no one can pray unless he or she was in the state of purity and having performed ablution. Allah says in the Qur’an, “**Believers, when you rise to pray, wash your faces and your hands up to the elbows, and wipe your heads and [wash] your feet up to the ankles. If you are in a state of impurity, take a full bath. Should you be ill, or on a journey, or when you have just relieved yourselves, or you have consorted with your spouses, purify yourself by bathing. If you can find no water, take some clean sand and rub your faces and hands with it. Allah does not wish to place any burden on you, He only wishes to purify you and perfect His favor to you, in order that you may be grateful.**” [The Qur’an (5:6)].

Some scholars tried to sum up the juristic principles reached into the most comprehensive ones among them. Many of them agree on 5 basic conformity juristic principles (*Al-Qawā’ed Al-’Usooleyah Al-Fiqheyah Al-Khams*), they are:

1. “Certainty could not be nullified by doubt.”
2. “All harm should be lifted.”
3. “Hardship entails facilitation.”
4. “People’s customs stand as juristic evidence.”
5. “All affairs are according to their objectives.”

The previous principles among other “**Conformity Juristic Principles**” constitute the third pillar upon which the methodology of legislation in Islam was built.



The Juristic Rulings (*Al-Ahkām Al-Fiqhīyah*)

After we have learned how jurists had different approaches in issuing a legal opinion, and how they utilized the different sources of legal evidences, it is important to know that since the first century A.H., the majority of jurists divided their legal rulings regarding the **actions and deeds of Muslims** into 5 main kinds:

1. **Obligatory (*Wājib*)**: it is any order promulgated by Allah in the Qur'an or by Prophet Muhammad in his *Sunnah*. Its observer shall be awarded, and its neglecter shall be punished in the hereafter; e.g., the five daily prayers, fasting *Ramadan*, paying *Zakah*, etc.
2. ***Sunnah (Mandoub)***: it is any deed which the prophet performed, but did not make obligatory on Muslims. Its doer shall be awarded, and its neglecter shall not be punished in the hereafter. It is divided into 3 kinds:
 - i) **Confirmed *Sunnah (Sunnah Mu'akkadah)***: it is any deed which the prophet observed persistently. Those who neglect it deserve to be blamed for neglecting it by their mentors; e.g., praying 2 voluntary units of prayers before the morning prayers.
 - ii) **Supererogatory *Sunnah (Nāfelah)***: it is any deed that the prophet did but did not observe persistently. Those who neglect it should be encouraged to do them even once during their lives; e.g., fasting Mondays and Thursdays.
 - iii) **Desirable *Sunnah (Mostahab)***: it is any deed which the prophet could have done normally. Those who follow the prophet's example in those things out of love and sincerity shall be awarded, and those who don't are not to be blamed in any way; e.g., walking fast, sleeping on the right side, preferring to wear white clothes, loving perfumes, etc.
3. **Abominable (*Makrouh*)**: it is any deed which the prophet hated, or implied that it was something not fit for Muslims to do. Its neglecter shall be awarded, and its doer shall not be punished in the hereafter; e.g., wearing extremely expensive clothes among those who cannot afford to buy remotely similar outfits.
4. **Permissible (*Mubāh*)**: it is any deed for which the legal texts of the Qur'an or the *Sunnah* gave the freedom of choice to all Muslims whether to perform or neglect. Its doer shall not be awarded, and its neglecter shall not be punished. E.g., Allah says in the Qur'an, "*When the prayer has been concluded, then disperse within the lands and seek from the bounty of Allah.*" [The Qur'an (62:10)].
5. **Prohibited (*Muharram*)**: it is any prohibition promulgated by Allah in the Qur'an, or by Prophet Muhammad in his *Sunnah*. Its avoider shall be awarded, and its doer shall be punished in the hereafter; e.g., fornication, adultery, theft, murder, lying, hypocrisy, backbiting, etc.

Finally, let's take a comprehensive example on the different juristic opinions and their evidences regarding a simple topic, that's for the sake of a well-established understanding. This example only tackles the opinions of the major 4 jurisprudential schools, which is enough for the scope of this book. After the example, we shall move on to another interesting topic: how did scholars classify the prophetic traditions?

The Topic Under Discussion: "Ablution"						
I.N.	Description	Jurist	Ruling	Legal Evidence	Degree	Reason of disagreement
1.0	Intention	<i>Abu-Hanifah</i>	Desirable	"O you who believe! When you prepare for prayers, wash your faces and your hands till the elbows; and wipe your heads; and (wash) your feet to the ankles."	Qur'an (5:6)	Some jurists considered ablution a pure act of worship and some considered it a means of purification required for correct worship. Intentions are required for acts of worship only.
		<i>Mālek</i>	Obligatory	"Deeds are but by intentions"	Recorded by Bukhari	
		<i>Shafe'i</i>	Obligatory			
1.1	Start by mentioning the name of Allah	<i>Ibn-Hanbal</i>	Obligatory	"No prayers are accepted without ablution and no ablution is complete for him who doesn't start by mentioning the name of Allah."	"Good" Recorded by Ahmad & Ibn-Mājah	They differed in understanding the tradition. Some considered the order a kind of favoring and the others considered it an obligation.
		<i>Abu-Hanifah</i>	Sunnah			
		<i>Mālek</i>	Sunnah			
		<i>Shafe'i</i>	Sunnah			
2.0	Washing the hands before inserting them in the water dish.	<i>Ibn-Hanbal</i>	Obligatory	"If any of you (wishes to perform ablution) after waking up let him wash his hands thrice before inserting them in the dish, for no one knows where his hands laid during the night."	Recorded by Muslim	
		<i>Abu-Hanifah</i>	Sunnah			
		<i>Mālek</i>	Sunnah			
3.0	Rinsing the mouth & sniffing water	<i>Shafe'i</i>	Sunnah	"If any of you performs ablution; he should sniff some water then disperse it."	Recorded by Bukhari & Mālek	They differed in understanding the tradition. Some considered the order a kind of favoring and the others considered it an obligation.
		<i>Abu-Hanifah</i>	Sunnah			
		<i>Mālek</i>	Sunnah			
		<i>Ibn-Hanbal</i>	Obligatory			
4.1	Washing the skin between the ears and the sideburns	<i>Abu-Hanifah</i>	Obligatory			There was no mentioning of whether to consider this skin part of the face or not; so every one of them stated his own opinion.
		<i>Mālek</i>	Permissible			
		<i>Shafe'i</i>	Obligatory			
4.2	Washing the beard / Passing the fingers through it	<i>Ibn-Hanbal</i>	Obligatory	"Whenever the prophet performed ablution he passed the water through his beard."	"Weak" Recorded by Ahmad & Dāwood.	<i>Mālek</i> & <i>Shafe'i</i> considered it part of the face and must be wiped with it, but they considered passing the fingers through it a <i>Sunnah</i> .
		<i>Abu-Hanifah</i>	Sunnah			
		<i>Mālek</i>	Obligatory			
		<i>Shafe'i</i>	Obligatory			

I.N.	Description	Jurist	Ruling	Legal Evidence	Degree	Reason of disagreement
5.0	Washing the elbows	<i>Abu-Hanifah</i>	Obligatory	<p>“I saw <i>Abu-Hurayrah</i> performing ablution; he washed his face well, then he washed his right hand till he reached his upper arm, then his left likewise, then he wiped his head, then he washed his right feet till he reached his shank, then his left likewise, and he said ‘<i>this is how I saw the prophet performing ablution.</i>’”</p>	Recorded by Muslim	
		<i>Mālek</i>	Obligatory			
		<i>Shafē’i</i>	Obligatory			
		<i>Ibn-Hanbal</i>	Obligatory			
6.0	The part wiped from the head	<i>Abu-Hanifah</i>	1/4	<p>“The prophet performed ablution; he wiped his forelock, and he wiped his turban and footwear.”</p>	Recorded by Muslim.	<p><i>Mālek</i> and <i>Ibn-Hanbal</i> said that wiping all of the head was obligatory, while <i>Abu-Hanifah</i> & <i>Shafē’i</i> said that part of the head was enough basing their opinions on the fact that the verse didn’t specify an exact portion and the literal wording imply wiping part of the head. <i>Abu-Hanifah</i>’s opinion was that the wiping tool is the palm which wipes at least 1/4 the head, so this portion is obligatory while the rest was <i>Sunnah</i>. <i>Shafē’i</i> said that only few hairs were enough. It’s an analogous issue.</p> <p><i>Ibn Al-Qayem</i> said, “It was never authenticated that the prophet sufficed with wiping his forelocks, he always wiped over his turban as well.”</p>
		<i>Mālek</i>	All	<p>“A man asked ‘<i>Abdullah Ibn-Zayd</i> to show him how the prophet performed ablution. ‘<i>Abdullah</i> agreed and asked for clean water. He poured some on his hands and washed them a couple of times, then he rinsed his mouth and sniffed thrice, then he washed his face thrice, then he washed his hands to the elbows thrice, then he wiped his head with both hands starting with his forelocks until he reached his nape and back, then he washed his feet.”</p>		
		<i>Shafē’i</i>	Few hairs	<p>“...and wipe your heads...”</p>	Qur’an (5:6)	
		<i>Ibn-Hanbal</i>	All	The same evidence of <i>Mālek</i> .		
6.1	The number of times we Wipe our heads	<i>Abu-Hanifah</i>	1			<p><i>Shafē’i</i> saw that if we wash every organ 3 times then we wipe our heads 3 times, but the rest of the jurists saw that repeating the wiping makes this washing and not wiping. It’s an analogous issue.</p>
		<i>Mālek</i>	1			
		<i>Shafē’i</i>	3			
		<i>Ibn-Hanbal</i>	1			

I.N.	Description	Jurist	Ruling	Legal Evidence	Degree	Reason of disagreement
6.2	The ears: Are they part of the head, or the face, or a separate organ?! What is the ruling of their cleansing?!	<i>Abu-Hanifah</i> <i>Mālek</i> <i>Shafe' i</i> <i>Ibn-Hanbal</i>	<i>Sunnah</i> <i>Sunnah</i> <i>Sunnah</i> Obligatory	1. "Ears are part of the head" 2. <i>Ibn-'Abbās</i> said, "The prophet performed ablution, he dipped out a scoop of water and washed his face, then he dipped out another and washed his right hand, then another and he washed his left hand, then another and wiped his head and ears putting his indexes inside and passing his thumbs from the back, so he wiped both their insides and backsides." <i>Ibn Al-Mughirah</i> said, "The prophet was late for prayers one day and I was with him; when he wanted to perform ablution he said, "Do you have any water?", so I brought him some water and he started by washing his hands and face, then he tried to tuck up his sleeves but they were too tight so he took his arms out of his garment and he washed them, and he wiped his forelocks, his turban and footwear."	"Weak" Recorded by Tirmidhī. "Authentic" Recorded by Ibn-Majāh, Nasā'ī & Hâkem.	Based on the mentioned traditions, <i>Abu-Hanifah</i> preferred wiping them with the head with the same water, while the rest of the jurists preferred using new water. Wiping the ears is considered a <i>Sunnah</i> for they are not mentioned in the authentic traditions describing the prophet's ablution or what companions like <i>Othman</i> & <i>'Abdullah Ibn Zaid</i> taught to be the most correct ablution. Renewing the water for them is reported in weak traditions that go back to <i>Ibn-'Omar's</i> ablution.
6.3	Wiping over the turban.	<i>Abu-Hanifah</i> <i>Mālek</i> <i>Shafe' i</i> <i>Ibn-Hanbal</i>	Prohibited Prohibited Prohibited Permissible with the forelocks	<i>Ibn Al-Mughirah</i> said, "The prophet was late for prayers one day and I was with him; when he wanted to perform ablution he said, "Do you have any water?", so I brought him some water and he started by washing his hands and face, then he tried to tuck up his sleeves but they were too tight so he took his arms out of his garment and he washed them, and he wiped his forelocks, his turban and footwear."	"Authentic" Recorded by Muslim.	This tradition though authenticated by <i>Muslim</i> , was disregarded by most jurists and they didn't regard it as authentic. Furthermore the tradition mentioned that the prophet wiped his forelocks first. <i>Ahmad</i> saw that wiping all of the head is obligatory and permitted wiping the forelocks and over the turban.
7.0	Washing the feet.	<i>Abu-Hanifah</i> <i>Mālek</i> <i>Shafe' i</i> <i>Ibn-Hanbal</i>	Obligatory Obligatory Obligatory Obligatory	"O you who believe! When you prepare for prayers, wash your faces and your hands to the elbows, and wipe your heads, and your feet to the ankles."	Qur'an (5:6)	Jurists differed on whether the feet are washed or just wiped because of the two recitals of the word "مَسَحُوا بِرِجْلَيْكُمْ": "your feet" in verse (5:6). Some read it with an accusative vowel (a) in conjunction with the limbs washed, and some read it with a genitive vowel (i) in conjunction with the head that is wiped. The majority said that washing the feet is more suitable for purifying them than wiping. This was given preponderance by the previously mentioned traditions.

I.N.	Description	Jurist	Ruling	Legal Evidence	Degree	Reason of disagreement
7.1	Wiping over the footwear (i.e. leather socks, thick fabric socks) if you had put them on while keeping your ablu-tion.	<p><i>Abu-Hanifah</i></p> <p><i>Malek</i></p> <p><i>Shafe'i</i></p> <p><i>Ibn-Hanbal</i></p>	<p>Permissible</p> <p>Permissible</p> <p>Permissible</p> <p>Permissible</p>	<p><i>Ibn-Jareer</i> said, "I saw the prophet wipe over his footwear." When <i>Ibn-Jareer</i> was told that this was before the revelation of chapter <i>Al-Ma'idah</i>, he said "I embrace Islam after its revelation."</p>	<p>"Authentic" Recorded by Bukhari & Muslim.</p>	<p><i>Ibn 'Abbās</i> saw that verse (5:6) abrogated the traditions of wiping over the footwear, but the 4 jurists saw that it was permissible because of the tradition of <i>Ibn-Jareer</i>. Some jurists made a distinction between travelling & being in settlement. They did so because most of the traditions conveyed regarding wiping over the footwear were related to travelling, and taking off the footwear in such case presents hardship for the traveler.</p>
7.2	The Permissible period for wiping over the footwear.	<p><i>Abu-Hanifah</i></p> <p><i>Malek</i></p> <p><i>Shafe'i</i></p> <p><i>Ibn-Hanbal</i></p>	<p>1 day for residents, 3 days for travelers</p> <p>As long as you can keep them on while the major impurity hadn't befallen you.</p> <p>1 day for residents, 3 days for travelers</p> <p>1 day for residents, 3 days for travelers</p>	<p>'<i>Ali</i> said regarding the period of wiping over the footwear, "The prophet allowed [wiping] 3 days and nights for the traveler and 1 day and night for the resident." <i>Ibn Abi-'Emarah</i> reported that, "I asked the prophet, 'O prophet, can I wipe over my footwear?' The prophet said, 'Yes.' So I asked, 'For a day?' He said, 'Yes.' So I asked again, 'And for 2 days?' And he said, 'Yes.' So I asked again, 'And 3 days?' So he said, 'Yes.' I continued to ask till I reached 7 days, then he said, 'Wipe as long as you like.'"</p>	<p>"Authentic" Recorded by Muslim</p> <p>"Weak" Recorded by Dāwood</p>	<p><i>Mālek</i> accepted the tradition of <i>Ibn Abi-'Emarah</i> as he saw that this ritual couldn't be time limited and that a person can wipe over the leather socks as long as he doesn't take them off and the major impurity hadn't befallen him.</p>

I.N.	Description	Jurist	Ruling	Legal Evidence	Degree	Reason of disagreement
7.3	The side wiped from the footwear / The manner of wiping / The permissible magnitude of tears and holes.	<i>Abu-Hanifah</i>	Upper side/ 1 time with 3 fingers / less than 3 toes.	'Ali said, "Had (the teachings) of religion been built on opinions, the lower part of the footwear would have been more deserving of wiping than the upper part, but I've seen the prophet wiping the upper parts."	"Authentic" Recorded by Bukhari & Muslim.	The two different traditions mentioned in the evidence cells are the reason for disagreement. <i>Mālek</i> gathered between the 2 traditions and said that wiping the lower parts was desirable and the upper parts was obligatory, while the rest of the jurists discarded the weak tradition and saw that 'Ali's words were clear about the matter. They didn't differ on the manner of wiping: that it should be done with three fingers and only once. They had different analysis regarding the presence of tears & holes in the footwear and the magnitude beyond which the person must take it off and wash his feet. This matter was not explained by Prophet Muhammad, so it's settled through analogy and preference based on what's closer to reality and bringing ease for Muslims.
		<i>Mālek</i>	Upper side obligatory & lower side desirable / 1 time with 3 fingers / small hole.	<i>Al-Mughirah Ibn Show'abah</i> reported that the prophet wiped the upper and lower sides of his footwear.	"Weak" Recorded by Dāwood, Tirmidhī & Ibn-Mājah.	
		<i>Shafe'i</i>	Upper side/ 1 time with 3 fingers / not at the front.			
		<i>Ibn-Hanbal</i>	Upper side/ 1 time with 3 fingers / small hole.			

It is now important to state that jurists analyzed every topic in details like the example above shows. They classified all topics and categorized all issues, and then they gave an opinion regarding every little detail. Among the main topics which they tackled are the following:

1. Acts of Worship (Prayers – Fasting – Paying Alms – Pilgrimage).
2. Family laws (Marriage – Divorce – Inheritance – Raising kids).
3. International laws (Relations with neighboring countries – Rules of war – Rules of peace).
4. Human rights (Orphans – Indigents – Widows – Non-Muslim citizens – Non-Muslim covenants – Prisoners of war – Slaves).
5. Commercial dealings and interactions (Buying & Selling – Lending & borrowing – Bargaining – Findings – National treasures – Wills & Guarantees).
6. National laws (Treasury of state – National income – Expenditures – Education – Penal code – Pleading rights and procedures).
7. Constitutional laws.

The above topics among many others are discussed in details in jurisprudence books. The above example was an illustration to this on one simple subject like ablution. This is why scholars say that Islam is not just a religion, but it's a complete way of life.

Please note that:

Studying the Islamic jurisprudence from books written more than 1000 years ago is like walking in a mine field. Normally, it's always hard to understand the jurisprudential opinions based upon people's customs or welfare back at that time. Most jurists didn't have the comprehensive books which we have today. They didn't have the computerized search programs which we use on daily basis. They didn't have the internet to use as a means of correspondence or communication; the postal system during their time depended on postmen traveling on horses for months. Many authentic traditions didn't reach them before they placed their opinions, etc.

The reader should be able to understand that the different jurisprudential schools of thought which most Muslims hold on to very tight are not Islam; they are opinions and interpretative judgments given by fallible men. No matter how knowledgeable and great those men were, they will always remain fallible men who were neither inspired through archangels, nor did they ever claim that their opinions were the absolute correct ones. From this point, it should be clear that the door to practicing interpretative judgment (*Ijtihad Ar-Ra'y*) must be kept wide open, and the practice itself should never stop. Every day we need new jurisprudential opinions that suit our modern lives and the circumstances forced upon us. Those fancy jurists who love to issue opinions based only on the famous schools of thought should really start looking at the wider view of this life; they should leave that dark box in which they have imprisoned their minds, and seek to give Muslims new enlightening opinions that can help the nation move forward and achieve progress.

All jurists say that insurance is a kind of usury and gambling, but they never present a solution for a Muslim investor who imports raw materials costing millions through sea shipments; what should he do to protect both, his business and the future of 300 workers and their families from the hazards that face his investment if his shipment was lost at sea?! All jurists stipulate that bank interest on investment loans is usury, but they never submit any solid suggestion of a detailed law to the parliament explaining the changes they deem necessary in order to rectify the bank transactions so that they would become lawful. Many scholars find it easier to say this is *Haram* or forbidden than to seek a lawful solution and a way out for our nation. This should really stop. Detailed solutions should be sought by the knowledgeable scholars instead of the widely-spread undefined catchy slogans which are always raised by the so-called Islamists.

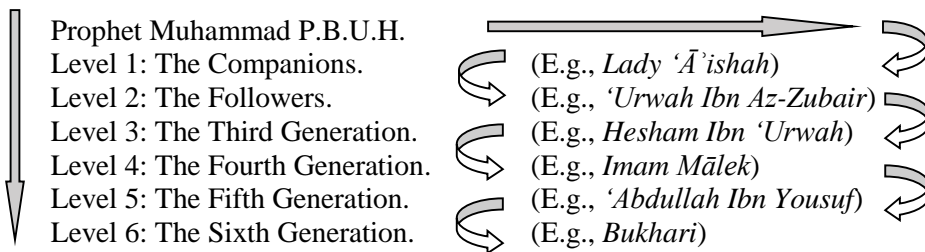


The Methodology of Classifying the Prophetic Traditions

Traditionist (*Muhad-deth*) is the name given to any scholar who contributes in collecting, recording, and propagating the prophetic traditions. We have already spoken about the emergence of this science, and named the most famous figures who contributed in its foundation. In this section of the book, we are going to define the methodology followed by the scholars of the next generations in classifying the prophetic traditions, known as (*‘Elm Mustalah Al-Hadith*).

Any prophetic tradition is divided into 2 parts: the chain of narrators “CON” (*Al-Sanad*), and the body of the tradition itself (*Al-Matn*). CON could be defined as a list of the names of those who have reported the tradition. Every narrator reports what he heard from his sheikh, until the list reaches a companion who narrates a deed, a saying or an incident related to the prophet P.B.U.H. In each level of this list, there could be more than one narrator who had heard and reported the tradition from his sheikh¹.

CON goes as follows:



Traditions are classified according to their authenticity into the following two kinds:

1. **Recurrent (*Mutawater*)**: is the tradition reported by at least 6 scholars in each level of its CON (the preferred number by most scholars is 10), whose agreement on a lie is inconceivable. It could be:
 - a) **Recurrent in wording (*Mutawater Lafdhan*)**: This means that all narrators reported exactly the same wording. Scholars counted the traditions of this kind to be **10 traditions**. These are the most authentic of all traditions.
 - b) **Recurrent in meaning (*Mutawater Ma‘nan*)**: This means that the narrators stated exactly the same meaning but with different wording. Scholars counted the traditions of this kind to be **approximately 310 traditions**.
2. **Narrations of Individuals NOI (*‘Āhād*)**: is the tradition reported by less than 6 scholars in each level of its CON. It could be:
 - a) **Widely Spread (*Mash-hoor*)**: it is the tradition reported by 3, 4, or 5 scholars in each level of its CON. It might have 1 or 2 reporters at the primary levels of its CON but in the next levels it becomes widely spread.
 - b) **Rare (*‘Aziz*)**: is the tradition reported by 2 scholars in each level of its CON.
 - c) **Strange (*Ghareeb*)**: is the tradition reported by 1 scholar in one or more levels of its CON. It is either **Absolutely Strange (*Ghareeb Mutlaq*)** if it is narrated by 1 companion, or **Relatively Strange (*Ghareeb Nisbee*)** if it has 1 narrator in any level of its CON after the level of the companions.

¹: For simplicity, we are going to refer to “chain of narrators” with the abbreviation CON and “narrations of individuals” with NOI.

Recurrent traditions were considered authentic without the need for further investigation. On the other hand, traditionists agreed that NOI were speculative, meaning that their relation to the prophet is indecisive as the number of its narrators did not reach the minimum limit of frequency that may establish certitude. But since that this kind constitutes the majority of the traditions, they decided to make further investigation aiming to authenticate it. Although they agreed that its primary classification as an indecisive tradition stands still, they also agreed that it is the duty of every Muslim to adhere to the teachings of such traditions if authenticated, but they do not accuse the one who rejects any NOI for logical scholarly reasons of apostasy or disbelief. Let's get to know how they defined and classified the different NOI.

Classification of NOIs (From the strongest to the weakest):

1. **Authentic NOI (*Saheeh*):** is any tradition having a continuous chain of narrators who are all known to be trustworthy, accurate, and having sound memories. It must not be defective or errant.
 - a) Continuous CON: is the chain in which each narrator is known to have studied, or at least met the one from whom he reported the tradition.
 - b) Trustworthy Narrator: is any Muslim who was never known of lying not even once, who was never known of having committed any major sin or of being an innovator or an immoral person. His reputation of having full knowledge of what he narrates is indisputable, and he totally understands how different expressions may alter the meaning intended.
 - c) A Narrator having Sound Memory: is the narrator who can memorize what's reported to him, and report it back accurately with exactly the same CON and wording. His reports agree with those of the leading authorities in this field.
 - d) An Accurate scribe: is the traditionist who is known to have written down and recorded the traditions reported to him accurately. The narrations taken from him must be from his books and records.
 - e) **Defective Tradition (*Ma'lool*):** is a tradition that appears to be authentic; nonetheless, with further investigation, it turns out to be incorrect.
 - f) **Errant Tradition (*Shadh*):** is a tradition reported by a trustworthy accurate narrator, but its meaning or CON contradicts in a clear manner another tradition having a more reliable CON; or else, it contradicts a group of traditions with similar status. Such tradition is classified as errant or irregular.

2. **Authenticated by another (*Saheeh Lighaireh*):** is a good well accepted tradition (*Hasan*) that is elevated to the rank of an authentic one due to the existence of supporting evidences.
 - a) **Supporting Evidence:** is an expression that refers to the existence of numerous narrations of similar status to the one under study, or the existence of a more authentic narration implying the same meaning. This raises the status of the well accepted tradition to become authenticated by another.

3. **Good, well accepted Tradition (*Hasan*):** is the strongest after the previous two kinds. The difference between it and the authentic tradition is that its CON includes a narrator who is trustworthy but has a mediocre level of accuracy. He may also be "screened" (*Mastoor*), meaning that no prominent person reported from him; nonetheless, he was never known of being careless.

4. **Well accepted by another (*Hasan Lighaireh*):** is a weak tradition (*Da'eef*) that is elevated to the rank of a good well accepted one due to the existence of supporting evidences.
5. **Weak Tradition (*Da'eef*):** after the previous 4 kinds of NOI, scholars classified any weaker tradition according to the reason of its weakness mainly into 12 kinds. In addition to the **defective** and **errant** traditions defined above, the following 10 kinds are classified as weak:
- a) **Ascribed Tradition (*Mursal*):** is a tradition whose CON lacks the name of the companion who reported it from the prophet P.B.U.H. Some jurists agree that if the follower was trustworthy, then the tradition is considered legitimate evidence as much as an authentic one. That's because all companions are trustworthy as testified for them by the Qur'an and the *Sunnah*. Other jurists, like Imam *Shāfe'i*, stipulated that the follower must be a famous, trustworthy, elder one, so that his narrations would be accepted; e.g., *Shāfe'i* accepted the ascribed reports of *Sa'eed Ibn Al-Musayyab*. Imam Ahmad accepted ascribed and weak traditions if no text opposing them was found.

Prophet Muhammad P.B.U.H. ----- Level 2: The Followers. Level 3: The Third Generation. Level 4: The Fourth Generation. Level 5: The Fifth Generation. Level 6: The Sixth Generation.
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- b) **Disconnected Tradition (*Munqate'*):** is a tradition whose CON lacks one of the names between the narrator and the companion who reported it¹. The table below is a simplified illustration of this.

Prophet Muhammad P.B.U.H. Level 1: The Companions. ----- Level 3: The Third Generation. Level 4: The Fourth Generation. Level 5: The Fifth Generation. Level 6: The Sixth Generation.	Prophet Muhammad P.B.U.H. Level 1: The Companions. Level 2: The Followers. ----- Level 4: The Fourth Generation. Level 5: The Fifth Generation. Level 6: The Sixth Generation.
Prophet Muhammad P.B.U.H. Level 1: The Companions. Level 2: The Followers. Level 3: The Third Generation. ----- Level 5: The Fifth Generation. Level 6: The Sixth Generation.	Prophet Muhammad P.B.U.H. Level 1: The Companions. Level 2: The Followers. Level 3: The Third Generation. Level 4: The Fourth Generation. ----- Level 6: The Sixth Generation.

This kind should not be confused with the “**severed tradition**” (*Maqtu'*), which is a narration from a successor that neither reaches a companion, nor is it ascribed to the prophet P.B.U.H. This kind could only be accepted as a prophetic tradition after thorough investigation. *Al-Muwatta'* has approximately 285 *Maqtu'* traditions.

1: For any incomplete CON, the narrators mentioned could all be trustworthy but the missing name or names weaken the tradition and give preponderance to its fallacy unless stronger evidence raises its status to a *Hasan* tradition.

- c) **Problematic Tradition (*Mu'dal*)**: is a tradition whose CON lacks 2 consecutive names between the narrator and the prophet P.B.U.H. The following table is a simplified illustration of this.

Prophet Muhammad P.B.U.H. ----- ----- Level 3: The Third Generation. Level 4: The Fourth Generation. Level 5: The Fifth Generation. Level 6: The Sixth Generation.	Prophet Muhammad P.B.U.H. Level 1: The Companions. ----- ----- Level 4: The Fourth Generation. Level 5: The Fifth Generation. Level 6: The Sixth Generation.
Prophet Muhammad P.B.U.H. Level 1: The Companions. Level 2: The Followers. ----- ----- Level 5: The Fifth Generation. Level 6: The Sixth Generation.	Prophet Muhammad P.B.U.H. Level 1: The Companions. Level 2: The Followers. Level 3: The Third Generation. ----- ----- Level 6: The Sixth Generation.

- d) **Hanging Tradition (*Mu'allaq*)**: is a tradition whose CON lacks the names of the narrators between the one reporting it and the prophet or the companion or the follower. The table below is a simplified illustration of this.

Prophet Muhammad P.B.U.H. ----- ----- ----- ----- Level 6: The Sixth Generation.	Prophet Muhammad P.B.U.H. Level 1: The Companions. ----- ----- ----- ----- Level 6: The Sixth Generation.
Prophet Muhammad P.B.U.H. Level 1: The Companions. Level 2: The Followers. ----- ----- ----- Level 6: The Sixth Generation.	

- e) **Deceitful Tradition (*Mudallas*)**: is a tradition whose CON includes a hidden defect. If the name of one of the narrators was displaced with his nickname, this is considered “Name Deceit” (*Tadlees Ash-Shyoukh*). If the narrator reported a tradition from his sheikh—which he didn’t actually hear directly from him—using an ambiguous word like “from” or “so and so said,” instead of “so and so related to us, or told us,” this is considered “CON Deceit” (*Tadlees As-Sanad*). Deceit is identified either through the contemporaries of the narrator who testify to his fraud, or through his own admission.
- f) **Covertly Ascribed Tradition (*Mursal Khafey*)**: is a tradition reported by a scholar from one of his contemporaries whom he didn’t actually meet nor studied under. This is recognized either through other coeval scholars, or through other existing CONs for that same tradition. After confirming its covered ascription, it is considered “Disconnected.”

- g) **Confused Tradition (*Mudtareb*):** is a tradition reported in different ways by the same narrator. His confusion could be in the CON or the body of the tradition itself but the latter rarely happens.
- h) **Denied Tradition (*Munkar*):** is a tradition reported by a weak narrator, and it contradicts another reported by a trustworthy narrator. The weak narrator meant here is the one who makes excessive mistakes.
- i) **Disregarded Tradition (*Matrook*):** is a weird narration reported by a distrusted narrator accused of lying.
- j) **Fabricated Tradition (*Mawdou'*):** is a lie attributed to the prophet P.B.U.H. for worldly life gains, e.g., the political differences that arose between the companions made some of their followers fabricate traditions aiming to strengthen a certain side, and demonize the other. The debates of the philosophical movements kindled fabrications. Story tellers fabricated a lot of traditions as well. Likewise, some ignorant ascetics and those driven by nationalism fabricated many traditions. Some proverbs and Jewish narratives were introduced into exegesis as prophetic traditions, etc. Fabrications were recognized either by the confession of their fabricators, or through the discrepancies found in their dates and the contradiction of their sequence to the real events.

The above classification makes it clear that a tradition is rejected either because of a break in its CON, or a defect in one or more of its narrators. The different kinds of breaks in the CON were simplified above. Now let's get a glimpse at the classification of narrators, and learn how the degree of their uprightness affects the classification of traditions.

Classification of Narrators from the Strongest to the Weakest

1. **Most trustworthy**, usually referred to by the Arabic word "*Awthaq*."
2. **Highly trustworthy**, usually referred to by Arabic descriptions like, "*Imam Hāfīz*," "*Thiqatun thiqah*," "*Thiqatun thabt*," "*Hāfīz mutqin*," etc. In general, if the narrator was referred to by 2 scholarly attributes, he is considered highly trustworthy.
3. **Trustworthy**, usually referred to by Arabic words like, "*Thiqah*," "*Hāfīz*," "*Mutqin*," "*Thabt*."
4. **Truthful**, usually referred to by Arabic descriptions like, "*Sadook*," "*La ba's beh*."
5. **Pious, or righteous, but of mediocre memory**, usually referred to by Arabic expressions like, "*Saleh al-hadith*," "*Sadook lahu awham*," "*Thiqah Yukhte'*."
6. **Forgetful, or makes mistakes**, usually referred to by the Arabic expression, "*Saye' al-hifz*."
7. **Inconsistent with more reliable narrators**, usually referred to by the Arabic word, "*Shādh*."
8. **Extremely forgetful, or makes excessive mistakes**, usually referred to by the Arabic expression, "*Fahesh al-ghalat*."
9. **Confused**, usually referred to by Arabic words like, "*Mauhum*," "*Yuham*."
10. **Neglectful**, usually referred to by Arabic words like, "*Ghāfel*," "*Muhmel*."

11. **Innovator**, usually referred to by the Arabic word, “*Mubtade’*.”
12. **Immoral**, usually referred to by the Arabic word, “*Fāseq*.”
13. **Accused of lying**, usually referred to by the Arabic expression, “*Muttaham Bil-kadhib*.”
14. **Liar**, usually referred to by Arabic words like, “*Kadhdhāb*,” “*Waddā’*.”

Traditions reported by narrators of classes 1-3 are all considered authentic (*Saheeh*). Traditions reported by narrators of class 4 are considered good, well accepted (*Hassan*). Traditions reported by narrators of classes 5-6 are considered weak, but their status could be uplifted with supporting evidence from the Qur’an or the more reliable traditions; if so, then they are classified as “good by another.” Traditions reported by narrators of classes 7-13 are considered very weak; their status could only be uplifted if there was no consensus among traditionists regarding the classification of the narrator, and supporting evidence from the Qur’an or the *Sunnah* gave preponderance to the acceptance of the tradition under investigation. Traditions reported by narrators of class 14 are classified as lies attributed to the prophet; they are rejected altogether.

Rules pertaining to weak traditions:

1. If the narrator was a pious truthful person but a bit forgetful, makes some mistakes in his narrations, or became confused at old age, his narrations are categorized as weak, but they are usually given deeper investigation seeking to uplift their status to “good well-accepted by another.”
2. They could be adopted if they call for logically accepted good deeds, beneficial actions, or virtuous matters.
3. In matters of creed, weak traditions are rejected altogether.
4. When issuing legal rulings, weak traditions were rejected by most jurists, but accepted by Imams *Ahmad*, and *Abu Dāwood* on the following conditions:
 - a. They are not extremely weak
 - b. They do not contradict another tradition of similar status.
 - c. They tackle matters having no mentioning in the Qur’an, the *Sunnah*, or the more reliable traditions.

The different kinds of traditions, status of narrators, and the methodology followed by scholars in their classification were explained in many books. The most comprehensive of which was written in the 7th century A.H. by an Iraqi scholar named ‘*Othman Ibn As-Salah* (577 – 643 A.H.). The book is named after its writer, “*Muqaddemat Ibn As-Salah*.” The reader should know that the methodology was initially established in the second century A.H. It reached its most mature form within 100 years at the hands of dedicated scholars from the 6th generation like Bukhari and Muslim. In most of their narrations, Bukhari and Muslim mentioned 5 names between themselves and the prophet P.B.U.H. The example given in the beginning of this section was a quick illustration of this.

Now, it’s time to move on to the base upon which Islam was built, which is the methodology of unifying The Creator who has created everything. This article of faith constitutes the major portion of the Islamic dogma. It is the orbit in which Islam revolves.



The Methodology of Monotheism

Muslims agree that the first, and most important article of faith in Islam, is to believe in the Creator who has created everything that exists. They agree that this universe couldn't have come to exist on its own, but it must have an omniscient omnipotent creator. A creator whom they invoke, and call upon by the name "Allah." He is the originator and the source of everything; He is one and only; He is eternal and everlasting; He begets not nor was He begotten, and there is none comparable unto Him. He is the sustainer of all that exists; consequently, He is the only one worthy of worship, and to Him belong the attributes of exaltation.

They also agree that this creator is free from all defects or shortcomings, and this is why He is eternal and everlasting. Some philosophers explain this saying that if a system reaches its optimum and most complete state, that is to assume that it's free from any defects or imperfections, then it shall never perish or die. This view is reasonably acceptable; the more the defects are in a certain system or regime, the faster shall it decline and be destructed. Thus, we see governments, laws, constitutions, economic systems, organizations, etc., falling every day because of the deficiencies in their systems. The most perfect system could only be reached through an All-Knowing Omniscient entity. Muslims believe that this entity is Allah, and they believe that His message—the Qur'an—is the final testament to all humans.

The following is an illustrative conversation between 2 friends; one of them is a skeptic called *Amr*, and the other is a Muslim student called *Zein*. This conversation was designed to help the reader find answers for many questions which we all hear on daily basis, or even ask ourselves, but sometimes fail to answer.

Amr, "If there exists a creator free from any flaws, then how come that His creation is full of them?!"

Zein, "That's ordinary, this worldly life is nothing but a brick in a high rise building. It's a test in which we are initially born totally pure; thereafter, while growing up, we learn all sorts of things, some good and some bad, this is why this Creator never forsakes us for our whim and lusts, but He sends us messages and prophets to teach us how to live rightly. Those who betray, fornicate, rape, cheat, steal, lie, kill, etc., are disobeying the laws of this creator and disobeying his messengers. Their sins cause corruption and great evils, which is a horrible defect that shall eventually lead to our destruction. Allah says in the Qur'an, '*Corruption has appeared throughout the lands and seas by reason of what the hands of people have earned so He may let them taste part of the consequences of their actions that perhaps they will desist.*' [The Qur'an (30:41)]. Prophet Muhammad also said while invoking Allah, '*Evil is not ascribed to You.*' Every day you can see people complaining from the corruption and evils they face in this world. This worldly life is just a step that we have to take in order to reach a world in which the system is perfect and no one complains anymore. But you have to understand that only those who deserve to live in such a perfect system are the ones who shall be admitted into it. I believe that we can consider this a universal law:

Life of a system \propto Degree of perfection of that system

This is exactly why this creator has created another place in which everything is perfect, and life is eternal for those who abide by His laws and teachings in this defective worldly life. As for those who decline and turn their backs to His commandments, He created another place in which everything is disgusting. These flaws and iniquities are the result of creating us having free wills, able to choose and select our own deeds and actions. How unfortunate it is that many people choose to satisfy their lusts and indulge into all sorts of sins instead of choosing a righteous life.”

Amr, “But why didn’t this creator create us compelled to obey Him like those creatures you call angels for instance? Why did He create us having lusts and free wills? It’s as if He wants us to sin!”

Zein, “This was His method in creating the most perfect creatures ever. He granted us the freedom of choice; thereafter, He gave us the chance to perform and display our characters and real-selves through our choices and actions. Proving whether we deserve to be part of the perfect system or not is totally up to us. Angels are not tested because they were created compelled to obey the creator; they are His obedient servants. This is why scholars agree that those who follow their intellect and obey Allah, though they were created with lusts and have free wills, they are better than angels. Hence, by means of perfection, those who were given the freedom of choice and chose to do what’s right, they are the most perfect creatures.”

Amr, “If this Creator is Omniscient as you claim, why didn’t He just use His vast knowledge to determine who are those who deserve to dwell in His perfect system “Paradise,” and who are those who don’t? Surely He would have spared Himself and us this intermediate step which you call the worldly life!”

Zein, “Well, this is the covenant He decreed upon Himself. He shall not award or punish anyone before setting his or her own deeds as witnesses upon His retribution. He shall not waste any of people’s good deeds, and if they ask His forgiveness for their sins and repent sincerely, He shall forgive them. Think of this logically, if you were condemned to dwell in the hellfire for eternity without living this worldly life, wouldn’t you have wanted to get a chance to live this life and prove that you could have been among the dwellers of paradise? This worldly life is the chance that we all need. Indeed, we should seize the opportunity and do our best.”

Amr, “If this Creator was aiming to create the most perfect system from the beginning, then why is there hell? Or are you claiming that this torture pit is also a perfect system?!”

Zein, “The perfect system is the one in which justice is established firmly without any procrastination. If justice was not established, then this could never be a perfect system. Try to imagine a thief stealing your mother’s purse, when your father tries to stop him, he shoots both your parents killing them on spot, and he gets away with his crime in this worldly life. Would it be fair that this thief never gets punished for what he has done? What about Hitler who killed over 2,000,000 civilians, burned thousands in furnaces, and he was never punished for his crimes? What about imperialists who have killed millions inside their own homelands throughout the human history? What about traitors, rapists, thieves, murderers, drug dealers, terrorists, children abusers, thugs, bullies, and all those who never care about people’s lives and security? Would you call the system that lets them get away with their crimes a perfect system? By all means, those who hurt others should receive the appropriate punishment for what they have done either in this life or the next. As for those who get away with their crimes in this life, Allah has prepared the hell fire for their retribution.”

Amr, “If you are speaking about justice, then how come that hell is eternal and those who were sinners in this life shall dwell inside it forever?! Justice is to punish criminals in the same magnitude of their crimes, not to torture them forever.”

Zein, “Totally agree, and Allah is never unjust; on the contrary, He is most Merciful and His mercy precedes His anger. Allah says in the Qur’an, ‘*On that Day (i.e. judgment day) people shall come forward in separate groups to be shown their deeds; hence, whoever does one jot of good, he shall see it; and whoever does one tittle of evil, he shall see it.*’ [The Qur’an (99:6-8)]. This is why the prophet P.B.U.H. told us that Allah shall bring out many people from the Hell-fire. Any person with one jot or tittle of faith shall be saved after receiving the proper punishment for his or her evil deeds. That is also why Allah says in the Qur’an, ‘*No soul will bear another’s burden, nor do We punish until We have sent a messenger.*’ [The Qur’an (17:15)]. Consequently, those who never received a warner or a messenger to teach them about Allah’s laws and righteous path, they shall be given the choice whether to believe or not on the judgment day. Many scholars say that even those who receive the message of Allah but in a distorted manner shall be treated in a similar way. This is why the main concern of the Qur’an is to make people believe in the existence of the mighty Creator, and warn them of His anger may they desist from disobeying His laws, or at least have the slightest portion of faith that may eventually save them after receiving their punishment. But as for those who deny reason and turn their backs out of arrogance; those who do not intend to repent from their evil deeds ever, their punishment shall be according to their intentions. This is why hell is eternal for those who don’t have any faith, nor do they intend to get to know and fear their Creator ever.”

Amr, “Why is the relation with this creator always built upon fear? If He were the most merciful as you claim, why should all people fear His wrath and torment? A relation built upon fear could never be a sound relation!”

Zein, “If this is what you understood from my words, then I apologize. I believe the context we were speaking in was about the hell fire, sinners, and the warnings directed to them. By all means the relation with Allah is not solely built upon fear. We all loved our fathers; nonetheless, we always had some fear from their anger towards us whenever we did something wrong. This fear was like a shield from erring, and a driving force that always pushed us towards being better persons. Likewise, the relation with our Creator is also built upon both love and fear. True correct worship is a combination of those two feelings, but building faith on only one of them is incomplete, and has many dangerous traps that people fall into.

Sound sincere worship = Loving Allah + Fearing Allah

The prophet P.B.U.H. said, ‘*If you knew how merciful Allah is you would have relied upon His mercy, and refrain from making any efforts [in obeying Him]; and if you knew His anger, nothing of what you do could relieve your fear.*’ How poor are the people who depart this life without experiencing the best of its feelings, that is Loving Allah and knowing His continuous remembrance. Allah says, ‘*When My servants ask you [O Muhammad] concerning Me, I am indeed close [to them]: I listen to the prayers of every suppliant when he calls on Me.*’ [The Qur’an (2:186)]. And He says in the holy tradition, ‘*I am at my servant’s expectations, and I am with him whenever he calls onto me. If he draws near me one span of hand, I draw near him a cubit; if he draws near me a cubit, I draw near him an ell; and if he approaches my path walking, I approach him hurriedly.*’ The driving force behind the actions of those with sound hearts is always their love towards Allah, and their protection against relapse is their fear from Him.”

Amr, “Why are you so sure that such a creator does exist though you cannot see him, speak to him, or receive any messages directly from him?!”

Zein, “Have you ever seen a beehive?”

Amr, “Absolutely!”

Zein, “Do you think that bees are intellectual creatures?”

Amr, “Well, I’m not sure, maybe they do have some kind of a tiny brain.”

Zein, “Tiny brain! If I were to ask you to draw for me 100 hexagons without a compass, a ruler, a protractor or any external tool but a pen, on the condition that all the 100 hexagons would be similar with exactly 120 degrees angles and equal sides, will you be able to do that?”

Amr, “No.”

Zein, “Now do you think that bees have minds that enable them to build hives with hundreds or thousands of these similar hexagonal shapes and internal chambers without the need for any of those tools that you need to finish the job?”

Amr, “Okay, maybe they do, but where is this leading to?!”

Zein, “This leads to understanding that it’s enough to see the signs in order to understand that there exists an effective cause behind them. What about this complex universe with millions of constellations, planets, stars, etc., guided by physical laws that scientists have discovered, are still discovering and writing down in voluminous books? Did it come to exist merely through some kind of creative chaos without any need for organization and guidance from an intelligent, capable designer, or an Omniscient, Omnipotent Creator! Creative chaos can for example produce the sand dunes in the deserts but it cannot produce a huge self-sustaining palace by this sand, or build a pyramid. Complexity is a sign for intelligence and capability. What do you think of a much more complicated thing as the human RNA and DNA?!”

Amr, “Your logic is void, for if complexity is a sign for intelligence, then from where did that most intelligent creator come?! How can you imagine His existence?”

Zein, “The Creator is not a creature to come or happen, or comply with the laws of the creatures that need a cause for their existence. He is the source of all that exists, but our minds always stand incapable of imagining His nature. There is a huge difference between reason and imagination. Reason tells us that complexity cannot happen by coincidence. For example, if I blindfold you, give you 10 darts, and ask you to throw them all into the middle circle of the dart board, can you do this?”

Amr, “If I’m well trained, I can.”

Zein, “True. This means that the more complicated the deed is, the more training and capabilities you will need to acquire in order to accomplish it. What if I number the darts from 1 to 10, and ask you to throw them in their order of numbering?”

Amr, “I shall need to remove the blindfolds in order to see the numbers.”

Zein, “True. This means that the more the obstacles are, and the more complicated things get, the more senses and capabilities you shall need in order to accomplish the mission. Have you ever seen the pyramids?”

Amr, “Yes.”

Zein, “Do you know that with all of the advanced modern technologies humans have today, they still can’t build a pyramid like *Khufu*?”

Amr, “Yes, I know that. Can you make your point clearer?”

Zein, “Can you say that *Khufu* was built by coincidence, by any of the sand storms or natural catastrophes that occurred in Egypt back in time, or by any form of creative chaos without the need for intelligent creatures to design and build it?”

Amr, “Absolutely not.”

Zein, “How be it with something much more complicated like a bee? Can Humans create one bee that lives, reproduces, builds hives and makes honey like the natural bee which we know?”

Amr, “I don’t think they can.”

Zein, “So you cannot draw 100 identical hexagons without geometrical tools. You need training and the use of your eyesight simply to throw 10 darts in the correct order and hit the target prescribed to you. You don’t accept it that the Pyramid could have been built through some kind of creative chaos and agree that it needs intelligent designers having more knowledge than what we have today on earth, but still you accept it that bees that are a million times more complicated, and us as humans, and all of this universe surrounding us have come to exist by coincidence through some kind of blind creative chaos; all of this is merely because you cannot imagine how the Creator who has created everything exists; where is the logic in that?!”

Amr, “Matter cannot be created from nothing. This means that matter is eternal, it has always been there in some form, and it was not preceded by a creator.”

Zein, “Have you read about nuclear fusion, *Amr*?”

Amr, “Yes, absolutely.”

Zein, “What does the theory say?”

Amr, “It’s a nuclear reaction in which two or more atomic nuclei collide at a very high speed and join to form a new type of atomic nucleus. During this process, matter is not conserved because some of the matter of the fusing nuclei is converted to energy.”

Zein, “Great, this means that if matter can be converted into energy, then the reaction can also be reversed and huge amounts of energy could be changed to matter. Amazingly, this is what science has come to realize in the past century. Matter and energy are two faces for the same thing. Therefore, assuming that matter was preceded by an omniscient omnipotent creator doesn’t contradict science. On the contrary, it makes more sense than assuming that inanimate matter came to exist on its own by dumb chance.”

Amr, “If this mighty creator does exist, and he is perfect as you claim, then how come that he created the universe? What was the urge behind this and why did he need to do it! He should have been self-sufficient having no need to create anything at all.”

Zein, “You do not possess a trait unless you use it. If a person can hear, yet he doesn’t listen, we call him deaf. If a person can see yet he never opens his eyes, he’s no different from the blind. Likewise, we cannot think of a god who cannot create. If he can’t, he isn’t a god. If he can create yet halts the usage of his powers, he is deficient. The only situation that befits his supreme being is that he can create and he creates what he wills. Ability only exists in a deed, exactly as the wisdom of a wise man never appears except in a wise decision he takes. Allah is perfect and self-sufficient, and no one can reach such state except if he can do whatever he wants without having to explain his actions to those who are lesser than him. He is free to create whatever he wants. Not knowing the purpose of creation doesn’t nullify the fact that it happened, or else we will deny our own existence. Not knowing the purpose of creation is like not understanding the purpose for which painters draw paintings, or why musicians make music; it’s a capability which they have and we can’t ask them, ‘*why do you make beautiful art?*’ So is the case with the Creator, he can create beautiful marvelous creatures, this is one of his attributes, and in my opinion, it’s the most unique divine attribute; asking why He creates is meaningless. Allah created man—not because He needs him, but to distinguish clearly His Supreme peculiarity in him. If artists make art so that people would get to know them and admire their talent, then why do you deny this right to the mighty entity that has created all artists and granted them their gifts?!”

Amr, “This is apologetic.”

Zein, “If according to your measures, logical reasonable thinking is considered apologetic, then by all means it’s an honor to be an apologist.”

Amr, “I can’t see any reason in your responses, you are just repeating what you were taught since childhood.”

Zein, “Truly amazing how those who deny the existence of God, resurrection, paradise and hell, make them the token around which most of their talks revolve; thereafter, they dare speak about reason and logic.”

This debate never ends and the two friends don’t intend to back up. Of course, hundreds of questions and evidences are presented by both sides. Learning about such debates is extremely important. You should make up your mind and decide for yourself what to believe and what to renounce. Use your reason and intellect in building your faith, don’t suffice with being a follower. Learn how to defend your beliefs and stand firm for what you believe is right. The mightiest believers in this nation were the companions of Prophet Muhammad P.B.U.H.; may Allah be pleased with them all. When you read their stories, you get the sense that those people were not ordinary, they were extremely smart, brave and reasonable. They were determined to defend their faith no matter what. No one can reach such a state unless he or she has acquired a firmly established faith which nothing can shake.



After we have tackled the controversial ideas of having faith in the Creator, it's now important to know how the early Muslim generations thought of His attributes, and how they loved, glorified and exalted Him. Muslims' unanimous creedal views regarding Allah revolve mainly around the following Qur'anic verses:

“O mankind, worship you Lord who has created you and those before you, may you become righteous. Him who made for you the earth for dwelling and the skies as a ceiling and He sent down from the skies water with which He brought forth fruits as provision for you, so do not setup rivals unto Allah while you know.” [The Qur'an (2:21-22)].

“When My servants ask you (O Muhammad) concerning Me, I am indeed close (to them): I listen to the prayers of every suppliant when he calls on Me.” [The Qur'an (2:186)].

“Allah, there is no God but He, the Ever-Living, the Sustainer, No slumber or sleep can overtake Him, to Him belongs all that is in the heavens and the earth. Who can intercede with Him except with His permission? He knows their present and their future, and they do not have any of His knowledge except for what He wishes. His sovereign knowledge encompasses the heavens and the earth and it is easy for Him to preserve them. He is the Most High, the Great.” [The Qur'an (2:255)].

“The Lord of the heavens and the earth and whatever lies between them, worship Him and have patience for His worship, do you know anyone of His similitude?!” [The Qur'an (19:65)].

“Rely upon the Ever-Living who does not die and exalt Allah with His praise.” [The Qur'an (25:58)].

“Verily, Allah is the Sustainer, the Mighty One, the Invincible.” [The Qur'an (51:58)].

“There is nothing like unto Him, He is the All-Hearing, the All-Seeing” [The Qur'an (42:11)].

“To Him is the kingship of the heavens and the earth. He brings life and death. And He is capable of all things. He is the First and the Last, the Most High and the Most Near, He is fully aware of all things.” [The Qur'an (57:2-3)].

“It is Allah who has created seven (layers) of the skies and of the earth, the like of them. His commandment descends among them, so that you may know that Allah is All-Powerful over all things, and that He encompasses all matters with His knowledge.” [The Qur'an (65:12)].

“Say (O Muhammad), ‘Allah is the Only (God), Allah is the Everlasting Self-Sufficient (Lord), He begets not, nor was He begotten, and there is none comparable unto Him.’” [The Qur'an (112)].

In understanding the previous verses, Muslim scholars from all sects agreed that the verses speak of a mighty unique omniscient deity who has created this universe, created the earth amidst it, and prepared it for the dwelling of humans. He is always maintaining and sustaining the universe and watching over all creatures. There is no one we should turn to and invoke for help at times of need but Him. His knowledge encompasses the universe, and all creatures do not discover from this knowledge except what He wishes them to know. He is eternal, uncreated, and everlasting. He is the first that the universe has realized when it was created, and He is the last one to see the universe before it perishes and every soul returns to Him. There is no one comparable unto Him, nor is there anything like Him. For all of the previous, He is the only entity worthy of worship.

The creedal conflict among the Muslim sects revolves mainly around the following **Qur’anic verses, which have allegorical indecisive meanings:**

“Are they only waiting for Allah as well as the angels to descend upon them under canopies of clouds...” [The Qur’an (2:210)].

“To some of them (i.e. the prophets) Allah spoke” [The Qur’an (2:253)].

“And if any of the polytheists seeks your protection, grant him your protection, may he listen to the words of Allah (i.e. the Qur’an), then help him reach his sanctuary.” [The Qur’an (9:6)].

“The Most Gracious rose above the Throne.” [The Qur’an (20:5)].

“And I endued you (O Moses) with love from Me, that you may be brought up under My Eyes.” [The Qur’an (20:39)].

“Everything shall perish save His Face” [The Qur’an (28:88)].

“He (Allah) said, “O satan what prevented you from prostrating (in honoring) to what I have created with both My Hands?” [The Qur’an (38:75)].

“Some faces will be radiant on that Day, looking towards their Lord.” [The Qur’an (75:22-23)].

The wording of the above verses implies the following meanings apparently:

- That Allah has a body, a face and two hands.
- He speaks directly to whom He chooses and the Qur’an is His direct spoken word.
- Those who are righteous in this life shall be able to see their Creator in the hereafter.

In dealing with the previous verses, scholars were divided into 2 main groups:

1. Traditionists (*Al-Muhad-detheen*): This group limited their thinking to the Qur’an, and the recorded sayings of Prophet Muhammad P.B.U.H. They saw that creedal knowledge is confined to what Allah has sent to us in His message, and what He ordered His messenger to explain. They promoted the idea that those who have sincere faith don’t need any further investigation into other evidences. They considered this a big risk and an innovation. Today, they are usually referred to by the term “*Salafists*.” They took as evidence on their opinions the Qur’anic verse which says, *“It is He who has sent down the Book to you. Some of its verses are clear and decisive in meaning—they are the foundation of the Book—while others are allegorical and indecisive. Those with deviation in their hearts pursue the indecisive verses, so as to create dissension by seeking to interpret them: but no one knows their meaning except Allah. Those who are firmly grounded in knowledge say, ‘We believe in it: it is all from our Lord.’ But only the wise take heed.”* [The Qur’an (3:7)].
2. Scholastics (*Al-Mutakal-lemeen*): They pondered deeply over the attributes of Allah by contemplating on His creation. They looked attentively at the universal evidences proving His existence, and followed their reason in getting to know their Creator. They tried to do this within the guiding frame of the Qur’an and the *Sunnah*. They are divided mainly into 3 sects: *Mu’tazilies*, *Ash’aries* and *Matureedies*. Scholastics had a different understanding for the previously mentioned verse (3:7). They said that they don’t try to interpret the indecisive verses, but they only turn the text away from the inappropriate apparent meaning to a logically accepted one.

They considered this imperative in order to protect laymen from creating and propagating wrong creedal thoughts about Allah. They took the decisive verses and the Arabic language as their guide; thereafter, they chose the meanings deemed most appropriate for the supreme rank of Allah Almighty. The main reason for refusing the apparent meanings of the indecisive verses was that they contradict the logical evidences which sound reason can accept from contemplating on the creation.

When speaking about the approach of scholastics in his book “Explaining the Monotheistic creeds” (*Tawdeeh Al-‘Aqa’ed Fe ‘Elm Al-Tawheed*), Sheikh *Abd-Ur-Rahman Al-Jezery* (1299-1360 A.H.) said, “*Based on the Islamic principal: ‘Whatever is necessary for accomplishing an obligation is also obligatory,’ contemplating on the universal evidences and pondering over them in our endeavor seeking to strengthen our knowledge of our Creator should not be considered an innovation, specially that the Qur’an instigates us to ponder over the creation and seek evidences on our thoughts and beliefs.*”

Please note that the main purpose of this section is to incite objective thinking towards the ideas of all sects, not to promote the ideas of any of them. Personally, I don’t consider any of them to be a straying sect casted away from main stream Muslims, though personally I refuse some of the ideas stated by each sect. When you read in their books you will instantly understand that their sole target was the glorification and exaltation of Allah, so how come that those who do this could be accused of infidelity or of being a straying sect? Let’s indulge deeper into their views so that we may grasp more knowledge about their views.



The early Muslim generations never indulged into ideas like how the creator exists, how come that He is not limited by space or time, etc. When some of the companions thought about these ideas, and spoke to the prophet about them, it is recorded that he said, *“Don’t think about Allah’s nature but ponder over His creation.”* Although this tradition is categorized as weak, similar responses were recorded to have been given by companions like *Ibn ‘Abbās*, *‘Ali* and *Abu Hurayrah*. The early generations exalted Allah beyond all imagination. They understood that any trial to imagine His existence is a degradation of His supreme status. They never thought of Allah as an old man sitting on a huge throne above the heavens. They never tried to embody Allah, or compare Him to whatever they see in this world, nothing of that sort. They believed in His supremacy and that there is nothing they know that could be compared to Him.

The first 4 generations treated any verse whose wording implies any embodiment for Allah as an indecisive verse. They never tried to interpret such verses or indulge into their meanings. Imam *Rabi‘ah Ibn Far-roukh* (Died 136 A.H.)—the teacher of Imam *Mālek*—was once asked by a student attending his lesson, *“How did Allah rise above the throne?”* The student was referring to the fact that if Allah moves and equilibrates or sits above a throne, then He has a body, and if He has a body that could be confined in a certain space as the throne, then His existence needs space and consequently He Himself was preceded by space; therefore, He is not the Creator. Imam *Rabi‘ah* immediately responded saying, *“Rising [as a deed] isn’t unknown [to ask about]. Its manner [for Allah’s rank] is unimaginable. The belief in its occurrence is an obligation, and to ask about its manner is an innovation.”*

It was also reported that later on, a man asked Imam *Mālek* the same question, so he gave the same answer and then expelled the questioner from his class. It seems that the Imam feared that his students might be affected by the questioner or imitate his manner in comparing Allah to creatures, and indulge into the meanings of the indecisive verses. Whenever asked about any of the indecisive verses, the early generations used to say, *“Recite them like they have been revealed without indulging into the means of their occurrence.”*

Imam *Abu Hanifah* expressed his opinion regarding these verses in his famous book, *“The Grand Jurisprudence” (Al-Fiqh Al-Akbar)* saying, *“There is nothing like Allah, He is All-Hearing, All-Seeing. All of His attributes are ageless, uncreated, not like those of creatures. His knowledge is not like that of ours; His power is not like that of ours and so are His sight, hearing and speech. We speak through vocals and letters that are created while Allah speaks without the need for them both and His speech is uncreated. He is not a body, nor is He limited by space or countered by a rival or any peer, there is nothing comparable unto him. He has a face, hands and essence and they are all attributes whose characteristics and state are unknown. No one should say that His hand is a reference to His power or blessings, as this would be a denial of the attribute, which is what the Mu‘tazilites say. His hand is an attribute whose state is unknown.”*

Regarding this issue, Imam *Ahmad Ibn Hanbal* said, *“Allah could only be qualified with the attributes He named for Himself, or those taught by His messenger. Nothing should be said beyond the Qur’an or the Sunnah.”* And regarding the indecisive verses, he said, *“Indecisive verses are like closed safes; all one can do is to recite them as they have been revealed.”*

The approach of the early generations was extremely cautious. They did not try to indulge into matters that our human minds can neither imagine nor confirm. Whenever they were faced with questions regarding the meaning of any indecisive verse, they stated that the meaning—or mode of occurrence of these verses—is something beyond our imagination. They didn't try to interpret any of these verses. This is the most appropriate manner of dealing with such verses. It resembles the approach described by Allah Himself in verse (3:7) mentioned earlier.

Salafists say that they follow the early generations in their methodology of monotheism. They say, “*We adopt a doctrine gathering between exaltation (At-Tanzeeh) and affirmation (Al-Ethbat),*” meaning that they exalt the Creator above any resemblance to the creatures, and they affirm all of the attributes He referred to Himself with in His message, and through the teachings of His prophet, without any indulgence into the manner of their occurrence. *Ibn Taymeyah* (661-728 A.H.) was the founder of the Salafists' creedal school of thought. He was a *Hanbali* scholar, his views were built upon Imam *Ahmad's* opinions. This is why some scholars refer to them by the word “*Hanbalies.*” In his book “The Intermediate Creed” (*Al-'Aqeedah Al-Wasetiyah*), *Ibn Taymeyah* said, “*We affirm all of Allah's attributes without any alteration, negation, attributing a state of being or likeness to any of His creation. There is nothing comparable unto Him, He is the All-Hearing, All-Seeing.*”

“Alteration” (*Tahreef*): is to leave out the direct meaning understood from a verse or a tradition, and accept another meaning which the words do not imply, or do imply but in an indirect doubtful manner; that's unless there is another evidence from the Qur'an, the *Sunnah*, or the Arabic language to justify this understanding; only then could this understanding be an acceptable possibility.

E.g., interpreting the verse and tradition which speak about Allah's descent to this world to be referring to His commandments and judgment.

“Negation” (*Ta'teel*): is to deny any of Allah's attributes mentioned in the Qur'an, or mentioned by the prophet P.B.U.H. Negation is considered part of alteration, wherever there is alteration, there is negation but not the contrary.

E.g., interpreting the verses which mention Allah's hands to be referring to His Power.

“Attributing a state of being” (*Takyeeef*): is to define a certain state or manner for the attributes of Allah.

E.g., interpreting the verse speaking about Allah's ascension above the throne to be referring to a throne like that of kings and that Allah is a body sitting on it.

“Attributing a state of Likeness” (*Tamtheel*): is to compare the attributes of Allah to the attributes of His creatures.

E.g., interpreting the verse speaking about Allah's hands to be referring to hands like those of humans.

Salafists accept the apparent meanings of the indecisive verses without any trial to interpret them, or think of any manner for their occurrence. They confirm that Allah has a face, hands and legs, He equilibrates above His throne, He moves, laughs, loves, gets angry and becomes content, speaks and enjoys all of the attributes He referred to Himself with in the Qur'an or through the Prophetic teachings, but His attributes are not like anything we know, nor could they be compared to the creation in any manner.

Scholastics agreed with the *Salafists* in the main ideas. They also said that attributing a manner or mode for Allah's actions is wrong and against the decisive verses of the Qur'an, which state that there is nothing like Allah nor is there anyone comparable unto Him. They agreed with *Salafists* in prohibiting attributing a state of being or likeness to any of the creatures when reciting the verses that mention Allah's attributes. But when it comes to alteration and negation, they had a different opinion; their views were built upon the following contemplation:

All creatures are constructed or formed of parts, these parts need one another in a certain fashion. For example our human body is formed of hands, legs, head, abdomen and torso. We need our hands in order to eat, drink, hold all sorts of things, and move properly. We need our legs to walk and run. We need heads which contain our brains, eyes, noses, ears and mouths; in short, it contains most of the senses and the main engine behind our functioning. Our abdomen and torso contain the rest of our internal organs like the heart, which is the main battery of our lives, our lungs and respiratory system, our kidneys and internal purification system, etc. If any of these parts suffered any malfunction, the rest of our body falls ill, and doesn't function properly. Likewise, all creatures are formed of many parts that need one another. Planet Earth as we know it needs the sun and the moon to exist. The location of our solar system amidst the surrounding galaxy protects it from the vast supernova explosions in the rest of the locations, etc. All of these complications make it clear that life was designed, and everything related to it—from the air we breathe to the location of our solar system within our galaxy—was selected very carefully. Every part, member, or organ has a certain specified duty that keeps life running. Therefore, anything formed of parts that complete one another is designed and created.

From this contemplation, scholastics deduced that Allah cannot be like us, formed of parts that need one another. They said that Allah is the one who has created space and time, so He cannot be confined in a certain place or be affected by time. They said that Allah cannot have a body, for bodies need space to exist, and Allah is not preceded by anything, He described Himself to be All-Encompassing. When they encountered the indecisive verses whose apparent meanings negate the decisive evidences, their methodology of monotheism was to turn the meaning away (*Sarf Al-Ma'na*) from the inappropriate apparent one to an acceptable appropriate one that befits the rank of Allah, and coincides with the decisive verses. They built this approach upon the Arabic language and the decisive verses of the Qur'an. According to their view, this kind of necessary interpretation is different from the interpretation prohibited in verse (3:7) mentioned earlier. Its necessity emerges from the fact that if it was not done, those who are not grounded in knowledge shall either go astray in their understanding of the Islamic creed, or think that the Qur'an contradicts itself.

Example: when they encountered the verse which says, "*Nay, indeed! When the earth is crushed and ground to dust, when your Lord descend with the angels standing rank upon rank.*" [The Qur'an (89:21-22)]. The apparent meaning is that Allah shall come down to earth after its destruction on the judgment day, and that the angels shall be standing in ranks honoring His approach. This could only be possible if Allah has a body that could be confined inside a certain place, and so He moves from one place to another, which is impossible for it contradicts the decisive verses of the Qur'an that state clearly the following:

“It was He who created the heavens and earth in six Days [i.e. periods] and then ascended the throne. He knows what enters the earth and what comes out of it, what descends from the sky and what ascends to it. He is with you wherever you are, He sees all that you do.” [The Qur’an (57:4)].

“Allah is the one who has created the seven (layers of) heavens and of the earth, the like of them. His commandments descend among them, so that you may know that Allah has power over all things, and that He encompasses all things with His knowledge.” [The Qur’an (65:12)].

Based on the previous verses, scholastics stated that the meaning of verses (89:21-22) should be understood in the sense that Allah’s commandments and judgment are the ones that shall descend upon mankind. They said that this is not alteration as the Salafists claim, but it’s explaining the indecisive verses in a manner that doesn’t negate the decisive verses of the Qur’an by turning the apparent illogical meaning to an acceptable logical one. Salafists refused this approach. They said that Allah shall actually come in a manner befitting His existence and rank. They gave heed to the verse which says, ***“Unquestionably, they are in doubt about the meeting with their Lord. Unquestionably, He is of all things encompassing.”*** [The Qur’an (41:54)].

It was reported that Imam *Mālek* adopted this approach when he was asked about Allah’s descent to the heavens, he said, *“His commandments are the ones that descend, not Him. He is eternal, He doesn’t need to move.”* (*Seyar A’lām Al-Nubalā’*). But many scholars denied this narration and said that it was a forgery made by *Mālek’s* scribe *Habeeb Ibn Abi-Habeeb*. It was also reported that when Imam *Mālek* was asked by his student *Ibn Al-Qāsem* (132-191 A.H.) about the traditions stating that Allah has created Adam having the same appearance as His, and that Allah shall reveal his leg on the judgment day and put it into the hell fire so that it may calm down, and that He shall put His hand into the hellfire and bring out whom He likes, Imam *Mālek* denied this vigorously and forbade his students from propagating such traditions (*Seyar A’lām Al-Nubalā’*).

Evidence supporting necessary interpretation (*Sarf Al-Ma’na*):

Scholastics took as evidence for necessary interpretation the following:

1. It is recorded in the Holy traditions that Allah shall address one of His servants on the judgment day saying, *“I fell sick and you never came to visit me.”* Feeling astonished, the servant would say, *“O Lord! How can You fall sick?”* Allah shall respond, *“My servant so and so fell sick and you did not visit him. Verily, if you had visited him, you would have found me by his side.”*

Besides teaching us that visiting those who are sick is an Islamic obligation, in this tradition Allah teaches us something very important: whenever He describes Himself with something that is not befitting for His rank or status, automatically this means that it has a different interpretation from the apparent meaning, and we should seek to turn the apparent meaning to an appropriate one. Another important point that we can learn from this tradition is that no matter how difficult and critical the situation is, believers remain steadfast for their beliefs. This servant whom Allah shall address on the judgment day is going to be questioned alone about his deeds, after this, it’s either Paradise or Hell; yet still, when he heard a question that collides with his firm creed, he questioned its correctness even though it was directed by Allah Himself.

2. It is recorded that after the battle of confederates (*Al-Ahzab*), Prophet Muhammad P.B.U.H. ordered his companions to head towards the traitorous tribe of *Banu-Quraizah* saying, “*Whomsoever hears my words, let him not pray the after-noon prayers (Al-Asr) except at Banu-Quraizah.*” Though this was a decisive order with clear words, on their way to *Banu-Quraizah*, *Al-Asr* prayer was due. Some of the companions interpreted the prophet’s words to mean, “*Hurry up as much as you can,*” so they stopped and prayed. The other group took the words literally, and did not pray the obligatory prayer until they reached *Banu-Quraizah*. Later on, when they asked the prophet which action was correct, he considered both actions correct. Hence, he approved on the interpretation approach, and the literalism approach.
3. Allah says in the Qur’an, “*And your Lord never forgets.*” [The Qur’an (19:64)]. This is a decisive verse. Its meaning is understood by all Muslims and logically accepted without any difference about it. Verily, Allah cannot be accused of any short comings like forgetfulness. But there is another verse which says, “*Today We shall forget you like you forgot Our meeting on this day (i.e. the judgment day).*” [The Qur’an (45:34)]. The literal wording of the second verse says that Allah shall forget like His creatures do, which is impossible for His rank. Therefore, we have to turn the apparent meaning to another one befitting for Allah. Scholastics said that the verse means, “*Today We shall neglect your begging for mercy like you neglected our warnings regarding the judgment day.*”
4. Allah says in the Qur’an, “*The Most Gracious is high above the Throne.*” [The Qur’an (20:5)] and He also says, “*He is with you wherever you are, He sees all that you do.*” [The Qur’an (57:4)]. If we were to take the second verse literally, the Qur’an would contradict itself which is impossible. Scholastics said that the meaning of the second verse is, “*He is with you wherever you are with his knowledge, He sees what you do.*” Their interpretation actually makes the rest of the verse more understandable and resolves the dilemma of the literal contradiction.

From the previous few examples, it becomes clear that the forbidden interpretation meant in verse (3:7) is the one related to things which our human minds can neither perceive, nor imagine, like Allah’s essence, the time of the judgment day, the future, etc. Hence, scholastics turned Allah’s attributes mentioned in the indecisive verses towards the closest acceptable meaning found in the decisive ones. They said:

- Allah’s hands are a reference to His Power and Omnipotence. The verse which says, “*Verily those who give pledge to you (O Muhammad), they are giving pledge to Allah, Allah’s hand is above theirs.*” [The Qur’an (48:10)] means, “*Allah’s power is with them.*” Likewise, verse (38:75) mentioned earlier means “*Why didn’t you prostrate yourself in honoring to what I have created with my might and power?*”
- The tradition stating that Allah has created Adam in His image is a reference to creating Adam **capable of** seeing, hearing, thinking, having intelligence, etc.
- Allah’s face is a metaphoric reference for His existence.
- Allah’s rising (*Estwa’*) above the throne (*‘Arsh*) has different linguistic meanings. The Arabic word (*Estwa’*) could mean: equilibrate, rise, become high, settle, capture, or seize control of. And the Arabic word (*‘Arsh*) could mean throne, building, or construction. With some trial and error, the most appropriate meaning which does not contradict the decisive verses would be, “*Allah is high above the universe,*”

which is confirmed by the verses that say, “**He is the Most-High, the Great.**” [The Qur’an (34:23)] and the verse, “**Are you more difficult to create or the heavens (i.e. the surrounding universe) that He has constructed, He raised it high and organized its construction.**” [The Qur’an (79:27-28)]. Scholars agree that Allah created a magnificent throne above the universe, which the angels circumambulate continuously praising and worshipping Him. So some scholastics said that the meaning is, “*Allah is high above the throne that’s above the universe.*” This doesn’t mean that Allah has a physical body with which he sits on this throne, it was simply constructed as a manifestation of His magnificence.

The main controversial points around which debates ensued:

- **Seeing Allah on the judgment day:**

Allah says in the Qur’an, “*On that day (i.e. judgment day), some faces shall be radiant and shining, looking towards their lord.*” [The Qur’an (75:22-23)].

Prophet Muhammad said, “*Do you compete among one another to see the sun when the sky is clear?*” the companions said, “*No.*” The prophet then said, “*And so shall you see Allah on the judgment day.*” [Recorded by Bukhari and Muslim].

- A. Based on the previous verse and tradition, Salafists affirmed that on the judgment day all believers shall be granted special abilities which will enable them to see Allah with their own eyes.
- B. *Mu‘tazilies* denied this vigorously, and stated that seeing Allah means that He could be confined in a certain place and in a certain direction that eyes can perceive, which is impossible for His rank as this necessitates that Allah has some kind of a materialistic body like creatures. They interpreted verse (75:23) to mean “*waiting for their Lord’s grace and blessings.*” They said that seeing Allah could only happen spiritually and mentally but not physically. They took as evidence on their opinion the verse which says, “**Vision cannot perceive Him but He perceives all vision.**” [The Qur’an (6:103)]. *Salafists* responded to this saying that this verse is speaking about this worldly life not the hereafter, while verse (75:23) is speaking about the hereafter that has different laws and nature.
- C. *Ash‘aries* and *Matureedies* adopted the same view of *Salafists* in this issue, they also affirmed that believers shall be able to see their Lord with their own eyes on the judgment day. They took as evidence the logical fact that anything that exists could be seen in a certain fashion befitting its existence, and Allah shall grant the believers the ability to see Him on the judgment day, He is capable over all things.

- **Do we create our own deeds:**

Allah says in the Qur’an, “*On the Day when every soul will come pleading for itself, and every soul will be repaid according to whatever it has done, and they will not be wronged.*” [The Qur’an (16:111)].

“*We shall set up scales of justice on the Day of Resurrection, so that no soul can be in the least wronged. And even if actions were as small as a mustard seed, they shall be weighed. Sufficient are We as Reckoner [of every deed].*” [The Qur’an (21:47)].

“On that Day people will come forward in separate groups to be shown their deeds: whoever has done good, even equal to the weight of an atom, he shall see it, and whoever has done evil even equal to the weight of an atom, he shall see it.” [The Qur’an (99:6-8)].

Based on the previous verses, Muslim scholars agreed that people were created having free wills. Their actions are the result of their own choices, for if it weren’t so, then how come that they shall be rewarded for their good deeds, or punished for their bad ones?! This view entailed a tough philosophical debate between the *Mu‘tazilies* and the *Ash‘aries*. It all started with this question, “Do we create our own deeds through the freewill which Allah has granted us, or do we just gain those deeds based on our intentions, while Allah is the one who actually creates them?!”

A. *Mu‘tazilies* divided Allah’s will into two kinds, **the first is that of fate and predestination**, whatever happens through fate is something that we cannot evade or control, nor do we get rewarded or punished for it. Example: the time of birth, our parents and relatives, the time of death, the manner of death, the people whom we encounter during life, the places we visit, the amount of money which we earn, our sickness and health, etc. **The second kind is that of authorization**, meaning that Allah authorized us to make our own actions. Based on this kind, we were entrusted to abide by Allah’s messages and obey His messengers, and we shall be judged. Later on, we shall either be rewarded or punished based on our own choices and actions. *Mu‘tazilies* affirmed that this is not done outside Allah’s will; on the contrary, it was His will to create us able to choose and create our own deeds in order to test us. They placed as evidence on this opinion the fact that Allah desires truthful faith and righteous lives for His servants, but He does not force them to embrace any of that. He says in the Qur’an, “*Say (O Muhammad), ‘This is the truth from your Lord. Let whoever wills believe, and whoever wills deny.’*” [The Qur’an (18:29)]. Allah also says, “*Blessed is He in whose hand is the creation: He has power over all things, He created death and life so that He might test you, and find out which of you are best in conduct. He is the Mighty, the Most Forgiving One.*” [The Qur’an (67:1-2)]. Last but not least, Allah is not pleased with disbelief but still it happens, which further proves that we have freewill, and are able to create our own deeds.

B. *Ash‘aries* refused this opinion and said that nothing of what we do is actually created by us, but Allah is the sole creator of everything. What happens is that whenever we make a choice and have enough determination to undertake a certain action, Allah creates a temporary power in our bodies that enables us to do it (*Al-Kasb*). Consequently, we are judged based on our intentions, which is confirmed by what the prophet P.B.U.H. said, “*Actions are but by intentions.*” They took as evidence on their opinion the verse which says, “**Allah created you and what you do.**” [The Qur’an (37:96)]. *Mu‘tazilies* responded saying that the mentioned verse’s context implies another meaning, Allah says, “*[Abraham’s] people came rushing towards him, but he said, ‘How can you worship things you carve with your own hands, when it is Allah who has created you and all your handiwork?’*” [The Qur’an (37:94-96)]. From the context, Prophet Abraham was referring to the fact that they utilized wood and stones in craving idols which they worshipped, while they denied Allah who created them and the materials they were using in carving their idols. This is made obvious in the verse which says, “**Glory be to Allah, the best of creators.**”

[The Qur'an (23:14)]. Of course, there is no creator but Allah; what the verse here implies is that Allah is the best creator for He created the materials and elements from which everything is made. Unlike us, we need tools and materials to invent or create anything, and all of these materials are Allah's creation. *Ash'aries* stated another verse, "***That is Allah your Lord, there is no deity except Him, the Creator of all things, so worship Him, He is the disposer of all things.***" [The Qur'an (6:102)]. *Mu'tazilites* responded to this verse saying that there is no conflict between it and their opinion, for Allah is the one who created us having the ability to create our own deeds.

- C. *Matureedies* adopted a similar view to that of *Ash'aries*, but they divided the effective power behind any action into two halves: the first is the power which creates the deed itself and this is from Allah, while the second is the power which affects the mode and manner of its occurrence and this one is from ourselves.
- D. Salafists adopted a similar view to that of *Ash'aries* in this issue. They denied any ability for humans to create their own deeds outside the will of Allah. They agreed that Allah is the one who creates our deeds and that we are judged based on our intentions. Prophet Muhammad said, "*Actions are but by intentions;*" hence, our main task is to adjust our intentions.

Sheikh *Abd-Ur-Rahman Al-Jezery* said, "*Actually the verses [tackling this issue] could be understood according to all of the previous views, which makes it impossible for any of the arguing teams to make their opinion prevail.*"

- **Bringing the Qur'an to existence:**

Allah says in the Qur'an, "*To some of [the prophets] Allah spoke.*" [The Qur'an (2:253)]. "*And Allah spoke to Moses directly.*" [The Qur'an (4:164)]. "*And if any of the polytheists seeks your protection, grant him your protection may he listen to the words of Allah, then let him reach his sanctuary.*" [The Qur'an (9:6)].

Based on the previous verses, Muslim scholars agreed that Allah speaks, and the Qur'an which we have between our hands conveys to us His speech in the form of verbal words. They differed in understanding the second half of the previous sentence.

- A. *Mu'tazilites* said that the Qur'an is Allah's speech in meaning, He created it in words and sentences to communicate with His creatures. Their evidence on this is that the verses of the Qur'an are formed of sentences, words and letters; by logic, these were created at a certain time, they are not infinitely preexistent.
- B. *Ash'aries* differentiated between self-speech, and the actual speech in words and sentences. They said that the actual speech in words is created because it ends as soon as the utterance of the words is finished, while self-speech is one of Allah's eternal attributes, its existence is connected to His infinite preexistence. They said that Allah can create the ability in whomever He likes among His prophets to hear and understand this infinitely preexistent speech, and this is how they interpret verse (4:164). Their evidence on the division of any speech into self-speech and actual uttered words is that we all practice it, and the Qur'an testifies for it in the verses which say, "*and inwardly they say, 'Why doesn't Allah punish us for what we say?'*" [The Qur'an (58:8)], and "*Whether you speak inwardly or aloud, He knows what is in every heart.*" [The Qur'an (67:13)].

- C. *Salafists* did not indulge into the matter or differentiate between self-speech and verbal speech. They insisted that the Qur'an is Allah's speech uncreated, just as anything related to Allah's attributes cannot be created.
- D. *Matureedies* adopted a similar view to that of the *Ash'aries*, but when they interpreted verse (4:164) they said that Allah created the voice which Moses P.B.U.H. heard from the blessed tree, and this voice related to Moses Allah's preexistent eternal speech.

- **Those who commit major sins:**

Allah says in the Qur'an, "*Those who when they have committed atrocity or have wronged their souls, remember Allah and pray that their sins be forgiven—for who but Allah can forgive sins?—and do not knowingly persist on their misdeeds while they know.*" [The Qur'an (3:135)].

"*Indeed, Allah shall not forgive associating partners with Him, but He forgives what is less than that for whomever He wills. Whoever ascribes partners to Allah, he has indeed done a monstrous sin.*" [The Qur'an (4:48)].

"*Say [O Muhammad], [Allah says], "O my servants, who have transgressed their limits by committing evil sins, do not despair of Allah's mercy," verily Allah forgives all sins. He is truly the Most Forgiving, the Most Merciful.*" [The Qur'an (39:53)].

"*To Allah belongs the kingdom of the heavens and the earth. He forgives whomever He pleases, and punishes whomever He pleases. Ever is Allah Forgiving and Merciful.*" [The Qur'an (48:14)].

Based on the previous verses, Muslim scholars agreed that Allah forgives all sins—major or minor—for whoever repents and asks for forgiveness; the only condition is that this person is a believer who does not associate any partners with Allah. Associating partners with Allah is a fatal sin in Islam. They also agreed that the believer who dies before repenting from making major sins shall be judged by Allah, if He wills He shall punish Him, and if He wills He shall forgive Him; Allah is Most-Forgiving, Most-Merciful. If this person was to be punished by Allah—may Allah save us all—he shall receive the proper punishment, and then he shall be brought out from the hellfire and admitted into paradise. No believer or even a person with one jot of faith in his or her heart shall remain in the hellfire forever. *Mu'tazilies* had a different opinion; they said that those who commit major sins are not considered believers. If they die before repenting, they shall be admitted into the hellfire and dwell therein forever. Their punishment shall be less than that of those who never believed during their lives. The main reason behind those different opinions was the definition of faith, and whether deeds and actions are part of faith or not.

- A. *Ash'aries* considered faith to be an affirmation by the heart, while deeds and actions are the fruit of sincere faith.
- B. *Matureedies* adopted the same opinion but set uttering the testimonies a condition for truthful faith.
- C. *Mu'tazilies* considered faith to be an affirmation by the heart, the tongue and the deeds altogether. This is why they considered the one who commits major sins to be in a middle rank between believers and deniers. If he dies before repenting sincerely, then he won't be considered a believer and shall dwell in Hell forever.

- D. *Salafists* adopted an intermediate position between all sects, they considered faith to be an affirmation by the heart, the tongue and the deeds altogether. They stated that submission of the heart entails submission of the body. They took as evidence the fact that Allah always describes the believers in the Qur'an through their deeds and actions, but they refused the claim of *Mu'tazilites* that Allah shall punish those who commit major sins by casting them into the hellfire forever. Their opinion regarding this point was like that of *Ash'aries* and *Matureedies*. Their opinion was built upon the Qur'anic verses alongside some prophetic traditions like the one in which Prophet Muhammad P.B.U.H. said, "*Faith has more than 60 parts, the highest of which is to confess that there is no deity but Allah, and the least of which is to remove harmful objects from the roads, and decency is part of faith.*" [Recorded by Bukhari and Muslim]. In this tradition the prophet made it clear that some deeds, ethics, and morals are considered parts of faith.

I would like to conclude this point with this part of a very long tradition speaking about the judgment day. It was **recorded by Imam Muslim** that Companion **Abu Sa'eed Al-Khudri** reported that the prophet P.B.U.H. said,

"The bridge would be set up over Hell, intercession would be allowed, and believers shall keep on uttering this supplication: 'O Lord, protect us and keep us safe'

It was asked, "O Prophet, what is this bridge?"

He said, "It's a passageway above the void in which one is likely to slip. There would be hooks, tongs, and spits like the thorn found in Najd deserts, known as Sa'dan. Believers shall pass over it within the twinkle of an eye, like lightning, like wind, like a bird, like the fastest horses and camels. Some will be saved, some will be lacerated and let go, and some will be pushed into the Hellfire, until believers are rescued from the Fire. I swear by the One in whose hand is my soul, there will be none more eager to invoke Allah for [saving their] brethren from the Hellfire than the believers on the Resurrection Day. They shall say, 'O Lord, they used to fast, pray and perform pilgrimage with us.'

It will be said to them, 'Take out those whom you recognize.'

Those people shall be saved from Fire, and they would take out a large number of people who had been overtaken by the Flames up to the middle of their shanks or up to their knees. They would then say, 'O Lord, none remains therein from the ones whom you commanded us to bring out.'

Allah shall then say, 'Go back and bring out those in whose hearts you find the weight of one dinar of goodness.'

So they will take out a large number of people, then they would say, 'O Lord, not one of those whom You commanded us to save have we left therein.'

Allah would then say, 'Go back and bring out those in whose hearts you find as much as half a dinar of goodness.'

Then they will take out a large number of people, and would say, 'O Lord, not one of those whom You commanded us to save have we left therein.'

Allah would then say, 'Go back and bring out those in whose hearts you find as much as one jot of goodness.'

They would bring out a large number of people, and would then say, 'O Lord, we have left none having any good in his or her heart.' "

Abu Sa'eed Al-Khudri then said, "If you don't accept this tradition, then recite if you wish the verse which says, 'Verily Allah never wrongs [any soul], not even the weight of an atom, if it is a good deed, He multiplies it and grants from Himself a great reward.' [The Qur'an (4:40)].

Then Allah, the Exalted, the Great, would say, 'The angels have interceded, the apostles have interceded, and the believers have interceded, and no one remains (to grant pardon) but the Most-Merciful of all those who are merciful.'

He will then take a handful from Fire, and bring out people who never did any good [during their lives] and had been turned into charcoal. He will cast them into a river called the river of life on the outskirts of Paradise. They will come out like the seed comes out from silt carried by flood. They will come forth like pearls with seals on their necks. The inhabitants of Paradise would recognize them [and say], 'Those are the ones who have been saved by the Most-Compassionate One, He has admitted them into Paradise without having done any good deeds in advance.'

Then Allah shall say, 'Enter Paradise, whatever you see in it is yours.'

They would say, 'O Lord, You have bestowed upon us favors which You have not bestowed upon anyone else.'

He would say, 'There is still a favor kept for you that is better than all of this.'

They would say, 'O Lord! What could be better than all this?'

He would say, 'It is My Content. I will never be angry with you after this.' "



O Allah, fill our hearts with the light of truth, and grant us your pardon in this life and the next as well. O Allah, don't forsake us for ourselves without any guidance or we shall perish.

*O Allah, grant us your blessings in each and every step we take on the righteous path, and let us not go astray till we return to You,
Amen.*

Finally, I would like to address the reader: The madness of accusing others of infidelity for having a different understanding from yours should stop. By all means, you cannot accuse any person of infidelity merely for having a different opinion in any of the above matters that are all hard to understand for most people, set aside the fact that they are debatable. Accept whatever opinion you see most correct, and ask Allah to enlighten your brothers and sisters, and help all people reach the truth. That would be way better than wasting your time debating and accusing others of disbelief.

Some young students say that Imam *Ahmad Ibn Hanbal* accused anyone who dared say that, “the Qur’an was brought into being” of blasphemy, and he even accused those who refused to say that they were infidels of infidelity. They take the Imam’s words as evidence on the legitimacy of accusing their opposition with this abominable accusation. They neglect the circumstances under which Imam *Ahmad* said those words. For your knowledge, Imam Ahmad was imprisoned for 18 months; during which, he was flogged daily until he fainted from pain. He received this punishment because he refused to compromise his freedom of speech. Anyone in his place would have accused his torturers of disbelief; no one who tortures Allah’s servants like this could be considered a faithful believer who knows or fears Allah. Islam orders us to show mercy in our treatment to animals, how be it with human beings? By all means, the generality in the Imam’s words must be excused and understood in this context. Before his tribulation, he never accused anyone of blasphemy or disbelief. Imam Ahmad was one of the bravest and most truthful believer; those like him never issue general blasphemy judgments without an individual academic argument. You can still read his arguments with the great Imams of his time regarding lesser things in jurisprudence books.

As we respect Imam Ahmad’s stand for what he believed in, we should also respect others when they do the same, or else, we would be hypocrites. Any controversial issue can be discussed in a civilized academic manner, and the final judgment should be left for the listeners. No one can claim that he or she knows the absolute truth. We are all avid truth seekers. I hope that all sincere truth seekers will be gathered some day in a better place, no matter how different they used to be, a place in which no more arguments are heard, a place in which all people shall rejoice with Allah’s reward, Amen.



*This is the end of the first section of the book.
All praises be to Allah for granting me the ability to finish it.
I hope the reader has found it enriching and beneficial.*

Section II: Preaching Islam



This section is dedicated to a very important issue that occupies the minds of sincere Muslim youths, which is “Preaching Islam.” The deterioration of the Islamic nations, and the misconceptions thrown at the faces of the youths agitates the desire of their sincere ones to learn how to preach and defend their religion. Of course this is great, but a problem emerges when this inclination takes a deviant form that makes them renounce their academic studies seeking to dedicate themselves solely to this issue. Their sincerity is more than appreciated, but their exaggeration is not from Islam. Islam is the religion of intermediacy. Preaching Islam needs successful engineers, doctors, scientists, writers, artists, etc., exactly like it needs knowledgeable scholars. I hope that those youths will find this book satisfying for their wish to learn about Islam without forsaking the other academic studies or renouncing their professional careers, which is extremely important for their nation.

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The Methodology of Preaching Islam

Prophet Muhammad P.B.U.H. said, "Convey on my behalf, even one verse."

Unlike what many Muslims think, preaching Islam is not about converting others to Islam, making presentations about Islam, giving lessons in mosques, having the prophetic traditions hanged on billboards in non-Muslim countries, etc. Those acts neither improve people's understanding of Islam, nor even urge them to respect it as an important religion. If by coincidence they do, it is always individual cases, and their admiration is mostly directed towards the presenter while their view of Islam remains the same. All people understand that presenters are well trained on attracting others to what they present. Presenters usually beautify their commodity even if it were the most terrible. Religion is not a commodity, so please don't treat it like one. In my opinion, presenting Islam in an attractive manner is not the proper way of preaching Islam, and it has many negative impacts on the presenter him or herself. From what I have seen so far, they think so high of themselves and they can't even notice it. Please understand that the best preachment you can give is the one you give to yourself. When you repair your own defects and immoralities, you will automatically teach others about Islam through real practice, and the outcome shall be amazing to the farthest extent.

Many Muslim youths fall in the widely spread nets of false sheikhs. They are amazed when they hear that they have converted too many people to Islam by their preachments in non-Muslim countries. They feel so small and unworthy of any reward in the hereafter for not being like those so-called sheikhs. Know that the effort you make inside your country, in your daily job sincerely while enduring all hardships, showing patience, and dealing with others in the best manner like the prophet did, serves Islam millions of times more than those 'fancy sheikhs' do. Islam doesn't need preachers who speak about it, it needs preachers who practice it. An honest poor Muslim farmer preaches Islam a thousand times better than those fancy figures; an honest merchant preaches Islam a thousand times better than a sheikh on a mosque's pulpit; a noble soldier preaches Islam, a good doctor preaches Islam, a diligent engineer preaches Islam, a sincere husband preaches Islam, a dedicated wife preaches Islam, etc.

By all means, preaching Islam is about interacting with other people honestly with noble manners and a sound heart. You don't need to utter one word from the Qur'an or the *Sunnah* by your tongue. Conveying a Qur'anic verse or a prophetic tradition through your practice is what counts. This is what the tradition atop the page means; otherwise, it's an invitation to hypocrisy, and this could never be what the prophet P.B.U.H. meant. If in this course you were asked by a Muslim brother or sister, or a fellow non-Muslim about what Islam or the Qur'an says regarding a certain issue, only then you can open the Qur'an, recite the verses, and explain them in a brief easy manner using a language which this person understands.

Allah says in the Qur'an, "*Invite (people) to the way of your Lord with wisdom and fair preaching, and argue with them in the best of manners. Surely, your Lord knows best the one who deviates from His way, and He knows best the ones who are on the right path.*" [The Qur'an (16:125)].

Allah mentioned “wisdom” before “fair preaching.” Verily, it’s from wisdom to realize that if you wish to preach Islam, you should earn the respect of others first through fair interaction, good ethics, and professional expertise; otherwise, any preaching you give is going to be an extremely harmful thing to Islam. Islam needs practical preaching more than verbal preaching.

Allah says in the Qur’an, *“O mankind! Be pious to your Lord, Who created you from a single soul, and from its kind He created its match, and from them He created many men and women, so fear Allah through Whom you demand (Your mutual rights), and do not sever the relations of the wombs. Verily Allah is ever an All-Watcher over you.”* [The Qur’an (4:1)].

So we are all “One Family,” and being one family means that we should be “kind & Just” towards one another. Allah also says in the Qur’an, *“O mankind, We have created you from males and females, and made you into nations and tribes so that you may know one another. Verily the noblest among you in Allah’s sight are those who are most pious. Verily Allah is All-Knowing, All-Aware.”* [The Qur’an (49:13)].

Hence, Allah teaches us that we should get to know one another without any restrictions placed on race, nationality, religion, or anything else. The noblest people in Allah’s sight are not Arabs, Asians, Europeans, nothing of that sort, the noblest are those who are most pious, those who have good manners and noble characters, those who are honest and sincere. Prophet Muhammad said, *“Truthful religion is sincerity.”* He also said, *“There is a morsel inside your body which if you repair, your whole body becomes virtuous; verily it’s your heart.”* Hence, preach Islam by repairing your heart.

It’s true that under the stresses of the world injustices we suffer from today, some semi-knowledgeable Muslims who don’t have enough understanding of Allah’s laws and Prophet Muhammad’s *Sunnah* reciprocate hatred towards other nations instead of knowledge; this is not from Islam. Actually, this contradicts the innate human nature (*Fitrah*) as well as the Qur’anic teachings in a manifest way endangering its doer to be misguided in this life and deserve Allah’s wrath in the hereafter. Allah says in the Qur’an, *“Allah does not forbid you with regards to those who did not fight you on account of faith, and did not expel you from your homes (i.e. occupy your lands), that you do good to them, and deal justly with them. Verily Allah loves those who maintain justice.”* [The Qur’an (60:8)].

Muslims have been inflicted for a very long time by two kinds of religious figures that try all the time to occupy their minds. Occupying lands doesn’t matter anymore, your mind is the target. The weapons of war have changed centuries ago, but unfortunately, simple people don’t realized this. The first kind of those alleged religious figures neither teaches people about their religion, nor allows them to acquire true knowledge from the proper sources which they are very keen on sabotaging through their owned TV channels, or by flooding the stores with their books. The second kind—which is more dangerous in my opinion—is more smart and smooth, it utilizes part of the previous method besides monopolizing the teaching positions in the religious institutions. They seek avidly to brainwash their students and convert them to a flock of sheep that acknowledge anything they say without any questioning. Although they claim they are serving religion,

both kinds aim at mobilizing people in crowds at their doors in order to use them for reasons which they never declare. Allah knows best, but sometimes I get the feeling that their aim is to drive people away from truly learning their religion and practicing it properly. Unfortunately most people follow those sheikhs like zombies. People who try to read, learn, and criticize or object to anything stated by those sheikhs are immediately cast away like lepers.

There is a great difference between true scholars and false Sheikhs. The way to distinguish between them is easier than you think, those who try to occupy your mind with their opinions, and create from you a duplicated copy of themselves are false Sheikhs; while those who try to liberate your mind and urge you to learn, think, and criticize according to logical disciplines are the ones from whom you should seek council and knowledge.

When you read about the most knowledgeable scholars in the Islamic history, you will find that they were intelligent lofty-cultured bookworms. One famous example known worldwide is Imam *Ibn Rushd* (520-595 A.H.)—Latinized as “Averroes”—he used to read every night at least 40 pages. It is said that he never missed any night except when he got married, and when his father died. Hence, by all means READ and LEARN, free your mind from those who love to stagger followers underneath their feet. Don’t degrade your intellectual capabilities and think that you are incapable of differentiating between wrong and right. Don’t trust any word you read simply because the one who wrote it is an acknowledged scholar. Scholars are human too, they build false opinions that could be revised and denied when found wrong. Imam *Abu Hanifah* allowed his students to adopt different opinions from his own, he even ordered them to write down their opinions besides his. This did not degrade the Imam’s status, on the contrary it made him the “Grand Imam.” Imam *Mālek* used to say, “*Anyone is subjected to make mistakes and build wrong opinions that could be questioned except the prophet P.B.U.H.*” Imam *Shāfe’i* used to say, “*My opinion is right having a possibility of turning out to be wrong, and the other opinions are wrong having a possibility of turning out to be right.*” Because of their deep knowledge and open mindedness, no one of them ever accused the other of going astray or being a heretic; on the contrary, Imam *Abu Hanifah* prayed behind the Mālekites in *Madinah*; Imam *Shāfe’i* prayed in the same style of the Hanafists when he led the prayers near *Abu Hanifah’s* tomb; Imam *Mālek* told Imam *Al-Layth Ibn Sa’d*, “*He is truly a knowledgeable jurist,*” referring to *Abu Hanifah*; Imam *Ahmad* said, “*Mālek is my most beloved among all traditionists,*” etc. This was the kind of respect and spiritual unity those knowledgeable early Imams had, that’s mainly because they were holding tight to the most treasured hoard in Islam, “Morals and Ethics.”

Acquiring deep knowledge about the Islamic sciences takes a life time and is not an obligation on every Muslim, but attaining the Islamic moralities is. Muslims cannot all be knowledgeable scholars, but they must all seek to be pious and noble-minded. The prophet P.B.U.H. was a model by his ethics and morals; he taught his companions through real practice. Muslims need to stop talking and start learning and practicing immediately, or else, there won’t be any deliverance for them.



When we speak about the methodology of preaching Islam, we must look at the preacher of all preachers, the monk of all monks, the best husband, father, companion and friend; we must seek an example in Prophet Muhammad P.B.U.H. Let's get a portrayal of this mighty preacher who single handedly changed the world.

There was no one more handsome than the Prophet P.B.U.H., as if the sun runs in his face, whenever he smiled, sparkles almost reflected on to the walls. His face was a little rounded, white with a red tinge. His hair was neither straight nor curly, and his forelock's hair reached his earlobes. He had big eyes with long eyelashes. He had wide bone structure with broad shoulders. He was neither fat nor skinny, neither tall nor short, but of moderate height among the people.

He was the best in conduct, most generous, most auspicious boding well, most truthful, most easy going, best companion, and most courageous among all people. At first sight, one would fear his solemnity, but loves him when he gets to know him. It's quiet often to read his describer saying, *"I've never seen anyone of his like, neither before him nor after him."*

He never spoke in narrations like that of ours, but his speech was always plain and clear with separate sentences that could be memorized by the listeners. He never talked to anyone except smiling in his face. *"I never saw anyone more cheerful than the Prophet P.B.U.H.,"* was usually how his companions described him. He was the most pleasant and simple-hearted among all people. Whenever he was pleased with something, his face shined like the full moon. His hospitality and generosity were matchless. His gifts and endowments manifested a man who does not fear poverty.

He always joined in household work, and would at times mend his clothes, repair his footwear, and sweep the floor. He would milk, tether and feed the animals, and do the household shopping. He was always cheerful, pleasant-tempered and lenient. His broad mindedness and tolerance embraced all of his students, and entitled him to be regarded as father for them all. He was willingly and modestly obeyed by everyone. For him, all people were equal. No one was better than another except on the criterion of piety. A favored one to him was the most pious .

His assembly was a meeting of clemency, patience, and honesty. Voices were never raised in rows or riots. He always esteemed the old, reflected mercy on the young, assisted the needy, and entertained his guests.

He always walked in solemnity. He was always modest and most shy. He was the first to cast his eyes down. He never stared at anybody's face. He always lowered his looks. He looked ground-wards more than he looked sky-wards. His utmost looks at people were glances. He was the most beloved person to all of his companions; whenever they saw him approaching, they wouldn't get up in his honor only because they knew how much he hated that.

Among his ethical and moral teachings are the following:

"The one who strives on taking care of widows and the needy is like him who is serving Allah."

"Always Show gentleness, for if gentleness is found in anything, it beautifies it, and when it is taken out from anything, it spoils it."

“Never turn away any needy beggar from your doorstep empty-handed even if you have nothing but half a dried date. Love the poor, bring them near to you, and Allah shall bring you near to Him on the Resurrection Day.”

“Seek me among your weak ones, for you are given sustenance only by reason of their presence.”

“Spend in charity and don’t fear diminution.”

“No wealth is ever decreased by alms, and Allah never enriches the one who forgives except with glory, and no one ever acts humbly except that Allah honors him.”

“Those who are merciful are treated mercifully by the All Merciful. So be merciful to those on earth, and you shall receive mercy by the One in heavens.”

“Follow the bad deed with a good one, and it shall erase it; and treat people with good manners. The best among you are those with best manners.”

“Renounce the worldly pleasures, Allah will love you, and forsake seeking after the likes of what people have, and they will love you.”

“Maintain relations with those who have broken off relations with you, feed those who have deprived you, and pardon those who have oppressed you.”

“Beware of suspicion, for suspicion is the worst of false tales. Do not look for other people’s faults and do not spy. Do not be jealous of one another, and do not desert (cut your relation with) one another. Do not hate one another, and be like brothers.”

“Oh People, your Creator is one. There is neither superiority for a white man on a black one, nor for a black man on a white one except by piety.”

“Love for all people what you love for yourself. No one realizes the truth about faith except when he loves for all people what he loves for himself.”

“Children are Allah’s beloved.”

“To honor those who are old is to show glorification to Allah.”

“He is not one of us him who doesn’t respect our elders, show mercy to our children, enjoin what’s right, and forbid what’s harmful.”

This was just a quick view of the prophet’s personality and teachings as a preacher. He is our model and our hope for the better persons whom we would love to be. He is our most beloved. May the Creator’s Praises and Blessings be upon our mentor; may the Creator’s Peace and Blessings be upon Prophet Muhammad.

When Lady ‘Ā’ishah described the prophet P.B.U.H. she said, *“His manners were a personification of the Qur’an.”* Other companions described him saying that he was a walking Qur’an. From this we can learn that a good preacher must do his or her best to abide by the same **ethical and moral code of the prophet** to the best of his or her capacity. Whenever you feel uncomfortable towards any action, ask yourself:

“If the prophet was in my place, would he have done that?”

Unfortunately, after we were entertained by speaking about the prophet P.B.U.H., we have to come back down to earth and take a look at the Muslim preachers of today. Instead of adorning themselves with the prophet’s ethics and morals, they adorn themselves with the number of their followers and their twitter accounts. Instead of educating people about Islam through just fair interaction, all they do is empty verbal preaching, and presenting useless TV programs which disperse the listeners into deviant paths in this life. Instead of hating to see their students get up in their honoring, today’s false sheikhs let their followers bow down and kiss their hands. Instead of being cheerful

and easy going, today's sheikhs are extremely repulsive. Instead of being courageous and having enough integrity to advance the lines defending those who cannot defend themselves, today's sheikhs only speak, run and hide. Instead of having enough integrity to speak their hearts in the face of their opposition, today's sheikhs only speak in closed circles amidst their followers; they never utter a word in the open. Instead of making people's lives easier, today's sheikhs seek each and every opportunity to complicate it, etc. How can a nation led by such figures ever prevail! It's a mercy from Allah that this nation still exists when its tribulation is in its religious figures. It's time to stop following those false sheikhs who have filled up the earth. It is time to start following Prophet Muhammad, learn from his example, and rebuild our faith.



Many preachers mix politics with Islam; they seek to drive people towards a certain political direction which have come to exist under the name Islamism. Islamists claim that they want to apply the Islamic *Shari'ah* through today's legitimate political channels. They propagate the idea that our societies have forsaken Islam a long time ago and we need to get back to it once more. As a person who never ever during his life joined any of those groups, and neither did most of my acquaintances, this makes me wonder: If we have forsaken Islam then why are we so distressed by its set back? Why are we trying to clear the tons of misconceptions thrown at it by extremists? Why are we accused of hypocrisy and infidelity by those who never met or dealt with us not even once during our lives? Why are those people filled with so much hatred and violence though most of them lead easy lives, are well educated, and many of them have even continued their education abroad? Why are we the first ones they are always willing to fight and kill while they always claim that they want to fight for those who are oppressed in Palestine?!

All these questions cross my mind and I continue to wonder: Was Islam really lost with time? Am I truly an infidel and I can't realize so?! You have to pardon my thoughts, the tons of blood that had been shed by these groups—mostly Muslim blood—bewilder me and block my reason. Let's go back to the beginning and try to think reasonably. We stated earlier that *Ibn 'Uqail* said, "*Politics is every decision taken seeking to improve people's lives and fight corruption, even if it were a decision that the prophet P.B.U.H. never took nor is there any injunction in the Qur'an referring to it. Whoever says, 'There is no politics except for the matters that the Shari'ah has tackled,' is surly mistaken and claiming that the companions were innovators.*"

Prophet Muhammad was not a politician, a congressman, an ambassador or a minister. He never held any of those positions. He never sought after them among his tribe *Quraysh* though they all existed in a certain fashion during his time. He never gave any fancy political speeches throughout his life, nor did he ever claim to know about politics. When he was offered by the polytheists of Makkah to be declared as their king in return for waiving the preaching of Islam, he refused and said, "*If they were to put the sun in my right palm and the moon in my left, I shall never stop preaching Islam till I see it prevail or die trying;*" and he insisted on preaching his message in the face of persecution, insults, social boycott, poverty, hunger, brutal physical assaults, and being targeted to kill by most Arabs. For this reason, he became the best preacher ever.

After 13 years of preaching Islam, the prophet immigrated to *Madinah*. By that time, the majority of the community there had already embraced Islam, they believed in him to be a messenger from their Creator, so they obeyed him more than they would have done with any king. Consequently, any worldly life problem or complaint was automatically raised to the prophet P.B.U.H. This is why—during this stage—his prophethood took the shape of a political position. Back then, the number of people in *Madinah* was very few and so were their needs and problems. Through his sincerity and modesty, he succeeded in handling the political issues in an astonishing democratic manner at a time when the earth hadn't known yet the meaning of democracy, but only knew monarchy.

When companion '*Odai Ibn Hatem* narrated the story of his faith, he described the prophet saying, "*I traveled seeking to meet the prophet at Madinah. When I arrived, I found him praying in the mosque. I entered and greeted him. He looked at me and said, 'Who is the traveler?' I answered: 'Odai Ibn Hatem.' He got up welcomed me, and held my hand inviting me persistently to his house. On the way there, a very old weak woman called him by his name. He stopped and kept on listening to her demands for a very long time. I said to myself, 'I can swear that this is not a king.' When she finished, we went along. When we entered his house, he picked up a pillow made of leather stuffed with arum, and handed it to me saying, 'Sit on this.' Noticing it was the only one inside the room, I said, 'No, you sit on it.' But he insisted saying, 'No, but you sit on it,' and he sat on the floor. Seeing this, I said to myself, 'I swear that this could never be the life conditions of a king.'*" [Recorded by Ibn Ishāq, Ibn Hishām and others].

Hence, the prophet P.B.U.H. did not come to teach any of the political sciences which we know today. He was sent to educate each and every human being, whether a king, a politician, an engineer, a doctor, a nurse, a scientist, a husband, a servant, a farmer, etc., about the Creator of this universe, and how to be a truthful sincere servant to Him, whether you are a president, or a peasant.

What's truly amazing is that some non-Muslims understand this easily when they read about Islam, while some Muslims don't. Sarojini Naidu, The famous poetess of India said, "*It was the first religion that preached and practiced democracy, for in the mosque, when the call for prayer is sounded, and worshippers are gathered together, the democracy of Islam is embodied five times a day when the peasant and king kneel side by side and proclaim: 'God Alone is Great' I have been struck over and over again by this indivisible unity of Islam that makes man instinctively a brother.*"

Emirate or governorship is not a desirable position in the prophet's teachings. On the contrary, it was recorded by Bukhari and Muslim that two men entered on the prophet and said, "*Instate us as governors O prophet.*" The prophet P.B.U.H. replied saying, "*We [Muslims] do not instate those who seek governorship or are desirous of it.*" They also recorded that Prophet Muhammad P.B.U.H. said, "*Him who seeks after emirate does not receive aid [from Allah] if instated, but him who is instated without seeking after it, he shall receive Allah's aid.*"

Abu Hurayrah reported that the prophet P.B.U.H. said, "*Verily you shall be keen on emirate; on the judgment day, it shall be a great remorse.*" [Recorded by Bukhari]. The prophet described emirate saying, "*It's a trust, and in the hereafter, it shall be a disgrace and remorse.*" [Recorded by Bukhari].

Allah orders us to improve people's lives and preserve it, each and every person according to his or her capacity. The sweeper who cleans the streets is doing this according to his capacity, the physician who treats those who are sick is doing this according to his capacity, the wife who raises good children and takes care of her husband is doing so, the ruler who promulgates fair laws is doing so, etc. All of the previous in the general sense of the word is from Islam, but there are no specific injunctions in the *Shari'ah* tackling the means and measures that should be taken in order to fulfill any of those tasks in the best manner. For instance when 'Omar established the judicial and postal systems as a Caliph, he was not following any prescribed laws in the *Shari'ah*, this was common sense, it is something which people's lives needed in order to go on in an upright manner. The simple man whom the prophet praised for cutting down a tree that narrowed the road was not following a prescribed injunction in *Shari'ah*. *Shari'ah* orders us to do what's right and beneficial, and to fight corruption and what's harmful wherever we may be.

Think about any of the above mentioned examples, do we actually need revelations from beyond the boundaries of the universe in order to carry them out. These are matters of common sense, they don't need a rocket scientist to deduce their necessity. What's the use of being created having this fascinating mind if you are going to halt its utilization and insist that you need divine revelations in order to act in worldly life matters?! The prophet P.B.U.H. said, "*You are more aware of this worldly life affairs and their disposal.*" Politics is the system through which worldly life affairs could be maintained properly. And because it's a matter of worldly life, Islam never prescribed a certain way for practicing it, nor did the companions agree on a certain fashion for practicing it after the prophet's departure. Each and every one of the rightly guided Caliphs had his own manner of governorship. Each one of them followed a different path in instating governors and observing their performance. Each one of them followed a different path in responding to people's complaints based on the situation at hand. The examples are endless here. Likewise, Islam doesn't teach Muslims how to reclaim the desert, it doesn't utter a word about how to cultivate wheat or cotton, nor does it speak of how to build up factories or develop modern technologies; there is no mentioning whatsoever of how to develop a remedy for encephalitis, carditis, hepatitis, etc. I can have a field day with this issue. What Islam orders us to do is to seek avidly after knowledge, preserve this earth and remember our Lord's perfection for everything in each and every act we carry out.

Near the end of his life, Caliph 'Omar Ibn Al-Khattab invoked Allah saying, "*O Lord, the number of my subjects has increased vastly, and my ability to fulfill their needs is getting weaker, so please pardon me and let me return to you without being negligent or disregarding.*"

It is extremely important to understand those words, if the people's number is few, it is easy for one man to fulfill their needs and respond to their complaints; but as this number increases, this task needs more and more men to fulfill it. Example: when the number of people increases, the need for more cultivated lands to produce enough crops shall ensue. If the increase continues, the need to reclaim desert lands shall evolve, and consequently shall the need for specialized agricultural engineers and modern agricultural machinery. This shall entail the need for specialized mechanical engineers, etc. Planning and coordination between all these disciplines, solving their problems, and providing their needs entail the need for governmental employees dedicated to handling such issues.

Employees need intelligent managers to handle each and every department of service required by the people; those managers are the ones we call ministers. Ministers must be supervised by a chief minister who coordinates the cooperation between them all and reports all matters to the head of the state. This head of state must be capable of managing matters of politics and war; he must take care of the people's needs and reform their lives while protecting them from any enemy.

Therefore, the knowledge and ability of religious scholars in solving people's problems stand ineffective in modern times because solving those problems is not a matter of religion alone, it's a matter of science, invention, research, development, homeland security, and so many other things. This requires a team of people from different academic backgrounds to work together and contribute in handling things. What scholars should do—besides teaching people about their religion—is to investigate what people's lives need and preach its implementation. They should educate the youths about the importance of these tasks, and encourage them to learn and become highly educated researchers and inventors who can serve their community. Reclaiming the desert has become incumbent, so it is an Islamic obligation that scholars incite its implementation. Treating people's pains and maladies is something necessary, so it is an Islamic obligation on preachers to urge researchers find remedies. Establishing factories that produce the necessary utilities we need in our lives is something essential, so it is an Islamic obligation that preachers instigate engineers to build those factories, etc.

The previous are necessary acts that could not be undertaken by politicians, sheikhs or jurists. Only those who are specialized in such fields can carry out such missions. It is the politician's duty to support, plan and facilitate the task for specialists, and secure the supplement of all their needs. It is the scholar's duty to make investigations about people's needs, incite their fulfillment, and invoke Allah to grant the specialists success in what they are doing. No scholar should forsake remaining close to the people and educating them about their religion to practice politics, nor should politicians ascend the mosque's pulpits and speak about religious rites and rituals. Scholars call for reform and incite it persistently, politicians plan and facilitate the means of its implementation, and specialists carryout the task.

If the previous three figures work together for the sake of reforming people's lives, then they are preaching Islam without uttering a word from the Qur'an or the Sunnah; they are actually living the *Shari'ah*. If they decline and tear up the community amongst each other, they are all traitors to Islam and to their countries, and should be taken to court. In my opinion, specialists carry 75% of the load upon their shoulders all the time, but they are never appreciated for it, especially in the Arab countries. This is why many of their youths renounce seeking after knowledge and follow fancy figures like famous sheikhs or charismatic politicians, and those are always tearing our communities apart.

In my country Egypt, many streets, squares and bus-stations are named after army officers, politicians and rulers. Some streets are even named after notable sheikhs, but not one street named after a scientist, a doctor, or an engineer. Even the engineers who rebuilt the Egyptian army after the relapse of 1967 have no mentioning whatsoever. By all means, the country that doesn't appreciate its knowledgeable citizens shall never prosper or find any light in its future.

Back to mixing preaching Islam with practicing politics; if you wish to practice politics with the intention to reform people's lives, then be my guest, but don't lie to the people and claim that there is a certain prescribed Islamic way for practicing politics. Don't make underground schemes to smear the reputation of any governor who doesn't belong to your group and use Islam as a ride to reach the leading position. Don't be a traitor and take foreigners as allies against the citizens of the country. We have all seen the performance of those who raised the banner of reformation in the name of Islam ever since the *'Abbāsids* and till the moment of writing this; never were any of them truthful or sincere. Muslims have always followed anyone for uttering the word Islam or Muhammad amidst his speech; they don't realize that their desire for the justice of Islam could only be fulfilled through their own practice. No one can repair your heart if you don't criticize yourself and repair your intentions. No one of those Islamists has a magic stick with which he can cast a spell and change your life. No one is going to defend the weak ones by empty speeches and fancy conferences. Unless you change yourself nothing will ever happen.

Prophet Muhammad's approach in preaching Islam was not built upon seizing power or practicing politics. It was built upon raising sound pious hearts, and planting the sense of justice, equality and fraternity among all people. If any nation, tribe or even a small bunch of people succeed in reaching such a state, surely they shall prosper and be able to accomplish anything. Preaching Islam according to my understanding is to raise sincere, well educated, pious persons with sound hearts; only then shall the state of justice that all believers dream of be established.



From the previous we should be able to deduce that preaching Islam is directly connected to the conditions of the Muslim communities. This is why it's extremely important to tackle some points that Muslims should consider while bringing up their children. Preparing a preacher starts ever since his or her childhood. The ethics and morals upon which our children are raised form the foundation of preaching. Pondering over the history of the prophet and his companions, some features could be deduced for perfect preaching. The following is a brief summary of the most important traits that our children should be raised on.

Children should be raised on **truthfulness, honesty and sincerity**. Those traits are the foundation of fair preaching without which any lofty education won't matter. Those traits could only be implanted in kids through example and real practice. Ever since perception, our kids start gaining many of the traits that form their characters when they grow up. Narrating stories of pious people is important, it adds a lot to children's moral hoard, but its effect is nullified if it was not accompanied by true examples which they see with their own eyes every day. There is nothing stronger in effect than what you see with your eyes. Any noble trait you want to implant in your kids should be treated in a similar manner.

Children should be trained on **using reason and logic** ever since their early teenage years. There is nothing more useful for any person than attaining the ability to think about everything in a proper logical manner, “*Wisdom is the long sought goal of believers.*” Reason is something which we are born with, but preserving it, and enriching it with training and education is really one tough task that needs a lot of perseverance from the mentors.

Children should be **accustomed to reading** on daily basis ever since their perception. Parents must read for their children a lot; they must hold a family gathering every day for at least one hour, and read for their kids books which interest their age and are meanwhile useful. Allowing the children to choose the books that interest them must also be allowed.

Children should be allowed to **incline towards Islam through their own choice**. Islam should fill their hearts based on their own convictions. We should urge our kids to learn about all religions and discuss all matters openly with them. This means that parents must learn about their religion and other religions as well if they want to protect their children, but they should not compel their children to embrace their own convictions. Allah forbids us from doing so in the verse which says, “*Let there be no compulsion in religion.*” [The Qur’an (2:256)]. Remember that one of Prophet Noah’s sons died refusing the faith of his father. If compelling our children to embrace our religions was something lawful, Prophet Noah P.B.U.H. would have been the first to do it. By logic, how can anyone be honest, sincere and truthful if he is forced to embrace an idea he doesn’t believe in! Muslims must understand why they believe in Allah—the Creator of all that exists, and why they believe in Muhammad—the Creator’s servant and messenger—in order to act according to the Islamic injunctions in the proper manner.

In my opinion, the previous points constitute 75% of preaching Islam. Their existence forms the fortress upon which any future preaching depends. Any Muslim characterized by the above mentioned traits is already a preacher through his or her attitude without any need to utter a word about Islam.

Fair verbal preaching by presenters needs **knowledgeable well versed Muslims** who have full understanding of **the prophet’s history**, the sequence of events in relation to the Qur’anic verses, and the prophetic traditions in relation to their context. Knowing history is about incidents and dates, but understanding it is about perceiving the lessons and wisdom in every incident.

Fair verbal preaching requires **good knowledge of the Qur’an**, its narratives, its injunctions and their application from the *Sunnah*, and finally, the wisdom behind the rational injunctions that are not related to rituals.

To have full knowledge and understanding of the prophet’s history is like living with him all the time. To have the Qur’anic verses living in your mind and conscious is like speaking with Allah all the time. Only those who are most pious can reach such level. Always remember that piety is the key for everything, and pondering over the Qur’an is the main source for having a good grasp of such a key.

Fair preaching needs **patience and perseverance** in the face of tribulations, insults, and hatred. Allah says in the Qur'an, "*You shall be inflicted in your possessions and in yourselves, and you shall hear from those who received the scriptures before you and the polytheists much abuse. If you be patient and pious, then verily (you shall succeed in a matter) that requires a strong will.*" [The Qur'an (3:186)].

Preachers are **liberators not leaders**. Any preacher who seeks leadership either has no understanding of Islam or is a big liar. Those preachers who seek to lead people think of them as slaves not free human beings. No prophet or messenger scored any personal gains or worldly life benefits from his call and strife; this is the sign of truthfulness.

Fair verbal preaching is characterized by **simplicity**. Take a lesson from the fact that the Qur'an was revealed in 23 years to the best Muslim generation ever. How be it with the current generations. Prophet Muhammad himself said, "*Facilitate all matters for people and don't complicate them.*" In simple words, a Preacher should not think of the number of sermons and the different issues he or she tackles in relation to time, but should think of the **quality** of those sermons and their **effectiveness**.

The preacher's mission ends when he succeeds in **connecting the hearts and minds of his or her listeners with the Creator**, and pointing for them towards the righteous path. Walking the path is not the preacher's duty unless his help was sought.

A Preacher should **never waive any of the Islamic injunctions** seeking to satisfy his or her listeners, or seeking to beautify Islam in their eyes. Allah says in the Qur'an, "*O prophet, be pious to your Lord and do not follow the deniers and the hypocrites, verily Allah is ever Omniscient and All-Wise. Follow that which has been revealed to you from your Lord, verily Allah is Ever-Acquainted with what you do.*" [The Qur'an (33:1-2)]. This order was given by the High Commander (i.e. Allah) to the leader of His army (i.e. Prophet Muhammad), but the soldiers are the ones intended, and Muslims are those soldiers.

In my opinion, the previous points constitute the remaining 25% of preaching Islam. Their existence forms the main pillar upon which fair preaching is built. Any Muslim who has the ability to maintain these traits alongside the previous 75% is a professional preacher.

A professional preacher must **have a respectable experience in any field of work**. He must earn his living from his own handiwork. All prophets worked for a living, none of them lived as a pauper.

A professional preacher must volunteer to **contribute in all good and beneficial activities** he encounters or is invited to. He should give aid to those who are trying to set things right and repair the community and this earth on which we are living. Prophet Muhammad P.B.U.H. contributed in the "Oath of ethics" before Islam when he was still 20 years old, and he said, "*If I were invited to it by the polytheists after Islam, I would have attended.*"

A professional preacher must **have a time with his Lord's words every day**, a time dedicated for the remembrance of Allah and pondering over His words. This recharges his faith with positive energy that enables him to carry out his mission.

A professional preacher must **prepare very well his speech or sermon**. He must repeat it out loud to himself several times as if he is standing in front of his audience and conversing with them. He must think of the possible questions that could be asked regarding each and every point he shall tackle, and prepare the proper answer. Good intentions are never enough, **good planning is the key to success**. The prophet's history is full of examples on this. One famous example is the immigration plan.

Seeking help from honest non-Muslim experts in worldly life matters which Muslims are unfamiliar with is acceptable and desirable in times of necessity. Prophet Muhammad entrusted 'Abdullah Ibn 'Uraiqet to guide him when he was immigrating from Makkah to Madinah. Nonetheless, with the least doubts of treason, Muslims must depend on themselves and choose experts from their own.

A professional preacher must **never spread hatred against anyone**. On the contrary, he must always try to reconcile between all people and spare lives. Prophet Muhammad invoked Allah to bring forth righteous progeny from those who hurt him and his companions. He even accepted to sign a peace treaty with those who drove Muslims out from their lands and occupied their homes. Allah called this treaty a huge triumph in the Qur'an.

A true preacher **earns the love and respect of people** even from other faiths.

The previous were just general tips that devout preachers should consider when preaching Islam. Their consideration by any professional preacher makes him or her a great invincible preacher.

Now, since that the misconceptions about any religion are used to weaken it and dismantle its strong construction, it is extremely important to explain and respond to them in a logical manner that clears the dilemma, restores certainty, and incites the deniers to use their reason in issuing their judgment regarding the misconception under study. The stronger logic often wins in the minds of those who are sincere, so let's talk about the methodology of refuting misconceptions.



Islam means, "Believing in the soul Creator of all that exists, submitting to His will as sent in His messages, getting to know Him and follow His described righteous path in a fair manner that achieves peace of mind and tranquility of soul."

The Methodology of Refuting Misconceptions

Unlike what many Muslims think, refuting misconceptions is not a football game in which you are trying to score as many goals as possible and make fun of your opponent. Many accusations are rational and need logical answers and explanations, and many accusers are truly objective in their presentation of the issue. Your duty as a Muslim is to explain the matter to them in the simplest way possible, and in a language they know and understand.

Please understand that it's easy to throw tons of accusations in a couple of minutes; however, refuting them needs a long detailed explanation. If a person was keen on understanding the truth about any issue, he or she won't follow the attitude of throwing a lot of accusations, but would put one accusation forward in the form of a question. This is the one whom you should converse with and explain the matter to according to your understanding. As for the other kind, don't bother responding to them or listening to what they say; any response will only make things worse and increase their ignorance about Islam and hatred towards Muslims.

Always remember that any Muslim should be an avid truth seeker. Our intention should always be fixed upon finding the truth and clarifying it to others in the best of our capacities. If we succeed in doing so, then this shall be better for us than all the riches of this world. If we fail, then we should hope that we were not good enough, may the denier receive a better preacher who succeeds in conveying the truth about Islam to him or her in a better manner.

Allah tells the prophet in the Qur'an, "*Perhaps you will destroy yourself with grief if they do not believe in this message. We have adorned the earth with attractive things, so that We may test mankind as to which are the ones best in conduct.*" [The Qur'an (18:6-7)]. The verses relate to us how keen the prophet was on delivering his message to everyone, and how sad he was for their denial. This should make it crystal clear that the failure to guide others is not something easy or insignificant; on the contrary, it's grievous and we should sincerely try to evade it as hard as we can.

It was narrated that one day, a funeral of a Jew from *Madinah* was passing by. On seeing it approaching, the prophet stood up. His companions said in astonishment, "*O prophet, this is a funeral of a Jew.*" They were referring to the fact that the man met the prophet yet died without believing in him. The prophet P.B.U.H. responded saying, "*Isn't it a human soul.*" The prophet's action and response teaches us that we should respect any person even those who deny Islam. If this was the kind of respect the prophet had for the man's funeral, how be it with the man himself.

From this page and till the end of the book, the most common misconceptions shall be stated in a clear abusive manner so that our youths would be accustomed to the harsh style in which accusations are always thrown. The response to each accusation shall follow explained in a simple manner. Scholars have different opinions and responses regarding these issues, that's something normal and beneficial. The reader can choose the best response he or she encounters; or better, dig deeper, make new researches, and build up more detailed opinions regarding the accusations deemed important.

1. Allah, the moon god, or The Only God?

Many people attack Muslims saying, “*You people have no understanding whatsoever, you don’t even know who it is whom you worship. For your own good, know that you are worshipping the moon, for Allah is the name of the “Moon god.” You even follow in your traditions the lunar calendar. Can’t you understand that all this is not a coincidence? You actually worship the moon!*”

Well in order to clear up this misconception we need to ask ourselves the following question, “*Was Prophet Muhammad P.B.U.H. the only prophet who used the name “Allah” in referring to the creator of this amazing universe?*”

The prophets of the previous nations mentioned in the Bible mostly spoke Hebrew and some spoke Aramaic. Though Moses and Aaron P.B.U.T. most probably spoke the ancient Egyptian language that was written in Hieroglyphic and Demotic letters, yet the claim of the Jewish nation is that the Torah’s original language was Hebrew. It should be cleared here that the Hebrew language reached its most mature form in the tenth century before delivery during the reign of Prophet Solomon P.B.U.H. Some scholars say that it was originated from an old Hebrew that was spoken by Abraham after he escaped from Egypt to Philistine (i.e. Palestine). They suggest that this is the Old Hebrew which was inherited and spoken by the Jews besides ancient Egyptian.

During Solomon’s reign P.B.U.H., Jews settled in Philistine and established their temple. Hebrew became the formal language of their state, and consequently, the language of all Jewish prophets after that. After the demise of their kingdom under the attacks of the Babylonian king Nebuchadnezzar 597 B.C., they were enslaved in Babylon for centuries; as a result, they were forced to speak the language of their masters, which was a subset language of the Syriac tongue. Decades later, Jews returned to Jerusalem. The dominant language in this part of the world at that time was Syriac Aramaic, especially in the area where Canaanites dwelled. Thenceforth, Aramaic became the language of the Jews, and later on, the language of Jesus P.B.U.H.

Hebrew and Aramaic are both Semitic languages. They have the same letters and are read and written from right to left like Arabic. If we were to check those two languages for the words used to refer to “God,” we will find the following:

A. *In Hebrew scriptures many words are used to refer to God, some as His attributes, some as names; but the words that are translated as God in the English Bible are the following:*

1. “אל” pronounced as “Al.” It originally means “power” as explained by Rashi (the famous French rabbi) and Onkelos (the famous Roman rabbi). It’s the smallest word which refers to God in Hebrew. For example read [Job (33:29)] where it says:

“הן-כל-אלה יפעל-אל פעמים שלוש עם-גבר”

Pronounced as follows, “En kol ellè yef’al al f’amaim shalosh ‘m gaber”

Translated in English as, “Lo, all these [things] works God oftentimes with man”

2. “אלה” which is used to refer to “God.” It is pronounced as “Alah.” For example, read [Daniel (2:28)] where it says:

“ברם איתי אלה בשמיא גלא רזין”

Pronounced as follows, “Beram itai Alah bishmaia galae razin”

Translated in English as, “But there is a God in heaven that reveals secrets”

The book of Daniel reverts from Hebrew to Aramaic at several places, but the word is understood and translated as God throughout the book. You can easily notice its closeness to the next frequently used Hebrew word.

3. “אלה,” sometimes written “אלוה.” It means “the one with powers,” but always translated as “God.” It is pronounced as “Aloh.” For example read [Job (33:12)] where it says:

“... אענך כי-ירבה אלוה מאנוש”

Pronounced as follows, “... e’eneka ki-ierbeh Aloh me’enosh.”

Translated in English as, “... I will answer you, that God is greater than man.”

4. “אלהים,” sometimes written as “אלוהים.” It is pronounced as “Alohim,” which is the linguistic plural of the previous word “אלה” and means “these with powers.” It is simply the masculine plural of the attribute. Hebrew plurals can be quantitative: more than one, or qualitative: large or great. The word was originally “Aloh,” but “ים” or “im”—which identifies Hebrew nouns as masculine plural—was added to the attribute as a plural of respect. Its main function is to confirm that the attribute is boundless, and stress on its absoluteness. For example read [Genesis (1:1)] where it says:

“בראשית ברא אלהים את השמים ואת הארץ.”

Pronounced as follows, “Bereshit bara Alohim et haShamaim ve’et ha’aretz.”

Translated in English as, “In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.”

5. “יהוה” pronounced as “Yahuwah,” usually translated as “The Lord.” It was used to refer to God as His most important name or attribute after being revealed to Moses [Exodus (6:3)]. It is always mistakenly written and pronounced in English as “Jehovah,” it’s obvious from the Hebrew letters that it has no “J” in it. Some even argue that its accurate pronunciation is unknown for sure. It is mentioned more than 6000 times in the Old Testament (OT). All Jews replace it with the word, “אדני” pronounced as “Adony” in recitation.

The root of the name “Yahuwah” is a big dispute among scholars, but the confirmed points here are that its roots are unknown and all Jews replace it while praying or reciting the Old Testament with the word “Adony,” which means “my master” or “my lord.” Hence, a very logical question arises here, “*Why would anyone want to replace the word chosen by God to refer to himself more than 6000 times in his revealed books with another word chosen by men? How dare anyone do this thinking that he knows better than God?!*”

The reason behind this mysterious replacement as explained by rabbis is that, “*This name is so holy that merely invoking it can have tremendous effects such that being uttered within the wrong circumstances, or in the wrong way can be very harmful, aside from being included in the prohibition of taking God’s name in vain.*”

According to the dictionary of the Bible, the Arabic orthodox Christian Biblical encyclopedia, “The term Yahuwah is a name among the names of Allah, it serves protect faith from two dangerous ideas: first, the idea that Allah is a thought or an imaginary being; second, the idea of pantheism and that all creation melts in Allah’s existence. The name makes Allah a specific declared God upon whom any human can call with a clear decisive term. The term Yahuwah linguistically means, ‘The one always existing.’ By the end of the 4th century B.C., fear increased for the holy name from being profaned; consequently, people were completely forbidden from uttering it. No one can say the Holy name anymore except the chief rabbi while reciting the prayers inside the temple.”

For example read [Deuteronomy (6:4)], where it says:

“שמע ישראל יהוה אל-הינו יהוה אחד”

Pronounced as follows, “Shema‘ Israel, Adony aloheno, Adony akhad.”

Translated in English Bibles as, “Hear O Israel: the lord is our God, the lord is one.”

Hence, “the lord” is not the translation of “Yahuwah,” but of “Adony.” The term “Yahuwah” is probably the most important name of God given to Jews, or it’s His most important attribute.

From the above we can conclude the following:

- The translation of the word “יהוה” pronounced as “Yahuwah” doesn’t mean “The Lord,” which is the translation of its substitute “Adony.” “יהוה” is either a name of God which He chose to refer to Himself with, or a very important attribute of His Glory. It was unknown before Moses P.B.U.H. as stated in the Old Testament [Exodus (6:3)], where it says, “*And I appeared unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob, by [the name of] Alohim, but by my name Yahuwah was I unknown to them.*”
- The three words “אל,” “אלה” and “אלהים,” pronounced as (“Al,” “Aloh” and “Alohim”) respectively, all do not literally mean “God.” Their real meanings are as explained above, “Power,” “one with powers,” “These with powers.” Hence, their most suitable translation would be “the All-powerful,” “God Almighty,” or “the Omnipotent.” The word “God” is usually used as their implied meaning.
- The remaining word is the one used by Daniel P.B.U.H. to refer to God, which is “אלה,” pronounced as “Alah.” It’s almost the same word as “Aloh,” but it has the vowel “a” amidst it instead of “o.”

That was a quick overview of the words which were most frequently used in the OT to refer to God. Now let’s move to Aramaic, Jesus’s language.

Muslims believe that Jesus P.B.U.H. was a prophet sent to the sons of Israel, which is what he himself says in [Matthew (15:24)], “*I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel.*” The language which most Israelites spoke at the time when he was born was the Syriac Aramaic, besides Hebrew, the language of their holy scriptures. It’s important here to clarify that no Aramaic scriptures were preserved for us to study and discuss except a very few scripts for the book of Daniel, whose date and authors are unknown. The church utterly destroyed all ancient manuscripts written in the original language of Jesus P.B.U.H. sometime after the ‘Council of Nicaea’ 325 CE.

Consequently, there is only one way left, which is to check the “Peshitta” (i.e. the Eastern Aramaic Syriac bible) beside any English-Aramaic dictionary. This way we may find out the correct translation and pronunciation of the word “God.”

The originality of the Peshitta was confirmed by the words of Patriarch Mar Eshai Shimun XXIII who said, “*With reference to the originality of the Peshitta text, as the Patriarch and Head of the Holy Apostolic and Catholic Church of the East, we wish to state, that the Church of the East received the scriptures from the hands of the blessed Apostles themselves in the Aramaic original, the language spoken by our Lord Jesus Christ Himself, and that the Peshitta is the text of the Church of the East which has come down from the Biblical times without any change or revision.*”

B. In Aramaic, the word “God” is written in one of the following forms :

1. “אלה” or “אלם” pronounced as “Alah,” like word number 2 in Hebrew. It was used about 3 times in the letters of Paul. For example read [Peshitta Corinthians (8:4)] where it says:

“סגלם אלם אעזי אלם אר עג”
 “ודלית אלה אחרין אלא אנ חד .”

Pronounced as follows, “...Wadalyt Alah akhareen illa en khad.”

Translated in English as, “...and that [there is] none other God but one.”

2. “אלהא” or “אלמא” pronounced as “Alaha,” which is the only word used in the 4 gospels meaning “God.” For example read [Peshitta Matthew (15:4)] where it says:

“אלמא גיר אמר...”
 “אלהא גיר אמר...”

Pronounced as follows, “Alaha gir amar...”

Translated in English as, “for God commanded...”

Another example from what Jesus said himself is in (Peshitta Matthew 5:8):

“למכסמם למלם גזחם חלכסם גסמם נסמם למלמם”
 “טוביהון לאילין דדכין בלבהון דהגון נהזון לאלהא”

Pronounced as follows, “Tobèhon la-’eleen dèdèkeen bèlbèhon dèhnon nèhzon l’Alaha” (Please note that the letter ‘L’ before “Alaha” in Aramaic means ‘to’ or ‘towards’).

Translated in English as, “Blessed [are] the pure in heart: for they shall see God.”

Also note that the word, “נהזון” or “nèhzon” is driven from the verb “זון”, which is used to indicate the act of, “driving pleasure from a sight” or “to feed the eye.” Hence, the more accurate translation would be:

“Blessed [are] the pure in heart for they shall be pleased by looking to Alaha.”

3. Finally there is the word “מריא” pronounced as “Marya” in English. As explained for the previous Hebrew word “Adony,” it means “My Lord” not “God.” It is derived from the Aramaic word “מאר” or “Mar” which means “Lord.”

From the previous insight in to Aramaic, we now know that Jesus himself called God “Alaha.”

Clarification:

Muslims believe that Allah is the only God. He is the Creator of all that exists. He is eternal and everlasting. He neither begot any children, nor was He begotten, and there is none comparable unto Him. He is Unique in all of His attributes, that's to say: He is the Most Merciful, Most Wise, Most Gracious, Most Generous, Most kind, etc. Muslims do not worship any god other than "Allah," to Him belongs the universe and its inhabitants. He is the disposer of all affairs. He is Omnipotent, Omniscient and Powerful over all matters. The word "Allah" in Arabic doesn't refer neither explicitly nor implicitly to any deity other than the one and only true God, the supreme being who has created all that exists, the one whom we as Muslims worship and to His will alone we submit. "Allah" literally means "The Only God." It has been used by the Arab Jews and Christians to refer to God Almighty for centuries even before the advent of Islam. It is mentioned in the Arabic Bible more than 2000 times.

Conclusion:

- The word "God" was never used by any prophet when referring to our Creator. None of them even heard this word during his life. This returns to the fact that the English language evolved from the fusion of languages and dialects which were brought to the eastern coast of Great Britain by Germanic (Anglo-Saxon) settlers in the 5th century. Hence, the word "God," and the whole English language evolved after Jesus departed earth by more than 400 years.
- The two words pronounced as "Adony" and "Marya" in Hebrew and Aramaic respectively do not mean "God," they mean "My Lord." The meaning and correct pronunciation of the term "Yahuwah" are unknown for sure; this name is considered a secret of the highly knowledgeable rabbis. As quoted previously from the Arabic orthodox Christian Biblical encyclopedia, it is one of the names of Allah which means "The one always existing."
- The remaining words used by the prophets which mean God are "Aloh," "Alah," "Alaha," and finally "Allah," which Arabs, whether Muslims, Jews, or Christians have been using for thousands of years, and will keep on doing so till the end of time. According to what's inherited from our ancestors, even before the advent of Islam, it's the most correct pronunciation.

Now I have a small question for you, "Which is the most odd among these words?"

Aloh – Alah – Alaha – Allah – God

I leave the answer for the intelligence of the reader. May all truth seekers be guided to the righteous path; Amen.



2. Muhammad, a pretender or a Prophet?

Many non-Muslims propagate hatred towards Prophet Muhammad P.B.U.H. We have seen them making movies defaming him, writing books attacking him, calling him many things like a womanizer, a pedophile, a blood thirsty tyrant, rapist, liar, fabricator, etc. They claim they have read his history and couldn't find a single act of kindness in it. They say, *"It doesn't matter what Muhammad taught. Any lying hypocrite can ask others to behave beautifully, while he himself does otherwise."*

Well, these were a big bunch of accusations. In order to refute them all, we need to speak about each accusation on its own, and clear the misconception behind it. Let's start with the accusation that Prophet Muhammad was a lying pretender who never had any act of kindness, and ordered his followers with what he himself never did.

It is absolutely true that through the history of mankind there were many false prophets, they were just ordinary men seeking personal benefits from pretending to be chosen by Allah Almighty to deliver His laws and messages to their people. In order to determine whether any of those who claimed prophethood was telling the truth or lying, we need to listen-to or read what he preaches, and examine his aspects, manners and the way he lives so that we may figure out whether he was truthful or not. Never had a true prophet led an easy life free from severe hardships that only a true believer can endure. Prophets were the most afflicted humans who ever lived on earth, yet still, they were the most obedient to Allah's laws and teachings. They were the most patient in facing Allah's tests and tribulations. Their reward is not of this mortal life but of the next, where the obedient believers shall prosper forever.

Any objective reasonable person knows by heart that it's illogical and unfair to judge someone without knowing him, or gathering enough information about him from those who knew him. Any fair person knows that it's totally unjust and libelous to build a false image for a dead person ignoring the opinions of those who knew him well, like his companions, wives, relatives, students, and those who believe in him. Today, Prophet Muhammad's grave is visited annually by at least 20 million Muslims—males and females. Some western writers developed the term "Muhammadism," and they called Muslims "Muhammadins." This is a totally foreign unrecognized word for the majority of Muslims. That's because they do not worship Muhammad, or think of him as a divine being. Visiting someone's grave never means that you worship him, it simply means that you love him and miss him greatly. Don't you visit your mother's or father's grave? Don't you visit the graves of your beloved ones? It's exactly the same for all Muslims; they visit the grave of a person they have come to know and love so much; they visit the grave of their paragon and hero.

Since that Prophet Muhammad P.B.U.H. departed our world 14 centuries ago, and we can't get to meet him ourselves, then at least we should get to know how those who actually lived with him described him. Without learning how his contemporaries described him, no one can ever build an honest complete opinion regarding his prophethood. Those who attack him without having the slightest idea about how his companions described him are totally biased and unfair to say the least.

Within the next few pages, I'm going to lay between your hands a brief description of Prophet Muhammad's appearance, personality, attitude, teachings, etc., as reported by those who knew him best. I shall try to give you a full portrayal of his appearance and his life. This will be a review of how his followers, friends and family described him after his death. I hope that this will help the reader acquire fair knowledge about the man before making any judgments regarding his prophethood based upon falsified fragmented information.

His Appearance P.B.U.H.:

Abu Hurayrah, one of the prophet's most famous companions. He reported the maximum number of traditions from the prophet's teachings. He witnessed all incidents in the last 4 years of the prophet's life, during which, he didn't leave the prophet's side except when he slept at night. He described the prophet saying,

"I never saw anyone more handsom than the prophet P.B.U.H.; [he glowed] as if the sun ran in his face. And I never saw anyone faster in his walk than the prophet P.B.U.H., [he was so fast] as if the earth was rolled up for him." [Recorded by Ahmad and Tirmidhī].

"Whenever the prophet's garment fell off his shoulders, they shone as if he was created from silver." [Recorded by Ibn Asāker].

"The prophet had smooth plain cheeks; whenever he smiled, sparkles almost reflected on to the walls." [Recorded by Abd Ar-Razzāq in Al-Musannaf].

"The prophet had extremely black hair."

Anas Ibn Mālek, the prophet's famous servant and companion. He earned the honor of serving the prophet for ten years. His mother entrusted him to the prophet when he was 10 years old. Because of his long stay with the prophet, he was among the companions who reported a lot of the prophetic traditions. **Anas** described the prophet saying,

"I never touched any silk fabric softer than the prophet's hands, and I never smelled a scent more sweet-smelling than the prophet's."

"When the prophet passed away, there weren't more than 20 grey hairs in his hair and beard." [Recorded by Bukhari].

"The prophet's hair was neither straight nor curly, and his forelock's hair reached his earlobes." [Recorded by Tirmidhī].

"One day, while the prophet was resting in our house, he fell asleep and his sweat soaked the bed's sheet. My mother came with a vial and started squeezing the sheet in to the vial (before the sweat evaporates). This alarmed the prophet and woke him up. He asked my mother, 'what are you doing Um-Saleem?' She said, 'This is your sweat O prophet, we put it in our perfumes for it is the sweetest smelling among all scents.'"

"The prophet was the best in conduct, the most generous, and most courageous among all people." [Recorded by Muslim].

'Ali Ibn Abi-Tālib, the prophet's young cousin, fourth successor, and one of the closest companions described the prophet P.B.U.H. saying,

"The prophet was neither tall nor short, but of moderate height among the people. His hair was neither straight nor curly. His body wasn't fat nor skinny. His face was a little rounded, white with a red tinge. He had big eyes, dark colored iris, and long dense eyelashes. He had wide bone structure with broad shoulders. He had thick palms and feet."

His walk was very fast as if he were coming down a hill. When he pays attention to anyone, he would turn to face him with all his body. On his back, between his shoulders, was the prophethood's seal, which all prophets had. He was the most generous among all people, most auspicious boding well, most truthful, most easy going, best companion. He who sees him for the first time would fear his solemnity, but loves him when he gets to know him. Anyone who would describe him would say, 'I've never seen anyone like him, neither before him, nor after him.' ” [Recorded by Tirmidhī].

“The prophet's face was white imbued with redness. The sweat drops on his face shone like pearls. I never saw anyone like him, neither before him nor after him.”

“The prophet's neck shone like a silver jug.” [Recorded by Ibn sa'd and Baihaqy].

“The prophet's hair was bushy and wavy.”

“The prophet had great eyes with long eye lashes. The white of his eyes was pervaded with a pale red color.” [Recorded by Ahmad].

Lady 'Ā'ishah, the prophet's youngest wife. She lived about 48 years after the prophet's departure educating the next generation about his teachings and how he lived. She described him saying,

“The prophet had a bright face that shone like the moon, he was the most handsome among all people with the most shining cuticle. Never did I hear anyone describing him except by comparing him to the full moon amidst the dark night. People would say, 'We would admire the full moon's beauty, but still find the prophet far more beautiful in our eyes.' You can notice his anger or content from his face. When he was pleased with something, his cuticle shone like a mirror reflecting light on your face, but when he was angry at something, the color of his face changed and his eyes reddened.”

“The prophet had smooth plain cheeks.” [Recorded by Abu Na'eem in Dala'el An-Nobowwa].

“He had the most beautiful neck among all people, it was neither tall nor short, what appears to the sun from his neck looked like a silver jug with golden gangue sparkling with the whites of silver and the redness of gold, and what's hidden beneath his clothes shone like the moon in its full night.”

“The prophet had a broad hairless chest, like the mirror in its sternness and flatness. None of his flesh was flabby, and it was as shiny as the moon in its full night. His navel was joined to the upper part of his chest with hair led like a rod, besides which, he had no more hair, neither in his belly, nor in his chest.”

“The prophet's eyes were big and beautiful with black colored iris. His eye lashes were long and dense that they almost merged.” [Recorded by Baihaqy and Ibn Asaker].

“I never saw the prophet laughing till his uvula showed, but he always smiled.”

“The prophet never spoke in rapid narrations like that of yours, but his speech was always plain and clear with separate sentences that could be memorized by anyone who listens to it.” [Recorded by Bukhari and Muslim].

Jābir Ibn Sumra the companion, and one of the prophet's blood relatives said,

“One full-moon night, I was sitting outside appreciating the beautiful sight of the moon amidst the sky. I saw the prophet P.B.U.H. [passing by] wearing a red garment, I looked at him and at the moon, and he was far more beautiful in my eyes than the moon's view.”

“If you looked at him, you would think that he had kohl in his eyes, but actually he didn't.” [Recorded by Tirmidhī].

Jābir also recalled from his childhood the following, “*I once followed the prophet home after one of the prayers. He was stopped by some kids in the street, so he greeted them, and petted their cheeks one by one. When he petted mine, his hands were cold with the sweetest smell, as if he just took them out of a perfumery’s vat.*”

Al-Barā’ Ibn ‘Āzeb the companion said,

“*The prophet was the most handsome among all people, and the best in conduct. His built was neither extremely tall nor short, but to the tall ones closer.*” [Recorded by Bukhari and Muslim].

He also said, “*The prophet P.B.U.H. had wide bone structure with broad shoulders. His forelock’s hair reached his earlobe.*” [Recorded by Tirmidhī].

‘Abdullah Ibn Al-Hāreth the companion said, “*I never saw anyone more cheerful than the prophet P.B.U.H.; he never talked to anyone except smiling in his face. He was the most pleasant and simple-hearted among all men.*” [Recorded by Tirmidhī].

Abi-‘Obaida Ibn Muhammad Ibn ‘Ammār, the follower, asked Lady **Robai’ Bint Mo‘aueth** about the prophet’s appearance, she said, “*O son, seeing him was like seeing the sunrise.*” [Recorded by Ad-Darmy].

‘Abdullah Ibn ‘Abbās, the famous companion and the prophet’s cousin said, “*Whenever the prophet P.B.U.H. spoke, it was as if light shone from between his front teeth.*” [Recorded by Tirmidhī and Al-Darmy].

Ka‘b Ibn Mālek, the companion, said, “*Whenever the prophet was pleased with something, his face shone as if it was part of the full moon.*” [Recorded by Bukhari and Muslim].

On his death bed, **‘Amr Ibn Al-‘Ās**, the companion and famous general of the Muslims’ army was weeping; he said to his son, “*There had been a time when I hated no one more than the prophet P.B.U.H., and there was nothing more beloved to me than to capture him and kill him. If I had died in such condition, I would have been among the dwellers of the hellfire. But then, Allah opened my heart for Islam, so I travelled to the prophet and said, ‘Open your hand so that I may swear allegiance to you.’ When he stretched his hand, I closed my palm, so he said, ‘What is it ‘Amr?’ I answered, ‘I have one condition.’ He said, ‘What is that?’ So I said, ‘That Allah forgives all the sins which I have done before.’ He said, ‘Don’t you know that Islam erases all sins committed before embracing it, and immigration [to Muslims’ land] erases all preceding sins, and performing pilgrimage erases all preceding sins.’ Ever since that day, no one became more beloved to me, or more revered in my eyes than the prophet P.B.U.H. I couldn’t bear to fill my eyes with his appearance out of reverence. If I’m ever asked to describe him, I would fail to do so, for I was never able to fill my eyes with the beauty of his face.*” [Recorded by Muslim].

His manners and attitude P.B.U.H.:

Lady ‘Ā’ishah described his conduct P.B.U.H. saying, “Whenever he was given the opportunity to choose between two affairs, he always chose the easiest and most convenient. But if he were certain that it is sinful, he would stay as far as he can from it. He never avenged himself, but whenever the laws of Allah were violated, he would apply the prescribed punishment; that was in obedience to Allah, and not for his personal satisfaction. He was the last one to get angry, and the first to be satisfied. His hospitality and generosity were matchless. His gifts and endowments manifested a man who does not fear poverty.”

“The prophet used to stand in prayers most of the night until his legs swell. I asked him once, ‘O prophet, hasn’t Allah forgiven all of your sins?’ He answered, ‘O ‘Ā’ishah, shouldn’t I be a grateful servant.’ ”

“He always joined in household work and would at times mend his clothes, repair his footwear, and sweep the floor. He would milk, tether and feed the animals, and do the household shopping.”

“Never had the prophet’s hands hit a servant, a woman, or anyone at all except at battle.” [Recorded by Bukhari].

“The prophet P.B.U.H. used to sew his clothes, mend his footwear, and work like the rest of the men for his house.”

“The prophet P.B.U.H. used to say, ‘O Allah, please perfect my manners as you have perfected my creation.’ ” [Recorded by Ahmad].

Lady Safiyyah, the prophet’s wife and a former Israelite Jewess from the offspring of Levi. She was the daughter of a famous rabbi in Madinah called *Huyay Ibn Al-Akhtab* who was a fierce enemy to the prophet P.B.U.H. She said, “I never saw anyone with better manners than the prophet P.B.U.H.” [Recorded by Tabarāni].

Regarding his gentleness she said, “The prophet took his wives to pilgrimage; during our journey my camel kneeled down (i.e. out of sickness). I was the weakest among the prophet’s wives, I had a weak back. Unable to stand the pain, I started crying. When the prophet was informed of that, he came to me and started wiping my tears with his hands and garment, but I only cried more. He kept on wiping my tears, and calming me down; but when I over-cried, he reprehended me for over-crying, and ordered the caravan to stop and prepare for staying the rest of the day at this place.” [Recorded by Ahmad].

Regarding this journey, Bukhari recorded that, “The prophet put down his knee for his wife *Lady Safiyyah* to step on his thigh and ride on her camel.”

Among what *‘Ali Ibn Abi-Tālib* reported to his son describing the prophet’s manners and assembly, “The Prophet was always cheerful, easy-going, pleasant-tempered and lenient...His broad mindedness and tolerance embraced all people and entitled him to be regarded as a father to them all...He was willingly and modestly obeyed by everyone...To him, all people were equal. No one was better than another except on the criterion of piety. A favored one to him, was the most Allah fearing...His assembly was a meeting of clemency, patience, and honesty. Voices were never raised in rows or riots. They esteemed the old, and reflected mercy on the young. They assisted the needy, and entertained their guests.” [Recorded by Tirmidhī].

Hind Ibn Abi-Hālah the companion and the prophet's stepson from his first wife *Lady Khadijah*, described the prophet P.B.U.H. saying, "He was in continuous hardships, and always thoughtful. He never rested but joined day with night [praying at night, teaching and working during the day]. He never spoke for no reason...He was never offensive, and he always glorified any favor no matter how small it was, and never dispraised any part of it...Not one matter of this worldly life ever made him angry unless what's right was violated, then, he wouldn't calm down until he corrects the situation, he never got angry for himself and he never avenged himself...Whenever angry, he would look away, and whenever something pleased him, he lowered his looks. His laughter never surpassed smiling." [Recorded by Tirmidhī and Tabarāni].

Abu Sa'eed Al-Khudri the companion described the prophet's politeness saying, "He was shier than a virgin in her boudoir." [Recorded by Bukhari and Muslim].

Anas reported that, "The prophet always started anyone he met with peace greetings stretching his arm for a handshake with a smile on his face, and he was never the first one to withdraw his hand. He never turned his face away from his interlocutor first, and he was never seen stretching his legs in front of him while speaking to anyone." [Recorded by Abu Dāwood and Tirmidhī].

From the descriptions given by the people of Madinah, many narrations stated that, "He always walked in solemnity; he was always modest and most shy, the first to cast his eyes down. He never stared at anyone. He always lowered his looks. He looked groundwards more than he looked sky-wards. His utmost looks at people were glances."

'Abdullah Ibn 'Omar the companion said, "I never saw anyone more generous, more succor, more courageous, or more clean and handsome than the prophet." [Recorded by Ad-Darmy].

Jabir Ibn 'Abdullah the companion said, "The prophet always spoke in a distinct leisurely manner." [Recorded by Abu Dāwood].

There are many instances that show his kindness and gentleness, especially to the weak and poor. He always made *Anas*, his servant, sit and eat with him from the same plate as reported by *Anas* himself. He used to visit the poorest of ailing persons and urged all Muslims to do likewise as recorded by Bukhari. Prophet Muhammad was most humble, he would sit with the simplest persons saying that piety and righteousness alone were the criterion of one's superiority over another. He invariably invited people, be they slaves, servants, or the poorest believers to partake with him his scanty meals.

Anas said, "The Prophet would accept an invitation even if he was offered barley bread with some soup whose taste has changed." [Recorded by Tirmidhī].

He also reported that the Prophet said, "I am Allah's servant, I eat like a servant, and sit like a servant." [Recorded by Abu Yu'la].

'Abdullah Ibn Mas'ud the companion said, "A man came to the prophet to inquire about something; when he saw the prophet he quivered, so the prophet said, 'Take it easy, I'm only the son of a woman who had nothing to eat but jerked food in Makkah.'" [Recorded by Ibn Mājah].

‘Abdullah Ibn ‘Abbās reported that, “*The prophet used to sit on the floor, eat on the floor, tether his sheep and accept a slave’s invitation.*” [Recorded by Tabarāni].

Regarding his ascetic life, **‘Abdullah** said, “*The prophet P.B.U.H. used to spend several nights fasting and his family starving having no food. The majority of their bread was made from barley.*” [Recorded by Tirmidhī and Ibn Mājah].

Anas also reported, “*I once entered on the prophet in his room; he was lying on his bed covered with a very rough sheet. Under his head, there was a pillow stuffed with bast. Then entered some of his companions, among them was ‘Omar. When they approached, the prophet turned [to meet them]. ‘Omar noticed that there was no soft cloth between the prophet’s body and the rough sheet, and it had left marks on his skin. On seeing that, ‘Omar’s tears fell silently out of pity. The prophet asked him, ‘Why are you crying ‘Omar?’ ‘Omar said, ‘I couldn’t help it knowing how tyrants like Caesar and Chosroes live luxuriously, and now, seeing you live like this.’ So the prophet said, ‘Wouldn’t you be satisfied if they get the pleasures of this worldly life, and we get those of the hereafter?’ ‘Omar said, ‘Yes I would.’ The prophet said, ‘And so it shall be.’*” [Recorded by Ahmad and Baihaqy].

In another occasion **‘Abdullah Ibn Mas‘ud** reported, “*The prophet P.B.U.H. was lying down on a rough straw mat that left marks on his skin. I said to him, ‘O prophet, if you permit us, we would spread something softer for you.’ The prophet P.B.U.H. said, ‘Where am I from this worldly life, the example of me and this worldly life is like that of a rider traveling on a hot summer day, he took shelter in the shadow of a tree for an hour, then he left and went on his way.’*” [Recorded by Tirmidhī].

He did not like people to get up for him and used to say, “*He who likes people to stand in his honor seeks a place in hell.*” [Recorded by Abu Dāwood].

Abu Umama the companion said, “*One day the prophet approached us leaning on a stick. We all got up to receive him, so he said, ‘Don’t get up like the Persians do in glorification for one another.’*” [Recorded by Abu Dāwood and Ibn Mājah].

Anas as well reported that, “*The prophet was the most beloved person to us all, whenever we saw him approaching, we only wouldn’t get up to receive him for we knew how much he hated that.*” [Recorded by Tirmidhī].

He would himself, however, stand up when any dignitary came to him. He stood up to receive the wet nurse who reared him in infancy; in respect, he spread his own sheet for her. His foster siblings were also given similar treatment.

Abu Dhar the companion reported that, “*The prophet avoided sitting at a prominent place in any gathering. People coming in had difficulty in spotting him, and had to ask, which one was the Prophet.*” [Recorded by An-Nasā’ī].

Quite frequently uncouth Bedouins accosted him in a curt ill-mannered style, but he never took offence. [Recorded by Abu Dāwood].

Among his invocations P.B.U.H., as reported by **Abu Hurayrah**, “*The prophet always said, ‘O Allah, I seek your protection against dissension, hypocrisy and bad manners.’*” [Recorded by Abu Dāwood].

Whenever he visited a person, he would first greet him and take his permission to enter the house. He advised the people to follow this etiquette and not to get annoyed if anyone refused to give permission, for it is quite likely that the person concerned was busy and did not mean any disrespect.

Regarding taking permissions to enter someone's house, *Abu Musa Al-Ash'ary*, the companion, reported that the prophet said, "When any of you seeks permission (i.e. knocks on someone else's door) three times and he does not receive any response, he should leave and come back later on." [Recorded by Muslim].

Anas reported that the Prophet used to visit the sick, sit on the ground, attend funerals, ride donkeys, and accept a slave's invitation for a meal.

Jabir Ibn 'Abdullah, the companion, reported that the Prophet used to slow down his pace for the sake of the weak ones, and he prayed for them to get well.

Lady 'Ā'ishah said, "When any person amongst us fell ill, Allah's Messenger P.B.U.H. used to rub him with his right hand and then say, 'O Lord of the people, grant him health, heal him, you are a Greet Healer; there is no healer but you, with your healing Power one is healed and illness is removed.' She further added, 'When the prophet fell ill, and his illness took a serious turn, I took hold of his hand so that I should do with it as he did, that's to rub his body with his blessed hand. But he withdrew his hand from mine and said, 'O Allah, pardon me and let me join thy companion.' I kept on watching him till he passed away." [Recorded by Muslim].

The prophet P.B.U.H. never disdained to do the menial work of others, particularly of orphans and widows, as narrated by An-Nasā'ī & Ad-Dārmi. Once when there was no male member in the house of companion *Khabbaab Ibn Al-Arat*, they were all at the battlefield. The prophet checked on his family daily and milked the cattle for them. Loving the poor and the needy, entertaining them, attending their funerals, and praying for them were things the prophet always observed.

Abu Hurayrah reported that the prophet P.B.U.H. said, "The one who strives on taking care of widows and the needy is like him who is striving in the cause of Allah." [Recorded by Bukhari and Muslim].

'Abdullah Ibn Aby-Awfa the companion reported that, "The prophet never disdained to walk along with widows, slaves, and the wretched, until their needs were fulfilled." [Recorded by An-Nasā'ī].

Lady 'Ā'ishah reported that the prophet taught her, "O 'Ā'ishah, always show gentleness, for if gentleness is found in any matter, it beautifies it, and if it is absent from any matter, it spoils it." [Recorded by Abu Dāwood].

She also reported that he told her, "O 'Ā'ishah, never turn away any needy beggar from your door empty-handed, even if you had nothing but half a dried date. O 'Ā'ishah, love the poor, bring them near to you, and Allah shall bring you near to Him on the Day of Resurrection." [Recorded by Albany in At-Tarhib wat-Tarhib].

At another occasion, he said, "Seek me among your weak ones, verily you are given provisions because of your weak ones." [Recorded by Abu Dāwood].

Tabarāni recorded that, “The prophet was at the market when he saw a slave girl in the street crying, so he asked her, ‘*Why are you crying?*’ She said, ‘*My folks gave me two dirhams to buy flour and I lost them on the way.*’ The prophet calmed her down and gave her the two dirhams then went on his way. On his way back, he saw her again, and she was still crying, so he walked over to her and asked her about the reason why she was still crying, she said, ‘*I’m afraid they may beat me for taking too long.*’ So the prophet accompanied her back to her folks, knocked on the door once and said, ‘*Peace be upon you people of the house,*’ but he received no answer. He repeated what he said again and waited, then another third time, and they replied, so he asked the respondent in query: ‘*Did you hear me the first time?*’ The man said, ‘*Yes we have O prophet, but recognizing it was you, we loved to hear you invoke more peace for us. By my father and mother O prophet, if you demanded our presence, we would have come to you; what made you walk all the way to us yourself?*’ The prophet told him about the slave girl and what has happened, so the man said, ‘*She is free in return for Allah’s reward and for the sake of your walk with her to our house.*’ ” And the slave girl was emancipated on spot.

The prophet P.B.U.H. was most generous. **Jabir Ibn ‘Abdullah** said, “*Never was the Prophet asked for anything and his answer was ‘No.’* ” [Recorded by Bukhari]. **Bilal**, the companion, reported that the prophet said, “*Spend (in charity) and don’t fear diminution from Him who is on his throne (i.e. Allah).*” [Recorded by Abu Yu‘la].

Abu Hurayrah reported that the prophet said, “*Everyday two angels callout in the sky, one of them says, ‘O Allah, give recompense to him who spends in charity.’ And the other says, ‘O Allah, give decay (i.e. decrease in money) to him who is tightfisted (i.e. doesn’t spend in charity).’* ” [Recorded by Bukhari].

And he also reported that the prophet said, “*No wealth is ever decreased by alms, and Allah never enriches the one who forgives except with glory, and no one ever acts humbly except that Allah honors him.*” [Recorded by Muslim].

At-Tirmidhī recorded that, “*Once a man came asking the prophet for alms, the prophet answered, ‘I have nothing remaining, but go and buy whatever you need on my account, and when anything [money or something to trade with] comes to me, I shall pay for what you bought.’ On hearing this ‘Omar said to the prophet [out of pity], ‘But Allah didn’t over burden you with what you can’t bear, O prophet.’ The prophet seemed to have hated what ‘Omar said, so a man from among the people of Madinah said, ‘O prophet, spend [in charity] and don’t fear diminution from the one above the throne.’ The prophet smiled and glad tidings filled his face, and then he said, ‘That is what I was ordered to do.’* ”

Sahl Ibn Sa‘d the companion said, “*A woman brought a garment to the Prophet, she said, ‘O prophet, I have brought you this garment as a gift.’ The Prophet was actually in need of a new garment, so he accepted the gift, and put it on immediately. A man among the attendants then said, ‘O prophet, will you give it to me.’ The Prophet said, ‘Yes;’ he took it off, and gave it to him. Later on, after the prophet left, that man was blamed by the attending companions who said, ‘It wasn’t nice on your part to ask the Prophet for the garment when you saw that he needed it, and you know that he never turns down anyone’s request.’ The man said, ‘I just wanted to receive its blessing after the Prophet had put it on; I seek to be shrouded in it when I die.’* ” [Recorded by Bukhari].

Regarding the prophet's leniency and patience, *Anas* said, "I served Allah's Messenger for ten years and he never said to me, 'Ugh,' or 'Why did you do such a thing?' nor 'Why didn't you do such a thing?'" [Recorded by Bukhari].

Anas also said, "Once we were sitting with the prophet in the mosque. Suddenly, a nomad Bedouin came in, and stood urinating at the back of the mosque. The companions shouted at him 'stop, stop,' but the prophet forbade them saying 'Don't disturb him, and let him pee first.' When he finished, the prophet called him to his side, and told him calmly: 'Mosques are not the proper place for such an act, or for any impure matter, they are built for worshipping Allah, praying, and reading the Qur'an.' He then ordered us to bring a bucket of water and pour it on the urine." [Recorded by Muslim].

And he said, "One day, I was walking with the prophet and he was wearing a rough NAGRANIAN garment (i.e. NAGRAN is a place in Arabia). An uncouth Bedouin approached us, and pulled the prophet by his garment in a very harsh manner that left marks on the prophet's skin, he then said, 'Order the treasurer to give me some money from what you are entrusted on.' The prophet looked at him, smiled, and sent word to the treasurer to give the man the money he needed." [Recorded by Bukhari and Muslim].

Some of his teachings P.B.U.H.:

It should be cleared out first that the prophet P.B.U.H. taught his companions through example; whenever he ordered them to do something, he was the first one to abide by it as testified for by his coevals. I believe that the previous testimonies are quite enough to help the reader realize the fallacy of the accusation under discussion.

Among his ethical and moral teachings are the following, "Those who are merciful shall be treated mercifully by the All merciful, so be merciful to those on earth, and you shall receive mercy by the One above the heavens." [Recorded by Tirmidhī].

The mercy meant in the above narration—as deduced from the prophet's attitude and explained by Muslim scholars—is not only for humans but for all living creatures.

He also said, "He who is not merciful to others shall not be treated mercifully [on the judgment day]." [Recorded by Bukhari].

"Truthfulness leads to righteousness, and righteousness leads to Paradise. A man keeps on telling the truth until he becomes known before Allah as a truthful person. Falsehood leads to Fujur (i.e. wickedness, evil-doing), and Fujur leads to the Hellfire. A man keeps on telling lies until he becomes known before Allah as a liar." [Recorded by Bukhari].

"Fulfill your consignments to those who have entrusted you, and do not betray those who have betrayed you." [Recorded by Tirmidhī].

"Righteousness is good manners, and a sin is that which weaves inside your chest, and you hate its disclosure in front of others." [Recorded by Muslim].

"He whose heart possesses one jot of arrogance shall not enter paradise." [Recorded by Muslim].

"The best among you are those with best manners." [Recorded by Bukhari].

"A man entered on the prophet while he was sitting in the mosque; the prophet moved aside giving him space to sit down. The man said, 'O prophet, there is plenty of space.' The prophet responded, 'It's the right of a Muslim on his brother that if he sees him approaching his seat, he should make some space.'" [Reported in Mizan Al-Hekma].

Abu Sa‘eed Al-Khudri reported that, “*The prophet said, ‘Beware! Avoid sitting in the streets.’ The people said, ‘How can we avoid so, O prophet? They are our meeting places where we hold our talks.’ The Prophet said, ‘If you must sit there, then observe the rights of the street.’ They asked, ‘What are the rights of the street?’ He said, ‘Casting down your eyes (i.e. refraining from looking at the passerby, people’s houses, and whatever is forbidden), refraining from harming people, responding to greetings, advocating what’s good and forbidding what’s evil.’*” [Recorded by Bukhari].

Mu‘ādh Ibn Jabal reported that the prophet said, “*Fear Allah where ever you may be, follow the bad deed with a good one to erase it, and deal with people in good manners.*” [Recorded by Tirmidhī].

Abu Hurayrah reported that the prophet said, “*The signs of a hypocrite are three: whenever he speaks, he tells lies; whenever he promises, he breaks his promise; and whenever he is entrusted, he betrays.*” [Recorded by Bukhari].

And he also reported that the prophet said, “*A strong person is not the one who overcomes people by his physical strength, but he is the one who controls himself when in anger.*” [Recorded by Bukhari].

Anas Ibn Mālek reported that the Prophet said, “*Make things easier for people, and do not complicate them. Calm them down with glad tidings, and do not be repulsive.*” [Recorded by Bukhari].

Abu Shuraih Al-Ka‘bi the companion reported that the prophet said, “*Whoever believes in Allah and the judgment Day, should serve his guest generously. To honor a guest is to provide him with the best food you can for a night and a day, and a guest is to be hosted for three days. Whatever is offered beyond that is regarded as charity. It is unlawful for any guest to stay with his host for such a long period that may embarrass him, or put him in a critical position.*” [Recorded by Bukhari].

Abu Hurayrah reported that the Prophet said, “*Whoever believes in Allah and the judgment Day, should not hurt his neighbors; whoever believes in Allah and the judgment Day, should serve his guest generously; and whoever believes in Allah and the judgment Day, should speak of what is good or keep silent.*” [Recorded by Bukhari].

‘Abdullah Ibn ‘Abbās reported that the prophet P.B.U.H. taught them about Allah’s Mercy saying, “*Allah records good deeds and misdeeds. If any of you intended to make a good deed, and actually does it, Allah records it as ten good deeds to seven hundred multiples and more (i.e. according to the degree of perfection). If you intended to make a misdeed, then refrained from doing it, it’s recorded as a good deed, but if you do it, it’s recorded as one misdeed only.*” [Recorded by Bukhari and Muslim].

Sahl Ibn Sa‘d the companion reported that, “*A man came to the prophet and said, ‘O prophet, tell me of a deed that will make Allah and all people love me.’ The prophet said, ‘Renounce seeking after worldly pleasures, Allah will love you; don’t seek after the likes of what people have, and they will love you.’*” [Recorded by Ibn Mājah].

‘Abdullah Ibn ‘Omar reported that, “*A man came to the prophet and asked him, ‘How often should we forgive our servants?’ The prophet didn’t reply, so the man repeated his question, but again the prophet didn’t reply. Then the man repeated it for a third time, and the prophet said, ‘Forgive him seventy times [daily].’*” [Recorded by Abu Dāwood].

His approach in building the Muslim nation:

The prophet P.B.U.H. established brotherhood among all of his followers and Companions. He established intimacy between them and kept them united. He didn't allow enmity to erupt between them. Among the prophet's teachings as reported by *Anas*, *"The prophet said, 'Be at the aid of your brother whether he is oppressive or he is oppressed.' People asked, 'O prophet! It is all right to be at his aid if he is oppressed, but how should we be at his aid if he is oppressive?' The Prophet said, 'By preventing him from oppressing others.'"* [Recorded by Bukhari].

The prophet P.B.U.H. said, *"No one [really] believes until he loves for his brother what he loves for himself."* [Recorded by Bukhari and Muslim].

'Uqbah Ibn Nāfe' reported that the prophet said, *"Maintain relations with those who break off relations with you, feed those who deprived you, and pardon those who oppressed you."* [Recorded by Ahmad].

Abu Hurayrah reported that the Prophet said, *"Beware of suspicion, for suspicion is the worst of all false tales. Do not search for other people's faults, do not spy, do not be jealous of one another, do not desert (i.e. break off relations with) one another, do not hate one another. O believers, be brothers."* [Recorded by Bukhari].

And among his teachings P.B.U.H. as reported by the companions are the following:

"Allah is merciful to him who is magnanimous when he sells, buys, or demands any of his rights." [Recorded by Bukhari].

"He hasn't believed in me him who sleeps at night with a full stomach knowing that his neighbor is hungry." [Recorded by Tabarāni].

"If you were three, then it is immoral for two to talk together in whispering aside the third, this hurts his feelings." [Recorded by Muslim].

"Give the hired worker his wage before his sweat dries up." [Recorded by Ibn Mājah].

"If any of you can lend a helping hand to his brother in anyway, he should help him." [Recorded by Muslim].

"The best believers—who have completely believed among you—are those with best manners; and the kindest among you are those who are kind to their women." [Recorded by Tirmidhī].

The prophet P.B.U.H. didn't only teach the companions to be merciful towards each other, but he also taught them that all humans are equal, have one God, have one father, and live on one land. Among what he said in his farewell speech,

"O People, your God is one, your father is one. There is neither superiority for an Arab over a non-Arab, or for a non-Arab over an Arab, nor for a white man over a black man, or for a black man over a white man except on the criterion of piety." [Recorded by Ahmad].

Abu Hurayrah reported that the Prophet said, *"Love for all people what you love for yourself, and you shall be a Muslim."* [Recorded by Tirmidhī and Ibn Mājah].

Anas reported that the prophet said, *"No man realizes the truth about faith except when he loves for all people what he loves for himself from what's good."* [Recorded by Ahmad].

‘Abdullah Ibn ‘Amr reported that the prophet said, “*Whoever loves to be moved far away from the hellfire and be admitted into paradise, let him die believing in Allah and the judgment day, and let him deliver to all people what he loves to receive himself.*” [Recorded by Muslim].

Among his teachings as reported by several companions is the following:

“I swear by Allah, He, the Almighty, does not bestow His mercy except on a merciful one.” The companions said, *“O prophet, we are all merciful.”* The prophet said, *“I don’t mean the mercy you show towards one another, but towards all mankind.”* [Recorded by Abu Yu‘la and authenticated by Albany].

The prophet P.B.U.H. never used any harsh words, he never named a person whom he knew ill news about, but to admonish such person without hurting his feelings or degrade his status among his brethren, he would say, *“Why do some people choose to do so and so.”* [Recorded by Abu Dāwood].

He taught that, *“It’s better for a judge to be mistaken in pardoning than in punishment.”* [Recorded by Al-Hakem].

Allah Almighty is the Most Kind, the Prophet followed Allah’s example by showing kindness to all people without any regard to their beliefs, color, or nationality. He always taught his followers through example. If he taught them anything, he would be the first one to abide by it. He was most modest, he never showed any superiority above others. Whoever served him was served by him.

On one of their journeys, the Prophet’s companions were preparing to roast a goat. One of them said that he would slaughter the animal, another said that he would skin it, while a third one said that he would roast it. The prophet then said that he would gather some wood, and light the fire. Their response was, *“O prophet, we can do everything.”* The prophet said, *“I have no doubt that you can, but I do not like distinctions to be made, nor does Allah like any of His servants to exert any kind of superiority over his companions.”* [Recorded by Abu Dāwood].

The Prophet taught that, *“Allah is kind and likes kindness in all matters.”* [Bukhari].

“One of the finest acts of kindness is for a man to honor his father’s friends and treat them kindly after his father passes away.” [Recorded by Abu Dāwood].

He always received people with courtesy and showed respect to their elders. He taught that, *“Honoring an old man, is like glorifying Allah.”* [Recorded by Abu Dāwood].

“He’s not one of us him who doesn’t respect our elders, show mercy to our children, enjoin what’s right and prevent what’s harmful.” [Recorded by Ahmad and Tirmidhī].

“No Muslim ever shows respect to the elders except that Allah will destine someone to honor him at his old age.” [Recorded by Tirmidhī].

Sahl Ibn Sa’d the companion reported that, *“A drink of milk was brought to the prophet in a gathering and he drank some of it. A boy was sitting to his right, and an old man to his left. The prophet asked the boy, ‘Do you allow me to give the rest of the drink to the older folks?’ The boy said, ‘O prophet, I cannot prefer anyone over myself to drink immediately after you from the same bowl.’ So the prophet handed the bowl to the boy (i.e. According to the Islamic etiquettes, the first person on the right-hand-side has the right to drink first when passing a drink).”* [Recorded by Bukhari]. Hence, the prophet here tried to break the rules in order to honor those who are old, but it was not his choice, it was the boy’s, and the prophet submitted to his will.

His love for children P.B.U.H.:

He was especially fond of children. He loved carrying his grandchildren and his companions' children, and play with them. Many reports tell us that frequently he carried his grandchildren on his back while praying and while giving sermons. He was reported to give them rides on his back frequently. Whenever he was approached by a child, he would carry and pamper him. Whenever he met a child in the street, he would greet him and shake his hand. He always patted the heads of children, especially orphans, he would carry and hug them tightly, then invoke Allah to bless them.

Regarding his kindness towards children, **Abu Hurayrah** reported that, *“People used to present the very first of their reaped fruits to the prophet (seeking his supplication). He would take it and say: ‘O Allah, bless our fruits, bless our city, and bless our weights and bushels.’ Then he would call to him the youngest child he sees passing by, and give it all to him.”* [Recorded by Muslim].

Usamah Ibn Zayd the companion and the son of **Zayd Ibn Al-Hareth**—the prophet's adopted son—reported from the memories of his childhood, *“The prophet used to put me on one of his thighs and put his grandson Al-Hassan Ibn ‘Ali on the other thigh, then he would embrace us both and say, ‘O Allah, bestow your Mercy upon them.’ ”* [Recorded by Bukhari].

He would pick up infants in his arms, kiss them and play with them. A companion recalling his childhood, said, *“In my childhood I used to fell dates by throwing stones at palm trees. Somebody took me and complained to the Prophet who advised me to pick up the dates lying on the ground, and not to strike them down with stones. He then patted my head and invoked Allah to blesse me.”* [Recorded by Abu Dāwood].

Anas said, *“The prophet P.B.U.H. used to greet and handshake the children he passed by [in the streets].”* [Recorded by Bukhari].

Lady ‘Ā’ishah reported that, *“Newly born babies were always brought to the prophet to bless them. He would then carry the baby on his lap to honor his parents; sometimes babies peed on the prophet's lap which embarrassed the child's parents and made them hurry up in carrying their baby away, but the prophet would prevent them saying, ‘Don't disturb him and let him finish.’ ”* [Recorded by Muslim].

Um Al-Fadl, the fosterage mother of the prophet's grandchildren reported that, *“The prophet was carrying Al-Hussein when he was still a baby, and the boy peed on the prophet's garment. I pulled him away from the prophet's arms nervously, which made the boy cry. The prophet said, ‘Take it easy Um Al-Fadl, this spilling could be cleaned by water, but nothing can wipe off this harsh shock from Al-Hussein's heart.’ ”*

His kindness towards animals P.B.U.H.:

The Prophet did not only preach kindness towards people, but towards all living souls. He forbade the practices of cutting tails and manes of horses, branding animals at any soft spot, keeping horses saddled unnecessarily, etc. [Recorded by Muslim].

If he saw any animal over-loaded or ill-fed, he would pull up the owner and say, *“Fear Allah in your treatment to animals.”* [Recorded by Abu Dāwood].

In one of their travels, a companion brought him the young ones of a bird and said that the mother hovered over them all along. The Prophet commanded the man to put the bird's offspring back in their nest. [Recorded by Abu Dāwood].

It was also reported that on one of their journeys, somebody picked up some eggs from a nest. The mother-bird kept on hovering above the prophet and his companions, squealing for its young ones. This attracted the Prophet's attention, so he asked the man to return the eggs to their place safely. [Recorded by Bukhari].

As his army of ten thousand marched towards Makkah, they passed by a female dog with newly born puppies. The Prophet didn't only give orders that they should not be disturbed, but he posted a man to make sure that this was properly done.

Abu Hurayrah reported that, "The prophet said, 'Once a man was traveling on a barren road, he had finished his water skin and felt extremely thirsty. He came across a well [beside which there was no tied up bucket to bring the water up], so he climbed down the well, drank his full, and then climbed back up. Not long after he went on his way, he saw a dog panting and licking the sand out of excessive thirst. The man said to himself, 'This dog is suffering like I suffered a while ago.' So he returned and climbed down the well again, filled his footwear with water, held it between his teeth, climbed up the well, and watered the dog. Allah forgave all of that man's sins and praised what he had done.' The companions asked, 'O prophet, is there a reward for us when we show kindness to animals?' He said, '(Yes), there is a reward for every act of kindness done towards any living creature.' " [Recorded by Bukhari].

His incomparable heroism and chivalry P.B.U.H.:

His courage, chivalry and succor were unmatched. He encountered many dangers and difficult situations, yet he always remained steadfast. More than once, brave men fled away leaving him alone, yet he held his grounds with full composure facing danger without turning his back. Almost all the brave men of his time experienced fleeing or were driven off the battlefield even once in a lifetime, but not the prophet.

Al-Bara' Ibn 'Aazeb described the prophet's courage during the battle of Hunayn in which many Muslims fled except the prophet and a few of his companions, they stood their grounds until they achieved victory, he said, "Whenever the fight grew fiercer, we resorted to the Prophet for succor. The bravest man among us was the closest to where he stood." [Recorded by Muslim].

'Ali Ibn Abi-Taleb, who was among the bravest of the brave and a peerless cavalier, described the prophet's outstanding courage saying, "Whenever the fight grew fiercer and the eyes of fighters reddened [in anger], we resorted to the prophet for succor. He was always the closest among us to the enemy lines." [Recorded by Ahmad].

Yet, the prophet P.B.U.H. never wounded a man fatally throughout his life. His duels were only in self-defense and trying to disable the enemies from attacking Muslims, they were never for killing. The only person whom he killed was named *Ubai Ibn Khalaf*, and it was a prophecy which the prophet had given a few years before the incident occurred. Sometime before immigrating to Madinah, this polytheist stopped the prophet in Makkah and said, "I will kill you one day for defaming our Gods, Muhammad."

The prophet P.B.U.H. replied, *“By Allah’s will, it’s me who is going to kill you.”* A few years later, during the battle of *Uhud*, this polytheist spotted the prophet injured badly and trapped, so he rode his horse towards him raising his spear and shouting *“Let there be no rescue for me if I failed to kill you today, Muhammad.”* ‘Ali reported that, *“The prophet was alerted, he grabbed my spear and lanced the polytheist with it killing him with one strike.”* Some reports say that the man died on spot, while others say that he died days later by that wound.

Anas reported that, *“One night the people of Madinah woke up alarmed on hearing a strange loud sound. People went out hurriedly towards the source of the sound only to be met by the Prophet who had already gone ahead of them, he said, “It took you so long.” He was riding the horse of Abu Talhah (one of the companions) without a saddle over it, and his sword was hanging around his neck. He calmed the people down and told them that there was nothing to be afraid of, then he said, ‘This is one quick horse.’ ”* [Recorded by Bukhari and Muslim].

The Prophet was just, decent, most truthful at speech, and the most honest among all people. Those who exchanged speech with him—even his enemies—acknowledged his noble qualities. Before prophethood, he was nicknamed *“As-Sadek, Al-Ameen”* (i.e. the truthful, the faithful). All idolaters turned to him for judgment and consultation. *Abu Jahl*, who was one of the prophet’s most bitter enemies said to the prophet once, *“We do not call you a liar, but we have no interest in what you preach.”*

Prophet Muhammad P.B.U.H. started preaching Islam at the age of forty. Before this, he was a very wealthy merchant leading a calm life, and one of the most respected men among his tribe. He always helped the poor and the needy, and took care of widows and orphans. It is well known that the prophet’s preachments agitated the enmity, hatred, and rage of his people. This resulted in a long arduous struggle that by all means of rationality, no person would dare wade into unless he was obliged to do so, and had no choice of his own. Any objective person should ask himself: for what reason did Muhammad choose to suffer all those hardships after being one of the wealthiest, most respected and consulted men among his people? They even offered to accept him as their King, and lay all the riches of the land at his feet if he would forsake what he preached and called for; nonetheless, he never accepted any of their alluring offers, and insisted on delivering his message in the face of persecution, insults, social boycott, poverty, hunger, brutal physical assaults, and being targeted to kill by his own kin. When he passed away, he was penniless. He ordered the last few dirhams he had inside his house to be distributed on the poor a few days before his death. He died mortgaging his shield to a Jewish merchant in Madinah in exchange for a couple of barley bushels which he needed to feed the members of his family. Would the aforementioned be the deeds, attitude, personality, or teachings of a liar and a pretender, or of a true prophet? I leave the answer to your conscience.

This was just a quick review of Prophet Muhammad’s personality and general teachings, the teachings that should contribute in forming the character of any sincere Muslim. In the Qur’an Allah says, *“Indeed, there is a good example for you in the prophet for those who wish to meet with Allah on the judgment day and they remember Allah constantly.”* [The Qur’an (33:21)].

Unfortunately, today, many Muslims neglect these teachings. They claim to love the prophet but they have forsaken his **path** and the teachings that still lie recorded in closed dusty books. Truthful were the prophet's words when he said, *"Allah does not erase knowledge from inside the hearts of scholars after He gives it to them, but the vanishing of knowledge shall reside in the death of scholars. When there shan't be left any scholars, people will take as their admonishers ignorant leaders whom when asked, will answer without knowledge misleading themselves and others as well."* [Recorded by Bukhari, Muslim, Tirmidhī, Ibn Mājah and others].

As for those who hold tight to Prophet Muhammad's teachings, don't grieve for there is always a price which you must be willing to pay if your intention was to make victorious what's right. The prophet P.B.U.H. said, *"Islam started out as a stranger [to this world], and it shall return to be a stranger, so blessed be the strangers."* When he was asked in different occasions who were those strangers, he gave different responses with very close meanings, he said, *"Those who shall continue trying to set things right when people are corrupt."* *"Those who shall forsake their corrupt people."* *"Honest persons amidst corrupt people, they shall be disobeyed by much more people than those who shall obey them."* *"Those who shall try to revive my teachings and deliver them to all people."*

May Allah guide us to the **path** of all prophets and messengers P.B.U.T.

May Allah reward them with the best of awards for bringing us closer to Him, and for delivering His **laws and spiritual purifying teachings** to all people, Amen.



Now it would be fair to get a glimpse at the opinions of some non-Muslim thinkers and historians, and see what they said about Prophet Muhammad after studying his life in its historical context. These writers were among the most renowned during their time; they were never known to have embraced Islam. I think this makes their testimonies a strong evidence on the fallacy of the accusation at hand:

"If greatness of purpose, smallness of means, and astounding results are the three criteria of human genius, who could dare to compare any great man in modern history with Muhammad? The most famous men created arms, laws and empires only. They founded, if anything at all, no more than material powers which often crumbled away before their eyes. This man moved not only armies, legislations, empires, peoples and dynasties, but millions of men in one-third of the then inhabited world, and more than that, he moved the altars, the gods, the religions, the ideas, the beliefs and souls... His forbearance in victory, his ambition, which was entirely devoted to one idea and in no manner striving for an empire, his endless prayers, his mystic conversations with God, his death and his triumph after death, all these attest not to an impostor but to a firm conviction which gave him the power to restore a dogma. This dogma was twofold, the unity of God and the immateriality of God, the former telling what God is, the latter telling what God is not, the one overthrowing false gods with the sword, the other starting an idea with the words. Philosopher, orator, apostle, legislator, warrior, conqueror of ideas, restorer of rational dogmas, of a cult without images, the founder of twenty terrestrial empires and of one spiritual empire, that is Muhammad. As regards all standards by which human greatness may be measured, we may well ask, is there any man greater than he?" [Lamartine, "Histoire de la Turquie," Paris, 1854].

“His readiness to undergo persecutions for his beliefs, the high moral character of the men who believed in him and looked up to him as leader, and the greatness of his ultimate achievement all argue his fundamental integrity. To suppose Muhammad an impostor raises more problems than it solves. Moreover, none of the great figures of history is so poorly appreciated in the West as Muhammad.” [W. Montgomery, “Mohammad at Macca,” Oxford, 1953].

“He was Caesar and Pope in one, but he was Pope without Pope’s pretensions, Caesar without the legions of Caesar: without a standing army, without a bodyguard, without a palace, without a fixed revenue, if ever any man had the right to say that he ruled by the right divine, it was Mohammad, for he had all the power without its instruments and without its supports.” [Bishop Benjamin Bosworth Smith, “Mohammad and Mohammadanism,” London, 1874].

“The league of nations founded by the prophet of Islam put the principle of international unity and human brotherhood on such universal foundations as to show candle to other nations.” He continues, *“The fact is that no nation of the world can show a parallel to what Islam has done towards the realization of the idea of the League of Nations... Today after a lapse of fourteen centuries, the life and teachings of Muhammad have survived without the slightest loss, alteration or interpolation. They offer the same undying hope for treating mankind’s many ills, which they did when he was alive. This is not a claim of Muhammad’s followers but also the inescapable conclusion forced upon by a critical and unbiased history.”* [Prof. Christian Snouck Hurgronje of Leyden].

“My choice of Muhammad to lead the list of the world’s most influential persons may surprise some readers and may be questioned by others, but he was the only man in history who was supremely successful on both the religious and secular levels.” [M.H. Hart, “THE 100: A Ranking of the most influential persons in history,” New York, 1978].

“Muhammad, the inspired man who founded Islam, was born about A.D. 570 into an Arabian tribe that worshiped idols. Orphaned at birth, he was always particularly solicitous of the poor and needy, the widow and the orphan, the slave and the downtrodden. At twenty he was already a successful businessman, and soon became director of camel caravans for a wealthy widow. When he reached twenty-five, his employer, recognizing his merit, proposed marriage. Even though she was fifteen years older, he married her, and as long as she lived remained a devoted husband. Like almost every major prophet before him, Muhammad fought shy of serving as the transmitter of God’s word, sensing his own inadequacy. But the angel commanded ‘Read’. So far as we know, Muhammad was unable to read or write, but he began to dictate those inspired words which would soon revolutionize a large segment of the earth, “There is one God.” In all things Muhammad was profoundly practical. When his beloved son Ibrahim died, an eclipse occurred, and rumors of God’s personal condolence quickly arose. Whereupon Muhammad is said to have announced, ‘An eclipse is a phenomenon of nature. It is foolish to attribute such things to the death or birth of a human being’. At Muhammad’s own death an attempt was made to deify him, but the man who was to become his administrative successor killed the hysteria with one of the noblest speeches in religious history: ‘If there are any among you who worshiped Muhammad, he is dead. But if it is God you worshiped, He lives forever’.” [James A. Michener, “Islam the Misunderstood Religion,” May 1955].

“It is impossible for anyone who studies the life and character of the great Prophet of Arabia, who knows how he taught and how he lived, to feel anything but reverence for that mighty Prophet, one of the great messengers of the Supreme. And although in what I put to you I shall say many things which may be familiar to many, yet I myself feel whenever I re-read them, a new way of admiration, a new sense of reverence for that mighty Arabian teacher.” [Annie Besant, “The Life and Teachings of Muhammad,” Madras, 1932].

“A mass of detail in the early sources show that he was an honest and upright man who had gained the respect and loyalty of others who were like-wise honest and upright men.” [Encyclopedia Britannica (Vol. 12)].

“How one man single-handedly, could weld warring tribes and wandering Bedouins into a most powerful and civilized nation in less than two decades.” “The lies (Western slander) which well-meaning zeal has heaped round this man (Muhammad) are disgraceful to ourselves only.” “A silent great soul, one of that who cannot but be earnest. He was to kindle the world, the world’s Maker had ordered so.” [Thomas Carlyle, “Heroes and Hero-ship”].

“I believe that if a man like him were to assume the dictatorship of the modern world he would succeed in solving its problems in a way that would bring it the much needed peace and happiness: I have prophesied about the faith of Muhammad that it would be acceptable to the Europe of tomorrow as it is beginning to be acceptable to the Europe of today... If any religion had the chance of ruling over England, nay Europe within the next hundred years, it could be Islam... I have always held the religion of Muhammad in high estimation because of its wonderful vitality. It is the only religion, which appears to me to possess that assimilating capacity to the changing phase of existence, which can make itself appeal to every age. I have studied him - the wonderful man and in my opinion far from being an anti-Christ, he must be called the Savior of Humanity.” [Sir George Bernard Shaw, “The Genuine Islam,” 1936].

“It is not the propagation but the permanency of his religion that deserves our wonder, the same pure and perfect impression that he engraved at Macca and Madinah is preserved, after the revolutions of twelve centuries by the Indian, the African and the Turkish proselytes of the Koran... The Mahometans have uniformly withstood the temptation of reducing the object of their faith and devotion to a level with the senses and imagination of man. ‘I believe in One God and Mahomet the Apostle of God,’ is the simple and invariable profession of Islam. The intellectual image of the Deity has never been degraded by any visible idol, the honors of the prophet have never transgressed the measure of human virtue, and his living precepts have restrained the gratitude of his disciples within the bounds of reason and religion.” [Edward Gibbon and Simon Ockley, “History of the Saracen Empire,” London, 1870].

I shall conclude this with the words of a clergyman:

“I have read in Moslem writings such deep and tender expressions of respect and reverence for Jesus that for the time I almost forgot, I was not reading the words of a Christian writer. How different, it is sad to say, has been the way in which Christians have spoken and written of Muhammad. Let us put it down to its true cause, ignorance.” [Reverend R. Maxwell King].

Whether people care to believe in Muhammad's prophethood or not, if non-Muslims try to study his life and read the message he preached objectively, they will be able to understand Muslims, they will be able to have a fair idea why Muslims have chosen to believe in the truthfulness of Islam, they will be able to appreciate the aforementioned testimonies and realize their true value. Above all, they will be able to realize how exceptional Muhammad was, find some common grounds with Muslims, and see beyond the fake idea of 'US Vs. THEM.'

Now, let's move on to stories of men who actually met the prophet and took the step which the aforementioned writers didn't. These men—whether former pagans, Jews, or Christians—passed by some kind of a struggle before they believed in his prophethood and supported him. They always had pride in narrating the stories of their faith to their companions. Among them are the following five notable figures:

1. ***Abu Sufyan Ibn Harb***: He was a former idolater and a notable leader among Quraysh, the prophet's tribe. He was one of the fiercest enemies to the prophet, and was among the pagan leaders at the battle of 'Uhud in which the prophet was nearly killed. After 20 years of fighting against the prophet and lurking to kill him at every opportunity, he embraced Islam, became one of the companions, and a devout Muslim.

'Abdullah Ibn 'Abbās reported that, "Abu Sufyan Ibn Harb informed me that Heraclius sent a messenger to summon him while he was accompanying a caravan from Quraysh. They were merchants doing business in Sham during the time when the prophet held a truce with the pagans of Quraysh. So Abu Sufyan and his companions went to Heraclius at 'Ilya' (i.e. Jerusalem). Heraclius summoned them into his court where he had all the senior Roman dignitaries around him. He called for his translator. Translating Heraclius's question, the translator said to them, 'Who amongst you is closely related to that man who claims to be a Prophet?'

Abu Sufyan replied, 'I am the nearest relative to him amongst the group.'

Heraclius said, 'Bring him (Abu Sufyan) close to me and make his companions stand behind him.'

Abu Sufyan added, 'Heraclius told his translator to tell my companions that he wanted to ask me some questions regarding that man (i.e. the prophet), and if I told a lie, they should signal him. By Allah! If I hadn't been afraid that my companions may label me a liar, I wouldn't have said the truth about the Prophet. The first question he asked me was, 'What is the status of his family amongst you?'

I replied, 'He belongs to a good noble family amongst us.'

Heraclius further asked, 'Has anyone amongst you ever claimed to be a Prophet before him?'

I replied, 'No.'

He said, 'Was anybody amongst his ancestors a king?'

I replied, 'No.'

Heraclius asked, 'Do the nobles amongst you follow him or the poor?'

I replied, 'It is the poor who follow him.'

He said, 'Are his followers increasing or decreasing?'

I replied, 'They are increasing.'

He then asked, 'Does anybody amongst those who embrace his religion become displeased and renounce the religion afterwards?'

I replied, 'No.'

Heraclius said, 'Was he ever accused of being a liar before he claimed to be a Prophet?'

I replied, 'No.'

Heraclius said, 'Does he break his promises?'

I replied, 'No, We are at truce with him but we do not know what he is going to do.'

(Abu Sufyan explained his last answer saying, 'I wasn't able to find any opportunity to say anything against him except in this answer.')

Heraclius then asked, 'Have you ever had a war with him?'

I replied, 'Yes.'

Then he said, 'What was the outcome of the battles?'

I replied, 'Sometimes he was victorious and sometimes we were.'

Heraclius said, 'What does he order you to do?'

I said, 'He tells us to worship Allah alone and not to associate any partners with Him, and to renounce all that our ancestors had said. He orders us to pray, to speak the truth, to be chaste and to keep good relations with our Kith and kin.'

After that, Heraclius asked the translator to convey to me the following: 'I asked you about his family and your reply was that he belonged to a very noble family. In fact all prophets come from noble families amongst their respective peoples. I asked you whether anybody else amongst you claimed such a thing, your reply was in the negative. If the answer had been in the affirmative, I would have thought that this man was following the previous man's statement. Then I asked you whether anyone of his ancestors was a king. Your reply was in the negative, and if it had been in the affirmative, I would have thought that this man wanted to take back his ancestral kingdom. I further asked whether he was ever accused of telling lies before he claimed his Prophethood, and your reply was in the negative. So I wondered how a person who does not tell a lie about others could ever tell a lie about Allah. I then asked you whether the rich people followed him or the poor. You replied that it was the poor who followed him. And in fact all the prophets have been followed by this very class of people. Then I asked you whether his followers were increasing or decreasing. You replied that they were increasing, and in fact this is the way of true faith, till it is complete in all respects. I further asked you whether there was anybody, who after embracing his religion, became displeased and discarded his religion. Your reply was in the negative, and in fact this is the sign of true faith, when its light enters the hearts and mixes with them. I asked you whether he had ever betrayed. You replied in the negative and likewise all prophets never betray. Then I asked you what he ordered you to do. You replied that he ordered you to worship Allah alone and not to associate partners with Him, and he forbade you from worshipping idols and ordered you to pray, to speak the truth and to remain chaste. If what you have said is true, he will very soon occupy this place underneath my feet and I knew it (from the scriptures) that he was going to appear, but I didn't know that he would be from you (Arabs), and if I could reach his city, definitely, I would go immediately to meet him; and if I were with him, I wouldn't certainly refrain from even washing his feet.' (i.e. An act of honoring in Christianity).

Heraclius then asked for the letter addressed by the prophet which was delivered by Dihya (the prophet's companion) to the Governor of Busra, who forwarded it to Heraclius. The contents of the letter were as follows:

"In the name of Allah the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful. This letter is from Muhammad the servant of Allah and His messenger to Heraclius the grand ruler of the Romans. Peace be upon those who follow the righteous path. Furthermore, I invite you to Islam, if you become a Muslim you will be safe and Allah will double your reward,

but if you reject this invitation to Islam, you will be committing a sin by misguiding your people, and you shall bear the burden of the Arians. ‘O people of the book, Come to a common word between you and us, that we worship none but Allah and we associate nothing in worship with Him, and that none of us takes others as Lords beside Allah. Then, if they turn away, say, “Bear witness that we are Muslims [who have submitted solely to Allah].”’

Abu Sufyan then added, ‘When Heraclius finished reading the letter, there was great hue in the Royal Court, so we were escorted out. I told my companions that the matter of Ibn Abi-Kabsha (i.e. referring to Prophet Muhammad in an infuriated way) has become so prominent that even the King of Bani-El-Asfar (i.e. the Romans) is afraid of him. Then I started to believe that the Prophet would be the one to prevail in the near future. Later on, Allah guided me to embrace Islam.’ ” [Recorded by Bukhari].

It was reported by one of the court politicians—who later on embraced Islam—that when Heraclius summoned his councilors, they refused Islam and denied any possibility that the awaited prophet could come from among the Arabs. They decided to fight against the spread of Islam and stop Muslims from preaching the new religion at any price. Heraclius agreed with his councilors out of fear for his authority. He ordered his officers to assemble an army, enter Arabia, and attack Madinah. He warned his *Ghassanide* Arab allies from the new religion. This later on led to the famous battle of *Mu’tah*.

Abu Sufyan fought beside the prophet at the battles of *Hunayn* and *At-Ta’ef*, 8 A.H. He was 70 years old at that time and he lost an eye in the second battle. He lost the other eye in the battle of Yarmouk, 13 A.H. Though older than the prophet by 9 years, he died 20 years after the prophet in 30 A.H. at the age of 92. May Allah be pleased with him.

2. **‘Abdullah Ibn Salām**: He was a former Jewish rabbi, and one of the most knowledgeable leaders among his Jewish tribe. He was an Israelite from the offspring of Prophet Joseph P.B.U.H. from the tribe of “*Banu-Qainuqā’*.” They lived in Madinah awaiting the coming of a prophet at that place as prophesized in their holy books. He reported the story of his faith to the companions, he said,

“When I first heard of the prophet’s arrival in Madinah, I recognized his attributes, name, appearance and the time in which we were awaiting his arrival. On that day, I was working in my field on one of my palm trees and my aunt was sitting under it when a man came and told me that the prophet we were told of has arrived. I shouted, ‘Allah is the greatest’ out of joy. My aunt said, ‘If it was Moses who has arrived you wouldn’t be any more joyful.’ I told her, ‘O aunty, I swear that he’s Moses’s brother (i.e. in Prophethood) and following his faith. He has come to revive the same teachings.’ She asked, ‘Is he the prophet we were told would be sent before the day of resurrection.’ I said, ‘Yes.’ ” [Recorded by Ibn Ishāq].

‘Abdullah also reported that, “*When the prophet P.B.U.H. arrived in Madinah, all people were overwhelmingly spreading news of his arrival. I went out looking for him just to take a look at him. When I found him and saw his face, I knew it in my heart that this wasn’t the face of a liar. I listened to what he was saying, the first thing I heard him say was, ‘O people, spread peace greetings, feed the needy, respect the ties of kinship and pray at night while people sleep; do that and you shall be admitted into paradise peacefully.’ ” [Recorded by Ibn Mājah, Al-Darmī and Tirmidhī].*

To make sure that the prophet was not a lair, *Anas* reported that *‘Abdullah Ibn Salām* sought the prophet, and asked him about things that only the awaited prophet would know. He stated the following:

“‘Abdullah Ibn salām went to the prophet and said, ‘I will ask you about three things that only a prophet would know. What is the first sign of the judgment day? What is the first food that those who enter paradise will taste? And what makes the child incline to his father’s like or his mother’s like?’

The prophet said, ‘Gabriel told me of them earlier.’

‘Abdullah said, ‘Gabriel, that’s the enemy of the Jews among the angels.’

So the prophet recited, “Whoever is an enemy to Gabriel (let him know that) he brings down the (revelations) onto your heart by Allah’s will, a confirmation of what went before you, a guidance and glad tidings for those who believe.” [The Qur’an (2:97)], then he said, ‘The first sign of the judgment day is fire that will jam the people from the east to the west, and the first food of those who will enter paradise is the lobe of the whales liver, and if the male’s fluid exceeds over the female’s, the child inclines to his like but if the female’s fluid exceeds over the male’s, the child inclines to her like.’

So ‘Abdullah said, ‘I testify that there is no god but Allah and that you are his messenger. O prophet, the Jews are falsehood people, so don’t inform anyone that I have believed in your prophethood until they state their real opinion in me.’” [Recorded by Bukhari].

‘Auf Ibn Mālek the companion reported that, “One day the prophet went to the Jewish temple in Madinah and I was with him. It was their festival day and they were gathering in the temple so they hated to see him entering.

The prophet said, ‘O Jewish folks, give me twelve men who would testify that there is no God but Allah and that I’m his messenger, and Allah will forgive for any Jew under the heavens all past sins.’

They silenced anyone who tried to speak, so the prophet repeated what he said, but they didn’t respond. He repeated it for the third time, but still, they didn’t respond. Seeing that, the prophet said, ‘So you choose to decline. I swear by Allah that I’m the last of the prophets—the one you were promised would come—whether you believe it or not.’ The prophet and I turned and were about to leave when a man shouted, ‘Wait Muhammad.’ That man asked the Jews, ‘Who am I amongst you, folks?’

They answered, ‘You’re like your father and grandfather. We know no man more knowledgeable than you.’

So he said, ‘Then I swear that this man is the prophet you find described in the Torah.’

They shouted in rage, ‘You are a lair,’ and started to swear at him.

So the prophet said, ‘But you are the liars. A moment ago you were praising him, yet, when he declared that he believes in my prophethood, you call him a liar! Allah won’t accept what you say.’

And we left three men, for with us was that man, ‘Abdullah Ibn Salām.’”

[Recorded by Ahmad, Al-Hākem, Tabarāni and others].

After that, ‘Abdullah witnessed all the events with Prophet Muhammad. He lived the reigns of the famous 4 caliphs and died in the year 43 A.H. at the age of 70 after the prophet departed by 32 years, which he spent conveying to the followers what he learned from the prophet. May Allah be pleased with him, and grant us the companionship of his likes—in this life and the next; Amen.

3. **Zayd Ibn Sa‘yah:** A former Jewish rabbi who lived in Madinah. Through his studies, he knew that there was a prophet promised in the scriptures whose time had come. He knew that this prophet would appear in Arabia, and would have two very special characters. Let’s read his story as he narrated it to his companion and former Jew, ‘Abdullah Ibn Salām, who reported that Zayd told him:

“There was no sign left from those of the awaited prophet that I hadn’t recognized in Prophet Muhammad’s face when I saw him except for the moral characters—two in particular—that his patience precedes his anger, and that treating him ignominiously couldn’t but increase his patience. So I went over to him and said, ‘O Muhammad, would you send me the fruits of so and so when they are reaped.’

He agreed and I gave him the price eighty weights of gold for an appointed time. When this time approached, I saw the prophet walking in a funeral with his companions, so I approached him, pulled him by his garment roughly and shouted angrily, ‘Hey Muhammad, won’t you give me what’s mine? By Allah I know your people, you are known of procrastination.’

On seeing that ‘Omar Ibn Al-Khattab glared at me in a frightening way and said, ‘O enemy of Allah, how dare you do what I saw and say what I heard? If I didn’t fear the prophet’s blame, I would have smitten your neck with my sword.’

The prophet looked at ‘Omar calmly and said, ‘Me and him were in need of what’s different from that ‘Omar, you should have ordered me to fulfill my promise, and ordered him to be lenient. Go with him, ‘Omar. Fulfill to him his debt and increase him twenty weights of dates in recompense for frightening him the way you did’¹.

‘Omar obeyed the prophet. He took me with him, gave me my share and increased me the twenty weights; thereafter, he asked me, ‘What made you do what you did and say what you said?’

I answered him, ‘O ‘Omar, there was no sign of Prophethood left that I hadn’t recognized in the prophet’s face when I looked at him, except for two that I was unable to recognize from his appearance, that his patience precedes his anger, and that treating him ignominiously couldn’t but increase his patience. Now I have recognized them, so I take you as my witness ‘Omar, I testify that there is no God but Allah and that Muhammad is His messenger, and I also hold you as my witness that half of my wealth is a dole for Muhammad’s followers.’” [Recorded by Tabarāni, Ibn Habān, Al-Hākīm and others].

Zayd witnessed most of the events with the prophet until he received his martyrdom nine years later while returning from *Tabook*. May Allah be pleased with him and all those who are sincere and devout; Amen.

1: Please note that ‘Omar Ibn Al-Khattab was a huge, strong man. His height as described by the companions was like that of a man riding on a horse (the Arabian horses are smaller than other families of horses), so in approximation he was around 7ft. (2.1 meters).

4. ***'Odai Ibn Hatem Al-Tā'y:*** He was the leader of a Christian Arab tribe and one of the most rich leaders among all Arabs. His mother was the daughter of the king of Yemen. His lineage goes back to Joktan, the oldest Arab ancestry. Like his father, he was known of his great generosity. Stories about their generosity were narrated all over Arabia. He told his story to the companions after the prophet's departure saying:

"No Arab ever hated the prophet when he first heard of him more than I did. I was a noble man among my people, I was a Christian, and as the leader of my tribe I kept for myself quarter of the riches they gained from any battle (i.e. the other tribes were pagans and there was an old feud between him and them). I had a religion with which I was content and my people treated me like a king, so I hated him so much. I summoned one of my young shepherds and said, 'Prepare from my flock of camels some that are big and strong. Keep them close by. If you hear that the army of Muhammad entered any of the neighboring towns, come and inform me.'

Later on, one day noon, the lad came in and said, 'O Master 'Odai, whatever it is that you were going to do if Muhammad's army was to approach your town, you better do it immediately. I saw some banners that I inquired about, and I was told they were the banners of Muhammad's army.'

I ordered him to bring the camels he prepared. I loaded my family and possessions on their backs, and took off towards Sham to join the company of the Arab Christians living there. I fled leaving my stepsister behind; she was later captured by the prophet's army. When the prophet learned that I had escaped to Sham. He ordered that my sister and all of the women left behind should be held safely in a house beside the mosque. My sister told me that she sat in front of that house, when the prophet passed by, she got up and said, 'O prophet, my father died long ago, and him who took care of me fled leaving me behind. Set me free may Allah reward you.'

The prophet asked her, 'Who is him who took care of you?'

She answered, 'Odai Ibn Hatem.'

So the prophet said, 'The one who ran away from Allah and His messenger?' then he left. She told me that the next day he passed by the house again, so she asked him to set her free like she did the day before, and his response was the same.

On the third day when he passed by her, she despaired that he would let her go if she asked him again, but a man standing behind him signaled her to get up and ask him to let her go, so she got up and again said, 'O prophet, my father died long ago, and my brother fled leaving me behind. Set me free may Allah reward you.'

The prophet said, 'I've already done that so don't be hasty. Wait until you find some of your people whom you can trust and who can lead you safely to your folks.'

After he left she asked the people about the man who signaled her to speak. Those who knew him said, 'That's 'Ali Ibn Abi-Taleb, the prophet's cousin.'

She lived in that house with the women from her tribe until a caravan from Kada'a (a place in the way to Sham) came to Madinah. She told the prophet when he passed by the house, 'O prophet, some of my people whom I trust are here.'

The prophet ordered for her new clothes to wear, prepared for her a camel and loaded it with provisions and gifts, gave her the expenses she may need, and he let her go.

I was sitting with my family in front of the house I bought at Sham when a camel approached and the rider was my sister. She got off and shouted angrily, 'You ignoble tyrant, you severed me. You fled with your wife and children and left me behind—you left the remainder of your father and your nakedness behind.'

I apologized saying, ‘O sister, what you said is all true. I have no excuse. I did what you said.’

She stayed with my family for some time. One day, I asked her—and she was an extremely firm woman—I said, ‘What do you think of this man?’

She said, ‘You should go to him quickly; if he is truly a prophet, then those who follow him earlier are the best, and if he were a king, then you shall get to keep your glory in Yemen as it was.’

I said, ‘By Allah, that’s a wise opinion.’

I traveled seeking to meet the prophet at Madinah. When I arrived, I found him praying at the mosque. I entered and greeted him. He looked at me and said, ‘Who is the traveler?’ I answered, ‘Odai Ibn Hatem.’ He got up greeted me and took me by my hand inviting me to his house. On the way, an old weak woman called him by his name. He stopped and kept on listening to her demands for a long time. I said to myself, ‘This is not a king.’ When she finished, we went along. When we entered his house, he grabbed a pillow made of leather stuffed with bast and handed it to me saying, ‘Sit on this.’ I said, ‘No, you sit on it.’ But he insisted saying, ‘No, but you sit on it,’ and he sat on the ground. Seeing this, I said to myself, ‘This could never be the condition of a king.’¹

He then said, ‘O ‘Odai, embrace Islam and you will be at peace from all your fears.’

I said, ‘I already have a religion.’

He said, ‘I know your religion better than you do.’

I said [in astonishment], ‘You know my religion better than I do!’

He said, ‘Yes. Aren’t you the leader of your people?’

I said, ‘Yes.’

He said, ‘Aren’t you a Christian?’

So I said, ‘Yes.’

He said, ‘Didn’t you keep for yourself quarter the booty your people gained from their battles against the pagans?’

I said, ‘Yes.’

He then said, ‘Isn’t this forbidden in your religion?’

On hearing this I blanched and realized that this couldn’t be but the knowledge of a prophet who knew what he was talking about. He then said, ‘Maybe you hate Islam because those who embrace it are the poorest of all people, or maybe because you see most people fighting against us and we are outnumbered and surrounded by enemies; and maybe what’s holding you from embracing Islam is that you see kingship and power with others; but I swear by Allah, money is about to flood Muslims that no one will ask for it, and you are about to hear of a woman coming from Qādisiyyah on her camel to visit the sacred mosque in Makkah without any fear on herself, and I swear that you are about to hear of White castles at the land of Babel having its doors opened for Muslims.’

I embraced Islam, and two events of what the prophet foretold me have already happened, and there is still one remaining. I know by heart that it will happen, for I was among those who opened Babel and I witnessed the white castles of Babel having their doors opened for us. I have seen women travel from Qādisiyyah to perform pilgrimage at the sacred mosque in Makkah without any fear on themselves. I can swear that there will be plenty of money that no one will take it for the prophet told me so.’ [Recorded by Ibn Ishāq, Ibn Hishām, Ahmad and Ibn Hibbān].

1: The prophet’s house was a small room, with a straw mat as a bed and a leather pillow stuffed with bast on which he laid his head and sat on. That’s it.

'*O dai* embraced Islam in the year 7 A.H. 3 or 4 years before the prophet passed away. '*O dai* died in 67 A.H. after the prophet by 57 years at the age of 120, may Allah be pleased with him. After his death by about 30 years, the third sign was fulfilled in the reign of '*Omar Ibn Abd El-Aziz* (99-101 A.H.). During his caliphate, money flooded the Muslims' treasury to the extent that he fulfilled the debts on behalf of all those indebted, he paid for the marriage expenses of all the youths, he made regular salaries for every poor person unable to work, he dropped Jizyah, he even sent workers to all barren roads surrounding the Islamic countries to make sure that all people were living in good conditions. Finally, whenever he sent his workers to the streets with bags of money looking for a beggar or any person in need, they couldn't find anyone and returned the money to the treasury.

5. ***Salmān Al-Farisy (Salmān the Persian)***: He was the son of a Persian mayor of a small village in Esfahan. His people were magus, but destiny held for *Salmān* another path, which was the path of seeking after the truth. Traveling almost quarter of that day's inhabited world, living with 5 old priests approaching the end of their lives, making a fortune, getting enslaved, and finally reaching the truth he sought. The prophet and the companions nicknamed him "The truth seeker." Let's get to know how he got this nickname. *Salmān* told the companions his story as follows:

"I was a Persian from the people of Asbahan (aka: Esfahan), from a village called Jai. My father was the leader of our people and I was his most beloved son. He loved me to the extent that he used to lock me up inside the house like people do with their little girls. We were Magus and I chose to devote myself to serve the fire until I became the custodian of the temple. My father owned and ran a great estate. One day he got occupied by a huge building that was being constructed in our village, so he dispatched me to his estate saying, 'Son, I'm occupied by this new building. I need you to go and check on the business.' He ordered me to carry out some necessary tasks, and before I departed, he said, 'Don't get distracted by the work and stay there for a late hour. I shall forget my estate, this building, and everything out of worry that harm could've befallen you.' I left heading towards my father's estate. On the way I passed by a Christian church and heard the sound of their prayers. I didn't know much about other religions for I was forced to stay at home most of the time. Driven by curiosity, I went in to see what they were doing. I was impressed by their prayers. I felt a deep desire to pray like they did, and said to myself, 'These rituals are better than what we have in our religion.'

I stayed with them until sunset forgetting all about my father's estate. I asked the Christians about the original lands of their religion. They told me it was 'Sham.' I returned to my father who had already sent out some people looking for me, I said to him, 'Father, I passed by people praying in a church, and I was fascinated by their prayers. I can assert that their religion is better than ours.'

He said, 'O son, there is no good in that religion. Your ancestors' religion is better.'
I said, 'No, I swear that their religion is better.'

On hearing this, he feared that I would leave him and join the Christians, so he put fetters on my feet and locked me up inside the house. I managed to send a servant to inform the Christians on my behalf that I have embraced their religion, and requested that if a caravan comes from Sham, they would inform me before it returns so that I may travel with them, which they did. I managed to free myself from the fetters and escaped with the caravan to Sham. When I reached it, I asked about the most learned man of Christianity, and I was directed to the bishop of the church. I went to him and expressed my desire

to stay with him, serve him, and learn from him about Christianity. He agreed, and I lived with him for a while, but I found him unfaithful. He ordered the people to give alms and made them long for its reward from Allah. Whenever they collected any amount of money and gave it to him, he wouldn't distribute it on the poor and the needy but kept it for himself. He collected about seven jars of gold and silver. I hated him so much for what I saw him doing. After a short while he died. When the people came to bury him, I told them, 'This was a bad man. He ordered you to give alms and made you desire its reward, but whatever you brought to him, he just kept for himself.'

They said, 'And how did you know that?'

I said, 'I can show you where he hid your money.'

When I showed them where he hid the treasure and they pulled out the seven jars filled with gold and silver, they refused to bury him. They crucified his body and stoned him with stones. Later on, they appointed a new bishop in his place. I never saw anyone more pious, more persistent in his prayers, more renouncing to this worldly life in exchange for the Hereafter, or more persistent in worship than him. I loved him more than I loved anyone else.

On his death bed, I told him, 'I've been living with you for a while and I've come to love you more than anyone I ever knew. To whom should I go if anything happens to you?'

He said, 'O my son, I do not know anyone who's still following the path I've followed. Most people have gone astray and have abandoned what they were taught except an old friend who lives in Mausel (A city in Iraq). He is still holding on to the true path. Go to him and stay with him,' and he gave me the man's name.

After a few days, he passed away. I attended to his funeral and buried him myself. Thereafter, I traveled to Mausel. When I reached the old man he told me about, I told him my story and that his friend advised me to join him.

He accepted and permitted me to stay with him. I found him as pious as his late friend, but shortly after I moved in with him, he became extremely ill. I told him, 'On his death bed, your friend advised me to join you, and now seeing what has befallen you, what would you advise me to do?'

He said, 'I know no other man who still holds on to our path but one who lives in Nisibin (i.e. A city in Iraq back then but now in Turkey),' and he told me his name.

After he passed away, I buried him, and then traveled to Nisibin. I went to that man and told him my story. He allowed me to stay with him. I found him, too, following the same path of his predecessors. Later on, when death was about to overtake him, I asked him to whom he would advise me to go if something happened to him, and he told me that the only person still alive and holding on to his path was a man in Amuriah in Byzantium, and he gave me his name. Later on, he died, so I buried him and went to the priest of Amuriah. I told him my story and he accepted to let me stay with him. I found him following exactly the same path of his former friends. I worked and earned my living there by rearing cattle and sheep. I gathered a fortune. After a few years, death approached that priest, and as I have asked his former friends I asked him, 'To whom should I go after you?'

He said, 'I know no one left who still holds on to our path, but I believe this is an epoch in which there will appear a prophet. He will preach the pure creed of Abraham. He shall appear in Arabia and escape to a place that lies between two mountains and is full of palm trees. He has some personal signs which will be manifest: he does not eat from alms but accepts to eat from gifts. Between his shoulders there shall be the seal of Prophethood. If you find such a place, then wait for his appearance there.'

After the Amurian priest died, I stayed in Amuria for as long as Allah destined me to stay, then one day, a caravan passed by, they were from Banu-Kalb tribe in Arabia. I told them, 'Take me with you to Arabia, and my cattle and sheep are yours.'

They agreed, so I gave them my flock and they took me with them. When we reached "Wady Al-Qura" or "The valley of villages,"¹ they double-crossed me and sold me as a slave to a Jew. I saw many palm trees and hoped that this place would be the one described to me but I wasn't certain. I stayed with the Jew for a while until one day, one of his cousins from "Banu-Quraiza" tribe at Madinah came visiting. He bought me and took me with him to Madinah. I swear by Allah that the moment my eyes fell on this land, I recognized that it was the one described to me by my late friend. I stayed with my new master and worked for him until Allah sent His Prophet. He stayed in Makkah for years and I never heard of him until he immigrated to Madinah. One day, while I was working atop a palm tree and my master was sitting underneath, one of his Jewish cousins passed by and said, 'Hey cousin, May Allah kill Bani-Qaylah (Arabs of Madinah), they are gathering now at Qibaa' (a place at the southern entrance of Madinah) around a man who came fleeing from Makkah and claiming to be a prophet.'

On hearing this, I quivered and was about to fall on my master. I climbed down hurriedly and asked him, 'What are you saying? What's the news?'

My master gave me a nasty punch and said, 'What have you got to do with this? Return to your work.'

I said, 'Nothing. I just wished to know if what he said was true,' then I returned to work. By nightfall, I took some food and set out towards Qibaa' seeking to meet the prophet. When I entered, I found him sitting with some of his Companions, so I went over to him and said, 'It came to my knowledge that you are a good man and that you and your friends are strangers. I brought you some food which I have been keeping to give for alms. I think you deserve it the most,' and I laid down the food before him.

The Prophet placed it in front of his Companions and said, 'Eat,' but he abstained and didn't take even one bite from it. I said to myself, 'This is the first sign.'

I returned to my master's home, and for a while I gathered more food. During this period, the prophet moved to the inside skirts of Madinah, so I went to him with what I had gathered and said, 'I saw that you don't eat from alms, so this is a gift for you.'

He ate from it and ordered his friends to eat with him, so I said to myself, 'This is the second sign.'

Later on, I sought the Prophet and I found him sitting with his companions after having returned from a funeral. He was wearing a split garment placing one half on each shoulder. I greeted him, then stood behind him trying to take a sneak peek at the upper part of his back. He sensed what I was trying to do, so he threw the garment off his shoulders, and behold, the sign between his shoulders, the seal of prophethood was clear just as the Christian monk had described it. I staggered towards him, kissing his head and weeping. He told me to calm down and sit, so I sat before him and told him of my story as you have already heard.

Enslavement held me back from witnessing the battles of "Badr" and "Uhud" with the prophet. One day, the prophet P.B.U.H. told me, 'Write a pact of emancipation with your master to free yourself Salmān.'

1: Wady Al-Qura: a large valley of oasis north of Madinah. It contains many villages, and this is how it got its name. It starts with Tema, 400 Km north of Madinah, and ends at Khaibar that's 150 Km north of Madinah.

So I made an emancipation pact with my master who agreed to set me free if I cultivate for him 300 palm trees in a barren land which he owned, and give him 40 ounces of gold. When I informed the prophet of this pact, he said to his companions, 'Help your brother,' and they did. One brought me 30 baby palm trees, one brought 20, and another brought 10, until I gathered all 300. The prophet told me, 'Go Salmān, dig their plantation places, and when you finish, I shall put them in their places with my own hands.'

I dug their plantation places with the help of the companions. When we finished, I informed the prophet. He came and we handed him the baby trees one by one. He planted all 300 with his own hands. I swear by Allah, not one of them died. By this, I fulfilled the first part of the pact, but there still remained the 40 ounces of gold. Not long after that, the prophet P.B.U.H. received a piece of gold equal in size to a hen's egg. He asked his companions about me saying, 'What has the enslaved Persian done?'

They sent word telling me to come to the prophet.

He said, 'Take this Salmān and fulfill the remainder of your debt.'

I said, 'And where is this little piece compared to my debt, O prophet?'

'Take it and Allah shall fulfill your debt,' he responded.

I took the golden egg and went over to the Jew. I kept on breaking parts of it and weighing. I swear that all of the 40 ounces were fulfilled from that small piece of gold the prophet gave me. At last I was free, and I never missed an event with the prophet P.B.U.H. after that day." [Recorded by Ahmad].

What an honorable journey. May Allah's blessings be upon *Salmān* for striving through this long path seeking after the truth. May Allah reward him for his incredible patience and perseverance. The prophet honored *Salmān* saying, "*Salmān is one of us, he's a member of my family.*" No other companion was ever given that honor. He died after the prophet passed away by about 22 years in the reign of '*Othman Ibn Affan.*' May Allah be pleased with him and with all the companions; Amen.



Many non-Muslims find the previous stories weird and contradicting to their previous knowledge. Many Muslims as well—if not most of them—don't have a clue about the prophet's signs in the old scriptures. In order to have sufficient understanding for the concept of Prophethood and its logic according to the Islamic teachings, this concept and Prophet Muhammad's signs in the old scriptures shall need further exploration. Let's do that, may the benefit of this chapter be completed.

2.1 The Prophethood Glad Tidings

The biggest problem that had usually faced the prophets in delivering their messages is that many people were unable to understand the concept of “Prophethood,” they were unable to realize its necessity. They couldn’t comprehend that without divine messages, we will all be like laborers taken to a jobsite without being informed of the tasks we are supposed to do, and the guidelines which we should follow in fulfilling our tasks. Consequently, there have always existed those who took other gods besides the Creator, those who worshipped gods of their own invention, and those who denied the existence of any God. Meanwhile, there have always existed those who believed in the Creator and followed his messengers.

As humans, we were created having a certain mechanism through which we can acquire information, understand it, and realize the truth of everything. This mechanism consists of the five senses, and the mind, reason, or intellect. Through our five senses, we perceive and collect all sorts of information. This information is then analyzed through our most important merit as one of the creatures living on earth, which is the ‘Human Mind.’ Accordingly, we are able to realize the truth of such information. As far as most of the five senses are functioning alongside the intellect, anyone shall be able to learn, acquire knowledge and understand the reality of things. But what happens when we as humans need knowledge about matters which our five senses cannot perceive on their own? For example: How did everything come to exist? Who is our creator? How is He like, and what are His attributes? How can we communicate with Him? Who taught the very first humans how to speak and talk instead of humming for instance? We all think of the previous besides many other questions since childhood, but our learning mechanism stands incapable of answering.

With the help of advanced technologies reached in the last 200 years and established upon the sciences founded and enriched by mankind throughout 5 millennia, we were able to learn a lot about ourselves, the planet on which we are living, and the universe around us. We were able to discover many of the physical laws and rules that govern its components. The universe was originated from a magnificently rapid expansion in a singularity point resulting in a celestial gaseous dust cloud. From it, constellations, billions of planets and stars were formed. We see the earth, the moon, the sun, the whole Milky Way and other millions of galaxies, all revolving in perfect cycles in their orbits, all at the same time. We see the universe marvelously arranged, following logical physical laws. If we were to say that the universe was originated from this Big Bang without the need for any creator, then we will have to give a logical answer to the following question, “How did the singularity point from which everything started come to exist?” I believe that any person should be able to conclude through reason that this whole system that we call “The Universe,” functioning with rational laws, which govern each and everything inside it, must have been created, sustained and guided through all stages of its evolution by an absolutely knowledgeable powerful eternal entity—the entity that most people call God.

If through reason we can deduce the existence of God, then we should also be able to figure out that this Omniscient deity couldn’t have designed this planet we call Earth perfectly suiting for life; thereafter, He created various living creatures to live on it; later on, at a certain stage through the long history of life on earth, God created man,

made him superior above all other creatures by bestowing upon him the beautiful amazing merit we call the “Human Mind,” granted him the ability to think, learn, search, deduce, speak, and discover all sorts of knowledge, have the ability to examine various feelings like love, joy, anger, longing, sadness, desire, jealousy, etc., all for no reason or without any plan. This Mighty capable deity couldn’t have just created all this and then abandoned it, especially this intelligent creature. He couldn’t leave man off in total darkness without ever communicating with him and guiding him through his life whenever he’s in need of guidance, show him the signs of His existence, teach him wisdom and righteousness, teach him how did everything begin, how did he come into this world, why was he created, what are the rules most fitting for him to live with, what are his duties towards other creatures and the planet on which he is living, what is beneficial for him and what is harmful, etc.

Imagine that you sent one of your employees or servants to a designated place without ever telling him of the tasks which he’s supposed to carryout and how to accomplish them, neither while he is leaving, nor explaining it to him later on through some message. If a man of ordinary reason cannot do this, how can something like this be imagined with respect to the most Holy Lord under whose ultimate wisdom this whole universal system is functioning! As a matter of fact, Prophethood is the creator’s method of communicating with His creation. Allah did not forsake His servants or His creation in the dark, He has instituted a regular system for their guidance. This very regular system of guidance is what we call “Prophethood.” This should make it crystal clear that Prophethood is not some illogical religious belief, but a rational need that should be figured out if we follow reason.

Mankind, through their history, have passed by many stages of development. Civilizations rose and fell all around the world. If you try to study the reasons behind the falling of great civilizations you will find many reasons, mainly one in common, they forsook the ethical and moral reformatory teachings of their Creator, which were delivered by His messengers and prophets. The knowledge attained by these civilizations was sometimes preserved and other times lost with the decline of their nations. When mankind attained the proper amount of knowledge that can help them enter a self-sustaining stage of development after their extremely long history that goes back hundreds of thousands of years, they were extremely far away from their creator’s ethical teachings. At that point, the Omniscient Creator sent them His final messenger and message, and because there wasn’t going to be any more messages after that, He promised to keep that final message intact from any distortion or tampering, and protect the message bearer till he delivers it. This final message in Muslims’ belief is THE QUR’AN, the last testament to mankind, and the bearer is Muhammad, the last prophet and the corner stone.

Now, a logical question probably arises in everyone’s mind, which is, “Upon whom does God bestow his revelations and how?” Let us think rationally and give ourselves an example from what we see in our daily lives. If you own a company that works in the construction business for instance, and you wanted to hire a new principal engineer who would be responsible for preparing all the junior engineers, choose from among them their most clever ones to be the senior engineers and team leaders, he will teach them, train them, answer their questions, revise their work, correct their mistakes, approve or reject their work, etc. What would be the most correct method in hiring such an engineer?

Logic says that the most correct approach would be to review all existing candidates, and then choose the one who has the best qualifications, whom you can prepare to face the difficulties and hardships of such a job. After this, you will assign a deputy to prepare him and transfer to him the information he needs in order to carry out the tasks for which he is assigned. Finally, you will watch his progress to interfere when necessary.

This approach is almost the same as what the Creator has been doing in order to teach and guide us. Allah Almighty—ever since Adam the father of all prophets—has been sending down his revelations with the angel he created and assigned for this job—namely “Gabriel,”— to the best and the most pious believing humans who can bear the burden of delivering the divine messages to their people. This human is like the principal engineer in the above example and the one whom we call a messenger or a prophet. Prophets are the ones chosen by Allah to deliver his messages to us as humans and teach us about His attributes, our existence, the best way to live in this worldly life, what’s harmful and what’s useful, the laws by which if we abide we shall prosper, he teaches us about our tasks and how to do them.

Some people teach that Allah has given a covenant to a certain lineage or race to bestow his revelations and messages upon a prophet chosen only from among them. Islam, on the other hand, teaches that Allah Almighty chooses whoever He likes and knows in His ultimate wisdom to be the best among every nation for delivering His message—without any regards to his race or lineage. Allah Almighty is not a racist nor could He be. Islam teaches that Allah never punishes any people except after sending them a warner or a messenger to teach them about their Creator’s laws and moral teachings. In the Holy Qur’an, Allah says about this:

“Allah chooses as messengers whomever He wills.” [The Qur’an (3:179)].

“The decree of Allah is at hand, so do not seek to hasten it. Holy is He, and exalted far above what they associate with Him. He sends down the angels with revelations by His command to whomever of His servants He pleases, saying, ‘Warn mankind that there is no God but Me, so beware of Me.’ ” [The Qur’an (16:1-2)].

“Allah chooses messengers from among the angels and from among men. Allah is All Hearing, All Seeing.” [The Qur’an (22:75)].

“We have never sent a messenger who did not use his own people’s language to make things clear for them.” [The Qur’an (14:4)].

“Whoever accepts guidance does so for his own good, whoever strays does so at his own peril. No soul will bear another’s burden, nor do We punish until We have sent a messenger.” [The Qur’an (17:15)].

It is true that most of the prophets mentioned in the Qur’an, and sent after Abraham were from his offspring, but the Qur’an does not teach that this was some kind of a covenant between Abraham and Allah, it was rather a blessing bestowed upon those who were pious among Abraham’s offspring. Abraham P.B.U.H. invoked Allah to bless his offspring with prophets from among themselves to teach them about their creator. This is mentioned in the Qur’an as follows:

“Remember when Abraham’s Lord tested him with certain commandments, which he fulfilled, He said, ‘I will make you a religious model for the people.’ Abraham asked, ‘And from among my descendants too?’ Allah answered, ‘My pledge does not hold for those who do evil.’ ” [The Qur’an (2:124)].

Allah also says in the Qur'an:

"We have sent other messengers before you (O Muhammad), some We have mentioned to you and some We have not." [The Qur'an (40:78)].

Islam teaches that the previous holy books pointed out and taught that there will be a last prophet, the seal of all prophets. He will be sent to deliver to all people the final message and final law by which they should abide till the judgment day comes. All of the preceding prophets were sent specifically to their people, to teach them about their creator, the one and only God, treat what they have corrupted in this understanding in a way that fits their conditions and their capability of understanding. None of the prophets was ordered to preach his message to all people on earth, but only to his people or a certain nation as specified to him by Allah. Of course, all these messages preached the same creed of faith but had different laws according to the era and state of the people to whom it was sent. For example, the laws of marriage for the previous nations permitted a man to gather to himself in marriage two sisters, like Prophet Jacob's marriage to Leah and Rachel. This was later on abrogated and forbidden in the message Allah bestowed upon His Prophet Moses. Nonetheless, the creed of faith has always been the same and it never changed, for changing it only means that God Himself is changed, which is absolutely impossible.

Different Nations ↔ Different Languages ↔ Different Messengers
Different Eras ↔ Different circumstances ↔ Different Laws
Same Sender ↔ Same Creed of Faith
Final Message ↔ Final Messenger ↔ Final Law

When humanity reached the era in which it had acquired the primitive knowledge capable of introducing mankind into a self-sustaining stage of progress, most people were straying from the prophets' pure creed and teachings. Instead they followed the teachings of sects of men who have added, hidden, struck-off and corrupted those teachings according to their own understanding, whim, and will. The world was mostly occupied by 2 major fighting military empires; namely, the Roman and Persian empires. Besides those two, there existed small scattered communities that were incapable of achieving any progress. Men were categorized according to their color, lineage, race, status and wealth. It was then the time for that last prophet, the one by whom all prophets would be sealed, the original pure creed of faith would be restored, the previous messages and correct laws would be confirmed, and what was corrupted or misunderstood from them would be explained, clarified and preserved from any distortion by Almighty's own care. It was time for one final message sent to all people telling them that they are all one nation, having one true God, one father, and one land. All people are one family. They should be gathered by mercy, justice and respect in their pursuit to fulfill the task for which they were created, that's keeping their trust in being their Creator's vicegerents on earth.

Many of the prophets were informed of that last prophet. They gave glad tidings to their companions and followers about him, and ordered them to follow and support him if they witness his coming. This last prophet's attributes and signs were described in the previous holy books sent by Allah. The teachings and final law that he would deliver were alluded to, and even his followers were described, the ones who would stand by him, support, and strengthen him through his mission.

When Prophet Muhammad P.B.U.H. was sent, people of the book (i.e. Jews and Christians) split in to two groups since his time and till this moment. The first group believed in his prophethood. They embraced Islam and taught their children that the Qur'an is Allah's final testament to all people. The other group declined.

First, the Jewish nation

History books tell us that some of the rabbis living in Arabia recognized Prophet Muhammad P.B.U.H. They were the most to ask him about things they knew that only a true prophet can answer. Some of them believed that he was the unlettered prophet they have been informed of, who would be the seal of all prophets, while others declined. They saw that Ishmael and his offspring are not included in God's covenant to Abraham. According to their understanding, the final promised prophet must be chosen from among the "sons of Israel." The end product of this belief was that they denied Muhammad's Prophethood. Working reason and logic, we can understand that "The Creator" could not be an exclusive God for a certain lineage from among His creation. Prophethood itself is not some kind of an honorary position, but it's a heavy burden, a responsibility, and a tough tribulation that only the most patient of all pious people can carry and deliver to the rest of mankind. Let's analyze what the Old Testament says about this issue:

The Book of Genesis 22:2 says, "And he said, Take now **your son, your only [son]** Isaac, whom you love, and get into the land of **Moriah**, and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell you of."

A question arises in one's mind when reading this verse, how come God calls Isaac in the previous verse, "**your only son**," when Abraham already had an older son; namely, **Ishmael** from Hagar?! The answer that is mostly given by rabbis and priests is that the meaning intended is, "your only legitimate son," and Ishmael was not a legitimate son for he was the son of a concubine.

Well, let's see what the Bible says about this explanation. From Genesis, just a few pages earlier, we read the following verses:

(16:3) And **Sarai Abram's wife took Hagar** her maid the Egyptian, after Abram had dwelt ten years in the land of Canaan, **and gave her to her husband Abram to be his wife**. (16:4) **And he went in unto Hagar, and she conceived.....**

(16:15) **And Hagar bare Abram a son:** and **Abram called his son's name**, which Hagar bare, **Ishmael**. (16:16) And **Abram [was] fourscore and six years old, when Hagar bare Ishmael to Abram.....**

(17:4) As for me, **behold, my covenant [is] with you, and you shall be a father of many nations.....**

(17:7) **And I will establish my covenant between me and you and your seed after you in their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto you, and to your seed after you**. (17:8) And **I will give unto you, and to your seed after you**, the land wherein you art a stranger, **all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession, and I will be their God.....**

(17:10) **This [is] my covenant, which ye shall keep, between me and you and your seed after you, Every man child among you shall be circumcised.....**

(17:21) **But my covenant will I establish with Isaac**, which Sarah shall bear unto you at this set time in the next year.....

(17:23) **And Abraham took Ishmael his son**, and all that were born in his house, and all that were bought with his money, every male among the men of Abraham's house, **and circumcised the flesh of their foreskin in the selfsame day, as God had said unto him.....**

(17:25) **And Ishmael his son [was] thirteen years old, when he was circumcised** in the flesh of his foreskin. (17:26) **In the selfsame day was Abraham circumcised, and Ishmael his son.....**

Working reason and logic in the above verses, one can easily realize that **Hagar was Abraham's wife** and Ishmael seems pretty legitimate as Abraham's son and seed. He was born to Abraham when he was 86 years old. He was circumcised with his father when he was 13 and Abraham was almost 99. Abraham was promised by God to be the father of many nations, and that God shall keep an everlasting covenant in Abraham's seed. Please note how **verse No. (17:21)** seems inconsistent between the above verses and doesn't make any sense. Try to read the above again neglecting this verse and you will understand what I mean. According to this verse, God's "**EVERLASTING covenant**" was changed when Sarah (Israel's grandmother) gave birth to Isaac, Genesis says:

(21:2) For Sarah **conceived, and bare Abraham a son in his old age**, at the set time of which God had spoken to him. (21:3) And Abraham called the name of his son that was born unto him, whom **Sarah bare to him, Isaac**. (21:4) **And Abraham circumcised his son Isaac being eight days old, as God had commanded him**. (21:5) **And Abraham was an hundred years old, when his son Isaac was born unto him...**

(21:8) And the child grew, and was weaned: and Abraham made a great feast the [same] day that Isaac was weaned. (21:9) And **Sarah saw the son of Hagar** the Egyptian, which she had born unto Abraham, **mocking**. (21:10) **Wherefore she said unto Abraham, Cast out this bondwoman and her son: for the son of this bondwoman shall not be heir with my son, Isaac**. (21:11) **And the thing was very grievous in Abraham's sight because of his son**. (21:12) **And God said unto Abraham, Let it not be grievous in your sight because of the lad, and because of your bondwoman, in all that Sarah has said unto you, hearken unto her voice, for in Isaac shall your seed be called**.

So from the above, it is obvious that Isaac was born to Abraham when he was 100 years old to become his second son. He was circumcised as a baby. *Now concentrate with the following please*, According to the "*Babylon Talmud*" a child is weaned at the end of 24 months. According to the bible between our hands today: **After Isaac was weaned**, Sarah ordered Abraham to cast out Hagar and her son **because Ishmael—who was almost 16** at that time—mocked **Isaac who was only 2 years old!** Abraham hated to do so for it was not right to cast out his wife and his **almost 16 years old first born son** just to satisfy his other wife, but amazingly, God's orders came to Abraham that he should **hearken unto Sarah's orders for in Isaac shall his seed be called**. Well now God is taking sides and despising Hagar and her son, "**Abraham's first born son**," for being the son of an Ex-bondwoman. But for the sake of Abraham God continues:

(21:13) **And also of the son of the bondwoman will I make a nation, because he [is] your seed**.

Although Hagar was Abraham's wife and Ishmael his seed, but as an Ex-bondswoman, she and her son were despised and cast out as ordered by God himself. This is either racism against his own creation, or pure corruptions in the real story and the words of God. In order to solve this dilemma, let's continue reading:

(21:14) And Abraham rose up early in the morning, and took bread, and a bottle of water, and gave [it] unto Hagar, **putting [it] on her shoulder, and the child, and sent her away: and she departed, and wandered in the wilderness of Beer-sheba.** (21:15) And the water was spent in the bottle, **and she cast the child under one of the shrubs.** (21:16) And she went, and sat her down over against [him] a good way off, as it were a bowshot: **for she said, Let me not see the death of the child.** And she sat over against [him,] and lift up her voice, and wept. (21:17) And God heard the voice of the lad, and the angel of God called Hagar out of heaven, and said unto her, What aileth you, Hagar? fear not, for God has heard the voice of the lad where he [is.] (21:18) **Arise, lift up the lad, and hold him in thine hand, for I will make him a great nation.** (21:19) And God opened her eyes, and she saw a well of water, and she went, and filled the bottle with water, and gave the lad drink. (21:20) And **God was with the lad, and he grew, and dwelt in the wilderness,** and became an archer. (21:21) **And he dwelt in the wilderness of Paran: and his mother took him a wife out of the land of Egypt.**

Now the "**almost 16 years old son**" who was described earlier to be mocking his 2 years old baby brother, and brought upon himself and his mother the wrath of his stepmom, is amazingly described to be carried up on the shoulder of his mother, being cast under a shrub, and described by his mother as a child; thereafter, God orders Hagar to lift him up and to hold him in her hands! Reason and logic could never get this picture, not even a bit. The inconsistency and distortion in the story is crystal clear.

Now, let's look into the Qur'an and the Sunnah for explanations. Allah tells us the full story of Abraham's faith, his avid spiritual search for the creator of this marvelous universe, his self-intelligence debates, receiving revelations, his people's trial to burn him when he invited them to forsake worshipping idols and to only worship their Creator, etc. Allah says in the Qur'an:

"They said, 'Build for him a structure (i.e. big furnace), and throw him into the blazing fire.' So, they plotted against him, but We made them the lowest. And he said, 'I am going to my Lord, He will guide me. O, My Lord! Bless me with a righteous offspring.' So We gave him tidings of a forbearing son (i.e. Ishmael). And when he (the boy) reached an age in which he could strive with him, he (Abraham) said, 'O my son, I have seen in a dream (i.e. a vision) that I am slaughtering you, so consider, what is your opinion?' He said, 'O father! Do that which you are commanded to do. You shall find me with Allah's willing one of those who endure patiently.' So, when they had both submitted (to Allah's will), and he (Abraham) laid him upon his forehead, We called out to him, 'O Abraham, you have (already) fulfilled the vision. Lo! thus do We reward the good.' Lo! that verily was a clear test. And We redeemed him with a great sacrifice. And We left for him (a word of praise) among the later people, 'Peace be upon Abraham.' Thus do We reward the good. Lo! he is one of Our believing servants. And We gave him tidings of the birth of Isaac, a prophet among the righteous. And We blessed him and Isaac. And of their seed are some who do good, and some who plainly wrong themselves." [The Qur'an (37:97-113)].

Hence, the Qur'an tells us that Abraham's first born son, "Ishmael," the son who was ever at a time Abraham's "only son," was the one whom Abraham was ordered to sacrifice, not Isaac. This clears up the dilemma of the first point stated, and now makes more sense. Ishmael was a blessing for Abraham after 86 years of having no children. Consequently, Abraham loved him and became attached to him so much. It was only then that Allah tried Abraham with a test of faith. The main purpose was to teach him that his love for his Lord must not be surpassed by love to any of his Lord's endowments. It was a tribulation through which Allah set Abraham as an example for all faithful believers through the ages. As a result, Abraham became their spiritual father, and his faith became their only lawful faith till the end of time. Actually, the name "Abraham" literally means, "father of many." Hence, unlike the Bible's story, the Qur'an tells us that Abraham saw in a dream that he was slaughtering his only son, so when Ishmael—his only son at that time—reached the age in which he can strive along with his father (i.e. teenage years), Abraham told him of his vision, and Ishmael saw that they should do as Allah orders.

The Islamic traditions explain that on this day, satan tried to seduce Abraham, Hagar and Ishmael from following Allah's orders. Whenever he came to one of them in a human form, they sought Allah's refuge from his seduction, and threw him with stones driving him away. This tradition is still followed on that same day every year in the ceremonies of the Muslims' pilgrimage at the same place where the events occurred. The place is called **Menah**. The tradition is revived in a symbolic way of course. It's a reminder of the day when satan failed to seduce a father from slaughtering his only son—a son with whom he was blessed after a lifetime. Thereafter, satan failed to seduce a mother from escaping away with her only son—and only family—from his old father who was going to slaughter him leaving her totally alone without anyone to protect and take care of her. Finally, satan failed to seduce even the young boy, or make him run away in fear for his life. Abraham, Hagar, and Ishmael had set for all mankind the greatest example of full submission and respect to Allah's orders. Unfortunately, many people today would stand incapable of realizing how magnificent that day was throughout the human history; a day in which mankind's faith was tested to the furthest limits, and ended up triumphant. As a reward for this family's incredible faith, Allah sent down the archangel Gabriel to redeem Ishmael with a magnificent ram that was slaughtered in his stead, and Abraham was given glad tidings of another righteous son who would also become a great prophet; namely, Isaac. This was how Abraham deserved to become the father of many great nations with whom Allah kept His everlasting covenant. May Allah's peace and blessings be upon Abraham, Ishmael, Isaac, and all prophets, the most faithful and most patient humans who ever walked the surface of this earth. These events are also celebrated every year by Muslims on the day known in the west as the Greater Bairam.

For the complete story, and to clear up the remaining gaps discussed earlier, we need to read what Bukhari recorded about Ishmael's story as taught by Prophet Muhammad. Companion *Ibn 'Abbās* said:

"The first lady to use a girdle was the mother of Ishmael. She used a girdle so that she might hide her tracks from Sarah. Abraham brought her and her son Ishmael while she was suckling him, to a place near the Ka'bah under a tree on the spot of Zamzam, at the highest place in the mosque. During those days, no one was living yet in Makkah, nor was there any water. Abraham made them sit over there and placed near them a leather

bag containing some dates, and a water-skin containing some water. Thereafter, he set-out homewards. Ishmael's mother ran after him saying, *'O Abraham! Where are you going leaving us in this (barren) valley where none resides nor is there anything?'* She continued to ask him, but he did not respond or look at her. Seeing that, she asked him, *'Has Allah ordered you to do this?'* He said, *'Yes.'* She said, *'Then He shall not waste us,'* and returned while Abraham proceeded onwards. On reaching a place where she could not see him, he turned and faced the place where he left them, raised both hands, and invoked upon Allah saying, *'O Lord! I have left part of me to dwell in that (barren) valley, beside Your sacred house, that they may offer prayers perfectly and worship you alone. So fill some hearts among the people with love towards them, and provide them with provisions, that they may give thanks continuously.'*

Ishmael's mother continued to give suckling to Ishmael while she drank from the water skin. When the water had all been used up, she became thirsty and her child also became thirsty. Seeing her baby twisting in agony, she got up searching for someone who could help. She saw that the hill of Safa was the nearest hill. She ascended it and started looking at the valley hoping to see anyone, but no one was there. So she descended from Safa, tucked up her robe and ran in the valley in distress. She crossed it and reached Marwah hill. She ascended Al-Marwah and looked around; still, she could not see anybody. She repeated that (running between Safa and Marwah hills) seven times hoping to find a caravan or some traveler passing by who might help her. Prophet Muhammad explained that this was the source of the tradition which Muslims follow by walking between the two hills (i.e. Safa and Marwah). When Lady Hagar reached Marwah hill the last time, she heard a voice, so she listened attentively. She heard the voice again, so she shouted loudly: *'Whoever you may be! You have made me hear your voice, have you got something to help me with?'* And behold! She saw the archangel at the place of Zamzam, in the form of a man hitting the earth with his heel, till water flowed from that place. She used the sand to make a basin around it with her hands. She drank and filled her water skin. The Prophet said, *'May Allah bestow Mercy on Ishmael's mother! Had she let Zamzam flow without trying to control it, it would have become a huge stream flowing on the surface of the earth.'* The Prophet further added, *"She drank and suckled her child. The angel said to her, 'Don't be afraid of being forgotten, for this is the place of the House of Allah which will be built by this boy and his father. Allah never wastes its inhabitants.'*

Lady Hagar stayed in that place till some people from the tribe of Jurhum (i.e. Arabs from Yemen) passed by coming through the way of Kada' (i.e. a desert road in Arabia). They landed in the lower lands of Makkah where they saw a bird whose species have the habit of flying around water. They said: *'This bird must be flying around water, though we know that there is no water in this valley.'* They dispatched a man who discovered the source of the water, and they approached it. Lady Hagar was sitting beside the water spring. They asked her, *'Do you allow us to stay with you?'* She replied, *'Yes, but you will have no right to possess the water.'* They agreed to that. Lady Hagar enjoyed people's company so she was pleased with this development. They settled there, and later on, they sent for their families who came and settled with them. With time, some families became permanent residents of the place. Ishmael grew up and learnt Arabic from them. His virtues caused them to love and admire him so much. When he reached the age of puberty, they gave him for marriage a bride from among them. Later on, after she had witnessed her son grow and become a man, Lady Hagar died.

Then it happened that Abraham came visiting after Ishmael's marriage but Ishmael wasn't home. When he asked Ishmael's wife about him, she replied, *'He's out searching for means of livelihood.'* He asked her about their conditions, and she replied, *'We are living in misery, we are living in hardship and destitution,'* and complained to him. He said, *'When your husband returns, convey to him my salutations and tell him to change the gate of his house.'*

When Ishmael returned, he felt something unusual, so he asked his wife, *'Has anyone visited you today?'* She replied, *'Yes, an old man of so-and-so description came and asked about you, and about our conditions, so I told him that we were living in hardship and poverty.'* On hearing that Ishmael said, *'Did he leave me any advice?'* She said, *'Yes, he told me to convey his salutation to you and to tell you to change the gate of your house.'* Ishmael said, *'That was my father, and he has ordered me to divorce you. Return to your family.'* He divorced her and married another woman from among the same tribe. Abraham stayed away for as long as Allah wished then called on Ishmael again but did not find him. So he visited Ishmael's wife and asked her about him. She said, *'He's out in search for means of livelihood.'* Abraham asked her about their conditions, and she replied, *'We are prosperous and well-off.'* And then she thanked Allah.

Abraham said, *'What kind of food do you eat?'*

She said, *'Meat.'*

He said, *'What kind of drink do you have?'*

She said, *'Water.'*

He said, *'O Allah! Bless their meat and water.'"*

Prophet Muhammad explained, *"At that time, they didn't have grains. If they had any, he would have also invoked Allah to bless it."* The Prophet added, *"If anyone has only these two for sustenance, his health would be negatively affected unless he lives in Makkah."*

The Prophet continued, *"Then Abraham said to Ishmael's wife, 'When your husband returns, convey to him my regards and tell him that he should hold firmly onto his gate.'*

When Ishmael came back, he asked his wife, *'Did anyone come visiting?'*

She replied, *'Yes, a decent old man came,'* she praised him and added, *'he asked about you and about our conditions. I told him that we were enjoying a good prosperous life.'*

Ishmael asked her, *'Did he leave me any advice?'*

She said, *'Yes, he sends you his regards and orders you to keep the gate of your house.'*

On hearing that Ishmael said, *'That was my father, and you are the gate. He has ordered me to hold on to you.'*

Abraham stayed away for a while, and called on them again. He saw Ishmael sitting under a tree near *Zamzam* sharpening his arrows. When he saw his father, he got up to welcome him. They hugged each other like fathers and sons do.

Abraham said, *'O Ishmael! Allah has given me an order.'*

Ishmael said, *'O father, carry out what your Lord commands you to do.'*

Abraham asked, *'Will you help me?'*

Ishmael replied, *'I will help you.'*

Abraham said, *'Allah ordered me to build a sacred house here,'* pointing to a hillock higher than the land surrounding it. The Prophet added, *'They raised the foundations of the House (i.e. the Ka'bah). Ishmael brought the stones and Abraham put them in place. When the walls became high, Ishmael brought a large stone and placed it for Abraham who stood over it and continued building while Ishmael continued handing him the stones. Both of them were repeating, 'O our Lord! Accept (this deed) from us, Verily, You are the All-Hearing, the All-Knowing.'"* [Recorded by Bukhari].

From the above narration, we learn that when Abraham took Hagar his wife and her son Ishmael to Makkah (the Bible calls it Pharan, this shall be discussed in details in the next section), Ishmael was still a baby, not even weaned yet, which now makes sense and explains the previous verses of Genesis. Abraham was ordered to do so by Allah. There was no orders from Lady Sarah; there was no mockery from Ishmael—who was still a baby—towards the still unborn Isaac; there was no injustice; and most importantly, there was no taking sides nor racism from Allah, the Lord of all people. On the contrary, Allah never left the helpless woman or her child for a single moment, but was preparing the boy for the destiny which the archangel foretold his mother earlier: **that he will be the father of a great nation.** Abraham visited them from time to time. He did not forsake them completely, but he entrusted them to Allah, and fulfilled his duty towards his son. The story of sacrifice narrated in the Qur'an occurred in those years. The tradition is only a narration about how, when, and where the sacred mosque in Bakkah was built. After they succeeded in their trials as mentioned earlier, it was time to fulfill the promise by making the place where Ishmael lived, the place of Allah's sacred house and of pilgrimage. Ishmael helped Abraham build the sacred house (Ka'bah) in Makkah amidst the valley called Bakkah. Ishmael's brother, Isaac, also became the father of another great nation to fulfill Allah's promise to Abraham in [Genesis (17:4)], that he will be the father of many great nations. When Abraham died, Ishmael and Isaac P.B.U.T. buried him together as told in Genesis, where it says:

(25:8) **Then Abraham gave up the ghost, and died in a good old age,** an old man, and full [of years,] and was gathered to his people. (25:9) **And his sons Isaac and Ishmael buried him** in the cave of Machpelah.....

Regarding the vast difference between the narratives of the Bible and those of the Qur'an, Allah says in the Qur'an, *“Do you [Faithful believers] entertain [yourselves with] the hope that they (i.e. the sons of Israel) will believe in you? In spite that a party of them heard the Word of Allah, and distorted it knowingly after they understood it. Behold! When they meet those who have believed, they say, ‘We believe.’ But when they meet each other [in private], they say, ‘Shall you tell them what Allah has revealed to you [about the description and qualities of Prophet Muhammad], that they may engage you in argument about it before your Lord? Have you no understanding?’ Know they not that Allah knows what they conceal and what they reveal? And there are among them those who are not learned, who know not the Book, but [rely upon false] desires, and they do nothing but conjecture. Then woe to those who write the Book with their own hands, and then say, ‘This is from Allah,’ to traffic with it for miserable price! Woe to them for what their hands do write, and for the gain they make thereby. And they say, ‘The Fire shall not touch us but for a few numbered days.’ Say [O Muhammad], ‘Have you taken a promise from Allah, for He never breaks His promise? Or is it that you say about Allah what you do not know?’ Nay, those who seek gain in evil, and are girt round by their sins, they are residents of the hell Fire: Therein shall they abide [Forever]. But those who have faith and work righteousness, they are residents of the paradise. Therein shall they abide [Forever]. And remember We took a covenant from the Children of Israel [saying], ‘Worship none but Allah, treat with kindness your parents and kindred, and orphans and those in need, speak fair to the people, be steadfast in prayer, and practice regular charity.’ Then you turned away [from my orders], except a few among you, and you backslide [even now]. And remember We took your covenant [saying], ‘Shed no blood*

amongst you, nor turn out your own people from your homes,' and you solemnly ratified this, and to this you bore witness. After this it is you, the same people, who slay among yourselves, and banish a party of you from their homes, assist [Their enemies] against them, in guilt and rancor, and if they come to you as captives, you ransom them, though it was already forbidden on you to banish them. Then do you believe in a part of the book [scripture], and you reject the rest? So what is the retribution for those among you who behave like this, but disgrace in this life and on the Day of Judgment they shall be consigned to the most grievous penalty. For Allah is not unaware of what you do. These are the people who have bought this worldly life at the price of the Hereafter, their torment shall not be lightened nor shall they be helped.” [The Qur’an (2:75-86)]

When Muslims say that Allah is exalted above practicing any kind of racism against His own creation. When Muslims deny the claims that Allah only chooses His prophets from the lineage of Israel, as Jews claim, and when they say that Allah sent Prophet Muhammad P.B.U.H. to correct these false teachings and deliver to all people Allah’s final law and true teachings that confirm part of the previous messages and correct the distorted parts, many from the people of the book decline and refuse listening. Some even tell Muslims, *“If what you say is true then it’s not our fault, for it wasn’t us who corrupted the teachings of Allah but our ancestors; hence, this will be our excuse on the judgment day. We are just holding on to our message as it has reached us.”*

Well, to those I say, “You’re wrong, for Allah created us as intelligent beings. He perfected our creation by bestowing upon us the bliss of being able to think, learn, and deduce the truth of all things. You built your faith on the idea that you are Allah’s chosen people above others no matter what you do and what sins you make, which could only mean that God is an unjust racist. Absolutely, this is wrong for any reasonable human being. Allah did choose from among you many prophets, but these prophets were mainly sent to guide you, which only means that you were disobedient most of the time. Allah sends his prophets to guide those who have gone astray and lost track of the correct path to him, and not as you interpret it to be, that Allah has favored you above all nations. Only those who are pious and work their reason and logic to get to know their creator dedicating themselves to the truth are God’s true servants.”

Their rejection and distortion of the truth is even testified for in their own holy books in **Isaiah’s visions (48:1-11)** where it says:

Listen to this, you descendants of Jacob, you who are called by the name of Israel and come from the line of Judah, you who take oaths in the name of the Lord and invoke the God of Israel— but not in truth or righteousness— you who call yourselves citizens of the holy city and claim to rely on the God of Israel—the Lord Almighty is his name: I foretold the former things long ago, my mouth announced them and I made them known, then suddenly I acted, and they came to pass. **For I knew how stubborn you were, your neck muscles were iron, and your brows were brass.** Therefore I told you these things long ago, before they happened I announced them to you so that you could not say, ‘My images brought them about, my wooden image and metal god ordained them.’ **You have heard these things, look at them all. Will you not admit them?** “From now on I will tell you of new things, of hidden things unknown to you. They are created now, and not long ago, you have not heard of them before today. So you cannot say,

‘Yes, I knew of them.’ You have neither heard nor understood, **from of old your ears have not been open.** Well do **I know how treacherous you are, you were called a rebel from birth.** **For my own name’s sake I delay my wrath, for the sake of my praise I hold it back from you, so as not to destroy you completely.** See, I have refined you, though not as silver, I have tested you in the furnace of affliction. **For my own sake, for my own sake, I do this. How can I let myself be defamed and I will not yield my glory to another?**

When reading the history of the children of Israel, we can find many instances when they have declined and turned away from what Allah ordered them to do. Only one but very significant example as told in “Exodus” chapter 32, when they worshiped the calf after Allah had just split the sea and saved them from Pharaoh and his army, who were drowned before the Jews’ eyes for not believing prophet Moses P.B.U.H. and denying all the signs he showed them. Any person in the Jews’ place and in such a situation couldn’t but drop down on his face and worship Allah for this grace, but not the children of Israel. Those gallants took the chance that Prophet Moses P.B.U.H. left for 40 nights as appointed to him by Allah, and during his absence, they turned away from worshipping Allah, made a statue of a calf with their own hands, and worshipped it. Well, I say to the Jews of today, the persons who didn’t hesitate to exchange their God and creator with a calf’s statue that they made with their own hands, are surely capable of distorting God’s holy books and tampering with His words for whatever they see more convenient for their desires. When they found that they had to obey and listen to a prophet who is not from their own lineage, they simply denied his Prophethood. Even the Israelite prophet who was sent to rectify their path and correct the corruptions which their rabbis had made, they denied his prophethood and tried to kill him.

Regarding this Allah says in the Qur’an:

“We gave Moses the Book and followed him up with a succession of messengers, We gave Jesus the son of Mary Clear [Signs] and strengthened him with the holy spirit [Gabriel]. Is it that whenever there comes to you a messenger with what you yourselves desire not, you grew arrogant? Some you called impostors, and others you slay! They say, ‘Our hearts are the wrappings [which preserve Allah’s Word, we need no more].’ Nay, Allah’s curse is on them for their blasphemy. Little is it they believe. And when there comes to them a Book from Allah, confirming what is with them, although aforetime they had invoked Allah for victory against those without Faith, and when there comes to them that which they [should] have recognized, they refuse to believe in it so let the curse of Allah be on those rejecting Faith. Miserable is the price for which they have sold their souls, by denying [the revelation] which Allah has sent down grudging that Allah reveals of His Grace unto whom he wills of His servants. Thus have they drawn on themselves Wrath upon Wrath. And for the disbelievers there is disgracing torment. And when it is said to them, ‘Believe in what Allah Has sent down,’ they say, ‘We believe in what was sent down to us,’ yet they reject all besides, even if it be the Truth confirming what is with them. Say [O Muhammad], ‘Why then have you slain the prophets of Allah in times gone by, if you did indeed believe?’ There came to you Moses with clear [Signs], yet you worshipped the calf [Even] after that, and you did behave wrongfully. And remember We took your covenant and We raised above you the Tor Mount [Saying], ‘Hold firmly to what We have given you, and hearken [to the Law].’ They said, ‘We hear, and we disobey.’

And their hearts absorbed the worship of the calf because of their Faithlessness. Say, 'Vile indeed are the behests of your Faith if you have any faith!' Say to them, 'If the Home of the hereafter, with Allah, is indeed for you, and not for anyone else of mankind, then seek for your death, if you are sincere.' But they will never seek for death, on account of the [sins] which their hands have [done and] sent on before them. And Allah is all aware of the wrong doers. You will indeed find them, of all people, most greedy of life, even more than the idolaters. Each one of them wishes He could be given a life of a thousand years. But the grant of such life will not save him from [due] punishment. For Allah sees well all that they do." [The Qur'an (2:87-96)]

And Allah also says:

"Indeed Allah took the covenant of the Children of Israel and We appointed among them twelve chieftains: and Allah said: I am with you if you perform the prayers and pay the poor due, and believe in My messengers and support them, and lend unto Allah a good loan, surely I shall remit your sins, and shall admit you into gardens underneath which rivers flow. But if any among you disbelieves after this, he has indeed gone astray from the straight path. So because of their breaking their covenant, We have cursed them and made their hearts grow hard. They change the words from their [correct] places and they abandoned a good part of the Message that was sent to them. You will not cease to discover deceit in them, except a few of them. So forgive them and overlook [their misdeeds]. Verily Allah loves the good-doers." [The Qur'an (5:12-13)]

May Allah guide their youths to the truth and save them from what their forefathers have done, Amen.



Second, the Christian nation

When Jesus Christ P.B.U.H. was sent as a messenger, the Jews split in to 2 groups. One group denied his Prophethood, and the other believed in him and started preaching his teachings. “Christians,” was the name given to those who believed in Jesus P.B.U.H. after his departure, but the name itself was never mentioned or heard by Jesus during his life. After the departure of Jesus, those who believed in him formed a Jewish sect that remained faithful to the rituals practiced in the temple and to the Mosaic Law. In those very early years of Christianity, Judeo-Christianity represented the main stream. The head of community was James, Jesus’s brother. Then came “Saul of Tarsus” A.K.A. “Paul,” the one to whom Christianity—as it stands today—owns its establishment through his travels, writings, and teachings. Half the books of the New Testament were written by him; most of the Christian dogma—if not all of it—was based on his words and teachings. When the Gentiles started converting to the new faith, the council of Jerusalem was held in 49 A.C. It discussed issues concerning the new converts. The council decided that Gentile converts were not obliged to keep most of the Mosaic Law, including the circumcision of males. It was Paul’s suggestion that circumcision, Sabbath, and the rituals performed in the temple were old fashion even for the Jews. His opinion was that Christianity should free itself from Judaism. The apostles—according to Paul—did not walk “uprightly” according to the “truth of the Gospel” and he labored more abundantly than they did, (refer to: 1Corinthians 15:10, Galatians 2:13-14). With time, Pauline-Christianity started taking over Judeo-Christianity. The struggle between the two schools continued for the first 100 years after Jesus’s departure.

About the development of the church of Jerusalem, Edward Gibbon wrote in his epic book “The decline and fall of the Roman empire” the following:

“The history of the church of Jerusalem affords a lively proof of the necessity of those precautions, and of the deep impression which the Jewish religion had made on the minds of its followers. **The first fifteen bishops of Jerusalem were all circumcised Jews, and the congregation over which they presided, united the law of Moses with the doctrine of Christ.** It was natural that a church founded forty days after the death of Christ, and governed almost as many years under the immediate inspection of his apostles, should be received as the standard of orthodoxy. The distant churches very frequently appealed to the authority of their venerable Parent, and relieved her distresses by a liberal contribution of alms. But when numerous and opulent societies were established in the great cities of the empire, in Antioch, Alexandria, Ephesus, Corinth, and Rome, the reverence which Jerusalem had inspired to all the Christian colonies insensibly diminished. **The Jewish converts, or, as they were afterwards called, the Nazarenes, who had laid the foundations of the church, soon found themselves overwhelmed by the increasing multitudes, that from all the various religions of polytheism enlisted under the banner of Christ ; and the Gentiles, who, with the approbation of their peculiar apostle, had rejected the intolerable weight of Mosaic ceremonies, at length refused to their more scrupulous brethren the same toleration which at first they had humbly solicited for their own practice. The ruin of the temple, of the city, and of the public religion of the Jews, was severely felt by the Nazarenes,** as in their manners, though not in their faith, they maintained so intimate

a connection with their impious countrymen, whose misfortunes were attributed by the Pagans to the contempt, and more justly ascribed by the Christians to the wrath, of the Supreme Deity. **The Nazarenes retired from the ruins of Jerusalem to the little town of Pella beyond the Jordan**, where that ancient church languished above sixty years in solitude and obscurity. They still enjoyed the comfort of making frequent and devout visits to the Holy City, and the hope of being one day restored to those seats which both nature and religion taught them to love as well as to revere.” [DECLINE AND FALL OF THE ROMAN EMPIRE, Vol. I, The church of Jerusalem – The Ebionites, P.337-338].

Paul never met nor saw Jesus P.B.U.H. Before his conversion, he hated the new faith, persecuted Christians and also wasted the church. From Acts we read:

(8:3) As for Saul, he made havock of the church, entering into every house, and haling men and women committed [them] to prison.....
(9:1) And Saul, yet breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord, went unto the high priest. (9:2) And desired of him letters to Damascus to the synagogues, that if he found any of this way, whether they were men or women, he might bring them bound unto Jerusalem.....

And he confessed of this in Acts saying: **(22:4) And I persecuted this way unto the death, binding and delivering into prisons both men and women.**

And from Galatians we read him saying: **(1:13) For you have heard of my conversation in time past in the Jews’ religion, how that beyond measure I persecuted the church of God, and wasted it.**

After Jesus’s departure, Paul received a vision and was saved! This is mentioned in Acts as follows:

(9:3) And as he journeyed, he came near Damascus: and suddenly there shined round about him a light from heaven: (9:4) And he fell to the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me? (9:5) And he said, Who are you, Lord? And the Lord said, I am Jesus whom you persecute: [it is] hard for you to kick against the pricks. (9:6) And he trembling and astonished said, Lord, what do you order me to do? And the Lord [said] unto him, Arise, and go into the city, and you shall be told what you must do. (9:7) And the men which journeyed with him stood speechless, hearing a voice, but seeing no man. (9:8) And Saul arose from the earth, and when his eyes were opened, he saw no man: but they led him by the hand, and brought [him] into Damascus. (9:9) And he was three days without sight, and neither did eat nor drink. (9:10) And there was a certain disciple at Damascus, named Ananias, and to him said the Lord in a vision, Ananias. And he said, Behold, I [am here,] Lord. (9:11) And the Lord [said] unto him, Arise, and go into the street which is called Straight, and enquire in the house of Judas for [one] called Saul, of Tarsus: for, behold, he prays, (9:12) And has seen in a vision a man named Ananias coming in, and putting [his] hand on him, that he might receive his sight. (9:13) Then Ananias answered, Lord, I have heard by many of this man, how much evil he has done to your saints at Jerusalem: (9:14) And here he has authority from the chief priests to bind all that call on your name. (9:15) But the Lord said unto him, Go your way: for he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel:

(9:16) For I will show him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake. **(9:17) And Ananias went his way, and entered into the house, and putting his hands on him said, Brother Saul, the Lord, [even] Jesus, that appeared unto you in the way as you came, has sent me, that you might regain your sight, and be filled with the Holy Ghost.** (9:18) And immediately there fell from his eyes as it had been scales: and he received sight forthwith, and arose, and was baptized. (9:19) And when he had received meat, he was strengthened. **Then was Saul certain days with the disciples which were at Damascus. (9:20) And straightway he preached Christ in the synagogues, that he is the Son of God.**

Now read the same story from the same book, chapter 22, where Paul narrates what happened:

(22:6) And it came to pass, that, **as I made my journey, and came nigh unto Damascus about noon, suddenly there shone from heaven a great light round about me.** (22:7) And I fell unto the ground, **and heard a voice saying unto me, Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me? (22:8) And I answered, Who are you, Lord? And he said unto me, I am Jesus of Nazareth, whom you persecute. (22:9) And they that were with me saw indeed the light, and were afraid, but they heard not the voice of him that spoke to me. (22:10) And I said, What shall I do, Lord? And the Lord said unto me, Arise, and go into Damascus, and there you shall be told of all things which are appointed for you to do. (22:11) And when I could not see for the glory of that light, being led by the hand of them that were with me, I came into Damascus. (22:12) And one Ananias, a devout man according to the law, having a good report of all the Jews which dwelt [there,] (22:13) Came unto me, and stood, and said unto me, Brother Saul, receive your sight. And the same hour I looked up upon him. (22:14) And he said, The God of our fathers has chosen you, that you should know his will, and see that Just One, and should hear the voice of his mouth. (22:15) For you shall be his witness unto all men of what you have seen and heard. (22:16) And now why do you tarry? Arise, and be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling on the name of the Lord.**

Please note the contradiction between verses (9:7) and (22:9) of Acts. Did those who witness this incident hear the voice or didn't they! Did they see anything or didn't they! Let's read the story from another account may it clear the misunderstanding? Read Galatians where Paul wrote:

(1:15) But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, and called [me] by his grace, (1:16) To reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the heathen, immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood: (1:17) Neither went I up to Jerusalem to them which were apostles before me, but I went into Arabia, and returned again unto Damascus. (1:18) Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to see Peter, and abode with him fifteen days. (1:19) But other of the apostles saw I none, save James the Lord's brother. (1:20) Now the things which I write unto you, behold, before God, I lie not. (1:21) Afterwards I came into the regions of Syria and Cilicia, (1:22) And was unknown by face unto the churches of Judaea which were in Christ: (1:23) But they had heard only, That he which persecuted us in times past now preaches the faith which once he destroyed. (1:24) And they glorified God in me.

Now, this added more troubles to my mind than it resolved. Please note the contradiction between [Acts (9:8-20) and (22:10-13)] on one hand, and [Galatians (1:16-19)] on the other. Did Paul go to Arabia after receiving the vision or did he go to Damascus? Did he receive Ananias at Damascus or did he “immediately confer not with flesh and blood” as he described he did after receiving the vision? Did Paul loose his eyesight or didn’t he? Did Paul preach boldly in Damascus straightway a few days after receiving the vision or did he travel to Arabia without conferring with anyone? How much time could it have taken him to travel from the road of Damascus to Arabia then to Damascus again back at that time?! I think not less than 4-5 weeks—absolutely not three days or a few days. Did Paul meet the disciples in Damascus after this incident straightway or didn’t he?! Also note the contradiction between [Acts (9:6)] and [Galatians (1:16)]: Did the Lord order Paul to enter Damascus where he shall be told by someone there what to do, or did Paul confer with no flesh and blood but went to Arabia then came back to Damascus?!

I can understand the questions that I have raised may have responses that clear up the misunderstanding. For example we can try to combine the different narrations together and assume that the story happened as follows:

1. Paul was on the way to Damascus when he received the vision.
2. Those who were with him did not hear the exact words of the one who spoke to Paul but they heard a sound.
3. They could not see the one who spoke to Paul but they saw light.
4. He saw Jesus who ordered him to go to Damascus where he shall be told what to do.
5. He lost his eyesight so he had to be led by hand to Damascus. He stayed blind for 3 days from this incident until Ananias cured him in Damsqus and told him that he shall be filled with the Holy Ghost and preach in Jesus’s name. This needed no conferring whatsoever.
6. He met the disciples who were in Damascus then he started preaching in synagogues that Jesus was the son of God.
7. He didn’t meet the apostles who were in Jerusalem for he traveled to Arabia instead, then he came back to Damascus. Finally, **after 3 years** from the incident, **he traveled to Jerusalem to meet Peter** with whom he stayed for 15 days.
8. He didn’t meet any of the apostles during this visit to Jerusalem except Peter, and James, Jesus’s brother.

I guess that now the misconceptions are a bit explained. Let’s continue studying the story of Saul’s conversion. From acts we read the following:

(9:22) But **Saul increased the more in strength, and confounded the Jews which dwelt at Damascus, proving that this is very Christ. (9:23) And after that many days were fulfilled, the Jews took counsel to kill him:** (9:24) But their laying await was known of Saul. And they watched the gates day and night to kill him. (9:25) **Then the disciples took him by night,** and let [him] down by the wall in a basket. (9:26) **And when Saul was come to Jerusalem, he assayed to join himself to the disciples: but they were all afraid of him, and believed not that he was a disciple. (9:27) But Barnabas took him, and brought [him] to the apostles, and declared unto them how he had seen the Lord in the way, and that he had spoken to him, and how he had preached boldly at Damascus in the name of Jesus. (9:28) And he was with them coming in and going out at Jerusalem.**

On reading the above verses, there arose a few more questions... Paul himself stated in Galatians that he didn't travel to Jerusalem except after 3 years from receiving the vision, how come that in Acts it is mentioned that he traveled to it only "after many days were fulfilled"? Could those many days mean 3 years?! How come that in Galatians he stated that he never met any of the apostles in Jerusalem except for Peter and James, while in Acts, it is mentioned that he met all of the apostles, or at least a big number of them as the words say, "**Barnabas took him, and brought [him] to the apostles**" Could "the apostles" meant in [Acts (9:27)] be referring only to Peter and James?! The more I read in Paul's writings, the more my confusion increases for his words always carry different contradicting meanings in things that are essential for understanding religion, for example:

- In [Galatians (1:20)] Paul states the following, "**Now the things which I write unto you, behold, before God, I lie not.**"
While in [Romans (3:7)], he states the following, "**For if the truth of God has more abounded through my lie unto his glory, why yet am I also judged as a sinner?**"
So did Paul lie unto God's glory or didn't he, which one is it?!
- In [Romans (5:12)] he says, "**Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin, and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned.**"
While in [1Timothy (2:14)] he says, "**And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression.**"
So was the original sin done by Adam or Eve in Paul's opinion?!
- In [2Timothy (3:16)] he says, "**All scripture [is] given by inspiration of God, and [is] profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness.**"
While in [Hebrews (7:18)] he says, "**For there is verily a disannulling of the commandment going before for the weakness and unprofitableness thereof.**"
So are the previous commandments and scriptures profitable and important or are they unprofitable and should be neglected?!

Paul endured lots of hardships and went through a lot of dangers according to what's told in history books. Making up one's mind regarding his conversion story and teachings is not easy at all. Usually when things are not clear and hazy like this, we need to go back to the beginning, to the pure creed of the early prophets, in order to stick to the right path. Religion is for all people, all prophets preached worshipping one God, the creator who has created everything including us; to Him belongs all that exists. He sent us many messages and prophets as a guide. He never forsakes us but He is always watching us and knows all that we do, whether it be in public or in secret, or even what we just think of without uttering a word. All prophets taught that life is an exam after which—and according to our deeds—we will be rewarded for abiding by the Almighty's messages, or punished for forsaking them. Never did any prophet preach the holiness of any entity other than that sole creator, besides whom no god or savior exists. Never did any prophet preach the alleged communion of saints. Never did any prophet teach that God exists in any triune form or that he has a son or a savior beside him. Never had God Almighty revealed to us in his previous messages that he existed in any triune form or that he will send us his son to rescue us from our sins, and consequently, our deeds would be important no more, but only our faith in his sacrifice would be what matters as taught by Paul in Romans (3:21-28)). Never did any prophet preach the atonement of sins through any human sacrifice, not even Jesus himself.

Never had any prophet taught that mankind are held responsible for what Christians called in their doctrine “The original sin,” which is a weird concept that only demonstrates that God is unfair and holds people responsible for a sin they never committed, a sin that was committed before any of them was even born. Don’t we all believe that a loving kind father wouldn’t hesitate to sacrifice his own life for his son’s life? In Christianity’s creed of faith, it is believed that God sacrificed his own son and sent him to earth to be tortured to death for the sins of humans whom He Himself has created. Here, a logical question must arise: If a normal human father wouldn’t hesitate to sacrifice his life for his child’s in many ways that we all respect, wouldn’t it be more fitting for the Almighty to do the same for his son? Or else, wouldn’t it be much easier for that loving merciful father to forgive us all instead of sending his own son to get tortured to death for our redemption?! Think of this example: If your neighbor’s son—whom you love so much—stole from your house. After getting caught red handed, he was condemned for theft and sentenced for prison as a punishment. Would you send your own son to get imprisoned in his stead, or would you just forgive him and drop any charges you’ve raised?!

In Psalms, God’s existence, besides the concept of testing mankind and that their retribution shall be in the hereafter according to both, their faith and their deeds is clearly stated in the following verses:

PSALM I, “1 **Blessed is the man that walks not in the counsel of the ungodly**, Nor stands in the way of sinners, Nor sits in the seat of the scornful. 2 **But his delight is in the law of the Lord , And in his law does he meditate day and night**. 3 And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that brings forth his fruit in his season, His leaf also shall not wither, **And whatsoever he does shall prosper**. 4 **The ungodly are not so**: But are like the chaff which the wind drives away. 5 **Therefore the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment, Nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous**. 6 **For the Lord knows the way of the righteous**, But the way of the ungodly shall perish.”

PSALM IX, “17 **The wicked shall be turned into hell, And all the nations that forget God**.”

PSALM XI, “**The Lord is in his holy temple, The Lord’s throne is in heaven: His eyes behold, His eyelids try the children of men. The Lord tries the righteous: But the wicked and him that loves violence, his soul hates**.”

PSALM XIV, “1 **The fool has said in his heart, There is no God. They are corrupt, they have done abominable works**, There is none that does good.2 **The Lord looked down from heaven upon the children of men, To see if there were any that did understand, And seek God**.”

Contrary to “Trinity,” the “**Oneness of God**” was stressed by Moses in the Jewish creed of faith in [Deuteronomy (6:4)], where he said, “Hear, O Israel The Lord **our God is one Lord**”

And also from [Deuteronomy (4:39)], we read, “Know therefore this day, and consider it in your heart, that **the LORD he is God in heaven above, and upon the earth beneath: there is none else**.”

From [Isaiah (43:10-11)], “You are my witnesses, **says the LORD**, and my servant whom I have chosen: **that you may know and believe me, and understand that I am he: before me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after me. I, even I, am the LORD, and beside me there is no savior**”

[Isaiah (44:5-6)], “Thus says the LORD the King of Israel and his redeemer the LORD of hosts, **I am the first, and I am the last, and beside me there is no God**”

[Isaiah (45:6)], “**I [am] the LORD, and [there is] none else, [there is] no God beside me: I girded you, though you has unknown me: That they may know from the rising of the sun, and from the west, that there is none beside me. I am the LORD, and there is none else.**”

[Isaiah (45:18)], “**For thus says the LORD that created the heavens, God himself that formed the earth and made it**, he has established it, he created it not in vain, he formed it to be inhabited: **I am the LORD, and there is none else.**”

And from [Isaiah: (45:21-23)], “Declare, and bring [them] near, let them take counsel together: who has declared this from ancient time? [who] has told it from that time? [have] not **I the LORD? and [there is] no God else beside me, a just God and a Saviour, [there is] none beside me. Look unto me, and be saved, all the ends of the earth: for I [am] God, and [there is] none else. I have sworn by myself, the word is gone out of my mouth [in] righteousness, and shall not return, That unto me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear.**”

Then from [Jeremiah (10:10)], “**But the LORD is the true God, he is the living God, and an everlasting king.**”

So as you can see, all sent prophets were trying to tell us that there is a God, He is the one and only God and there is none else beside him. He watches all of His creation and knows what they do, and He will judge their deeds on the judgment day. Those who were righteous shall rejoice in His mercy and those who were wicked shall be turned in to hell.

Jesus also taught the same thing as came in the gospel of [Mark (12:29-30)], “**And Jesus answered him, The first of all the commandments [is,] Hear, O Israel, The Lord our God is one Lord: And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength: this is the first commandment...**”

And he emphasized P.B.U.H. the importance of this concept where he says in [Matthew (5:17-19)], “**Think not that I have come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I did not come to destroy, but to fulfill. For verily I say unto you, TILL HEAVEN AND EARTH PASS, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled. Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven:** but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.”

Prophet Muhammad came along approximately 600 years after Jesus P.B.U.H., bringing the same message that has been corrupted by Trinitarians:

“And your God is One God: there is no God but He” [The Qur’an (2:163)].

“Allah there is no God but He, the Living the Everlasting. Slumber does not seize Him, neither sleep, to Him belongs all that is in the Heavens and the Earth. Who is there that can intercede with Him except by His permission? He knows what is before them (i.e. what happens to them in this world) and what is behind them (i.e. what happens to them in the hereafter), and they do not encompass anything of His knowledge except what He wills. His Throne extends over the Heavens and the Earth, the preservation of them does not burden Him, He is the Most High, the Greatest.” [The Qur’an (2:255)].

But Christians have broken out of the concept of oneness of God in to a new exaggerated one that was never preached by any of the prophets P.B.U.T., not even Jesus himself. The trinity— in line with the crucifixion and the sacrifice of the “Son of God”— became the creed in which whomever believes enters heaven and the laws are important no more. Never had any prophet taught that the Almighty is like man in marrying and begetting children or that He takes wives or that fatherhood could be attributed to Him in any way other than being our Creator and Sustainer. You cannot find the doctrine of the Trinity set out anywhere in the Bible. Even Paul himself, who is the author of half of the books of the new testament, and the one to whom Christianity owns its formation, nowhere does he call Jesus God, nor does Jesus himself anywhere explicitly claim to be the second person in any Trinity, wholly equal to God. On the contrary, he taught that he was God’s messenger or as he himself said in the gospel of John:

“(17:3) And this is life eternal, that they might know You the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom You have sent. (17:4) I have glorified You on the earth: I have finished the work which You gave me to do.”

Never did a prophet preach that the law and commandments were important no more, not even Jesus himself. Jesus taught his followers to keep the laws as came in [Matthew (5:17-19)], and the commandments as stated in [Matthew (19:16-21)] and [Luke (18:18-22)], but Christians abrogated all this because of what Paul taught them in the verses of [Romans (3:21-28)].¹

The epistle of James, Jesus’s brother and the early leader of the believers—in contrast to the other books of the new testament—does not describe Jesus as a divine entity, but more as a human character blessed by Allah, a teacher of great faith, or in other words, a prophet and a messenger. The epistle of James didn’t mention the crucifixion of Jesus or the forgiving of sins through believing in any savior or “Son of God.” On the contrary, it taught—like Jesus taught—that the laws must be kept. From the epistle of James, we read him describing Jesus’s faith and teachings saying:

(2:1) My brethren, do not have the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, [the Lord] of glory, with respect of persons. (2:2) For if there come unto your assembly a man with a gold ring, in goodly apparel, and there come in also a poor man in vile raiment, (2:3) And you have respect to him that wears the gay clothing, and say unto him, Sit here in a good place, and say to the poor, Stand there, or sit here under my footstool: (2:4) Are you not then partial in yourselves, and are become judges of evil thoughts?

1: These verses are included in the last chapter of this book, P.401.

(2:5) **Hearken, my beloved brethren, Has not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he has promised to them that love him?** (2:6) But you have despised the poor. Do not rich men oppress you, and draw you before the judgment seats? (2:7) Do not they blaspheme that worthy name by which you are called? (2:8) If you fulfill the royal law according to the scripture, you shall love your neighbour as yourself, you do well: (2:9) But if you have respect to persons, you commit sin, and are convicted by the law as transgressors. (2:10) **For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one [point,] he is guilty of all.** (2:11) **For he that said, Do not commit adultery, said also, Do not kill. Now if you commit no adultery, but yet you kill, you shall become a transgressor of the law.** (2:12) So speak, and so do, as they that shall be judged by the law of liberty. (2:13) For he shall have judgment without mercy, that has shewed no mercy, and mercy rejoices against judgment. (2:14) **What [does it] profit, my brethren, though a man say he has faith, and have not works? can faith save him?** (2:15) If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food, (2:16) And one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be warmed and filled, notwithstanding you give them not those things which are needful to the body, what [does it] profit? (2:17) **Even so faith, if it has not works, is dead, being alone.** (2:18) Yea, a man may say, you have faith, and I have works: show me your faith without your works, and I will show you my faith by my works. (2:19) **You believe that there is one God, you do well: the devils also believe, and tremble.** (2:20) **But wilt you know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead?** (2:21) Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac¹ his son upon the altar? (2:22) **Do you See how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect?** (2:23) And the scripture was fulfilled which said, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness: and he was called the Friend of God. (2:24) **See then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only.** (2:25) Likewise also was not Rahab the harlot justified by works, when she had received the messengers, and had sent [them] out another way? (2:26) **For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.**

It's crystal clear from the previous verses that Faith alone cannot save anyone if the person violates God's laws. The idea of a savior who bears people's sins is so romantic but it's also void. Think about it logically, how come that when we speak of "the death of God," it is Jesus who is claimed to have died and not God or the "trinity." How come that God died then resurrected, who resurrected him if he himself were dead? What kind of semi-death is that?! When God is described as having "begotten" a son It is not the "trinity" nor Jesus who has begotten, but a distinctly separate entity from the other two. Some Christians explain this by stating that the three different entities merged together after these incidents. To those I ask, from where inside your own holy book did you get this idea?! As a matter of fact, if you ignore any hidden mysterious meanings that are sometimes forced by commentators upon the text, you will find that nowhere in the New Testament is it mentioned clearly at all that God, Jesus, and the Holy Ghost, are the same or have merged together in any way.

1: The Qur'an as previously explained in p. 138-145 teaches that it was Ishmael (Abraham's first son) who was going to be sacrificed by Abraham.

I shall wrap up with one final point. It's the last words that Jesus—as believed by Christians—is supposed to have said before he gave up the ghost. They are stated in Matthew (27:46) as follows: *“And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, “Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani? That is to say, My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?”*”

If Jesus was as Christians claim, the divine son of God, and he was sent to earth on a mission in a human form to receive the crucifixion as an atonement for mankind's sins, then how come that he utters these words on the cross, which only indicates that the man on the cross had no advanced knowledge whatsoever of the reason behind what has happened to him. He was asking his lord why he has abandoned him to be tortured and crucified. He is asking this god, *“Why have you forsaken me?”* If the man on the cross was the son of God or even a prophet with great faith, he would have never uttered those words; his faith in God's wisdom and plan should be much stronger than to utter such desperate words. These words couldn't but imply complete despair in God's support, and total ignorance of why this has happened to him or what was to happen next.

Islam teaches that the person on the cross was not Jesus, but someone the Jews identified mistakenly to be Jesus. This explains the words mentioned up there. Allah protected Jesus and saved him from those who intended to kill him. Allah tells us of the truth about Jesus's miraculous birth, Prophethood, life, and alleged death, in many locations in the Qur'an. Read the Qur'an where Allah says:

“O People of the Book [Christians]! Commit no excesses in your religion: Nor say about Allah but the truth. The Messiah Eisa [Jesus] the son of Maryam was [no more than] a prophet, and His Word which He bestowed on Maryam, and a spirit proceeding from Him: so believe in Allah and His messengers. Say not “Trinity”’: better for you to desist [saying so]. Verily Allah is only one God: Glory be to Him: [far exalted is He] above having a son. To Him belong all things in the heavens and on earth. And enough is Allah as a Disposer of affairs. Neither the Messiah disdains to serve and worship Allah, nor the nearest angels [to Allah]. And whosoever disdains His worship and are arrogant, He will [surly] gather them all unto Himself [for judgment].” [The Qur'an (4:171-172)].

Allah describes John and Jesus's miraculous births in the Qur'an where He says:

“Kaf Ha Ya Ayn Sad, [This is] a recital of the mercy of your lord to his servant Zakariya [Zachariah], Behold he cried to his lord in secret, praying, ‘O Lord, infirm indeed are my bones, and the hair of my head does glisten with grey: but never am I unblest O Lord in my prayer to you, Now I fear [what] my relatives [and colleagues] will do after me but my wife is barren, so give me an heir as from yourself, [One that] will [truly] represent me, and represent the posterity of Jacob, and make him O Lord one with whom you are well-pleased!’ [His prayer was answered]: ‘O Zakariya we give you good news of a son: his name shall be Yahia [John]: on none by that name have we conferred distinction before.’ He said, ‘O Lord! How shall I have a son, when my wife is barren and I have grown quiet decrepit from old age?’ He said, ‘So [it will be] your lord says, “That is easy for me: I did indeed create you before and you had been nothing.” ’ [Zakariya] said, ‘O Lord give me a sign.’ ‘Your sign,’ was the answer, ‘shall be that you shall speak to no man for three nights although you no bodily defects.’ So Zakariya came out to his people from his chamber: He told them by signs to celebrate Allah's praises in the morning

and in the evening. [To his son came the command], ‘O Yhaia take hold of the book with might’: and we gave him wisdom even as youth, and pity [for all creatures] as from us, and purity: he was devout and kind to his parents, and he was not overbearing or rebellious. Peace be upon him the day he was born, the day he dies and the day that he will be raised up to life [again]. And relate [O Muhammad] in the book Maryam [Mary], when she withdrew from her family to a place eastwards, she veiled herself from them, then we sent to her our angel, and he appeared before her as a man in all respects. She said, ‘I seek refuge from you at [Allah] the most Gracious, [come not near] if you do fear Allah.’ He said, ‘Nay I am only a messenger from your lord [to announce] to you the gift of a righteous son.’ She said, ‘How shall I have a son, seeing that no man has touched me, and I am not unchaste?’ He said, ‘So [it will be]. Your lord says, “that is easy for me: and [we wish] to appoint him as a sign unto men and a mercy from us, it is a matter [so] decreed.” ’ So she conceived him, and she retired with him to a remote place. And the pains of childbirth drove her to the trunk of a palm tree: She cried [in her anguish] ‘Ah would that I have died before this! Would that I have been a thing forgotten and out of sight.’ But a voice cried to her from beneath the [palm tree], ‘Grieve not for your lord has provided a rivulet beneath you, and shake towards yourself the trunk of the palm tree, it will let fall fresh ripe dates upon you. So eat and drink and pleasure [your] eye and if you see any man, say I have vowed a fast to the Most Gracious, and this day I shall not converse with any human being.’ [Then] she brought the [baby] to her people, carrying him [in her arms], they said, ‘O Maryam truly an amazing thing has you brought! O sister of Haroon [Aaron] your father was not a man of evil, nor was your mother a woman unchaste!’ So she pointed to the babe, they said, ‘How can we talk to one who is a child in the cradle?’ He [the child] said, ‘I am indeed a servant of Allah, he has given me revelations and made me a prophet, and he has made me blessed where so ever I be, and has enjoined upon me prayers and charity as long as I shall live, and [He ordered me to show] kindness to my mother, and never to be overbearing or evildoing, so peace is upon me the day I was born, the day that I die, and the day that I shall be raised up to life [again].’ Such [was] Eisa [Jesus] the son of Maryam, [it is] a statement of truth about which they [vainly] dispute. It is not befitting for [the majesty of] Allah that he should beget a son. Glory be to him when he determines a matter he only says to it ‘Be,’ and it is. And verily Allah is my lord and your lord. So worship him alone; that is the righteous path. Then the parties differed in between them, so woe unto the deniers [of my words] from the scene of the great day [Judgment day], How clearly will they hear and listen on the day they are brought to us, but the wrongdoers today are in plain error, And warn them [O Muhammad] of the day of regret, when their life has ended and they had spent it in inadvertence and declination, Verily we shall inherit the earth and whatsoever is thereon, and to us they shall return.” [The Qur’an (19:1-40)].

Allah mentions Jesus’s story from birth until saving him from those who didn’t believe in him and wanted to have him crucified. He says:

“[And remember] when the angels said, ‘O Maryam! Allah gives you glad tidings of a word from Him, whose name is the Messiah, Jesus, son of Maryam, illustrious in the world and the Hereafter, and one of those brought near [unto Allah]. He will speak unto mankind in his cradle and in his manhood, and he is of the righteous.’ She said, ‘My Lord! How can I have a child when no human has touched me?’ He [the angel] said, ‘So [it will be]. Allah creates what He wills, if He decrees a thing, He only says unto it: Be! and it is, And He [Allah] will teach him the Scripture and wisdom, and the Torah

and the Injeel [Gospel], and will make him a messenger unto the children of Israel, [saying], “Lo! I come unto you with a sign from your Lord. Lo! I fashion for you out of clay the likeness of a bird, and I breathe into it and it is a bird by Allah’s leave. I heal him who was born blind, and the leper, and I raise the dead, by Allah’s leave. And I announce unto you what you eat and what you store up in your houses. Lo! Herein verily is a sign for you, if you are believers. And [I come] confirming that which was before me of the Torah, and to make lawful some of that which was forbidden unto you. I come unto you with a sign from your Lord, so keep your duty to Allah and obey me. Lo! Allah is my Lord and your Lord, so worship Him. That is a straight path.” ’ But when Jesus became conscious of their disbelief, he cried, ‘Who will be my helpers in the cause of Allah?’ The disciples said, ‘We will be Allah’s helpers, We believe in Allah, and bear you witness that we have surrendered [unto Him]. Our Lord! We believe in that which You have revealed and we follow him whom You have sent, Enroll us among those who witness [to the truth].’ And they [the disbelievers] planned and plotted (i.e. To kill Jesus), and Allah planned [against them]: and Allah is the best of planners. [And remember] when Allah said, ‘O Eisa! Lo! I shall take you and raise you unto Me, and I shall cleanse you of those who disbelieve and will make those who follow you above those who disbelieve until the Day of Resurrection. Then unto Me you will [all] return, and I shall judge between you in the matters in which you used to dispute. As for those who disbelieve, I shall chastise them with a heavy chastisement in the worldly life and the Hereafter, and they will have no helpers. And as for those who believe and do good deeds, Allah will pay them their reward in full, And Allah loves not wrongdoers.’ This [which] We recite unto you [O Muhammad] is a revelation and a wise reminder. Verily the likeness of Eisa before Allah is like that of Adam, He created him from dust, then He said to him ‘Be,’ and he was. This is the truth from your lord, so be not of those who doubt. Then whoever disputes in this matter with you, now after [full] knowledge has come to you, say, ‘Come! Let us gather together, our sons and your sons, our women and your women, ourselves and yourselves: Then let us earnestly pray, and invoke the curse of Allah on those who lie!’ This is the true account: There is no god except Allah. He is indeed the Exalted in Power, the All Wise.” [The Qur’an (3:45-58)].

*“And because of their saying (i.e. the Jews), ‘We killed the Messiah Jesus son of Mary, Allah’s messenger.’ They killed him not nor crucified him, **but it appeared so unto them, and lo! Those who disagree concerning it are in doubt thereof**, they have no knowledge, they follow nothing but conjecture, and they killed him not for certain, but Allah raised him up unto Himself. Allah is ever All-powerful, All-Wise.” [The Qur’an (4:157-158)].*

Allah mentions some of the miracles He gave Jesus to strengthen him on his mission:

“Allah will say [on the day of resurrection], ‘O Jesus, son of Mary! Remember My favor unto you and unto your mother, how I strengthened you with the holy Spirit, so that you spoke unto mankind in the cradle as in maturity, and how I taught you the Scripture and Wisdom and the Torah and the Gospel, and how you did shape of clay the likeness of a bird by My permission, and did blow upon it and it was a bird by My permission, and you did heal him who was born blind and the leper by My permission, and how you did raise the dead, by My permission and how I restrained the Children of Israel from [harming] you when you came unto them with clear proofs, and those of them who disbelieved exclaimed, “This is naught else than mere magic.” ’.” [The Qur’an (5:110)].

These were parts of the Qur'anic narratives about Jesus P.B.U.H. He is not the son of Allah. He was not crucified as Christians claim. He was Allah's messenger and prophet to the sons of Israel, which is what he himself stated in [Matthew (15:24)] saying, *"I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel,"* and confirmed in the Qur'an. He never claimed that he was sent to receive any punishment for mankind, which is totally illogical and unfair. Imagine that you make sins and a judge ruled someone else to pay for your sins, what kind of judge will that be?! Praise be to Allah for He is Most-Just and Most-Merciful. If He were to treat us with His Justice we would all be doomed to perish for our sins, but He treats us with His Mercy without any need for a crucified son whatsoever. This is what Islam teaches, and what Muslims believe.

Allah says in the Qur'an:

"And from those who said, 'We are Christians,' We took their covenant, but they forgot a good part of the message which was sent to them. So we have stirred up enmity and hatred among them till the Day of Resurrection, and Allah will inform them of what they used to do. O people of the book! Now has Our messenger [Muhammad] come to you, explaining to you much of that which you used to hide in the Scripture, and forgiving much. Indeed, there has come to you a light from Allah and a clear Scripture, Wherewith Allah guides him who seeks His good pleasure unto paths of peace. He brings them out of darkness by His will into light, and guides them to a straight path. Indeed they have disbelieved who say: Lo! Allah is the Messiah, son of Maryam. Say: Who then has the least power against Allah, if He had willed to destroy the Messiah son of Maryam, and his mother and everyone on earth? And to Allah belongs the dominion of the heavens and the earth and all that is between them. He creates what He wills. And Allah is Able to do all things. The Jews and Christians say: We are sons of Allah and His loved ones. Say, Why then does He punish you for your sins? No, you are but mortals of His creation. He forgives whom He wills, and punishes whom He wills. And to Allah belongs the dominion of the heavens and the earth and all that is between them, and unto Him is the return [of all]. O people of the book! Indeed there has come unto you our messenger [Muhammad] to make things clear after a break in [the series of] the messengers, lest you should say, 'There came not unto us a bringer of glad tidings nor any Warner.' Now has a bringer of glad tidings and a Warner come unto you. Verily, Allah is Able to do all things." [The Qur'an (5:17-19)].

Regarding the prophets and their messages, and how people have broken out from their teachings, Allah says in the Qur'an:

"Indeed, We gave unto Moses the scripture that they may be guided, and We made the son of Maryam and his mother a sign, and We gave them refuge to a high ground, a place of rest, security and flowing streams. O [you] messengers, eat of the Good [Halal] food and do righteous deeds, Verily I'm well-acquainted with what you do. And verily this [religious] nation of yours is one nation, and I'm your God, so keep your duty to me. But [men] have broken their religion between them in to sects, each group rejoicing in what is with itself. So leave them in their error till an [appointed] time. Do they think that the wealth and sons that We provide to them, [is that] We hasten unto them with good things? Nay, but they perceive not. Verily! those who live in awe for fear of their Lord, And those who believe in the signs of their Lord, And those who do not associate partners with their Lord, And those who give that which they give with hearts full of fear because they are

sure to return unto their Lord, It is these who hasten for the good deeds, and they are foremost in them. And We task not any soul beyond its capacity, and with Us is a Record which speaks the truth, and they will not be wronged. Nay, but their hearts are covered [blind] of this [Qur'an], and they have other [evil] works, besides, which they are doing. Until when We grasp those of them who lead a luxurious life with the punishment, behold! they supplicate loudly. Supplicate not this day! Assuredly you will not be helped by Us. Indeed, My revelations were recited unto you, but you used to turn back on your heels in arrogance: talking nonsense about the [Qur'an], like one telling fables by night. Have they not pondered over these words, or has there come to them what hadn't come to their fathers of old. Or is it that they didn't recognize their messenger [Muhammad], so they deny him?" [The Qur'an (23:49-69)].

Thirdly, the Muslim nation

Muslims believe that Prophet Muhammad P.B.U.H. is the seal of all prophets. He is the prophet described in the Torah and the Injeel (the Gospel of Jesus) and sent for all people to gather them on one final law. In the Qur'an Allah says:

"Those who follow the apostle, the unlettered Prophet, whom they find mentioned in their own [scriptures], in the Torah and the Injeel, for he commands them with what is [just, good] and forbids to them what is [evil, abominable], he allows them as lawful what is good [and pure] and prohibits them from what is bad [and impure], He releases them from their heavy burdens and from the yokes that are upon them. So it is those who believe in him, honor him, help him, and follow the light which is sent down with him, it is they who will prosper." [The Qur'an (7:157)].

Many Jews and Christians make fun of this verse without giving themselves any chance whatsoever to look for any of those signs in the holy book they have between their hands.

And here, a common misconception should be cleared first:

People of the book don't understand why Muslims do not either accept all of their holy Books or reject them totally. They find our attitude towards their holy Books unconvincing. Muslims are told in the Qur'an that Allah has sent down the Torah to Moses, the Psalms to David and the Injeel to Jesus P.B.U.T. The Qur'an then goes on to describe how mankind had made changes in these holy books and corrupted their teachings. For this reason, Prophet Muhammad P.B.U.H. taught that these books should be dealt with respectfully since that they were primarily the true word of Allah. He explained that if we were to reject them completely then we might be rejecting some verses that remain to be the true words of Allah. This is why the Qur'an had been sent down to correct what has been corrupted in the previous books and reinstate the original teachings. Allah ordered all people in the Qur'an to use their reason and logic in judging all matters. He says in the Qur'an:

"It was We who revealed the Torah [to Moses] therein was guidance and light. By its standard, for the Jews, judged the prophets who submitted to Allah's will and the rabbis and [those who devoted themselves to Allah]; to them was entrusted the protection of Allah's book, and they were witnesses thereto: therefore fear not men, but fear me, and sell not my signs for a miserable price. If any do fail to judge by [the light of] what Allah has revealed, they are [no better than] unbelievers. We ordained therein

[the Torah] for them, 'Life for life, eye for eye, nose or nose, ear for ear, tooth for tooth, and wounds equal for equal.' But if any one remits the retaliation by way of charity, it is an act of atonement for himself. And if any fail to judge by [the light of] what Allah has revealed, they are [No better than] wrong doers. And in their footsteps We sent Jesus son of Mary, confirming the Law that had come before him. We sent him the Gospel; therein was guidance and light, and confirmation of the Law that had come before him, a guidance and an admonition to those who fear Allah. Let the people of the Gospel judge by what Allah has revealed therein. If any do fail to judge by [the light of] what Allah has revealed, they are [no better than] those who rebel. And unto you [Muhammad] We revealed the Scripture [Qur'an] with the truth, confirming whatever Scripture was before it, and a watcher or corrector over it. So judge between them by that which Allah has revealed, and follow not their desires away from the truth which has come to you. To each among you have we prescribed a law and an open way. If Allah had so willed, He would have made all people a single nation, but [His plan is] to test you in what He has given you: so strive as in a race in all virtues. The goal of you all is [the path] to Allah, it is He that will show you the truth of the matters in which you dispute, And so Judge [Muhammad] between them by what Allah has revealed, and follow not their vain desires, but beware of them lest they beguile you from any of that which Allah has sent down to you. And if they turn away, be assured that for some of their crimes it is Allah's purpose to punish them. And truly most men are rebellious." [The Qur'an (5:44-49)].

For this reason, Muslims accept from the previous books only what is verified by the Qur'an or the Sunnah, and reject what contradicts them. We believe that the Qur'an is Allah's final testament to mankind. He has promised to keep it safe from any distortions unlike the previous messages, which were entrusted to and corrupted by the rabbis and priests of old. Jesus P.B.U.H. said, "Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled." Muslims believe that the law was fulfilled by Prophet Muhammad, the seal for all messengers, and by The Qur'an, the seal of Allah's testaments. Allah says in the Qur'an, addressing Prophet Muhammad P.B.U.H., "We have not sent you (O Muhammad) except as a mercy **for all creation.**" [The Qur'an (21:107)].

Allah also addresses the believers in the Qur'an, teaching them about the grace that He has bestowed upon them, in a glorifying wording to his entity, saying:

"It is He (i.e. Allah) Who has sent His messenger (i.e. Muhammad) with Guidance and the Religion of Truth, to make it prevail over all religions: and enough is Allah for a Witness. Muhammad is the prophet, and those who are with him are strong against the Unbelievers, [but] compassionate amongst each other. You see them bow and prostrate themselves [in prayer], seeking Grace from Allah and [His] Good Pleasure. On their faces are their marks, [being] the traces of their prostration. This is their similitude in the Torah, and their similitude in the Gospel is: like a seed which sends forth its blade, then makes it strong, it then becomes thick, and it stands on its own stem, [filling] the sowers with wonder and delight, so that He may enrage the disbelievers through them. Allah has promised those among them who believe and do righteous deeds forgiveness and a great Reward." [The Qur'an (48:28-29)].

Muslims believe that Prophet Muhammad's message is a universal message for all people from their Creator. Allah says that those who believe in it are like those who had believed in it before in the original Torah of Moses and the original Gospel of Jesus. When I first started my research, I was truly surprised to find verses like the following:

From the Old Testament, we read:

Genesis: (17:3) **And Abram fell on his face:** and God talked with him..."

Genesis: (17:17) **Then Abraham fell upon his face, and laughed, and said in his heart, Shall a child be born unto him that is an hundred years old? and shall Sarah, that is ninety years old, bear?**

Exodus: (34:8) **And Moses made haste, and bowed his head toward the earth, and worshipped.**

Numbers: (16:20) **And the LORD spoke unto Moses and unto Aaron,** saying, (16:21) Separate yourselves from among this congregation, that I may consume them in a moment. (16:22) **And they fell upon their faces,** and said, O God, the God of the spirits of all flesh, shall one man sin, and will You be worth with all the congregation?

Numbers: (20:6) **And Moses and Aaron went from the presence of the assembly** unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, **and they fell upon their faces: and the glory of the LORD appeared unto them.**

Joshua: (5:14) And he said, Nay, but [as] captain of the host of the LORD am I now come. **And Joshua fell on his face to the earth, and did worship,** and said unto him, what said my lord unto his servant?"

1 Samuel: (5:3) "And when they of Ashdod arose early on the morrow, behold, **Dagon [was] fallen upon his face to the earth before the ark of the LORD.**" 2 chronicles: (7:3) And when all **the children of Israel** saw how the fire came down, and the glory of the LORD upon the house, they **bowed themselves with their faces to the ground upon the pavement, and worshipped, and praised the LORD,** [saying,] For [he is] good, for his mercy [endures] forever."

2 chronicles: (20:18) **And Jehoshaphat bowed his head with [his] face to the ground: and all Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem fell before the LORD, worshipping the LORD.**

Nehemiah: (8:6) And Ezra blessed the LORD, the great God. And all the people answered, Amen, Amen, with lifting up their hands: **and they bowed their heads, and worshipped the LORD with [their] faces to the ground.**

From the New Testament, we read:

Matthew: (26:39) And he (**Jesus**) **went a little farther, and fell on his face, and prayed,** saying, O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt.

Luke: (17:15) **And one of them, when he saw that he was healed, turned back, and with a loud voice glorified God,** (17:16) **And fell down on [his] face at his feet, giving him thanks:** and he was a Samaritan.

Abraham, Moses, Aaron, Jesus, Joshua, the children of Israel, all Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, Ezra, and their followers are being described many times in the Bible as falling on their faces and praying or worshipping God, which is exactly the way we Muslims pray as taught to us by Prophet Muhammad. Have you ever seen

a Christian priest or a Jewish rabbi **“fall on his face”** and pray like any of the prophets and their followers? Amazing how non-Muslims today see this act as something weird! Apostasy from many of the prophets’ teachings had occurred through history. The discrepancies found in today’s Bible stand as an irrevocable evidence on this. All that Muslims can do is to present the evidence on their opinions, then it’s up to the recipients themselves to seek the truth asking Allah to guide them along the way.



The following chapter shall represent some verses from the Old Testament that as a Muslim, I believe to be most identical with Prophet Muhammad P.B.U.H. from his description and his history. In no way could this be 100% proved nor denied, this is purely my opinion and analysis as a Muslim and an Arab researcher, based on my own study in the Qur’an, the Bible and the books written by some Ex-Christian scholars who have embraced Islam, and have pointed out that some of these verses were referring to Prophet Muhammad P.B.U.H. Among those are “*Ibrahim Khalil Ahmad*,” a former Egyptian priest “*Ibrahim Khalil Philips*” who preached Christianity and taught Christian theology and dogma in the university of Asyut in Egypt, he converted to Islam back in 1982 at the age of forty, and wrote a book titled, “*Muhammad in the Torah, Injeel and Qur’an*” in his late fifties. Also “*Abdul-Ahad Dawud*” who was the former Reverend “*David Benjamin Keldani*,” a Roman Catholic priest. He was born in 1867, he embraced Islam in the year 1904 when he was 37 years old, and wrote his book “*Muhammad in the Bible*,” that contained his personal opinion about the Biblical verses which he deemed referring to Prophet Muhammad. Finally, I sought the commentaries written by some Muslim scholars like “*Ahmad Deedat*” and “*Mish‘al Ibn ‘Abdullah Al-Kadhi*,” may Allah award them all for their avid search for the truth. I can only hope that the reader here would try to think objectively and reasonably about this subject. Allah says in the Qur’an:

“Indeed We have explained in this Qur’an every subject in various ways for the benefit of the people, but out of all creation, man is most disputing. The only thing that prevented people from believing, even after the guidance had come to them, and from seeking forgiveness from their Lord, is (their demand) that what used to come to the earlier people should come to them as well, or that the punishment should be brought to them face to face. We send the messengers only as bearers of glad tidings and warnings, and those who disbelieve raise disputes on basis of false (arguments), so that they may nullify the truth with it, and they have taken My signs, and the warnings given to them, as mockery.”
[The Qur’an (18:54-58)].



2.2 Signs in the previous scriptures

This section shall discuss 4 prophecies and a man's thorough description mentioned given in the Old Testament. The problem with this issue is that it has always been faced with extreme mockery and denial. People of the book never truly try seek the truth and set aside any previous opinions they may have regarding the issue. I hope the reader starts from scratch when reading this analysis. You can grab a pen and a paper, take notes, and then continue digging deeper into each and every point on your own. Centuries have passed since the times of the old prophets; people have come to build and adopt different understandings of their indecisive prophecies. I believe that if we try to cooperate in interpreting and understanding a certain prophecy, we will reach a more correct result than if every one of us works alone. Indeed, this requires sincere intentions. As stated above, the next few pages shall concentrate on certain prophecies. They were tackled before by other scholars and are in my opinion the most important ones. I dug deeper into them hoping to reach a clearer picture, and this is what I found.

1. **From Deuteronomy**, we read when prophet Moses P.B.U.H. was telling the Jews of a prophet who will come to them from among their brethren, and that they must listen to and obey this prophet:

(18:15) The LORD your **God will raise up unto you a Prophet from amidst you, of your brethren, like unto me**, unto him you shall hearken, (18:17) And **the LORD said** unto me, They have well [spoken that] which they have spoken. (18:18) **I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren, like you, and will put my words in his mouth, and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him.**

In the above verses God promises to raise the Israelite tribes a prophet who is from their **BRETHREN**. That awaited prophet is not to be from the Israelites or from “**among themselves**” but rather from “**among their brethren.**” So who exactly are the brethren of the Israelite tribes?

Israelites are the sons of Jacob (Israel), the son of Isaac, the son of Abraham. There has never been a prophet to the Israelites except from among themselves. And never had a prophet risen from among their brethren from the lineage of Esau (The elder brother of Israel), so who are the ones intended by “**their brethren**” in the above verses?

“**Their Brethren**”: Isaac's older brother was Ishmael, the lesser rejected brother by the Jews, the father of the Arab tribes from whom Prophet Muhammad descended, and the eldest uncle of the Israelites. Thus, the brethren of Isaac's offspring are the Ishmaelites. This was confirmed in Genesis where God's angel told Lady Hagar about her son Ishmael saying, “**he shall dwell in the presence of all his brethren.**” Of course it is obvious that Ishmael's brethren are Esau and Isaac. Prophet Muhammad was the only prophet who rose from among the Ishmaelites. The Jews were awaiting that prophet alright, but from among themselves thinking that “brethren” was in reference to the twelve tribes (the sons of Israel), but when Prophet Muhammad came from their brethren (Ishmael's descendants), they met him with enmity and hatred. They ignored the fact that Arabs are their brethren and kin, and that they are all the descendants of Prophet Abraham P.B.U.H.

Remember in Genesis when Allah informed Abraham of Ishmael's future saying: (17:20) And as **for Ishmael**, I have heard you: **Behold, I have blessed him, and will make him fruitful, and will multiply him exceedingly, twelve princes shall he beget, and I will make him a great nation.**

What exactly did Allah bless Ishmael with and where is the greatness in the Ishmaelites' history? Through all of their history the greatest blessing that was ever bestowed upon Ishmaelites was the coming of Prophet Muhammad from among them. Before him, they were scattered fighting tribes who had different religions. Some embraced Christianity in its Unitarian form, some in its Trinitarian form; few individuals were still following Abraham's pure creed, but the majority were pagans and idolaters who corrupted Abraham's religion and worshipped handmade idols claiming that those idols helped them get closer to their creator. After Prophet Muhammad P.B.U.H., Ishmaelites united under the banner of Islam. They returned to Abraham's pure creed of worshipping the Creator without associating other partners with Him. They fought the tyrant Roman and Persian military empires. Although at most battles Ishmaelites were outnumbered by at least 2-4 times their numbers, and far away from their homelands, they succeeded in breaking the arrogance of the two bitter enemies and conveyed Allah's final message to far distant countries, which until today, and after centuries of crusades and massacres, are mostly still Islamic countries. After Islam, Ishmaelites developed a great civilization joining the peoples of Spain and North Africa in the west with the peoples of India and China in the east passing by the ancient lands of Egypt, Sham, Mesopotamia and Arabia. It was Islam that initially brought the people of these countries together, unifying them as one nation with one language and one religion. The 600 years between the 7th and 13th centuries A.D. marked a period in history when culture and learning flourished in Muslims' lands. The Muslim world developed and enhanced great arts and sciences; new discoveries were made, and the heritage of the past was preserved. During the Dark Ages of Europe, much learning and discoveries were made by Muslim scientists.

Examples of the notable Muslim scientists are the following:

- **Jabir Ibn Hayyan** (721–815 AD): Latinized as **Geber** “The father of Alchemy.” He was the student of “*Ja'far Al-Sadeq*,” Prophet Muhammad's grandson. His books strongly influenced the European alchemists and had great contribution in developing the science.
- **Muhammad Al-Khuwarizmi** (780–850 AD): Known as “The father of Algebra.” He invented Algebra, and contributed by his work in the development of trigonometry and calculus. **Algorithm** was named after him.
- **Ahmad Ibn Al-Farghani** (died after 861 AD): Latinized as **Alfraganus** in the West. He was an astronomer in 9th century. He had many contributions in the measurement of the diameter of the Earth as well as many other planets. His textbook of astronomy on the celestial motions, written about 833 and his calculations were used by astronomers since his time until Copernicus about 600 years later. The crater Alfraganus on the Moon is named after him.
- **'Abbās Ibn Firnas** (810–887 AD): An inventor and engineer who worked on developing the mechanics of flight even before “Eilmer of Malmesbury” and DaVinci. His back was hurt badly in his first experiment of flying, but he learned that the tail is very important in steerage while landing. He also built a planetarium.

- **Muhammad Ibn Sinan Al-Battani** (858-929 AD): Latinized as *Albatagnius*, was an astronomer and mathematician. He introduced a number of trigonometric relations, which were frequently used and quoted by many medieval astronomers, including Copernicus, Tycho Brahe, Riccioli, among others.
- **Muhammad Ibn Zakariya Al-Rāzī** (865–925 AD): Known as “The father of pediatrics.” He wrote “The Diseases of Children” which is the first book to deal with pediatrics as an independent field.
- **Abul-Qasim Al-Zahrāwī** (936-1013 AD): Latinized as *Zahravi*, “The father of modern surgery.” He wrote a 30-part medical encyclopedia in Arabic. The last part of the encyclopedia, dealing with surgery, was later translated into Latin. He was the first to describe and prove the hereditary pattern behind hemophilia, and the first to describe ectopic pregnancy and the first to describe stone babies.
- **Al-Hassan Ibn Al-Haytham** (965–1040 AD): Latinized as *Alhazen*, he was the developer of experimental physics, he discovered the theory of vision and wrote on the science of Optics. He is the author of the “Book of optics” that served as the concrete foundation for most optics' scientists after him.
- **Muhammad Ibn Ahmad al-Bīrūnī** (973–1048 AD): Latinized as *Alberonius*, he is known to be the father of Indology. He had great contributions in anthropology, geodesy and he also had great contribution in the field of comparative religion.
- **‘Abdullah Ibn Sina** (981-1037 AD): A very well-known physician known as *Avicenna in the west*. He authored the “Canon of Medicine” and the “Book of Healing.” His writings were considered the authority of medicine in European universities for over 550 years after his departure.
- **Muhammad Al-Idrisi** (1099–1165 AD): He created the most accurate map of the world in pre-modern times, which served as a concrete illustration of his book “Nuzhat Al-Mushtaq,” or “A Journey for one longing to travel.” His map was copied by geographers for three centuries without alteration. It inspired great Islamic geographers like “*Ibn Battuta*” and “*Ibn Khaldūn*,” as well as European ones like “Christopher Columbus” and “Vasco De Gama.”
- **‘Abdullah Ibn Al-Baytar** (1188-1248 AD): He was a pharmacist and physician. He is considered one of the greatest pharmacists of the Islamic Golden Age and Muslim Agricultural Revolution. *Ibn Al-Baytar's* two books “*Al-Jami‘ fil-Adwiya*” and “*Al-Mughni fil-Adwiya*” were considered the greatest pharmaceutical, botanical and medical compilations in history. They served as botanical authority for centuries. They described more than 1200 plants and drugs, 300 of which were his own original discoveries. His work was translated into Latin in 1758 and was used in Europe up until the early 19th century. *Ibn Al-Baytar* also discovered the earliest known herbal treatment for cancer: *Al-Hindba’*.

There are many other scientists, too many than to be listed here. Though their origins differed, their religion united them and they were all devout Muslims following the teachings of Islam that urges every Muslim to learn, seek after knowledge wherever it is and spread it. They lived and studied during the Islamic golden ages that the west calls the dark ages. They made many great discoveries, and authored many writings in all branches of science, philosophy and literature. Their work affected humanity in all areas of knowledge, and formed the foundation of the west’s renaissance. So Allah’s blessing to Ishmael was fulfilled in raising the awaited prophet from among his offspring and the greatness of his nation was in embracing a religion that urged them to read and learn.

Let's continue analyzing Deuteronomy's verse:

“Like unto me”: Christian scholars say that Jesus P.B.U.H. is a divine facet of God who was sent by the other facet (the father) to save mankind from their sins. He was tortured, crucified, and then resurrected and raised to heaven. However, they claim that both Moses and Jesus are like each other for they had the same mission! Well, all prophets had the same mission which was calling people for worshipping their creator and associating no partners with Him. Hence, their mission could not be the meaning intended by the verse at hand. Besides, the Christian creedal view about Jesus's mission negates their opinion. On a closer look, one could easily realize that Muhammad and Moses P.B.U.T. had a lot of things in common that Jesus didn't share with them. Some of which are the following:

Both Muhammad and Moses had normal births. Both were raised as orphans. Both worked as shepherds for a long time. Both started receiving revelations from Allah over mountains. Both were chased out from their birth lands for preaching their religion. Both weren't ordered to fight back their enemies except after their followers were persecuted greatly and they were forced to leave their birth lands. Both were chased after by their persecutors and targeted to be killed. Both were army leaders and ruled over their people after immigration. Both triumphed over their enemies and weren't killed by them. Both brought divine laws to their people including obligations, prohibitions and punishments. Both got married and had children. Both conveyed their messages completely to their people. Both died leaving their people at the door steps of a great triumph and establishing a great kingdom built upon faith. Both died of natural causes and weren't tortured to death as Christians claim for Jesus. Both still lie buried in the ground and weren't resurrected after death. Both were succeeded by their close ministers (Moses by Joshua, and Muhammad by Abu Bakr). So through all of their life-lines they were much alike, which is not the case with Jesus P.B.U.H., not in the least sense.

“will put my words in his mouth, and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him”: If you read some of the Qur'an you will instantly understand what is meant by these words and what is meant by “Allah putting His words in the awaited prophet's mouth,” for the Qur'an is literally the words of Allah, not a narration of someone else like the Bible. Listening to the Qur'an is like listening to the creator speaking. It's literally the words of Allah coming from someone else's mouth. This is also an implicit signal that the awaited prophet will be unlettered and couldn't write what he's taught nor read a book delivered to him like the preceding prophets. The revelations he receives will be verbally transmitted to him, for he could neither write them down nor read them back. About this, Allah says in the Qur'an:

“Move not your tongue concerning (the Qur'an, O Muhammad) to make haste therewith, it is for us to collect it and give you the ability to recite it. If we recite it to you, then follow its recital. Indeed, it's for us to make it clear (for the people).” [The Qur'an (75:16-19)].

From Deuteronomy, continue reading the awaited prophet's description:

(18:19) And it shall come to pass, [that] whosoever will not hearken unto my words which he shall speak in my name, I will require [it] of him. (18:20) **But the prophet, who shall presume to speak a word in my name, which I have not commanded him to speak, or that shall speak in the name of other gods, even that prophet shall die.**

Deuteronomy's verses say that any lying prophet who dares speak in God's name shall "die." In other translations, "shall be put to death." Meaning that God wouldn't allow him to speak falsely in his name for long. Hence, if Muhammad was a liar, why didn't God Almighty kill him?! Why did God allow Muhammad to finish delivering his message?!

About this, Allah says in The Qur'an:

"(This Qur'an) a Message sent down from the Lord of the Worlds. And if he (i.e. Prophet Muhammad) were to invent any sayings in Our name, We would certainly seize him by his right hand, And We would certainly cut off the artery of his heart: None of you could protect him (from Our wrath). Verily, this is a Message for the God fearing. We certainly know that there are among you those who reject (it). But truly (Revelation) is a cause of sorrow for the disbelievers. Verily, it is Truth of assured certainty. So glorify the name of your Lord, The Most Magnificent." [The Qur'an, (60:43-52)].

Continue from Deuteronomy:

(18:21) And if you say in your heart, How shall we know the word which the LORD has not spoken? (18:22) **When a prophet speaks in the name of the LORD, if the thing follow not, nor come to pass, that [is] the thing which the LORD has not spoken, [but] the prophet has spoken it presumptuously: you shall not be afraid of him.**

Finally, the true prophet of Pharan shall speak of things to come, things revealed to him. If these things happen, then he is a true prophet. If his predictions do not come true, then he is a lying prophet and people should not believe him nor be afraid of his warnings. Prophet Muhammad told his companions of many events that were to happen, either during their time or in the far future. Many did happen during his life or shortly after he departed. Some happen in these days we're living, and some shall happen near the end of time like he said they would. The following are some examples of the miraculous foretelling of future events as came in the Qur'an and Sunnah.

- Allah says in The Qur'an, chapter 30:

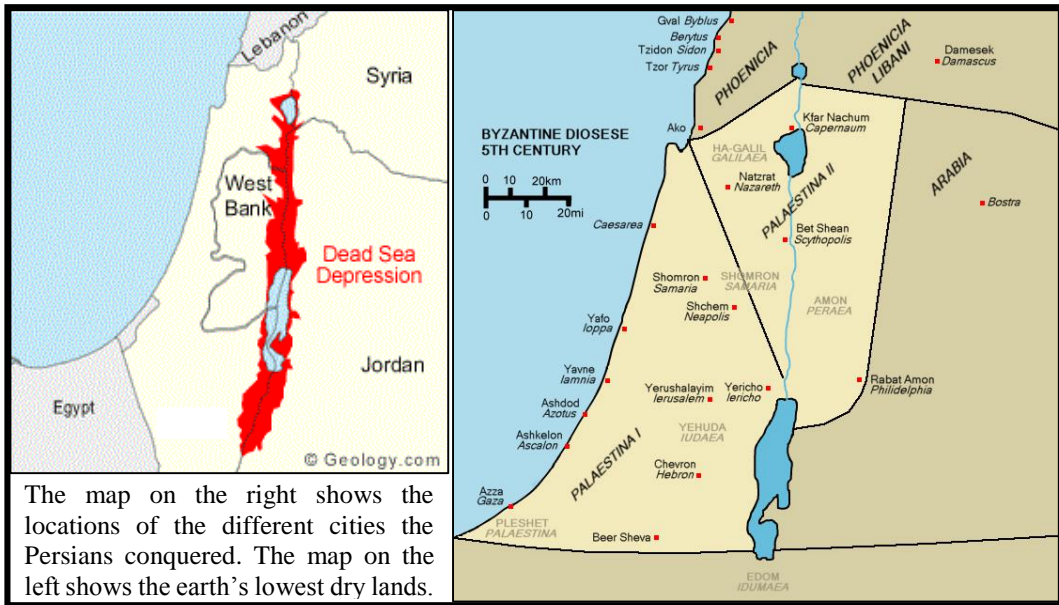
"The Romans have been defeated, in the Adna (i.e. an Arabic word that means: lowest and nearest) land and they after their defeat will be victorious, within bed'a (i.e. an Arabic word that means few, used to indicate a value from 3-9) years. The decision of matters before and after [these events] is only for Allah, and on this day the believers will rejoice with Allah's help, He helps whom he wills, and He is the Almighty, the most merciful. A promise from Allah and Allah fails not his promise but most people do not know." [The Qur'an (30:2-6)].

The events of these revelations took place in the year 614. Persians battled with, and chased after the Romans all the way from Damascus to Jerusalem. They expelled them from the vicinity of the Dead Sea, which extends for over 150 km in the way towards Jerusalem. They destroyed the Monastery of Martyrius. The monasteries of Jericho were all abandoned in the process. Palaestina Prima and Palaestina Secunda were both conquered by a joint Persian-Jewish army that destroyed their churches and confiscated the true cross. The Persian army continued to triumph until it reached Jerusalem where it camped outside the city walls and besieged the remnants of the Roman army inside and around Jerusalem for 21 days under warfare, after which, the city was captured by the Persians. After the Romans' defeat, the Persians extended their control to Asia Minor.

Muslims were still in Makkah at that time. Arabian merchants returning from Sham, brought the news of the Roman-Persian war back with them. The idolaters wanted the Persian army to win the war, while Muslims wanted the Romans to win for they were people of the book who believed in Allah. When the news of the Romans' defeat at Jerusalem reached them, *Abu Bakr* reported the bad news to Prophet Muhammad, so the prophet P.B.U.H. said, "*But they (the Romans) will triumph shortly,*" and he recited the above verses as was revealed to him by Allah.

On hearing this, *Abu Bakr* went back to the idolaters and told them that the Romans shall defeat the Persians within a few years. The idolaters challenged him to tell them when exactly; if it happens as he says, then so and so shall be his, and if what he says turns out to be wrong then so and so shall be there's. Consequently, a bet was raised against the truthfulness of the previous Qur'anic verses. *Abu Bakr* suggested a period of 6 years, thereafter, he returned to the prophet and told him about his bet with the idolaters. The prophet told him, "*You should have been more careful. You should have said within less than 10 years.*" Six years later, in the year 620, the Romans were still defeated and had lost more lands to the Persians, so the idolaters won the bet. Losing the bet was a kind of disciplining from Allah for Muslims. They learned that betting is a kind of gambling, which was totally forbidden later by the Qur'an. Anyway, two years later, in April of the year 622, Heraclius left Constantinople. He led his army in a desperate trial of striking back and retrieving the lands taken by the Persians. In autumn of the year 622, he won his battle against the Persians in the Cappadocian highlands of Issus retrieving Asia Minor and fulfilling exactly what Allah foretold in the Qur'an. Muslims rejoiced when the news reached them later on in Madinah. Regarding this incident the famous historian Edward Gibbon says in his epic work, "The decline and fall of the Roman empire," in volume No.8 p.94, "*At the time when this prediction is said to have been delivered, no prophecy could be more distant from its accomplishment, since the first twelve years of Heraclius announced the approaching dissolution of the empire.*"

Another amazing thing is that in the same year 622, the idolaters planned to kill Prophet Muhammad. They plotted that a man from every tribe will contribute in his assassination so that his followers wouldn't think of avenging him. Allah revealed their plan to his prophet and ordered him to immigrate to Madinah. The idolaters went out chasing after him; they set a huge reward for the one who would help in capturing him. Muslims at Madinah were awaiting the prophet's arrival; they were afraid that the idolaters would succeed in killing him. The distance between Makkah and Madinah is about 400 kilometers. The prophet and his companion *Abu Bakr* were traveling this distance on 2 Camels that *Abu Bakr* had previously prepared for the journey. Of course, the idolaters' horsemen chasing after them were much lighter and faster, but Allah is powerful above all; He delivered his prophet in a miraculous way. The prophet and *Abu Bakr* reached Madinah on Friday the 12th of "Rabi' Al-Awwal" (month No.3 on the Hijrah calendar) also in autumn of that year. Calculations found it to be approximately the 23rd or 24th of September (i.e. the exact day couldn't be known 100% accurately). Muslims celebrated that day and they described it as the day in which the streets of Madinah were illuminated by Prophet Muhammad's arrival. That day is considered the real dawn of Islam and the beginning of the Islamic reign. This was the second prophecy in the above verses stating that the believers will rejoice with Allah's help on the day in which the Romans defeat the Persians.



Finally, the nearest inhabited lands to Makkah were in Sham and Yemen. The above verses described the Romans defeat stating that they were defeated at the “Adna” lands; so when these verses were revealed, Muslims understood that the word “Adna” was referring to the cities in Sham as the neighboring Northern lands. They never indulged into the issue or ask why Allah added this description (in the adna land) amidst the verse. Actually, if you remove it, the verse will be understood just fine without any need for this added description. The translations throughout the last two centuries have also translated the word to *nearest* following the early generations’ interpretation. Amazingly, a stunning scientific fact was stated in these verses more than 1350 years before its discovery. It wasn’t understood except after the development of satellites. The Dead Sea shores—marked in red in the picture above—have been recognized with the aid of satellite photographing to be the earth’s lowest dry lands. This precisely fulfilled the meaning of the word “Adna,” and made it manifest that the one-word Qur’anic-description of the place was the most accurate that could ever be given. Now, assuming that the Qur’an was not from the Omniscient Creator, and Prophet Muhammad was making it up, how did the above prophecy, and the scientific fact given in it, turn out to be correct and accurate? I leave the answer for the reader’s judgment.

- The prophet P.B.U.H. foretold the Mongols and Tatars’ invasion before it happened by more than 600 years. This invasion occurred at the year 1260. During the early stages of the invasion, Muslims were unable to resist the Tatars. Millions of Muslims were slaughtered and many Islamic lands were occupied. Later on, the Tatarian progress ended with the Muslims’ triumph at “*Ain Jalut*” battle under the command of the brave Muslim Egyptian Mamluk, *Saif Ul-Deen Qutuz*, and his fearless banner bearer, *Az-Zaher Baibars*. The Tatars tasted their very first defeat after many years of victory in which they invaded more than 1/2 of that day’s inhabited world. Consequently, they were forced to retreat back to their home lands.

Abu Hurairah reported that the prophet P.B.U.H. said, *“The judgment day shall not approach unless Muslims fight against the Turks, they are people who have faces like “Mejan Mutraqa” (Arabic description that means: rough flat faces), they wear hair, and they walk in (foots’ wear) of hair.”* [Recorded by Muslim].



And he also reported that the prophet P.B.U.H. said, *“The judgment day shall not come, unless you fight against people who take foots’ wear of hair, unless you fight the Turks who have, small eyes, red faces, short flat noses and their faces are like Mejan Mutraqa.”* [Recorded by Bukhari].

Please note that the prophet’s description is an exact description of the Mongol and Tatar soldiers. It was given by Prophet Muhammad P.B.U.H. at a time when no one had heard of the Tatars. They were still scattered fighting tribes and a very minor negligible power in middle Asia drowned in civil war. Their homelands were never visited by the prophet P.B.U.H. during his life nor any of his companions.

- Prophet Muhammad’s prophecy about conquering Persia. This prophecy was given at a time when the Persian army was the strongest army in the whole world. Its numbers exceeded 120,000 soldiers and the Persians were triumphant over the Romans and had already invaded most of their lands. Meanwhile there weren’t more than 800 Muslims all over the world including women, old men and children, and only less than 400 of them could fight (The number of Muslims at Badr—the first battle they ever entered—was 313, which was 1 year after this prophecy). Any observer of the events could unhesitatingly confirm that this prophecy could never happen, and that the prophet would even be killed before reaching Madinah. The incident occurred as follows:

Muslims immigrated to Madinah escaping with their lives from the pagan’s persecution except for the prophet and his two companions *‘Ali Ibn Abi-Tālib* and *Abu Bakr. Quraysh* and other Arabian tribes decided to kill the prophet P.B.U.H. They planned that a man from each tribe would contribute in stabbing him so that his blood would be scattered among all tribes. Consequently, his relatives and followers wouldn’t dare avenge him. Allah revealed to Prophet Muhammad that this was the time for him to immigrate to Madinah for *Quraysh* had planned to kill him amidst the night while he sleeps. Prophet Muhammad brought his young cousin *‘Ali Ibn Abi-Tālib* and asked him to sleep in his bed confirming that the pagans won’t kill him. He ordered *‘Ali* to stay behind and return all of the deposited trusts which the pagans of Makkah had entrusted to him. Thereafter, *‘Ali* can catch up with them at Madinah. That night, the prophet went to *Abu Bakr’s* house and told him that it was time for them to immigrate. They immediately set out towards south Makkah, where they took a temporary refuge in a cave called *“Thawr”* waiting for *Abu Bakr’s* son *‘Abdullah* to make the necessary preparations for their trip.

Finding that it was *‘Ali* who was sleeping in the prophet’s bed, the notables of Makkah summoned an emergency meeting. They decided to block all avenues leading out of Makkah. They imposed armed surveillance over all exits and dispatched their horsemen to explore all areas and capture the prophet. A bounty of 100 camels was set for the head of Prophet Muhammad. Horsemen, infantry, and trackers scoured the country. *Abu Bakr* reported that when the trackers reached the entrance of their cave, he whispered to the Prophet, *“O Prophet, if they were to look beneath their feet (into the cave’s entrance), they would see us,”* But the Prophet calmed *Abu Bakr* saying, *“What do you think of two men whom Allah watches over them.”* And Allah did deliver the prophet and his friend from the pagans.

‘Abdullah Ibn Abu Bakr, hired *‘Abdullah Ibn ‘Uraiqt* as a guide for the prophet and his father on their trip. He brought them two camels that were well prepared for the journey, and he also brought them *Abu Bakr*’s servant to help them. When the news of the hundred camels reached a man named *Surāqa Ibn Malik*, who was a very skilled tracker, he decided to chase after the prophet. While he sat among the men of his tribe, a man came and said that he saw a couple of riders faraway in the desert heading north towards Madinah a while ago, and that he thinks they were the prophet and his companion. *Surāqa*, so cunningly, replied in the negative saying that these were so-and-so searching for some lost cattle of theirs. He was hoping to kill the prophet and receive the big prize alone. When the people resumed their speech ignoring what the man said, *Surāqa* silently went out to chase after the prophet.

Later on, *Surāqa* reported what happened to him during the chase saying:

*“When I approached the prophet and his companions, suddenly my horse’s front legs sank into the sand throwing me off the saddle. I got up and picked out the divination stones¹ from my quiver and threw them; the stones ordered me to go back. I hated that, so I got on my horse disobeying the divination stones and continued chasing after the prophet. When I approached them, I heard him reciting the Qur’an while riding his camel. *Abu Bakr* looked around and saw me approaching. My horse’s front legs sank again into the sand throwing me off its back. I got up in anger swearing at my horse. I was unable to free the horse’s legs. I yelled in fear, *“Safety O, Muhammad.”* The prophet stopped. I said to him, *“I realize that you have invoked Allah to punish me. Ask Him to set my horse free and save me from this situation, and I promise to distract those who are chasing after you.”* The prophet invoked Allah for me and the horse was immediately freed. I approached him and said warning him, *“Your people have placed a big prize on your head, and they are chasing after you.”* Then I offered him and his companions what I had from water and food, but they rejected it and said, *“Just don’t tell anyone of the way we have taken (to Madinah).”* So I asked the prophet to write me a safety pact, and he ordered *“Amer Ibn Fuhairah”* (*Abu Bakr*’s servant) to write it down for me, and Amer wrote on a piece of leather what the prophet dictated. The prophet told me while I was leaving, *“How will you look like *Surāqa* wearing the armlets of Chosroes?”* I said, *“Chosroes son of Hormizd?”* The prophet said, *“Yes, Chosroes son of Hormizd,”* and he went on his way with his companions.”*

1: 2 stones, on one it is written ‘do’ and on the other it is written ‘don’t do’. Pagans used to throw them thinking that the one that falls closer or is facing upwards while the other faces downwards are telling them what to do as orders from their idols.

Surāqa didn't believe what the prophet told him, and he didn't embrace Islam or follow Muslims to Madinah. He thought, *'Where are all Arabs from Chosroes's big armies, not to mention those few escaping Muslims.'* He went back home fulfilling his promise and distracted whomever he met away from the path which the prophet took to Madinah. He lived among his tribe near Makkah for the next eight years and kept the safety pact with him. Later on, after the conquest of Makkah, the prophet and his army of ten thousand reached *Surāqa's* town. *Surāqa* asked to meet the prophet. He pushed through the crowds till he reached the prophet and raised the safety pact. The prophet said, *"This is the day of fidelity and kindness. Come closer, Surāqa. There is no faith for him who is not honest, and there is no religion for him who doesn't keep his promise."* *Surāqa* approached the prophet and declared that he believes in his prophethood. Not long after that, the prophet passed away. *Surāqa* reported that, *"When the news of the prophet's death reached my town, I remembered the day I went out chasing after him hoping to kill him and receive a bounty of 100 camels. When I received news that the prophet passed away, all the camels in this world weren't even worth a broken piece of the prophet's nail."* *Surāqa* always took pride in telling his story to the companions and that the prophet foretold him that one day he would wear Chosroes's armlets.

A few years passed by. During the reign of the second Caliph *'Omar Ibn Al-Khattab*, the Muslims' army defeated the Persians. After many battles, they succeeded in freeing the neighboring eastern region from Chosroes' enslavement for good, and opened it for preaching Islam. The Army brought back to *'Omar* the booty left by the Persian army and their leaders. Among these were Chosroes' crown that was inlaid with jewels and pearls, Chosroes' cloak that was sewed with golden threads, and his armlets. *'Omar* stood looking at this treasure with tearful eyes. When his companions asked him about that, he said his famous sentence, *"The people who brought this back are surely trustworthy. Only Chosroes's crown is worth millions. If him who has brought it had taken it to Antakia (a city in sham), he would have lived there the richest among all people."* Then *'Omar* summoned *Surāqa* who came hurriedly and *'Omar* dressed him Chosroes's crown, cloak, and armlets then said, *"Praise be to Allah for removing those from Chosroes the tyrant and dressing them to Surāqa, a poor Arab from Madlag (Surāqa's tribe)."*

And this was the prophecy given by the prophet 18 years earlier. *'Omar* then lifted his hands up to the sky and said, *"O Allah, you have held back this treasure from your messenger, and he was far more beloved to you and more honored by you than I. You have held it back from Abu Bakr, and he too was more beloved to you and more honored by you than I. Yet, now you have laid this treasure in front of me. I ask your refuge from its seduction."* *'Omar* then didn't get up until all of the booty was distributed in front of him on the poor and the needy. [Compiled narrations from *Bukhari, Ibn Abd Al-bar, Ibn Hagar Al-Asqalany* and others].

- Prophet Muhammad foretold the great leadership of *"Khaled Ibn Al-Walid,"* nick named, "The drawn sword of Allah." The prophet prophesized of Khaled's great leadership as an army general while narrating to his companions what was happening at the battle field of *Mu'tah*. The narration itself is a prophetic miracle, for the prophet P.B.U.H. was more than 800 kilometers away from the battlefield and he was narrating to his companions what was happening as if he were present there. It was as if Allah wrapped up the earth for him. The story went as follows:

The prophet P.B.U.H. dispatched "*Al-Hareth Ibn 'Umair*" as an envoy with a letter to the ruler of Busra (A city in Sham). On his way there he was intercepted by "*Sharhabeel Al-Ghassani*," the ruler of Al-Balqa' (A city in the way to Busra) and an ally of Heraclius. *Al-Hareth* was searched, and finding the letter with him inviting the ruler of Busra to Islam, *Sharhabeel* ordered him to be beheaded. Killing unarmed peaceful envoys was a crime that amounted to the degree of war declaration. When the news of beheading *Al-Hareth* reached the prophet, he ordered that an army must be dispatched immediately to avenge *Al-Hareth's* death from this tyrant ruler and show *Sharhabeel* that Muslims are not sheep to be slaughtered like this.

An army of 3000 soldiers was prepared. The prophet chose for its leadership "*Zayd Ibn Al-Hareth*," his beloved adopted orphan. He ordered that if *Zayd* was wounded, the banner goes to "*Ja'far Ibn Abi-Taleb*," the prophet's beloved cousin; and if the latter was wounded as well, the banner goes to "*Abdullah Ibn Rawāha*," one of the prophet's companions who was known of his poetic responses in defense of the prophet at Makkah. The prophet then stipulated that if the third leader was wounded too, then Muslims should choose a leader from among themselves. This order, if you think of it properly, was actually an inclusive prophecy of the martyrdom of these three leaders. The Prophet commanded the Muslim army to reach *Al-Balqa'*, and before fighting *Sharhabeel's* army, they should try to invite the people to embrace Islam. Should the latter respond positively, Islam as a start of a new covenant with Allah erases all the sins preceding it, so their crime would be forgiven and the Muslim army would return peacefully. Otherwise, fighting would be the only alternative left in order to seize *Sharhabeel* and punish him for his crime.

When the Muslims' army reached a place called *Ma'an*, which is a border town of Sham, some news reached them that Heraclius dispatched an army of over 10,000 Roman soldiers to meet them at *Mu'tah* near *Balqa'*, and that the Roman allied Arabian tribes of Lakhm, Jutham and Balqain among others had joined Heraclius' army with about another 10,000 soldiers. Muslims never planned to meet such a huge army on the battlefield. They camped two nights at *Ma'an* in consultation. Many of them suggested writing to the prophet and informing him of their situation so that he would either send reinforcements and backup, or order them to withdraw their troops back to Madinah. *Abdullah Ibn Rawāha* disagreed with this opinion. His companions reported that he stood and said, "*O people, I swear by Allah that this which you hate is what you've come asking for, your martyrdom. We do not fight with numbers, muscles or troops; we fight with the faith which Allah has bestowed upon us. So march towards your enemy with no fear, and it shall be one of two, either victory or martyrdom.*" After these words, the companions agreed unanimously on advancing towards the enemy.

It was at *Mu'tah* where the battle started with 3000 soldiers led by their faith stood fast against the attacks of over 20,000 soldiers led by their arrogance and tyranny. *Zayd Ibn Al-Hareth* kept fighting in matchless spirit of bravery until he was fatally stabbed. *Ja'far Ibn Abi Taleb* then took the banner and gave a peerless example in bravery. In the crowd of the battle, when any other soldier would have lost control of his anxiety, he dismounted his horse, hamstringing it to prevent it from running in fear causing others to retreat, and then he resumed fighting until his right hand was stricken off. He seized the banner with his left hand to prevent it from falling, but this too was stricken off.

He then hugged the banner with both humerals until a strong Byzantine soldier struck his abdomen very hard to the extent that his body was cut in half. *‘Abdullah Ibn ‘Omar* reported that he was among those who attended to *Ja‘far’s* corpse and he counted over fifty wounds in his body, none of which was in his back. May Allah be pleased with him.

It was reported by *Anas Ibn Mālek*, that while they were sitting with the prophet in Madinah, (i.e. about 800 Km away from Mu’tah), the prophet announced the death of the three leaders. He said, “*Zayd took the banner, and he was smitten. Ja‘far took it and he too was smitten, and then Ibn Rawāha took it and he was smitten as well. (He wept a little, then continued), then took the banner a sword from among the swords of Allah, and Allah will grant Muslims a way out.*” [Recorded by Bukhari].

This was the first battle attended by *Khaled* as a Muslim. It took place only a short while after he embraced Islam. When Muslims chose him to lead them, he succeeded in fending off the Byzantines’ attacks for a whole day. At night, he ordered the soldiers to wash their clothes and clean their swords till they shine. He reversed the two wings of the army, and its front and rear as well. He ordered some of the horsemen to retreat and turn in circles a few miles behind the Muslim lines. When the battle was resumed at dawn, the Byzantines saw the shining swords, the different faces, and clean banners. They also noticed the dust cloud a few miles behind the Muslims’ army. The Byzantines thought that Muslims received reinforcements from Madinah, and fear found its way to their hearts. When *Khaled* started withdrawing the army bit by bit—with the evidence at hand, the Byzantine leader smelled an ambush. He ordered his troops not to follow the Muslims’ army into the desert thinking that Muslims were dragging them in to a trap.

Through this smart military trick, *Khaled* succeeded in saving the Muslim’s army with the least losses. Most men returned to Madinah safe and sound. When they arrived, the children mocked them saying, “*Welcome welcome battle deserters,*” but the prophet silenced them saying, “*Raiders not deserters.*” It was on that day that Muslims nicknamed *Khaled Ibn Al-Walīd*, “The drawn sword of Allah” as the prophet prophesized for the one who would lead the Muslims’ army to safety.

Later on, *Khaled* led the Muslims’ army through many battles. In most of which, Muslims were outnumbered and far away from reinforcements and aid. *Khaled* succeeded in leading them to victory proving the prophet’s prophecy about him to be 100% true. Though wounded hundreds of times, he was never killed by the enemies. On his deathbed, before he drew his last breath, he wept and said:

“I have witnessed a hundred battles. There isn’t a span of hand on my body except that there is a wound in it from a sword strike, an arrow pierce, or a spear’s stab; yet, here I am dying on my bed naturally like an old camel. May cowards never sleep.” [Recorded by Ibn Qutaybah].

This was Allah’s wisdom and disposal. “The sword of Allah” could never be broken by his enemies nor defeated. May Allah grant *Khaled* what delights his soul alongside his companions and join all Muslims with them one day, Amen.

Miraculous Scientific Statements:

Beside the events which Prophet Muhammad foretold, he also stated many things—whether in the Qur’an or the Sunnah—that were deemed strange during his time. They were hard to understand. The disbelievers always accused him of madness because of such statements. Amazingly, these statements were proven later on to have important scientific significances when compared to modern science. These statements stand as solid proof that the Qur’an was truly revealed by the Creator who is All-Knowing. Voluminous books have been written about such statements; as such, I won’t indulge into this issue here; I will just quote what some of the world’s renowned scientists said about these statements and how they received them. Allah says in the Qur’an:

“We shall show them Our signs on the horizons and within themselves until it will become clear to them that it (i.e. the Qur’an) is the Truth. Does it not suffice that your Lord is Witness over all things?” [The Qur’an (41:53)].

Many verses that discuss “Embryology,” “The Universe’s expansion,” “Water and Life,” “Creation of the universe,” “Deep sea currents,” etc., were all presented to several world renowned scholars and well known professors, each in his field of expertise; among them are the following ones:

Professor Keith L. Moore: He is one of the greatest scientist in anatomy and genetics in the world if not the greatest of them all. In 1984, he received the most distinguished prize in the field of anatomy in Canada. He was honored by the Canadian Association of Anatomists with the prestigious J.C.B. Grant Award, Jerant Prize from the Canadian Association of Anatomy Specialists. He led several international associations such as Canadian and American Association of Anatomy Specialists and united assembly of virtual science. He was a former President of the Canadian Association of Anatomists, and of the American Association of Clinical Anatomists. He wrote a book that was used for teaching in most medical colleges in the world. This book was translated to more than 10 languages. He is the publisher of the famous book “The Developing Human.” He has published more than 150 research articles, chapters and books in this field. In 1994 he received the Honored Member Award of the American Association of Clinical Anatomists for outstanding contributions to the field of clinical anatomy. In 2007, the American Association of Anatomists awarded him with the first Henry Gray or Elsevier Distinguished Educator Award. Now let’s see what Professor Moore—as one of the most respected knowledgeable persons on earth in the field of Anatomy—had to say.

At a conference in Saudi Arabia, Jeddah, he said, *“For the past three years, I have worked with the Embryology Committee of King Abdul-Aziz University in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, helping them to interpret the many statements in the Qur’an and Sunnah referring to human reproduction and prenatal development. At first I was astonished by the accuracy of the statements that were recorded in the 7th century AD, before the science of embryology was established. Although I was aware of the glorious history of Muslim scientists in the 10th century AD, and some of their contributions to Medicine, I knew nothing about the religious facts and beliefs contained in the Qur’an and Sunnah.”*

During a conference in Moscow, one of the attending Russian scientists declared embracing Islam because of the scientific facts he found through his studies in the Qur'an, Professor Moore said, *"The Qur'anic terms for the development of baby creation in human body reached a level of accuracy and publicity that the modern science has not reached yet. Which means that this Qur'an is impossible to be except the words of God and that Muhammad is his messenger."*

At a conference in Cairo, he presented a research paper and stated, *"It has been a great pleasure for me to help clarify statements in the Qur'an about human development. It is clear to me that these statements must have come to Muhammad from God, or Allah, because most of this knowledge was not discovered until many centuries later. This proves to me that Muhammad must have been a messenger of God, or Allah."* He also stated that, *"Because the staging of human embryos is complex, owing to the continuous process of change during development, it is proposed that a new system of classification could be developed using the terms mentioned in the Qur'an and Sunnah. The proposed system is simple, comprehensive, and conforms with present embryological knowledge."*

Professor E. Marshall Johnson: Professor and Chairman of the Department of Anatomy and Developmental Biology, and the Director of the Daniel Baugh Institute. He is the author of over 200 publications and the former President of the Teratology Society among other accomplishments. Professor Marshall said:

"In summary, the Qur'an describes not only the development of external form, but emphasizes also the internal stages, the stages inside the embryo, of its creation and development, emphasizing major events recognized by contemporary science..."

"As a scientist, I can only deal with things which I can specifically see. I can understand embryology and developmental biology. I can understand the words that are translated to me from the Qur'an. As I gave the example before, if I were to transpose myself into that era, knowing what I do today and describing things, I could not describe the things that were described..."

"I see no evidence to refute the concept that this individual Muhammad had to be developing this information from some place... so I see nothing here in conflict with the concept that divine intervention was involved in what he was able to write..."

Dr. T.V.N. Persaud: Professor and Head of the Department of Anatomy, Professor of Pediatrics and Child Health, and Associate Professor of Obstetrics, Gynecology and Reproductive Sciences, University of Manitoba, Canada. He is the author and editor of 25 books, has contributed with 31 chapters to published books, and has published over 180 scientific papers. In 1991 he received the most distinguished award presented in the field of anatomy in Canada, the J.C.B. Grant Award from the Canadian Association of Anatomists. Professor Persaud said:

"It seems to me that Muhammad was a very ordinary man, he couldn't read, didn't know how to write, in fact he was an illiterate... We're talking about 1400 years ago, you have some illiterate person making profound statements that are amazingly accurate, of a scientific nature... I personally can't see how this could be mere chance, there are too many accuracies and like Dr. Moore, I have no difficulty in my mind reconciling that this is a divine inspiration or revelation which lead him to these statements."

Dr. Joe Leigh Simpson: Professor and Chairman of the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology at Baylor College of Medicine, Houston, Texas. He is the President of the American Fertility Society, and has served in many other national, and international organizations. He has received numerous awards including Association of Professors of Obstetrics and Gynecology Public Recognition Award in 1992. He has published more than 400 chapters and articles in books and journals. Professor Simpson said:

“These Hadiths (sayings of Prophet Muhammad) could not have been obtained on the basis of the scientific knowledge that was available at the time of the ‘writer’... It follows that not only is there no conflict between genetics and religion (Islam) but in fact religion (Islam) may guide science by adding revelation to some of the traditional scientific approaches... There exist statements in the Qur’an shown centuries later to be valid which support knowledge in the Qur’an having been derived from God.”

Dr. Yoshiodi Kozan: director of the observatory of Tokyo, Japan, also said, *“I say, I am very much impressed by finding true astronomical facts in Qur’an, and for us modern astronomers have been studying very small piece of the universe. We have concentrated our efforts for understanding of very small part. Because by using telescopes, we can see only very few parts of the sky without thinking about the whole universe. So by reading Qur’an and by answering to the questions, I think I can find my future way for investigation of the universe.”*

Dr. Tajatat Tajason: Head of the Department of Anatomy, University of Chiang Mai, Thailand, said, *“In the last three years, I became interested in the Qur’an... From my studies and what I have learned throughout this conference, I believe that everything that has been recorded in the Qur’an fourteen hundred years ago must be the truth that can be proved by the scientific means. Since the Prophet Muhammad could neither read nor write, Muhammad must be a messenger who relayed this truth which was revealed to him as an enlightenment by the one who is eligible creator. This creator must be God, or Allah. I think this is the time to say La Alaha illa Allah, there is no god to worship except Allah (God), Muhammad rasulo Allah, Muhammad is the Prophet...The most precious thing I have gained from coming to this conference is La Alaha illa Allah, and to have become Muslim.”*

The list goes on and on including many scientists. Some of them embraced Islam. Others acknowledged the scientific statements in the Qur’an. They agreed that Prophet Muhammad couldn’t have known those facts centuries before their discovery unless they were divine revelations.

Dr. Gary Miller: Now known as “Abdul-Ahad ‘Omar” after embracing Islam. He is a Canadian Mathematician and former Christian Missionary who through his study in the Bible discovered many inconsistencies. In 1978, he happened to read the Qur’an expecting that it, too, would contain a mixture of truth and falsehood. He discovered to his amazement that the message of the Qur’an was precisely the same as the essence of truth that he had distilled from the Bible. Dr. Miller became a Muslim; since then, he has been active in giving public presentations on Islam including radio and television appearances. He is also the author of several articles and publications about Islam. He gave his wonderful lectures about the Qur’an titled “The amazing Qur’an.”

Dr. Maurice Bucaille: author of the best-seller, “The Bible, The Qur’an and Science.” His classical studies of the scriptural languages, including Arabic, in association with his knowledge of hieroglyphics, allowed him to hold a multidisciplinary inquiry in which his personal contribution as a medical doctor has produced conclusive arguments. His work, “Mummies of the Pharaohs – Modern Medical Investigations,” (St. Martins Press, 1990), won a History Prize from the Académie Française and another prize from the French National Academy of Medicine. His other works include, “What is the Origin of Man,” (Seghers, 1988), “Moses and Pharaoh, the Hebrews in Egypt,” (NTT Mediascope Inc., 1994), and “Réflexions sur le Coran” (Mohamed Talbi & Maurice Bucaille, Seghers, 1989). After a study which lasted ten years, Dr. Maurice Bucaille addressed the French Academy of Medicine in 1976 concerning the existence of physiological and reproduction statements in the Qur’an. He said:

“Our knowledge of these disciplines is such that it is impossible to explain how a text produced at the time of the Qur’an could have contained ideas that have only been discovered in modern times.”

“The above observation makes the hypothesis advanced by those who see Muhammad as the author of the Qur’an untenable. How could a man, from being illiterate, become the most important author, in terms of literary merits, in the whole of Arabic literature?”

“How could he then pronounce truths of a scientific nature that no other human-being could possibly have developed at that time, and all this without once making the slightest error in his pronouncement on the subject?”

Dr. Jeffrey Lang: He is an Associate Professor of Mathematics at the University of Kansas. He embraced Islam when he was about to turn 30 at the early 80s. Since then, he has been an active and influential voice in Islamic Circles throughout America.

Professor Arthur Alison: Head of the Department of Electronic Engineering in the University of London. For several years he was the president of the British Society for Psychological and Spiritual Studies. In the course of his study about religions, he got acquainted with Islam. When he compared it with other religions and creeds, it suited his perception more. He was invited to the First Islamic International Conference on the “Medical Inimitability in the Qur’an” held in Cairo on September 1985 held by the Egyptian Medical Syndicate. In the conference he presented a paper on the psychological and spiritual methods of therapy in the light of The Qur’an, in addition to another paper on sleep and death in the light of Verse 42 of Chapter Az-Zumar (39), which he presented in collaboration with Dr. Mohammed Yahya Sharafi. At the concluding session of the Conference, attended by Sheikh “Jad Al-Haq,” the Egyptian Minister of “Religious consecrations” back then, Professor Alison declared that Islam is the religion of truth and inborn nature with which Allah has created man. He uttered the testimonies and became a Muslim. Regarding this incident he said:

“Therefore, when I studied Islam, I found that it did not conflict with reason and science. I believe that is the revealed religion from the one and only God. As I witnessed the truth, I uttered the two testimonies. The moment I uttered it, I was overwhelmed by a strange and ineffable feeling mingled with ease, comfort and satisfaction.”

He went on to say that the material world is now in a critical stage. What they say and see, does not explain the facts precisely. Here lies the responsibility of Muslims who could meet the wondering and perplexed humanity.

Dimitry Polyakov: An Ukrainian physicist who worked with a team concerned with conducting scientific research in the field of vacuum physics. The team was led by Professor Nikolay Kosinikov, one of the pioneers in the field. He said that they made some globes on which they conducted some experiments in order to test the authenticity of a theory which explains what causes the earth to spin around its axis, and that they succeeded in affirming the theory. It was noticed through their research that the magnetic pole of the Earth was moving only 10 km per year until the year 1970. In the last few years this has increased to 40 km per year and in 2001 the magnetic poles of the Earth moved 200 km in one go. Such is concluded, that under such magnetic forces the two poles of the Earth will swap places which will cause the earth to spin in the opposite direction. Then the sun shall rise from the West. Then while navigating through religions' teachings he found a tradition reported by *Abu Hurayrah* that the prophet P.B.U.H. said, "*Whosoever repents (to Allah) before the sun rises from the West shall have his repentance accepted by Allah.*" At that moment, there was nothing between Dimitry and accepting Islam except going to the nearest Islamic center and proclaiming the Testimonies, which is what he actually did.

There are many more scientists than could be listed here. I just wanted to give you a quick brief of what some of them said. Their words shall always stand as incontestable evidence proving that what some people say about the Qur'an, and that it's full of false scientific statements, is all untrue. The opinions of Islam haters are always built upon falsified statements which they misinterpret or mistranslate intentionally. Many non-Muslims are easily misguided by those wretched characters because they disdain to ask Muslim scholars about the intended meanings of what they don't understand. The findings of scientists did not contradict what Allah has revealed to Prophet Muhammad 14 centuries ago; on the contrary, today's scientific discoveries prove that the Qur'an is a true message from our Creator. It is really overwhelming that a man speaks about the start of all creation and tells us that this was revealed to him by the Creator himself. Later on, 1400 years later, scientists make discoveries and build theories resembling what this man had said. Amazingly, all those scientists weren't Muslims. The question here is, what could have made an unlettered Arab from the desert all of a sudden indulge in such scientific matters after decades of leading a plain simple life! The answer is that he didn't as he couldn't; it was something beyond his knowledge and beyond the knowledge of all people at that time. It was The Creator who revealed it to him so that when His message reaches us centuries later, we would believe it and follow its light. Allah says in the Qur'an:

"Neither did you [O Muhammad] read any book before it, nor did you write any book with your hand. In that case, indeed, the followers of falsehood might have doubted, nay, it is but clear signs in the chests of those endowed with knowledge: and none but the unjust reject Our signs." [The Qur'an (29:48-49)].

"Allah did not create [all] that except in truth. He details the signs [in the Qur'an] for people of knowledge." [The Qur'an (10:5)].

"And those who were given knowledge see that which was sent down upon you [Muhammad] by your Lord is the truth and guides to the path of the Exalted (in Might), the worthy of all praise." [The Qur'an (34:6)].



2. From Deuteronomy we read where Moses P.B.U.H. at his death says to his companions some words holding within their meanings signs of a prophet to come:

(33:1) And this [is] the blessing, wherewith Moses the man of God blessed the children of Israel before his death. (33:2) And he said, **The LORD came from Sinai, and rose up from Seir unto them, he shined forth from mount Paran, and he came with ten thousands of saints: from his right hand [went] a fiery law for them.**

Sinai: The place where Moses P.B.U.H. spoke to Allah and received the commandments. It's the place where the very first laws were received for the guidance of mankind. Its exact location is a big dispute among scholars, some say it's Mount-Moses in Sinai of Egypt, others say it's Mount-Serbal north west to that, others say that it's in North Midian in Arabia, east to Aqaba gulf.

Seir: A landmark on the boundary of Judah as testified for in (Josh 15:10), not far from Kiriath-jearim and Chesalon that are districts of Jerusalem. It is also defined as the region containing the chain of mountains extending from the Dead Sea to Aqaba gulf of the red sea, which forms the south west boundary of Judah. Judah, is the place in which Jesus P.B.U.H. lived and taught, and so did many prophets live and teach there till their death. Some scholars say that "Seir" is a reference to the coming of Jesus and the receipt of a new message, which was the Gospel.

Mount Paran: Or "Pharan" as correctly pronounced and written in Hebrew (פארן), is among the mountains around the wilderness where Ishmael lived after prophet Abraham P.B.U.H. took him and his mother Hagar there as testified for in Genesis where it says: **(21:20) And God was with the lad, and he grew, and dwelt in the wilderness, and became an archer. (21:21) And he dwelt in the wilderness of Paran.** From the biblical verses we can understand that Paran is not a city or town, but a region that contains mountains and a barren valley or waste land. Paran's location according to most biblical dictionaries is unknown. This was testified for in **Hasting's** dictionary of the bible where it says, "***The site of Suph is unknown. So is that of Paran.***" (p.193 in the definition of the word, "Dizahab"). All we know from the Biblical verses is that Paran is in the south direction from Seir. Hence, to search for its approximate location, we need to connect it to the place where Ishmaelites dwelt. From Genesis, we read:

(25:17) And these [are] the years of **the life of Ishmael**, an hundred and thirty and seven years: and **he gave up the ghost and died, and was gathered unto his people.** (25:18) **And they dwelt from Havilah unto Shur, that [is] before Egypt, as you travel towards Assyria: [and] he died in the presence of all his brethren.**

In Smith's dictionary of the Bible, Shur is identified as follows:

"(a wall), a place just without the eastern border of Egypt. Shur is first mentioned in the narrative of Hagar's flight from Sarah. (Genesis 16:7) Abraham afterward "dwelled between Kadesh and Shur, and sojourned in Gerar." (Genesis 20:1) It is also called Ethami. The wilderness of Shur was entered by the Israelites after they had crossed the Red Sea. (Exodus 15:22 Exodus 15:23) It was also called the wilderness of Etham. (Numbers 33:8) **Shur may have been a territory town east of the ancient head of the Red Sea, and from its being spoken of as a limit, it was probably the last Arabian town before entering Egypt.**" [Smith's dictionary 1901].

In Hasting's dictionary of the Bible, **Havilah** is identified as follows:

"It has been suggested that it formed the NE part of the Syrian Desert, **but it may with greater probability be identified with central and north east Arabia.**" [Hasting's dictionary of the Bible, P.333].

And in the definition of the word "Gold," he says:

"...the main sources of it being Ophir, Tarshish and Sheba. **Another Gold producing country was Havilah. Of the localities, Havilah and Sheba were Arabian.**" [Hasting's dictionary of the Bible, P.619].

In Holman's dictionary of the Bible, Havilah is identified as follows:

"Place name meaning, "sandy stretch." Biblical name for the sand-dominated region to the south covering what we call Arabia without necessarily designating a particular geographical or political area. The river from Eden is described as flowing "around the whole land of Havilah" (Genesis 2:11), a land noted for gold and other precious stones. The Table of Nations lists Havilah as a son of Cush or Ethiopia, showing Havilah's political ties (Genesis 10:7). Some Bible students think the name is preserved in modern Haulan in southwest Arabia. Havilah is also mentioned in the table of Nations as a son of Joktan, the grandson of Shem (Genesis 10:29). The descendants of Ishmael, Abraham's son, lived in Havilah (Genesis 25:18). Saul defeated the Amalekites from "Havilah as you go to Shur, which is east of Egypt" (1Samuel 15:7), a description whose meaning Bible students continue to debate. Some seek to change the Hebrew text slightly. Others look for a Havilah further north and west than Havilah is usually located. Others talk of the fluid boundaries of the area. Thus Havilah refers to an area or areas in Arabia, but the precise location is unknown." [Holman's dictionary of the Bible 1991].

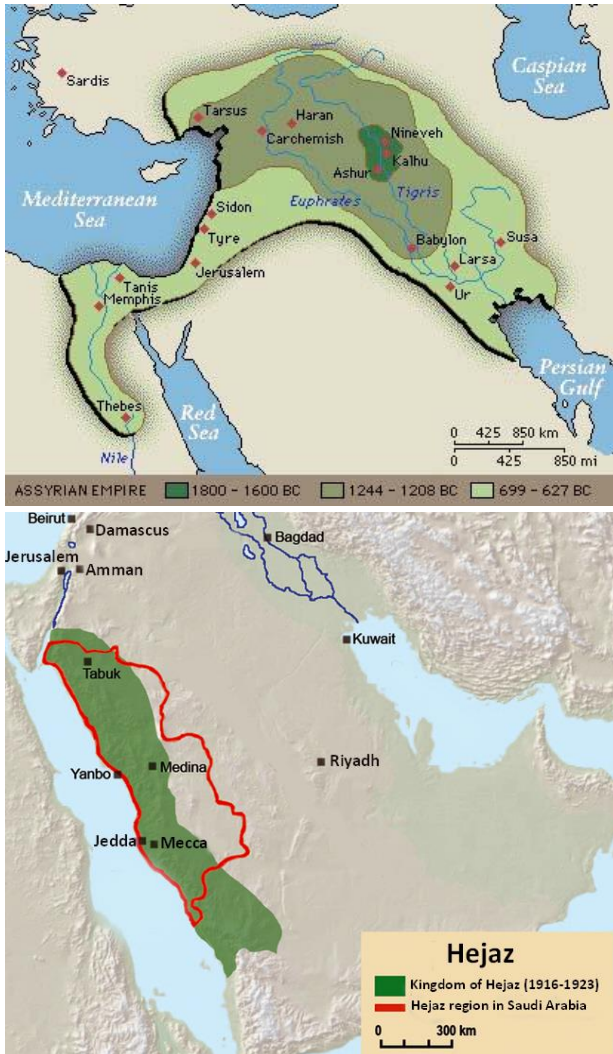
Other sources like (Smith's dictionary 1901), (Encyclopedia Biblica 1899) and (Easton's 1897) suggested that there could be more than one place with the name Havilah. Checking old studies by Rev. Archibald Henry Sayce (1846-1933), who was a pioneer British Assyriologist and linguist; he held a chair as Professor of Assyriology at the University of Oxford from 1891 to 1919. In his work, "The races of the old testament" he says:

"The South Arabian tribe of Sheba spread far to the north, through the sandy deserts of Havilah, and founded a kingdom which came into conflict with **Assyria** in the days of Tiglath-pileser and Sargon." [A.H.Sayce, Races of the Old Testament, 1891].

"The tribes and districts of South-eastern Arabia traced their descent to Joktan. Among them we find Hazarmaveth, the modern Hadhramaut, Ophir, the famous sea-port and emporium of the goods of the further east, **Havilah the sandy region,** compassed by the river Pison (Gen. ii.II), and **occupied by the sons of Ishmael** (Gen. xxv. 18), and Amalek (i Sam. xv. 7), as well as Sheba, the Saba of the native inscriptions, whose ancient capital is now represented by the ruins of Mareb in the south-western corner of Arabia." [A.H.Sayce - Races of the old testament - P.65].

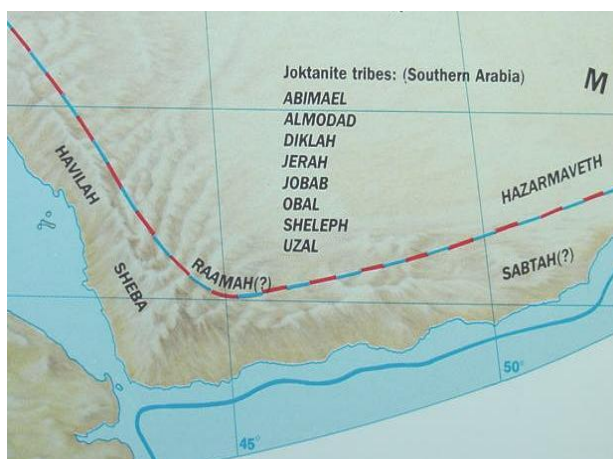
And he says in his work "Early Israel and the Surrounding Nations" in (1899):

"The Ishmaelites were merchants and traders. They lived on the caravan-road which brought the spices of southern Arabia to Canaan and Egypt, and the trade was largely in their hands." [A.H.Sayce - Early Israel and the Surrounding Nations – Ch.r III].



The problem with Sayce’s studies is that they lacked modern science elements, like the use of satellites, underground imaging and tracking the dried out river valleys. Modern studies by “Juris Zarins,” who is an archaeologist and professor at Missouri State University, specialized in the Middle East. He has extensive experience in archaeological fieldwork in Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Oman, and Yemen, suggested Hejaz mountains to meet Havilah’s description. Hejaz is defined primarily by its western border on the Red Sea, it extends from the Gulf of Aqaba to Jizan in the far south-west of Saudi Arabia and directly north of the border with Yemen, as demonstrated on the second map. This region includes both the Cradle of Gold at “Mahd Al-dahab,” which is the leading gold mining area in the Arabian Peninsula, located in Madinah province, and it also includes a possible source of the “Pishon River” - that has been speculated to refer to a now dried-out river formerly flowing 600

miles (970 km) northeast to the Persian Gulf via “Wadi Al-Batin” system. Archaeological research led by “Farouk El-Baz” of Boston University indicates that the river system, now prospectively known as the Kuwait River, was active 2500–3000 BC. Bdellium plants are also abundant in Hejaz.



This map demonstrates an approximate location based on the previous data for the place of Havilah. The region of South West Arabia (Yemen today) has the kingdom of Sheba and the region called Hazarmaveth (Arabic: Hadhramaut). In Genesis Havilah is described as a land of gold, bdellium and precious stones. The Queen of Sheba brought Solomon much gold, spices and incense (resins) and precious stones (1 Kings 10:1-13).

Genesis also mentions that Havilah was a son of Joktan, and his brothers are Sheba and Hazarmaveth (Genesis 10:26-30), which are localities associated with Yemen in south west Arabia. So if **Shur** is a place between Palestine (Philistia) and Egypt, and if **Havilah** is a place in Arabia, and most probably from the above descriptions, starts somewhere between the south west corner and central west Arabia, then the area where Ishmael and his offspring dwelt couldn't be but "Hejaz," which is the west half of the country called today **Saudi-Arabia**, and so Paran most probably is a place in this area.



The Egyptian historian "Al-Maqrizi" (1364-1442 A.C.), gave full description for all the places named Pharan in his most important book "*Al-Mawaiz Wal- 'i'tibar Fi Dhikr Al-Khitat Wal- 'athar*" or "Lessons and considerations in mentioning the tracks and signs," which was translated to French by "Urbain Bouriant" as (Description topographique et historique de l'Égypte – Paris, 1895), he said:

"The city of Pharan: is a city at the shores of Qalzam sea (Red sea) and it's among the cities of the "Amaleek" (i.e. AMālekites) over a hill between two mountains, and in the two mountains there are a lot of holes, uncountable, filled with dead corpses, and from there to Qalzam sea there is only one station, and it's called at that place: the shore of Pharan sea. It's the sea in which God drowned pharaoh, between Pharan city and the "Israelites' wanderings in the wilderness" there are two stations. And it is mentioned also that Pharan is the name of the mountains of Makkah or the mountains of Hejaz, and this is the one mentioned in Torah. Verifications show that Pharan and Tor are two towns in Upper Egypt and that they are different from the ones mentioned in the Torah.

It is said that Pharan is the son of Amr the son of Amleek (AMālek) and that he's the one to whom the mountains of Makkah are ascribed. People say: Pharan mountains, and others say: Pheran mountains, and the city of Pharan has been among the cities of Madian until today, it's full of fruitful palm trees from which I ate and there is a big river in it, and it's a site of ruins by which the Arabs pass." [Al-Maqrizi, "Lessons and considerations in mentioning the tracks and signs"].

Some people, in their search for Pharan, claimed that Ishmael lived and died in Egypt. Others claimed that Arabs are not the descendants of Ishmael. Well, these are the worst claims ever. The Egyptian history is known way far before Abraham through Egyptology, and never was it found mentioned anywhere that Ishmael immigrated and settled in Egypt and formed a nation there, or that Egyptians are his descendants. Remember that Allah promised Abraham to make of Ishmael a great nation in Genesis. Ishmael's seed multiplied greatly through his twelve sons. The tribes of the two sons, Nebajoth and Kedar, seem to have acquired an ascendancy over the rest. That's why Arabs are sometimes referred to after one of them. This is exactly like the entire nation of Israel is sometimes designated Judah from the superiority in numbers of this tribe. "Eusebius Sophronius Hieronymus" known as "**Jerome**" (347-420 AD) who was recognized by both the Catholic and the Eastern Orthodox Churches as a saint, testified for this in his commentary on Jeremiah. **He described Kedar as a region of the Arabian Desert where the Ishmaelites dwelt. And in his commentary on Isaiah, he observed Nebajoth as one of the sons of Ishmael after whose names the Arabian desert was called.**

"Joseph Ibn Matityahu" (37-100 AD), the famous Roman-Jewish historian who lived in Galilee in north Palestine testified for the same truth in his book, "Antiquities of the Jews" where he says, "Now when Sarah had completed her ninetieth, and Abraham his hundredth year, a son (Isaac) is born unto them, whom they forthwith circumcise on the eighth day, and from him the Jews derive their custom of circumcising children after the same interval. **But the Arabians** administer circumcision at the close of the thirteenth year, **for Ishmael, the founder of their nation, the son of Abraham** by his concubine¹, was circumcised at that time of life" (Antiquities of the Jews, chapter 12). Ibn Matityahu also said, "**That he (i.e. Abraham) left to Ishmael and to his posterity, the country of Arabia,** as also to his sons by Keturah, Troglodytes: and to Isaac, Canaan." [Antiquities of the Jews, chapter 9].

Also "**Origen Adamantius**" (185 – 254 AD) who is regarded as one of the Church Fathers and one of the most distinguished writers of the early Church testified for the same truth in his writings where he says, "*The natives of Judea generally circumcise their children on the eighth day, **but the Ishmaelites who inhabit Arabia** universally practice circumcision in the thirteenth year.*" I hope you can see now how some people are twisting the words in their trial to dodge the truth and fabricate in its place what would match their beliefs. It is evident beyond doubt from what the earliest knowledgeable historians and church fathers wrote that Arabs are the descendants of Ishmael, the son of Abraham, and that they have dwelt in Arabia since Ishmael moved with his mother Hagar to Pharan. A historical fact in which there is no doubt except by those who're contentious.

1: Hagar was not Abraham's concubine but she was his wife as testified for clearly in Genesis 16:3, "*And Sarai Abram's wife took Hagar her maid the Egyptian, after Abram had dwelt ten years in the land of Canaan, and gave her to her husband Abram **to be his wife.***"

From the above, we can now understand that the opinion stating that Paran is in Sinai contradicts the historical solid fact that Ishmaelites dwelt in Arabia. Moreover, the verse of Deuteronomy under discussion was obviously referring to three distinct different places (Sinai, Seir and Paran), so it is illogical to say that one of them is located inside the other. This was reassured in Numbers verse (10:12) that says, “**And the children of Israel took their journeys out of the wilderness of Sinai, and the cloud rested in the wilderness of Paran.**” So it doesn’t take a rocket scientist to understand that Paran couldn’t be a place inside Sinai. Furthermore, logically speaking, if I wanted to ask about the place where any famous historical figure lived, the most correct information I shall get would be from this figure’s people and offspring, for they would be the ones most knowing of his history. If I wanted to learn about Queen Elizabeth, where she lived and where she was buried, I would ask the English people, not the Chinese. Since Ishmael P.B.U.H. was the father of the Arabs, and one of the most famous figures in their history, therefore the Arab tribes are the ones who are most knowing of the place where he lived, not anyone else. As inherited by all Arab tribes, even before the advent of Islam, Ishmael lived and died in the place they call “Makkah,” and he built the sacred mosque there with his father Abraham at the sanctuary called “Bakkah.” His grave is next to the sacred mosque. It is defined in some old traditions to be under the place called “Hijr Ishmael” alongside his mother’s grave. Therefore, if the wilderness of Paran was the name of the place where Ishmael lived, then Mount Paran is one of the mountains surrounding Makkah, which is the place where Prophet Muhammad P.B.U.H. received his very first revelations.

Back to the verses of Deuteronomy:

Reading those verses and pondering over them, one may notice that when Prophet Moses P.B.U.H. said, “*The Lord came from Sinai,*” this was a reference to the Lord’s guiding message and laws which Moses received there. When he said, “*rose up from Seir unto them,*” this was a reference to Palestine, the land in which most of the prophets ever since Abraham till Jesus dwelt and taught. It is a special reference to the coming of Jesus P.B.U.H. and the Gospel which he received there. Thirdly, when he said, “*he shined forth from mount Paran, and he came with ten thousands of saints: from his right hand [went] a fiery law for them,*” this was a reference to an everlasting message and law that would be revealed to another prophet in Paran. This prophet shall come with ten thousand saints. And from the message he receives, the Lord’s light of guidance shall shine forth. After Prophet Muhammad P.B.U.H. immigrated to Madinah, he returned to Makkah eight years later and retrieved it from the hands of the polytheists. As reported by the companions and recorded by Muslim historians, the prophet’s army was formed of ten thousand companions, who were all restless devout believers; they were most renouncing to the worldly pleasures and most pious; they strained themselves in worship at night, and in the morning, they strove alongside the prophet in building their community and defending their faith. In other words, they never lived for themselves, but they dedicated their lives for serving their Creator. Look at Makkah today, you will see millions of pilgrims traveling to it annually from all over the globe, only for the purpose of worshipping and glorifying Allah in the sacred mosque, which lies between the mountains at the sanctuary of Bakkah. Now I have a question for you: *Is there any other place on earth whose description matches the verses under discussion more than Makkah?!*

The Qur'an—as mentioned previously in verses (5:44-49)—is a confirmation to the Scriptures revealed before it, a watcher over them, and a corrector to whatever has been distorted amidst their lines. Allah ordered the prophet P.B.U.H. in those verses saying: *“So judge between them [Jews and Christians] by that which Allah has revealed, and follow not their desires away from the truth which has come to you.”*

Reading the Qur'an only once will help any researcher realize that some of the previous laws in the Torah are confirmed in it and others were abrogated. During the prophet's life, people of the book resented this too much although the prophecies of a final fiery law are right there inside their own holy books. About this Allah says in the Qur'an:

“Neither the People of the Book who disbelieve nor the idolaters would like anything good to be sent down to you from your Lord, but Allah chooses for His grace whoever He wills: His bounty has no limits. Any revelation We cause to be abrogated or forgotten, We replace it with something better or similar. Do you (O Prophet) not know that Allah has power over everything? Do you not know that control of the heavens and the earth belongs to Him? You (believers) have no protector or helper but Allah. Do you wish to demand of your messenger something similar to what was demanded of Moses? Whoever exchanges faith for disbelief has strayed far from the righteous path. Even after the truth has become clear to them, many of the People of the Book wish they could turn you back to disbelief after you have believed, out of their selfish envy. Forgive and forbear until Allah gives his command: He has power over all things. Keep up the prayer and pay the prescribed alms. Whatever good you store up for yourselves, you will find it with Allah: He sees everything you do.” [The Qur'an (2:105-110)].

Prophet Muhammad P.B.U.H. said, *“I have left with you what if you hold on to, **you shall never go astray**, the book of Allah (i.e. **the Qur'an**) and **my teachings**.”* [Recorded by Muslim, Tirmidhī and others].

In reference to **“the right hand,”** in Islam all righteous actions are preferred to be done by the right hand. The left hand gives support if needed. So the right hand is always referred to in connection with pure, pious actions, etc. Muslims never shake hands except using their right hands. When reading the Qur'an they always carry the book with their right hands unless they feel tired. Muslims eat and drink with their right hands. Lady 'Ā'ishah said, *“The prophet P.B.U.H. loved to start any action with his right first, even when combing his hair or wearing his footwear.”* [Recorded by Ahmad and others].

Finally, there is a great resemblance between this verse of Deuteronomy and a certain chapter in the Qur'an in which Allah swears by three Holy places identical to the ones mentioned. From the holy Qur'an, we read:

“By the Fig and the Olive, By the Tor Sinin (Mount Tor in Sinai), and By this secured city, Verily We have created man in the best stature, then do We return him into the lowest of the low, except those who believed and did righteous deeds, for them there is a reward never ending. So, what can make you, after all this, deny the Requital? Is Allah not the Greatest of all judges?” [The Qur'an (95)].

The fig and the Olive: In reference to the blessed place historically known of planting these two fruits abundantly for over 3000 years, namely “Palestine.” Palestine has been nicknamed for centuries “The land of fig and olives.” Both trees are mentioned extensively in the Bible and taken as symbols of peace and prosperity. They are also especially associated with Palestine. Mount of Olives is a mountain ridge adjacent to ancient Jerusalem. This is the place where Jesus is said to have prayed the last night before Allah saved him and made him rise to heaven in Islam. The place is named for the olive groves that once covered its slopes. Palestine is also the place to which Prophet Abraham immigrated and lived till his death. The place where he was followed by a succession of prophets till Jesus P.B.U.T., and the place where most of them preached their teachings, lived and died. It is also the first Qiblah for Muslims.

Tor Sinin (Mount Tor in Sinin or Sinai): Again, the place where Prophet Moses P.B.U.H. received the commandments and the tablets.

The Secured City: Referring to Makkah and its sacred valley of Bakkah, where Prophet Abraham built with his son Ishmael the *Ka'bah*, or as inherited by all Arabs, “**The sacred house of Allah.**”

In my opinion, the previous was not a coincidence. The Qur'an is confirming the verse of Deuteronomy as explained, and clarifying the misunderstanding about the place of mount Paran. May Allah guide us all to the truth.



3. The Song of Songs is a big dispute among scholars. Some argued that it shouldn't be included in the holy book because of its apparent sexual nature like Rabbi Shammai (50BC–30CE, Hebrew: רבי שמאי) who was an important figure in Judaism's core work of rabbinic literature, the Mishnah. Others stressed its importance like Rabbi Aqiva (17–137CE, Hebrew: רבי עקיבא) of the Hillel school who said, *“The entire universe is not as worthy as the day on which the Song of Songs was given to Israel, for all the Writings are holy, but the Song of Songs is the Holy of Hollies.”* The book was not accepted as part of the Jewish canon and the holy books till the council of Jamnia 90CE.

In short, The “Song of songs” is a book that talks in its clear simple appearance about love using sexual perplexing expressions that are thought of by most rabbis and priests as symbols. On checking some of the writings of eastern orthodox fathers, some of them explained that the feminine character in this book is the church, and the masculine is Jesus P.B.U.H. Others said that the feminine character is the prayers praising Jesus, among other opinions. Likewise, Jews have different opinions. Some explained that the feminine character was a symbol for Jerusalem and the masculine for God. This view was forwarded by the Midrash, Targum, and Medieval Jewish commentators. Finally, some scholars said that it was much simpler than all of the previous; the masculine character is Solomon P.B.U.H., the feminine character is one of his wives, and the whole book is a description for their marriage. This last opinion is the strangest of them all. If this were the case, then why would it be included in the Holy Book?!

The only part of the Songs that really caught my attention as it has done with other researchers before is the paragraph containing seven verses at the end of chapter five. They are the description of a person, a certain man whose appearance was found so important. This man's detailed description and appearance has lived through thousands of years preserved between the verses of the songs which say:

(5:10) My beloved [is] white and ruddy, the chiefest among ten thousand. (5:11) His head [is as] the most fine gold, his locks [are] bushy, [and] black as a raven. (5:12) His eyes [are] as [the eyes] of doves by the rivers of waters, washed with milk, [and] fitly set. (5:13) His cheeks [are] as a bed of spices, [as] sweet flowers: his lips [like] lilies, dropping sweet smelling myrrh. (5:14) His hands [are as] gold rings set with the beryl: his belly [is as] bright ivory overlaid [with] sapphires. (5:15) His legs [are as] pillars of marble, set upon sockets of fine gold: his countenance [is] as Lebanon, excellent as the cedars. (5:16) His mouth [is] most sweet: yea, he [is] altogether lovely. This [is] my beloved, and this [is] my friend, O daughters of Jerusalem.

The previous verses are describing a man's appearance, they describe his face, his skin, his hair, his eyes, his scent, his saliva, etc. Now let's analyze this description bit by bit. Please note that the descriptions given below in front of each part of the verses under discussion have already been mentioned in details (P.104-106) as given by Prophet Muhammad's close companions and mostly by his wife Lady 'Ā'ishah.

My beloved [is] white and ruddy: *“His face was a little rounded, white with a red tinge”* - *“The prophet P.B.U.H. was white imbedded with redness, the sweat (drops) on his face were like pearls, I never saw of his like neither before him nor after him P.B.U.H.”*

Chiefest among ten thousand: It's important here to state again the historical fact that when freeing Makkah (The origin of revelations and the land of the first mosque that was ever built for worshipping Allah on earth), the prophet P.B.U.H. was leading ten thousand companions as narrated by historians like Ibn Ishaq, Ibn Hesham, Baihaqy, Waqedy and others.

His head [is as] the most fine gold: *“Whenever the prophet P.B.U.H. smiled, sparkles almost reflected on to the walls.”* - *“The prophet P.B.U.H. had a shining face that shone like the moon, he was the most handsome among all people with the most shining cuticle.”* - *“The prophet’s neck was like a jug of silver.”* - *“Whenever the sun shone on his neck, it sparkled like a silver jug with golden gangues.”* - *“I never saw anything more beautiful than the prophet P.B.U.H., as if the sun runs in his face.”* - *“Oh, my son, if you had seen him, it’s as if you saw the sun rise (in his face).”*

His locks [are] bushy, [and] black as a raven: *“The prophet’s hair was neither straight nor curly and his forelock’s hair reached his earlobes.”* - *“The prophet P.B.U.H. had extremely black hair.”* - *“When the prophet P.B.U.H. passed away, there weren’t more than 20 grey hairs in his hair and beard.”* - *“The prophet’s hair was bushy and wavy.”*

His eyes [are] as [the eyes] of doves by the rivers of waters, washed with milk, [and] fitly set: *“The prophet’s eyes were big and beautiful with dark black colored iris.”* - *“The prophet P.B.U.H. had great eyes with long eye lashes, and the white of his eyes was pervaded with a pale red color.”* - *“If you were to look at him, you would think that he had kohl in his eyes, which he didn’t P.B.U.H.”*

Verse 5:12 says that: (His eyes [are] as [the eyes] of doves by the rivers of waters, washed with milk, [and] fitly set). Doves’ eyes as indicated in the lower pictures mostly have dark colored iris and white mottled with red sclera, but the verse continues saying washed with milk, which is of course white colored. Now what happens if you try to look at a red marble washed with milk, it will appear white with pale red color, which is exactly how the prophet’s eyes were described by his companions. Also note that the dove’s eye is designated from the outside with a thin black line like it has kohl around it, which is also how the prophet’s eyes were described P.B.U.H.



His cheeks [are] as a bed of spices, [as] sweet flowers: *“The prophet P.B.U.H. had smooth plain cheeks”* - *“I never smelled a scent more sweet-smelling than the prophet’s P.B.U.H.”* - *“This is your sweat prophet, we put it in our perfumes as it is the most sweet smelling among all scents.”*

His lips are [like] lilies, dropping sweet smelling myrrh.” And later **“His mouth [is] most sweet”**: Regarding the prophet’s saliva, there are many narrations that describe its special attributes. Among those that describe its odor are the following:

Lady Omaira bint Mas’oud (a woman from Madinah) and her sisters went to visit the prophet and pay homage to him. They were five women. She said that when they entered on him they found him eating jerked meat, he cut a piece of it with his teeth then took it and handed it over to her, she divided it between them and each one of them ate a piece of it. She said, *“Eversince that day and till my sisters passed away, never did any of them have any bad smell coming out of her mouth.”* [Recorded by Tabarāni and Abu Na’eem].

Wael Ibn Hajar, the companion said, *“I once pulled up a bucket of water for the prophet P.B.U.H. He drank then he spat back some water in to the well. The odor of Musk exuded from the well.”* [Recorded by Ahmad and Tabarāni].

His hands [are as] gold rings set with the beryl: his belly [is as] bright ivory overlaid [with] sapphires. (5:15) His legs [are as] pillars of marble, set upon sockets of fine gold: his countenance [is] as Lebanon, excellent as the cedars: *“The prophet P.B.U.H. shone as if he was created from silver.” - “What appears to the sun from his neck looked like a silver jug with golden gangues sparkling with the whites of silver and redness of gold, and what’s hidden in his clothes from his neck and beneath it shone like the moon in its full night.” - “The prophet P.B.U.H. had a broad hairless chest, like the mirror in its sternness and flatness, none of his flesh was flabby, and it was as shiny as the moon in its full night.” - “The prophet P.B.U.H. had wide bone structure with broad shoulders.” - “I looked at the prophet’s legs while he was riding his camel. They were as white as palm pith.”*

In case you haven’t seen palm pith before, its picture is on the left. Ivory is on the right:



Finally, Prophet Muhammad’s name is mentioned loud and clear at the end of the description but mistranslated in the English version, which shows the hidden intention of hiding the truth. Names are not translated from one language to another even if they had meanings. If your name is “Armstrong” in English, it is still pronounced “Armstrong” in Arabic “أرمسترونج” and in Hebrew “ארמסטרונג” as well as in any other language. We don’t translate it to “Bras forte” in French for instance. If you try to listen to a rabbi reciting this verse in Hebrew you will know that what I’m saying is true. Let’s take a look at this in brief. Please remember that Hebrew is read from right to left:

חכו ממתקים וכלו מחמדים זה דודי וזה רעי בנות ירושלם:

Pronounced as follows, “Hiko mmtakim V’ekhulo Muhammadim zeh dudi vizeh ra’i bnot yurushalem”

Translated in English as, “**His mouth [is] most sweet: yea, he [is] altogether lovely. This [is] my beloved, and this [is] my friend, O daughters of Jerusalem.**”

“Lovely” is a mistranslation of the word “מחמדים” (“מחמד” in Hebrew is exactly in Arabic “محمد” with the exact same 4 letters and pronunciation). Please note that “ים” which is pronounced in English as “im” [*That is used in Hebrew to identify the noun as a masculine plural*]¹, is added to names in Hebrew as a plural of respect. This stresses the absoluteness of the attribute that stands as the meaning of the name. Like when added to “Aloh” to become “Alohim.” Aloh means, “The one with power,” while Alohim in the Hebrew terminology means, “The one whose powers are absolute.” It doesn’t mean, “These with powers.”

“Muhammad” linguistically means, “The continuously praised one.” The “im” were added in Hebrew to stress the absoluteness of his praise, meaning: “The one whose praise is absolutely continuous.” This shall further be confirmed in the next sign as well.

So the correct translation would be one of the following two:

“His mouth is confectionary and the all of him; Muhammad is my beloved and is my shepherd subsidiaries of Jerusalem.”

“His mouth is confectionary and the all of him; the continuously praised one is my beloved and is my shepherd subsidiaries of Jerusalem.”

The previous verses altogether form a complete description of Prophet Muhammad as was given by his companions, wife, and those who knew him best. Whether the word Muhammadim is his name or the meaning of his name, it is right there, mentioned loud and clear at the end of the description. Again, the one leading ten thousand is mentioned, which reminds us of the previous sign in Deuteronomy and the prophet of Paran. I leave the judgment of the previous for the reader.

1: Remember that God in Hebrew, “Aloh” means “the one with power” is written “Alohim” which is the plural of the attribute, and as we have explained, adding “im” to the attribute implies the continuity and that its boundless, and so stressing its absoluteness. Example as in Deuteronomy 5-7:

לא יהיה-לך אלהים אחרים על-פני

The verse is translated in the English version as, “Thou shalt have none other gods before me.” The shaded word here pronounced “Alohim” means “Gods” as plural but the exact same word with the plural pronunciation is used to refer to the one god in Deuteronomy verse 4-35:

אתה הראת לדעת כי יהוה הוא האלהים אין עוד מלבדו

Which is translated in English as, “Unto thee it was shewed, that thou mightest know that the LORD he [is] God, [there is] none else beside him.” The shaded Hebrew word is exactly the same but now it is used to refer to the one and only God, and the “ה” before “Alohim” in Hebrew means “the.” The word is originally “Aloh” or “אלה,” that means “the one with power” used to refer to “God,” but “ים” or “im” is added as a plural of respect to the attribute implying its continuity and that its boundless, and so stressing its absoluteness.

4. From Habakkuk, we read when Habakkuk P.B.U.H. was invoking Allah for mercy after seeing a vision of the Chaldeans destroying his people's towns and cities. Habakkuk then wondered why Allah would allow this to happen to the Israelites. He was trying to find excuses for their sins, which he knew very well and even spells some of them in verse (1:4). Allah revealed to him that he punishes all spoilers and evildoers for their deeds one by another, and that the Chaldeans shall be punished as well for their evil works. Learning this, Habakkuk prays for Allah to revive His laws and religion after this occurs, and to make it known and clear so that people may follow it. So Allah revealed to him in a vision these signs:

(3:3) God came from Teman, and the **Holy One from mount Paran**. Selah. His glory covered the heavens, and **the earth was full of his praise**. (3:4) And [his] **brightness was as the light, he had horns [coming] out of his hand: and there [was] the hiding of his power**. (3:5) **Before him went the pestilence, and burning coals went forth at his feet**. (3:6) He stood, and measured the earth: he beheld, and drove asunder the nations, and the everlasting mountains were scattered, the perpetual hills did bow: his ways [are] everlasting.

Again, Paran is mentioned in connection with a holy person and a praised one coming from it. The rest of the verse describes his glory as covering the heavens, which is something that we can never recognize as we are earth inhabitants. But the second half of the verse says that, "**the earth is full of his praise.**" As stated before, "Muhammad" means, "The one praised continuously." Muslims all around the world, never utter the prophet's name except that they follow it with the sentence, "Peace and Blessings be upon him," which we interpret as P.B.U.H. Muslims pray five obligatory prayers every day from dawn till night. Before each prayer, the muezzin says during his call, "*I bear witness that Muhammad is Allah's messenger.*" Of course, the reader should be able to understand that at every second there is dawn somewhere on earth, there is sunset somewhere else, noon, night, and after-noon, cover the whole earth in continuous succession. This means that in every second there are thousands of muezzins somewhere calling for prayers and raising their voices with the prophet's praise. Thereafter, Muslims gather for praying. In their prayers they recite what's called "*Tashahud*" or "Giving the Testimonies." Every Muslim says in it "*I bear witness that there is no God but Allah and that Muhammad is His messenger,*" and then follow these words with the same invocation saying, "*O Allah, praise Muhammad and the family of Muhammad as you have praised Abraham and the family of Abraham, and bless Muhammad and the family of Muhammad as you have blessed Abraham and the family of Abraham.*" The 5 prayers take place in succession all round the world from one place to the next as the earth rotates around its axis. Do you know that there are over 1.7 billion Muslims living on earth? This means that there isn't a second in the 24 hours of the day except that somewhere on earth there are millions of people praising Prophet Muhammad's name? Well, this is what I can absolutely understand as, "**the earth is full of his praise.**"

Now, to the next verse which says, "And [his] **brightness was as the light, he had horns [coming] out of his hand: and there [was] the hiding of his power,**" Also translated in modern versions as follows:

"(His) radiance is like the sunlight, He has rays (flashing) from His hand, And there is the hiding of His power." The New American Standard Version (1995).

“And ‘his’ brightness was as the light, He had rays ‘coming forth’ from his hand, And there was the hiding of his power.” The American Standard Version (1901).

“His splendor is like the sunrise. Rays shine from his hand, where his power is hidden.” The World English Bible.

Again, the holy one’s appearance is alluded to in a way that totally matches Prophet Muhammad’s description as was given by his companions and stated previously. The verse describes the secret of his power describing as horns or light rays from his hand. Remember when verse (33:2) of Deuteronomy said, **“from his right hand [went] a fiery law for them,”** it was also describing the prophet from Paran. These two verses are obviously describing the same prophet from Paran. They fairly complete each other when referring to his hand—or his right hand as more accurately described in Deuteronomy’s verse—from which a fiery law, horns of light, or rays of light as described in Habakkuk, shall come. Inside this law shall the secret of his power lie. This fiery law is the Qur’an, the creator’s final message to all people. All of the pure actions and divine laws mentioned in the Qur’an, or taught by the prophet, are what’s described in the previous verses of Deuteronomy and Habakkuk as “fiery law,” and “horns or rays of light.”

Habakkuk’s verse then continues saying, **“Before him went the pestilence”**:

Before Prophet Muhammad’s immigration to Madinah, the city was known of its pestilence and this pestilence was known all over Hejaz as *“Yathreb’s fever.”* All Muslims who immigrated caught this fever and fell terribly sick. Lady ‘Ā’ishah reported this incident saying, *“When the prophet arrived at Madinah, Abu Bakr and Belal¹ fell very sick. When I entered on them, I said, ‘How are you father? How are you Belal?’ She continued saying, ‘Whenever Abu Bakr was in great pain, he would say, ‘Every man wakes up between his family, and death is closer to him than the soles of his footwear.’ Belal was mostly unconscious but whenever he was aware, he would repeat a few poetry lines, ‘Oh my poetry, how I hope to spend a night in a valley surrounded by Ezkhar and Galil². Oh shall I one day stand by Mganna’s³ waters? Shall I see again Shama and Tophil⁴.”*

Lady ‘Ā’ishah then said, *“I went to the prophet P.B.U.H. and informed him of their sickness. He said, ‘O Allah, make Madinah beloved to us like Makkah and more. O Allah, bless its Weighs, its Bushels, and move its fever to Jahfa⁵.”* Lady ‘Ā’ishah then commented saying, *“We came to Madinah and it was the most pestilential of all lands.”* [Recorded by Bukhari].

All praises be to Allah, the prophet’s blessed invocation was fulfilled and all the companions were cured and the pestilence of Madinah was gone ever since that day without any return. What’s really amazing is the second half of this verse which says, **“and burning coals went forth at his feet,”** which is a clear reference to the high fever that infected the companions and was cured by the prophet’s invocation.

1: Belal was a very famous companion originally from Abyssinia. He was the prophet’s muezzin and Abu Bark’s former freed slave.

2: Ezkhar and Galil : Plants that grow in Makkah.

3: Majanna : One of the Arab’s Markets in Makkah.

4: Shama and Tophil : Two of Makkah’s mountains.

5: Jahfa : A desert place far away from Madinah, near Sham.

Moreover, if you take a look at the different translations of this verse, you will find it translated as follows:

“Before him went disease, and flames went out at his feet” (The Basic English Bible). The word under discussion here, which is “רשף” in Hebrew, has the following meanings, “flame,” “coal or burning coal” and “Plague or pestilence.” So the verse is implying that this pestilence is like flames or burning coal, or what we know in short as fever. The verses state that this pestilence shall fade away at the feet of the awaited prophet from Paran. This is more clearly confirmed in King James 2000 Bible translation: *“Before him went the pestilence, and burning fever went forth at his feet.”*

Finally, the awaited prophet’s description ends with this verse, **“He stood, and measured the earth: he beheld, and drove asunder the nations, and the everlasting mountains were scattered, the perpetual hills did bow: his ways [are] everlasting.”**

This verse is clearly stating that this final prophet whose ways are everlasting shall fight and gain triumph over the other nations, which is also the case with Prophet Muhammad. After his coming and success in delivering Allah’s final message and law, Muslims lead by his companions (i.e. the ones described earlier as saints) triumphed over all of the tyrant military empires that occupied and ruled over the earth during their time. The like of this prophecy is in Daniel’s interpretation of king Nebuchadnezzar’s dream in (2:36-45). Babylon was opened for Islam as was predicted by Prophet Muhammad P.B.U.H., so was Persia and Constantinople, the largest capitals that sent out magnificent armies, occupied the lands, enslaved the people, and monopolized the world’s treasures back then.

Do you know any other person whose life matches the above mentioned verses of Habakkuk more than Prophet Muhammad? I leave the answer for your conscience.

Prophet Muhammad P.B.U.H. said, *“My case and the prophets before me is as that of a man who established a building, beautified and adorned it except for one missing corner stone. People kept on wandering around it admiring its beauty and saying, ‘If only the missing stone was put in its place.’ Verily, I am that stone and I am the seal of the prophets.”* [Recorded by Bukhari, Ahmad, An-Nasā’ī and others].

May Allah guide us and all people to the truth, Amen.



5. Isaiah's book is full of prophecies about the future of that old era, as Isaiah approximately lived in the 8th century B.C. Many of these prophecies gave signs about prophets who would come in the future. Jesus P.B.U.H. was mentioned in many of them, but others couldn't in any way match but Prophet Muhammad P.B.U.H. Let's take a look at one of these prophecies and analyze it. From the book of Isaiah chapter 21 we read:

(21:1) The burden of the desert of the sea. As whirlwinds in the south pass through, [so] it cometh from the desert, from a terrible land. (21:2) A grievous vision is declared unto me, the treacherous dealer dealeth treacherously, and the spoiler spoileth. Go up, O Elam: besiege, O Media, all the sighing thereof have I made to cease. (21:3) Therefore are my loins filled with pain: pangs have taken hold upon me, as the pangs of a woman that travaileth: I was bowed down at the hearing [of it,] I was dismayed at the seeing [of it](21:4) My heart panted, fearfulness affrighted me: the night of my pleasure hath he turned into fear unto me. (21:5) Prepare the table, watch in the watchtower, eat, drink: arise, ye princes, [and] anoint the shield. (21:6) For thus hath the Lord said unto me, Go, set a watchman, let him declare what he seeth. (21:7) **And he saw a chariot [with] a couple of horsemen, a chariot of asses, [and] a chariot of camels,** and he hearkened diligently with much heed: (21:8) And he cried, A lion: My lord, I stand continually upon the watchtower in the daytime, and I am set in my ward whole nights: (21:9) And, behold, here cometh a chariot of men, [with] a couple of horsemen. And he answered and said, **Babylon is fallen, is fallen, and all the graven images of her gods he hath broken unto the ground.** (21:10) O my threshing, and the corn of my floor: that which I have heard of the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, have I declared unto you. **(21:11) The burden of Dumah. He calleth to me out of Seir, Watchman, what of the night? Watchman, what of the night? (21:12) The watchman said, The morning cometh, and also the night: if ye will enquire, enquire ye: return, come. (21:13) The burden upon Arabia. In the forest in Arabia shall ye lodge, O ye travelling companies of Dedanim. (21:14) The inhabitants of the land of Tema brought water to him that was thirsty, they prevented with their bread him that fled. (21:15) For they fled from the swords, from the drawn sword, and from the bent bow, and from the grievousness of war. (21:16) For thus hath the Lord said unto me, Within a year, according to the years of an hireling, and all the glory of Kedar shall fail: (21:17) And the residue of the number of archers, the mighty men of the children of Kedar, shall be diminished: for the LORD God of Israel hath spoken [it].**

The above vision is talking about three chariots or riders connected respectively with three places at which important events were to take place. Verse (21:7) is accurately translated in other Bible versions as follows:

“And he saw a chariot with two horsemen, a rider upon an ass, and a rider upon a camel: and he beheld them diligently with much heed” (Douay Rheims Bible).

“And he hath seen a chariot, a couple of horsemen, the rider of an ass, the rider of a camel, And he hath given attention, He hath increased attention!” (Youngs' Literal Bible)

For the word “רכב” in the original Hebrew text, pronounced as “rakb,” could mean both “rider” or “chariot,” but the correct translation with creatures like asses and the camels would be “rider.” Chariots are a type of carriages known to be pulled by horses, not asses nor camels. So the most accurate translations of this verse are those of Douay Rheims Bible and Young's Literal Bible.

First: the chariot of horses which signifies war, followed by the fall of Babylon and the destruction of its idols and graven images, which are signs of polytheism and disbelief in Allah the one and only God. This fall took place in the reign of **Cyrus the great** back in 539 BC as the visions say in (Isaiah 45:1-4) and as explained by most Christian fathers and Jewish rabbis. It's also well-known historically that the Persians employed chariots in their army. There is no dispute over the meaning of this prophecy.

Second: the rider of an ass in connection with its synonymously mentioned place "Seir." As indicated before, Seir is a landmark on the boundary of Judah (Josh 15:10) the place where Jesus lived and taught. Jesus entered Jerusalem riding an ass as testified for in Matthew (21:1-11). This is an obvious prophecy of Jesus's coming P.B.U.H. described by the words, "**The morning cometh.**" The verse continues quickly as if warning the believers and stressing the fact that this rider won't stay with them for long saying, "**and also the night.**" That's a clear reference to the betrayal of the Jews and their trial to kill Jesus on the cross. This prevented him from fully delivering his message, and consequently created the need for another prophet after Jesus. That prophet's signs are explained in the next verses for those who would await his coming. This is why the verse ends up saying "**if you will enquire, enquire, return, come.**" May Allah reward Jesus and all prophets P.B.U.T.

Third: the rider of a camel who travels in Arabia escaping from the mighty persecutors of Kedar. He would come from a place inside Arabia heading towards Tema, not to Tema. This part of the vision totally resembles Prophet Muhammad's immigration to Madinah. Let's analyze this for details and clarifications.

Verse 13 says, "**The burden upon Arabia. In the forest in Arabia you shall lodge, travelling companies of Dedanim.**"

Historically Arabia has been known of being the homeland of palm trees, palm trees are the most cultivated type of trees in Arabia. Historically, it was and still is the most abundant tree the inhabitants cultivate. It suits the region's environmental conditions perfectly. So the forest in Arabia referred to in the verse is a place full of palm trees. This is an order for the travelers coming from Dedan to lodge at this place in Arabia, a forest of palm trees.

Verse (14) has some differences in the different translations of the bible. This is why I shall retranslate it in a trial to solve its dilemma. The verse says, "**The inhabitants of the land of Tema brought water to him that was thirsty, they prevented with their bread him that fled.**"

In the original Hebrew text it's written as follows:

“ לקראת צמא התיו מים ישבוי ארץ תימא בלחמו קדמו נדד ”

Pronounced as, "Lekrat same hetayo maym yoshbe 'aretz Tema belahmu keddemu nodd."

Before working on the translation of this verse, we must note that most of the English translations available for this verse add too many words to the original text, in order to make any sense. Consequently, they end up changing the original meaning. Only a few examples of the variations between them are the following:

*“Bring water for the thirsty, O inhabitants of the land of Tema, Meet the fugitive **with bread.**”* (New American Standard Version (1995))

*“Give water to him who is in need of water, **give bread,** O men of the land of Tema, to those in flight.”* (Basic English Bible)

*“To **meet the thirsty** brought water have Inhabitants of the land of Tema, **With his bread** they came before a fugitive.”* (Young’s Literal Bible)

*“**Unto him** that is thirsty bring ye water! The inhabitants of the land of Tema did meet the fugitive **with his bread.**”* (Jewish Publication Society Bible)

*“The inhabitants of the land of Tema brought water to him that was thirsty, they met **with their bread** him that fled.”* (Webster’s Bible)

From the above translations, two questions arise in the readers mind:

1) Was that fugitive passing by Tema or is this an order for Tema’s inhabitants to go out and meet him at a certain place that was not mentioned? For the word “לקראת” literally means “Towards” and obviously the order is for the inhabitants of the land of Tema to go out and meet the fugitive with water.

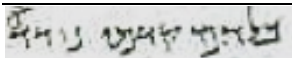
2) Was the bread the fugitive’s bread or did it belong to the inhabitants of Tema? For the word בלחמו literally means “his bread” and not their bread which actually doesn’t make any sense as noted in Young’s literal bible translation.

This is why we will first rewrite the verse as it was found written in the Dead Sea scrolls¹ for there is a slight variation in the letters of the 8th word. This produces a difference in the meaning, which clears up the dilemma:

“ לקראת צמא התנו מים ישבי ארץ תימא **נלהם** קדמו נודד
Pronounced as, “Lekrat samè hetayo maym yoshbe ‘aretz Tema **nelahm** keddemu nodd.”

Accurately Translated to, “Towards (the) thirsty bring water inhabitants of land Tema. **Fighting** preceded by emigrant.”

In the above you will find 10 separate underlined words in Hebrew, followed by their pronunciation and their literal translation in English in the same order of the Hebrew words. The bold word is the one that is different in the Dead Sea scrolls. It produces a new meaning for the verse. This new meaning is more consistent with the context and makes more sense. The verse is an order to the inhabitants of Tema to bring water towards the migrant whose coming is a sign on the approach of war and fighting.



1- Find the complete photo of this scroll attached. This trimmed part is found at the left end of the second line from the bottom. It covers the last three words in the verse under discussion.

Then the verses go on to say: **(21:15) For they fled from the swords, from the drawn sword, and from the bent bow, and from the grievousness of war.**

Verse 15 is describing the condition of this emigrant and those who escaped like him. It explains that they will be escaping from armed people seeking to kill them, and that these fugitives didn't fight back or wage any war against their persecutors who are identified in the next two verses that say:

(21:16) For thus has the Lord said unto me, Within a year, according to the years of an hireling, and all the glory of Kedar shall fail: (21:17) And the residue of the number of archers, the mighty men of the children of Kedar, shall be diminished: for the LORD God of Israel hath spoken [it].

These two verses state clearly that the persecutors of the emigrant or fugitive and those who escaped like him will be from Kedar tribe whose glory shall fail within a year. An indication that the fugitives will fight back and defend themselves after a year passes from their arrival at the forest of Arabia. Thereafter, the power of the mighty men of Kedar shall diminish. Kedar was the second son of Ishmael (Gen. (25:13)), his offspring was known of living in tents as Bedouins and raising sheep, goats and camels. Smith's dictionary says about them, "*The tribe seems to have been one of the most conspicuous of all the Ishmaelite tribes, and hence the rabbins call the Arabians universally by this name.*" (Smith's dictionary of the bible 1901).

This prophecy should be studied in connection with the previous ones of the prophet from Paran as all of them include the names of places or tribes related to Ishmael, his offspring, and Arabia where they dwelt. We have already told the story of Prophet Muhammad's immigration¹. Prophet Muhammad P.B.U.H. left Makkah heading north towards Madinah; that's in the direction of Tema and Dedan. Madinah is about 400 Km north of Makkah. Tema is about 400 Km north of Madinah, while Dedan ('um al-qura or Al-ula) is about 380 Km North West of Madinah (i.e. the places are indicated on the map of Arabia P.185). Madinah has always been known of its abundant palm trees, so it's among the forests of Arabia and the largest of them all. Today, its production from dates is the largest that a city produces in the whole world even after removing thousands of acres from its palm trees through centuries of constructional expansion. After referring to Jesus, these verses of Isaiah were urging those who would seek the prophet coming after him to await his coming at a place in Arabia described as "the forest of Arabia," and it further urged the inhabitants of Tema and Dedan to meet him. The reader here should ask, *why Tema and Dedan?* Remember the previous verse of Deuteronomy that prophesized of the holy one from Paran, "*God came from Teman, and the Holy One from mount Paran,*" these are actually all signs for those who read and study Allah's messages, and are eager to support his prophets and make Allah's word prevail above any other. Those who know their holy books well enough would absolutely seek to reach the place where this prophet would appear, that's to give him aid and learn from him if he appears during their lives. So again, if Paran is Makkah in central Hejaz as we have already discussed, and the prophet or the holy one from Arabia shall come from it, and he shall head towards Tema and Dedan; therefore, the forest of Arabia in which those who seek him should lodge is somewhere between those three places, which only leaves us with Madinah.

1: Regarding the detailed events please go back to P.172 and read again the story of immigration in connection with Surāqa Ibn Mālek's narration.

After immigrating to Madinah by about eleven and a half months (one lunar year exactly), in August 623 the prophet started leading campaigns against the pagans of Makkah. The reason was that they continued threatening Muslims even after they immigrated, and they were instigating the Arab tribes against them. The campaigns were successful. That drove the pagans crazy. They thought that Muslims would never fight for they were few, inexperienced former slaves and shepherds, led by a 54-years-old man who never fought before. This eventually led to the battle of “Badr,” which took place in March 624 between 313 Muslim foot soldiers, and about 1000 Makkan polytheists (including 200 horsemen). Among them were the mighty leaders who have tortured and killed many Muslims before their escape to Madinah. Those leaders were of high status, known of their great hatred to the prophet and his followers. They were all killed during the battle. This was literally the start of diminution in the numbers of the mighty polytheists of Makkah, the sons of Kedar. It was also the start of deepening the roots of the new Islamic capital in Madinah.

Many battles later on took place between Muslims and pagans alongside other Jewish tribes that inhabited Madinah, Tema, Dedan, Khaibar, and many other places all over Arabia. Many from the Jewish tribes had come to live in these places hoping to be the ones who would follow the awaited prophet and gain the honor of making him victorious. When he came from among their Arabian brethren and not the Israelites, they declined and refused to follow him as we have discussed earlier. All of the battles following Badr were won by Muslims except for one battle which was the battle of ‘Uhud in which the prophet was almost killed. Yet, even those who fought against Muslims at ‘Uhud, all embraced Islam later on. Among them were the leader of the pagans’ Cavilary “*Khaled Ibn Al-Walīd*” and the army general “*Abu Sufyan Ibn Harb*,” whom we have told their stories before. This signified that Allah supported His final messenger and made him victorious no matter what the odds. He is the deliverer of the last message and he must live until he completes his mission. Regarding this protection, Allah says in the Qur’an:

“O messenger! Proclaim the (message) which has been sent to you from your Lord. If you do not, then you have not conveyed His message. Allah will protect you from mankind. Verily, Allah guides not those who are intent on refusing to believe.” [The Qur’an (5:67)].

And here a very important question arises in the mind of truthful thinkers, “If Muhammad was a liar, a fabricator and he was making up the Qur’an, would he have said the previous verse after which he forbade all of his companions from protecting him or exchanging shifts to protect his house out of fear for his life? Would he lie to himself and endanger his own life?” I leave the answer for the intelligence of the reader.

One final point: amazingly, between Cyrus and Jesus’s time, there were about 6 centuries. Likewise, between Jesus and Muhammad’s time there were about 6 centuries. Could there be any clearer signs!

We needn’t add more now for anyone to see the resemblance of these verses with Prophet Muhammad P.B.U.H. Since that there hasn’t come a prophet from Arabia since the time of uttering the previous prophecies except Muhammad, nor has there been any one at all whose story matches these verses other than him, then logically, they complete one another, and are all describing Muhammad P.B.U.H.



This picture is for the southern entrance of Madinah showing thousands of palm trees at this location. The white building is Quba' mosque, the first place at which the prophet arrived and the first mosque that was ever built by the prophet P.B.U.H. when he reached Madinah. I visited the place myself and walked amidst its trees. I shall always find great honor and joy in this memory.

This was my simplified review for some of Prophet Muhammad's signs in the Old Testament. Other signs for Makkah and the prophet are present and obvious for those who would search for the truth and are not arrogant.

Finally I would like to leave you with the words of Jesus P.B.U.H.,
"Jesus said unto them, 'Did you never read in the scriptures, "The stone which the masons rejected, the same is become the head of the corner. This is the Lord's doing, and it is marvelous in our eyes?" Therefore I say unto you, the kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof. And whosoever shall fall on this stone shall be broken: but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder."
[Matthew (21:42-44)].



1 את אשר ביום ה' ויאמר ה' ויאמר אל ישראל על שמי צדק
והאשר ברוד בלילה ויאמר אל ישראל שמי ויהי עבארת לאשר
ביום עמו צדקתו ויאמר ה' ויאמר אל ישראל
באמת בא תודעו אשמה ויאמר ה' ויאמר אל ישראל
5 בא שמי ויאמר ה' ויאמר אל ישראל שמי ויאמר ה' ויאמר
לאשר לך וימחוק עלך עונותי ויאמר ה' ויאמר אל ישראל
והאשר לך ויאמר ה' ויאמר אל ישראל שמי ויאמר ה' ויאמר
ערוך ויאמר ה' ויאמר אל ישראל שמי ויאמר ה' ויאמר
על אשר את שמי צדקתו ויאמר ה' ויאמר אל ישראל שמי ויאמר
10 ויאמר ה' ויאמר אל ישראל שמי ויאמר ה' ויאמר אל ישראל
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והאשר לך ויאמר ה' ויאמר אל ישראל שמי ויאמר ה' ויאמר
ערוך ויאמר ה' ויאמר אל ישראל שמי ויאמר ה' ויאמר
על אשר את שמי צדקתו ויאמר ה' ויאמר אל ישראל שמי ויאמר

An Image of the Dead Sea scroll that contains Isaiah, chapters 20 & 21.

3. The Qur'an, Muhammad's fabrication or the Creator's Words?

All prophets chosen by Allah were supported by miracles that persuaded their people of their prophethood. After the prophets and those who witnessed their miracles passed away, their stories lived on in narratives, poems, songs and stories, but nothing ever remained from those miracles to persuade those who never witnessed the events of the truthfulness of such stories. This couldn't have been the case with the seal of all prophets; the one after whom there wasn't going to be any more prophets or messages. The final prophet must have an everlasting miracle that can reach all people and be strong enough to convince them of his prophethood. This is why—besides the temporal miracles that had been witnessed by his companions— Prophet Muhammad's major miracle was a book, a scripture named, "The Holy Qur'an." If this book was truly Allah's final message and everlasting guide for all people, then it must have been and forever remain beyond contestation. Hence, we need to learn how this book was preserved through the ages? What is so miraculous about it? What are the signs of its supremacy? How can we be sure that it is from our Creator, not from satan, or a fabrication by Muhammad? Some non-Muslims ask, *'If it were from our Creator, then how come it has verses that contradict or abrogate each other, as if this Creator was teaching us through trial and error?'* The previous among other common questions about the Qur'an shall be discussed in the next few pages. Let's start from the very beginning.

3.1. Preservation of the Qur'an

Leading a hard life in the desert, the Arabs were accustomed to making their hearts the pages on which they memorized their endless poems, lineages, glorious events, and the stories of old. Many of the people back then were unlettered. Even for those who knew how to read and write, the writing tools—as such of ink and papyrus scrolls—weren't easily obtainable at that region. From here, relying on memorizing the words was much stronger than relying on writing them down. The Qur'an on the other hand was favored by the greatest deal of care. The prophet's determination—and his companions'—was primarily aimed at learning and memorizing the Qur'an by heart. Nonetheless, this didn't distract them from writing it down as much as the writing tools that were available back then allowed them to do so. The prophet assigned for the task of writing down the Qur'an as he dictates it some of his closest companions, among them were the following notable ones:

"Abu Bakr Al-Sedeek": The prophet's closest minister and First Caliph.

"Omar Ibn Al-Khattab": The prophet's second minister and Second Caliph.

"Othman Ibn Affan": The prophet's son in law and Third Caliph.

"Ali Ibn Abi-Taleb": The prophet's cousin, son in law, and Fourth Caliph.

"Obai Ibn Ka'b": One of the most knowledgeable companions. He was assigned by the prophet to teach the delegations the Qur'an and the Islamic laws.

"Zayd Ibn Thabet": One of the most knowledgeable young companions and the prophet's neighbor. He was 11 years old when the prophet reached Madinah. His brilliance and young age helped him memorize the Qur'an by heart. He recited all of the Qur'an to the prophet twice the year the prophet passed away, and he attended the prophet's last complete arranged recitation of the Qur'an in that same year.

“***‘Abdullah Ibn Mas‘ud***”: One of the earliest men to embrace Islam, and one of the most knowledgeable companions. He was the first to recite the Qur’an in a loud voice at the *Ka‘bah* in Makkah and was almost killed for it.

“***Az-Zubair Ibn Al-‘Awwam***”: The prophet’s cousin, one of the earliest Muslims and closest companions, and the one whom the prophet declared his helper at hard times.

The Qur’an has always been preserved by two methods that complete each other in a way that guaranteed keeping it intact. The first method is memorizing it by heart; the second is having it written down. Thus, the Qur’an has always been kept intact in the hearts of Muslims and in the copies dictated directly by Prophet Muhammad. It is the only book taught on earth today whose certified teachers must be among those who have memorized it completely by heart, examined orally and in writing, (i.e. blind students are examined orally only), and have received a very unique graduation certificate that permits them to teach it to others. This certificate which we call “*Ijazah*” (i.e. permission) mentions the name of the graduate, his teacher and his teacher’s teacher, etc., passing through the past 1400 years until it reaches the prophet P.B.U.H. This tradition began as an oral tradition. Within the course of time, it became written as well. In other words, the teacher must have a cemented certificate testifying for his knowledge of the recitation. Try to listen to any chapter from the Qur’an recited by a Russian, a Hindu, a Japanese, an American, and an Arab; though they are totally different people with different nationalities, different mother tongues, and different accents, you will be amazed at how all recitations are exactly the same. In order to clarify this more for the reader, I shall simplify the story of preserving the Qur’an.

When Prophet Muhammad P.B.U.H. started receiving the Qur’an from our Creator, it was not revealed all as a single unit. The verses were revealed to the prophet fluctuating according to the different incidents and occurring events that Muslims had to face throughout 23 years. When delivering the holy book was complete, the prophet was informed that his duty was done and the message was complete. This final message was not a compilation of laws, or a list of DOs and Don’ts that could be sent down all at once; it was a guide for a new nation built naturally day by day, developing its faith, forming its heart, thoughts, and volition, according to the will of their creator. A nation that wouldn’t impose its will above Allah’s will, but guides humanity to complete trust in Almighty’s laws through intellect and reason. He is All-knowing, All-wise. Through our lord’s wisdom, the Qur’anic verses were revealed circumstantially to lead this nation in its development and its challenges through the different events. This is why their final arrangement in one book couldn’t have been done except after the completion of the whole message. Amazingly enough, when you read the Qur’an you won’t find any inconsistency in it; on the contrary, it’s an intelligently connected flowing book. The verses were inspired to Prophet Muhammad P.B.U.H. and he recited them to the companions in every incident. The companions memorized them from the prophet. Meanwhile, those among them who knew how to read and write, wrote the new verses down as dictated by the prophet on the available tools at the time. They wrote on papyrus, palm branches, on rocks, leather, and even on animals’ shoulder bones.

‘Abdullah Ibn ‘Abbās reported that, “The prophet P.B.U.H. taught us the closing salutation of the prayers (i.e. Al-Tashahud) the same way he taught us every chapter from the Qur’an.” [Recorded by Muslim].

He also reported that, “Whenever new Qur’anic verses were revealed to the prophet P.B.U.H., he summoned some of the lettered companions to write them down saying, ‘Put these verses in the chapter of so and so.’” [Recorded by Abu Dāwood].

‘Abdullah Ibn Amr reported that, “The prophet P.B.U.H. said to me: ‘Read the Qur’an once every month’, so I said, ‘I can read it in less than that’. He kept on reducing the period for me until he said, ‘Read it once every three days’.” [Recorded by Bukhari].

It seems that this incident took place before the completion of the Qur’anic revelations because in another narration by Bukhari, the prophet told ‘Abdullah Ibn Amr, “Read it once every seven days and do not read it in less than that.”

‘Abdullah Ibn Jaber reported that, “The prophet P.B.U.H. used to teach us the consultation prayers (i.e. Al-Estekharah) like he used to teach us every chapter from the Qur’an.” [Recorded by Bukhari].

Zayd Ibn Thabet also reported, “During the prophet’s life P.B.U.H. we arranged the Qur’anic verses written on Reqaa.¹” [Recorded by Tirmidhī and Ahmed].

From the above narrations, you can see how keen the prophet was on preserving the Qur’an, and guarding it against any distortion. He made sure that any new portion was written down in its place, memorized, and recited continuously by his companions, who later on, delivered the whole book to all people. As reported by the companions, the verses were arranged in chapters according to the instructions of the prophet. In the last year of the prophet’s life, he recited it in its final arrangement. This was witnessed and preserved by many of the companions at Madinah. On this final form, they gathered the written verses, arranged it as one book, and taught it to their followers. The followers in turn taught it to theirs, and so on. The process went as follows:

After the prophet P.B.U.H. departed, in the first year of his successor’s reign, *Abu Bakr* consulted ‘Omar Ibn Al-Khattab about collecting the Qur’an written during the prophet’s life. He ordered *Zayd Ibn Thabet* to gather a complete copy of the Qur’an dictated by the prophet. *Abu Bakr* and ‘Omar told *Zayd* not to trust only what he has written and memorized directly from the prophet, but also to revise it from what the rest of the companions have written and memorized. Furthermore, for any submitted portions, *Zayd* required from the companion submitting it to bring forth two witnesses to testify that they have witnessed these verses being written between the prophet’s hands and according to his dictation. Regarding this incident, *Zayd* said, “I swear by Allah that if they ordered me to transfer a mountain [rock by rock], it wouldn’t have been more difficult than the task of gathering the Qur’an.” [Recorded by Bukhari]. This indicates how much careful, cautious and considerate *Zayd* was in his mission.

This event took place in Madinah, so the closest of all companions were the ones who participated in it. They brought forward to *Zayd* all that which they have written. They produced two just witnesses from among themselves to testify to have witnessed it being written between the prophet’s hands and according to his dictation. *Zayd*’s memorization for the Qur’an alongside that of the companions was extra assurance. Furthermore, what they have all written stood as witnesses one above the other, and solid evidence on its correctness. That’s how the Qur’an was preserved by the companions.

1: Reqaa’: An Arabic word meaning leather and papyrus scrolls.

In this cautious wise method, a complete written copy of the Qur'an dictated by the prophet P.B.U.H. was gathered. This action is an everlasting laudable deed for *Abu Bakr*, *'Omar*, *Zayd*, and the companions. May Allah award them all for their efforts.

After *Zayd* gathered the Qur'an written in its final arrangement as taught by the prophet, it was transferred to a room in *Abu Bakr*'s house for safe keeping. After *Abu Bakr*'s death, *'Omar* had it moved to his house for the same purpose. Later on, after *'Omar*'s death, the companions agreed to move it to his daughter's house Lady *Hafsah*, the prophet's wife and mother of believers. It remained there intact until the third Caliph *'Othman Ibn Affan* asked her for it. During *'Othman*'s reign, Muslims succeeded in delivering Allah's final message to far away countries. Many people accepted Islam and started reading and memorizing the Qur'an as taught to them by the companions, it was then that an incident occurred.

To understand what happened, we need to go back almost three decades. When the Qur'an was first revealed to Prophet Muhammad, it was revealed to him in his tribe's dialect. The prophet asked Gabriel, the archangel, to teach it to him in more than one synonym; that was to facilitate its understanding on the different Arab tribes scattered all over Arabia. These tribes have been using different words and expressions in their dialects ever since the prophet's time and till this moment but in a lesser form. The archangel first told the prophet that Allah orders him to teach the Qur'an to his nation in one synonym. Finding it difficult for his nation, the prophet repeated his request invoking upon Allah's tolerance and help for Arabs were still not ready to fathom all this. Allah accepted the prophet's invocations by His grace, and for each hard word or expression in the Qur'an, the Angel taught the prophet **7 synonyms**, which he taught to the companions according to their dialects. When they noticed this and asked him about it, he informed them of the previous. The story was recorded as follows:

'Omar Ibn Al-Khattab said, *"I heard Hesham Ibn Hakeem reciting Chapter Al-Furqan (i.e. The Criterion) during the prophet's life. I listened to him and he was reciting it in different synonyms from those which I learned directly from the prophet. I was about to interrupt his prayers, but managed to stay calm until he finished. Afterwards, I grabbed him by his garment and asked, 'Who taught you to recite this chapter as I just heard?' He said, 'The prophet P.B.U.H.' I said, 'You are lying for the prophet taught it to me with different synonyms from the ones you used in your recital.' I led him to the prophet hurriedly then said, 'O prophet, I heard this man reciting Chapter Al-Furqan in synonyms different from those which you taught me earlier.' The prophet P.B.U.H. ordered me to let Hesham go and told him, 'Recite it Hesham.' Hesham recited the same recital I thought faulty, but the prophet said, 'This is how it was revealed to me.' Then he told me, 'Recite it 'Omar,' and I recited it with the synonyms I memorized from the prophet. He said, 'This is also how it was revealed to me. The Qur'an has been revealed to me in seven synonyms, so recite it in the one you find easier according to your capacity."* [Recorded by Bukhari].

'Abdullah Ibn 'Abbās also reported that the prophet P.B.U.H. said, *"Gabriel made me recite the Qur'an on one synonym, but I kept on asking him to teach me more than one until he ended up teaching me seven synonyms."* [Recorded by Bukhari].

The companions understood this and they had no problem with it. Later on, during ‘*Othman*’s reign, when the call for Islam reached faraway lands, many people embraced it and started studying and memorizing the Qur’an. Every group recited it according to what was taught to them by one of the companions. Moreover, Arabs from different tribes and places started mingling and listening to the Qur’anic recitation from each other. They heard different synonyms from the ones they knew, which they thought was a trial to distort the Qur’an. They didn’t understand that some expressions were taught by the prophet in 7 different synonyms for facilitation. Out of concern and sincerity, a terrible tumult was going to erupt between them. When ‘*Othman*’ was informed of this, he ordered a committee led by *Zayd Ibn Thabet* and constituted from the best Qur’an memorizers among the companions—who witnessed the last complete recitation of the Qur’an by the prophet—to duplicate the original copy gathered during the reign of *Abu Bakr*, and to gather the whole Muslim nation on one copy with one synonym. He ordered that whatever expression they differ on, they should record it in the tongue of “*Quraysh*” (the prophet’s tribe), for it was the original synonym with which the Qur’an was first revealed. Consequently, the Qur’anic recitation was once again unified on one synonym, duplicated, and sent to all regions extending from Persia to Morocco as Allah had planned for it from the beginning. All other copies containing different synonyms were burned in order to prevent any future tumults. All Qur’an copies between our hands today have the exact same writing, wording, and signs as that which ‘*Othman*’ sent to all regions.

All praises be to Allah the omnipotent. He has fulfilled His promise to the believers and employed the most honest men for preserving his last message to all humanity. May Allah reward them for their efforts with the best of awards, Amen.

Allah says in the Qur’an,

“A. L. R. These are the verses of Revelation and a Qur’an that makes things clear, may those who disbelieve wish that they had been Muslims. Let them eat and enjoy (i.e. the good things of this life) and let [false] hope amuse them: soon will they come to know. Never did We destroy a village except with a known decree beforehand. Neither can a nation anticipate its term, nor delay it. They said, ‘O you [Muhammad] to whom the Message is being revealed! Truly you are a mad [or possessed] man! Why do you not bring us the angels if you are of the truthful?’ We send not the angels except for a just cause: if they come [to the ungodly], behold! No respite would they have! Verily, it is We who have sent down the Message, and We will assuredly guard it [from any corruption]. We did send messengers before you amongst the religious sects of old. But never did a messenger come to them except that they mocked him.” [The Qur’an (15:1-11)].



3.2. The Qur'an as a miracle linguistically speaking

Ever since the prophet P.B.U.H. started reciting the Qur'an, the musical tones in its recitation have always stolen the hearts of those who listened. The greatest Arab poets of all ages stood in awe in front of the beautiful rhythmic recitation that was neither poetry nor prose, but one of a very unique nature. Even today, you can still see people being deeply touched by the sound of the Qur'anic recitation though they aren't Muslims, nor do they know any Arabic. The method in which the prophet recited the Qur'an and taught to all Muslims was later on developed in to a complete branch of the Islamic sciences known as (*Ilm Al-Tajweed*). Amazingly, if this science or method of recitation is tried on any other book, it fails greatly and doesn't work. It's an inimitable rhythmic tone created by Allah Almighty solely for His own words.

“Al-Walīd Ibn Al-Moghīrah” was among the mightiest and most bitter pagans living during the prophet's time. He was father of the famous companion *“Khaled Ibn Al-Walīd,”* and one of the richest and most famous leaders of the prophet's tribe, *Quraysh*. He was widely known of his vast knowledge of Arabian poetry. As such, the other leaders asked him to visit the prophet, and discuss with him what he preached. They hoped he could convince the prophet desist and give up his call. When this man went to confront the prophet and he listened to him reciting the Qur'an, his heart was ceased by it. He was overwhelmed to the extent that when he returned to his fellow pagans, they inquired worriedly about what happened, and he said, *“I don't know what to say. I swear by the gods, there isn't a man among you who is more knowledgeable than me of poetry, its rhymes and kinds, and by the gods do I swear that what he says isn't like any of those kinds. What he says has unique beauty and grace. Its high tone is fruitful, and its low tone is abundant. It ascends above all other words and nothing ascends over it, and it crushes down what's beneath it.”*

On hearing this, another leader and bitter enemy of the prophet named *‘Amr Ibn Hesham* told *Al-Walīd*: *“Your people won't accept this from you. They won't be satisfied unless you say something bad about what he recites.”*

Al-Walīd thought for a moment and then said, *“It is some sort of overwhelming magic.”* [Recorded by Al-Hākem and Al-Dhahaby].

The pagans then urged one another to make noise beside any Muslim reciting the Qur'an so that they may forbid others from hearing what he says. Allah described their attitude in the Qur'an where He says, *“And those who denied (our message) said, ‘Listen not to this Qur'an and make noise in the midst of its recitation that you may gain the upper hand.’ ”* [The Qur'an (41:26)].

Another significant evidence on the influence of the Qur'anic recitation could be sensed in the following story: When the persecution of the Makkān pagans reached its peak during the early years of the prophet's call, *Abu Bakr* decided to escape to Abyssinia. On his way out of Makkah he was intercepted by a man named *“Ibn Al-Doghonnah”* who asked him where he was going. *Abu Bakr* answered, *“I was driven out by my people, so I wish to seek refuge somewhere else where I can worship my God freely.”* *Ibn Al-Doghonnah* said, *“A man like you Abu Bakr is not to leave nor be driven out. You have always taken care of the poor and looked after your kin. I'm your neighbor and you have my protection. Go back home and worship your lord without any fear.”*

After that, *Ibn Al-Doghannah* paid the pagan leaders a visit and told them that he has granted *Abu Bakr* asylum from their persecution. They accepted on the condition that *Abu Bakr* practices his religion only inside his house; he cannot recite the Qur'an except within its walls. Accordingly, *Abu Bakr* built a small hermitage in the yard of his house. Inside it, he secluded himself to pray and read the Qur'an every day. Passing by the hermitage, the people started listening to his recitation. He was a weepy worshipper who couldn't hold his tears when reciting the Qur'an and pondering over its meanings. This frightened the pagan leaders of the tribe. They sent for *Ibn Al-Doghannah* and expressed their fear that *Abu Bakr* would charm their families, and then they asked him to forbid *Abu Bakr* from reciting the Qur'an in a loud voice. They told him that this was only for the sake of his asylum guarantee. *Ibn Al-Doghannah* went to *Abu Bakr* and asked him to stop reciting the Qur'an in a loud voice. *Abu Bakr* then said, "I remit your asylum burden and suffice with Allah's asylum and his messenger's." This was how the Qur'an affected both, those who believed in it, and those who did not.

'Omar Ibn Al-Khattab, narrated the story of his faith saying, "When I heard the Qur'an, my heart softened, I wept, and Islam entered my heart." [Recorded by Ibn Hishām]. And this is "*Al-Jubair Ibn Mut'am*," the companion, narrating the story of his faith, he said that when he was captured as a POW in the battle of *Badr*, he was brought back to Madinah with the Muslims' army. During one of the prayers, he heard the prophet P.B.U.H. reciting the chapter called "*At-Tur*" in the *Maghrib* (i.e. Sunset) prayers. When the prophet recited, "Were they created out of nothing, or were they themselves the creators?" *Al-Jubair* said, "This was the first portion of faith that entered my heart." [Recorded by Bukhari and Muslim].

By all means, don't take my word for it, download any part you choose from the Qur'an and listen to it yourself from different reciters with different nationalities, and then make up your mind. All those who read the Qur'an, or a reliable translation of the meanings of the Qur'an, and ponder over its verses, they are affected by it. Many contemporary non-Muslims who read the Qur'an felt likewise. About this, the famous Palestinian poet "Nicola Joseph Hannah" (1923-1999) said, "I read the Qur'an and it stunned me, I indulged in its meanings and it fascinated me, I read it again and I believed. How couldn't I believe when the miracle of the Qur'an is between my hands; I'm looking at it and feeling it all the time. It's a miracle not like any other, an everlasting divine miracle that proves itself and it doesn't need anyone to speak about it nor preach it."

A female convert named "Ayesha Bridget Honey" who was raised in a Christian British family; while she studied Philosophy in a Canadian university she had the opportunity to learn about Islam and finally embrace it. Regarding her experience, she said, "However hard I try, I cannot fully estimate the impression the Qur'an left on my heart. Before I finished the third Surah (i.e. chapter), I had prostrated myself before the Creator of the universe. This was my first Salaat (prayer) and since that time by the grace of Allah I am a Muslim." Again, by all means, don't take my words for granted. Get your own copy of the Qur'an, read as much as you can from it, and ponder over its verses. Try to listen to it being recited in Arabic on the internet, and then judge for yourself.



3.3. The Qur'an as a miracle scientifically speaking

Ever since the beginning of revelation, the Qur'an has been challenging its deniers in various intellectual methods, and urging its reader to think and ponder over its verses. Since that it is an everlasting miracle, its challenge must continue through all ages and till the end of time. During the prophet's era, the challenge was only of a linguistic nature. With the advancement of time, this linguistic challenge diminished because people's knowledge and interests changed. Humanity has entered the age of scientific discoveries and modern technology. This new era needed a new challenge of a different nature that can cope up with the new developments. These developments were dealt with in the Qur'an and given special care by our Creator who is All-Knowing of His creation.

Allah says in the Qur'an:

“We shall show them Our signs on the horizons (i.e. the universe) and within themselves until it will become clear to them that it (i.e. The Qur'an) is the Truth. Does it not suffice that your Lord is Witness over all things?” [The Qur'an (41:53)].

In the 3rd section of the previous chapter, some scientists' opinions regarding the scientific statements in the Qur'an and *Sunnah* have already been stated. In this section, I am going to tackle one of the modern scientific theories, and then state the related Qur'anic verses—with their literal word for word translation—giving a brief comment about them. I leave the final judgment for the reader. I would like to remind the reader that whenever we speak about matters like the start of creation and the early beginning of things, science did not and cannot state a final opinion or theory about them; these were matters beyond the humans' observation. What science can do is place theories based on the available evidence without forcing any ideologies upon the evidence.

According to the established modern scientific theories, **the universe was originated from an explosion** in a singularity point turning it into **a universal celestial gaseous dust cloud**. The cloud produced by the Big Bang was mostly formed of hydrogen gas alongside tiny dust particles. **Gravity took its role between the close particles, the end product of which is that stars and galaxies were formed**. While galaxies continue to move away from each other due to the primary explosion, some of them are moving relative to each other due to their gravitational interaction. **In 1925, Edwin Hubble**—after whom the Hubble Space telescope is named—**provided the conclusive observational evidence for the expansion of the universe**. The whole space itself is expanding, carrying galaxies with it, like spots on an inflating balloon. In a galaxy called “The Milky Way,” our solar system was formed in a similar way.

Scientists tell us that about 4.5 billion years ago, a dying star in our galaxy exploded crushing down a massive dust cloud **resulting in a cloud of gas and dust**. **From this cloud our solar system was originated**. The previous incident was the first link in a chain of events that preceded the earth's existence. **A new star was born which became our sun**, and as expected, gravity played its role among the tiny dust particles forming the planets revolving around the new star. Those included our own planet. After many millions of collisions, the earth finally reached its semi spherical oblate shape. According to the prevailing hypothesis today, **the moon was formed** as a result of a massive collision between earth and another semi planet, which they named “Theia.”

During the previous events, the sun vaporized the water molecules in the solar system. Millions of miles away from the sun's heat, this water vapor was condensed, frozen and accumulated on comets and asteroids as ice.

During the development of the rest of the planets of the solar system, namely the ones farther away from the sun than earth, and while their orbits around the sun became more uniform and stable, **billions of comets and asteroids were driven towards the earth bringing water to our planet. As a result, life emerged in an aquatic form.** Thanks for volcanoes, gases evaporating from earth started to form the earth's atmosphere. A new form of life started to evolve. Photosynthetic organisms emerged to consume Carbon dioxide and produce Oxygen. Once oxygen had been produced, ultraviolet light split its molecules producing the ozone UV shield. At this point, life moved out from the oceans and respiration evolved. The layers of the atmosphere were formed. **Meanwhile, the water cycle on earth began to stabilize.**

Every planet is now stable in a specific orbit. The sun is orbiting the center of the Milky Way at a distance of approximately 24,000–26,000 light-years from the galactic center. **The earth is orbiting the sun, and the moon is orbiting the earth. The sun's rays penetrate the earth's atmosphere and produce light during the day. The moon only reflects the Sun's light,** this is why it looks luminous at night, but it does not produce any light of its own. Thanks for the moon, the earth's axis-tilt is preserved at 23.45°, this means that the North Pole is kept closer to the sun for 6 consecutive months than the South Pole, then in the next 6 months this is reversed resulting in the succession of the 4 seasons of the year. Consequently this makes most of the earth's regions qualified for inhabitancy throughout the year.

To the previous, one may ask: How did the singularity point from which all this began come to exist and why did it explode? From where did the raw materials that formed the universe come from? Are those huge planets and galaxies merely the result of uncontrolled gravity forces between tiny dust particles? Can unprompted order result from absolute chaos on its own? How did the early photosynthetic organisms survive the UV rays, when there was neither Ozone nor oxygen?

Now, please ponder over the following verses from the Qur'an:

“In the creation of the skies and the earth, and in the alternation of night and day, there are signs for people of understanding.” [The Qur'an (3:190)].

This verse is an invitation for all people to ponder over the creation of the universe, especially the planet upon which we're living in order to confirm whether a Creator exists or not.

“Allah did not create [all] that (i.e. the universe) except in truth. He expounds the signs [in the Qur'an] for people of knowledge (i.e. scientists, scholars, truth seekers, etc.)” [The Qur'an (10:5)].

This verse is also an invitation, but this time, it's for those who have knowledge about the universe. It's an invitation for scientists to read the Qur'an, study the verses that discuss the creation of the universe and the earth, and then make up their minds towards its truthfulness, and whether it's truly a message from the Creator or not.

“And those who were given knowledge see that which was sent down upon you [O Muhammad] by your Lord is the truth and guides to the path of the Exalted [in Might] the worthy of all praise.” [The Qur’an (34:6)].

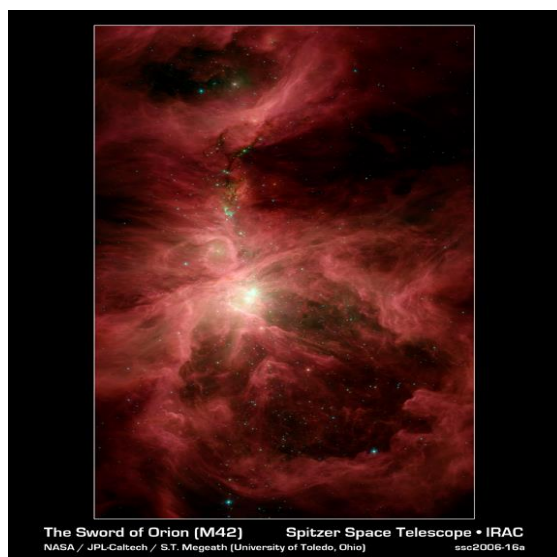
This verse confirms that if scientists and scholars ponder over the verses of the Qur’an, they will find it an evidence that the Qur’an is truly a message from the Creator.

“Haven’t the disbelievers observed that the skies and the earth were combined, then We ruptured them, and We created from water every living thing. Would they still not believe.” [The Qur’an (21:30)].

A confirmation that the skies and the earth were once a single body then the Creator ruptured it. The reader here should understand that the Arabic word “*Samawat*” (singular: *Sama’*) translated as skies is used to refer to the universe around us. If you check any English dictionary, you will also find the same usage for the word. This verse is a clear reference to what scientists have discovered in the Big Bang theory.

“Then He (i.e. Allah) equilibrated unto the sky when it was (still) smoke and said unto it and to the earth: come willingly or unwillingly. They said, we come willingly (O Lord)” [The Qur’an (41:11)].

A confirmation that, at a certain point, the universe was still a celestial cloud of gases and dust, then a mighty force caused its particles to combine forming the planets and the rest of the universe around us. Please ponder over this infrared image from NASA’s Spitzer Space Telescope that shows the Orion nebula, the closest massive star-making factory to Earth. How do you describe this celestial cloud which you see?!



“And the sky We constructed with might and verily We are expanding it” [The Qur’an (51:47)].

A confirmation to the fact that the universe is expanding, which is what all scientists today confirm and what the Big Bang theory is based upon.

“He (i.e. Allah) is The One who created the night and day, and the sun and the moon each floating in an orbit.” [The Qur’an (21:33)].

A confirmation to the fact that the sun and the moon are celestial bodies floating in prescribed orbits.

“Blessed in The One (i.e. Allah) who made constellations in the sky, and made therein a lamp (i.e. the sun) and a luminous moon.” [The Qur’an (25:61)].

A confirmation to the fact that the sun produces its own light like lamps do. On the other hand, the moon is described simply to be luminous. Of course 1400 years ago, these words did not catch the attention of the people receiving the Qur’anic message. Today, after we have discovered that the moon does not produce light but it only reflects it, we can understand why the verse gives different descriptions for the light of our two friends.

Any science student today, even children know the importance of both the sun and the moon for the earth. Without any of them, life wouldn't have existed on earth. Hence, absolutely, blessed is The Creator who created them both at their exact places.

“And Allah sent down water from the skies reviving the earth after it was dead. Surely, in that there is a sign for the people who listen (to this message).” [The Qur'an (16:65)].
 A confirmation to the fact that the earth—at a certain period—was a dead waterless place having no form of life on it. Then water was sent to earth and life started to emerge. Scientists confirm that life did not start on earth except after water's existence.

“And We sent down water from the sky in due measure, then We lodged it in the earth, and of course, We are able to take it away.” [The Qur'an (23:18)].
 The same as the previous, and a confirmation to the fact that the earth's underground water results from the rainwater that infiltrates the earth's soil.

“Haven't you seen that Allah makes the night penetrate into the day and He makes the day penetrate into the night...”
 [The Qur'an (31:29)].

“He created the skies and the earth for a true purpose. Spherically He coils the night upon the day and spherically He coils the day upon the night.” [The Qur'an (39:5)].
 The above verses are an amazing description for the picture explaining the day-night changes. Verse (39:5) also alludes to the fact that the earth is of a spherical shape.



“Do they not ponder over the Qur'an? If it had been from anyone other than Allah (i.e. the true Creator of the universe), they would have found much variance in it.”
 [The Qur'an (4:82)].

The Qur'an is not a science book; nonetheless, if you compare the allusions given in the previous verses to what scientists have discovered in the last 100 years about the beginning of the universe, you should reason out the following: Prophet Muhammad P.B.U.H. died more than 1400 years ago. When he started preaching Islam and reciting such verses to his people, he was accused of being a mad man and a fabricator. Of course, if any person preached such statements claiming that he receives them from the Creator—not 1400 years ago but only 200 years ago, he would have been accused of being a mad man and an imposter. For Prophet Muhammad to have stated the previous verses during his life, did he visit outer space? Did he have an infrared telescope? Did he have a time machine? Or was he a prophet inspired by The Creator who has created this universe? Muslims believe he was.

As you can see in the above verses, the Qur'an does not demand belief, it invites belief. In Islam there is no such a thing as “Blind Faith;” on the contrary, the Qur'an demands that you think logically, prove all things, and build your faith on solid grounds that nothing can shake. Throughout the Holy Book, you can read expressions like: “Have they

not considered?” “Hasn’t man seen yet?” “Do they not ponder over?” etc. It’s always an invitation for each and every person not only to read the Book, but to examine it, check the evidence on its truthfulness, and finally reach a decision that’s based on thorough study. The above verses are only a small portion of what I saw relevant to modern scientific theories proving that The Qur’an is an everlasting miracle. Many other verses discuss creation, embryology, geology, Oceanography and sea currents. Stunning facts about animals, bees, spiders, etc., are mentioned. Voluminous books have been written tackling the scientific implications alluded to by the Qur’an and the prophetic traditions. By all means, don’t waste your time with what people say. Get your own copy of the Book and start your own examination.



3.4. The Qur’an and Evolution

The most perplexing theory that has always stood as a barrier between faith and science is the evolution theory. Ever since its early placement by Charles Darwin back in 1859, those who are religious have always rejected it. On the other hand, many evolutionists developed an atheistic ideology based on the theory and fought against the idea of God’s existence. In order to reach a verdict regarding this issue, we shall first need to **understand what the theory basically says, ask the logical questions that erupt and the theory does not cover, and then compare what it says with the Qur’anic verses that speak about the beginning of life.**

In short and for simplicity, evolutionists suggest that: About 3.7 billion years ago, somewhere on the earth of that time, **chemicals randomly organized themselves into a self-replicating amino-acid chain** (The building blocks of life). **This process produced a distinct bacteria cell that divided and multiplied in an aqueous (watery) environment.** This very first cell was the seed of every living organism we see today on earth.

During the cells’ division, genetic or chromosomal mutations occurred. **The theory goes on to suggest that the DNA of an organism changes over time randomly;** this process is called “**Random Mutation.**” **This change** in the DNA of an organism **affects its offspring** positively or negatively. In the case of negative effect, the offspring will most probably perish and cease to exist. While in the case of positive effect, the offspring will do better than its predecessor; it will reproduce more. Through reproduction, the positive change that had occurred is preserved and spreads. The process of preserving the better and more beneficial changes is what Darwin called, “**Natural Preservation**” (i.e. initially named “Natural Selection,” both names are used interchangeably). Over long periods of time (i.e. millions of years) these mutations caused new species to form. The theory suggests that all of the species known to us were formed in millions of years starting from the very first living organism—which was a simple form of bacteria—passing by extinct species like dinosaurs, and reaching our own species as humans.

1: The main references on which writing this section depends is “How did the creation start?” by Dr. Amr Sherif and “My father Adam” by Dr. Abd El-Sabour Shaheen.

Now, one may ask: “How did the molecules of an inorganic matter randomly organize itself to form organic matter? What is life and how did it suddenly appear in non-living matter to produce the first living cell? Could these **Random mutations** in the DNA of living organisms **result in more advanced, more intelligent and more complicated organisms** than their predecessors without the need for any interference?”

Darwin himself answered these questions in his Autobiography saying: “Reason tells me of the extreme difficulty or rather impossibility of conceiving this immense and wonderful universe, including man with his capability of looking far into futurity, as the result of blind chance or necessity. When thus reflecting I feel compelled to look to a First Cause having an intelligent mind in some degree analogous to that of man, and I deserve to be called a Theist.” (The Autobiography of Charles Darwin 1809-1882 ed. Nora Barlow, London: Collins, 1958)¹.

Back to evolution; the problem that has always faced evolutionists is not in submitting scientific evidence supporting the theory, it’s in proving that it occurred randomly without the need for an intelligent maker or omniscient creator behind its various phases. Those who deny the need for the intelligent maker say that time is capable of accomplishing everything. They always say that evolution didn’t take place in thousands of years but in hundred millions of years. Dr. Amr Sherif, an Egyptian Physician and former head of the surgery department in Ain-Shams University responded to that saying:

“Pleading time as an excuse proves the ignorance of those who use it of the second law of thermodynamics, which states that: The entropy (i.e. Lack of order or predictability, and gradual decline into disorder) of an isolated system (i.e. a system that receives no energy or organization from outside) never decreases because isolated systems spontaneously evolve towards thermodynamic equilibrium, the state of maximum entropy. (i.e. In other words, the arrow of entropy has the same direction as the arrow of time). Increase in entropy corresponds to irreversible changes in a system because some energy is expended as waste heat limiting the amount of work a system can do and pushing it towards slow death. Consequently, this means that ‘Time’ on its own is a destructive factor, not a constructive one. Hence, if you leave a random system on its own, it shall decay and fall apart; its situation will never get any better. If you want to preserve it and push it towards progress, you shall have to guide it through some special precautions.”

He further adds, “If only the evolution of horses needed 50 million years according to what Darwinists say, and it’s an evolution within the same species, not from one species to another, then is the age of life on earth enough for million species and kinds of living creatures to have evolved from a single living cell?! Numbers and mathematical calculations totally expose the weakness of **the random evolution** notion without any doubt or excuse. How far it is from reason and how magnificently it contradicts science.” [How did the creation start? By Dr. Amr Sherif, 2011].

1: Reading Darwin’s religious views, you can easily deduce that Darwin believed in the need for an intelligent creator behind evolution, but he didn’t believe in what the Bible says about the start of creation and the age of humanity on earth. Unlike the Bible, The Qur’an gives no mentioning whatsoever of the ages of any of the prophets since Adam until Muhammad P.B.U.T. It gives a totally different account regarding creation. The age of humanity is referred to in a completely different way in Prophet Muhammad’s traditions indicating a magnificently much longer time than that indicated in the Bible. The end product is that the data found wrong in the Bible is not found anywhere in the Qur’an.

The reader here should know that about 580 million years ago, most organisms were simple ones, composed of individual cells. Later on, the “**Cambrian explosion**” occurred round 540 million years ago. This term designates a sudden geological appearance of multi-cellular animals in the fossil record. The Cambrian explosion lasted for a period of 5-10 million years in which 34 phyla of animals appeared (i.e. A phylum is the highest level for classifying organisms. It can be thought of as grouping organisms based on general body plan). Different animals appeared in this period fully designed and carrying new DNA without any need for modification until today. This referential timeline makes it impossible for all this huge diversity of animals to have appeared based merely on “Random mutation” and “Natural selection.” To say the least, hundreds if not thousands of knowledgeable scientists and philosophers have criticized “Natural selection,” “Random evolution” and “Neo-Darwinism.”

Brain vs. Mind

Pondering over the **Human-Mind, Consciousness** and **perception**, we are distinguished above other creatures by the **Mind** whose most important characteristic is **Consciousness**. How can we define those terms and how are they related to one another?

“**Consciousness**” is the ability to perceive our surroundings, our self being, our feelings, thoughts, desires, beliefs, and freedom of choice. It’s what makes us feel alive. It is simply the difference between an awake person and a sleeping one. When you wake up in the morning, you feel that you were nonexistent then your senses start coming back; you first realize who or what is waking you up, where you are, the things you have to do this morning, and then you’re back to life’s theater, you have regained consciousness. Consciousness could be compared to the electric current without which the computer doesn’t work. A lot of biologists consider the mind—that is responsible for consciousness—to be a direct result for the physical brain’s chemistry, exactly like the kidneys produce urine. Darwinists think that when the physical brain reached its current size and amazing complexity, the mind emerged spontaneously as a direct result for the brain’s evolution.

Those who suggest that the mind emerged naturally from the physical brain face several problems. **First**, their suggestion means that substance is characterized by a concealed mind of its own. When it reaches a certain stage of complexity in its construction, it explodes and the concealed capabilities emerge. The end product is that they have given materialistic substances qualities that totally contradict the materialistic concepts, which is closer to the religious concepts than science. **Second**, if the mind emerged from materialistic substances without any need for a higher absolute intelligence, then how can we trust its judgments?! For simplicity, imagine that a mentally retarded person makes a computer program, will you trust the outputs of this program? How be it if this programmer had no mind whatsoever?! **Third**, if the mind emerged from materialistic substance, this means that it shall consequently follow its definitive chemical and physical laws that give constant outputs. These definitive laws contradict the freedom of choice of all humans; e.g., you may continue to read this book or simply close it and throw it away. If the mind was a direct result to the physical brain, then all humans would have adopted the same view for every issue. That’s because the materialistic view is always one for

every issue as you can see in all physical matters. Accordingly, personal perspectives which are the most important characteristic of human beings shall disappear. Thus, if this suggestion was true, the human mind wouldn't have existed in the first place.

Let's seek practical evidence. There is no doubt that practical evidences are the strongest. Dr. Wilder Penfield (The founder of modern neurosurgery and a Nobel Prize winner) has performed more than 1000 operations for epileptic patients who did not respond to medical therapy. During the operations performed under local anesthetization, he tried to reach the location of the human mind within the physical brain through electrical activation for the different centers of the cerebral cortex. On activating a certain part of the cortex, one of the patients' hands moved, but the patients would then try to stop it with their other hand. When Penfield discussed the matter with his patients later on, they said that he was the one moving their hands and that they could not stop it. This means that while one hand was moving under the electrical activation's control, the patient's freewill was trying to stop it with the other hand. This proves that humans have "freewill" separate from the electrochemical activities of the brain. Dr. Penfield admitted that the brain and the mind are two separate things and each has a different nature. After his thorough researches on the human brain, Dr. Roger Sperry—a Nobel Prize winner for his research about the different brain functions—confirmed, too, that the mental functions do not emerge from the normal activities of the physical brain, even though they use it as a machine.

A person may make some tests to check on his heart and brain functions, but he will never make a neurological cerebellum examination to check on the correctness of his thoughts and feelings. Absolutely, there is no brain check that can scan our thoughts and determine if they were wrong or right. What's going on inside our minds is something very private and totally irrelevant to materialism.

Consciousness is one of the mind's functions, but the mind itself is not the apex of the pyramid, it's just one of our self-being manifestations. You cannot get to know a person through lab tests and X-ray checkups. You must know how he feels, what his thoughts are, his aspirations, and his view of the whole existence, in order to really know him. In short, the essence of any human being goes far beyond his body, brain, consciousness, and even his mind. It is rather that intrinsic nature that integrates all of the previous, and makes you feel a whole consistent being who realizes himself and name it "ME." This is why, when Sir "John C. Eccles" was receiving the Nobel Prize for his research on "Brain Biology," he said, "*I find myself compelled to say that there is a non-materialistic nature for my being and my mind, a nature that agrees with what the religious call the 'Soul.'*" All divine religions indicate that the soul is the immaterialistic essence of any human. The dualism of the soul and the body could even be found in all civilizations throughout history all over the globe. This dualism has even been the main pillar of the Egyptian civilization that goes back more than 7000 years.

After we have tackled the issue of life and consciousness from the scientific point of view, let's get to know what the Qur'an has to say about the creation and the emergence of life on earth in the same manner we followed in the previous section. Please note that the following contemplation is built on comparing the scientific findings to what the verses say linguistically.

Under the spotlight of the previous, let's ponder over the following Qur'anic verses:

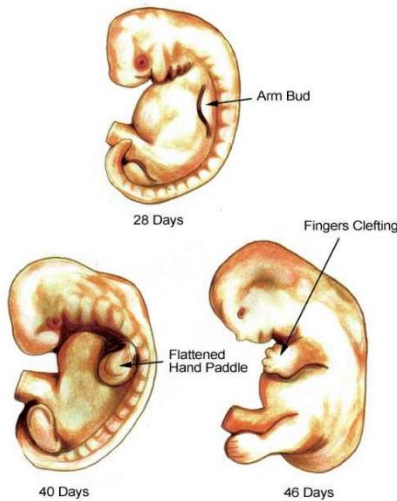
1. “Did they (i.e. the disbelievers) not see how Allah originates creation then reproduces it? That surely is easy for Allah. Tell them, ‘Roam the earth and see how the creation was originated. Then Allah will create the subsequent creation. Surely Allah is powerful to do everything.’ [The Qur’an (29:19-20)].

As clearly stated in the above verses, Allah is ordering those who disbelieve in the hereafter and resurrection to roam about in the earth and try to find out how the creation started. The first man to ever follow this order without ever learning a word from the Qur'an was “Charles Darwin.” This great scientist went out on a journey for 5 years roaming the earth, studying all sorts of living organisms, and gathering fossils in order to learn how the creation was originated. The Qur'an doesn't hinder mankind from searching into matters like the start of creation; on the contrary, it orders us literally to do so. This means that what we find through our research cannot contradict the Qur'an; or else, this would be a very strange order. Here, we must be careful not to negate the Qur'an with unestablished or incomplete theories.

2. “And indeed We created man from descendants (created) from clay (i.e. water and earth mixture). Later on, We made him a nutfah (i.e. literal translation is sperm-drop) in a safe lodging. Later on, we turned this nutfah into an alaqah (i.e. literal translation is leech or blood clot), then we made the alaqah into a mudghah (i.e. literal translation is chewed morsel), then We made out of that mudghah bones, then we clothed the bones with flesh. Later on, We developed it into another creation, so Glorious is Allah, the Best of the creators. Later on, you shall surely die. Later on, you will be raised up again on the Resurrection Day.” [The Qur’an (23:12-14)].

These few words give clear reference that **humans** were originally created from a former progeny that was initially created from **clay** (water mixed with earth). Remember that the first living cell was created in an aquatic environment. Then, after a long period, referred to by the words “**later on**” (i.e. Arabic “*Thumma*” is used to indicate the occurrence of two events with a long period of time in between), the creation of humans was made from creatures that reproduce through sperm production. Though the first known scientific notion given about sperm was in 1677 by a scientist called “*Antonie van Leeuwenhoek*” (The father of microbiology), yet, this verse from the Qur'an—alongside other verses—form a much earlier reference back before 640 CE. Amazingly, sperm is described in the verses to be “in a safe lodging.” Science explains that sperm dies within a maximum period of few days after exiting the male's body (i.e. unless special preservation-precautions like freezing were considered). Also sperm is sensitive to heat and cannot endure high temperatures. In mammals, the male's genitalia is designed with a compensating mechanism that preserves the sperm and recycles it throughout the life span of its host. During mating, fertilization occurs. If the male's sperm succeeds in reaching and penetrating the female's egg (i.e. ovum) producing a zygote (i.e. fertilized egg), then it is kept safe inside the female's womb. So literally speaking, the male's body is a safe lodging for the sperm before fertilization. The female's womb then becomes the new safe lodgment in which the sperm continues to live in its new form.

After fertilization takes place, the embryo is formed inside the female’s womb. It clings to the womb’s inside-wall feeding on the blood of the mother exactly like a leech. During the early stage of the embryo formation (i.e. first 3 weeks) the heart is not yet built. Therefore, the embryo is filled with blood that is not circulating, it is literally a blood clot. Hence, the two literal meanings of the Arabic word “*Alaqah*” are actually giving a perfect description of the embryo at its early stage.



Human Embryo: This is a photo of the human embryo at different stages of its formation. Notice how the vertebra looks like teeth marks on a chewed morsel, and how the general shape of the embryo gives you the same impression that this is a chewed morsel, or what is called in Arabic *Mudghah*. After the start of blood circulation, the embryo develops into a lump of flesh in which the heart, brain, head and the tissue that later develops into the vertebra are in the period of formation. The backbone is formed first, followed by the rest of the bones that are later wrapped by the muscles and then the flesh. After 6 weeks the facial features begin to form. Amazingly this was literally stated by Prophet Muhammad 14 centuries ago

when he said, “*When 42 nights have passed from the time of the nutfah (i.e. time of fertilization), Allah sends an angel to it. He shapes it, makes its ears, eyes, skin, muscles and bones...*” [Recorded by Muslim]. Dividing 42 by 7, you get a 6 weeks period exactly like science has proven. After 8 weeks the fetus stage starts and the new creature continues developing. This data was only discovered by scientists after the establishment of embryology in the 19th century.

After the verses describes the reproduction process in most mammalian vertebrates, it continued to say that **later on**, after another long period of time, Allah **developed it into another creation**. According to evolution, humans descended from mammalian vertebrates after 200 million years of mammals’ first appearance. Absolutely, among the ways through which one can understand these few verses is guided evolution.

3. “Such (i.e. Allah) is the Knower of the unseen and the seen, the All-Powerful, the Most-Merciful, who perfected everything He created, and He originated the creation of man from clay (i.e. water and earth mixture). Later on, He made his progeny from an extract of a despised liquid (i.e. Male’s semen). Later on, He straightened him and breathed into him from His Spirit (i.e. Gabriel), and He gave you hearing, sight, and hearts. How seldom you are grateful!” [The Qur’an (32:6-9)].

In these verses, a new confirmation is made to the fact that the creation of man was originated from a water-earth mixture. Remember that the first living cell was formed—or rather created in an aquatic environment. **Later on**, after a long period, man’s progeny was extracted from a phylum that reproduces through the introduction of the male’s semen into the female’s reproduction system. **Later on**, after another long period, Allah straightened this creature and breathed into him from His created spirit (i.e. Gabriel).

I believe that this is an allusion to the creation of the “homo sapiens sapiens,” who were preferred by the Creator above other creatures with the “Intellect” or “Human-Mind.” This angelic breath granted by the intelligent creator through his archangel resulted in the main peculiarity of all humans, and made us the chosen vicegerents on earth. This breath was the most significant part of our preparation to receive our Creator’s messages, understand them, learn their content and live through their guidance. Actually, this is what Allah refers to in the Qur’an in chapter *At-teen* or The Fig, verse 4: ***“Verily We have created man in the best modification.”*** (95:4). Of course, this modification requires a previous lesser creature. When you look at the other creatures, you will see that man is not the strongest or fastest among them; nonetheless, he is the smartest and most capable. Though horses are much faster than men, but it is man who rides horses not the contrary. It is man who studies the horse’s anatomy and treats its pains and illnesses, not the opposite. It is man who builds barns in which he takes care of horses, etc. Consequently, man is the most intelligent design; or to be more precise, the most intelligent creature created by Allah Almighty on this earth, and he must fulfill his duty towards all other creatures to succeed in his mission.

4. “Was there not a period of time when mankind was nothing worth mentioning? Verily, We created man from a mixed sperm-drop so that We might try him, We gave him hearing and sight, We showed him the way, whether he be grateful or ungrateful (rests on his will).” [The Qur’an (76:1-4)].

The Qur’an is confirming that there has been a period of time when mankind was nothing worth mentioning. One way to understand the 1st verse is that it is referring to the period of time when all living creatures were still nothing but a single celled organism from which our Creator developed all living creatures. The verses then continue to confirm that mankind was created from a mixed sperm-drop, referring to the male’s sperm mixed with the female’s ovum. This entails that mankind was not created separately, but rather developed from previous ancestors. This comes in line with the previous verses and the contemplation given about them.

5. “O People, worship your Lord, who created you and those before you, so that you may learn devoutness” [The Qur’an (2:21)].

This verse is clearly stating that there were other creatures before us as humans. Some people may say that this verse is referring to the angels, but the context implies that those creatures whom the verse is referring to were earth inhabitants.

6. “Remember when your Lord said to the angels, ‘I am going to instate a vicegerent on earth,’ they said, ‘Will You instate therein someone who will cause corruption and shed blood, while we glorify You with Your praise and extol Your holiness?’ (Allah) replied, ‘Surely, I know that which you know not.’ And He taught Adam all the names, then He set them before the angels and said, ‘Tell Me the names of these, if what you say be true.’ They said, ‘Glory be to You, we have no knowledge except whatever You have taught us. You are the All Knowing, the All Wise.’ Then He said, ‘O Adam, tell them their names.’ When Adam had told them the names, (Allah) said to the angels, ‘Did I not tell you: I know the secrets of the heavens and of the earth, and I know what you reveal and what you conceal?’ And remember when We said to the angels, ‘Prostrate yourselves before ‘Adam!’ So, they prostrated, all but Satan, he refused, and became one of the disbelievers (in Allah’s wisdom).” [The Qur’an (2:30-33)].

These verses are describing the preparation of Allah’s first chosen prophet, “Adam”—the newly introduced intelligent creature—to be God’s vicegerent on earth after teaching him what was referred to as “all the names.” If you take a look at any little child in the phase of learning speech, you will see his parents teaching him the names of all surroundings, this is how any child learns how to speak. Without the ability to speak, no prophet could have conveyed his message to his people, no learning of any kind would have been possible and there wouldn’t have been any civilizations on earth today.

Another notable point here is the response of the angels—Allah’s obedient servants—when Allah informed them that He was going to instate a vicegerent on earth, they said, ***“Will You instate therein someone who will cause corruption and shed blood?”*** They didn’t say for instance, *“O Lord, praise be to You, You are The Omniscient Creator,”* or *“Create whatever You will, You are The Omnipotent Creator,”* nothing of that sort. On the contrary, their response implies that they were shocked that Allah will instate a vicegerent on earth from among the creatures He created therein. According to the angels’ response, those creatures were shedding blood and causing corruption. But Allah told them that He knows about that still non-existing creature—the awaited vicegerent—what they knew not.

Scientists have discovered that before the existence of today’s humans, there existed a primeval human whom they named: “Homo sapiens Neanderthals.” He was less skilled and less intelligent than the contemporary human. He inhabited the earth for approximately 150,000 years before extinction nearly 35,000 years ago. Scientists say that Neanderthals were skilled hunters who lived in caves. They ate meat and used arrows and spears in hunting. Neanderthals coexisted with today’s humans for 10,000-15,000 years. They must have been a source of disturbance for the humans of that day with their stern appearance. Both parties must have fought against one another. The rivalry ended with the extinction of Neanderthals. After that, humans continued securing themselves and building communities that later on formed civilizations.

Today we can see humans taking care of all sorts of creatures at their homes, or in their farms, stables, pens, barns, yards, zoos, etc. Humans have developed even medical departments for animals in their medicine schools and we see veterinarians in each and every village in the world. Humans even try to guard and protect rare species in natural preserves. If you ponder over all creatures existing on earth, you will see that humans are the only species who have the ability to study other creatures thoroughly, take care of them, and if they willed, truly become Allah’s vicegerents on earth. This is their trust and tribulation. Those who try to succeed in fulfilling this task shall prosper forever, and those who betray their trust, spread corruption and shed blood shall be doomed.

After the creation of the awaited vicegerent, granting him the ability to learn and deduce new information by bestowing upon him the bliss of the Human-Mind, and after teaching him speech, which was not among the abilities of the previous creatures on earth, it was time for honoring Allah’s most intelligent creature, first chosen prophet and vicegerent on earth. In obedience to Allah’s order, the angels prostrated themselves to Adam but Satan refused out of arrogance. This was the start of enmity between the two creatures, the one whose creation started from clay, and the one whose creation started from fire. According to the Qur’an, this was **the original sin**, the first sin that was ever committed ever since the start of creation, **it was racism.**

7. “Verily, Allah has chosen Adam and Nuh (Noah) and the House of Ibrahim and the House of Imran above all creatures.” [The Qur’an (3:33)].

This verse confirms that Allah chose Adam from among all those He created. Choosing requires choices, so how come that Adam was the only human created when Allah chose him to be a prophet, and the father of a great intelligent species capable of receiving their creator’s messages, understand them, follow the guidance and light therein, and fulfill their duty in being Allah’s vicegerents on earth?! The verse speaks for itself.

8. “Your Lord is the self-sufficient One, the merciful. If He wills, He can take you away and instate as vicegerents whomever He pleases, just as He created you from the offspring of other people.” [The Qur’an (6:133)].

This verse is again clearly stating that all humans were created from a previous progeny of another nation or other people. According to this account of contemplation, I can’t but say that this is a clear reference for the occurrence of some kind of guided or controlled evolution, not random mutation or natural selection. Scientists say that modern humans (i.e. Homo sapiens sapiens) were created from the offspring of a previous mammalian species whom they called “Homo erectus.”

9. “He (Allah) brings forth the living from the dead and the dead from the living. He gives life to the earth after its death, and you shall be raised to life in the same manner.” [The Qur’an (30:19)].

This verse states clearly that Allah—The Omnipotent Creator—is The One who gives life to what’s dead, and the one who takes it back whenever He wills. Scientists tell us that [Water + Organic Carbon Compounds + Energy = Life]. Hence, according to this, the first living cell did not come to exist on its own, but through the organization of an Omniscient Creator and by His power. He has been sending us messages to teach us about ourselves and His supreme being ever since our existence started.

What you have read so far was a trial to understand the Qur’anic verses discussing the start of creation within their linguistic frame, placing them as evidence one over the other, and meanwhile pondering over them under the spotlight of the scientific findings. I have used literal translations for all verses without even the slightest change in the wording except when necessary, and you will find it placed between brackets. This contemplation does not mean that the Qur’an is confirming the evolution theory that we have at hand; it simply shows that our Creator could have used evolution as a mechanism or a method in creation. May Allah guide us to the truth; Amen.



Qur’anic verses used by some scholars to refute the previous contemplation:

Some scholars would say that this explanation contradicts some other verses from the Qur’an itself. They would present the following verses:

*1. “Your Lord said to the angels, ‘I am going to create a human-being out of clay, then if I straighten him and breath from My spirit into him, prostrate yourselves before him.’ Thereupon, the angels prostrated themselves, all of them together, except Satan, he waxed proud, and became one of the disbelievers (in Allah’s wisdom). (Allah) said, ‘Satan, **what prevented you from prostrating yourself to what I created with My own Hands? Did you wax proud or were you among the lofty ones?’** Satan replied, ‘I am better than him. You created me from fire, but You created him from clay.’ (Allah) said, ‘**Then get out from here!** You are accursed: My curse will remain upon you till the Day of Judgment!’ But Satan said, ‘My Lord, grant me respite until the Day of Resurrection,’ so (Allah) said, ‘You are granted respite till the Appointed Day.’ (Satan) said, ‘By Your Honor, I will lead all of them astray, except for those among them who are Your chosen servants.’ (Allah) said, ‘Then the truth is—and I speak only the truth—that I will definitely fill up Hell with you and every one of them who follows you, altogether’.” [The Qur’an (38:71-85)].*

These verses state that Allah, The Creator, told the angels—his loyal servants—that He was going to create a creature from clay. Later on, if the time comes when Allah straightens him and makes his created spirit (Gabriel) breathe into him, they must prostrate themselves to him in honoring for Allah’s new creature, for it is created in the best modification as previously explained. Some scholars refuse accepting the point of view adopted in this research saying, “*How could Allah’s method in creation be guided evolution when He Himself states in the previous verses that He created Adam—the new honored creature—with His own hands?*”

To their question we respond reminding them that our main and major reference is the Qur’an itself, and if we get back to the Qur’an to understand what Allah means by creating Adam or any creature with His own hands, we will find the following verse:

*“Do they not see that, among the things **which Our hands have fashioned**, We have created for them cattle of which they are the masters?” [The Qur’an (36:71)].*

Does this verse mean that Allah created our cattle with His own hands? Of course it does not. It simply means that He started the creation with his power. He designed and fashioned everything to be what it is, He is the best of creators. Let’s simplify this for better understanding. When an architect designs a building; later on, after a few years, his building is established and there he stands watching it and says, “*This is the work of my own hands.*” Do you understand these words in the sense that he must have dug the ground works, carried the bricks one by one, manufactured the glass, the cement, the iron beams, etc., and later on, installed everything in its place! Or do you simply understand the words in the sense that he was the designer and originator of the building? Moreover, try to imagine that the architect’s servant—an ignorant arrogant young fellow—stands beside the building looking at it with contempt. When the architect sees him, he says in anger, “*Why do you despise what I created with my own hands?*” Of course, no one understands these words except in the sense that the architect was the designer of the building.

Allah is the supreme Designer, Creator and Originator. This is how He describes Himself in the Qur'an in different places:

"Surely your Lord is the Omniscient Creator!" [The Qur'an (15:86)].

"Glorious is Allah, the Best of Creators." [The Qur'an (23:14)].

"Is He who created the heavens and earth not able to create others like these people? Surely He is! He is the Supreme Creator, the All Knowing" [The Qur'an (36:81)].

"Do you (sons of Israel) call on Ba'al and abandon the Best of Creators, Allah, your Lord and the Lord of your forefathers?" [The Qur'an (37:125-126)].

Hence, we are all Allah's creation, we were all created by His hands, not in the direct sense of the word, but in the sense described in the Qur'an itself and further strengthened by logic and science.

2. "O mankind! Fear your Lord, who created you from one soul, and from it He created its mate, and from them spread countless men and women." [The Qur'an (4:1)].

Some scholars will say, "How about this verse? Doesn't it clearly indicate that Eve was created from Adam's rib, and that all humans are their offspring?"

Our response is that: **First**, the stories mentioned in the book of Genesis about the start of creation, and the creation of Eve from Adam's rib are not mentioned anywhere in the Qur'an. On the contrary, the verses of the Qur'an totally negate and contradict the account given in the Bible about creation. **Second**, this verse does not say anything of what you have mentioned, you are now following the Bible and a couple of weak traditions, and presenting them as evidence on your understanding. This verse is clearly stating that both males and females were created from the same human soul or the same kind; they will always be attracted to each other and find tranquility in one another. As a result of this design, males and females mate, and their offspring continues to multiply spreading all over the earth upon which they were instated as vicegerents. This was a necessity for fulfilling their assigned task. **Third**, as stated before, our main and major reference is the Qur'an itself. If we search in it, we will find the following verse that clears up the misunderstanding:

"And it is among His signs that He has created for you wives from yourselves, so that you may find tranquility in them, and He has created love and kindness between you. Verily, in this are indeed signs for people who reflect." [The Qur'an (30:21)].

Of course, no man understands from this verse that the woman he chose to be his wife was created from his rib, but rather from his kind. This verse makes it crystal clear that some scholars were misled in their contemplation by the biblical story of creating Eve from Adam's rib. Actually this is why all translators add the word (**among**) before (**yourselves**) in verse (30:21) so that the meaning understood in Arabic would be correctly conveyed. This opinion was the one given by some of the most notable scholars like Sheikh Muhammad Metwally Ash-Sha'rawy (1911-1998), who said in his explanation of verse (4:1), "Allah says in the Qur'an: **"There has come to you a prophet from yourselves."** [The Qur'an (9:128)]. *So did Allah create Prophet Muhammad physically from us?! Of course not. The verse means that Muhammad was a prophet from our kind, the human kind.*" Sheikh Muhammad 'Abdou (1849-1905) as well had a similar opinion.

In his explanation of the verse, he said, *“If the expounders have interpreted the ‘one soul’ as Adam, then they have not taken this from the Qur’anic text or its direct meaning, but rather from an incontestable tale according to their understanding, that Adam is the father of all human beings. There is no definitive verse in the Qur’an stating that all humans are the descendants of Adam. The ‘one soul’ mentioned here is the human soul.”* **Fourth**, verse (4:1) does not say that only Eve was created from that “one soul,” but all of us were created from it. The verse is stating very clearly that this “one soul” is for all of us, for our kind, the human kind. Hence, the ‘human soul’ is what the verse is referring to, not Adam, and certainly not his rib. The human soul according to the Qur’an is a divine secret that only Allah knows. He says, *“They ask you [O Muhammad] about the soul. Say, ‘The soul owes fealty to my lord (alone); you haven’t been granted but little knowledge.’”* [The Qur’an (17:85)].

3. “Verily, the example of Jesus before Allah is like the example of Adam. He created him from earth, later on, He said to him, ‘Be!’ and he was.” [The Qur’an (3:59)].

Some scholars say, “This verse refutes your contemplation. It literally states that Adam and Jesus are alike. They were both created from dust instantaneously with a single worded order, which is ‘BE,’ and there they existed without the need for two mates. This word was all that Allah uttered to create them both.”

Our response is that: **First**, the verse does not say that any of the 2 magnificent prophets was created instantaneously. On the contrary, the verse literally says **“later on,”** which means that their creation initially started from earth, then after a long period of time, they came to exist as human beings when Allah willed it. **Second**, as for the single worded order ‘BE,’ all of the universe was created with that same order but through the method designed by our Creator and described in the previous Qur’anic verses. Since that the Qur’an is our reference, read the verse that says, **“(Allah is the) Originator of the heavens and the earth. When He qada (i.e. literal translation is: decides or finalizes) a matter, He simply says to it, “Be,” and it comes to be.”** [The Qur’an (2:117)]. This verse is mentioned several times in the Qur’an. It stands as evidence on the inconsistency of the instantaneous creation understanding. The verse is saying that this single worded order is given by Allah to any matter after He decides everything about it, executes its design and finalizes it. It is like the attack order given by field commanders after training their soldiers, placing the plan, distributing the duties, preparing the weapons, etc. **Later on**, on the battlefield, all of the previous is implemented precisely according to the plan by the word ‘attack’ or a battle cry. Likewise, our Creator makes His design, chooses the elements contributing in it, organizes the matter, and finally gives His order ‘BE’ so that all elements would interact and produce what Allah wills. Think about it logically, if the new creature doesn’t exist then to whom is the order ‘BE’ given in the first place?! We say that it is given to the elements organized by the Creator to form it. **Third**, verse (2:117) states that everything including us was created by this word, but still we all needed a father and a mother to mate, fertilization to occur, and a 9 months pregnancy period before we came to the world. This totally refutes the instantaneous creation understanding. **Finally**, Allah Himself says in the Qur’an: **“Then He (i.e. Allah) equilibrated unto the sky when it was [still] smoke and said unto it and to the earth, ‘Come willingly or unwillingly.’ They said, ‘We come willingly [O Lord].’ ”** [The Qur’an (41:11)]. Hence, Allah’s creation order is not always “BE” like you think. It could be whatever He wills.

Now what about Jesus P.B.U.H.? The Qur'an tells us that Lady Maryam's pregnancy was miraculous. She conceived Jesus after Allah ordered Gabriel to breathe into her womb creating the baby who was to be Jesus. Hence, it never says that Jesus was created instantaneously. The Qur'anic verses praise Jesus and his mother in a magnificent way. Meanwhile, it continuously reminds us that Jesus was human, a part of Allah's creation whose birth was made miraculous from a woman known of her virginity and great chastity. This stood as evidence on his Prophethood in front of the sons of Israel. The Qur'an tells us that when the Israelites asked Lady Maryam about the baby she came carrying, she pointed to the child and Jesus spoke in the cradle saying, "*I am Allah's servant and His messenger.*" May Allah's peace and blessing be upon Jesus and his mother. The Qur'an tells us about Jesus's miracles. More miracles are even mentioned in the Qur'an than those mentioned in the gospels.

Hence, the likeness between Adam and Jesus is in the process of their creation. Both of them came to exist without biological parents. Both received an angelic breath directly from the archangel Gabriel by divine orders from our Creator. This angelic breath granted them abilities that were unimaginable for the rest of the people existing during their time so as to strengthen them in their missions. Adam was the first human to speak, and Jesus was the first infant to speak. They were both taught and granted knowledge by their creator. Adam answered questions all angels couldn't answer, and Jesus cured diseases all people couldn't cure.

I hope that the previous contemplations open a new window to understanding the Qur'an among Muslims and non-Muslims equally. This should not be thought of as a trial to confirm evolution, nothing of that sort. This was just a trial to see whether the Qur'an refuses the concept of evolution or it simply doesn't negate it, that's it. Among the scholars who did not see that evolution contradicts the Qur'an, and that it could be the method which Allah adopted in creation, are the following renowned ones:

1. Sheikh *Hussein Muhammad Al-Jesr* (1845-1909 A.D.): he was a Lebanese *Azhary* scholar and a coeval of Darwin.
2. Sheikh *Muhammad Abdou* (1849-1905 A.D.): he was an Egyptian *Azhary* scholar who became the grand jurist (*Mufty*) of Egypt in 1899.
3. Sheikh *Tantawy Juhary* (1870-1940 A.D.): he was an Egyptian *Azhary* scholar and a pioneer in writing about the scientific statements in the Qur'an.
4. Sheikh *'Abdullah Al-Jesr* (1897-1980 A.D.): the son of Sheikh *Hussein Al-Jesr* and the grand jurist (*Mufty*) of Lebanon.
5. Sheikh *Abd El-Sabour Shaheen* (1929-2010 A.D.): he was an *Azhary* scholar who wrote a book named, "My father Adam." In it he compared the evolution theory to the Qur'an and concluded that it could be the method adopted by Allah in creation.

May Allah guide us all to the truth or grant us the honor of dying while seeking after it sincerely, Amen.

1: The expression "My spirit" must not be understood in the sense that Allah is a spirit. It means the spirit that I have created, the spirit of life. Some scholars say that this is a reference to Gabriel, the archangel who bears the responsibility of conveying Allah's messages to His chosen servants. Allah calls him in different places in the Qur'an "The spirit." E.g. verses (19:18) & (26:193). The second opinion was preponderated by *Ibn 'Abbas* and others. Nonetheless, both meanings are valid.

3.5. Abrogation in the Qur'an

Among the most common misconceptions raised against the Qur'an is the issue of "Abrogation." Some would say: *"How come the verses of the divine book contradict themselves? One time God says one thing; later on, He says another! How could this hesitating attitude be attributed to the Omniscient Creator? It seems that the God of the Qur'an didn't know any better than this. Way to go Muslims, keep up the spirit of faith!"*

The previous, alongside many other taunting sentences are directed to Muslims all the time. Let's get started by explaining some facts about the Qur'an in brief, and then we shall tackle some verses deemed contradicting sometimes. First, it's important to know that knowledge in the Qur'an discusses a variety of subjects, mainly the following ones:

- 1- Knowledge about our creator → Creed of Faith.
- 2- Knowledge about the previous nations → Lessons considered from History.
- 3- Knowledge about people of the book → Misconceptions and distortions.
- 4- Knowledge about the hereafter → Future events, Judgment Day, Heaven and Hell.
- 5- Knowledge about ourselves and the universe → Creation and Life.
- 6- Knowledge about the first generation → Prophet Muhammad and his coevals.
- 7- Knowledge about rituals and rites → Main pillars of Islam.
- 8- Knowledge about duties and rights in this life → Legal rulings, Laws, etc.

With this built up knowledge about the Creator and the creation, the present and the past, this life and the hereafter, we find that spiritual and materialistic guidance are both made available and balanced in the Qur'an. This helps the believers build up a moderate personality and live rightly. From my personal experience, pondering over the verses of the Qur'an and working your mind into understanding them is a very big step towards achieving the peace of mind and tranquility of soul. Try it yourself, write down your contemplations so that you may read them back later, and you shall get to know why the Qur'an is truly a Holy Divine Book.

Back to abrogation, the Qur'anic branch of knowledge concerned with it is the 8th branch mentioned above—the one related to "legal rulings." This is mainly because legal rulings prescribe legal relationships between people the way our creator wishes them to be observed in different situations. Meanwhile, the remaining branches of knowledge in the Qur'an have always remained the same. Legal rulings varied throughout the 23 years of Prophethood. Many prophets received certain legal rulings for their respective communities. With time, these rulings were changed or abrogated in latter messages according to what our creator knows is best for His vicegerents.

When Prophet Muhammad started preaching Islam in Arabia, its teachings were quite different from the Arabs' customs and daily life traditions. Arabs used to practice polygyny without any limitations. They were addicted to drinking wine and gambling. Adultery and fornication were practiced freely. Beating women was something normal. Burying newborn females alive was a matter of honor. Despising slaves, mistreating them; and in case of disobedience, flogging or slapping them was something normal, etc. Those bad customs were so deeply entrenched in the society that it was so hard to change people's attitude all at once and convince them to abandon them.

Therefore, the Qur'an brought important tough changes gradually; that was to help all people adjust to the new prescriptions, while observing their welfare in the process and reducing any difficulty. Let's take an example for better understanding. In the Qur'an, there are four verses tackling the issue of wine. Drinking wine was widespread among Arabs before the advent of Islam. Although a social evil, it was highly esteemed and many of them were addicted to it. This is why its prohibition was revealed in 4 stages:

1- “And from the fruits of date palms and grape vines, you obtain intoxicants, and good provision. Surely, in that there is a sign for people of understanding.” [The Qur'an (16:67)].

This verse is a lenient blame from the Creator to the believers. It is an invitation to think and ponder over how they make use of Allah's provision from dates and grapes. They either enjoy their natural taste by directly eating them, or they use them in making wine and intoxicants which are not a good provision. Later on, after this verse was revealed, many of the companions went asking the prophet about wine's lawfulness and whether it was something evil or not.

2- “They ask you [O Muhammad] concerning wine and gambling. Say: ‘In them is great sin, and some profit, for men, but the sin is greater than the profit.’” [The Qur'an (2:219)].

This verse was revealed to the prophet in response to the previously mentioned incident. The verse here emphasizes that drinking wine is a doorway to sins, as it dulls the senses and weakens your consciousness. Since that consciousness acts as brakes against indulging into lusts and evil deeds; therefore, once it is anesthetized, the doorway to all sorts of evil deeds is left open. As noted in this verse, drinking has not been clearly identified as something unlawful but its evil has been pointed out clarifying that it may lead man to many sinful acts. This allusion was a kind of good advice urging the believers to reduce the wine dosages they were used to. Nonetheless, complete prohibition was still on hold for a wisdom that only The Creator knew back then.

3- “O you who believe! Approach not prayers with a mind befogged (drunk), until you realize [the meaning of] all that you say.” [The Qur'an (4:43)].

Now, in this verse, Allah clearly prohibited the believers from approaching their prayers while they are still under the effect of wine. They must be completely sober in order to perform the prayers ordained upon them. Since that there are five prayers every day starting with the dawn prayer, followed by the noon prayer, then the afternoon, then the sunset, and finally the evening prayers, therefore, the only available time for drinking will be during the night. This is the only period long enough for those who drink to get rid of the drinking side effects. This verse is a semi-prohibition that resulted in a significant decrease in the wine dosages Muslims were used to. However, complete prohibition is on hold for a wisdom that only Allah knew back then.

4- “O you who believe! Intoxicants (i.e. all kinds of alcoholic drinks) and gambling, [dedication of] stones, and [divination by] arrows, are an abomination of Satan's handwork; eschew such [abomination], that you may prosper. Satan's plan is but to inveigle enmity and hatred amongst you through intoxicants and gambling, and hinder you from the remembrance of Allah, and from prayer: will you not then abstain?” [The Qur'an (5:90-91)].

These verses were the last stage that led to complete prohibition of drinking wine. Humans have no sustainer or helper except their Creator. This gradual prohibition for wine proves that Allah is All-Knowing of his creation, He is All-Wise and Most Merciful. Had wine been prohibited suddenly in one step without this gradual reduction to the dosages that Muslims were used to, they would have failed to quit. This was to give all people the least possible inconvenience. Regarding Allah's orders and obligations that He imposes upon mankind, Allah says in the Qur'an: "*Allah burdens not a soul beyond its capacity.*" [The Qur'an (2:286)].

The demand and need for this mercy, wisdom and full knowledge of the human nature that suffers incredibly to cut away from a habit of a life-time—especially like addiction to drinking wine—was the reason behind this gradual prohibition. The reader here should not think that the verses of the first two steps were abrogated and so are no longer required, for what would the situation be if a person was dizzy with a foggy mind under the effect of a medical anesthetic and wanted to pray? The answer is still in the verse of the third stage, he should not approach his prayers with a befogged mind. Also what will the situation be if a person embraced Islam recently, and he or she was addicted to drinking? The same Qur'anic approach should be followed in treating his or her addiction. Through this approach the new Muslim may reduce his drinking habits until he finally stops drinking.

What does the Arabic word “*Naskh*” mean?

The word “*Naskh*” is translated linguistically as “Abrogation,” “Annulment,” “Repealing,” or “nullifying.” Its idiomatic meaning is a bit different. Allah gradates His legal injunctions knowing fully well that the circumstances are going to change in such a way that some laws will no longer be best for people's interest. Hence, when the circumstances change, a more suitable law is promulgated, until finally, the aimed law from the very beginning is reached, and the community's circumstances are improved. The previous example from the Qur'an was a verification for this.

This is exactly like a physician who is trying to treat a patient. First, he prescribes a certain medicine in view of the patient's present conditions, while he knows very well that after the patient uses this medication for two weeks, his condition will change and require a new medicine or a new dosage. Therefore, based on his knowledge, he prescribes the proper medicine and dosage suitable for the patient's current condition and tells him to come back after 2 weeks for recheck and consultation. Two weeks later, when the patient's condition has developed and the circumstances have changed, the physician prescribes a new medicine and a new dosage. Some may think that the physician can easily give the patient written instructions for the whole course of treatment with all modifications duly indicated. To this logic we say, how will the patient know whether his condition has developed to the next level or not without consulting the doctor?! This would be putting too much burden on the already feeble patient, and there would be the danger of some harm resulting from possible errors or misunderstanding from the patient's side. This is the only form of abrogation which has been occurring in the Qur'anic injunctions for the sake of mankind's reformation. In short, it is **not abrogation but rather gradation** in the legal rulings.

The early generations understood “Naskh” to mean restricting a general law promulgated based on certain conditions. This is why *‘Ali Ibn Abi-Taleb* stressed that no one should dare to explain the Qur’an unless he or she knows the abrogating and abrogated injunctions (*Al-Nasekh Wal-Mansoukh*). Example: Some people may think that wine is not prohibited in the Qur’an when reading the verses of the first three stages mentioned earlier. Some others may think that the new Muslim who is still addicted to drinking wine should be punished if he drinks. Both of the previous understandings are wrong. Drinking intoxicants is prohibited in the Qur’an, and those who are addicted to drinking must be given sufficient help to quit drinking before any blame is directed to them if they return to this bad habit. Therefore, the Knowledge of the verses tackling the same issue, and the understanding of their gradation is very important. It’s the doorway to correct application of the Islamic laws.

Scholars of the later generations—probably after the 6th century—had a different understanding of the word “Naskh.” According to their writings, they spoke of “Naskh” as abrogation and nullifying, not gradation or restriction of general laws according to prescribed circumstances. Because of this development in the understanding of “Naskh,” tens of misconceptions evolved. Many semi-knowledgeable scholars considered the verses tackling the same issue but giving different injunctions, contradicting. Consequently, they investigated which was the most recent verse revealed to the prophet, and they abrogated the others. This led to huge misunderstandings for many issues in the Qur’an, and the negligence of tens of verses. Hence, many erudite scholars took the initiative of writing down books explaining the issue of “Naskh,” clarifying the verses that were permanently abrogated, and refuting the misconceptions about the other verses. This leads us to the following important question:

How many verses are permanently abrogated in the 6236 verses of the Qur’an?

The number of verses that are abrogated in the Qur’an vary according to scholars’ understandings. I couldn’t help but notice that in most exegesis, the more reasonable and logical the scholar is, the fewer this number is. Some scholars even argue that there is no abrogation in the Qur’an. Let’s explore what some notable scholars said about this issue.

According to the *Mu’tazily* scholar *Abu Muslim Al-Asfahany* (254-322 A.H.), there is no abrogation in the Qur’an and all of the Qur’anic verses remain applicable according to the situation at hand. The great *Hanbali* scholar *Ibn Al-Jawzy* (508-597 A.H.) wrote a voluminous book about this issue in which he tackled all of the verses that the scholars during his time claimed were abrogated. He counted 247 verses; he analyzed them and concluded that only 22 verses were abrogated. According to Imam *Jalal Ad-Deen As-Soyouty* (849-911 A.H.) there are only 20 abrogated verses in the Qur’an. Dr. *Mustafa Zayd* (1337-1398 A.H.) was an Egyptian *Azhary* scholar who received his PhD in this specific issue. He gathered all of the verses claimed to be abrogated throughout the previous centuries. He counted 293 verses. No other acknowledged scholar ever claimed that there was abrogation in more than this number of verses. Dr. *Zayd* analyzed each case and concluded at the end of his huge research that only 6 verses were permanently abrogated in the Qur’an. This research took Dr. *Zayd* 10 years to finish it. It is published today in 2 huge volumes under the name “Abrogation in the Qur’an,” (*An-Naskh fel-Qur’an*).

Hence, the issue of “Naskh” has always been a controversial issue among scholars, that’s because it depends on the understanding of every scholar to the verses, which is something that could never be unified. People have different ways of thinking, different approaches in their analysis of any issue, and above all, different minds. All we can do is adopt the most reasonable opinion we reach.

Examples of the verses that are mistakenly thought of as abrogated:

1. *“It is prescribed that when death approaches any of you and he is leaving behind wealth, he shall bequeath in favor of his parents and relatives equitable shares, a duty for all who fear Allah.”* [The Qur’an (2:180)].

Before Islam, if a person died, his wealth moved directly to his mature sons or brothers without paying any attention to the daughters, young sons, parents or relatives. Islam abolished this habit and promulgated new laws in its place gradually. The above verse was the first step in doing so. In it Allah orders any Muslim who is extremely ill and feels death is close by, that if he is leaving behind considerable wealth, then he should bequeath in favor of his parents and relatives equitable shares from this wealth. This is an obligation from Allah.

Some scholars say that this verse was permanently abrogated by the inheritance verses of chapter 4 (The Women). Allah says in the Qur’an: *“Each of your parents receives a sixth of what you leave if you have children. If you are childless and your heirs are your parents, your mother receives one third. If you have brothers [or sisters] your mother receives a sixth, after [the deduction of] any bequest you make or the repayment of any debts. With regards to your parents and your children, you do not know who of them is more helpful to you, but this fixing of shares is by Allah and He is All-Knowing and All-Wise.”* [The Qur’an (4:11)].

After the promulgation of this injunction in the Qur’an, Prophet Muhammad said, *“There is no bequest for those who have a prescribed share of inheritance.”* [Recorded by Tirmidhī].

Based on verse (4:11) and the mentioned tradition, Allah has prescribed for all members of the family fixed shares of inheritance. Therefore, they are not entitled of any bequest. The question here is what if the parents were not Muslims? Of course, non-Muslims are not entitled of the inheritance shares prescribed in the Qur’an, so what would be the proper action in such a case?

The Islamic injunctions permit any person to cut one third of his or her wealth, and bequeath it in favor of whomever he or she wills. Those who already have prescribed shares of inheritance are exempted. Hence, the answer to the above question is in the verse thought of to be permanently abrogated. That person should bequeath in favor of his non-Muslim parents an equitable share on the condition that this share should not exceed one third of his wealth. Moreover, verse (2:180) could not be abrogated as it didn’t only speak about parents, it spoke also about relatives. Relatives include uncles, aunts, cousins, nephews, nieces, etc. All those have no prescribed shares of inheritance in the Qur’an. However, they are entitled of an equitable share through bequest on the condition that all shares recorded in the bequest do not exceed one third of the wealth left behind.

From this example, it is obvious that the above is not abrogation, it's gradation in legislation that takes in consideration the welfare of all people and the consolidation of the community. That was done without laying a huge burden upon those who were not yet used to such laws after spending a lifetime accustomed to different traditions.

2. *“O you who have believed, be pious to your Lord as properly as you should be, and do not permit death to take you except as Muslims [who have submitted to His will]”* [The Qur'an (3:102)].

It is said that when this verse was revealed, many of the companions were extremely distressed by the huge burden of being obliged to be pious enough to fear Allah as properly as He should be feared. They said, *“And who of us can carry such a huge burden.”* The story goes on to say that when they said this statement, Allah laid down this burden and revealed verse (64:16) that says, *“Be pious to your Lord as hard as you can,”* to abrogate verse (3:102).

By all means, this story is incorrect. Both of the previous verses are stressing the same thing but in different manners, that's it. Verse (3:102) is saying that being pious as properly as we should be is to submit to Allah's will throughout our lives, and die on this status. This is confirmed in the verse that says, *“Strive in the cause of Allah as properly as you should. He has chosen you and laid upon you no over burdens in the matters of your religion, [it is] the faith of your forefather, Abraham. In this [scripture], as in former scriptures, [Allah] has given you the name of Muslims, so that the Messenger may be a witness over you, and so that you may be witnesses over mankind. Therefore, establish prayers regularly, pay the obligatory alms and hold fast to Allah. He is your master, such an excellent master and an excellent helper!”* [The Qur'an (22:78)]. This was further confirmed by Prophet Muhammad himself when he told *Mu'adh Ibn Jabal*, *“Do you know what's the right of Allah on His servants? It is to worship Him alone without ever ascribing partners to Him.”* [Recorded by Bukhari].

The previous verse (22:78) and tradition of Bukhari explain verse (3:102) and make it manifest that there is no abrogation whatsoever. Think logically, how could it be abrogated when it ends up saying: *“and do not permit death to take you except as Muslims”*?! Another notable point here is how may Allah order us to do something that we cannot bear to do?! This could never be when He Himself says in the Qur'an, *“Allah does not charge a soul with more than it can bear.”* [The Qur'an (2:286)]. All of the previous makes it crystal clear that verse (3:102) was not abrogated, not even partially like some scholars claimed. To be pious and fear Allah as properly as we should is the same thing as to be pious as hard as we can.

3. *“Let there be no compulsion in religion, what is rational stands manifest from falsehood, whoever refuses to follow satan's temptations and believes in Allah has grasped the strong handhold that never breaks, Allah is all hearing and all knowing.”* [The Qur'an (2:256)].

Extremists claim that this verse—among others—were abrogated by a verse they named the “sword verse.” This is pure innovation. There is no such a thing as the ‘sword verse,’ nor is the word ‘sword’ ever mentioned in the Qur'an. There are verses that order Muslims to fight under described circumstances but never to force others to embrace Islam. These verses shall be dealt with in details in the next chapter. Let's concentrate on verse (2:256).

To those who claim that this verse was abrogated, I ask: How can you force someone to embrace Islam when Allah Himself says, ***“If your Lord willed [O Muhammad] He would have made all people become believers altogether, are you then going to compel people to become believers! It is not for a soul to believe except by the will of Allah and He casts His wrath upon those who do not use their reason.”*** [The Qur’an (10:99-100)]. How can you force people to become Muslims if faith is an act of the heart! How can you force someone to embrace Islam or even adopt your point of view in any religious matter when the prophet and all Muslim scholars after him taught us that, *“Deeds are but by intentions.”* How can you compel others to embrace your religion; meanwhile, strenuously deny the same action from their side! How can a verse that says, *“What is rational stands manifest from falsehood, whoever refuses to follow satan’s temptations and believes in Allah has grasped the strong handhold that never breaks, Allah is all hearing and all knowing,”* be abrogated!

Throughout the Qur’an, Allah is inviting **faith** stressing upon the utilization of **reason** as the **main path** that leads to it. So who are you to change this path, and then come to claim that you are a Muslim? Know that your understanding—if you have any—is wrong. Enough as evidence the fact that Allah says:

“Say (O Muhammad): ‘O mankind, the truth has come to you from your Lord, so whoever seeks its guidance shall verily be guided for saving his own soul and whoever goes astray shall verily stray away against it, and I am not a warder over you.’” [The Qur’an (10:108)].

“The truth is from your Lord, so let whomsoever believes and whomsoever denies.” [The Qur’an (18:29)].

*“If they averse, then **We did not send you as a warder over them, your duty is but to convey the message.**”* [The Qur’an (42:48)].

*“**So remind them, you are only a reminder, you are not a warder over them.**”* [The Qur’an (88:21-22)].

By all means, Allah does not change His opinion or take back His word. He says in the Qur’an, *“My word never changes and I never wrong my servants.”* [The Qur’an (50:29)]. To those who insist that all of the above verses were abrogated, all I can say is that your twisted understanding of abrogation and wrong application of the Islamic laws are harming Muslims and defaming Islam. Fear Allah whose words you take as a ride to have power, control the masses, and manipulate their wealth.

More examples of verses mistakenly considered by some as abrogated shall be tackled in their proper context. The previous three examples were just the tip of the iceberg. As stated earlier, many books were written by erudite scholars refuting the misunderstanding about abrogation. If you wish, you can return to any of them when you encounter a verse you don’t understand; or else, suffice with the next title, it shall include the verses permanently abrogated in the Qur’an. After this, know that any other verse holding a claim of abrogation holds a meaning that negates abrogation. If you ponder over any of those verses and put your mind into it honestly, you will be able to figure out this meaning on your own. Don’t be afraid to think and use your reason like some scholars teach. The end product of their teachings is that Muslims have turned into an unworthy nation after once being the best of all nations.

The verses that are permanently abrogated:

1. *“Believers, when you come to consult the Messenger privately, give something in charity beforehand. That is best for you and most conducive to purity. But if you cannot find anything to give, know that God is Forgiving and Merciful.”* [The Qur’an (58:12)].

In this verse, Allah ordered all capable Muslims to give something in charity whenever they wished to ask the prophet about something or consult him privately. This was an obligation from Allah on all Muslims except for those who were poor or needy. Later on, this injunction was permanently abrogated by the next verse in which Allah says: *“Do you fear that you will not [be able to] give in charity before your consultation? Then if you are unable to do so, [know that] Allah has turned to you in His mercy, then observe your prayers and pay the prescribed alms and obey Allah and His Messenger. Allah is All-Aware of all that you do.”* [The Qur’an (58:13)].

It seems that many of the companions deemed it easy to ask the prophet about anything they wanted whenever they wished. They did so without giving any regards to his personal comfort and privacy. When this augmented beyond the prophet’s capacity, Allah revealed this obligation. Its purpose was to teach Muslims discipline and rectify their attitude. When the order in verse (58:12) was revealed, the companions found it uneasy to give something in charity whenever they wanted to ask the prophet a question. Consequently, many of them reduced their consultation visits to the prophet.

In my opinion, through this process the companions were taught to think and ponder deeply over the meaning of the Qur’anic text, collect whatever inquiries they couldn’t find an answer for, and then raise them to the prophet. This is why the prophet was extremely keen on teaching them how to interpret the Qur’anic text through its own verses and context, and how to perform analogy whenever they faced an issue not mentioned therein. We have mentioned many examples in the first section of the book. This process was a necessary step to prepare the companions for the day in which the prophet wasn’t going to be alive amidst them anymore. Later on, after the companions’ attitude was reformed, Allah revealed verse (58:13) to remove the difficulty from the previous verse and allow them to consult the prophet freely without having to give any charity but the annual prescribed obligatory alms (*Zakah*).

Some scholars were misguided by fabricated traditions ascribed to *‘Ali Ibn Abi-Taleb* saying that he was the only one among the companions who gave for charity whenever he went to consult the prophet, while the rest of the companions declined. Accordingly, Allah abrogated verse (58:12). *Shi‘ah* claim that this is a proof that *‘Ali* was the only sincere Muslim among the companions and the rest were hypocrites. To all those I say: How could *‘Ali* know that he was the only one who gave for charity whenever he wanted to consult the prophet about something?! Did he spy on the other thousands of companions at the same time to see whether they gave something in charity or not before they went consulting the prophet?! Absolutely not, so please stop propagating these fabricated traditions. Try to ponder over the body of the tradition in a logical manner after you check its CON. A solid reliable CON is not enough to make a tradition authentic.

Amazingly, verse (58:12) is the only permanently abrogated verse in the Qur'an. The reason is obvious, the prophet P.B.U.H. is dead; therefore, it can no longer be applied. Any other verse claimed to be permanently abrogated has a sense in which it could still be applied and there is still some need for it. The previous example of the verses tackling "drinking intoxicants" is a solid proof on that.



Many scholars state verse (2:106) as their evidence on abrogation. This is quoting out of context. Allah says in the Qur'an:

"Those who deny the truth from among the People of the Book, and from among the polytheists, do not desire that any good should be sent down to you from your Lord. But Allah distinguishes with His grace whomever He wills—for Allah is limitless in His great bounty. Whenever we abrogate a verse or cause it to be forgotten, We bring one better than it or one equal to it. Do you not know that Allah is powerful over everything? Do you not know that to Allah alone belongs the kingdom of the heavens and the earth? And, you have none, other than Allah, to protect or help you." [The Qur'an (2:105-107)].

The abrogation spoken of in the previous verses is by one scripture to another. Allah abrogated the Old Testament with the Gospel of Jesus, and He abrogated them both with the final testament, which is the Qur'an. The verses are crystal clear in emphasizing how the previous books were either forgotten or tampered with by their trustees. Consequently, Allah sent down one final complete message on those whom He favored and chose to carry forth the responsibility of its deliverance to all mankind. May Allah guide us all to the truth, Amen.



3.6. Misunderstood verses utilized in smearing the Qur'an

Some Qur'anic verses are always used by non-Muslims in smearing the Qur'an. They have some kind of a list for those verses which they always use in the media, on internet sites dedicated for this issue, and sometimes in movies. In the next few pages I shall tackle some of these verses and clear up the misconceptions about them in a very simplified manner placing the context as the evidence on the fallacy of such accusations. First, I'm going to write down the translations submitted to me by a fellow non-Muslim when he was presenting his argument against the Qur'an, and then I'm going to write down the complete context with the proper translation underlined. I shall follow that with a short response to the accusation according to the complete context of the Qur'an.

1. *“Those who reject [Islamic] Faith, Allah will not forgive them nor guide them to any path except the way to Hell, to dwell therein forever. And this to Allah is easy.”*
[The Qur'an (4:168-167)].

Islam deniers say that this verse is enough to prove that Islam is an exclusive religion. It looks down upon other faiths and treats their adherents as infidels who don't believe in the Creator whom Muslims call Allah.

Now let's read the proper translation of the previous verse in its complete context in order to understand what it is actually saying. Allah says in the Qur'an:

*“Because of the wrongdoings of the Jews, We forbade them certain good things that had been allowed to them before, for having frequently debarred others from God's path, for taking usury, when they had been forbidden to do so. And because of their devouring people's wealth wrongfully. We have prepared a painful punishment for those of them who [continue to] deny the truth. **But those well-grounded in knowledge among them, and the believers, believe in what has been revealed to you and what has been revealed before you, as well as those observing prayers and paying obligatory charity, and those believing in Allah and the judgment day. To them we shall give a great reward. Surely, We have sent Our revelations to you like We have sent them to Noah and to the prophets after him, and We have revealed to Abraham, Ishmael, Isaac, Jacob and the tribes, and to Jesus, Job, Jonah, Aaron and Solomon, and We gave the Psalms to David. (We have sent) Messengers, some of whom We have told you about, and some others We did not tell you about, and Allah has spoken to Moses directly. (We have sent) Messengers giving glad tidings and warnings, so that people may have no plea against Allah after the Messengers (have come). Allah is All-Mighty, All-Wise. But Allah bears witness that what He has revealed to you, He has revealed it with His knowledge. The angels too, bear witness, (though) Allah is sufficient as witness. Surely, those who disbelieved and prevented (people) from the way of Allah have gone far astray. Surely, those who disbelieved and transgressed, Allah will not forgive them, nor will He lead them to a way other than the way of the hellfire where they are to remain forever. That is easy for Allah.”***
[The Qur'an (4:160-167)].

These verses are describing a certain sect from among the people of the book. The people of this sect act as religious leaders and admonishers while they are not well grounded in knowledge. They refuse Islam without any truthful study or trial to understand the Qur'an.

They never try to compare it to the scriptures that they have in order to confirm whether it's truly the Creator's message or not. They don't try to compare the knowledge in the Qur'an to what they perceive in this worldly life every day. They don't even suffice with rejecting it, but they try to hinder others from giving the book a proper chance of examination and contemplation on its content. They never ask themselves the following important question:

“What if the Qur'an was truly the final message from the Creator of this universe and we were wrong not to study it properly and give it a true examination?”

The end product of their attitude is that they drive themselves astray and many others as well. In the previous verses as obvious, Allah is warning them; He is telling them that if they do the aforementioned and show arrogance against His message and messenger, He shall not grant them His pardon on the judgment day, and their dwelling in the next life shall be in the hellfire.

By all means, those who attack the Qur'an using the last two verses of the aforementioned Qur'anic context are doing exactly what the verses are criticizing. They trim out those two verses and present them to their followers in order to plant in their minds that Islam is a dreadful religion so stay away from it and don't try to read its holy book. Allah is All-Aware of what they do, may He save the people from their schemes and twisted desires. This should make it crystal clear that laymen from other faiths are not the ones intended by these verses. I believe that those who receive a distorted image about Islam in this life, or are unable to examine the Qur'an properly themselves due to some incompetence—they shall not be wronged in the hereafter. Allah is never unjust, not in the least sense. He shall grant them the choice whether to embrace Islam or not after having it presented to them properly. Nonetheless, every person should try to reach the truth according to the best of his or her capacity.

2. *“Believers, take not Jews and Christians as friends.”* [The Qur'an (5:51)].

Islam deniers say that this verse is enough to prove that Islam is a religion of hatred and enmity. It orders Muslims not to befriend the people of the book (i.e. Jews or Christians) on account of their faith.

Now let's read the proper translation of the previous verse in its complete context in order to understand what it is actually saying. Allah says in the Qur'an:

*“O Messenger, do not be grieved by those who vie with one another in denying the truth, those who say with their tongues, ‘We believe,’ but have no faith in their hearts. From among the Jews also, there are those who listen eagerly to any lies and listen to others (i.e. their religious leaders) who did not come to meet you [out of pride and conceit]. They (i.e. these Jewish leaders) take the words out of their context and they say, ‘If this [Qur'an] be inspired to you, receive it, but if not, then beware of it!’ [O prophet] if anyone's trial is intended by Allah, you cannot in the least give aid to him. Those whose hearts Allah does not intend to purify, shall be subjected to disgrace in this world and a severe punishment in the Hereafter. [This is because] they listen eagerly to falsehood, and devour forbidden things voraciously. If they come to you [seeking arbitration], you may judge between them or turn away from them. If you turn away from them, they can in no way harm you. But if you do judge between them, then judge justly, for Allah loves those who are just. Why do they come to you for judgment when **they have the Torah,***

*which enshrines Allah's own judgment? Yet, in spite of that, they turn their backs to it, and certainly those are not believers. Verily, We have revealed the Torah in which there was guidance and light. By it Our obedient prophets judged between the Jews. So did the rabbis and the priests judge according to Allah's Book which had been entrusted to their care, and to which they were witnesses. Have no fear of people but fear Me, and do not sell My revelations for a paltry sum. Those who do not judge by what Allah has sent down are deniers of the truth. We prescribed for them in [the Torah]: 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 a wound for a wound. But, if anyone forgoes, this shall be atonement for him. Those who do not judge by what Allah has sent down are wrongdoers! We caused Jesus, son of Mary to follow in their footsteps, fulfilling what had been revealed before him in the Torah. We gave him the Gospel, in which there was guidance and light, fulfilling what was revealed before it in the Torah: a guide and an admonition to the God fearing. Therefore, let those who follow the Gospel judge according to what Allah has revealed in it. Those who do not judge by what Allah has sent down are rebellious. We have sent down the Book to you with the truth, fulfilling [the predictions] revealed in the previous scriptures and determining what is true therein, and a guardian over it. Judge, therefore, between them by what Allah has revealed, and do not follow their vain desires turning away from the truth that has come to you. To every one of you We have ordained a law and a way, and had Allah so willed, He would have made you all a single nation, but He did not so will, in order that He might try you by what He has given you. Vie, then, with one another in doing good works, to God you shall all return, then He shall make clear to you what you have been disputing about. Judge between them by what Allah has sent down and do not be led by their desires. Beware of them lest they turn you away from a part of that which Allah has revealed to you. If they reject your judgment, know that Allah intends to punish them for the sins they have committed. Indeed a large number of the people are disobedient. Is it pagan laws that they wish to be judged with? Who is a better judge than Allah for those whose faith is firm? O believers do not take the Jews and Christians as allies. They are allies with one another. Whoever of you takes them as allies then he is one of them. Allah does not guide the wrongdoers. You will see those whose minds are diseased hastening towards them, saying, 'We fear lest a misfortune befalls us.' But Allah may well bring about victory or a decision according to His will. Then will they repent of the thoughts which they secretly harbored in their hearts. Then the believers will say, 'Are these the men who swore their strongest oaths by God that they were with you'? Their works will come to nothing and they will lose all. **O believers, if any among you apostates from his faith, Allah will replace them by others who love Him and are loved by Him, who will be kind and considerate towards the believers and firm and unyielding towards those who deny the truth.** They will strive hard for the cause of Allah and will in no way fear the reproaches of the fault finders. Such is Allah's bounty, which He gives to whomever He wishes. Allah is Bountiful and All-knowing. **Verily, your helpers are Allah, His Messenger and the believers who preserve their prayers and pay the alms and bow down in worship. Those who ally themselves with God, His Messenger, and the believers must know that Allah's party is sure to triumph. O believers! Do not seek alliance with those who were given the Book before you (i.e. Jews and Christians) and the deniers who ridicule your religion and make a jest of it, if you are true believers. When you call for prayers, they take it in amusement and treat it as a jest. This is because they are people who have no understanding.**" [The Qur'an (5:41-58)].*

These verses are describing a certain sect of Muslims, Jews and Christians. They all claim to be adhering to their faiths, but actually, they are hypocrites. Although they know the truth and understand it with their minds, they don't truly believe with their hearts nor do they follow Allah's messages. Their actions contradict their understanding. They follow man made laws in their judgments and neglect Allah's laws. The end product of their hypocritical attitude is that the world inclines towards a distorted unbalanced system more and more every day. Eventually, this shall lead to our destruction. As for the believers who acknowledge the truth when they receive it, they take Allah and each other as allies in this unbalanced system. Muslims who take hypocrite Jews or hypocrite Christians as allies are described in the verses as apostates. Allah knows what's in their hearts; He proclaims that He shall replace them with others who are sincere in their faith.

Now the reader may wonder, why couldn't we as Muslims take allies from among the people of the book when the prophet himself took Negus, king of Abyssinia, as an ally and he was a Christian? The prophet also took the Jews of Madinah as his allies when he immigrated to Madinah, and he respected this alliance until they committed high treason when Madinah fell under attack during the invasion of the confederates. The prophet used as well to praise a rabbi named "*Mukhaireeq*" for refusing to betray the alliance with Muslims and died while defending *Madinah* with the Muslims' army in the "Battle of 'Uhud." The verses answer all these questions saying that those among the people of the book who ridicule Islam and treat it as a jest are the ones intended. There are many from among the people of the book who respect Islam and treat Muslims in a very kind manner. I knew an American who was raised in adoption by a Christian mom. He told me that when he started thinking about embracing Islam, she gave him great support and never tried to hinder him from following his heart. He described her to be the most honest woman he ever knew. When he spoke about her final illness and departure, the grief in his voice was honestly heart breaking. People are not all alike, some non-Muslims may respect Islam more than some born Muslims do. Those who respect your religion are the only ones worthy of your friendship and alliance.

Amazingly, Islam haters neglect the entire preceding context and trim out only verse (5:51) from amidst it. The worst forgery of all is when they neglect verse (5:57) in the same page, this verse is very clear in stating that those who ridicule Islam and mock Muslims are the ones intended by the preceding verses, but as the verses describe their attitude "***This is because they are people who have no understanding.***" The Qur'anic context is clear, it doesn't need elaborated explanation. Please read it again and decide for yourself whether this is a religion that promotes hatred, or mutual respect.

3. "*I will terrorize the disbelievers. Therefore smite them on their necks and every joint [and incapacitate them. Strike off their heads and cut off each of their fingers and toes]*" [The Qur'an (8:12)].

Islam deniers say that this verse is enough to prove that Islam calls for terrorism and violence. They say it's a sick religion that orders its adherents to kill those who don't accept it in the most terrible ways.

Now let's read the proper translation of the previous verse in its complete context in order to understand what it is actually saying. Allah says in the Qur'an:

“[Remember] When you begged your Lord for help, He answered you, ‘I will reinforce you with a thousand angels in succession.’ God made this a message of hope to reassure your hearts. Help comes only from God, He is mighty and wise. Remember when He covered you with slumber as a reassurance from Him, and sent down water from the sky to purify you, to remove Satan’s insinuations from your [hearts], to make your hearts strong and your feet firm. Your Lord revealed to the angels: ‘I am with you: give the believers firmness, I shall cast terror into the hearts of the disbelievers, strike above their necks and strike their fingertips.’ That was because they defied Allah and His Messenger, and if anyone defies Allah and His Messenger, Allah punishes him severely, ‘That is what you get! Taste that!’ and the torment of the hellfire awaits the disbelievers.” [The Qur’an (8:9-14)].

After the advent of Islam, Muslims lived under persecution for 13 years. Whenever they asked the prophet to invoke Allah to deliver them from the hands of the Makkan pagans, he ordered them to be patient for Allah has promised His sincere servants a great triumph, but it was not time for it yet. During those 13 years, many men and women were tortured and killed for holding on to their faith. Prophet Muhammad himself was beaten and targeted to be killed several times; nonetheless, never did Muslims raise one finger in the faces of their persecutors. Near the end of year 13, Prophet Muhammad ordered Muslims to forsake their homeland and immigrate to Madinah. After Muslims immigrated to Madinah leaving behind their homes, lands, and all possessions, the Makkan pagans didn’t leave them alone, they sent scouts after them and plotted to attack Muslims in their new homes at *Madinah*. It was only then when Muslims started to fight back.

The first battle Muslims ever led against the pagans was the “Battle of *Badr*.” They were outnumbered by 3 to 1. Their army comprised nothing but 313 shepherds and former slaves who never fought before. They only had “two horsemen” and the rest of them were foot-soldiers armed with swords, bows and arrows, and light shields. On the other hand, the pagans’ army comprised more than 1000 soldiers, most of whom were strong husky combatants known of having fierce fighting skills. They had more than 100 horsemen and 600 strong shields. Any quick analysis of the situation will tell you that the battle would end in 15 minutes tops.

On the battle’s eve, Muslims were unable to sleep out-of fear and worry. The news brought back by their scouts weren’t auspicious. On the battle’s day, they woke up astonished that they all fell asleep. They enjoyed a sound sleep to the extent that some of them had wet dreams. This could cynically make you laugh, but actually it’s an indication to how deeply and securely they slept without any traces of worry or fear on their minds. Those who had wet dreams during their sleep, woke up afraid that they might get killed in the battle without praying for they were impure and needed to wash their bodies, so it started raining and they washed their bodies, performed ablution and prayed. They prepared themselves in ranks for the battle and it was then when the prophet gave them glad tidings of victory and that Allah has sent His angles to fight among their ranks.

Amazingly Muslims triumphed in a magnificent way. The above verses were revealed after the battle as a commemoration of the incident so that Muslims throughout the ages would remember that victory is not given for the stronger army, but it is given to those who have stronger faith. Allah grants His victory only to those who are righteous.

Although the context is clear and the reason of revelation is written in all exegesis, some people twist the meaning of the verses to satisfy their own inclination and prejudice. If you compare the two preceding translations, you will instantly notice that the words placed between square brackets in the translation given by Islam deniers is an addition found nowhere in the Original Arabic wording. Moreover, the incident itself was one of self-defense against a much stronger and mightier army. Muslims were defending their new homes against those who drove them out from their original homeland after having tortured and persecuted them for 13 years. So the question here is: *“What exactly is the way “Islam deniers” deem appropriate to deal with those unscrupulous invaders, lie on the ground and play dead?!”*

The worst forgery of all is when Islam deniers trim out the words from amidst the context, and then tamper with its translation to portray Muslims as a bunch of cannibals sitting above the bodies of their decapitated victims and cutting off their fingers and toes. This is the instant image that anyone gets when reading the incomplete verse, while the complete context is actually ordering the fighters to either strike with their swords the enemies above the neck and kill them instantly, or strike at their fingertips in order to incapacitate them and stop their attacks. This is also why Prophet Muhammad said, *“If you strike to kill, make it a quick death.”* And this is also how the prophet P.B.U.H. never killed anyone in all of his battles except one man, and we have already told this story. This was a sword fight for crying out loud, so what exactly is it that Islam deniers want Muslims to do, throw down their swords and deliver thunderous slaps to their enemies’ faces?! Even the context of the order itself was not directed to Muslims, but it is a narration of Allah’s orders to the angles whom He sent to support the Muslims’ army, and the verses were revealed to Muslims after the battle was over, this is why Allah is continuously saying “Remember.”

4. *“The infidels should not think that they can get away from us. Prepare against them whatever arms and weaponry you can muster so that you may terrorize them.”*
[The Qur’an (8:59)].

Islam deniers say that this verse is enough to accuse Islam of being the religion of terrorists. It orders its adherents to utilize whatever weaponry and arms to terrorize non-Muslims and it accuses them of being infidels.

Now let’s read the proper translation of the previous verse in its complete context in order to understand what it is actually saying. Allah says in the Qur’an:

“The worst creatures in the sight of Allah are those who reject Him and will not believe, those with whom you have made a covenant, and they break their covenant on every occasion and have no fear. Should you encounter them in war, then deal with them in such a manner that those who follow them should abandon their schemes and may take warning. And if you learn of treachery on the part of any people, throw their treaty back at them, so as to be on equal terms, for Allah does not love the treacherous. Let not the deniers [of Islam] think that they can evade destiny. They cannot frustrate [Allah’s purpose]. They have not the power to do so. Prepare the strength you can muster against them, and any cavalry with which you can overawe Allah’s enemy, your own enemy, and others besides them whom you do not know but Allah knows. Anything you spend in the way of Allah will be repaid to you in full. You will not be wronged.”

Then if they inclined to make peace, make peace with them, and put your trust in Allah. Surely, it is He who is All-Hearing and All-Knowing. Should they seek to deceive you, Allah is enough for you: it was He who strengthened you with His help, and rallied the faithful around you, and bound their hearts together. Even if you had spent all that is on the earth, you could not have bound their hearts together, but Allah has bound them together. Surely, He is Mighty and Wise.” [The Qur’an (8:55-63)].

These verses—as obvious—are speaking about non-Muslim people with whom Muslims have a peace covenant but they betray it. The verses describe them as treacherous. They make their schemes trying to abolish Islam and destroy the Muslim community neglecting their peace covenant. The verses do not order Muslims to wage war against those traitors, but they say that if Muslims encounter them in war, they should deal with them in such a way that would frighten others who follow those traitors and support their schemes. The verses order Muslims to prepare themselves and muster as much power as they can, so as to be ready to defend themselves against the attacks of those traitors. They should muster this power to overawe their enemies, hinder them from betraying their pacts, and dishearten them from attacking Muslim lands. In other words, the verses are saying, *“If you wish for peace, then prepare for war.”*

Amazingly, Islam deniers neglect all of the preceding verses and trim out only verse (8:59) from between the context. But the worst forgery of all is when they neglect the two verses following the one they quote. The next two verses stipulate that if the above plan succeeds in forcing those enemies to incline towards peace again, then Muslims should accept it from them and put their trust in Allah to protect them against any further treason. In my opinion, any person who has the least sense of justice should be able to realize how keen the verses are on the lives of those traitors, may they realize that they were wrong, and change their way. The Qur’anic context is clear, it doesn’t need elaborated explanation. Please read it again and decide for yourself whether this is a religion of terrorism or of justice.

5. *“Truly, if the Hypocrites stir up sedition, if the agitators in the City do not desist, We shall urge you to go against them and set you over them. They shall have a curse on them. Whenever they are found, they shall be seized and slain without mercy a fierce slaughter—murdered, a horrible murdering.”* [The Qur’an (33:60)].

Islam deniers say that this verse further proves that Islam is terrorism; it orders its blood thirsty adherents to kill their opposition in sadistic ways.

Now let’s read the proper translation of the previous verse in its complete context in order to understand what it is actually saying. Allah says in the Qur’an:

“Those who affront believing men and believing women without their having deserved it (i.e. done any wrong) shall bear the weight of slander and flagrant sin. O Prophet, tell your wives and your daughters and wives of the believers that they should draw over themselves parts of their shawls [when in public], so as not to be recognized or harmed. Allah is most forgiving and most merciful. If the hypocrites and those who have tainted hearts and the scandal mongers of Madinah do not desist, We shall surely give you authority over them and their days in that city will be numbered. Accursed, wherever they shall be, they will be seized and killed without mercy.

Such has been Allah's way with those who have gone before them. You shall find no change in the ways of Allah." [The Qur'an (33:58-62)].

Hypocrisy is the gravest sin in Allah's sight. Allah says in the Qur'an: "*Verily hypocrites shall dwell in the lowest depths of the hellfire, and never will you find for them any helper.*" [The Qur'an (4:145)]. That's because the harm that could be inflicted by hypocrites on any community is the worst of all. The most lethal enemy is the one you can't recognize or sense his presence. Those who stab people in the back are the lowest of the low. I believe that all people can agree on that.

The above verses are speaking about hypocrites who claimed to be Muslims or allies of Muslims during the prophet's time. They mingled with the Muslim community in *Madinah*, some even prayed with Muslims inside the mosque and acted like sincere believers when in public, but in their private gatherings, they made schemes seeking to inflict as much harm as they can on the Muslim community. They spread harmful rumors, molested chaste women whenever the circumstances permitted them to do so; they threw abominable accusations against innocent men and women in order to smear their reputation. When *Madinah* fell under attack, they refused to fight in its defense; they even conspired with the enemies to strike a fatal blow to their Muslim fellow citizens, etc.

When the sedition of this fifth column became unbearable and took a dangerous course threatening the Muslim community, those verses were revealed ordering the prophet to tell all Muslim women that they should cover their faces when in public so that the hypocrites wouldn't dare claim that there was any seduction from the women's side. That was also a way to hide all females' identities and protect the prophet's female house members from the hypocrites' harassment. The verses also warned the hypocrites to desist from harming people or else they shall be driven out from *Madinah*, and Allah shall cast His curse upon them; wherever they would reside, they would be killed without any mercy by the dwellers of the new place who wouldn't bear their twisted attitude and treachery. Prophet Muhammad never harmed anyone of the Madinite hypocrites though he knew each and every one of them. Whenever he was incited against any of them, he said, "*I don't want the people to say, 'Muhammad is killing his companions.'*"

Throughout the Qur'an, you can read many verses that speak about hypocrites and their schemes. They are always given grave warnings against their attitude and its consequences in this life and the hereafter. Hypocrites have no religion or creedal convictions of any kind; they are not even agnostics. They are slaves to their own desires and welfare. They don't care at all about what or who is harmed in the process of achieving their goals. Such creatures are like a virus among the human race, it must be fought against and quarantined in order to avoid its harm. Then, if its harm continues, it must be abolished.

6. "*We reject you. Hostility and hate have come between us forever, unless you believe in Allah only.*" [The Qur'an (60:4)].

Islam deniers use this verse to indicate that Islam promulgates hatred and enmity against those who reject it.

Now let's read the proper translation of the previous verse in its complete context in order to understand what it is actually saying. Allah says in the Qur'an:

“O believers, do not take those who are enemies of Mine and of yours as allies. Would you show them affection when they have rejected the truth you have received, when they have driven you and the Messenger out [from your homeland simply] because you believe in Allah, your Lord. If you have left your homes to strive for My cause and out of a desire to seek My goodwill, how can you secretly offer them friendship? I know all that you conceal and all that you reveal. Whoever of you does this will surely stray away from the right path. If they gain ascendancy over you, they will behave towards you as enemies and stretch out their hands as well as their tongues with evil intent, they long for you to renounce your faith. Neither your relatives nor your children will be of any help to you on the Day of Resurrection. He will judge between you, and Allah sees all that you do. Indeed you have an excellent example in Abraham and those who followed him, when they said to their people, ‘We disown you and whatever you worship besides Allah. We renounce you. Enmity and hatred shall endure between us and you, until you believe in Allah alone.’ [The exception was] when Abraham said to his father, ‘I shall indeed pray for [Allah’s] forgiveness for you, although I do not have it in my power to obtain anything from Allah on your behalf.’ They prayed, ‘O our Lord, in You we have placed our trust and to You we turn in repentance and to You is the final return. Our Lord, do not make us a prey for those who deny the truth, and forgive us our Lord, You are the Almighty, the Wise One.’ Surely, there is a good example in them for you, for those who place their hopes in Allah and the Last Day. Whoever turns away will surely learn that Allah is Self-sufficient and worthy of all praise. It may well happen that Allah will create goodwill between you and those of them with whom you are now at enmity—for Allah is all powerful, most forgiving and merciful. Allah does not forbid you as regards to those who did not fight you on account of faith, and did not expel you from your homes, that you deal justly and kindly with them. Verily Allah loves those who maintain justice. Allah only forbids you to make friends with those who have fought against you on account of your faith and driven you out of your homes or helped others to do so. Any of you who turn towards them in friendship will truly be transgressors.”
[The Qur'an (60:1-9)].

The above verses comprise the complete laws when it comes to taking friends and allies from among non-Muslims. This chapter was revealed with a certain incident, so let's get to know it so that we may understand what the verses are saying. When Muslims immigrated to Madinah, some of them left their families behind knowing that the pagans wouldn't inflict any harm on them; this was mainly because they still had some pagan relatives in Makkah. It happened that a companion named *Hateb Ibn Belta'ah*—who was a sincere Muslim—immigrated to Madinah leaving behind his family in Makkah. *Hateb* was originally from Yemen, he had no relatives at all in Makkah. When the pagans violated the treaty of *Hudaybayah*, the prophet decided to retrieve Makkah from their hands. Out of fear that the Makkan pagans might persecute his family when they learn about this, *Hateb* took allies secretly from among the Makkan pagans. He sent them word about the conquest out of fear that they might inflict harm on his helpless family or kill them. He only did this because he was sure that the prophet will be victorious no matter what the pagans do or how strong and well prepared they were.

The archangel informed the prophet of *Hateb's* mistake and that his letter was carried by a woman named so and so who was on her way to Makkah. The prophet immediately ordered '*Ali Ibn Abi-Taleb* and *Al-Zubair Ibn Al-'Awwam* to pursue the caravan, arrest that woman and retrieve *Hateb's* letter. When they brought back the letter and the prophet had it read to him, he summoned *Hateb* to confront him with it.

Hateb said, "*I never did this to harm Islam or Muslims. I knew for sure that Allah will grant victory to His Prophet irrespective of whether the Makkans came to know about our preparations or not.*"

'*Omar Ibn Al-Khattab* was enraged and wanted to kill *Hateb* for this treason, but the prophet stopped him and said, "*He has told you the truth.*"

'*Omar* couldn't find *Hateb's* answer convincing but the prophet responded saying, "*He attended the battle of Badr (i.e. indicating that he cannot be a hypocrite). What can I say, perhaps Allah looked at those who attended Badr and said, 'O People of Badr, do whatever you want, I have forgiven you.'*" [Recorded by Bukhari].

On hearing this, '*Omar* calmed down and said, "*Allah and His Messenger know best.*"

Hateb's mistake was forgiven and it was at this incident that this chapter of the Qur'an was revealed. Any kind of alliance or friendship between Muslims and non-Muslims must be built on the basis of mutual respect and peace relationship. Any relation out of that perspective is unlawful. What's truly disgusting in what Islam deniers do when they quote verse (60:4) is that they trim the first part of the verse and totally neglect the rest of the context, which states clearly that ***Allah does not hinder Muslims from dealing kindly and fairly with those who do not fight against them or despise their religion, but He only forbids them to befriend those who have fought against Muslims on account of faith and have driven them out from their homes or helped others to do so.*** This makes me wonder, who is the one promoting "hatred" and who is the one promoting "accepting the other" in here?! I leave the answer for the intelligence of the reader.



I hope that the previous six examples were enough to make it clear that the Qur'an—like any other book—needs truthful inspection and examination in order to grasp fair knowledge about it. Reading a single quote from amidst its verses is totally misguiding—whether it's done by Muslims or non-Muslims. Those fancy figures that attack it without any knowledge, and hinder others from reading it in a fair manner, are only driving themselves astray. Allah says about them in the Qur'an:

"Say, 'O people of the Book (i.e. Christians and Jews), why do you reject the verses of Allah while Allah is witness to what you do?' Say, 'O people of the Book, why do you hinder the believers from the way of Allah, trying to create crookedness in it, while you yourselves are witnesses (to Allah's religion)? Allah is not oblivious of what you do.'" [The Qur'an (3:98-99)].

May Allah guide us to the truth and never forsake us to our whims.

4. Jihad, Fighting against Freedom or Fighting for Freedom?

Among the most controversial issues that most non-Muslims—even some contemporary Muslims—don't properly understand about Islam is "The concept of Jihad." It's enough to stand amidst any group of people in any western country and say the word "Jihad" in a loud voice to make all people run away scared. I don't blame them, especially with what we see happening every day in the news, whether in western or Arab and Muslim countries. I still remember from the days of my youth the terrorist attacks carried out by the Extremists—falsely called Jihadists—in my country; many bombs were planted in public places and hundreds of people were killed, mostly Muslims of course. I remember that once they planted a bomb near a school's fence to kill the policemen who used to sit inside their patrol car at that location; the end product was killing 2 children, 3 policemen, a civilian, besides wounding many pedestrians and some of the children who were playing near the fence. I remember my older brother's narration of what happened when two terrorists jumped into the faculty of engineering, Cairo university, while escaping from the police forces, and how one of his colleagues received a bullet in his arm during the shooting that followed. Without further indulgence into these stories, I remember my own fear as a child from what these lost souls were doing and could do. In my opinion, the best way to fight against those secret groups and their sick thoughts is by spreading the truth about "Jihad" as it was told in the Qur'an and the *Sunnah*. Accusing Islam of being the religion of terrorists couldn't be more wrong, especially that the majority of those who are killed by extremist groups are Muslims. Extremists are not different from Islam deniers, both of them are doing their best to destroy the image of Islam with their twisted understandings. Simple Muslims always find themselves sandwiched between the seemingly two bitter enemies; they are the ones who pay the highest price. The widely spread scenario given by politicians and their supporting media makes Muslims the perfect meal for the awaiting bombs and bullets manufactured by "modern countries."

In this chapter, I am going to tackle all of the Qur'anic verses that order Muslims to fight, the circumstances under which they were revealed, and finally, I'm going to discuss the concept of Jihad under the spotlight of the Qur'anic context and the prophetic teachings. Between the 600 pages of the Qur'an, there are 7 locations—found in 5 chapters—in which Muslims were ordered to fight. Within these locations the rules and laws governing "Combative Jihad" and defining it are well stated. Let's read them in their complete context so that we may get to understand the concept of Jihad. The following historical background is necessary for understanding the Qur'anic injunctions related to Jihad. Please read it carefully and try to comprehend the circumstances that surrounded the sequence of events.

When Prophet Muhammad started preaching Islam, those who embraced it were persecuted by the pagans of Makkah. A torture campaign was led by the Makkan leaders against those who were weak and didn't have anyone to protect. Since that Islam preached equality and justice ever since the first day, slaves were the first ones to embrace it and were also the first ones to suffer greatly. Bodies were lashed, tied on the burning sands and left for days, heads and faces were branded with flaming swords, etc. Many were mutilated or killed in the process.

History books recorded several cases. One unforgettable story is that of the brave family of companion *'Ammar Ibn Yaser*. *'Ammar* alongside his parents were continuously tortured for several days. They were severely beaten, tied up on the burning sands, tossed over embers, lashed, etc. *'Ammar's* mother, Lady *Sumaiyah*, was fatally bayoneted in her groin by *Abu Jahl*, one of the mightiest Makkani pagans. *'Ammar's* father also died during the torture process. It was narrated that the pagans continued torturing *Ammar* after he had witnessed his parents' murder, threatening to increase the means of torture unless he cursed Prophet Muhammad and recanted Islam. In a moment of weakness and inability to endure more pain, *'Ammar* yielded and recanted Islam. Later on, *'Ammar* went to the prophet and told him of what had happened. The prophet asked him about his heart, whether it was with or against the words he had uttered? *'Ammar* told the prophet that his heart was against them and that his faith never wavered. The prophet then consoled him and recited this verse from the Qur'an: "*As for one who denies Allah after he has believed—with the exception of one who is forced to do so, while his heart rests securely in faith—him who opens his heart to denying the truth shall incur the wrath of Allah, such as these will have a terrible punishment.*" [The Qur'an (16:106)].

The list of the men and women who were persecuted is too long. Some companions from among the notable figures of Makkah were also tortured and persecuted when they embraced Islam. *'Othman Ibn Affan* and *Mus'ab Ibn 'Umayr*, are two famous names of the most honored Makkans who endured persecution for embracing Islam. The prophet himself was attacked more than once beside the sacred mosque. *Abu Bakr* came to his rescue several times; consequently, he was once severely beaten by the pagans till he fell in a coma for a whole day. His relatives thought that he died. His wife reported that the first sentence he uttered when he woke up was, "*How is the prophet?*" and he insisted they would carry him to the prophet's house to see him with his own eyes.

When the persecution campaign worsened and became unbearable, the prophet ordered those who were weak among the companions to escape to Abyssinia. He told them that he had heard of a king there who never wronged any of his subordinates. A group of 12 men and 4 women took shelter in the night and started their journey towards the red sea shore. They sought to catch any ship going to Abyssinia. Among the migrants were the prophet's elder daughter Lady *Ruqayah* and her husband, companion *'Othman Ibn Affan*.

Later on, some false news reached Abyssinia implying that Makkans have all embraced Islam. Based on this information, most migrants returned to Makkah only to find that the news was false. Some of them escaped without entering Makkah, while others entered the holy city. After this, the persecution campaign became severer. Once again, the weak Muslims decided to escape to Abyssinia. This time 83 men and 18 women set out towards Abyssinia escaping with their lives. The pagans decided to ride out after them and kill them, but Allah helped Muslims reach Abyssinia safely. The pagans then decided to pursue the renegades and bring them back from Abyssinia. They dispatched a special delegation to Negus—king of Abyssinia—for this purpose. Without indulging into the details of their negotiations, the result of their meeting was that King Negus refused to extradite the Muslims to the pagans. He told the Muslims, "*What your Prophet preaches and what Jesus preached before him seem to radiate from the same source.*"

The escape of those few Muslims from between the hands of the pagans enraged them, especially that the Muslims remaining in Makkah were protected through their relatives and clans. This made them think of a devilish plan, they decided to starve Muslims to death. They all signed an agreement to apply a complete boycott on Muslims, especially Prophet Muhammad's clan "*Banu-Hashim*." No business interactions, social relations, or verbal contact was to be conducted with them or their supporters. They stipulated that the prophet must be delivered to their hands to be executed so that the boycott would end. The boycott continued for 3 years. During this period all of the food that Muslims ate was either smuggled to them by some compassionate Makkans, or they were able to buy it during the sacred months for double its price and more.

The prophet continued preaching Islam during the boycott. He seized every opportunity to preach to the Arabs coming from faraway places, and those who passed by Makkah for trade. When the conditions of Muslims worsened, some of their pagan relatives were enraged by what was happening and decided to call for putting an end to this outrageous boycott. Without indulging into the details of their plan, they succeeded in putting an end to the boycott and Muslims were saved again. Those who were old when the boycott started were severely weakened by the long starvation periods they had to endure. Some of them died shortly after the boycott ended. Among them were the prophet's most beloved wife, Lady *Khadijah* and his uncle, *Abu Taleb*.

After this, Prophet Muhammad started going out to preach Islam to the other Arab tribes. He received a delegation from Madinah where they had heard of his teachings and decided to meet with him and declare their faith in what he preached. The prophet received them in the outskirts of Makkah and they testified between his hands that there is no god but Allah and that he was His messenger. The prophet dispatched his companion *Mus'ab Ibn 'Umayr* to Madinah in order to preach Islam there and deliver its teachings to new Muslims. As such, he was nicknamed 'The first ambassador in Islam;' his performance was brilliant. Later on, a much bigger delegation from Madinah came to declare their faith in Islam. Within a period of less than 3 years, the overwhelming majority of the native Madinites were already faithful Muslims. It was only then when the prophet P.B.U.H. ordered all Muslims to immigrate to Madinah.

Realizing that such a collective immigration represented a huge threat to their society, some pagans imprisoned their Muslim relatives to prevent them from escaping to Madinah. Many Muslims immigrated secretly, leaving behind all of their wealth and possessions. The prophet P.B.U.H. was the last Muslim to immigrate with his friend Abu Bakr. He only left behind his young cousin '*Ali Ibn Abi-Taleb*' so that he would return the trusts that some pagans kept with Prophet Muhammad. This incident took place near the end of the 13th year of prophethood.

As soon as Muslims reached Madinah, the prophet led the process of building a civil state in which all people are equal, abiding by one law, and governed by a unanimously accepted constitution. He first established brotherhood between Muslims from the different tribes. Second, he gathered people from all faiths, Muslims, Jews and the native Madinite pagans on one constitution and under one banner, which was that of Madinah. They agreed that they were all one nation, each party was free to profess its religion; if attacked by some foreign enemy, they would all contribute in defending Madinah;

all parties were to consult each other; mutual relations were to be founded on righteousness; any wronged party should be given aid by the other parties. Madinah was declared a sacred city for all those who were concerned with this constitution. If any dispute arose between the parties abiding by this constitution, Prophet Muhammad would be the one to judge between them. Finally, all those concerned with this constitution were to boycott Makkans commercially and abstain from extending any support to them. That boycott sanction was for the crimes they had committed against Muslims.

When the Makkan pagans learned about the Muslims' progress, they started planning to abolish Islam once and for all. In order to shake Madinah's unity, they sent Muslims a note threatening to invade their new homeland. The Prophet received reliable information affirming that schemes were plotted by the enemies. Muslim scouts were dispatched to every road leading to Madinah, so as to warn the people from sudden attacks. It was only then that Muslims were permitted to fight back, and the very first verses of the Qur'an speaking about fighting were revealed. Allah says in the Qur'an:

*“Allah will surely defend the believers. Allah does not love the perfidious and the ungrateful. **Permission to fight is granted to those who are attacked, because they have been wronged** — indeed Allah has the power to help them — they are those who have been driven out of their homes unjustly, only because they said, ‘Our Lord is Allah.’ If Allah did not repel the aggression of some people by means of others, cloisters, churches, synagogues and mosques, wherein the name of Allah is continuously invoked, would surely be destroyed. Allah will surely help them who support His cause — Allah is indeed powerful and mighty.”* [The Qur'an (22:38-41)].

Ponder over this for a moment: Muslims lived in Makkah for 13 years enduring all sorts of persecution. They were subjected to torture, mutilation, killing, expulsion, beating, bullying, economic boycott, social boycott, starvation to death, and even getting chased after into faraway lands—all this without raising one finger in the faces of their persecutors, or receiving any permission to fight back. Finally, they were able to escape to a new place that embraced their faith, a place where they can live openly as Muslims and practice their religion freely without any harassment; but once again, they were threatened by their persecutors and war was forced upon them. Now I have a question for you, *“Could this religion be one that incites violence?!”*

The above verses hold the very first injunctions revealed in the Qur'an that speak about fighting or 'Combative Jihad':

1. Fight in self-defense.
2. Fight in defense of your home and country.
3. Fight against aggressors until there is no more compulsion in religion.

When Prophet Muhammad P.B.U.H. received those verses, he was 54 years old. Before this, he was never known to be such a warrior described by his companions to be the bravest amongst them all. Till he was 54 years old, he had led the most peaceful life. Even when he was beaten and choked by the pagans, he never lifted a finger to defend himself. His companions as well, were mostly simple shepherds, farmers, caravan travelers and former slaves. None of them was ever known to have any military

experience whatsoever. Their utmost experience was in the usage of bows and arrows in hunting animals for food. Before immigration to Madinah, none of them ever participated in any battle, nor experienced what it meant to have swords clattering over his head. It was their great faith in Allah's victory that helped them remain steadfast in the faces of their enemies, that era's tyrants, and all aggressors.

Fighting meant that Muslims needed to assemble an army. Every soldier must at least be equipped with a sword, armlets, a helmet and a light shield. A small battalion of experienced archers must be assembled and equipped with bows and arrows as well. Muslims were extremely poor at that time; they couldn't even afford to buy horses or lesser rides. Consequently, they took turns in riding above the available camels, and they slaughtered some of it for food. The immigrants left all of their possessions behind when they were escaping from Makkah. All of these possessions were confiscated by the pagans. Muslim merchants who were caught trying to immigrate, were forced to leave behind all of their money. After consulting with his companions, Prophet Muhammad decided to send scouts to the road which the Makkan commercial caravans took when they were returning from their trading trips. The scouts brought back news of a returning big caravan led by the Makkan leader *Abu Sufyan Ibn Harb*. The prophet decided that this was a suitable opportunity to retrieve some of the Muslims' money that was taken unlawfully by the Makkan pagans. Consequently, Muslims rode out to seize the caravan and confiscate it. When the pagans learned about the Muslims' plan from their scouts, they dispatched a quick rider to deliver the news to *Abu Sufyan* and advise him to take a different path to Makkah. Meanwhile, they assembled an army to meet Muslims outside Madinah and kill them all. This led to the "Battle of Badr," which we have tackled in the previous chapter when discussing verse (8:12), p.240.



Our next stop is chapter 8 of the Qur'an. It was revealed in the 2nd year A.H. It includes the second group of verses revealed with regards to fighting. This chapter was revealed after the battle of Badr; it's a commemoration of the incident. It also holds very important injunctions concerning Combative Jihad in the following verses:

“Believers, when you meet in battle those who deny the truth, never turn your backs on them: whoever turns his back on such an occasion, unless it be as a stratagem of war, or in an endeavor to join another group [of the believers] will indeed draw down upon himself the wrath of Allah, and Hell shall be his abode and the worst indeed is that destination.” [The Qur'an (8:15-16)].

Deserting the army in the battle field is a major sin in Islam. Merely turning your back to the enemy—except for a stratagem or giving aid to a weak battalion—is highly forbidden. Grave warnings of the bad consequences of this action were given in the above verses. This is not something that Islam came up with, it has always been the rule of any army that deserters are treated like traitors. Islam only confirmed that it's an abominable deed in the sight of our creator, and gave grave warnings to its doer that his abode shall be in the hellfire.

A few verses later, Allah says:

“Yet why should Allah not punish them when they debar people from the Sacred Mosque, although they are not its guardians? Its rightful guardians are those who fear Allah, though most of the [deniers] do not realize it. Their prayer (i.e. the pagans) at the Sacred House is nothing but whistling and clapping of hands. ‘So taste the punishment because of your denial’. Those who are bent on denying the truth are spending their wealth in debarring others from the path of Allah. They will continue to spend it in this way till, in the end, this spending will become a source of intense regret for them, and then they will be overcome. And those who denied the truth will be gathered together in Hell. So that Allah may separate the bad from the good, He will heap the wicked one upon another and then cast them into Hell. These will surely be the losers. Tell those who deny the truth that if they desist, their past shall be forgiven, but if they persist in [fighting against you], then let them take an example from the fate of those who did the same before. Fight them until there is no more [religious] persecution and religion belongs wholly to Allah. If they desist, then surely Allah is watchful of what they do, but if they return [to persecuting you], then know that Allah is your Protector, the Best of Protectors and the Best of Helpers!” [The Qur’an (8:34-40)].

In these verses Allah is speaking about Makkah, the city that was established by Ishmael’s offspring around the sacred mosque, the sanctuary that was built by Prophet Abraham and his son Ishmael and dedicated for worshipping Allah alone. This holy city was established originally to serve as a beacon of monotheism. Its dwellers were considered by all Arabs the custodians of the mosque. Later on, after many centuries, paganism started to appear in it at the hands of the merchants returning from Sham. Paganism pervaded Makkah until all of its citizens forsook the pure creed of Abraham and profaned the sacred mosque with their handmade idols. Their brethren from the other Arab tribes followed the custodians of the sacred mosque. They started putting their own idols near the sacred mosque as well. In the season of pilgrimage, every tribe would pray to its idol. More than 360 idols were placed around the mosque, and an image of Abraham and Ishmael bowing down to an idol was drawn on one of the inside walls of the mosque. Within few centuries all of Hejaz turned to polytheism and forsook monotheism.

As stated earlier, when Prophet Muhammad started receiving the Qur’an and preached the pure creed of Abraham amidst the Arabs, they rejected it and persecuted those who embraced Islam. After the battle of *Badr*, Muslims were ordered to fight back the pagans until they free Makkah from their occupation, and until all worship inside the holy city is restored to monotheism. Reviving the pure creed of Abraham became the main religious duty of Muslims ever since. May Allah bestow His grace and mercy upon them as He bestowed it upon the earlier faithful believers; Amen.

In the above verses, glad tidings were given to Muslims informing them that although the pagans were much stronger and wealthier, their strength is nothing in front of Allah’s Might. Let them spend their money and use their resources in mustering all the powers they can; eventually, they shall be defeated, and Allah’s light shall shine forth from Makkah to reach the furthest places on earth.

A few verses later, Allah says:

*“Let not the deniers [of Islam] think that they can evade destiny. They cannot frustrate [Allah’s purpose]. They have not the power to do so. **Prepare the strength you can muster against them, and any cavalry with which you can overawe Allah’s enemy and your own enemy as well, and others besides them whom you do not know but are known to Allah.** Anything you spend in the way of Allah will be repaid to you in full. You will not be wronged. **Then if they inclined to make peace, make peace with them, and put your trust in Allah. Surely, it is He who is All-Hearing and All-Knowing. Should they seek to deceive you, Allah is enough for you:** it was He who strengthened you with His help, and rallied the faithful around you, and bound their hearts together. Even if you had spent all that is on the earth, you could not have bound their hearts together, but Allah has bound them together. Surely, He is Mighty and Wise.”* [The Qur’an (8:59-63)].

These verses have already been tackled in the previous section. They were revealed at a time when there were less than 6,000 Muslims on earth, including women and children, and they were confined only in Madinah. Today, Arab Muslims comprise less than 20% of the total number of Muslims all over the world. More than 1,700,000,000 Muslims live today on earth. Indonesia alone has 200 million Muslims, which equals 6 times the total number of Arabian Muslims. All Praises be to Allah, He is All-Capable over opening locked hearts for Islam. He is our Guide and Protector against all enemies and their schemes.

The above verses of chapter 8 hold the following injunctions:

1. Never desert the army or turn your back to the enemy unless for a stratagem or giving aid to weaker comrades.
2. Fight against aggressors until there is no more compulsion in religion.
3. Fight against the pagans until you retrieve Makkah from their hands.
4. Muster as much power as you can in order to dishearten your enemies from attacking you.
5. If your enemies incline to peace, accept it from them and put your trust in Allah, He shall help and protect you against their schemes and treason.



Our third stop is with chapter 4. It was revealed in the 3rd year A.H. It includes the third group of verses that was revealed and speaks about fighting. Allah says:

*“Let those who would exchange [the pleasures of] this worldly life with those of the Hereafter, fight for the cause of Allah. **Whoever fights for the cause of Allah, whether he is killed or is victorious, to him We shall give a great reward. And how should you not fight for the cause of Allah: for the helpless old men, women, and children who say, ‘Deliver us, Lord, from this city of wrongdoers, grant us a protector out of Your grace and grant us a supporter?’** The believers fight for the cause of Allah, while those who reject faith fight for Satan. Then fight the allies of Satan, Satan’s scheming is truly weak.”* [The Qur’an (4:74-76)].

These verses are extremely important. They hold the definition of “Fighting for the cause of Allah” that many people don’t understand. I remember that I asked a sheikh once: *“How could Allah Almighty need someone to fight for Him?”* My sheikh said, *“There is a huge difference between fighting for Allah and fighting for His cause. His cause is achieving freedom for all people from the subjection of men, and teaching them righteousness.”*

The above verses confirm this definition; they make it crystal clear that “Combative Jihad” is due on Muslims for those who are oppressed and cannot fight for themselves. They also confirm that those who oppress people, deprive them the right to choose their own faith and practice it freely, occupy worship houses and prevent the people from entering them, etc., are the supporters of satan. Combative Jihad should be declared by sincere Muslim rulers upon those who commit such crimes. If Muslims were not strong enough to face those persecutors, the least they can do is to give as much political and logistic support as they can to those who are oppressed.

Those who are oppressed on account of their faith are not only Muslims, they are people from all faiths. Remember the verse quoted back a few pages: *“If Allah did not repel the aggression of some people by means of others, cloisters, churches, synagogues and mosques, wherein the name of Allah is continuously invoked, would surely be destroyed. Allah will surely help them who support His cause. Allah is indeed powerful and mighty.”* [The Qur’an (22:40-41)].

Putting the verses together one may instantly understand the previous definition. Again: *“Allah’s cause is achieving freedom for all people from the subjection of men, and teaching them righteousness.”*

The above verses of chapter 4 hold the following injunctions:

1. Fight for those who are oppressed on account of faith, and cannot fight for themselves.
2. Fight against aggressors until there is no more compulsion in religion.

I hope that now the true meaning of “Jihad” is getting clearer in the mind of the reader. Let’s move on to the next stop with the Qur’anic verses that order Muslims to fight.



Our fourth stop is with the largest chapter of the Qur’an, chapter 2. Its revelation began in the 1st year A.H. and lasted till the 10th year A.H. It includes the fourth group of verses that was revealed and speaks about fighting. Allah says:

“Fight in the cause of Allah against those who wage war against you, but do not commit aggression, verily, Allah does not love aggressors. Kill them wherever you find them, and drive them out from where they drove you out, for [religious] persecution is worse than killing. Do not fight them at the Sacred Mosque unless they fight you there. If they do fight you, kill them, such is the retribution of those who deny the truth.

But if they desist, then verily Allah is the Most Forgiving, Most Merciful. Fight them until there is no more religious persecution and religion belongs to Allah alone. If they desist, then let there be no hostility, except towards the aggressors. A sacred month for a sacred month: violation of sanctity calls for fair retribution. Thus you may exact retribution from whoever transgresses against you, in proportion to his transgression. Fear God and know that God is with those who are mindful of Him. Spend for Allah's cause and do not cast yourselves into destruction by your own hands. Do good, Allah loves the doers of good. [The Qur'an (2:190-194)].

In the 6th year A.H., the prophet P.B.U.H. and 1400 of his companions were on their way to Makkah, seeking to perform minor pilgrimage at the sacred Mosque. Muslims had already fought several battles against the Makkan pagans at that time, they were victorious in all of them except the "Battle of 'Uhud." The situation was hazardous and many of the Bedouins who embraced Islam refused to accompany the prophet; they said that the prophet was leading the Muslims into a death trap. Many people said that the prophet and his companions would all be killed by the pagans before even reaching the sacred city.

This incident occurred in the sacred months that were still honored by some of the pagans. Ever since Prophet Abraham P.B.U.H. and his son Ishmael, Arabs have inherited the custom that any kind of fighting or bloodshed was forbidden in these 4 months, not even in the least sense. Muslims were counting on this. They anticipated that the pagans wouldn't attack them. They assumed the state of *Ihram* (i.e. ritual consecration), and set out seeking to perform the minor pilgrimage in the sacred city like all Arab tribes did. On approaching the outskirts of Makkah, the prophet sent scouts to bring him news about the pagans. When they returned, they told him that the pagans had already prepared their army and camped in the way to Makkah at a place called *Baldah*. When Muslims learned about this, they were troubled for they didn't come to fight.

Makkah was the homeland of the prophet and most of those who were accompanying him. Every one of them left in it a house, relatives and friends, even the most precious memories. It was their land exactly like any of the Makkan pagans who drove them out, and at that moment, were lurking to prevent them from entering it. They had even mustered enough power to kill them all in a few minutes. This was one of the hardest moments in the lives of these 1400 men, and a true test of faith. After the prophet consulted his companions, they all pledged their allegiance to fight under the prophet's banner against the tyrant pagans till the last one of them.

On the next day when the prophet and his companions resumed their journey towards Makkah, something very strange happened, the prophet's she-camel knelt down and didn't get up. When the companions tried to force it rise, it refused. The prophet then stopped them and said, "*Let her be; she is ordered not to move.*" He ordered all Muslims to return to the place of their previous camp. Thereafter, he dispatched a deputy to the pagans to inform them that they didn't come to fight, and that they want to perform the minor pilgrimage and leave. This entailed sending deputies from both sides several times until both parties agreed on signing a peace treaty known in history books as "*Al-Hudaybayah* treaty." The treaty stipulated that Muslims should return to Madinah and perform the minor pilgrimage the next year at the same time. A peace period of 10 years was agreed upon by both parties and their allies from all Arab tribes.

Without indulging into the huge details and incidents surrounding this treaty, in the 7th year A.H., when Muslims were going to perform the compensatory minor pilgrimage, the companions were afraid that the pagans might betray their pact and attack them while being unprepared. They all resented the idea of fighting in the sacred months or fighting inside the sacred city. It was in this incident that the above verses were revealed to the prophet telling him and his companions what to do if they were attacked.

The above verses of chapter 2 hold the following injunctions:

1. Fight in self-defense those who attack you.
2. Never transgress the limits and attack those who do not attack you, nor do they fight.
3. Fight those who occupy your homeland and kill them wherever you find them until you drive them out and retrieve your homeland from their hands.
4. Fight against aggressors until there is no more compulsion in religion.
5. Never fight in or near the sacred mosque unless attacked there.
6. Never fight in the sacred months unless attacked during them.
7. Spend part of your income in preparing your army or your enemy shall destroy you.



Muslims performed the compensatory minor pilgrimage safely and returned to Madinah. The 10 years truce gave Muslims the perfect opportunity to preach Islam safely. Many pagans had the chance to think calmly about the teachings of Islam and compare them to the pagan faith, and the results were amazing. Thousands of pagans embraced Islam during the first year, among them were two of the most clever army generals in the Islamic history; namely, *Khaled Ibn Al-Walid* and *'Amr Ibn Al-'As*. Arabs from all over the Arabian Peninsula visited Madinah and met the prophet. Within two years, the number of Muslims exceeded 20,000 adult men and women.

Meanwhile, the prophet started sending emissaries to the surrounding empires inviting them to Islam and conveying its message to their rulers. The world of that day was formed of empires that ruled most people and fought against each other. Emperors and kings were concentrating on their military powers; consequently, they avoided any internal disorder by oppressing their people and always seeking to unify them on one religion. Religion is truly the opium of people if it was built upon blind faith and not reason. Let's take a simplified overview on the empires and monarchies of that time.

First, the Roman Empire: They were mostly Christians in the Trinitarian form. After the council of Nicaea (324 A.D.), anyone who dared declare to have any different beliefs was condemned as a heretic and sentenced to be burned at the stake. Millions of people who dared question the church at these times were killed in the most terrible ways. The inquisitions continued until the 19th century at some places. Of course, the priests who supervised over these crimes were regarded by their people as 'MEN OF GOD;' consequently, they were not questioned for their deeds. John Davenport described this period in the following words:

“After the death of Christ, there were two distinct and successive versions of His doctrines, to which the name of Christianity was given, the first, introduced by the authority of the Apostles, Paul and John, the second by that of Constantino. This emperor, who, from political motives exclusively, had embraced Christianity, but who, on account of his cruelty, has justly been called a second Nero, presided over the famous Council of Nicaea, commonly called Nice, in A.D. 324, in which the doctrine of Christ's divinity was, for the first time, established. Regarding the ceaseless, bloody and unprofitable religious disputes in which the lives of thousands of Christians were sacrificed and the most unexampled cruelty exercised, by those who ought to have lived like brothers and friends, St. Hilary, who lived at the time—viz., the fourth century—was Bishop of Poitiers, and one of the early fathers of the Church, expresses his regret, disapproval and condemnation in these words:

‘It is a thing, equally deplorable and dangerous, that there are as many creeds as opinions among men, as many doctrines as inclinations, and as many sources of blasphemy as there are faults among us, because we make creeds arbitrarily, and explain them as arbitrarily. Every year, nay, every moon, we make new creeds to describe the invisible mysteries. We repent of what we have done, we defend those who repent, we anathematize those whom we defended. We condemn either the doctrine of others in ourselves, or our own in that of others, and reciprocally tearing one another to pieces, we have been the cause of each other's ruin.’

It was at the Council of Nicaea that Constantine invested the priesthood with that power whence flowed the most disastrous consequences, as the following summary will show: the massacres and devastations of nine mad crusades of Christians against unoffending Turks, during nearly two hundred years, in which many millions of human beings perished, the massacres of the Anabaptists, the massacres of the Lutherans and Papists, from the Rhine to the extremities of the North, the massacres of St. Bartholomew in France, and forty years more of other massacres between the time of Francis I and the entry of Henry IV. into Paris, the massacres of the Inquisition (According to the estimate of Llorente, who wrote the history of the Inquisition, the aggregate number of victims burnt from 1481 to 1808 was 34,024) which are more execrable still as being judicially committed, to say nothing of the innumerable schisms, and twenty years of popes against popes, bishops against bishops, the poisonings, assassinations, the cruel rapines and insolent pretensions of more than a dozen popes, who far exceeded a Nero or a Caligula in every species of crime, vice and wickedness, and lastly, to conclude this frightful list, the massacre of twelve millions of the inhabitants of the new world, executed Crucifix in hand.” [An apology for Mohammad and the Koran, 1882]

Second, the Persian Empire: They were mostly Zoroastrians (aka Magians). It was “Ardashir I” (180-242 A.D.) who restored Zoroastrianism in Persia. He established it as the official religion of the state and built fire temples everywhere. He ordered the sacred fire to be lit on the altars and employed Zoroastrian priests to maintain it. He ordered the priests to collect the teachings of Zoroaster into one book, which he later imposed upon his subjects.

In his book, “Seven great monarchies of the ancient eastern world,” George Eawlinson, professor of ancient history in the University of Oxford described this period as follows: *“It was necessary, in order to secure permanent uniformity of belief, to give to the Magian priesthood, the keepers and interpreters of the sacred book, very extensive powers.*

The Magian hierarchy was therefore associated with the monarch in the government and administration of the State. It was declared that the altar and the throne were inseparable, and must always sustain each other. The Magi were made to form the great council of the nation. While they lent their support to the crown, the crown upheld them against all impugners, and enforced by pains and penalties their decisions. Persecution was adopted and asserted as a principle of action without any disguise. By an edict of Artaxerxes (i.e. Ardashir I), all places of worship were closed except the temples of the fire worshippers.”

Many persecution campaigns were adopted against anyone who dared speak against Zoroastrianism or tried to preach any other faith. King “Shapur II” (309-379 A.D.) killed the Christian Archbishop “Shemon” for complaining from the high taxes imposed upon Christians. Shapur closed the churches and confiscated the ecclesiastical property. He gave his Christian subjects the choice of converting to Zoroastrianism or being put to death. Thousands of Christian civilians were killed during his reign for refusing to convert to Zoroastrianism.

Later on, King Isdigerd (399-419 A.D.) was convinced of Christianity and he was baptized. Unlike what you may think, this didn’t change anything. Persecution continued but it was time for Magians to suffer instead of Christians. This continued until one of the Christian bishops seized the opportunity of this honeymoon and planned the destruction and burning down of the Magian great temple in his city. When this backfired at Isdigerd, he permitted the Magians to avenge themselves. The end product was a persecution campaign that continued for 5 years in which thousands of Christians were killed or tortured to death. Isdigerd didn’t find this sufficient, he tried to extirpate Christianity from Armenia but he failed. The religious subjection practiced by the Persian kings continued and never receded.

The other small kingdoms weren’t any better. For example in Armenia, after King Tiridates (287-330 A.D.) converted from paganism to Christianity, he enforced Christianity upon his subjects by the sword. Thousands from those who refused Christianity from his subjects were killed. Consequently, secret societies were formed and they allied themselves with foreign enemies against the Christian rulers. After a lengthy reign of 56 years, Tiridate died leaving behind a weak heir who was driven into exile by the nobles who were still secretly pagans, and the Christian priests were slaughtered. Without indulging into the historical bloody feud, it’s enough to say that the era that preceded Islam was disgusting; people everywhere suffered from the terrible subjection by their rulers. Freedom of thought, freedom of belief, or the freedom to preach anything other than what the rulers imposed upon their subjects were things forbidden.

The Roman and Persian empires fought against each other pursuing a dominion that was never achieved. The remaining scattered smaller kingdoms in Sham, Iraq, Yemen, Oman, Bahrain and Egypt were all subjected by the two empires. Iraq, Oman, Bahrain and Yemen were subordinates to Persia. The citizens were either pagans or Magians. Egypt, Sham and the African coast were subordinates to Rome. The people of Sham and Egypt were a combination of Unitarian and Trinitarian Christians. Some of them were Judeo-Christians, while others embraced the Pauline form of Christianity. Many Egyptians followed the teachings of “Arius,” the former presbyter of Alexandria who was forced to exile for ten years then killed after his famous debates in the first council of Nicaea.

Besides those sects, there were the remaining scattered Jewish tribes who have abandoned the application of Allah's laws, even before Jesus and John the Baptist P.B.U.T. Many of these tribes dwelled in Arabia, mainly in Dedan, Tema, Madinah and the valley of the villages. Finally, there were the Arabs who dwelled all over the Arabian Peninsula, mainly in Hejaz, they were mostly polytheists and pagans; some individuals were still "*Hanifs*" following the pure creed of Abraham, and few were Christians. Any observer of the world's situation would instantly know that mankind was in need for help and guidance.

The inhabited world back then was connected through land, and Arabia was its heart. As a huge mountainous hot Sahara, it never attracted the invasion of great empires. This kept it a calm place proportionally, and made it the perfect place for one final message from the Creator to all mankind. A message of liberation and equality, a message containing the final law which people need in order to live rightly, and return back to the pure creed of all prophets; a message that could end the use of people as subjects for greedy rulers and make them realize that they are all servants to their Creator, and to Him alone they should direct their obedience and sincerity.

After embracing Islam, and having their hearts soaked with its teachings, a new nation evolved: a nation that knows consultation and hates autocracy, a nation dominated by social justice and knows not casteism, a nation in which all people are equal and there is no place for racism or arrogance. Taking into account all of the previous conditions, the prophet's approach was to start by inviting the kings and rulers to Islam first; if they accept it, then this saves a lot of people from persecution. If they decline and refuse, then logically this means that they won't allow Islam to spread inside their countries. We have already told the story behind the battle of *Mu'tah* in which the Muslim emissary was beheaded merely for carrying an invitation to Islam. This incident is a clear example for the political situation of those days.

It is totally true that Islam refused the dogmas of all other faiths, and criticized the wrong ideas and teachings that were never recorded in an authenticated manner. Islam also denied the claim that those dogmas were preached by any of the prophets. For instance the Qur'an totally refuses associating any partner to Allah or saying that He took a son; it refuses any embodiment of Allah or comparing Him to any creature; it refuses attributing any sort of immoralities to the prophets, and describes them as infallible righteous persons. In this manner, the Qur'an is crystal clear in conveying to its reader why it was sent as the final testament to mankind. Nonetheless, the Qur'an never allowed any sort of persecution against people of other faiths or any compulsion in religion.

Allah says in the Qur'an:

"The believers (i.e. Muslims), the Jews, the Christians, and the Sabaeans—all those who believe in Allah and the Last Day and do good deeds—will be rewarded by their Lord, they shall have no fear, nor shall they grieve." [The Qur'an (2:62)].

"Say [O Muslims]: 'We believe in Allah, and that which has been sent down to us (i.e. teachings of Islam), and to Abraham, Ishmael, Isaac, Jacob, and the Tribes, and that given to Moses and Jesus, and that given to (all) prophets from their Lord: We make no distinction between one and another of them: And to Him (i.e. Allah) we have submitted (in Islam)'." [The Qur'an (2:136)].

“We have sent down the Qur’an as clear evidence, and surely Allah guides whom He wills. Allah will judge between the believers, the Jews, the Sabaeans, the Christians, the Magians and the polytheists on the Judgment day. Surely Allah is witness to everything.” [The Qur’an (22:16-17)].

Muslims viewed Islam as a message of justice and freedom for all people; consequently, they were ready to undergo all sorts of hazards and submit any sacrifices for its prevalence. It was reported that one of the Persian commanders asked the Muslim emissary disdainfully: *“Who are you people?”* The Bedouin companion whose name was *“Reb’i Ibn ‘Amer”* responded saying, *“We are a group of people who rose to free all people from worshipping the creatures to worshipping the Creator alone, and from the narrowness of this worldly life to the vastness of this life and the hereafter, and from the injustices of distorted religions to the justice of Islam.”* Some people may take this answer lightly, but those who know history won’t.

The kingdoms surrounding Arabia at that time were:

- Abyssinia (Ethiopia), ruled by King Negus.
- Bahrain, ruled by *Al-Mundhir Ibn Sawi*. It was occupied by Persia.
- ‘Oman, ruled by *Ja’far Ibn Al-Julanda* and his minister and brother *‘Abd*. It was occupied by Persia.
- Yemen, ruled by King Bazan. It was occupied by Persia.
- Iraq, it was divided into several governorates like: Walaja – Ullais – Heira – Daumat Al-jandal – Ain Al-Tamr and many other governorates. It was occupied by the Persians who instated the rulers of these governorates from among their allies.
- Sham, it was divided into several governorates like: Damascus – Busra – Balqa’ – Ma’an – Darum – Ilya and many other governorates. It was occupied by the Romans who instated the rulers of these governorates from among their allies.
- Egypt, ruled by Jurajj son of Matthew, known as Muqawqas. It was occupied by the Romans.

All of the countries surrounding Arabia at that time were occupied by either the Persians or the Romans except Abyssinia. Prophet Muhammad sent his emissaries to all kings, emperors and governors of the above places and more. Their reception of his invitation to Islam varied according to their knowledge and culture. Those who were Christians were the closest to accept Prophet Muhammad’s invitation to Islam. This was not the case with the kings only, but also with the people themselves. This was a confirmation to how Allah described the Christians of that day where He says: *“You will find that the bitterest in their enmity to the believers are the Jews and the polytheists, while, the nearest in affection to them are those who say, ‘We are Christians.’ That is because there are priests and monks among them, and they are not arrogant.”* [The Qur’an (5:82)].

- **King Negus of Abyssinia** was a Christian very well known of his piety and justice. Before the advent of Islam, people used to say, *“There is a king in Abyssinia at whose court no one is wronged or unjustly treated.”* He learned about Prophet Muhammad from the companions who escaped from Makkah seeking his refuge from the pagans’ persecution. He questioned them about Islam and the teachings of the Qur’an. When they recited to him the chapter titled “Mary,” Islam entered his heart and he said,

“What Jesus taught and what you just recited, surely have radiated from the same source, I testify that your apostle is the messenger Jesus promised would come, and he is the one mentioned for us in the Gospel. If I weren’t responsible for managing the affairs of my people, I would have traveled to him, followed him, and even would have carried his footwear.” Hence, King Negus was already a Muslim even before the prophet sent him any messages at all. After he received the prophet’s invitation to Islam, he embraced it and sent an Abyssinian delegation to Madinah to learn about Islam directly from the prophet. When King Negus died, the prophet P.B.U.H. told his companions, *“Your brother at Abyssinia died,”* and then he took them outdoors, made them stand in ranks, and prayed for king Negus in absentia. By all means, Negus was a just pious king, he was not self-conceited by his rank or glory.

- **Al-Mundhir Ibn Sawi, the Governor of Bahrain**, also accepted Islam. Following the Qur’anic injunctions, he didn’t enforce Islam upon his people but sent a message to the prophet asking him what to do? The prophet replied saying: *“Whoever accepts admonition, does it for his own good, and whoever follows my messengers and acts according to their guidance, he, in fact, accepts my own advice. My messengers have highly praised your character. I hold you the mediator of your people. Give the new Muslims full chance to preach their religion, know that I pardon the offences of the offenders; therefore, you should also forgive them. And as long as you shall reform, we shall never replace you. As for the people of Bahrain, whoever prefers to keep his faith, let him be, but he should pay the Jizyah.”*

Here a very important question must erupt in the reader’s mind: “Why should those who refuse Islam pay a fine? Those are free citizens inside their own country, they should be free to do whatever they want. The application of *Jizyah* only signifies that Islam is not any different from other false unjust religions.”

In order to answer this question, let’s follow the sequence of the historical events, and get to know what exactly *Jizyah* means. In the famous biography of the prophet “The Sealed Nectar,” the first time *Jizyah* was mentioned was in the previous occasion. When the governor of Bahrain accepted Islam and agreed to be an official ally to Muslims, this meant that he must expect an attack from the Persians who would try to subjugate Bahrain again. Bahrain was an important Persian port ever since Ardashir I sacked it during his reign. Hence, Muslims were compelled to prepare for war. Those who refused Islam from the people of Bahrain refused also to fight alongside Muslims; consequently, Muslims bore the burden of defending themselves and their fellow citizens who were still too fainthearted to fight against the Persians. Bahrain lived under the Persian occupation for more than 400 years. Although the people of Bahrain were suffering from religious and political subjection, and high taxes were imposed upon the Christian citizens ever since Shapur II, non-Muslims refused to fight for their own liberation. Muslims never blamed those people for refusing Islam or even refusing to fight by their side against the tyrant empires of that day, they only demanded a financial contribution to prepare an army that can fight. This financial contribution was named “*Jizyah*.” Linguistically, *Jizyah* means compensation or requital, some scholars like to call it the defense tax. Based on the logistics of that day, every foot soldier needed an outfit comprising at least a sword, a shield, armguards and a helmet. The cost of these 4 items was evaluated to be round 12 *dirhams*. The *dirham* of that day was a silver coin weighing approximately 3.5 grams.

Besides the previous, the minimum cost of a horse or a camel was approximately 40 *dirhams*. Consequently, the amount of *Jizyah* was calculated as follows: On annual basis, every rich man should pay 48 *dirhams*, every middle class man should pay 24 *dirhams*, and every solvent man should pay 12 *dirhams*. Women, old men, boys under 15 years of age, monks, poor men, ill men, blind men, crippled men and mad men, were all exempted from paying *Jizyah*. The defense of all those categories was the responsibility of the Muslim army without any requital. In case of failing to defend the city and its people, all of the *Jizyah* gathered must be returned to their payers without any deductions as was ordered by the prophet P.B.U.H. This actually happened when Muslims retreated from some cities in Sham after freeing them from the Roman occupation. They had to abandon those cities in order to assemble a big army capable of fighting against Heraclius's huge army at Yarmouk. It was recorded that the Christian Arabs who lived in those cities were overwhelmed by this act of honesty. *Jizyah* was not taken from those who agreed to fight for their countries alongside Muslims. It was not demanded from the Jews of Madinah for instance because they agreed to fight if Madinah fell under attack. Unfortunately, they betrayed their pact later on. Either way, this proves that non-Muslim citizens have the choice to join the army in defense of their countries, or else, they should pay a proper requital for preparing the soldiers who would do so.

It should be mentioned here that adult Muslims—males and females—who lived in the same cities were obliged to pay "*Zakah*." Islam teaches that all fortunes and wealth belong to Allah, He bestows them upon whom He wills. Hence, the wealth that some of us possess is a trust from Allah. *Zakah* is one of the 5 main obligatory deeds in Islam. It is a kind of charity imposed upon all capable Muslims. *Zakah* linguistically means both "Purify and Flourish." So our possessions are purified by giving out a predetermined share to the needy, and for reforming the society in general. Some scholars compare it to pruning plants, this cutting back, balances and encourages new growth. Out of his or her possessions, every Muslim pays 2.5% of the assets that has completed a whole year under one's possession. This excludes daily used items necessary for one's life (i.e. houses, clothes, cars, animals which people ride, etc.). *Zakah* is calculated and paid for money savings, owned cattle, horses, sheep and camels, raised crops, gold and silver. For each of the previous there is a minimum magnitude below which the owner pays no *Zakah* except out of his or her own freewill. The reference minimum-magnitude for *Zakah* is 85 grams of gold. *Zakah* helps in redistributing the wealth of the society and eliminates poverty. Therefore, Muslims actually paid more money than non-Muslims who lived with them and they also fought for their countries. During the reign of Caliph 'Omar Ibn Abd El-Aziz, Muslims were wealthy and capable of defending their fellow non-Muslim citizens without any need to gather the *Jizyah*, so 'Omar ordered that gathering the *Jizyah* from non-Muslims should be stopped.

About this, Sir Thomas W. Arnold says in his book, "The Preaching of Islam":

"...From the examples given above of the toleration extended towards the Christian Arabs by the victorious Muslims of the first century of the Hijrah and continued by succeeding generations, we may surely infer that those Christian tribes that did embrace Islam, did so of their own choice and free will. The Christian Arabs of the present day, dwelling in the midst of a Muhammadan population, are a living testimony of this toleration." [The Preaching of Islam, P.51].

“...but this Jizyah was too moderate to constitute a burden, seeing that it released them from the compulsory military service that was incumbent on their Muslim fellow-subjects.” [The Preaching of Islam, P.59].

“This tax was not imposed on the Christians, as some would have us think, as a penalty for their refusal to accept the Muslim faith, but was paid by them in common with the other ‘Thimmis’ or non-Muslim subjects of the state whose religion precluded them from serving in the army, in return for the protection secured for them by the arms of the Muslims.” [The Preaching of Islam, P.60-61].

Back to the reactions towards the prophet’s invitations to Islam:

- **Ja’far Ibn Al-Julanda**, king of **Oman**, also accepted Islam after consulting with his minister and brother **’Abed**. They spent several days thinking and directing their questions about Islam to the prophet’s emissary, until finally, they embraced Islam.
- **Muqawqas**, the Roman’s steward in **Egypt**, demanded more time to think. Although Muqawqas was an Egyptian and the Copts hated the Romans who had been oppressing them for 6 centuries; nonetheless, his thoughts about Islam were those of a king who was afraid to lose his kingdom.
- **Al-Harith Ibn Abi Shamir Al-Ghassani**, King of **Damascus** and an ally of the Romans, declared that he would fight against Muslims. He ordered the Muslim emissary to return and tell the prophet that he declares a state of war against Madinah. Later on, when his cousin, **Shurahbil Ibn ’Amr Al-Ghassani** the governor of **Balqa’**, caught the prophet’s emissary to the governor of **Busra**, he had him beheaded. This led to the battle of **Mu’tah**, which was discussed earlier in this text. Thereafter, the Muslims’ struggle against the Romans’ tyranny and their Arab allies ensued.
- **Chosroes**, king of **Persia**, was enraged and he tore the letter saying, “*A menial slave from among my subjects dares to write his name before mine.*” When the emissary reported this to the prophet P.B.U.H., he said, “*May Allah tear down his kingdom.*” Chosroes dictated a command to his viceroy in Yemen to send a couple of troopers to arrest the prophet and bring him to his presence. The viceroy, whose name was “**Bazan**,” sent two strong soldiers to Madinah to arrest the prophet. When they reached Madinah and met the prophet, they told him that Chosroes has written a message to Bazan ordering him to dispatch someone to arrest Muhammad and bring him to his presence; otherwise, the Persians would destroy Madinah. The prophet told them to return the next day concealing from them what he learned through divine revelation about Chosroes and the rebellion against him. The next day, when they returned to the prophet, he informed them that Chosroes had been murdered by his own son who has taken over the throne. They were stunned and said, “*Do you understand what you’re saying? The king has harbored malice against you for what’s less! Do you want us to send him a message telling him what you just said?*” The prophet answered, “*Yes. Tell him about me and inform him that my religion shall reach every place Chosroes reached, and will reach where all soles and hoofs have reached. Tell him that if he embraces Islam, I shall keep him the ruler of his people.*” The soldiers hurried back to Bazan at Yemen and reported to him what has been said. A while later, a message came to Bazan informing him that “**Sherweh**” has taken over the throne of his father, and ordering him to halt any procedures against the Prophet of Arabia till further notice. That was the story of Bazan, and how he and his soldiers believed in Prophet Muhammad. Not long after that, Yemenites embraced Islam, all praises be to Allah.

- Heraclius, the Roman emperor, seemed to know through his analysis of the old scriptures that there was a prophet still to come. The Muslim emissary reported that Heraclius showed some inclination towards accepting Islam first, but when his ministers and consultants refused, he declined and decided to fight against the rising power in Arabia. This led to an arduous struggle that continued for centuries.

The previous reactions towards the prophet's messages made it crystal clear that the two major empires would never allow a new power to rise amidst their lands. This meant that war was incumbent upon Muslims. Consequently, this period witnessed a lot of intelligence work. Scouts and spies were sent from both sides to gather information and make preparations.



Near the end of the 8th year A.H., the pagans violated *Al-Hudaybeyah* treaty. A tribe named *Banu-Bakr* from among the allies of the Makkan pagans attacked and killed a dozen or more men and women from among a tribe named *Khuza 'ah*, which was among the allies of Muslims. These two tribes had an old murderous struggle in the past, but they both agreed on *Al-Hudaybeyah* treaty. Although the people of *Khuza 'ah* were pagans themselves, they trusted Prophet Muhammad to respect the treaty more than they trusted the Makkan pagans. When their people were killed inside Makkah, they resorted to the prophet seeking justice. When the Makkan pagans learned that *Khuza 'ah* sought Prophet Muhammad's rescue, they were troubled. Realizing the dangerous consequences that appeared on the horizon, the Makkan leader *Abu Sufyan* traveled to Madinah seeking to meet the prophet and apologize for what happened, may he accept to consider the treaty valid, but Muslims refused. In the next month, Prophet Muhammad rode out towards Makkah leading 10,000 of the companions. It was time to retrieve Makkah from the hands of those criminals who do not even respect the sanctity of Allah's sacred mosque. Without indulging into the details, the Makkan pagans didn't show much resistance. The prophet entered Makkah without even taking his sword out of its scabbard. On entering, he showed great modesty. He ordered his companions to show leniency and to assure Makkans that no harm was going to befall them. When he reached the sacred mosque, he started breaking the idols placed around the mosque and his companions did the same. The prophet prayed inside the mosque, and then called upon all people to attend. He gave a brief speech glorifying Allah and stipulated that all people are equal; hence, all pre-Islamic customs of taking pride in ancestry should be forsaken. He stipulated that all people are Adam's progeny and Adam was created from earth. He recited the verse that says, "*O mankind, We have created you from males and females, and dispersed you into nations and tribes so that you may know one another. Verily the noblest among you in Allah's sight are those who are most pious. Verily Allah is All-Knowing, All-Aware.*" [The Qur'an (49:13)]. Thereafter, the prophet asked the Makkan pagans, "*O people of Quraysh, what is it that you think I'm going to do to you?*"

They responded saying, "*You have always been a noble brother and the son of a noble brother.*" In Arabic this answer is a quick short expression used to describe a person descending from a lineage known of its piety and great morals.

The prophet then said, "*I can't but say what Joseph said to his brothers, 'Let there be no reproach against you today.' Go your way, you're all free.*"

After this, the Islamic call for prayers was raised inside the sacred mosque, and Muslims worshipped Allah freely in Makkah without any fear for the first time. Although they had spent days traveling from Madinah to Makkah under the burning sun, they didn't sleep or rest; they spent the night inside the sanctum of the sacred mosque reciting the Qur'an, praying, praising Allah for His grace and asking His acceptance for their good deeds. When *Hind Bint-'Utbah*, the wife of *Abu Sufyan*, saw this, she said to her husband, *"I want to pay homage to Muhammad."*

Abu Sufyan said, *"Do you forsake your faith (i.e. idolatry)?"*

She said in awe, *"I swear I never saw any god being worshipped rightly in this mosque before this day. O I swear that they stayed all night praying, bowing and prostrating."*

After that day, the Makkan pagans started embracing Islam in huge groups willingly, and for the past 1400 years, the Islamic call for prayers has been raised 5 times every day in Makkah declaring that there is no God but Allah and Muhammad is His messenger. Muslims have since traveled from everywhere to seclude themselves for worship in the valley of Bakkah without the least fear on themselves. What a magnificent triumph, but above all, what a magnificent strife.



Our fifth and last stop is with chapter 9 of the Qur'an. Its revelation took place in the 9th year A.H.—14 months after retrieving Makkah. It includes several verses that speak about fighting. Allah says:

"This is a declaration of immunity from Allah and His Messenger to the polytheists, with whom you had made agreements: Travel in the land (i.e. Makkah) for four months, but know that you cannot frustrate the plan of Allah and that Allah will surely disgrace those who deny the truth. This is a proclamation from Allah and His Messenger to the people on the day of the Pilgrimage, that Allah repudiates the polytheists, and so does His Messenger. If you repent, it will be better for you, but if you turn away, then know that you cannot frustrate Allah's plan. Announce a grievous punishment to those who are bent on denying the truth. As for those who have honored the treaty you made with them and who have not supported anyone against you: fulfill your agreement with them to the end of their term. Allah loves those who are righteous. When the sacred months have passed, kill the polytheists [who are at war with you] wherever you find them. Take them as captives, and besiege them, and wait for them at every place of ambush. But if they repent, and take to prayer regularly and pay the alms, then let them go their way. Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful. If any of the polytheists seeks your refuge, grant it to him so that he may hear the words of Allah, then accompany him to his place of safety. That is because they are people who have no knowledge. How can the polytheists have a pact with Allah and His Messenger, except for those with whom you entered into a treaty at the Sacred Mosque? As long as they act uprightly towards you, act uprightly towards them. Allah loves those who are righteous. How [can there be a pact] while if they get the upper hand over you, they will respect neither kinship nor pact. They [try to] please you with their tongues but their hearts reject you; most of them are perfidious. They have sold Allah's revelations for a paltry price, and barred others from His path. How evil is what they have been doing!

*Where believers are concerned, they respect no tie of kinship or pact. They are people who transgress the limits. If they repent and keep up their prayers and pay the alms, then they are your brethren in faith. We make Our messages clear for people who are willing to learn. **But if they break their oath after pledging it and revile your religion, then fight the leaders of unbelief, for they have no regard for their oaths, may they then desist. Will you not fight against those who have broken their oaths and conspired to banish the Messenger? They were the first to attack you. Do you fear them? Surely Allah is more deserving of your fear, if you are true believers. Fight them: Allah will punish them at your hands, and will disgrace them. He will grant you victory over them and heal the hearts of the faithful, He will remove the rage from their hearts.** Allah will turn in His mercy to whom He wills. Allah is All Knowing and Most Wise. Do you [believers] think that you will be spared before Allah identifies which of you have struggled and did not take anyone for friends and protectors except Him, His Messenger, and the believers? Allah is fully aware of all your actions. **It is not right that polytheists maintain [polytheistic worships] at Allah's worship places while they confess that they are unbelievers. It is they whose works shall come to nothing and they shall abide in Hell.**"* [The Qur'an (9:1-17)].

After retrieving Makkah, the remaining pagan Arab tribes who were allies with *Quraysh* realized that Muslims were getting stronger by the day; they decided to direct a fatal blow to Muslims. They unified their leadership and decided to attack Muslims in Makkah. When the news reached the prophet, he rode out to meet that army away from the sacred city. At a place called *Hunayn*, the two armies met and Muslims were granted victory after a fierce battle. Later on, Muslim emissaries were dispatched all over Arabia calling all Arabs to Islam and explaining to them its teachings. The news of Islam gaining a wider base in the sacred city made many Arabs incline towards accepting it. News about this was conveyed to the Roman leadership and their native allies in Sham; consequently, they decided to attack Hejaz, and started preparing a big army to invade Arabia.

Information about the Roman preparations reached the prophet and his companions in Madinah. The Nabatean merchants coming from Sham brought the news with them; they informed their Arab brethren in Madinah that the native *Ghassanide* tribes in Sham have decided to join Heraclius's army, and that the Roman army comprised more than 40,000 soldiers. *'Omar Ibn Al-Khattab* narrated this incident to some of his companions saying: *"I used to take turn in attending the prophet's assembly with one of my friends; later on, each one of us informed the other of what happened during his absence. We both lived near the borders of Madinah so we took turns in calling upon the Prophet during that time of suspense. One day, my friend came knocking at my door hysterically saying, 'Open up! Open up!' I opened the door hurriedly and asked, 'What's the matter? Have the Ghassanides come?' But my friend said, 'No, it's more serious than that. The prophet has divorced his wives!'"* [Recorded by Bukhari].

Without indulging into the story of the prophet and his wives for this is not the place for it, this narration reports to us the state of alertness and anxiety Muslims were living in during those days. Moreover, the hypocrites were conspiring with the enemy to stab their Muslim fellow citizens in their back during the invasion. Based on the previous, the prophet decided to ride out towards the borders and meet the Roman army there. The main purpose was to protect the country and the sacred places from any invasion.

It was summer time and the long trip to the north without having enough provisions could have killed most of the soldiers. Preparing an army fit to meet the Romans at that time was an extremely hard task, this is why Muslims called this army “The arduous-times army.” When news of the Muslims’ army reached the Romans, they realized that their scheme was smitten in its cradle: they won’t be able to besiege Muslims inside their cities; the hypocrites who stayed behind won’t be able to help them anymore; the open land would give Muslims the opportunity to drag the Romans deep into the Arabian desert, which could cause the Roman army to perish. This meant that the Arabs could then invade Sham without any difficulty. Consequently, Heraclius called his army to quarters.

Although the two armies never met in the battle field, this incident landed so heavily on the hopes of the hypocrites and their allies. The group of hypocrites who refused to ride out with the prophet was now known to all Muslims; their schemes were scandalized. The chief of the hypocrites *‘Abdullah Ibn Salul* died out of depression and spite. More pagans in Arabia and the surrounding kingdoms were amazed by the huge triumphs Muslims were achieving one after another. They started wondering, *are these victorious gallants the same ones who started out as a bunch of slaves and shepherds, and were tortured and starved in Makkah 20 years ago?!*

This incident took place in the second half of the 9th year A.H. When the prophet’s army returned to Madinah, some Muslims expressed their will to perform pilgrimage. The prophet P.B.U.H. told them to prepare themselves and he dispatched *Abu Bakr* as the leader of the pilgrims’ delegation. After the delegation left Madinah, the prophet received the above verses. The verses were addressing the Arab tribes who have betrayed their peace pact with the prophet. They are ordering Muslims to announce to those traitors that they can travel to Makkah freely for another four months, after this period, let them know that they shall be dealt with as hostile enemies. If they try to approach Makkah, then they expose themselves to be killed on spot. Muslims shall guard all roads leading to the sacred city, they shall besiege and capture whomever they find lurking to approach the place.

The verses order Muslims not to harm those who embrace Islam from among the treacherous tribes. This is because Islam teaches that embracing it wipes away all past sins no matter how grievous they were. This is why Prophet Muhammad P.B.U.H. said, *“I was ordered to fight the people until they bear witness that there is no God but Allah and that I’m His messenger, and until they perform the prayers and pay Zakah. If they do so, then they have gained protection against me for their lives and property, unless they do acts that are punishable in accordance with Islam, and their reckoning will be with Allah the Almighty.”* [Recorded by Bukhari and Muslim]. Unlike what some Muslims understand from this tradition, the expression “the people” is not indefinite, it’s referring to the treacherous Arab tribes and the Makkan pagans who have betrayed their pact before. They all used to perform pilgrimage to Makkah and practice their invented polytheistic rituals. The above verses are speaking about them. This is why, after those people embraced Islam in multitudes, Prophet Muhammad received the chapter that says: ***“When Allah’s help and victory has come, and you see the people entering Allah’s religion in multitudes, then glorify your Lord with His praise and seek His forgiveness. He always accepts repentance.”*** [The Qur’an (110)]. “The people” referred to in the mentioned tradition and those verses are the same sect intended.

As for the pagans who didn't betray their pact with the prophet, the verses order Muslims to fulfill their agreement with them. The verses also order Muslims that if any pagan from among the treacherous tribes seeks the refuge of a Muslim, the Muslim should grant it to him and help him return to his homeland; maybe on hearing the recital of the Qur'an, he will think and rectify his idea about Islam.

Then the verses continue dispraising the treacherous attitude of these tribes, and orders Muslims not to show them any leniency: they had betrayed their pact; they prepared a massive attack on Makkah; they don't respect the sanctity of the mosque built by their great grandfather Abraham; they banished the prophet and tried to kill him, and they respect neither a covenant nor a pledge. The verses ask Muslims in disapproval to their lenient attitude, ***“Will you not fight against those who have broken their oaths and conspired to banish the Messenger? They were the first to attack you. Do you fear them? Surely Allah is more deserving of your fear, if you are true believers.”***

The polytheists used to worship idols thinking that they can bring them closer to the Creator. The verses came ordering Muslims to prevent any polytheistic acts of worship inside Makkah after the time limit specified. No polytheist who worships idols, seeks any intermediary between himself and his Lord, or associates partners to Allah, should be allowed after this period to enter Makkah. The sacred city was originally established by Prophet Abraham and his son Ishmael as a grand mosque dedicated for worshipping Allah alone and it has once again returned to be so. Later on, in the same chapter, Allah explains that polytheists' acts are sacrilegious saying, *“O Believers, know that polytheists are sacrilegious, they should not approach the Sacred Mosque after this year onwards. If you should fear destitution, Allah will enrich you out of His bounty, if He so wishes. Allah is All-aware and Most-wise.”* [The Qur'an (9:28)].

On receiving these verses, the prophet P.B.U.H. ordered his cousin 'Ali Ibn Abi-Taleb to travel to Makkah, recite these verses in all of the pilgrimage locations amidst people's gatherings, and deliver the message to them all. 'Ali caught up with Abu Bakr, recited the verses to him, and told him of the prophet's orders, which they both carried out precisely. Through these verses, polytheism was abolished from Makkah once and for all till the end of time. As Arabs once before followed the Makkans in taking idols for worship besides Allah, again, they followed them in returning to the pure creed of Abraham P.B.U.H., and ever since that day, they returned to worshipping Allah alone.

The above verses of chapter 9 hold the following injunctions:

1. Fight against the polytheists who try to attack Makkah and occupy it again.
2. Fight against those who betray their peace pacts and break their pledges.
3. Fulfill your pact with those who deal with you in an upright manner and respect their pacts.
4. Grant your refuge to noncombatant enemies who seek it and accompany them to their place of safety.
5. Do not allow any sort of Polytheism to be practiced inside Makkah again.
6. If any pagan from among those who committed treason embraced Islam, do not harm him, for embracing Islam abolishes all previous sins.

Later on, in the same chapter, Allah says: ***“Fight those from among the People of the Book (i.e. Jews and Christians) who believe neither in Allah, nor in the judgment Day, nor declare as unlawful what Allah and His Messenger have declared to be unlawful, nor follow the true religion, until they pay the Jizyah with their own hands and submit humbly. The Jews said, ‘Ezra is the son of Allah,’ and the Christians said, ‘The Messiah is the son of Allah.’ These are but their baseless utterances. They imitate the assertions made in earlier times by those who denied the truth, may Allah destroy them! How far astray they have been led! They have taken their learned men and their monks for their lords besides Allah. So have they taken the Messiah, son of Mary, although they were commanded to worship only One God, there is no deity but He. He is far exalted above whatever they set up as His partners! They want to extinguish Allah’s light with their mouths, but Allah shall perfect His light, no matter how those who deny the truth may abhor it. It is He who has sent His Messenger with guidance and the religion of Truth, so that He may make it prevail over every other religion, no matter how much the polytheists may hate this. Believers, many religious scholars and monks wrongfully appropriate people’s possessions and turn people away from Allah’s path! Tell those who hoard gold and silver instead of spending it for the Allah’s cause that they will have a painful punishment.”*** [The Qur’an (9:29-34)].

The meaning of *Jizyah* and the circumstances of its application have already been discussed. *Mujahed*, the famous student of companion ‘*Abdullah Ibn ‘Abbās*, said that these verses were revealed earlier before verses (9:1-29). He said that they were revealed when the prophet was preparing the ‘arduous times army’ to ward off the Romans’ invasion. The verses were ordering Muslims to collect the *Jizyah* from the people of the book living in Arabia, and to fight those from among them who would refuse to pay. As explained earlier, *Jizyah* was not demanded from all non-Muslims, it was demanded only from those who were physically and financially capable to contribute in fighting for their countries but refuse to join the army. If those people refuse also to pay the little amounts prescribed earlier and turned their backs to their fellow citizens, then by all means, they are traitors; they should be fought against until they pay the *Jizyah* and submit humbly to the welfare of their country.

The verses then continue to describe and dispraise the subjection of the “MEN OF GOD.” Those so-called scholars who subjugate people to their understandings, and then whoever deviates from their path finds the famous list of accusations waiting: heresy, blasphemy, apostasy, innovation, infidelity, etc. Those people are not only Jews or Christians, there are many Muslim scholars today who follow that same path. In the first section of this book I stated that a true scholar is the one who teaches his listeners the importance of intellect and how to use their reason, not the one who seeks to create duplicated copies of himself. Unfortunately, through centuries of subjection, people of the book have embraced twisted forms of their pure religions; their preachers inclined towards teaching alien dogmas and doctrines that were never preached by any of the prophets. In short, they have tampered with the pure creed of Abraham. Although the evidence on this is crystal clear, most people close their eyes and refuse to see it. I have always admired *Khalil Gibran’s* writings for he had always written against this kind of subjection. Many of those fancy religious figures have divided and separated the nations into groups and sects, and filled them with hatred against each other. The emanating attitude of their teachings stands as evidence on how far astray those scholars have gone.

Our differences should be dealt with in an academic manner. Those who have knowledge are not warders over the people, their duty is but to convey their point of view and explain their evidences; then, it's up to every person to decide for him or herself what's more truthful and worthy. Those who use their high stature to subjugate others, are fighting against the purpose for which we were created.

The above verses of chapter 9 hold the following injunction:

1. Fight against those among your non-Muslim citizens who refuse to contribute in the defense of their countries and refuse to pay the *Jizyah* until they pay it and submit humbly to the public welfare.



“O Believers, Fight against those deniers of the truth who are next to you. Deal firmly with them. Know that Allah is with those who fear Him.” [The Qur’an (9:123)].

This verse is speaking about the neighboring non-Muslims countries or forces that threaten the safety of the Muslim lands. During his life, the prophet rode out several times to fight against the forces that were preparing to attack Madinah, Makkah and all Hejaz. This was the case with the Romans who were preparing to invade Hejaz, so was it with the pagans at *Hunayn*, and so was it the case with the Persians who were lurking to subjugate *Oman, Yemen* and *Bahrain* again. If Muslims didn't ride out to meet their enemies at the borders, there wouldn't have been a place called Arabia today. By all means, securing the borders of any country is mandatory for the safety of the community. This was the explanation given by *Ibn 'Omar* and *Al-Hassan*. On the other hand, *Ibn 'Abbās* said that this verse was referring to the treacherous Jewish and Pagan tribes who were living inside Arabia. Logically, both explanations complete each other. Muslims must secure their homelands and its borders at all times and fight against those who lurk to attack them therein.

The above verse of chapter 9 holds the following injunction:

1. Secure your homelands and its borders, and fight against those who lurk to attack you therein.



After Muslims succeeded in stopping the Romans from invading Arabia, the Romans were enraged. When they learned that their steward on the city of Ma'an in Sham embraced Islam, they had him beheaded. This was a threat to anyone who would dare embrace Islam from among the people of Sham. When the news reached the prophet, he organized a military expedition under the command of 'Usamah Ibn Zayd. He ordered 'Usamah to reach with his army the cities of Palestine. His aim was to tell the Romans that Muslims won't tolerate any more tyranny or subjection, and that they will fight for their freedom no matter what the odds. The second purpose of this expedition was to root the sense of confidence in Muslims' hearts, and make them realize that Allah's victory is surely granted to those who are righteous. The third purpose was to tell the natives living in Sham under the Roman occupation that their freedom is close by.

Two months before the above incident, the archangel delivered to the prophet a very small chapter consisting of 3 short verses in which Allah tells him: ***“When Allah’s help and victory has come, and you see the people entering Allah’s religion in multitudes, then glorify your Lord with His praise and seek His forgiveness. He is always ready to accept repentance.”*** [The Qur'an (110)].

When Prophet Muhammad received these verses, he knew that it was time to return to his Creator. He performed pilgrimage in Makkah and delivered a short sermon. Among what he said, *“O people! Listen to what I say. I do not know whether I will ever meet you at this place ever again. It is unlawful for you to shed the blood of one another or take unlawfully the fortunes of one another; they are as unlawful as shedding blood on such a sacred day, in such a sacred month, and in such a sacred city.”*

Preparing the expedition of 'Usamah was the last thing the prophet did before his departure. The prophet P.B.U.H. died a few days later in the 3rd month of the 11th year A.H. After his departure, his companions carried forward his message. They liberated Sham from the Roman occupation, and Iraq from the Persian occupation. This led to a very long arduous struggle between Muslims and the two empires. Although in most battles Muslims were outnumbered and less prepared, Allah granted them victory like He has promised His messenger.

Among the famous fierce battles that took place, are the following:

(Battle of Yarmouk: 30,000 Muslims against 120,000 Byzantines),

(Battle of Al-Qādisiyyah: 25,000 Muslims against 80,000 Persians),

(Battle of Walaja: 15,000 Muslims against 30,000 Persians),

(Battle of 'Ullais: Less than 15,000 Muslims against 40,000 Persians),

(Battle of Nahawand: 30,000 Muslims against 150,000 Persians),

(Battle of Firaz: About 13,000 Muslims against 120,000-150,000 combined forces of the Byzantine Roman Empire, Sassanid Persian Empire, and Christian Arabs),

(Battle of Ajnadayn: 20,000 Muslims against 80,000 Byzantines).

Many of the prophet's companions died in these battles. What could have possibly made them lead battles like these one after another? They never said for instance, 'We were lucky in the previous battle but we might not be lucky in the next one'. Actually, they never hesitated to enter any battle no matter what. They believed that one way or the other they shall be victorious.

The Qur'an teaches the concept of vicegerency. It teaches that Man is Allah's vicegerent on earth. His task is to establish justice, rectify what's wrong, and protect those who are weak and persecuted. Sincere faith in these teachings is what pushed the early generations towards fighting against all sorts of subjection, tyranny, occupation and injustice. Again, this is the meaning of striving for the cause of Allah or *Jihad*. About those who die for such cause, Allah says in the Qur'an:

“Allah has bought from the believers their lives and their wealth in return for Heaven. They fight for the cause of Allah and they kill and are killed. It is a promise binding on Him in the Torah, the Gospel and the Qur'an, and who is truer to his promise than Allah? Rejoice then in the bargain you have made. That is the supreme achievement.”
[The Qur'an (9:111)].

“Think not of those who are killed while striving for the cause of Allah as dead. Nay, they live, finding their sustenance in the presence of their Lord, They rejoice in what Allah bestowed upon them of His bounty: And rejoice for those who have not yet joined them (i.e. not yet martyred) and left behind, that on them, there is no fear, nor would they grieve. They rejoice in the Grace and the bounty of Allah, and with the fact that Allah would not let the reward of the believers be lost. Those who answered the call of Allah and the messenger, after being wounded, for those of them who do right and refrain from wrong is a great reward. Those unto whom the people said, ‘Verily, A great army is gathered against you, so fear them’: But this [only] increased their Faith and they said, ‘For us Allah suffices, and He is the Best Disposer of affairs.’ So they returned with Grace and bounty from Allah. No harm touched them, for they followed the good pleasure of Allah, and Allah is the Lord of bounties unbounded. It is only satan that instigates you to fear his votaries. Fear them not, but fear Me, if you are true believers.”
[The Qur'an (22:16-17)].



Within less than 80 years, Islam was accepted by the majority of the people living in Arabia, Abyssinia, Sham, North Africa, Persia and some parts of India, China and Spain.
Today there are Muslims in each and every country all over the world.
All praises be to Allah who has opened billions of hearts for the light of the truth.

After we have learned the Qur’anic injunctions with regards to fighting, now it’s time to learn the orders and rules that Prophet Muhammad issued for Muslims when they fight their enemies. Knowing them is essential to differentiate between true combative Jihad, and any other kind of fighting. Prophet Muhammad P.B.U.H. said:

“Don’t look forward to meet the enemies [in battle]. If you do meet them, then show perseverance and know that heaven awaits you in the shadow of their swords.” [Recorded by Bukhari].

“Fight for the cause of Allah and never betray a pact, never conceal a thing from the booty, never mutilate, never kill a child, a woman, an old man, a hermit, and never cut down a tree or destroy a building.” [Recorded by Tirmidhī, Muslim, Abu Dāwood and others].

“The worst of all people on the judgment day shall be: a man who is killed by a prophet, a man who killed a prophet, a man who led others to perversity, and a man who mutilated another.” [Recorded by Ahmad and authenticated by Albani].

“Whoever guarantees safety for an enemy and then kills him, let him know that I reject his action even if the killed person was a pagan.” [Recorded by Bukhari].

“If you kill [your enemy during the battle], then make it a quick death.” [Recorded by Muslim].

“Whoever treats a non-Muslim covenanter unjustly, or detracts any of his rights, or overburden’s him with what he can’t bear, or takes anything from him against his own freewill, let him know that I shall be his foe on the judgment day.” [Recorded by Abu Dāwood].

The above prophetic traditions hold the following injunctions:

1. Don’t wish for fighting and killing people.
2. If you meet your enemy in battle, stand fast and show perseverance.
3. Never betray a pact.
4. Never conceal anything from the booty no matter how small it is.
5. Never mutilate.
6. Never kill a child.
7. Never kill a woman.
8. Never kill an old man.
9. Never kill a hermit.
10. Never cut down a tree.
11. Never destroy a building.
12. Never breach a safety promise.
13. If you kill an enemy at battle, make it a quick death.
14. Deal justly and kindly with non-Muslim covenanters.



Now, wouldn't it be interesting to place all of the previous injunctions in one complete list so that we can understand the Islamic ethics and morals governing the concept of "Combative *Jihad*."

1. Don't wish for fighting and killing people.
2. Fight in self-defense those who attack you.
3. Fight in defense of your home and country.
4. If you meet your enemy in battle, stand fast and show perseverance.
5. Secure your homelands and its borders, and fight against those who lurk to attack you therein.
6. Fight those who occupy your homeland and kill them wherever you find them until you drive them out and retrieve your homeland.
7. Fight against aggressors until there is no more compulsion in religion.
8. Fight for those who are persecuted on account of faith, and cannot fight for themselves.
9. Never desert the army during war or turn your back to the enemy except for a stratagem or giving aid to weaker comrades.
10. Never transgress the limits or attack those who do not attack you nor do they fight.
11. Never kill a child.
12. Never kill a woman.
13. Never kill an old man.
14. Never kill a hermit.
15. If you kill an enemy at battle, make it a quick death.
16. Never mutilate.
17. Never cut down a tree.
18. Never destroy a building.
19. Never breach a safety promise.
20. Never fight in the 4 sacred months unless attacked during them.
21. Spend part of your income in preparing your army or your enemy shall destroy you.
22. Muster as much power as you can in order to dishearten your enemies from attacking you.
23. Fight against those among your non-Muslim citizens who refuse to contribute in the defense of their countries and they refuse to pay the *Jizyah* until they pay it and submit humbly to the public welfare.
24. While at war, grant your refuge to those who seek it from the noncombatants and accompany them to their place of safety.
25. If your enemies incline to peace, accept it from them and put your trust in Allah, He shall help and protect you against their schemes and treason.
26. Never betray a pact.
27. Fight against those who betray their peace pacts and break their pledges.
28. If any non-Muslim from among those who committed treason embraced Islam, do not harm him for embracing Islam abolishes all previous sins.
29. Fulfill your pacts with those who deal with you in an upright manner and respect their pacts.
30. Deal justly and kindly with non-Muslim covenanters.

Please note that the above 30 injunctions have been arranged based on the sequence deemed most appropriate according to the writer's opinion.

The next 3 injunctions are related to Makkah:

31. Never fight in or near the sacred valley (i.e. Makkah) unless attacked there.
32. Fight against the non-Muslims who try to attack Makkah and occupy it.
33. Do not allow any sort of Polytheism to be practiced in Makkah again.

Finally there is the injunction related to the booty which is:

34. Never conceal anything from the booty no matter how small it may be.

This injunction was stated at a time when the defeated armies left behind horses, camels, money, swords, shields, armors, bows, arrows, helmets, camping tents, etc. All these stuff were collected by the victorious army and distributed on the fighters to enhance their degree of preparation, except for a predetermined portion specified in the Qur'an to be 1/5th, it was divided into 5 parts: 3 of them were distributed on the orphans, the poor and wayfarers; one part was distributed on the prophet's family and relatives; the remaining part was spent according to the prophet's recommendations and what he deemed most deserving for the welfare of the community.

All of the battles that Muslims fought weren't in desire of control and expansion, nor for any benefits from this worldly life; they were not to force people forsake their beliefs and embrace Islam, nor were they out of love to parade and scare their enemies with the huge numbers of their army, which was always unachieved; these battles were a burden imposed upon them to ward off oppression, resist falsehood, disseminate justice, and achieve freedom for all people, and these are the objectives of Allah's messages.

I hope that the previous organization of the injunctions governing "Combative Jihad," now makes this concept clearer in the reader's mind. Some of the verses discussed and explained, are always used by extremists as legitimate evidence for their attacks. They have also been the door way which Islam deniers use whenever they want to accuse Islam of being the religion of terrorists and blood thirsty people. Both parties neglect all of the previous and insist on adopting twisted understandings of "Jihad." In my personal opinion, Jihad is the noblest and most respectable concept in the Islamic faith. May Allah guide us all to the truth, Amen.



Now it's time to ask a very important question: Is Jihad only combative?

The answer is a very big fat NO. Jihad is an inclusive concept in Islam; it's like a huge tree having roots that reach deep into the land of faith; the more fertile the land is, the more booming the tree shall be. Combative Jihad is only one branch in this tree. There is also the financial jihad, health jihad, verbal jihad, perseverance jihad, acquiring knowledge and seeking after the truth jihad, etc.

The trunk of the tree is "Spiritual Jihad." Please understand that a believer is in continuous struggle with his or her whims, lusts, and satanic temptations. A believer continuously questions his actions and deeds. Whenever he sins or makes a misdeed, his conscience puts him in a state of remorse and keeps on pushing him towards repentance. He always feels watched and evaluated like a student taking an exam. The belief that one day he shall return to his Creator and shall be questioned for his deeds, makes him incline

towards acting properly and perfecting those deeds. This state could only be reached through spiritual Jihad. Those who do not live practicing this kind of Jihad should know that their faith is bogus and needs persistent rectification.

It was recorded that *‘Ali Ibn Abi-Taleb* once said, when returning from the battle field, *“We have returned from the minor Jihad to the major Jihad.”* *‘Ali* was referring to spiritual Jihad. The same meaning was conveyed by some notable scholars like *‘Abdullah Ibn Al-Mubarak* (118-181 A.H.) and others.

The previous understanding of Jihad is alluded to in the Qur’anic verse that says: *“Fighting has been ordained upon you, abhorrent as it may be to you. You may dislike something although it is good for you, or like something although it is bad for you; Allah knows but you do not.”* [The Qur’an (2:216)].

This verse makes it crystal clear that although the human nature detests hardships, sometimes fighting against evildoers and wading into what you hate, holds a lot of good for you. From this verse many scholars affirmed that Combative Jihad is the second step after spiritual Jihad—that struggle that insinuates you to face your enemies instead of running or hiding. Standing firm for what’s right without caring for the consequences always needs enormous spiritual power.

Likewise, any form of Jihad is preceded by a spiritual struggle first. For instance, before calculating the *Zakah*, one may feel some inclination towards neglecting some of his or her assets. Before helping others, some may hesitate if the task needed a lot of effort or involved some danger. Before giving blood, one may hesitate or freak out. Before uttering the truth that may stir up the enmity of others, one may hesitate. When facing troubles, one may fail to show perseverance. When raised on something or taught something since childhood, one finds it extremely hard to change his or her convictions and accept something different. All of the previous examples coincide with the types of jihad spelled out earlier, and they all need Spiritual Jihad. Allah says in the Qur’an: *“By the human-spirit and how [Allah] formed it, then inspired it to understand what is wrong and what is right. Him who purifies it will indeed be successful, and him who demoralizes it is sure to fail.”* [The Qur’an (91:7-10)].

Actually, Spiritual Jihad is the Sun around which Planet Islam revolves.



Finally, I would like to conclude this chapter by some testimonies stated by notable non-Muslim writers:

“Of any organized attempt to force the acceptance of Islam on the non-Muslim population, or of any systematic persecution intended to stamp out the Christian religion, we hear nothing. Had the caliphs chosen to adopt either course of action, they might have swept away Christianity as easily as Ferdinand and Isabella drove Islam out of Spain, or Louis XIV made Protestantism penal in France, or the Jews were kept out of England for 350 years. The Eastern Churches in Asia were entirely cut off from communion with the rest of Christendom throughout which no one would have been found to lift a finger on their behalf, as heretical communions. So that the very survival of these Churches to the present day is a strong proof of the generally tolerant attitude of Mohammedan [sic] governments towards them.” [Thomas Arnold, “The Preaching of Islam,” London, 1896].

“Sense of justice is one of the most wonderful ideals of Islam, because as I read in the Qur'an I find those dynamic principles of life, not mystic but practical ethics for the daily conduct of life suited to the whole world.” [Sarojini Naidu, Lectures on “The Ideals of Islam,” Madras, India, 1918].

“History makes it clear, however, that the legend of fanatical Muslims sweeping through the world and forcing Islam at the point of the sword upon conquered races is one of the most fantastically absurd myths that historians have ever repeated.” [Delacy O'Leary, “Islam at the Crossroads,” London, 1923].

“I have always held the religion of Muhammad in high estimation because of its wonderful vitality. It is the only religion which appears to me to possess that assimilating capacity to the changing phase of existence which can make itself appeal to every age. I have studied him—the wonderful man and in my opinion far from being an anti-Christ, he must be called the Savior of Humanity. I believe that if a man like him were to assume the dictatorship of the modern world, he would succeed in solving its problems in a way that would bring it the much needed peace and happiness: I have prophesied about the faith of Muhammad that it would be acceptable to the Europe of tomorrow as it is beginning to be acceptable to the Europe of today.” [Sir George Bernard Shaw, “The Genuine Islam,” Vol. 1, 1936].

“The extinction of race consciousness as between Muslims is one of the outstanding achievements of Islam and in the contemporary world there is, as it happens, a crying need for the propagation of this Islamic virtue.” [Arnold Joseph Toynbee, “Civilization On Trial,” New York, 1948].

“I am not a Muslim in the usual sense, though I hope I am a “Muslim” as “one surrendered to God,” but I believe that embedded in the Qur'an and other expressions of the Islamic vision are vast stories of divine truth from which I and other occidentals have still much to learn, and Islam is certainly a strong contender for the supplying of the basic framework for the one religion of the future.” [William Montgomery Watt, “Islam and Christianity Today,” London, 1983].

I shall leave you with the words of a Judge who served in the International Court of Justice for 10 years (1991-2000):

“Let us go back to the beginnings. We are constantly taught in law schools and international forums that the first systematic treatment of international law as a discipline was at the hands of “Grotius” with his famous “Law of war and peace” in 1625 AC. If there is some doubt about this we are referred to his Spanish predecessors of a century before who could possibly mount a claim to being the first systematic expositors of international law as a discipline in its own right. Rarely are we told, and few are the law teachers who are aware, that “Mohammed bin Hasan Shaybani” wrote an “Introduction to the Law of Nations” at the end of the eighth century, i.e. over 800 years earlier, and followed it with a second and more advanced treatise. Nor are we told that multi-volume treatises on the same subject followed within the next century or two. The subjects dealt with covered nearly the whole gamut of classical international law topics – the law treaties, the treatment of diplomats, hostages, asylum, prisoners of war, conduct on the battlefield, protection of women and children and non-combatants, contracts across the line of battle, the use of poisonous weapons, devastation of enemy territory. It went to such minute detail as the protection and communication across the line of battle of the correspondence of prisoners of war – matters seriously addressed in western jurisprudence only in comparatively recent times. The respect for these laws of war were recorded by contemporary European writers at the time of the Crusades. One writer, “Oliverus Scholasticus,” relates how the Sultan “Al-Malik Al-Kamil” supplied a defeated Frankish army with food:

“Who could doubt that such goodness, friendship and charity come from God? Men whose parents, sons and daughters, brothers and sisters, had died in agony at our hands, whose lands we took, whom we drove naked from their homes, revived us with their own food when we were dying of hunger and showered us with kindness even when we were in their power.”

[Judge Christopher Gregory Weeramantry, “Justice without Frontiers,” Sri Lankan, 1997]



5. Islam, Slavery Advocate or Slavery Destroyer?

Islam teaches that all humans are equal in the sight of Allah. It doesn't matter whether you are rich or poor, of noble origins or vulgar, black or white, European or Hindu, American or Asian, Arab or Malay, etc. The only thing that can distinguish people in the sight of Allah is their faith, piety and conduct. People are different, they have always been and will continue to be so. Their differences have always been the cause of their disputes. Islam teaches that in order to be different without fighting against one another, we should get to know each other, and deal piously with our fellow humans.

Allah says in the Qur'an, "*O mankind, We have created you from males and females, and made you into nations and tribes so that you may know one another. Verily the noblest among you in Allah's sight are those who are most pious. Verily Allah is All-Knowing, All-Aware.*" [The Qur'an (49:13)].

Islam also teaches that all people are servants to their creator; they must abide by His laws and rules for the benefit of all humanity. Among men, there is the strong and the weak, the rich and the poor, the victorious and the defeated, the controlling and the controlled, etc. To find yourself in any of those situations is nothing but a trial for your faith. Those who are victorious may become haughty and behave tyrannically; nonetheless, a faithful believer never forgets that he is just a servant for his Creator and His vicegerent on earth; his duty is to spread justice and give aid to all people even his defeated enemies. On the other hand, those who are miserable may lose heart and lose hope, they become resentful and forget Allah's other endowments; nonetheless, a faithful believer shows patience, remembers the graces with which he was blessed in life, and seeks consolation in them.

Before the advent of Islam, slave markets were present all over the world; this was something Islam had to deal with. Historically, slavery resulted from several causes, mainly poverty and war. Allah revealed in the Qur'an many rules that balance the relationship between all people and guarantee everyone's rights whether there is slavery or not. Among the relations organized by Islam is the relationship between the victorious and the defeated, and the masters and their slaves. Let's tackle the Islamic teachings regarding slaves, or 'The right hand possessions' as nicknamed in the Qur'an. Allah says:

"Virtue is to believe in Allah, the Judgment Day, the angels, the Holy Book and the prophets, [the virtuous are those who] despite their love for money, give it away to their relatives, to orphans, the needy, the wayfarers, those who ask [for charity], and for freeing those held in slavery, and [the virtuous are those who] observe their prayers, pay Zakah, keep their pledges when they make them, and are perseverant in hardship and adversity, and in times of distress. Such are the true believers, and such are the pious ones." [The Qur'an (2:177)].

"Do not marry pagan women until they believe, a bondwoman who believes is better than a pagan woman, however pleasing she may appear to you. Nor marry off believing women to pagans until they believe: A bondman who believes is better than a pagan, even though he (the free man) allures you. Such people (i.e. pagans) call you to the Hellfire, but Allah calls you to bliss and forgiveness, and makes His Signs clear to mankind, so that they might bear them in mind." [The Qur'an (2:221)].

“Worship Allah, and join none with Him (in worship), and be kind to parents, kinsfolk, orphans, those in need, neighbors who are near of kin, neighbors who are strangers, the companion by your side, the wayfarer (you meet), and what your right hands possess (i.e. Your slaves): For Allah loves not those who are arrogant and those who are vainglorious.” [The Qur’an (4:36)].

“Alms (i.e. Zakah) are only for: the poor and the needy, for those who collect zakah, for those whose hearts have been (recently) reconciled (to the Truth), for freeing those held in slavery, for those in debt, for striving in the cause of Allah, and for the wayfarer. It is a legal obligation enjoined by Allah, and Allah is All-Knowing and Most-Wise.” [The Qur’an (9:60)].

“Marry those among you who are single (i.e. a man who has no wife, and a woman who has no husband), and also marry the virtuous ones among your right hand possessions (i.e. slaves), males or females: if they are in poverty, Allah will enrich them of His grace: for Allah encompasses all, and he knows all things. Let those who find not the wherewithal for marriage keep themselves chaste, until Allah enriches them of His grace. And such of your right hands possessions who seek a written pact (of emancipation for a certain sum), give them such pact if you know that there is good and honesty in them: And give them something (yourselves) out of the wealth which Allah has bestowed upon you. But force not your girls (i.e. bondswomen) to prostitution (i.e. by forbidding them from marrying) when they desire chastity, in order that you may make a gain in the goods of this life. But if anyone compels them, yet, after such compulsion, is Allah Oft Forgiving, Most Merciful (i.e. to those women for they have been forced to do this evil act unwillingly), We have already sent down to you verses making things clear, an illustration from (the story of) people who passed away before you, and an admonition for those who fear (Allah).” [The Qur’an (24:32-34)].

“I swear by this City (i.e. Makkah), and you are a freeman from this City, and by the parent (i.e. Adam) and all those he begot (i.e. his progeny), Verily We have created man into toil and struggle. Does he think that none has power over him? He says (boastfully): ‘Wealth have I squandered in abundance!’ Does he think that none sees him? Have We not made for him a pair of eyes? And a tongue and a pair of lips?! And shown him the two paths (i.e. righteousness and perversity)? But he has made no haste towards the path that is steep. And what may let you know what the steep path is? It is the freeing of a slave, or the giving of food in a day of hunger (famine) to an orphan near of kin, Or to the indigent (down) in the dust. Then will he be of those who believe, and commend one another with patience, (i.e. spiritual jihad), and commend deeds of kindness and compassion.” [The Qur’an (90:1-17)].

Regarding “Slavery,” the above Qur’anic verses hold the following injunctions:

1. Part of the Muslim’s faith is to spend from his or her wealth on freeing slaves.
2. Marry a believing slave (male or female), they shall help you in your life’s struggles more than any free pagan (male or female) however pleasing they may appear to you.
3. Be kind and gentle in your treatment to slaves.
4. Freeing slaves is among the outlets of *Zakah* (i.e. alms giving).
5. If an honest slave seeks a pact of emancipation, grant it to him or her and help them by paying part of the money.

6. Marry off your slave girls if they wish to get married; this is closer to preserving their chastity.
7. Never force your slave girls to practice any sort of illicit sex.
8. Let the women who were forced—before the Qur’anic prohibition—know that Allah does not blame them for being forced to practice any sort of illicit sex.
9. Freeing slaves is a doorway to Allah’s righteous path.

Prophet Muhammad P.B.U.H. taught Muslims a special code of conduct in all aspects of life. Among his teachings regarding slaves are the following traditions:

“Right hand possessions are your brothers [in humanity], and Allah has put them under your command. Whoever has a brother under his command, he should feed him from what he eats, dress him from what he wears, and he should never overburden him with duties beyond his capacity; if any of you had to do so, then you should help him.” [Recorded by Bukhari, Muslim, Abu Dāwood and others].

“Don’t you ever say my ‘slave boy’ or my ‘slave girl,’ you are all Allah’s slaves. Say ‘my Boy’ or ‘my Girl,’ and the slave shouldn’t say ‘my Lord,’ but should say ‘my boss.’ ” [Recorded by Muslim].

“If a servant brings his master some food and the master doesn’t make him sit down and share his meal, he must give him some of that food for he (i.e. the slave) is the one who has prepared it.” [Recorded by Bukhari].

‘Abdullah Ibn ‘Omar reported that, “A man came to the prophet and asked, ‘How often should we forgive our slaves?’ The prophet didn’t reply. The man repeated his question but again the prophet didn’t reply. When the man repeated it for the third time, the prophet said, ‘Forgive him seventy times [daily].’ ” [Recorded by Abu Dāwood]. One may think, *would there be any punishment at all!*

“Whoever emancipates a slave, Allah shall save each and every part of his or her body from the hellfire.” [Recorded by Bukhari].

The prophet also said, *“If someone slapped a slave or beat him, [he has sinned] and his penance is to emancipate that slave.”* [Recorded by Muslim].

“Three get their reward (from Allah) twice. [First], a man who owns a female-slave, he treats her kindly, educates her (about Islam) and excels in her education, teaches her good manners and excels in that too, then he emancipates her and marries her; he’s rewarded twice. [Second], a believer from the people of the book (Christians and Jews) who believes in my prophethood, he’s rewarded twice. [Finally], a Muslim-slave who fulfills his duties towards Allah and advises his master faithfully.” [Recorded by Bukhari].

“Each one of you is a shepherd and is responsible for his herd. A man in his family is a shepherd and responsible for his herd. A woman in her husband’s house is a shepherd and responsible for her herd. A slave in his master’s wealth is a shepherd and responsible for his herd.” [Recorded by Bukhari].

On his death bed, the prophet’s last words were the following, *“Observe your prayers, stand fast in prayers, and maintain your duty towards your right hand possessions.”* [Recorded by Ibn Mājah, Baihaqy and An-Nasā’ī] These words were overflowing his tongue before his death as reported by his cousin, *‘Ali Ibn Abi-Tālib.*

And among his last words P.B.U.H., *“Maintain your duty towards the two weak ones: women and your right hand possessions.”* [Recorded by Tabari].

It’s worth mentioning here that the prophet died having no slaves under his command.

The above prophetic traditions hold the following injunctions:

1. Slaves should be treated like brothers.
2. A slave should be fed from the same food his boss eats.
3. A slave should be dressed from the same kind of clothes his boss wears.
4. A slave should never be burdened beyond his capacity of work.
5. If a hard task was assigned for a slave by his boss then the boss must help him.
6. When referring to his or her slave, the master should say, “My Boy” or “My Girl,” like many refer to their children.
7. When the slave refers to his master, he or she shouldn’t say “My Lord” but say, “My Boss,” like employees refer to their employers.
8. Emancipating slaves is an act that saves from the hellfire in the hereafter.
9. Slapping or Beating a slave entails his or her emancipation.
10. Treat your female slaves kindly and educate them about Islam in the best manner.
11. The observation of the above Qur’anic and prophetic injunctions are the duty of any Muslim master. Masters should maintain this duty like they protect and take care of their women.

The Islamic injunctions regarding slavery were not solely concerned with freeing slaves, but were also concerned with destroying the racism dams built. We have seen the trial of some nations to free slaves by issuing a judicial decree, where did this take them? Racism, persecution, and maltreatment continued in their worst forms for decades. Islam targeted the core of the problem and dealt with it. The previous injunctions granted slaves social and civil rights that placed them and their masters on an equal footing. The Qur’an exhorted the Muslim masters or mistresses to marry from their slaves those who embrace Islam and are righteous. It even urged the masters to marry the righteous slaves without giving any regards to their poverty or status. It also permitted the non-Muslim slaves to marry from each other. Islam gave slaves the right to emancipate themselves through an emancipation pact. In this pact, the master grants the slave his or her freedom in return for accomplishing a certain task or for paying a certain amount of money, etc. Allah also ordered the Muslim masters to help their slaves in freeing themselves by paying part of the due installments agreed upon in the emancipation pact from their own wealth; the majority of jurists said $\frac{1}{3}$ of the total sum. This was also an outlet for *Zakah* (obligatory alms) according to the Qur’an. When Muslims adhered to those injunctions in an era when slavery was widely spread all over the world, their act was found praise-worthy by many slaves. This made it obvious that the Islamic teachings could never be but divine, especially during that historical period 1400 years ago. Almost half of the prophet’s most famous companions were emancipated slaves, and many of the famous scholars from the next generations were also former slaves. In my opinion, emancipated slaves were the backbone of the Muslims’ nation during its formation.

Emancipating slaves was set as penance for many sins in Islam, e.g. violation of fasting, false murder, violating oaths and vows, etc. For the previous sins, the first compulsory penance is to emancipate a slave. The Companions used to emancipate slaves in large numbers seeking Allah’s reward. Very few examples of those, as recorded in “*Ma’aref Al-Qur’an*” by Imam “*Mufti Muhammad Shāfe’i,*” are:

Lady ‘Ā’ishah, the mother of believers, emancipated 69 slaves,
Al-‘Abbas, the prophet’s uncle, emancipated 70 slaves,

‘Abdullah Ibn ‘Omar, the prophet's companion, emancipated 1000 slaves,
‘Abdurrahman Ibn ‘Auf, the prophet’s companion and the richest Muslim of his time,
emancipated around 30,000 slaves.

Thus, as you can see, only four famous Companions emancipated 31,139 slaves;
thousands of other Companions must have emancipated countless slaves.

In the early years of Islam, Companion **Abu Bakr** emancipated a black slave from Abyssinia who was severely tortured by the pagans for embracing Islam. The slave’s name was **Belal Ibn Rabah**, the Abyssinian who later on became the prophet’s Muezzin and one of his close companions. It happened once that **Belal** had a debate with one of the companions descending from noble origins among his tribe. In a wild burst of anger, that companion insulted **Belal** saying, “*You son of a black woman.*”

When this reached the prophet P.B.U.H. and he saw that companion, he said to him, “*You are a man who still has pre-Islamic ignorance in his heart.*”

Filled with guilt, the man went to **Belal**, placed his face on the ground in front of him saying, “*Step on the head of the son of the nobles, O Belal.*”

Belal pulled him up and forgave him saying, “*Never could I step on a head that bows to Allah.*” [Recorded by Ibn Hajar in “Fath Al-Bary,” the explanation of Bukhari].

Pondering over this incident, I can’t but say that Islam dealt with the real problem from core to crust. Abolishing slavery needed reforming people’s attitude towards slaves alongside freeing them, only freeing them means absolute failure. In Islam, slaves or right hand possessions were given their rights as human beings, which is the major part in a real effective remedy for the problem. Islam focused on narrowing the distance between masters and slaves. It rooted out the sense of arrogance and nobility from the masters, and then it further enhanced their desire and tendency to emancipate slaves. The Islamic law set emancipation of slaves as a doorway to repent from sins. It also set it as an outlet for charity and the money of *Zakah*. Islam gave slaves the right to emancipate themselves; this granted them the upper hand on their destiny and raised their status to that of free hired workers. Pondering over today’s free servants and how they live, I couldn’t but notice how retarded we are from the early Muslim generations.

Canon Taylor a Christian philologist, toponymist, and Anglican canon of York (from 1885-1901) read a paper speaking about Islam before the Church Congress at Wolver Hampton, on October the 7th, 1887, among what he said, “.....*It brought out the fundamental dogmas of religion the unity and greatness of God, that He is merciful and righteous, that He claims obedience to His will, resignation and faith. It proclaimed the responsibility of man, a future life, a Day of Judgment, and stern retribution to fall upon the wicked, and enforced the duties of prayer, almsgiving, fasting and benevolence. It thrust aside the artificial virtues, the religious frauds and follies, the perverted moral sentiments, and the verbal subtleties of theological disputants. It replaced monkishness by manliness. It gave hope to the slave, brotherhood to mankind, and recognition to the fundamental facts of human nature.*”



Now let's move on to the relationship between the victorious and the defeated. When Muslims started their struggle for freedom and justice like we explained in the previous chapter, they were faced by two problems which they never faced before. The first was the "captives of war;" the second was the "women and children" who were sometimes left behind the defeated army. Let's indulge into the details so that we may have better understanding.

The first battle ever fought by Muslims, in which fighters from the enemy's lines were captured, was the battle of *Badr*. At that time, there weren't any injunctions in the Qur'an speaking about captives. The Makkan pagans owed Muslims all of the possessions which they had left behind when they immigrated to Madinah; after the battle, some of the notable Makkan leaders were captives in Muslims' hands. Putting this together, the prophet set a certain sum of money for every captive—based upon his status—in exchange for setting him free. As for those who couldn't pay the pecuniary ransom, the prophet set teaching 10 unlettered Muslims how to read and write as their ransom.

Prophet Muhammad told the companions, "*Commend kindness towards your captives.*" [Recorded by Tabarāny and Ibn Hishām].

Al-Hassan reported the following, "*Whenever a captive was brought to the prophet P.B.U.H., he presented him to some benefactors saying, 'Be kind to him.' The captive would then stay with these people who would favor him over themselves.*"

On returning from the battle field, the prophet ordered his companions to be lenient with their captives and to feed them from the best food they had. He also ordered them to provide water to their captives, let them rest in the shadow and have a nap on a hot sunny day. The prophet P.B.U.H. taught his companions saying,

"Be kind to your captives, let them have a nap and quench their thirst."

"Don't gather on them the heat of the day and that of the battle." [Recorded by Ibn Hajar and Al-Nawāwy].

Abu 'Aziz Ibn 'Umayr, the companion, narrated his captivity story in the battle of *Badr*. Back then, he was still pagan. He said, "*I was captivated by some Madinites. Whenever they served their meals, they favored me with the bread, and they would only eat dates for the prophet commanded them to be kind towards us. Not one piece of bread had reached the hand of anyone of them except that he gave it to me. Feeling embarrassed, I tried to pass it to anyone else, but then, he would push my hand back without touching the bread.*" [Recorded by Ibn Hishām].

The reader here should notice that for Arabs back then, bread was their most precious kind of food because of the rareness of wheat in the desert, that's unlike dates that were abundant in the region.

Muslims were also ordered to lit fires for their captives to warm them on cold nights, and to make sure that their wounds were treated well. Among the duties of the army general was to check on the captives' conditions and make sure that they were not mistreated or lacked any of their basic needs from food, water, clothes and medical care. Allah describes the ethics of believers in the Qur'an saying:

"They feed, for the love of Allah, the indigent, the orphan, and the captives, [Saying], 'We feed you for the sake of Allah alone. No reward do we desire from you nor thanks. We only fear a Day of distressful wrath from our Lord.' " [The Qur'an (76:8-10)].

After the battle of *Badr*, Qur'anic verses were revealed teaching Muslims how to deal with their captives. Allah says in the Qur'an:

“It is not for a prophet to take captives before he fights fiercely on the battle field. You desire the gain of this world, while Allah desires for you the Hereafter, Allah is exalted in Might and All-Wise.” [The Qur'an (8:67)].

“If you meet those who deny the truth in battle, strike above their necks until they are defeated, then tie firmly the bond (by making them captives). Thereafter, [release them] as an act of generosity, or in return for ransom, until the war lays down its burdens.” [The Qur'an (47:4)].

The previous two verses are the only ones that speak about the captives of war. From them we can deduce the following injunctions:

1. When you meet your enemies in battle, fight fiercely and do not hurry in taking captives before defeating your enemies and earning a clear victory.
2. Although all prophets were extremely lenient, the messages they were delivering were highly important for all mankind; as such, they had a lofty dignity, which prophets were ordered to preserve. Fighting fiercely against those who try to prevent this message from reaching all people or persecute the believers was mandatory.
3. When war lays down its burdens, you can either release the captives in exchange for Allah's reward, or you can set a ransom for their freedom according to the situation at hand.

Through the battles which Muslims fought, captives had been dealt with in one of the following ways:

- Freed out of generosity.
- Freed in return for Muslim captives or ransom.
- Freed on a pact basis.
- Forced to live in bondage till the war ends.
- Punished by death penalty.

Hence, captives may be freed out of generosity if they represented no danger. If there were Muslim captives in the enemies' hands, then the Muslim general should exchange the enemies' captives with the Muslim captives. If he still had more captives and his army lacked some of its basic needs, it is appropriate to release them in return for pecuniary ransom or for the fulfillment of a task that Muslims need and the captives are good at.

Beside the previously mentioned incident of the battle of *Badr*, Prophet Muhammad P.B.U.H. freed out of generosity 6000 captives after the Conquest of *Hunain*. He also freed the Makkan pagans—though they were the ones who drove Muslims out of their homes, and waged wars against them even after leaving Makkah; among them were those who have killed his uncle and his companions in previous battles. He also freed 70 warriors who prepared an ambush and tried to kill him near Makkah. The Caliphs followed his example and freed thousands of captives abiding by the prophet's choice. Likewise, Saladin freed the captives of the crusades during his reign, and so did many Muslim army generals.

Now, if ransom was demanded and the country of the captive couldn't pay, holding this captive in prison would not be such a good solution. If he has some experience in any craft that could help him work and earn some money, he can ask to be freed in return for a certain amount of money which he pays in installments. He is allowed to work under observation and surveillance until he fulfills the sum agreed upon. After this, such captive can choose either to return to his country, or become a citizen of the Islamic state and abide by its system keeping his faith. In such case, he must pay the *Jizyah*. The captive is granted that right only if he were believed to be trust-worthy and wouldn't betray his pact. Some jurists said that granting freedom on pact basis was obligatory if the captive demands it. This issue is indecisive and should be decided by the country's legislation system. This was the third manner in which captives are treated in Islam.

Taking captives in bondage is subjected to the consultation counsel vision. If setting a certain captive free entails his return to join the enemy's lines again, or his contribution in any conspiracy against the Muslim community, then Muslims have no choice but either to imprison him till the war ends—which is neither beneficial for him nor for Muslims—or place him in bondage in the sense explained before. Maybe after experiencing what Islam teaches, he would realize the truth and refrain from fighting against it.

Finally, if the captive had committed any war crimes, like killing Muslim captives, killing Muslim civilians, betraying a peace pact, attacking civilians, conspiring against Muslims, instigating others to attack them, or he persecuted those who embraced Islam under his rule and tortured them on account of their faith, etc., in these cases such captive is sentenced to death for his crimes. This was the case with the Jews of "*Bani-Quraizah*," whose treachery and disloyalty made them betray their peace pact with Muslims. This tribe was among the Jewish tribes who agreed on the constitution of Madinah, but instead of remaining loyal to their pact and their fellow citizens, they prepared a deadly blow against Muslims. They plotted a dreadful scheme in order to achieve their objectives. Twenty chiefs of the Jews with some of their brethren from "*Bani Nadir*" tribe went to Makkah to negotiate an alliance with *Quraysh* tribe. They instigated the Makkan pagans to attack Muslims at Madinah promising they would grant them full support and backing. Thereafter, they set out for "*Ghatfan*" Arab tribes and instigated them to do the same. Both *Quraysh* and *Ghatfan* accepted the Jews' devilish plan. The Jewish delegation then started a fresh effort, toured some parts of Arabia, and managed to incite the confederates of disbelief against Muslims. They all headed towards Madinah and gathered in its vicinity at a date they agreed upon. It was a great army of more than 10,000 fighters. At that time, the number of Muslims who could fight was less than 1400 capable men. If the confederates had succeeded to launch a surprise attack against Madinah, they would have exterminated all Muslims. However, the Muslim scouts managed to report the enemies' movement to the prophet in Madinah. The Jewish chief criminal of "*Bani Nadir*," *Huyai Ibn Akhtab* headed for the habitations of "*Bani Quraiza*" to incite their Jewish chief "*Ka'b Ibn Asad Al-Qurazi*," who had a pact with the prophet to run to his aid defending Madinah in times of war. *Ka'b*, in the beginning refused, but *Huyai* was clever enough to manipulate him by speaking of *Quraysh* and their notables, as well as *Ghatfan* and their chieftains, all determined to exterminate Muhammad and his followers. He, moreover, promised to stay in *Ka'b's* fort, exposing himself to any potential danger in case *Quraysh* and *Ghatfan* recanted. This man continued to incite *Ka'b* until he persuaded him to break his covenant with Muslims. "*Bani Quraiza*" tribe then started

to launch war operations against Muslims especially the secluded garrisons that housed the women, the elders and children. The Jews then went on providing the pagans with supplies in token of their support against Muslims. On learning the bad news about the Jews' treason, the prophet dispatched four Muslim prominent leaders to investigate the truthfulness of the news. He warned them against spreading any sort of panic amongst Muslims and advised that they should declare that the rumors were groundless. Unfortunately the four men discovered that the news was true and that the Jews announced openly that no pact of alliance existed any longer with Muhammad. The prophet was briefed of the situation, and Muslims understood their critical position with the unprecedented danger therein. They were extremely outnumbered, starving, and extremely tired. Their back was vulnerable to the attacks of "*Bani Quraiza*" with their women and children standing in between unprotected, and a huge army attacking them from the front. Without indulging into the details, after Muslims were delivered from this critical situation miraculously by the help of Allah, they headed to the Jews of "*Bani Quraiza*" seeking a fair trial for their treason. After besieging them for 25 days inside their fortress, Jews of "*Bani Quraiza*" surrendered and were captivated.

Other Jewish tribes interceded begging the Prophet to be lenient towards "*Bani Quraiza*." The prophet P.B.U.H. accepted their intercession, he neutralized himself from judging their crimes; he even allowed them to choose the person whom they like to stand as judge in their trial. The Jews chose "*Sa'd Ibn Mu'adh*," their former Madinite ally. They thought that he would set them free for the sake of their old alliance. *Sa'd* was deputed by both parties to give his verdict. His verdict was, "*All of their able-bodied men should be sentenced to death for treason, their women and children should be taken in bondage, and their wealth should be divided among the Muslim fighters.*" About 600-700 Jewish fighters were killed for their treason and betrayal¹.

Ironically, this verdict was exactly the one prescribed in the Torah against the cities that are taken by force². In one narration of the incident, *Sa'd* chose to set the Torah as the judge on the Jewish tribe, and the Jews fell into the trap of their own wit. It was reported that before his execution, *Huyai Ibn Akhtab* said to the prophet, "*By Allah, I never regretted my enmity towards you, but whoever fails Allah, Allah fails him.*" Three Jews refused to betray their pact with the prophet P.B.U.H. and surrendered themselves to him during the siege, among them was a man named "*Amr Ibn Sa'dy*." The prophet said about him, "*Allah saved this man because he was loyal to his pact.*"

After stating the previous case of "*Bani Quraiza*," it's now time to move on to the Islamic teachings regarding the "women and children" left behind the killed fighters from both sides.



1: For more details read "The sealed Nectar" by "Safy Arrahman Al-Mubarkarfuri."

2: Deuteronomy [20:(12-14)].

After any war, widows and orphans pay the price more than anyone else; may all those who prefer their interest above the public welfare of all people dwell in hell forever; they have always been the reason of all evils. One of the major priorities of the Muslim community is to take care of orphans and widows. Among what Allah says about orphans in the Qur'an are the following verses:

“Virtue is to believe in Allah, the Judgment Day, the angels, the Holy Book and the prophets, [the virtuous are those who] despite their love for money, give it away to their relatives, to orphans, the needy, the wayfarers, those who ask [for charity], and for freeing those held in slavery, and [the virtuous are those who] observe their prayers, pay Zakah, keep their pledges when they make them, and are perseverant in hardship and adversity, and in times of distress. Such are the true believers, and such are the pious ones.” [The Qur'an (2:177)].

“They ask you about orphans, say: ‘It is good to set things right for them. If you combine their affairs with yours, remember they are your brothers and sisters, and that Allah knows those who spoil things and those who improve them. Had He so willed, He could have made you vulnerable too: He is Almighty, He is Most-Wise.’ ” [The Qur'an (2:220)].

“Give the orphans their property, do not replace [their] good things with bad, and do not consume their property with your own, verily, this is a great sin.” [The Qur'an (4:2)].

“Keep a close check on orphans till they attain the age of marriage, then, if you find them mature and mindful, hand over their property to them. Do not consume it by wasteful spending, before they reach this age. If the guardian is affluent, let him abstain altogether, and if he is poor, let him have for himself what is just and reasonable. When you hand over their property to them, call witnesses in their presence, Allah is sufficient as a Reckoner.” [The Qur'an (4:6)].

“Verily, those who consume the property of orphans unjustly are actually swallowing fire into their own bellies: they will burn in blazing Flames.” [The Qur'an (4:10)].

“Worship Allah, and join none with Him (in worship), and be kind to parents, kinsfolk, orphans, those in need, neighbors who are near of kin, neighbors who are strangers, the companion by your side, the wayfarer (you meet), and what your right hands possess (i.e. Your slaves): For Allah loves not those who are arrogant and those who are vainglorious.” [The Qur'an (4:36)].

“Do not treat the orphan with harshness, and do not chide the one who asks for help.” [The Qur'an (93:9-10)].

“Have you seen the one who denies my message? He is the one who drives away the orphan and does not exhort the feeding of the poor.” [The Qur'an (107:1-3)].

The above Qur'anic verses hold the following injunctions:

1. Spend from your money on taking care of destitute orphans.
2. Take care of wealthy orphans and invest their inheritance on their behalf properly.

3. Orphans are your brothers and sisters, be mindful of that in your treatment to them.
4. Never detract any of the orphan's property or rights.
5. Never waste any of the orphan's property or rights.
6. If the guardian is rich, he must not take any wage for investing or taking care of the orphans' property.
7. If the guardian was poor, let him assign a reasonable salary for himself with the presence of witnesses.
8. Keep a close check on the orphans till they become mindful and mature enough to manage their own affairs.
9. When you hand the orphans their property, witnesses must attend and confirm that the orphans have received all of their property without any deductions.
10. Be kind and merciful in your treatment to orphans. Do not chide or drive them away.

Besides the previous Qur'anic verses, Prophet Muhammad P.B.U.H. taught Muslims a special code of conduct towards orphans. Among his teachings are the following:

"Whoever wipes over the head of an orphan with his palm, he or she is rewarded for every hair his palm touches." [Recorded by Bukhari].

"If you want to have a gentle heart, feed the needy and wipe over orphans' heads." [Recorded by Ahmad].

"Bring the orphan closer, wipe over his or her head, and carry him on your lap, your heart shall soften, and whatever troubles you, it shall fade away."

"The best house among Muslims is a house in which an orphan lives and is treated kindly, and the worst house among Muslims is a house in which an orphan lives and is treated badly." [Recorded by Ibn Maja].

"Whoever is assigned as the guardian on the property of an orphan, let him invest it so that it wouldn't be consumed by Zakah." [Recorded by Tirmidhi].

The traditions did not promulgate new injunctions; rather, they disseminated the seeds of kindness, love and mercy towards orphans.

With regards to widows, Allah says in the Qur'an:

"As for those who die among you and leave behind widows, [let] the widows [know that they] should wait for four months and ten days before remarrying. When they have completed this set time, you will not be blamed for anything they may reasonably choose to do with themselves. Allah is fully aware of what you do. You will not be blamed whether you give a hint that you wish to marry these women, or keep it to yourselves, Allah knows that you intend to propose to them. Do not seek to meet them in secret unless you intend to speak to them honorably and do not proceed with tying the marriage knot until the prescribed mourning period reaches its end. Remember that Allah knows what is in your souls, so be mindful of Him. Remember that Allah is Most-Forgiving, Most-Forbearing." [The Qur'an (2:234-235)].

"As for those who [may] die among you and leave behind widows, let them make a bequest for their wives of a year's maintenance without causing them to leave their homes, but if they leave of their own accord, you will not be blamed for what they may reasonably choose to do with themselves, Allah is Omnipotent and Most-Wise." [The Qur'an (2:240)].

“Your wives shall inherit one quarter of what you leave if you are childless. But if you leave children, your wives shall inherit one eighth, after the payment of any bequest or debts.” [The Qur’an (4:12)].

The above Qur’anic verses hold the following injunctions:

1. Widows should abstain from remarrying again for at least 130 days.
2. If any man wishes to propose to a widow, he must not seek to meet her secretly unless he intends to speak to her honorably.
3. Don’t proceed with the marriage contract unless the prescribed mourning period ends.
4. Those who may die leaving behind widows, let them write a bequest for their wives that they should not be forced to leave the marriage house for one year, and the expenditures during that year should be taken from their money equitably (i.e. that’s in case the house was rented or had several heirs).
5. If any man dies childless, his widow shall inherit $\frac{1}{4}$ of his wealth after settling his debts and deducing the bequest portion.
6. If any man dies leaving behind children, his widow shall inherit $\frac{1}{8}$ of his wealth after settling his debts and deducing the bequest portion.

Prophet Muhammad P.B.U.H. said,

“The one who takes care of a widow or a poor person is like a warrior fighting for the cause of Allah, or like a person who fasts during the day and prays all night.”
[Recorded by Bukhari].



Among the most horrible customs of war that were inherited from ancient times and lasted till the middle decades of the second millennium A.D. was the habit of enslaving the women and children left behind the defeated army by those who were victorious. The first record available of this custom is in the book of Genesis (34:25-31). This custom was practiced throughout history by all invaders without any mercy.

When Muslims started to fight back against their persecutors, they were always fighting under the stress that if they were defeated, their wives and children would fall into slavery and receive severe punishment for embracing Islam. Their stress was limitless, especially that the rights granted to slaves in Islam were not granted by non-Muslims; on the contrary, non-Muslim masters treated their slaves worse than they treated their camels and horses. When it happened that Muslims were not defeated but were victorious, the women and children left behind the defeated enemies had to be dealt with in a proper manner that may ensure they would understand Islam for what it truly is, not what they were told. Back at those times, 1400 years ago, forsaking them for their destiny after their men’s death would have multiplied their vulnerability and endangered their lives. Meanwhile, if they were strong enough to survive and continue to lead a hard life living on their own, their hatred towards Islam and Muslims would increase and constitute a huge threat against the stability of the next generations. Based on this, taking them in captivity and admitting them into the Muslims’ houses—where they can live securely and find sustenance—was the solution followed by Muslims.

This was not some sort of punishment for fighting against Islam like some people think, it was the act deemed most proper to show through real practice the families of those who rejected Islam and fought against it how different Islam is from what they thought and what they were told. They know what their armies would have done if they were the ones victorious. Experiencing how different Islam is from their attitude was a chance for them to ponder and reflect. I guess we have all seen what non-Muslim armies do when they invade Muslim lands, not only in medieval times, but in modern times as well.

In order to preserve the unity of the family, Prophet Muhammad P.B.U.H. forbade separating the members of the same family. If there were 2 sisters, 2 brothers, a mother and her child, etc., they were admitted into the same house. Based on the rights explained earlier, the children receive similar treatment to that of the children in the house. They would be dressed from the same clothes, fed from the same food, and when capable to work, they joined the rest of the family members in their daily work. The women were also treated in the same manner as that of the Muslim women. If any of the women was capable to take care of herself and was talented in any craft, she could emancipate herself with time, and then choose whether to live among Muslims or travel to another country with some trustable folks. This was also the case with double-orphans when they grew up and reached an age in which they could take care of themselves.

The controversial issue here is with taking concubines from among the women living in captivity. Many orientalist and western authors love to attack Islam saying that its teachings encourage taking sex slaves, but the truth is far away from their claims. Islam permitted the Muslim men to take wives and concubines from among the captivated women living under their care, but it also permitted the captivated women to marry whomever they willed, and it gave them the right to accept or refuse the proposal of their masters. Moreover, it forbade the masters from refusing to marry-off their captivated women like we have explained earlier. The following are the regulations that were placed for marrying a captivated woman, or taking her as a concubine:

1. If the woman was a pagan, the Muslim male cannot propose to her. Only women who believe in Allah are allowed to be taken as wives or concubines.
2. The woman's acceptance is a must. She must first accept to be a concubine or a wife to the Muslim male; otherwise, the man has no right to mate with her.
3. No sexual intercourse is allowed with a woman except after making sure that she had her menses on time after her captivity, and that she is not pregnant.
4. If she was pregnant, the male must wait until she gives birth to her child.
5. If she conceives from him a child, she is raised to a higher status. She is no longer considered a bondswoman or a captive, she becomes the mother of the child. She can't be sold or presented as a gift to another master. Her child is born free and named after his father. This child has equal rights to inheritance like the children of a free wife.
6. If the Muslim master dies after his concubine conceives from him, she is a free woman even if she accidentally miscarries fetus.
7. If the Muslim male had two sisters living inside his house, he can only have one of them as his concubine or wife. Entering a relation with a woman and her sister is totally forbidden in the Islamic law.

It has been mentioned that the prophet P.B.U.H. said, *“Three get their reward (from Allah) twice, a man who owns a female-slave, he treats her kindly, educates her (about Islam) and excels in her education, teaches her good manners and excels in that too, then he emancipates her and marries her, he’s rewarded twice...”* [Recorded by Bukhari]. This tradition makes it crystal clear that no maltreatment of any kind is allowed; on the contrary, kindness and devoutness are the base upon which the relation was allowed to be built. From what we see every day, the rules set in Islam 1400 years ago for taking a concubine from among the female captives of war are far more noble and incomparable to the way many males treat their girlfriends today. In many cases:

1. Boyfriends cheat on their girlfriends and vice versa.
2. Some boyfriends cheat on their girlfriends with their own sisters.
3. Many of them renounce the relation if their girlfriends get pregnant.
4. In many cases, a DNA test must be carried out to make sure who the real father is.
5. Many boyfriends do not provide for their girlfriends or the children resulting from the relationship.
6. None of the children born from this illegal relation has any inheritance rights.
7. A Child born out of wedlock has no legal right to carry his or her father’s surname. Many don’t even know who their fathers are.

All of the previous happen without any laws or rules to protect women’s rights and those of their children, or any deterring punishments for vile men who take advantage of women then forsake them. Can you now imagine how Islam has dignified a concubine under the Islamic rule more than the current laws in modern countries have done for free women? The percentage of children born out of wedlock in some of the countries that drawl with human rights today range between 40-60%. These children have no laws to protect them or guarantee their rights. If you don’t like the word ‘concubine’ and detest it so much; fine, name her a girlfriend with protecting rules against men’s aggression.

Anyway, the majority of Muslim scholars today agree that the conditions under which taking the women and children left behind the defeated armies as captives no longer exist. Modern war is totally different from the tribal battles that were waged thousands of years ago. In modern wars, women and children do not follow the armies or move with them from place to another; this protects them against captivity. Even if you return to the early years of Islam, Muslims fought against hundreds of thousands of Romans and the Persians; nonetheless, they never captivated except the women and children who were left behind the armies near the battle field, and most of them were servants and slaves who found in Islam the justice which they were hoping to see one day. This is why the Islamic history holds amidst its pages the chronicles of thousands of emancipated slaves who contributed greatly in building the Islamic civilization.

Finally, if the previous injunctions are the rules set in Islam for treating slaves whether males or females, and if the teachings of the Qur’an and Prophet Muhammad have set emancipating slaves as an act of penance for several sins and an act that is highly rewarded by Allah on the judgment day, and if the prophet’s family members and companions had emancipated thousands of slaves during their lives, and if the Qur’anic verses as well as the prophetic traditions ordered the kind of treatment which was emphasized towards slaves, then do you think that Islam is a brutal religion that encourages enslavement and obscenity?

6. Islam, Women's Persecutor or Women's Liberator?

Most Islam deniers love to attack Islam through women, they say, *“How can a religion that oppresses women, allows polygyny, gives women half the rights of men in inheritance, forces women to cover their heads in disgrace, allows men to beat up their wives, prevent women from driving, etc., be considered divine? Are you Muslims crazy?! This religion teaches sexism and your Holy book couldn't be but from satan.”*

In order to respond to the tons of accusations thrown at Islam and its teachings regarding women, let's get started with an overview of how the Qur'an defines **the relationship between men and women**:

“And the believers, men and women, are protecting friends one of another, they enjoin the right and forbid the wrong, and they establish worship and they pay the Zakah, and they obey Allah and His messenger. As for these, Allah will have mercy on them. Allah is Omnipotent, All-Wise.” [The Qur'an (9:71)].

“And of His signs is that: He created for you spouses from yourselves that you might find tranquility in them, and He ordained between you love and mercy. Lo, herein indeed are signs for folk who reflect.” [The Qur'an (30:21)].

“Surely, Muslim men and Muslim women, believing men and believing women, devout men and devout women, truthful men and truthful women, patient men and patient women, humble men and humble women, and the men who give alms and the women who give alms, and the men who fast and the women who fast, and the men who guard their private parts (against illicit sex) and the women who guard (theirs), and the men who remember Allah much and the women who remember (Him)—for them, Allah has prepared forgiveness and a great reward.” [The Qur'an (33:35)].

“On the Day when you will see the believing men and the believing women, their light proceeding in front of them and by their right hands, this is a glad tidings for you, from that day on, you shall dwell in gardens beneath which rivers flow, that is the supreme triumph.” [The Qur'an (57:12)].

The above verses emphasize that **men and women complete each other**. As long as they are righteous, they shall not be separated, neither in this life nor the next. There are many other verses that convey the same meaning. Likewise, Prophet Muhammad taught his companions about **women's partnership and great role in building the society**. Among his teachings are the following:

“Women are the twin-halves of men.” [Recorded by Ahmad and others].

“The most precious wealth in life is good companionship, and the best companionship is that of a righteous wife.” [Recorded by Muslim].

“Heaven lies under the feet of mothers.” [Recorded by Ahmad and others].

A man came to Prophet Muhammad and asked: *“O messenger, who is the worthiest person among all people of my perfect companionship?”* Prophet Muhammad answered, *“Your mother.”* The man said, *“Then who?”* Prophet Muhammad said, *“Your mother.”* The man said persistently, *“Then who?”* Prophet Muhammad said, *“Your mother.”*

The man said, “*Then who?*” Prophet Muhammad said, “*Then your father.*” [Recorded by Bukhari and Muslim].

“*Commend kindness towards your women.*” [Recorded by Bukhari].

“*Men propose to women for four reasons: her wealth, her noble ancestry, her beauty or her piousness. Win her who is pious or you shall end up empty handed.*” [Recorded by Bukhari and Muslim].

The prophet P.B.U.H. **stopped the old custom of marrying-off single women and young girls without consulting with them first.** He ordered Muslims saying, “*You cannot marry-off a (Widow or divorcee) woman without consulting with her first, and you cannot marry-off a virgin without her consent.*” [Recorded by Muslim].

The right to learn and acquire knowledge has been granted in the Qur’an and the authentic traditions of Prophet Muhammad. Women were allowed to go to the mosque like men do, and learn from the prophet directly. They even argued with him about marital matters in defense of their rights as came in the chapter named (The debating woman). This chapter begins with the following verse:

“*Indeed Allah has heard the argument of the woman who was debating with you about her husband, and was complaining to Allah. And Allah was listening to the conversation between both of you. Indeed, Allah is All-Hearing, All-Seeing.*” [The Qur’an (58:1)].

Prophet Muhammad also said, “*Do not inhibit women from going to the mosques.*” [Recorded by Bukhari and Muslim]. It should be noted here that mosques were the schools of that day.

During ‘*Omar Ibn Al-Khattab*’s caliphate, while he was giving a sermon in the mosque, he said, “*Do not exaggerate in dowries.*”

A woman stopped him saying, “*Allah says, ‘If any of you [men] had given a woman a whole treasure for dowry, take not the least bit of it back’ [The Qur’an (4:20)]. Should we listen to you or to Allah?!*”

‘*Omar* then said, “*All people are more knowledgeable than ‘Omar. Marry on whatever dowries you wish.*” [Recorded by Abu Yu’la and others].

The elders of the companions used to ask *Lady ‘Ā’ishah* about jurisprudential issues after the prophet’s departure. *Abu Musa Al-Ash‘ary*, the famous companion said, “*Never did we (i.e. the companions) doubt a tradition and asked ‘Ā’ishah about it except that we found her having some knowledge regarding the matter.*” [Recorded by Tirmidhī].

From the previous few examples it is clear that women played a very big role in learning and spreading knowledge during and after the prophet’s time. **The Qur’an has also acquitted women** from the accusation that had always been thrown at them in the previous scriptures; Allah says in the Qur’an, “*So, We said, ‘Adam, this is an enemy to you and to your wife. So let him not expel you from Paradise, lest you should get into trouble. Here you have the privilege that you will not be hungry nor will you be unclad, and you will not be thirsty, nor will you be exposed to sun’s heat.’ But later on satan instigated him. He said, ‘Adam, shall I guide you to the tree of eternity and to an empire that does not decay?’ So, both of them [Adam and Eve] ate from it, and their private parts became manifest to them, and they started stitching on themselves some of the leaves of Paradise. And ‘Adam disobeyed his Lord, and erred. Thereafter his Lord chose him, He accepted his repentance and gave (him) guidance.*” [The Qur’an (20:117-122)].

The Qur'an teaches that Allah led Adam and Eve to an earthly paradise in which they can live comfortably and securely. He ordered Adam not to approach a certain tree; this was a training for Adam and Eve to obey Allah and guard themselves against His prohibitions all the time. That was the very first tribulation to mankind on earth. The verses state that satan instigated Adam to eat from the tree, and it was Adam who erred and disobeyed Allah's orders, not Eve.

Islam defended women's right to inheritance. For every woman left behind the deceased person, a known share of the heritage has been prescribed by Allah in the Qur'an, that's whether she is a daughter, a sister, a widow, a mother, a step sister, a granddaughter or a grandmother. Allah says in the Qur'an:

"For men there is a share in what parents and the nearest of kin have left. And for women there is a share in what the parents and the nearest of kin have left, be it small or large, a determined share." [The Qur'an (4:7)].

If you continue reading this chapter of the Qur'an, you will read the details of these shares. They are distributed in such a way that preserves the unity of the family. The Islamic laws of inheritance abolished the custom of keeping the property monopolized by men.

Allah says in the Qur'an:

"Allah directs you concerning your children: for a male there is a share equal to that of two females. But, if they are (only) women, more than two, then they get two thirds of what one leaves behind. If she is one, she gets one-half. As for his parents, for each of them, there is one-sixth of what he leaves in case he has a child. But, if he has no child and his parents have inherited him, then his mother gets one-third. If he has some brothers (or sisters), his mother gets one-sixth, all after (settling) the will he might have made, or a debt. You do not know who, out of your fathers and your sons, is closer to help you, all this is determined by Allah. Surely, Allah is All-Knowing, All-Wise. For you there is one-half of what your wives leave behind, in case they have no child. But, if they have a child, you get one-fourth of what they leave, after (settling) the will they might have made, or a debt. For them (the wives) there is one-fourth of what you leave behind, in case you have no child. But, if you have a child, they get one eighth of what you leave, after (settling) the will you might have made, or a debt. And if a man or a woman is inherited in Kalalah (i.e. has neither parents alive, nor children) and has a brother or a sister, then each one of them will get one sixth. However, if they are more than that, they will be sharers in one-third, after (settling) the will that might have been made, or a debt, provided that the will must not be intended to harm anyone. This is a direction from Allah. Allah is All-Knowing, Forbearing." [The Qur'an (4:11-12)].

Later on in the same chapter, Allah says: *"They seek a ruling from you. Say [O Muhammad]: 'Allah gives you the ruling concerning Kalalah (i.e. has neither parents alive, nor children), If a person dies having no son, but he does have a sister, then, she will get one half of what he leaves. (On the other hand) He will inherit her if she has no child. If they are two (sisters), they will get two third of what he leaves. If they are brothers and sisters, both male and female, then, the male will get a share equal to that of two females.'* Allah explains to you, lest you should go astray. Allah has full knowledge of everything." [The Qur'an (4:176)].

All jurisprudence books contain a big chapter concerning inheritance. It includes hundreds of different cases in the forms of problems and answers to teach Muslims how to calculate the inheritance in all cases. This approach was taught by the prophet during his life, and then his companions after him. He urged Muslims to hold discussions about this branch of knowledge in their gatherings. **On comparing all cases, jurists of the next generations found that women inherit more than men in about 30 of them.** Today, many computer programs have been designed to calculate the share of every family member. Even born hermaphrodites were dealt with in Islam. When Muslims were first faced with such case in which a hermaphrodite was among the heirs, they ordered that two just witnesses should observe that person while urinating in a standing position from behind—so as not to see his or her private parts. If the water falls underneath his or her legs, then she is a female and inherits the share of a female. If the water streams forward, then he is a male and inherits the share of a male. Today, with advanced medical surgery, born hermaphrodites can choose the gender they incline to through operation and inherit based on this, or else, a doctor’s consultation is sought.

The controversial issue that most non-Muslims always raise is, **“Why didn’t Allah equate the shares of brothers and sisters, husbands and wives, etc.?”** The answer to this question is also in the same chapter under discussion where Allah says:

“Men are the protectors and caretakers of women, with what Allah has favored each of them above the other (i.e. the men with strength and bigger share in inheritance, and the women with their emotional sympathizing hearts and tenderness) and because the men spend from their means (taking care of their families). Therefore the righteous women are devoutly obedient (to Allah), and guard in (her husband’s) absence what Allah would have them guard (i.e. their chastity, their husband’s property, etc.)” [The Qur’an (4:34)].

Sheikh *Mufti Muhammad Shāfe‘i* wrote about this issue extensively in his magnificent exegesis, *“Ma‘aref Al-Qur’an.”* For simplicity, an extract from what he said shall follow in indents as to identify his commentary from mine:

This verse explains and removes the possible doubt that may creep up due to the share of men being twice that of women as described in the verses of inheritance. This is done by the present verse when it declares that all financial responsibilities rest with men. As for women, all her financial responsibilities before her marriage rest with her father; after marriage, these pass on to the husband. If a woman contributes in the daily expenses of the house, this is considered as charity for her and a highly esteemed deed in Islam, but it’s not an obligation, her husband should really appreciate her doing this. Islam also imposed a dowry on men that should be paid to their wives upon marriage, and the responsibility of preparing a house, buying its furniture and needs are all the responsibility of the man. With this in view, giving a twofold share to a man is not really too much, for it zooms back to women after all and raises her to the rank of an honored queen whose requests are orders to her caretaker.

Islam has dignified women and treated them all like queens by laying their responsibility upon their men and emphasizing the principal that a woman, in terms of her tender creation and nature, should not be subjected to go out, work and earn her own livelihood. The attributes of her gender are hardly conducive to her

running around offices and markets, doing jobs and laborious work to earn a livelihood unless there is a certain urge behind that. Hence, to keep her safe from roughing it out like men, Allah has placed her responsibility on men. Think of the women's creation, laying down the burden of being the ones who conceive the children and mainly the ones responsible for their feeding, upbringing and education, while also being responsible for managing the house and fulfilling the family members' home needs, all this comes in conflict with the idea of her sweating it out in the work places in the name of income, career or liberation. Any person with the least sense of mercy should understand that. Most men cannot handle the responsibilities laid down upon women by creation.

Keeping this in view, it is totally unjust to deduce that the status of women has been reduced by making them dependent on men in the matter of her expenses. No value judgment is being made here. This is no more than a functional distribution of duties based on the nature of each gender according to creation. That was no more than a brief clarification that the precedence of men does not lower the status of women, nor does this hold any special gain for men. On the contrary, whatever gain there is, it reverts back to women after all.

And as Allah has given women their rights, He also gave men their rights and taught them **how to deal with disloyal disobedient wives**, conditioned by first fulfilling their duties towards them as stated in the first half of the previous verse. Allah continues saying:

“As to those women whom you fear their recalcitrance, (first) admonish them, (next), abandon them in their beds, (and last) hit them, but if they obey you, then seek not against them means of annoyance for Allah is Most High, Great above you all.” [The Qur'an (4:34)].

Whenever a woman reads this verse, she thinks of herself in a pathological way to be the recalcitrant wife referred to. This leads many women to conclude that this verse is unjust to women. Almost all women ignore the fact that many wives do abuse their husbands, not physically but psychologically. In the above verse, Allah teaches Muslim males how to deal with their wives when they are abusive and shrewish—when they are **“Recalcitrant.”** A recalcitrant wife is not the one who does not cook or clean the house, that's the maid. In Islam women are not obliged to do these tasks except if the husband was incapable of hiring a servant or a maid. In such case, he should try to help his wife whenever he can like the prophet was recorded to do. Lady 'Ā'ishah described the prophet's attitude in the house saying, *“He always joined in household work, and would at times mend his clothes, repair his footwear, and sweep the floor. He would milk, tether, and feed the animals, and do the household shopping.”* [Recorded by Bukhari]. She also said, *“The prophet P.B.U.H. used to sew his clothes, mend his footwear, and work like the rest of the men for his house.”* [Recorded by Ahmad].

The recalcitrant wife is a wife who always refuses to listen to her husband. Whenever he tries to advise her with something good or acceptable by commonsense, she turns a deaf ear. She deals with her marital life as if she's still single and her husband's words have no value whatsoever. She is characterized by a domineering attitude. For example: She deliberately invites to the house people whom her husband hates. She embarrasses

her husband in front of others intentionally by disclosing the secrets of their life together and mentioning his imperfections, or by treating him badly in front of people and yelling at him. She is the sort of wife who would disobey her husband's big NOs to degrade his status, or would betray his trusts and secrets. She would not hesitate to treat her husband's parents and relatives badly or coldly in a way that offends them and him; a wife who would refuse to receive his relatives in their house or treats them in a vulgar manner, which is never the case with her relatives. She's a wife who spends lavishly more than her husband can afford putting him in a critical situation. A wife who goes out as she wills without informing her husband leaving him to worry; if he asks her where she was, she won't answer or tell lies. She doesn't think of her husband's comfort most times and always deals with matters in her own way neglecting his opinion, etc. Hence, this verse is not speaking about a normal couple having normal problems, nothing of that sort. It's speaking about a very special case in which the wife's shrewish attitude is about to destroy her marriage for good.



Since that the woman is the one for whom there is fear from leading a single life without a man to protect, console, work to provide for, and be her shield from whatever destiny holds; moreover, since that it's not easy for a divorced woman to find a husband or receive a new marriage proposal—especially that her recalcitrant attitude will most probably be disclosed within the circle of her acquaintances; for the protection of such a woman and her sacred marital life, and before rushing to the easy solution of separation and divorce, Allah escalated the manner in which a husband should deal with his shrewish wife. The main purpose here is to make her realize that his feelings towards her have changed, may she reform her attitude.

First, he should speak things out with her in tranquility admonishing her—for like his duty as a husband is to protect her and provide her with all her needs whether emotional or financial, her duty is to support him sincerely. If admonishing works, then he should stick to this attitude to reform her flaws. If it didn't work and she persists on returning to her arrogant attitude, then he should change his strategy to something new. The second step is to abandon her in bed, meaning that he should give her his back when they go to sleep. Most jurists said that this bed-boycott should not extend for over a month. Some jurists preponderated that he should not share the same bed with her during this period. If after this month she continues to treat him insolently and didn't care at all about his depression, there is still one final step remaining that may wake her up before resorting to separation. The purpose of this step is to make her realize that this man has had enough and cannot withstand living like this anymore. Hence, the husband may hit his wife lightly when she abuses him. He may for instance give her a strong shoulder shake, poke her arm, or grab her arms when in anger; it all depends on the situation at hand. Nonetheless, he shouldn't exceed this limit.

Before the advent of Islam, used to the customs of their rough Bedouin life, the men of Makkah resorted to beating their wives in the case of recalcitrance; sometimes they even resorted to divorce quickly to avoid the headache. After prophethood, Prophet Muhammad denied beating women completely. He forbade men from doing that saying, *“Don’t hit your women.”* [Recorded by Ibn Sa‘d and Baihaqy]. After immigration, the Makkan women mingled with the women of Madinah whose manners were much wilder. This stimulated the Makkan women to imitate their new friends, especially that they knew of the prohibition the prophet had promulgated before. This escalated to the extent that ‘Omar Ibn al-Khattab went complaining to the prophet, he said, *“O prophet, women have become domineering with their husbands.”* Then it happened once that one of the companions lost his tempers with his wife and he slapped her. This woman went complaining to her father who took her to the prophet to judge between her and her husband. Enraged with this act, Prophet Muhammad gave a verdict that this husband should be slapped back by his wife in the same manner in which he slapped her. It was at this moment that the above verse was revealed to the prophet informing him that his judgment was not the most correct. If applied, it will only increase the breach done and totally destroy the marriage. Marital life is sacred in Islam and protecting it is one of the *Shari‘ah* objectives. It was in that incident that **the allowance to hit shrewish wives was given but with rules** that the prophet explained to the companions, among what he said:

“Hit them lightly.” [Recorded by Ibn Jareer on the authority of ‘Ekremah].

“Never hit the face, never uglify (i.e. say: you ugly so and so), never withdraw away from her except inside the house.” [Recorded by Abu Dāwood and Ibn Mājah].

“The best among you are those who won’t hit their wives.” [Recorded by Baihaqy].

“Commend kindness towards your women, they are entrusted to you. Don’t you hold anything against them except if they do a manifest abominable deed; if they do, then abandon their beds and hit them lightly. If they obey you, then seek not against them means of annoyance. Know that you have rights and your women have rights too. As for your rights, they shouldn’t host or invite anyone you hate to your house, and as for their rights, you should treat them in the way they favor when dressing them or feeding them.” [Recorded by Tirmidhī].

“The most perfect believers are the best in conduct, and the best of you are those who are good to their wives.” [Recorded by Abu Dāwood].

“A believer should not hate his wife, for if he hates any of her manners, he will surely find another to love.” [Recorded by Muslim].

“None but a noble man treats women in an honorable manner, and none but an ignoble man treats women disgracefully.” [Recorded by Tirmidhī].

Prophet Muhammad forbade Muslim males from resorting to the beating allowance so quickly when losing their tempers. The prophet also emphasized that if a man resorted to hitting his wife then he must remember that she’s his love, he should not hurt her or hit her in a manner that increases the breach between them. He said, *“How could anyone of you beat his wife like a slave then make love to her at night?!”* [Recorded by Bukhari, Muslim, Tirmidhī, and others]. This was a denial for any tough hitting and a degradation of its doer. After the prophet’s departure, the companions were asked about the lawful manner of hitting, and they all gave the same explanation stressing that the hitting meant in the verse should be lightly done. This was the opinion of *Ibn ‘Abbās, Sa‘eed Ibn Al-Jubair, ‘Ekremah, Al-Sha‘aby, Al-Hassan, Qatadah* and others.

When *Ibn ‘Abbās*, the prophet’s cousin, was asked about the kind of hitting that wouldn’t hurt the woman physically but reprimand her, he said, “*Hit her with your Siwak.*” [Recorded by Tabari]. *Siwak* is a kind of toothbrush Made from a tree called *Arāk* in Arabic (*Salvadora Persica*), or simply the toothbrush tree in English. For simplicity, it is a sort of tooth brush in size and function. Arabs use it in brushing their teeth and they always keep it in their pockets. It’s about 5 inches in length, about quarter an inch in diameter, and it’s malleable. Putting together the explanations given by Prophet Muhammad, his companions, and the reason of revelation, one can deduce the following:

1. Men must protect their wives for they are stronger by creation.
2. Men must work to provide for their families and provide their needs.
3. Men are the ones responsible for spending on their families, this is why Allah has given them a bigger share of inheritance.
4. If the man’s income wasn’t enough and his wife supports him, this is considered charity for her and she shall be rewarded for it by Allah.
5. The male is the captain of the ship, his obedience is mandatory for a stable life unless he orders any of the family members to do something divinely prohibited. There is no obedience to any human if it leads to any disobedience to the Creator.
6. The woman is a shepherd and a guardian in her husband’s house. She must take care of his trusts, protect his honor, and seek his comfort.
7. Divorce is the most hated deed by Allah. Consequently, any shrewish recalcitrant wife should be dealt with—based upon the degree of her recalcitrance—according to the following approach:
 - a. Admonished her calmly, may she listen and reform her attitude.
 - b. If she persists, abandon her in bed until she inclines towards apologizing for her previous attitude. This bed-boycott should not extend for more than one month; she has rights too.
 - c. Know that the best men are those who won’t hit their women.
 - d. If she still persists and her insults were unbearable, then you may hit her lightly if you think this can change her, but be careful:
 - i. Never hit the face.
 - ii. Never hurt the bones.
 - iii. You may give her a shoulder shake.
 - iv. You may grab her wrists while rebuking her.
 - v. You may poke her shoulder, arm, thigh, hip, or upper chest. You can use your *siwak*.
 - vi. You may hit her on the waist with your garment.
 - vii. If you do anything beyond the previous, then know that you have transgressed the limit and deserve to be punished by the judge.
 - viii. If she reforms her attitude then do not seek to annoy her and know that Allah is All-Capable on you.

And since that we should not take one verse from the book and leave another, earlier in this same chapter Allah says, “*Consort with your wives in kindness, for if you hate them it may happen that you hate a thing wherein Allah has placed great good.*” [The Qur’an (4:19)]. In this verse Allah is teaching Muslim males not to resort quickly to take any action against their wives when they hate their attitude. On the contrary, they must treat them kindly and try to be as much patient as they can; perhaps Allah has concealed for them happiness in the future, and the troublesome wife will reform her attitude.

Allah also says, *“Verily, there is a good model for you in the Prophet for him who seeks (the forgiveness of) Allah on the Last Day, and remembers Allah profusely.”* [The Qur’an (33:21)].

Lady ‘Ā’ishah said, *“Never had the prophet’s hands hit a servant, a woman or anyone at all except at battle.”* [Recorded by Bukhari and Muslim]. The prophet was once boycotted by his wives. All he did was that he withdrew from their company and secluded himself in the mosque. He wanted to give them a chance to decide whether they wished to remain his wives or not. From all this, we may now understand that the “hitting allowance” was given for a very special case in which the wife’s shrewish attitude blinded her from realizing the danger of living alone if her husband leaves her. It’s a kind of shock therapy that was allowed for the persistently shrewish wife. It is not to harm her physically; its sole purpose is to remind her that this guy she’s giving a hard time is her closest friend and companion in this life, and he is about to leave, may she come back to her senses, and show more devotion to his companionship. It’s a last warning before resorting to separation, may she reform her attitude.

The arrangement described so far was to help tempers cool off within the privacy of the house keeping it restricted to the married couple. Nonetheless, there are times when the family feud becomes long drawn. It may be because the woman is temperamentally stubborn and contumacious, or it may be the fault of the man who may have been unjustly oppressive. Whatever it actually is, one thing is certain, it’s that the unfortunate tussle will not remain restricted within the four walls of the house, it will definitely spread out. Then—as usual—supporters of one party will go about maligning the others with all sorts of accusations. This will cause tempers of parties to rise and what started as the disagreement of two individuals will turn into a confrontation between two families. That’s why in the next verse Allah teaches Muslims what to do when the previous solutions fail to work:

“If you fear separation between them twain (the husband and his wife), appoint (two) arbiters, one from his family, and the other from hers, if they wish for peace, Allah will cause their reconciliation: For Allah has full knowledge, and is acquainted with all things.” [The Qur’an (4:35)].

If the previous approach fails in making any amends between the married couple, Allah addresses the guardians of the couple, and tells them to delay resorting to divorce and suggests a decent method that might help cool down tempers, shut out avenues of accusations, and reach a middle solution between both parties. The dispute which could not remain restricted to the couple’s home, should be settled within their families if possible, not at the court of law. The verse orders the guardians to take one arbitrator from the man’s family and another from that of the woman. Those arbitrators should have the necessary capabilities and decency to resolve the dispute. They must be religiously knowledgeable and trustworthy. If both arbitrators have good intentions and truly wish to bring about peace between the dissenting couple, they shall succeed in their mission, and Allah Almighty will bring forth love and harmony between the couple. Hence, if one of the arbitrators lacks perfect sincerity while pursuing the goal of peace-making, this process might fail. Therefore, the arbitrators must be carefully chosen from among the sincere friends of the two families.

Regarding the family and relatives' disputes, 'Omar Ibn Al-Khattab issued the following order to his judges, "*Send disputes between relatives back to them so that they may make peace with each other's help; court decisions breed hatred and hostility.*"

Divorce is the final step set by Allah for the married couples when they can't stand each other anymore. The wisdom behind making it permissible is that sometimes it's the right and most appropriate solution. The teachings of Islam incite that it shouldn't be considered except after a lot of thinking, and after trying all means of reconciliation between the married couple. If divorce was the only solution that can relieve both partners, so be it. Knowing that the couple may resort to divorce quickly at times of anger forgetting the feelings they still have for each other, Allah gave them the chance to retreat from their decision. Allah ordered the divorced woman to wait for three periods in the husband's house before returning to her father's house. Allah also ordered the husband to treat her honorably during this period may they restore the intimacy and decide to resume their marriage, or may the wife discover that she was pregnant, and they decide to let go of their anger and resume their marriage for the sake of the coming child. This plan is allowed for 2 divorces only; if the third divorce occurred, the husband must depart from his wife nicely. It is not permissible for them to marry each other again, and the woman may get married to another man, try a new life with a different husband whom she chooses based on her previous experience, may she find happiness and tranquility. This new experience may either succeed, or it shall help the woman realize that her first husband was a good man, and that she still loves him. Likewise, her first husband may marry another woman and find happiness, or he may regret divorcing his first wife and realize that he still has feelings for her. If the woman was divorced from the second husband, her first husband can propose to her; if she accepts, they can get married again.

When Allah spoke of divorce, it was made clear that it should be done based on equitable terms with a very strong rebuke to those who do not obey this order. This is stated in the following verses:

"If they (i.e. married couple) resolve to divorce, Allah is All-Hearing, All-Knowing. Divorced women shall keep themselves waiting for three periods, and it is not permissible for them to conceal what Allah has created in their wombs, if they believe in Allah and in the Last Day. Their husbands are best entitled to take them back in the meantime, if they want a settlement. Women have rights similar to what they owe in recognized manner though for men there is a step above them. Allah is Mighty, Wise. Divorce is twice, then either to retain in all fairness, or to release nicely. It is not lawful for you to take back anything from what you have given them, unless both apprehend that they would not be able to maintain the limits set by Allah. Now, if you apprehend that they would not maintain the limits set by Allah, then, there is no sin on them in what she gives up to secure her release. These are the limits set by Allah. Therefore, do not exceed them. Whosoever exceeds the limits set by Allah, then, those are the transgressors. Thereafter, if he divorces her, she shall no longer remain lawful for him unless she marries another man. Should he too divorce her, then there is no sin on them in remarrying again, if they think they would maintain the limits set by Allah. These are the limits set by Allah that He makes clear to people who know. When you have divorced women, and they have approached the end of their waiting periods, then, either hold on to them with fairness or release them with fairness. Do not hold on to them with wrongful

intent resulting in cruelty on your part; whoever does this, he actually wrongs himself. Do not take the verses of Allah in jest, and remember the grace of Allah on you and what He has revealed to you from the Book and His wisdom, giving you good counsel thereby. Fear Allah and know that Allah is All-Knowing. When you have divorced women, and they have reached (the end of) their waiting period, do not prevent them from marrying other husbands if they mutually agree with fairness. Thus the advice is given to all those who believe in Allah and in the Hereafter. This is more pure and clean for you. Allah knows [what's best for you] and you do not know.” [The Qur'an (2:226-232)].

The rules of divorce in the Qur'an told Muslims about the financial rights which divorced women have over their husbands. If the couple had children, the man has to pay all of the expenses that would suffice their needs on reasonable basis as long as they live under the wife's care. If the man dies during this period, then his heir is responsible for spending on the children. The heir in this case is the custodian of the children who could be the mother herself or the children's grandfather or uncle. This should be agreed upon according to the family's mutual consent; otherwise, the court decides who is most qualified and trustworthy of the responsibility. From the Holy Qur'an, we read:

“The (divorced) mothers give suck to their children for two whole years, for those (parents) who desire to complete the term of suckling. But the father of the child shall bear the cost of the mother's sustenance and clothing on reasonable basis. No soul shall have a burden laid on it greater than it can bear. No mother shall be treated unfairly on account of her child, nor a father on account of his child, and the father's heir shall be chargeable in the same way. If they both decide on weaning, by mutual consent, and after due consultation, there is no blame on them. If you decide on a foster suckling mother for your children, there is no blame on you, provided that you pay (the mother) what you offered, on equitable terms. But fear Allah and know that Allah sees well what you do.” [The Qur'an (2:233)].

After the previous verse, Allah goes on to explain a very rare thing that sometimes happens, and He tells Muslims how to deal with it. If divorce occurs before having any sexual intercourse, and the dowry has already been agreed upon, then the wife is entitled to get half of it unless she forgoes, or she gets all of it if the husband forgoes. If the dowry was not yet agreed upon, Allah orders men to provide for their divorced wives a reasonable compensation according to the man's financial capability. Some scholars estimated this compensation to be the woman's personal expenses for two years if the husband was wealthy, or what's affordable if he was poor. Allah says in the Qur'an:

“You will not be blamed [for not paying any dowry] if you divorce women when you have not yet consummated the marriage or fixed a dowry (i.e. bridal money given by the husband to his wife at the time of marriage), but give them fair compensation, the affluent according to his means and the poor according to his means, this is a duty on the righteous. If you divorce them before you have touched (i.e. had sexual intercourse with) them, and you have appointed a dowry, then pay half of that dowry, unless they (the women) agree to forego it, or he (the husband) in whose hands is the marriage tie, agrees to forego and give her the full dowry. To forego and give (her full dowry) is nearer to piety and righteousness. And do not forget liberality between yourselves. Truly Allah is All-Seer of what you do.” [The Qur'an (2:236-237)].

On the other hand, if it was the woman who hates her husband and wants to divorce herself from him, this is called *Khol'*. It was made permissible for women to divorce themselves from their husbands when they can't bear living with them anymore. If the woman was the one who wanted the divorce, the Islamic law orders her to return to the husband the dowry which he has paid upon marriage and to return to him all of his gifts; she doesn't have the right to keep them if she doesn't like their giver anymore and wanted to leave him. Meanwhile, this man would most probably want to get married again after his former wife divorced herself from him; consequently, he shall need his money back.

The above mentioned rights and obligations made it mandatory that Muslim women must not marry non-Muslim males, as all of the previous women rights are not binding for non-Muslim males. This is for the protection of Muslim women's rights. The laws in Islamic countries are designed to protect the Muslim wives against any violation to these rights. These laws could not be applied on non-Muslim husbands for they could not be held accountable for the laws of a religion they don't believe in. A non-Muslim husband who does not believe in the Qur'an or the teachings of Prophet Muhammad may not respect nor understand his wife's daily religious rituals. Moreover, he can commit many deeds that are forbidden in Islam without seeing that he has done anything wrong. For example: he may drink alcoholic beverages or get drunk which is forbidden on Muslims. He may slap her or beat her up violently when drunk or in anger. He may force her to practice anal sex, which is highly forbidden in Islam, or he may force her to take off her veil when outside together out of embarrassment, etc. The examples are endless here. This case is totally different from that of a Muslim male who marries a Jewish or a Christian female. A Muslim male is obliged according to the Islamic teachings to respect the two religions even if they had been tampered with according to his understanding. He is also obliged to protect and take care of his wife in the ways described above.

From the previous verses we can extract the following laws and injunctions:

1. Before resorting to divorce, the guardians of the married couple should call for an arbitration meeting between 2 trusted pious arbiters, one from the family of the groom and the other from that of the bride. If the 2 arbiters were sincere, they may succeed to reconcile between the couple and restore the intimacy.
2. If nothing works and the divorce word was uttered, let the woman wait for 3 menstrual periods inside her husband's house, maybe the couple will regret rushing into divorce, and maybe the woman will discover that she is pregnant.
3. The husband must treat his wife honorably during this period and should not annoy her in any manner, may they restore the intimacy and resume their marriage once again.
4. If they both decide during this period to resume their marriage, then the husband can take back the divorce word. This is only allowed twice, but after the third divorce occurs, the couple cannot resume their marital life together and they must separate nicely without seeking any means of annoyance against one another.
5. If the man had agreed upon a certain dowry with the guardian of his wife, and he still hadn't settled this debt, he must fulfill it to his divorcee without any diminution.
6. The man must pay his divorced wife a suitable compensation based on his financial conditions.

7. The divorced woman can marry another man after the passage of 3 menstrual periods. If she discovers that she is pregnant, she must inform the father of the coming child of this, and she cannot get married except after delivery.
8. Her expenses during her pregnancy and the fees of the hospital all lie with the father of the child to be delivered.
9. The expenses of the child and what's enough for the mother's sustenance and clothing all lie with the child's father throughout the 2 years of suckling.
10. The expenses of the wet nurse lie with the father without detracting any of the mother's expenses.
11. After weaning the child, his or her expenses lie with the father until the nursing period ends. Most jurists are at the opinion that it ends when the child turns 7. After this, the father may take the child to live with him. Others said that the nursing period for boys continues until they reach puberty, while for girls it's until they have their menses. The issue is indecisive, but there is a recorded tradition in which the prophet brought the perceiving child and made him chose whether he wanted to stay with his father or with his mom. I believe that following this tradition is best for the child.
12. The expenses of the children lie all the time with the father.
13. If the mother gets married, the father may take the children into his custody even if they were still under the lawful age. The judge may also rule that the children live with their maternal grandmother if she lived in a separate house. This was recorded to be *Abu Bakr's* verdict with *'Omar's* son *Assem*.
14. If the divorced woman married another man but after a while the marriage failed and ended in divorce, her first husband may propose to her again. If she agrees, they can get married again with a new dowry and new preparations.
15. In case that the woman was the one who wanted the divorce, not the man, and she asked the judge to divorce her from him, she should return to him his dowry and gifts. This is called *Khol'*.
16. If any of the above rights was violated by one of the two parties, the matter should be raised to a court of law. The judge will then issue a ruling based on these rules. This was the trend followed ever since Prophet Muhammad's life.

All of the above laws and rights were revealed in the Qur'an 1400 years ago. They laid the foundations for building a complete book of law dedicated for preserving women's rights. Any person who has the least knowledge of people's lives back at that time can realize the divinity of such laws easily, and most importantly, note how they have granted women more rights than those given to them today in modern countries.



6.1 Veil

A Muslim sister narrated that she was once asked by a non-Muslim woman why she was wearing a veil. She responded saying, *“Why shouldn’t I wear it while it conceals my beauty from the eyes of those who don’t have the right to enjoy it?”* The non-Muslim woman was bewildered by the answer and said, *“I just think that if a woman has something nice she should show it.”* The Muslim sister then said, *“A woman has a lot of nice things, should she show them all?!”*

In Islam women are taught that they are not instruments of pleasure for men, they are taught that chaste pure women do not allow their beauty to be seen except by the one who has the right to enjoy it; this right could only be acquired through marriage. Some people judge this to be oppression, but Muslims believe that this is more dignifying for women. It liberates them from being treated as means of amusement by men.

Actually, veil liberates women from the uncontrollable sex bell that rings inside men’s brains whenever they see a beautiful woman. It places the remote control in the woman’s hand, she can press play or pause any time she wants. The problem here is that most women do not understand the nature of men. The brain of every man has a molester residing inside. The man’s ethics and morals must gain control over this molester, or the molester shall gain control over the man himself. Hence, men are not all alike, among them are those who are pious and among them are those who are not. Courteous women should guard themselves all the time; they should not leave the matter in men’s hands.

Pondering over women’s costumes through history, you can see many fashions and styles. The one thing that you can instantly get to notice is that all pious women throughout history were depicted wearing a veil. For instance, you will never see a drawing or a statue for mother Mary except wearing a veil. Today, only nuns, rabbis’ wives and Muslim women choose to wear a veil. What you choose to wear is how you want to be seen, your clothes are part of your personality. It’s up to you whether you want to be seen as miss nice hair, nice legs, beautiful body, etc., or to be seen as a beautiful heart, smart mind, kind soul, etc. Know that it’s when you cover up your superficial beauty that people will be able to see you for who you really are. If you are afraid of this, then that’s a problem.

Some Islam deniers say, *“Why didn’t Islam order men to cover their hair too, or does it subjugate women only?”* Well, Islam doesn’t subjugate anyone. The main purpose of its teachings is to serve and protect all mankind. A Woman’s hair is totally different from a man’s hair. You can always see beautiful women marrying bald men, but you will never see the opposite. If you take a look at the pictures of handsome actors after they shave their heads bald, you will still see them handsome. This is not the case with glamorous actresses. Whenever one of these actresses shaves her head bald to play a certain role, she looks hideous. We don’t see any male marrying a female who shaves her head. Ask your husband if he would come near you in an intimate way if you deliberately shave your head. If his answer was in the affirmative, ask him if he will like it or not. A female’s hair in the eyes of males is way different from males’ hair in the eyes of females. Likewise, the sight of females’ legs has a different effect on males from that which males’ legs have on females, etc.

Consequently, the injunctions promulgated by our Creator regarding men's private parts are different from those promulgated for women. Allah says in the Qur'an:

*“Tell the **believing men** that they **must cast down their glances and guard their chastity**, it is more decent for them. Surely Allah is All-Aware of what they do. And tell the **believing women** that they **must cast down their glances, guard their chastity, and must not expose their adornment, except that which appears thereof, and must wrap their bosoms with their veils**, and must not expose their adornments, except to their husbands or their fathers or the fathers of their husbands, or to their sons or the sons of their husbands, or to their brothers or the sons of their brothers or the sons of their sisters, or to their maids, or to those [women] whom their right hands possess, or male attendants having no [sexual] desires (i.e. mentally retardants, very old men, etc.), or to the children who still have no carnal knowledge of women. **And let them not stamp their feet in a way that the adornment they conceal (i.e. anklets, ankle bracelets) is known. And repent to Allah O believers, all of you, so that you may achieve success.**”* [The Qur'an (24:30-31)].

The above verses teach Muslims—whether males or females—that there are certain parts of their bodies which they should cover when in public places. In order to achieve a pure righteous society, both genders should cast down their glances and guard their private parts against any illicit sex. The prophet P.B.U.H. defined men's private parts saying: *“What's beneath the navel and above the knees is private.”* [Recorded by Ibn Qodamah]. As for women, the verse defined their adornments, bosoms and heads covered together with the veil. Their legs are alluded to at the end of the verse where they are ordered not to stamp the ground with their feet in a manner that will make others know of the ankle bracelets they conceal beneath their clothes. Jurists differed in considering a woman's face and hands as private parts. The majority say that they should only be covered if the society was depraved. As for the kind of fabric that should be utilized by both genders in covering their private parts, jurists defined it saying, *“It must not be revealing, transparent or tight describing what it conceals.”* Any pious female should look neat and clean in front of all people but she may look attractive only in front of her husband.



Beauty is what resides inside your heart, not this outer box which we call the body. Some girls may be classified as ugly by most boys while they have the kindest hearts. Please don't build your opinion about others based on how they look. Don't be shallow. I'm not saying that you should look hideous, nothing of that sort, I'm just saying that you should not give your appearance a bigger attention than it deserves. Don't exert a big effort to create from your outer appearance an image of what's not inside your heart. This is why Prophet Muhammad P.B.U.H. was keen on teaching Muslims that,

“Allah does not look at your appearances or your bodies; He looks at the hearts concealed in your chests.” [Recorded by Muslim].

Finally, I would like to address a controversial issue, “Can Muslim males walk around in front of women wearing only trousers that cover their private parts while revealing their upper abdomens, like on swimming pools, seashores, etc.?”

My answer is “No.” The wisdom behind the verses was clear. The main purpose of covering the private parts is to guard one’s chastity and protect the opposite sex from any seduction. Most women find the muscles of a man’s chest, belly, shoulders and arms attractive and seducing. Consequently, the private parts are not all you should cover when in public, they are the least you should cover. Exposing your body is immoral; you are a human being not an animal, so please cover up.

Allah knows best, may He guide us all to the truth. Amen.



6.2 Polygyny

Among the accusations that are always raised against Islam is Polygyny, which is the permission that one man can have more than one wife (Maximum 4 wives). *“Why did Allah allow Men to marry more than one wife? Isn’t this infidelity? Isn’t this unfair to women? Why isn’t this allowed for women as well?”* The previous among other relevant questions are thrown at Muslims repeatedly. In the next few pages, Polygyny, its application, and the wisdom behind it, shall all be explained in brief.

The permission to practice polygyny was granted by our Creator according to Muslims’ beliefs. Hence, there must be a big bunch of logically acceptable reasons behind it. Let’s first grab some scientific knowledge related to the subject; they are extremely important in helping the reader reach the truth.

1. The inner lobe containing the nerve-centers responsible for sexual activities inside the “Hypothalamus,” is in males 2.5 times bigger than in females.
2. The “Testosterone” is the main motivating hormone for sex in both males and females. The male’s body produces as much Testosterone as that of 15-20 females.
3. Libido, known mostly as “Sex drive,” is much stronger in men than it is in women by creation. Men think of sex and seek after it more avidly. This has been stated by most sex researchers. Some tests made on both males and females by Kinsey Institute stated that:
 - a. 54% of men think about sex every day or several times a day, 43% a few times per month or a few times per week, and 4% less than once a month (Laumann, Gagnon, Michael, Michaels, 1994).

- b. 19% of women think about sex every day or several times a day, 67% a few times per month or a few times per week, and 14% less than once a month (Laumann, Gagnon, Michael, Michaels, 1994).
 4. The uterine cramps and blood loss that women suffer during their menstruation periods cause notable decrease in their sexual desires. The blood loss period differs from one woman to another; its approximate range extends from 3 to 7 days with a maximum record of 10 days every menstruation cycle (average cycle period is 28 days). This leaves us with a percentage ranging between 10-25% of their marital lives in which they are unwilling to have sexual relations with their partners. Unlike what some western commentators tried to prove—that there is no danger at all in practicing sexual intercourse during the period, many physicians refused this opinion and stated its fallacy. In a simplified manner, they explained the following:
 - a. The vagina contains a very useful bacteria called (Doderlein Bacilli, D.B.); it protects it against the invasion of harmful bacteria. This bacteria D.B. feeds on the sugar stored in the cells of the vagina transferring it to lactic acid that kills the harmful bacteria. The cells that contain the sugar start separating from the vagina for renewal amidst the monthly cycle; they decrease gradually until they reach their lowest-level hours before menstruation. When the blood loss begins, the degree of acidic ionization of the vagina changes from acidity to alkalinity resulting in the death of the D.B. and their elimination with the menstrual blood. This creates the perfect conditions for the harmful bacteria from the anus and the urinary tract to invade the vagina and feed on the blood, which is their favorite food. It has been found that these harmful bacteria increase in both, number and variety during menstruation, and only the flowing blood coming from inside the body keeps them out of the womb and prevent them from penetrating into the body. Sexual intercourse will surely compromise this process.
 - b. The parasitic microorganism called “Trichomonas” that lives inside the vagina multiplies fourfold during the blood loss period. It is known of causing inflammations in the urinary system and it could only be transmitted through sexual intercourse. During the period it goes up the vaginal sinuses waiting for the opportunity to attack. More than 160 million people (males and females) worldwide are annually infected by it.
 - c. The inner membrane of the uterus called “Endometrium” suffers higher level of “Prostaglandin” during menstruation. This Prostaglandin causes vaginal cramps and pain. The man’s semen is rich with this substance as well, so having sexual intercourse during menstruation can increase pain and harm women. Modern studies have also proven the relationship between intercourse during menstruation and inflammation of the urinary tract in both men and women. Usually the infection occurs within 24 hours. Regular intercourse during the menstruation period may result in sterility through repeated bouts of inflammation.
 5. Pregnancy as well plays a big role in making women revolt having sex with their husbands during several months of their pregnancy and even after delivery.

In the first trimester, most pregnancy symptoms occur during this period and women feel physically unwell due to the changes occurring. In the last trimester, women prepare for delivery and are mentally not ready for sexual-intercourse out of worry for the safety of their babies after six months of carriage. Men as well tend to avoid sexual relations with their pregnant wives near delivery out of fear for the safety of the baby. Researches have shown that tender nurturing and breast-feeding release bursts of the sex driving substance called “Dopamine,” the pleasure chemical, after which drop in dopamine and rise in “Prolactin” occurs. Prolactin dampens the sexual arousal resulting in the emotional separation that so often follows in the days after a passionate encounter. This leaves the husband sexually unsatisfied in most cases.

6. Women are emotionally more vulnerable than men, which sometimes affect their desire for sex negatively with the least disturbance. Published studies stated that the female brain has a much higher capability of reading subtle facial and verbal emotional expressions. Most Men, on the other hand, cannot read emotions; it’s only when they see actual tears that they realize that something is wrong. “Jessica Bennett,” a senior writer and editor at ‘Newsweek’ and ‘The Daily Beast,’ wrote an article named, “The Pursuit of Sexual Happiness,” describing the sexual behavior of women in comparison to men based on books written by different psychologists and researchers, among what she wrote was the following:

“...But women are complicated creatures: their sexual health is determined as much by their emotions as by their physical state, which might help explain why as many as 50% of women have trouble getting aroused...”

“In their new book, “Why Women Have Sex,” University of Texas psychologists Cindy Meston and David Buss aim to illuminate the complexities of women’s sexual motivations through women’s own words—an important step, they say, to better understanding how women can achieve sexual satisfaction. Based on five years of research and an online survey of 1,000 women, the authors consider motivation ranging from altruistic sex (I felt sorry for the guy) to revengeful sex (I wanted to get back at my partner) to palliative sex (I had a migraine). We hear from women who’ve had sex to boost their confidence, even if it’s with a man (or woman) they find repulsive, and from those who’ve used sex to barter for gifts or household chores (9% of us have used this form of economic sex, according to a University of Michigan study). We learn that 31% of women have had sex to evoke jealousy in the ones they love, while others have done it to protect themselves from getting hurt. Some, like the 25-year-old woman we described earlier, have had sex to boost their self-esteem, and 84% of women report they’ve done it simply to “keep the peace” at home...”

Polygyny in history:

Dr. *Jamal A. Badawi* wrote a pamphlet on this issue; he stated many points that made polygyny a historical necessity, the most important of which is that the devastating wars in the past and at present have taken their toll mainly among men. The result is not only more women who cannot find husbands, but also more widows and single mothers who may aspire to a normal family life, so what should these women do?

Polygyny was practiced by all nations before the advent of Islam without imposing any limits to the number of wives. The Bible mentions many polygynists including highly esteemed prophets like Abraham, Jacob, Moses, David, Solomon, among others. However, Christians started changing their religious view of Polygyny in the middle of the 4th century A.D., when St. Augustine started preaching against it after about 380 years of practicing Polygyny and considering it permissible by God. Centuries later, Christians broke away from the practice of their predecessors, and made Polygyny a religious sin—though the Bible itself never attacked it, and most of the prophets mentioned in it practiced polygyny without being forbidden by God in any verse. The history of nations shows that no religion had placed any laws or limitations governing polygyny, neither the Jews and Christians, nor the Hindus and Aryans, or the Zoroastrians.

In modern age, too, Polygyny is practiced in the west by the Mormons, “The church of Christ.” It is estimated that in Utah alone, over 30,000 middle-class Mormon Americans secretly cling to the practice of plural marriage. The Mormon Church accepted the principal of Plural Marriage as a revelation from God. It was widely adopted after Brigham Young led the Mormons into their “Promised Land”—the Territory of Utah, in 1847. However, in 1890, after polygyny was outlawed, the Church funds and property were confiscated. This apparently led the Church to issue a manifesto banning plural marriage. Church President ‘Wilford Woodruff’ later declared the manifesto had been divinely inspired. For a first-hand report on the practice of polygyny in the U.S., see Ben Merson’s 1967, “Husband with More than one Wife.” Polygyny is also allowed by Christian missionaries in Africa and other areas where it is considered a social necessity.

Today, Banning polygyny has resulted in the outbreak of fornication under many names: friendship, affair, consenting adults, relationship, sex-partners, etc. Giving it any name or description, hardly changes its reality from being a forbidden deed in all religions and moral constitutions to something acceptable. Nonetheless, the western media succeeded in manipulating the facts and imprinting new morals on to the minds of the viewers. As far as we can see in all western countries, banning polygyny resulted in the multiplicity of girlfriends retained out of wedlock, satisfying their sexual needs by fornicating or committing adultery. Saying no to marriage and yes to adultery is certainly very strange! Moreover, the children resulting from such relations are ostracized; their mothers suffer the responsibilities alone, besides being looked down upon by the society. In polygyny, children are recognized as legal offspring of their fathers and their mothers are respected as legally married women. There is no doubt that the second wife—legally married and treated equally to her fellow wife—is better off than a mistress without any legal rights or security. There is no doubt also that the legitimate child of a polygamous father, born in the full light of the day, enjoying all the rights and privileges of a son or daughter, is far better off than the illegitimate child.

Any reasonable person should understand that the most logical solution for all of the previous problems is the allowance of polygyny, but with restrictions and conditions that would protect women and protect their rights, which is exactly what the Islamic teachings are all about. John Davenport (1597-1670), an English puritan clergyman and well-known Christian writer, deduced in his book “AN APOLOGY FOR MOHAMMED AND THE KORAN” that plurality of wives is not only acceptable, it is a source of blessing from God. John Milton (1608-1674) supported this view strongly.

Polygyny in Islam:

During the early period of Islam, about 1400 years ago, polygyny was practiced without any limitations. Men took too many wives; later on, they could not be fair to them all equally. As a result, many wives were living like prisoners bound in the chains of marriage. Without any binding laws, the idea of an equitable treatment of wives was practically non-existent. It was all a matter of personal choice and whim, which could make the darling of the day a history of tomorrow. The need for standing rights and protecting laws was a far cry. It was the teachings of our creator in the Holy Qur'an that stopped this great social injustice. It restricted the multiplicity of wives by declaring that keeping more than four wives under the bond of marriage was forbidden. In addition to that, stern warning was given against any contravention of the Divine command, which emphatically ordered that equality in treating wives and fulfilling their rights must be maintained faithfully by men.¹ Allah says in the Qur'an:

"...marry the women you like, two, or three or four. But, if you fear that you will not maintain equity, then (keep to) one woman, or (the women) that your right hand possess. It will be closer to your not doing injustice." [The Qur'an (4:3)].

On one hand, permission has been given that up to four wives can be conjoined in marriage, on the other, after having taken the number to four, restriction was placed that more than four women cannot be gathered in marriage. From this verse, we find that having more than one wife is permissible and appropriate only on the condition that equality can be maintained among all wives as required by the Islamic law (*Shari'ah*), and that the rights of all wives can be duly fulfilled. If a man does not have the capability to discharge his obligations in this manner, the rule is to keep to only one wife. Hence, the Qur'anic command is: If you are unable to maintain perfect justice between wives, restrict yourself to no more than one, or make do with a concubine. Of course, it needs no saying that concubines are not available today as the conditions under which such relation becomes possible do not exist anymore. This has already been discussed earlier.

Prophet Muhammad laid great emphasis on maintaining full equality and justice between all wives. He gave stern warnings against those who do otherwise. Above all, he demonstrated the desirable ideal through his own conduct, reaching the outer limits of treating his wives equally even with matters in which equality is not mandatory. The prophet P.B.U.H. said, *"Anyone who has two wives and he cannot fulfill their rights equally and justly, he shall be resurrected on the Judgment Day having one of his shoulders drooping down towards the ground."* [Recorded by Tirmidhi].

However, we should keep in mind that this equality of treatment is necessary in things within the man's control. Few examples are: the house he prepares for each wife, the time he spends with each one of them, the coverage of personal expenses, the number of gifts he buys for each one of them and their values must be the same, parity in overnight stays, as well as the frequency of sexual intercourses unless the wife herself is ill or asks his pardon.

1: *"Ma'aref Al-Qur'an,"* Sheikh Mufti Muhammad Shāfi'i

Equality should even be maintained in smiling, kissing and hugging; the man must treat his wives equally and in the same manner. If he feeds one of them with his own hand, he must do the same with the others, etc. The examples are countless here. As for things out of man's control, such as the natural inclination of his heart, which might tilt towards one of them with more love, there is no accountability here. This is not a matter of choice. One can't control his heart, he can only control his deeds. However, the binding condition is that this tilt should not affect matters within man's control like the examples given.

Prophet Muhammad treated his wives with full equality in everything within his control, yet he invoked Allah saying, *"O Allah, this is my equalization in matters which I control; do not hold me accountable for matters which You control and I do not."* [Recorded by Tirmidhī, Abu Dāwood, Ibn Mājah and others]. What's meant is that he cannot force his heart to love all his wives equally, but he can be fair and treat them equally in everything else. This is why Allah says in the Qur'an:

"And you shall not be able to maintain perfect equality between [your] women..." [The Qur'an (4:129)]. This verse is referring to the fact that the heart inclination is something out of man's control. But even this involuntary conduct has not been left totally unchecked or unbalanced. In order to emphasize that men are obliged to fight against it if they take more than one wife, Allah continues in the same verse saying, *"So, do not incline too much towards one of them so as to leave the other hanging (i.e. neither divorced nor married). And if you do justice and do all that is right and fear Allah by keeping away from all that is unfair, then Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful."* [The Qur'an (4:129)]. Hence, if the man will be fair and just in his treatment to his wives, and avoids mistreating any of them in what he controls, Allah will forgive him for his heart's inclination.

The purpose of the previous explanation is not to encourage Polygyny, it's to emphasize its necessity and vital importance in many situations. The western culture, as well as some eastern sects, refuse polygyny. This is their right, exactly as it is our right to see it as a solution for many problems which we all face. Living in denial instead of finding practical solutions is a huge waste.

Annie Besant (1847-1933), the famous British Theosophist, women's rights activist, writer and orator, said about this subject: *"There is pretended monogamy in the West, but there is real polygamy without responsibility. The mistress is cast off when the man is weary of her and she sinks gradually to be the woman of the street: for the first lover has no responsibility for her future: and she is hundred times worse off than a sheltered wife and the mother in the polygamous home. When we see thousands of miserable women, who crowd the streets of Western towns during the night, we must surely feel that it does not lie in Western mouths to reproach Islam for its polygamy. It is better for a woman, happier for a woman, more respectable for a woman to live in Islamic polygamy united to one man only with the legitimate child in her arms and surrounded with respect, than to be seduced, cast out in the streets perhaps with an illegitimate child, outside the pale of law, un-sheltered and uncared for, to become a victim of any passer-by, night after night, rendered incapable of motherhood, despised by all."*

7. Muhammad, a Pedophile or a Devout Husband?

“How do you believe in a pedophile to be a prophet? How can you follow a child rapist and a womanizer? He married ‘Ā’ishah when he was 54 and she was 9, are you that crazy?! You Muslims encourage child abuse and Islam is a religion that teaches pedophilia.” [A fellow non-Muslim, 2010]. In the next few pages, Prophet Muhammad’s marriage to lady ‘Ā’ishah shall be discussed and explained as understood and accepted by Muslims. First I shall state some historical and cultural facts deemed helpful to reach the truth about the marriage under discussion.

1. From an article discussing the Age of consent historically, it gathered information from many acknowledged sources like the “Encyclopedia of Children and Childhood in History and Society,” “Children and Youth in History – Age of Consent Laws,” by Stephen Robertson, University of Sydney, Australia, and “The Age of Marriage in Ancient Rome,” by Lelis, Arnold , Percy, William A. and Verstraete, Beert C., we read the following:

“In Ancient Rome, it was very common for girls to marry and have children shortly after the onset of puberty. In the 12th century A.D. “Gratian,” the influential founder of Canon law in medieval Europe, accepted age of puberty for marriage to be between 12 and 14 but acknowledged consent to be meaningful if the children were older than 7¹. There were authorities that said that consent could take place earlier. Marriage would then be valid as long as neither of the two parties annulled the marital agreement before reaching puberty, or if they had already consummated the marriage. It should be noted that Judges honored marriages based on mutual consent at ages younger than 7, in spite of what Gratian had said, there are recorded marriages of 2 and 3 years old. The American colonies followed the English tradition, and the law was more of a guide. For example, Mary Hathaway (Virginia, 1689) was only 9 when she was married to William Williams. Sir Edward Coke (England, 17th century) made it clear that: *‘the marriage of girls under 12 was normal, and the age at which a girl who was a wife was eligible for a dower from her husband’s estate was 9 even though her husband be only four years old.’* The French Napoleonic Code established an age of consent of 11 years in 1791, which was raised to 13 in 1863. Portugal, Spain, Denmark and the Swiss cantons, initially set the age of consent at 10–12 years and then raised it to between 13 and 16 years in the second half of the 19th century. Historically, the English common law set the age of consent to range from 10 to 12. In the United States, by the 1880s, most states set the age of consent at 10-12, and in one state, Delaware, the age of consent was only 7. A New York Times article states that it was still aged 7 in Delaware in 1895.” [End of adaptation from the article].

One famous example is Alexios II Komnenos (1169-1183 AD) who married Agnes of France. William II, Archbishop of Tyre, witnessed the wedding and reported that Agnes was eight on her arrival at Constantinople, while Alexios was thirteen. Though according to most 12th century views, she was three years too young for marriage, but the pope authorized the marriage and approved to it.

1: Gratian’s sources were the Roman law, the Bible, the writings of the Church Fathers, papal decretals, the acts of church councils and synods.

2. According to Jewish traditions, adulthood is reached at the age of 12 (the age of the Bar-Mitzvah). Jewish boys, for example, are expected to demonstrate preparation for adulthood by learning the Torah and other Jewish practices in the Talmud. The Christian Bible and Jewish scriptures have no age requirement for adulthood or marriage, which includes engaging in sexual activity. The age of consent for sexual relations in the Vatican up till the moment of writing this is 13, the age when many girls achieve menses, and are thus reproductive and physically capable of marriage and childbirth. If you check the catholic encyclopedia you will find a marriage taking place between Mother Mary at the age of 12 and Joseph the carpenter when he was 90. So, historically girls were allowed to get married, not based on their age, but by determining that they are physically capable to reproduce.
3. Back in time, adulthood was primarily determined by the parents when noticing the characteristics of puberty on their son or daughter. Historically, the onset of puberty meant the beginning of adulthood. The average age of puberty varied from one place to another, and from one culture to another, but in all cultures it meant that the child was to be treated as an adult “biologically.” This age was considered an order to start working by doing the light jobs of that day, like serving the elders, farming, grazing cattle and pasturing sheep, and it was also an allowance to get married.
4. In modern ages, a new kind of adulthood evolved, it is what we call “Social adulthood.” This term is a legal term specified by governments in determining the age at which children are no longer considered minors, but are recognized and treated by the law as adults.
5. According to modern medical studies, puberty for girls generally begins around 10 years of age, and 12 years of age for boys. These are just average round figures. Medical books tell us that puberty is divided into several stages, the first of which is “Gonadarche.” This is the stage that witnesses the earliest biological changes in both sexes. The ovaries and the testes begin to grow and increase the production of the sex steroids, especially estradiol and testosterone. Gonadarche, as modern researches indicate, is reached approximately at 8 years and it indicates that true central puberty has begun. Menarche is reached by girls approximately at the age of 12. The timing of menarche differs from girl to another and is greatly influenced by genetic, environmental and nutritional factors. In much hotter regions like Africa and Arabia, the age of puberty as noticed by researchers is reached earlier than in colder places. This rapid development was also noticed by the famous British Orientalist “Ronald Victor Bodley” during his journey to Arabia, and he testified for it in his writings. The body development could be noticed on girls at the age of 9 and for boys at 10. Many historical reports state that boys and girls were married at 9-10 years of age at these regions; e.g., companion ‘Abdullah Ibn ‘Amr Ibn Al- ‘Aas reported that his father was older than him by 11 years; he was born during the pre-Islamic era.
6. These customs were not restricted to Arabia, they were the global customs followed all over the world as indicated in the first point. They were still followed until the 19th century when the age of consent in most states was 10 years. Modern estimates in the U.S. say that the average age of puberty for girls is estimated by modern researchers to be 10 years, and the process takes an average of about 4-5 years till its finish.

That's why the legal age of marriage for girls in most of the states today is 16 with parental consent; this is also the case for most European countries. Nonetheless, there are some exceptions. For example, in the state of "New Hampshire," the age of consent for females is 14, and 13 is allowed in cases of special-cause with parental consent and court permission. It's not that the modern medical studies haven't reached "New Hampshire" yet, but because it could be allowed without medically endangering any of the two parties involved. In South America, in Colombia, the age of consent is 14 with parental consent. In Paraguay it's 14 for females, Article 39, clause "b" of the Paraguayan Civil Code. In Colombia and Brazil it's 14 for females. In North Carolina, applicants 14 years old must provide a certified copy of the court order authorizing the marriage. Today the age of consent in many Islamic countries is 16-20 due to several factors, mostly, the way of life and the customs that have changed and made females premature and unqualified neither physically nor psychologically to get married as soon as they hit puberty. Birth control reasons and the great environmental changes also played a big role in this. The luxurious way of life has made females physically much weaker than they used to be 1400 years ago.

I can have a field day with this issue, but I think that what I've stated is enough to ring a bell inside the reader's mind, and make you realize that you should take a look at the wider picture to complete the view before judging what you don't have full knowledge about. Today, most people weigh any matter based on their own personal analogy, the end product is that according to today's limits of civilized thinking, the prophet's marriage to lady 'Ā'ishah was simply an expression of his perverted sexual desire, but the truth is far away from that. I shall continue discussing this issue in connection with the story of Prophet Muhammad's marital life. To say the least, this marriage couldn't have been issued forth from such an accusation.



Prophet Muhammad's marital life:

Right in front of *Quraysh* tribe in *Makkah*, Prophet Muhammad led a blame-free life. He was raised up an orphan by his grandfather then his uncle. When capable, he worked as a shepherd for the cattle owners in *Makkah*. At his young age he was too poor to get married as early as his people were accustomed to. When he grew up to become a strong young man capable of traveling for months in the desert, he started accompanying his uncle in his trade-travels to Sham; he became highly reputable of being truthful and trustworthy. At the age of twenty five, he was employed by Lady *Khadijah Bint Khwailid*, who was a highly respected woman and caravan owner of great honor and fortune among *Quraysh*. She used to employ well-experienced men to travel with her caravans to Sham. *Quraysh* people were mostly trades' people, so when lady *Khadijah* was informed of Muhammad—who was highly esteemed by his people for his truthfulness, great honesty and kind manners—she asked his uncle to let him travel with her caravans and promised to pay him double the usual rate. She also offered to send her hireling *Maisarah* with him to give him aid on the journey. The prophet agreed and took her caravans to Sham.

Strange things happened during the journey. *Maisarah* reported that on passing by a monk's hermitage, Prophet Muhammad stopped the caravan for rest and he sat under a tree taking shelter in its shadow. The monk watched him carefully then asked *Maisarah* about him saying, "Who is that man sitting over there?" *Maisarah* answered, "That's a man from *Quraysh* tribe from the sacred city of *Makkah*." The monk replied, "The man under that tree is but a prophet. Is there some redness in his eyes?" *Maisarah* answered, "It never parts his eyes." The monk said, "That's him, the seal of all prophets. I hope I would catch up with him when he is ordered to come out (i.e. preach the book revealed to him)." [Recorded by Ibn Sa'd]. During the journey, *Maisarah* also noticed that whenever the temperature increased, a cloud always threw its shadow upon the prophet protecting him from the sun.

When they returned to *Makkah*, Lady *Khadijah* noticed that her profit was increased four times and more. *Maisarah* told her of the monk's story and what he had noticed during the journey. He described to her the prophet's good manners, honesty, deep thought and long meditation upon the skies and mountains. Lady *Khadijah* realized that this was no ordinary man, but a holy blessed person whom any sane woman would aspire to have as a husband and caretaker. Many notable men had proposed to her after her second husband passed away. Since that she was an extremely rich widow with 3 young children, she always doubted those men's intentions; as such, she refused their proposals. But after meeting Muhammad, she entrusted her wish to have him as a husband to her close friend Lady *Nafisa*.

Lady *Nafisa* reported that she paid Prophet Muhammad a visit; after a short talk, she convinced him of proposing to Lady *Khadijah* signifying her admiration and certain consent if he asked for her hand in marriage. Receiving the news with pleasure, Prophet Muhammad asked his uncle to go to Lady *Khadijah*'s uncle and ask him for her hand. Subsequently, they got married. There he was married for the first time when he was 25 years old to a 40 years old widow with children. He lived with Lady *Khadijah*, may Allah be pleased with her, for twenty five years without ever thinking of getting married again. This was his choice at a time when polygyny was normally practiced by most men in his tribe without any blame. The prophet and Lady *Khadijah* were blessed through their marriage with 4 daughters and 2 sons.

A few years before turning 40, the prophet used to withdraw and seclude himself in the Cave of *Hira'*, located in one of the mountains surrounding *Makkah*. This desire to seclude himself from others visited him every year in the month of Ramadan. During that month, he devoted his time to worship and the remembrance of his Creator. This continued until he started receiving revelations at the age of 40 and began preaching Islam. The prophet's marriage to Lady *Khadijah* continued for 25 years until her departure. She passed away at the age of 65 after the siege of Muslims in the narrow passage of *Abu Tālib*. Prophet Muhammad's companions called the year in which she died "The year of grief," that was for the grief they saw on the prophet after her departure.

In "*Ma'aref Al-Qur'an*," Mufti Muhammad Shāfe'i said, "The first five decades of his life, specially his younger years and his youth, were all too visible to the people of *Makkah*. No one, not even an enemy, ever found an occasion to point an accusing finger at him regarding anything that could put his pristine piety and purity in doubt.

His enemies tried whatever arrows they had in their quiver. They accused him of being a magician, a sorcerer, a poet, madman, liar, and fabricator. But, they never dared say anything, not one word, about his innocent life, about whatever could refer to any crookedness of extra-marital sex or passion.”

It was reported that at the conquest of Makkah, about 10 years after Lady *Khadijah*’s departure—the prophet P.B.U.H. was 60 by then—on the first night Muslims spent in their homeland, lots of those who embraced Islam were inviting the prophet to stay at their houses with persistency; meanwhile, the companions were asking him if he wanted to stay in his old house, but the prophet answered in modesty with a longing voice, *“Nay, but stretch me a tent beside Khadijah’s tomb.”*

Lady *‘Ā’ishah* reported that once when jealous from the feelings Prophet Muhammad had for the departed Lady *Khadijah*, she said, *“You mention her so frequently while she was nothing but an old woman whom Allah has given you in exchange of her who’s better.”* The prophet replied in an honest burst of anger, *“No, I swear that Allah hadn’t given me in exchange of her who’s better; she believed in my prophethood and embraced Islam when people denied; she helped and comforted me in her person and with her wealth when there was none else to lend me a helping hand, and I was granted my children from her and deprived having them from any other wife.”* Regretting her earlier comment, Lady *‘Ā’ishah* said, *“Ask Allah to forgive me, O prophet.”* The prophet replied, *“Ask Allah to forgive Khadijah first then I shall ask Him to forgive you.”* [Recorded by Ahmad].

Lady *‘Ā’ishah* also reported that, *“Whenever the prophet slaughtered a sheep, he would say, ‘Send from its meat to Khadijah’s friends.’ When I asked him about that, he said, ‘I love whomever she loved.’ ”* [Recorded by Muslim].

That jealous wife was lady *‘Ā’ishah*, the prophet’s youngest bride and the only virgin he ever married. The wife for whose marriage the prophet is accused of being a rapist and a pedophile. The wife who has reported in many occasions after the prophet’s departure, that she was his most jealous wife; she said, *“I never felt so jealous of any woman like I did from Khadijah though she passed away three years before the prophet and I got married. The reason was that he mentioned her too often.”* [Recorded by Bukhari].



May Allah be pleased with Lady *Khadijah*. She was the first person to embrace Islam, the first one to stand by the prophet, the first one to comfort him and assure that Allah won’t forsake him. By all means, she was the best wife and the most faithful believer. She is mother for all Muslims, may Allah grant us the ability to deserve such an honor.

Lady ‘Ā’ishah’s marriage to Prophet Muhammad P.B.U.H.:

A year passed after lady *Khadijah’s* departure. The companions sensed the prophet’s grief and sorrow for losing her; they hoped he would agree to get married again, may he find with a new wife the sympathy and compassion that would reduce his sorrow. A woman among the prophet’s followers was chosen to talk to him, her name was *Khawla Bint Hakeem*. She paid the prophet a visit and succeeded in convincing him to marry again. She named for him two females, Lady *Sawda* and Lady ‘Ā’ishah. Lady *Sawda bint Zam’a* was among the first persons to embrace Islam along with her husband. They immigrated to Abyssinia escaping the persecution of the Makkan pagans. After a while, her husband died and she returned to Makkah. She was a poor widow with 6 children, and had no one to help her. Though an old lady at that time—older than the prophet himself, she was known of her merry spirit and sense of humor; that was the main reason behind nominating her for the prophet. Meanwhile, she was a pious widowed woman who needed a husband to take care of her and her children. The prophet asked Lady *Khawla* to pay her a visit and ask her if she accepts to be his wife. Lady *Sawda* accepted with pleasure.

The Prophet’s marriage to Lady *Sawda*—whose race was black—demonstrated for all Muslims at an age of slavery that there is no racism in Islam and that all people, no matter what their color is, are equal in the eyes of their Creator. The only criteria upon which persons are distinguished is their piety and actions. It’s worth mentioning here that his marriage to Lady *Sawda’s* was the first marriage ever consummated by the prophet after Lady *Khadijah’s* departure, which should raise the following question: If the prophet’s marriages were as claimed “all for sex,” then why didn’t he start by choosing a young beautiful virgin instead of a woman who was older than him, described to be large and black, but well known of being a virtuous pious woman?! I shall leave the answer for your intelligence.

As for the other nominee, Lady ‘Ā’ishah, she was the youngest wife and only virgin ever married by the prophet. She was the daughter of his closest friend and faithful companion *Abu Bakr*, who was the first man to embrace Islam. She was engaged to an idolater from *Quraysh* who was waiting for her to be physically capable so that he can consummate the marriage. When the prophet asked her father for her hand, *Abu Bakr* was honored, but meanwhile troubled. He didn’t want his daughter to marry a pagan, but according to the Arabs’ customs, he was embarrassed to break his word with her fiancé after accepting the engagement. *Abu Bakr* asked the prophet to give him some time; thereafter, he paid his daughter’s fiancé a visit and asked him whether he was still willing to marry ‘Ā’ishah or not. For his surprise, the guy himself expressed his dissatisfaction with marrying a Muslim’s daughter and broke the engagement. *Abu Bakr* immediately sent word to the prophet accepting his proposal. The engagement continued for three years until Lady ‘Ā’ishah’s mother decided that she was physically capable to consummate the marriage. After this, she moved to the prophet’s house and lived under his care till his death. Here, two logical questions should arise in one’s mind:

1. If the prophet was a pedophile, then why did he wait for three years after the engagement without consummating the marriage?!
2. If Lady ‘Ā’ishah was physically not ready yet to consummate the marriage, then why did her parents—specifically her mother—authorize the marriage consummation suddenly after three years of waiting?!

Lady ‘Ā’ishah moved to the prophet’s house after immigration by about one and a half years, after the battle of *Badr*. She was 9 years old at that time as recorded in Bukhari. The battle of ‘*Uhud*’ took place after immigration by exactly two and a half years (30 months); therefore, she must have been 10 years old at the time of ‘*Uhud*’.

Bukhari himself recorded that the famous companion *Anas Ibn Malik* said, “*On the day of ‘Uhud, people were retreating from around the prophet P.B.U.H., and I saw ‘Ā’ishah, the daughter of Abu Bakr and Umm-Saleem, tucking up their sleeves and transferring skins of water on the backs of their animals, and emptying them in the mouths of the people (i.e. the wounded), then refilling them up, and returning to empty them again.*” [Recorded by Bukhari].

Jurisprudence books tell us that the volume of the water skins used in Hejaz during the prophet’s time was about 35 lt. of water. This means that the full water skin weighs 35 Kg. According to today’s measures, try to imagine a 10 years old girl bearing the burden of filling these water skins and bringing water for the wounded on the battle field. She must have been a fully developed able bodied maid to do that task. Consequently, this means that she was as explained earlier, in no danger of getting married and this is why her mother authorized the marriage.

Also ‘*Urwah Ibn Al-Zubair* reported that Lady ‘Ā’ishah (i.e. she’s his aunt) said, “*It was the feast day; the Abyssinians were playing with their lances and armors inside the mosque. The prophet asked me, ‘Do you wish to watch them playing?’ I said, ‘Yes.’ So he made me stand behind him screening me (from the people’s site), and I stood leaning my cheek on his. He said, ‘Continue playing Abyssinians.’ I watched until I was bored, so he asked me, ‘Have you had enough?’ I said, ‘Yes’ and left.*” [Recorded by Bukhari].

‘*Urwah* also reported that Lady ‘Ā’ishah said, “*The prophet screened me with his garment while I watched the Abyssinians play inside the mosque until I was the one who got bored. So esteem a young maid’s (excitement) when she watches entertainment.*” [Recorded by Bukhari].

Other detailed narrations by Bukhari, Nasā’ī, Ibn Hajar and others, explained that ‘*Omar* was about to prevent the Abyssinians from playing inside the mosque, but the prophet P.B.U.H. told him to let them continue for it was a feast day. On entering from the mosque in to his house through the joining door, the prophet noticed Lady ‘Ā’ishah’s excitement to watch the games. He asked her if she wanted to watch, and she said yes, so he raised his arm beside him leaning on the door’s side and threw his garment down from above his arm like a curtain, and then Lady ‘Ā’ishah stood inside the house behind the garment, placing her chin on his shoulder, leaning her cheek on his, and watched the games. Putting the previous together, it’s obvious that Lady ‘Ā’ishah’s was a young maid excited to watch the games, but it should also be noted here that although she was young, she must have reached the limits of body maturity and attractiveness that could make the prophet screen her and prevent others from looking at her. Another point is further stressed, which is the fact that she was tall enough to place her chin on his shoulder and lean her cheek on his. The prophet was described to be neither extremely tall nor short among men, but to the tall ones closer.

It was reported that, a short while after the prophet P.B.U.H. married Lady *Hafsah*, *‘Omar Ibn Al-Khattab* was informed by his wife that *Hafsah* was a little disobedient to the prophet, so he paid her a visit and said, “*O daughter, never disobey the prophet, don’t be deceived by your neighbor’s beauty and that the prophet loves her (i.e. referring to ‘Ā’ishah)*” [Recorded by Bukhari]. Hence, Lady *‘Ā’ishah* was tall, ruddy and beautiful as described in history books.

What’s always misunderstood by non-Muslims and a little bewildering for many Muslims is that: The wording of the original narrations about Lady *‘Ā’ishah*’s age upon marriage are always understood in the sense that sexual intercourse was practiced, while the exact wording in Bukhari never mentions that, for the word used in Arabic which is “بني” pronounced as “Bana,” literally means that she moved to the building her husband prepared for her to live under his care. This is different from the word “دخل” pronounced as “Dakhala,” which means “attain sexual intercourse.” Consequently, she could have moved to the prophet’s house to live under his care, but he didn’t have sexual intercourse with her until her puberty was complete. This is further stressed by another narration also recorded by Bukhari as reported by Lady *‘Ā’ishah* herself; she said, “*When the prophet married me, my mother came to me and took me into his house and no one looked after me ever since that morning except the prophet P.B.U.H.*” This is a clearer narration given by Lady *‘Ā’ishah* herself emphasizing and explaining what she meant by the word “Bana” stressing that she lived under the prophet’s care till the moment of his death. This makes it crystal clear that she was never abused or mistreated in any way; on the contrary, the prophet took care of her in a way that’s obviously appreciated in her own wording of the event. Their love towards each other was expressed by them both in many occasions. When the prophet was asked by *‘Amr Ibn Al-‘Ass* about the most beloved person to his heart among all Muslims, he answered saying *‘Ā’ishah*. *‘Amr* said, “*I meant among men, O prophet.*” So the prophet said, “*Her father.*” Although *Abu Bakr* was his closest companion ever since their youth, the prophet didn’t say *Abu Bakr*, he said “*her father.*” This emphasizes how much he loved her and found tranquility in her companionship.

History also proves that through this marriage the prophet P.B.U.H. succeeded in educating Lady *‘Ā’ishah* and preparing her to become the most knowledgeable woman in the history of Islam. The companions, their followers, and all Muslim scholars built many opinions on her reports and narrations. Even the elders of the companions asked her about jurisprudential issues after the prophet’s departure. *Abu Musa Al-Ash‘ary*, the famous companion said, “*Never did we (i.e. the companions) doubt a tradition and went consulting ‘Ā’ishah, except that we found her having some knowledge about it.*” [Recorded by Tirmidhī].

If you study Lady *‘Ā’ishah*’s history well, you will be amazed to find that more than 2000 narrations about the prophet’s deeds and teachings were reported by her. They cover a wide range of issues including the explanation of some verses in the Holy Qur’an, jurisprudential opinions, Islamic morals and manners, and the prophet’s life. The high ranked gift Lady *‘Ā’ishah* had in memorizing, narrating, teaching and explaining jurisprudential issues was a corner stone for Muslim scholars. Her students alone came to around 200 during her life. She was the beacon of religious knowledge for a period of forty eight years after the prophet’s departure. Because of her young age, she was highly effective in carrying his mission forward.

This was the wife whom the prophet requested to be nursed in her room when he sensed the approach of his death. The wife who held the prophet's head between her hands leaning on her lap when he passed away. The wife described by the prophet as his most beloved person among all people. The wife who lived 48 years after the prophet's departure teaching to his followers how he lived and what he taught. The wife who narrated about 2210 of the prophetic traditions, and by that, she became the one who told the maximum number of prophetic traditions among all of his family members. When she grew old, the companions' sons and daughters used to visit her asking about issues related to their marital lives; she was regarded a mother for them all. Once newly wedded young husbands went to her asking if they could kiss their wives while fasting, they were afraid this could stimulate their sexual lust while they should abstain from practicing any sexual activity and concentrate on their worship. Her answer was, "*The prophet used to kiss me while fasting, but who can control his lusts like the prophet did?*" [Recorded by Muslim]. Could this be how a raped child describes her rapist?! Read further her description of the man, the loving husband and friend whom she described to her students after his death, may you realize how unjust the accusation at hand is.

Lady 'Ā'ishah said, "*The prophet P.B.U.H. had a shining face that shone like the moon. He was the most handsome among all people with the most shining cuticle. Never had I heard anyone describing him except by comparing him to the full moon amidst the night. One would say, 'We would look at the full moon and say he is more beautiful in our eyes.' You can notice his anger and content on his face. When he was content or happy, his face was like a mirror reflecting light on your face, and when he was angry at something, the color of his face changed and his eyes reddened.*" [Recorded by Abu Na'eem in Dala'el Al-Nobowa].

"He had the most beautiful neck among all people, it was neither tall nor short. What appeared to the sun from his neck looked like a silver jug with golden gangues sparkling with the whites of silver and the redness of gold, and what's hidden under his clothes beneath his neck shone like the full moon." [Recorded by Baihaqy and Ibn Asaker].

"The prophet P.B.U.H. had a broad hairless chest, like the mirror in its sternness and flatness. None of his flesh was flabby, and it was as shiny as the moon in its full night. His navel was connected to the upper part of his chest with short hairs led like a rod, besides which, his belly and chest were hairless."

"The prophet's eyes were big and beautiful with black colored iris. His eye lashes were long and dense that they almost merged." [Recorded by Baihaqy and Ibn Asaker]

"Whenever the Prophet was given the opportunity to choose between two affairs, he always chose the easiest and the most convenient. But if he were certain that it is sinful, he would stay as far away as he could from it. He never avenged himself, but if the sanctity of Allah was violated he would. That would be for Allah's sake not for himself. He was the last one to get angry and the first to be satisfied. His hospitality and generosity were matchless. His gifts and endowments manifested a man who does not fear poverty." [Recorded by Bukhari].

This was the description given by the wife who reported that once angry with the prophet, he asked her to choose between divorce and accepting to be his wife in this life and the next. She answered unhesitatingly, *“But I choose you, O prophet.”* Then she asked him not to tell his other wives of her response when he gives them the same choice; she was hoping to remain his only wife. Would the previous be the acts or descriptions given by a raped child to the man who abused her?! The previous couldn’t be but the words of a wife who loved her husband passionately. Muslims ascribe the false accusation of pedophilia to the misunderstanding of the accusers.

A Different Opinion:

Some contemporary scholars and researchers argued that the traditions mentioning Lady ‘Ā’ishah’s age upon marriage were weak and undependable. Many scholars were not convinced with their argument. For the sake of a complete honest study that can protect those who seek the truth from confusion, these scholars stated the following:

1. The source of all reports in *Bukhari* that clearly state Lady ‘Ā’ishah’s age upon moving into the prophet’s house, was the famous follower *“Hishām Ibn ‘Urwah Ibn Al-Zubair”*. He was the son of Lady ‘Ā’ishah’s nephew. Lady ‘Ā’ishah died before he was born by about 4 years, and all of the reports he ascribed to her were as he stated, what he learned from his father. The dilemma here is that the narrations of Lady ‘Ā’ishah’s age were all given by him in the last 10 years of his life, when his age was beyond 71 and after he immigrated to Iraq. These traditions were all reported by his Iraqi students. Although he was a very well-known scholar and narrator of the prophetic traditions in Madinah; yet, through the decades he lived and taught in Madinah, none of his students there ever reported such narrations about Lady ‘Ā’ishah’s age. Many great renowned scholars have learned from him in Madinah like Imam *Mālek Ibn Anas*, who is one of the most famous jurists in the history of Islam, and the most famous jurist of Madinah. Imam *Mālek* never reported any narration from *Hishām* regarding Lady ‘Ā’ishah’s age though he was the first scholar to collect the prophetic traditions and the reports mentioned by the followers. He collected his book before *Bukhari* by more than 50 years. Not only *Mālek* in Madinah but in Iraq itself, some of the most famous traditionists there didn’t report these narrations like *Hammad Ibn Salamah* and *Hammad Ibn Zayd* who were both among the 2nd century scholars and coevals of *Hishām*. Some famous scholars criticized *Hishām*’s narrations reported from Iraq like *Abdul-Rahman Ibn Shaybah* (died in 2nd century A.H.) who said, *“Hishām was a trusted source; no one ever denied any of his reports except after he moved to Iraq, as he started confusing his narrations, and ascribed to his father narrations he heard from others.”* Also *Abdul-Rahman Ibn Kharash* (died 283 A.H.) said, *“I was told that Mālek denied Hishām’s narrations to the people of Iraq and he didn’t accept them.”* He also said, *“He visited Kufa (i.e. a famous city in Iraq) three times, in one he said, ‘I heard ‘Ā’ishah”, in the second he said, ‘My father told me that he heard from ‘Ā’ishah,’ and in the third visit he said, ‘My father heard ‘Ā’ishah say.’”* Scholar *Abul-Hassan Al-Qattan* said, *“He (i.e. Hishām) changed before his death but we never noticed this on him earlier.”* All of the previous should indicate that upon his old age, *Hishām* could have reported incorrect traditions out of confusion and forgetfulness.

2. If you were to read in Islamic history books you will find that people's ages were never estimated in a solid trustable manner. Back then people didn't keep records of birth-dates like we do today. Lady 'Ā'ishah's age upon getting engaged to the prophet varied. In a narration by Imam *Muslim*, it was seven, and in others it was six. Consequently, when you add the three years between the engagement and marriage, you will find that she could have been 9 or 10 upon moving to the prophet's house. Some scholars like *Ibn Qutaibah* (213-276 AH), who was a coeval of Bukhari recorded in his book "*Al-Ma'aref*" that Lady 'Ā'ishah died after immigration by 58 years at the age of 70. This means that when the prophet married her she was above 13 years of age.
3. *Shams Ad-Deen Al-Dhahaby*, the famous scholar, reported in his book, "*Seyar A'alam Al-Nubala'*" on the authority of *Abdurrahman Ibn Zenad* (who was among the students of *Hishām Ibn 'Urwah* and died 174 A.H.) that, "*Lady Asmaa' was older than her sister Lady 'Ā'ishah by 10 years.*" It is mentioned in many traditions and history books that Lady *Asmaa'* immigrated to Madinah after the prophet immediately and she was 27 at that time. This means that Lady 'Ā'ishah was over 18 when she moved in to the prophet's house. This was further stressed by the knowledgeable historian *Ibn Kathir* in his epic book, "*Al-Bedayah Wal-Nehayah*" in Vol.8 where he stated that, "*Lady Asmaa' was older than her sister 'Ā'ishah by 10 years and she died in the year 73 A.H. at the age of 100.*" This comes in parallel with *Ibn Zenad's* narration and means that Lady 'Ā'ishah was over 18 when she moved into the prophet's house.
4. The prophet P.B.U.H. didn't allow it for those under 15 to join the army on the battle field, as came in Bukhari on the authority of *Al-Bara' Ibn Mālek* that he and '*Abdullah Ibn 'Omar* were not allowed to join the army of Badr for they were still underage. It is known historically that '*Abdullah* immigrated when he was above eleven and beneath twelve years of age. *Al-Bara'* said, "*Ibn 'Omar and I were deemed underage on the day of Badr.*" [Recorded by Bukhari]. Also *Ibn Hajar Al-Askalany*, in his book "*Al-Esabah Fi Tamyeez As-Sahabah*," stated the following about '*Abdullah Ibn 'Omar*, "*It is an established fact that he (i.e. 'Abdullah) was 13 on the day of Badr. He embraced Islam with his father, and he was presented to the prophet on the day of Badr, but the prophet deemed him underage and sent him back home. On 'Uhud's battle the same thing happened. Later on, on the battle of confederates, the prophet allowed him to contribute; he was 15 by then.*" Hence, if the prophet didn't allow boys under 15 to follow the army to the battle field, how come he allowed Lady 'Ā'ishah to join the army as a nurse on '*Uhud* when she was still 10? Things don't add up. (This narration was mentioned in page 320).
5. *At-Tabari*, the famous historian, in his book, "*Tarikh Al-Rusuli wal Mulook*," (History of prophets and kings), said the following, "*In the pre-Islamic era, Abu Bakr got married twice; his first wife was 'Fatilah,' he had two children with her: 'Abdullah and Asmaa'. Later on, he married 'Umm Rawman,' who gave birth to 'Abdurrahman and 'Ā'ishah. All four children were born before the advent of Islam.*" [Vol.3]. From this we understand that Lady 'Ā'ishah was born before the advent of Islam. Assuming she was born a few weeks earlier, and knowing that the immigration took place after the advent of Islam by 13 years, and knowing that Lady 'Ā'ishah

moved into the prophet's house after immigration by one and a half years; therefore, she should have been at least 15 at that time.

6. Bukhari recorded that Lady 'Ā'ishah said, "I didn't start realizing the events occurring around me during my childhood except after my parents were both Muslims. Every day the prophet visited us twice, once in the morning and once before sunset. Later on, when the persecution of the Makkan pagans reached its peak, Abu Bakr decided to immigrate to Abyssinia....." Commentators agree that this narration was referring to the second immigration to Abyssinia that took place in the 5th year after the advent of Islam, which was the year 8 B.H. Consequently, if Lady 'Ā'ishah was only 6 years old during that event, and she moved into the prophet's house 1.5 years A.H., therefore, her age was: $8+6+1.5 = 15.5$ at least when she moved into the prophet's house.

What I have stated was no more than a verification to the fact that there are some differences between the narrations indicating the age of Lady 'Ā'ishah upon moving into the prophet's house. Traditionists insist that these reports are not strong enough to stand as evidence on the fallacy of the narrations reported by *Hishām Ibn 'Urwah* and recorded in Bukhari. Whether they have consummated the marriage by attaining sexual intercourse at that time or not, is something that could never be known for sure. Nonetheless, all recorded narrations from trusted sources including Bukhari prove that Lady 'Ā'ishah was an early developer able bodied maid. Finally, all reports and narrations by Lady 'Ā'ishah herself totally refute the accusations or the idea of being abused or mistreated in any way by the prophet P.B.U.H. On the contrary, they all prove in a manifest indisputable manner that she loved him passionately, which—in my opinion—is what matters. May Allah guide us all to the truth, Amen.



Finally, I would like to address Muslims everywhere: The big difference in age between any married couple is neither a *Sunnah* nor a religious duty to defend or promote it. It's not even mentioned anywhere in the Qur'an. You should realize that our time is different from the prophet's time. More than 1400 years have elapsed, so please wake up. Nowadays, the closer the ages of the married couple, the easier they will be able to understand each other and succeed in conquering the problems they face in this mad life we're living. So it's okay to explain your faith, but please don't propagate wrong ideas in the process.

After what you've read, would it not be worth exploring as to why someone who had spent the first 54 years of his life as a righteous monogamous person, and in such peaceful abstinence from the good things of life, would suddenly be compelled to marry more than once? What was the urge? Anyone with the least sense of justice should absolutely be eager to know the reasons behind this plurality of marriages.

8. Muhammad, a Womanizer or a Merciful Human?

“A prophet with 9 wives, what kind of prophethood is that! Prophethood of rapists and sex-hungry people of course.” [A fellow non-Muslim, 2010]. Among the most common misunderstood points about Prophet Muhammad is his multiple marriages. Many people take it as an indication that he was a womanizer. Understanding the true circumstances under which those marriages occurred and knowing the quality of the prophet’s wives totally refute this misconception. The next few pages is no more than a summary of the circumstances under which those marriages occurred. May this lift the misunderstanding and clarify the necessity behind which those marriages came to pass.

Allah says in the Qur’an addressing Prophet Muhammad,

“We have not sent you save as a mercy for all creatures.” [The Qur’an (21:107)].

Prophet Muhammad P.B.U.H. said, *“The one who takes care of a widow or a poor person is like a warrior fighting for the cause of Allah, or like a person who fasts during the day and prays all night.”* [Recorded by Bukhari].

Lady Hafsa: She was the daughter of ‘Omar Ibn Al-Khattab, the prophet’s second minister after *Abu Bakr*. She and her husband were among the first to embrace Islam. They immigrated to Abyssinia then to Madinah. On the battle of Badr, her husband was fatally wounded and died after the battle. Known to have inherited the serious nature of her father, she remained single at her father’s house for a while. Distressed to see her like this, ‘Omar sought a proper husband for his still young daughter; she was 19 years old at that time. He offered her to *Othman Ibn Affan* but *Othman* declined. He then offered her to *Abu Bakr*, but the latter didn’t reply concealing something from ‘Omar. A few days later, Prophet Muhammad P.B.U.H. proposed to marry her. ‘Omar accepted immediately longing for the honor of being related to the Prophet through marriage. ‘Omar reported that *Abu Bakr* later on told him, *“I didn’t reply because I heard the prophet mention Hafsa, so I doubted that he may propose to her himself. I couldn’t reveal the prophet’s secret. If the prophet didn’t propose to her, I would have accepted to have her as my wife.”* [Recorded by Bukhari]. Prophet Muhammad took Lady *Hafsa* as his wife so as to protect and support the honorable lady and widowed daughter of his faithful companion and minister. The prophet was 55 years old at that time. Being known of her firm nature and strong personality, Lady *Hafsa* was the one entrusted on the complete copy of the Qur’an that was written during the prophet’s life and gathered in *Abu Bakr*’s reign. This was after ‘Omar’s departure; may Allah be pleased with her.

Lady Zainab bint Khuzaimah: She was nicknamed “*Ummul-Masakeen*” or “Mother of paupers” because of her vast kindness and great care towards the poor and the needy. Her husband was martyred at the battle of ‘*Uhud*. When she was widowed, Prophet Muhammad sympathized with her condition and proposed to marry her. They were married in the fourth year A.H. while the prophet was 56 years old. She died two or three months after her marriage to the Prophet P.B.U.H., may Allah be pleased with her.

Lady Hind Bint Abi-‘Umayyah: Mostly known by her nickname, *Ummu-Salamah*. She was among the early women who embraced Islam along with her husband *Abu Salamah*, who was an extremely kind caring husband and she loved him so.

They embraced Islam in its early days and were among those who immigrated to Abyssinia escaping the pagans' torture campaign. Later on, after the prophet's immigration to Madinah, the couple took their young children and followed him there. In the course of the events, her husband received a severe wound during the battle of 'Uhud; he died in his wounds a short while later. She reported that at her husband's death, she repeated some words which he taught her after he learned them from the prophet P.B.U.H. She said, "*O Lord, I seek your refuge from my calamity and your generosity in substituting my loss with what's better.*" Some of the best companions proposed to marry her and take care of her and her young children, but she refused. The reason behind that according to her own words, "*None of them was better than Abu Salamah.*" About 5 or 6 months later, seeking to support her and take care of her 4 children, Prophet Muhammad P.B.U.H. proposed to marry her and she accepted. She warned the prophet against the burden of taking care of an old woman and 4 young children, but the prophet said, "*As for the old age, it has caught up with me as it has done to you, and as for your children, they are my children and I'm responsible for them.*" About that event, she said, "*And Allah surly accepted my supplications. He gave me in substitution for Abu Salamah one who's better: Allah's messenger P.B.U.H.*" [Recorded by Tirmidhī and Nasā'ī]. By marrying *Ummu-Salamah*, Prophet Muhammad was able to support and taking care of the noble lady and her children. He demonstrated through example how to raise and bring-up stepchildren, and how to take care of orphans in the best manner possible. Her son, 'Omar, used to say, "*I was brought up in the lap of the Prophet.*" He always found great pride in that. As for *Ummu-Salamah* herself, she was a very intelligent woman. Her ability to memorize and teach what she learned from the prophet made her a very important reference for the followers. She reported about 370 prophetic traditions. These narrations were of great help in teaching Muslims how to take care of stepchildren, and how to be a successful stepfather. They are all available in the books of Hadith.

Lady Zaynab bint Jahsh: The Prophet's marriage to his cousin, *Zaynab bint Jahsh*, who was divorced by his freed slave and adopted son, *Zayd Ibn Al-Hareth*, demonstrated that it is lawful for a man to marry a woman who was divorced by his adopted son. It further emphasized that the adopted son is not related to his adoption father by blood; therefore, the prohibition law applied on fathers from marrying the ex-wives of their sons doesn't apply in the case of adoption. This was refused by most Arabs and forbidden before Islam. Arabs treated their adopted sons like their own biological sons. They gave them their surnames and granted them the right to inheritance. This was later on forbidden in Islam. The story started early before the advent of Islam. *Zayd Ibn Al-Hareth* was taken captive as a child in the course of the Arabian tribal wars. Thereafter, he was sold as a slave. On spotting him in the market, Lady *Khadijah* pitied his condition; she bought him and presented him to her husband, Muhammad, knowing that the boy shall receive the best treatment. Shortly after that, *Zayd's* father—who had been searching for his son—came to the prophet and asked him to free his son. The prophet told him that *Zayd* is free to go with him if he wished to do so, but *Zayd* asked to stay with Prophet Muhammad. The Prophet immediately gave *Zayd* his freedom and adopted him as his own son. He took him to the market and shouted out, "*O people of Quraysh, I hold you my witnesses that this is my son, he can inherit me and I can inherit him.*" After that, the people of Quraysh used to address the child as *Zayd Ibn Muhammad*, that's *Zayd* the son of Muhammad. Years later, after the advent of Islam, Prophet Muhammad authorized

Zayd's marriage to his cousin, Lady *Zaynab*. Their marriage emphasized that a slave or a freedman could equally marry a free-born noble woman. The Prophet started the hard task of rooting out the old customs with himself and his closest kin and relatives. After a while, and as could happen between any married couple, problems erupted between *Zayd* and *Zaynab*. Some reports stated that Lady *Zaynab* gave *Zayd* a hard time and was disobedient. *Zayd* complained to the prophet several times, but the prophet always reconciled between them and ordered *Zayd* to be patient. A while later, divorce occurred. The prophet P.B.U.H. proposed to Lady *Zaynab*. She was a pious woman known of her devoutness in worship and her generosity towards the poor and the needy. At that time, Arabs were still accustomed to treating their adopted children as their own biological children. Consequently, if an adopted son divorced his wife, his adoption father cannot marry that divorced woman. Islam rooted out these wrong customs by teaching that adopted sons are different from biological sons. The former are not blood relatives. As such, all marriage and inheritance laws applied to biological sons do not apply. The prophet had to set an example for all Muslims and started the hard task of rooting out the false customs by himself.

Lady *Juwayriyah bint Al-Hareth*: She was one of the captives taken by Muslims after their battle with “*Banul-Mustaleq*” Jewish clan. Her father, *Al-Hareth*, was the chief of their clan, and she was a very proud lady. Like the other captivated common people of her clan, she became one of the distributed captives, and found herself in the house of a companion named *Thabit Ibn Qays*. Refusing to live in captivity, not even for one day, she sought a freedom-pact with *Thabit*. The pact was that she would give him a certain amount of money against which, he would free her and she can live peacefully in Madinah. After making this arrangement, she asked to meet the Prophet P.B.U.H. to seek financial assistance. She was greatly distressed not knowing how to pay her debt, and emotionally unable to accept her captivity and her clan’s great loss. Lady ‘*A’ishah* reported that when she stood in-front of the Prophet, she said, “*O Prophet, I am Juwayriya, daughter of Al-Harith, the leader of our people, I have been afflicted with what you see. I found myself a captive in the share of Thabit Ibn Qays. I have entered an emancipation pact with him to free myself, and I have come to seek your financial support to pay my debt.*” [Recorded by Ibn Ishaq]. Her wounded pride and suffering as a noble woman who had just lost everything was heartfelt. The prophet decided to resolve the matter, heal her wounded pride and replace the feeling of humiliation with respect and love. He immediately agreed to pay all of her debt, set her free; moreover, he offered to take her as his wife. Understanding what this offer meant, Lady *Juwayriyah* accepted it immediately. On that day, a hundred families from “*Banul-Mustaleq*” clan were all set free by the companions the moment they learned about the marriage. *Banul-Mustaliq* clan were now related to the Prophet through marriage. The enemies of yesterday became potential allies. The defeated clan was now so honored than to keep any of them in captivity. By this brilliant act, the hearts of Lady *Juwayriyah* and her people were won. Many of them became interested in learning about Islam. Not long after that, they embraced it willingly and became allies with Muslims. Lady ‘*A’ishah* said about this incident, “*Because of the prophet’s marriage with Juwayriyah, one hundred families from Banul-Mustaliq became free. I know no other woman who proved to be of a greater blessing for her people.*” [Recorded by Ibn Ishaq].

Lady Ummu-Habibah: The daughter of *Abu Sufyan Ibn Harb*, the notable leader of *Quraysh*, who for a very long time was a bitter enemy to the Prophet and Muslims. Nonetheless, his daughter and her husband were among the earliest to embrace Islam. They immigrated to Abyssinia escaping the persecution of the Makkan pagans and of her father. Shortly after reaching Abyssinia, her husband died. At that time, Muslims in Abyssinia were living as refugees; they were barely able to provide for their own families and had too little to support *Ummu-Habibah* with. Consequently, the noble lady who was raised in the house of the richest man and leader of his clan, was totally alone in a strange country with no one to protect or take care of her. Of course, returning to her father who was the leader of the pagans' army at that time was totally rejected by the faithful pious woman. Begging her way through life or depending on others for sustenance was also unacceptable. She depended on her jewelry for a while; after selling most of what she had, she was left out of options. The prophet learned about her condition from the Muslims returning from Abyssinia. He dispatched one of his companions to king Negus on a hasty mission. As the king of Abyssinia and the caretaker of its subjects, the companion asked him for *Ummu-Habibah's* hand on behalf of the prophet. *Ummu-Habibah* accepted with great joy. She reported the incident saying, *"One day, a maid from King Negus's castle came to the house I was staying in; she asked to see me. When I permitted her in, she said, 'The king tells you that the prophet has sent asking for your hand in marriage', so I said, 'May Allah bode you well,' and I gave her two silver bracelets and two necklaces along with some rings I still had. I sent for Khaled Ibn Sa'eed appointing him as my deputy. At evening, King Negus gathered all Muslims, and gave a speech saying, 'All praise be to Allah, The King, The All-Holy, The Most-Revered, The Almighty. I bear witness that there is no God but Allah, and that Muhammad is his messenger and servant, and the one whom Jesus son of Mary told of his coming. The Prophet has sent me a message proposing to Ummu-Habibah, and I accepted his proposal, and this is her dowry, 400 dinars.'* Then Khaled Ibn Sa'eed spoke saying, *'I thank Allah and ask his forgiveness, I bear witness that there is no God but Allah, and that Muhammad is his messenger and servant, whom He has sent with guidance and the religion of truth to make it prevail above all religions despite how the deniers might hate so. On behalf of Ummu-Habibah, I accept the prophet's proposal and I give her to him as his lawfully wedded bride, may Allah bless their marriage.'* [Recorded by Ibn Sa'd, Qurtoby and others]. From this action, Muslims learned that marriage in absentia is permitted in similar cases. As an honoring for the prophet, King Negus paid a big dowry on his behalf. This marriage in absentia demonstrated how practical and easy Islam is, both as a religion and a way of life. Thereafter, the prophet P.B.U.H. took it upon himself to take care of the noble faithful lady, and she loved and revered him so. May Allah be pleased with her.

Lady Safiyyah: Daughter of *Huyai Ibn Akhtab*, one of the leaders and knowledgeable rabbis of the Jewish tribe "*Banu Nadir*" who betrayed their peace pact with the Prophet P.B.U.H. (Their story was told in p.286). She witnessed her family's schemes and conspiracies against the Prophet for a very long time. But as Allah promised, he protected his messenger, and all of the Jews' schemes were in vain. She lost many members of her family in this course, including her father, brother and newly wedded husband. After the siege of *Khaibar*, she fell in captivity. From what she reported of her own story is the following:

“None of my brothers or my cousins was more beloved to my father and my uncle than me. I never met any of them alongside any of their children except that they carried me from amidst them. When the prophet reached Qubaa’ at Madinah, my father and my uncle ‘Abu Yasser’ went out early the next morning to meet him. They did not return until sunset. They looked exhausted and about to collapse from tiredness. I ran to receive them as I always did but none of them even looked at me. They were speaking together and I heard my uncle asking my father, ‘Is it him?’ My father answered, ‘Yes, by Allah’s name it’s him.’ My uncle asked again, ‘Are you sure you recognized his description and characters? My father replied, ‘Yes, by Allah I did.’ My uncle asked, ‘What is it that you conceal for him inside your heart?’ My father replied, ‘Hatred and enmity till the day I die.’ ” [Recorded by Ibn Hishām and Baihaqy]. This narration emphasizes a lot about the hatred and enmity that Jews have for Arabs and Muslims in particular. Jews have always wished that the last prophet they were informed of in the Torah—who would be like Moses—would be one of their own kin, the descendants of Israel, and not from their Arab brethren, the descendants of their uncle, Ishmael (we have discussed this earlier in p.165). Lady *Safiyyah* also reported that a few days before the Prophet P.B.U.H. besieged their fortress at *Khaibar*, she saw in a dream the moon falling from the sky into her lap. When she informed her husband of this vision, he slapped her very hard injuring her face and said, *“Are you wishing for the king of Madinah to become your husband?”* Then the Muslims’ siege overtook them. Her husband was killed and she fell in captivity. When she was brought before the prophet, he proposed to free her and take her as his wife. She accepted the proposal, and after her lawful mourning period, they got married. Raised from being a captivated right hand possession to being the Prophet’s wife helped her witness with her own eyes the truth of Muslims and Islam. This marriage made her dive into that community of men and women who have submitted their hearts and minds to their Creator. Knowing the crimes of her family, and then becoming the Prophet’s wife, was certainly a blessing. After this marriage, most of the captivated Jews changed their attitude and started to learn about Islam and understand its teachings more closely. In his final illness, Lady *Safiyyah* sat beside the prophet and said, *“O prophet, I wish Allah would cure you and inflict me with your pains.”* Some of the prophet’s wives felt jealous and expressed their denial, but the prophet chided them saying, *“Do you mock her feelings. By Allah, she is truthful and honest.”* May Allah be please with Lady *Safiyyah*.

Lady Maymunah: She willingly presented herself to the prophet and asked him to take her as his wife. Through her marriage, Muslims learned that a woman may present herself for marriage to the worthy man and that Islam allows it with no embarrassment. The prophet praised her faith along with her 3 sisters and named them *“The 4 faithful sisters.”* She was a knowledgeable woman, some narrations relate how she corrected for *Ibn ‘Abbās* some of his wrong opinions, may Allah be pleased with her.

From the previous we have come to learn that none of those women whom the prophet married was a virgin, all of them were known of their piety and righteousness, some of them were older than the prophet, others were as old as him, and some were younger, all of them reported their content and acceptance to his marriage proposal, and all of them were widows who needed protection and care. After learning about the circumstances that encompassed each of the prophet’s marriages, it’s now time to take a look at their results. These marriages were of great wisdom and foresight, which could never be attributed except to our Creator, the All-Knowing.

Prophet Muhammad P.B.U.H. as the seal of all prophets and teacher of the creator's final testament to mankind was to deliver Allah's message not only to men, but also to women. All mankind need prophetic guidance, males and females alike. If you study the prophet's life carefully, you will find that he was not only teaching and delivering his message, but he was also preparing some of his students to carry forth his mission and deliver the Islamic teachings to all people. In this context, the prophet chose the best and most pious from among the faithful women to support him in his mission, exactly as he has done with the men.

Women have private questions that need answers, and they feel embarrassed to ask them to a man. For example, some women went to Lady 'Ā'ishah asking about the end of the menstruation period and when to resume performing their prayers. Lady 'Ā'ishah explained to them what she learned from the prophet saying, "*Wait until you see the white piece of cloth.*" Meaning that to make sure the period has ended, a woman should whip her private part with a white piece of cloth, if its color remained white and didn't hold any yellowness, then the woman is pure and can resume attending to her prayers. Of course, it is incredibly embarrassing for any woman to ask such question to a man, set aside the fact that it would be done in front of other people inside the mosque. There are tens of other questions that women ask related to their body functions, the other sex, the most secret affairs they share with their husbands, etc. By all means, these questions need divine guidance like all other matters in life, and they equally need feminine mentors. It was for this objective that the Prophet was obliged to marry some of the most pious believing women, belonging to different tribes and clans, having different ages and different intellectual levels, but widely known and popular among their people, through his life with them, he was able to complete his mission by educating them about their religion. Later on, they served as pillars of knowledge for all women regarding all feminine issues.

Today, after about 1400 years of their departure, hundreds of books about women's jurisprudence are written and available for all Muslims. These books convey the opinions of jurists regarding many feminine issues. The majority of these opinions are built on the knowledge received from the prophet's wives, may Allah be pleased with them. Subjects like purification, rituals performed during menstruation and pregnancy, praying, giving alms and charity, fasting, performing pilgrimage, dressing and ornaments, marital life, motherhood, relating to husbands, raising children, divorce, etc., are all dully discussed, explained, and all possible questions were answered and dealt with.

Like any normal human being, the prophet's life was divided into his social life that was visible to all people, and his private life that could only be observed by his wives. His private life held many teachings and facets that all Muslims need to learn, from the prayers he observed inside his house to the way he bathed. These noble ladies, or as we call them, "Mothers of believers," delivered, most faithfully the knowledge they acquired from the prophet P.B.U.H. They shared his private life with their students from the second generation. This created a complete picture for the prophet's life for all Muslims, men and women. Allah says in the Qur'an: "*It is not lawful for you (O Muhammad) to take more wives after this, nor to change them for others, even if their beauty attracts you, except those whom your right hand possesses. Allah is Ever a Watcher over all things.*" [The Qur'an (33:52)].

This verse implies that the prophet contracted those marriages for a certain purpose. If you study the history of this period, you will be able to realize that those multiple marriages were a necessity originated from the nature of the tribal life that was still deeply rooted among the people of that era. This needed a practical solution to merge the different tribes and races back again into one family. There was a divine purpose behind them as implied and explained; when it was achieved, a restriction was placed upon the prophet. Think about it, if the Qur'an was his invention and he was a sex hungry womanizer, would he have said the above verse and prevented himself from marrying any woman he likes?! It's important to know that the prophet took through his life two concubines whom he educated and emancipated. They both embraced Islam and lived in Madinah the rest of their lives. One of them was **Lady Maria the Coptic** who bore the prophet his beloved son Ibrahim. The reports differ as to whether he married those two ladies or not. Either way, they lived with him and received similar treatment to that of his wives. They are both revered and respected by all Muslims.

Another important point worth mentioning here is that the prophet's treatment to his wives was so honorable and noble; although his life was hard and full tribulations, none of his wives regretted marrying him. *Anas*, the prophet's companion and the one who was honored by serving the prophet for ten years, said about the prophet's hard life, "According to my knowledge, the Prophet never tasted a flattened bread loaf, nor did he ever see roasted mutton." [Recorded by Bukhari and Ibn Mājah].

Lady 'Ā'ishah also described their hard life to her nephew saying, "Over two months would elapse during which we saw three crescents, and yet no fire was kindled in the Prophet's house (i.e. they did not cook any food)." Her nephew 'Urwah asked her, "O Aunt, what did you eat for sustenance?" Lady 'Ā'ishah said, "The two blacks: ripen dates and water." [Recorded by Bukhari and Muslim].

Lots of information about the prophet's hard life was reported by his wives and companions. Despite these hardships, his wives never hated their life with him. Once when tired from this hard life, they complained and agreed to ask the prophet for increase in what he provides. The prophet was troubled because he didn't have any time to go back to trading. Allah ordered him to give them the opportunity to choose between two things, "O Prophet! Tell your wives: 'If you desire the life of this world, and its glitter, then come! I will make a provision for you and set you free in a handsome manner (i.e. divorce). But if you desire Allah and His Messenger, and the abode of the Hereafter, then verily, Allah has prepared for the good-doers amongst you an enormous reward.' " [The Qur'an (33:28-29)].

"Nay, but I choose Allah and his messenger," was their unhesitant answer though each one of them answered separately as they later on reported. Now could the man deserving such an answer be a sex hungry womanizer, or was he a noble devoted merciful husband whose loss could never be compensated?! I leave the judgment to the reader's conscience, may Allah guide us all to the truth.



9. Islamic Penal Code, Severe or Detering?

The Islamic penal code has always been a controversial issue among Muslims and non-Muslims alike. Many people have attacked it claiming that it's a severe brutal code. "*Chopping off hands, stoning to death, beheading and flogging should not be the punishments imposed by righteous human beings,*" this has always been the argument followed by many people in reaching the conclusion that Islam is not divine, but it's a bloody devilish religion. In order to understand the penal code in Islam, let's identify the deeds considered crimes in the Islamic law, and explain the conditions required for proving each crime, the punishments described for each of them, the limits of its implementation, and the wisdom behind prescribing such punishment.

First it's important to know that Prophet Muhammad said, "*Three are not held accountable for what they do: the child until he reaches puberty, the sleeping person until he wakes up, and the insane person until he gets back his senses.*" [Recorded by Ahmad, An-Nasā'ī and others] The previous 3 categories of people are exempted from punishment. It's an Islamic duty to take care of minors, those who are helpless and those who are mentally incompetent, and protect them. In the Qur'an and Prophet Muhammad's *Sunnah*, the following **crimes** were defined, they are called "*Hudud*":

1. Murder.
2. Theft.
3. Fornication and Adultery.
4. Leveling false accusation against chaste women.
5. Drinking Liquor.
6. Spreading disorder (i.e. kidnapping, rape, armed robbery, terrorism, etc.)



1. Murder

Allah says in the Qur'an, "*Believers, retribution is prescribed for you in cases of murder: the free man for the free man, the slave for the slave, the female for the female. If the killer is pardoned by the heir of the slain person, the agreed penalty should be equitably exacted and should be discharged in a handsome manner. This is an alleviation from your Lord and an act of grace. He who transgresses after this shall have a painful punishment. In [this law of] retribution there is life for you, O people of understanding, so that perhaps you will be mindful of God.*" [The Qur'an (2:178-179)].

About this Prophet Muhammad P.B.U.H. said:

"Whoever has a killed relative should choose between one of two things, either to have the killer killed, or redeem the killer." [Recorded by Bukhari and Muslim].

"Whoever has a killed relative should choose between one of three things, if he tries to deviate towards a fourth option, prevent him. He may request the killer's death, pardon the killer for the sake of Allah's reward, or pardon the killer and accept blood money." [Recorded by Abu Dāwud].

If an adult sane person fights with another and intentionally kills him or her, then if that person was caught red-handed, or the investigators were able to produce incontestable solid evidence to prove without any doubt that such a person did the crime, the judge grants the family of the victim one of three options:

1. Pardon the killer for the sake of Allah's reward.
2. Pardon the killer and accept blood money. (for simplicity, blood money is calculated to be the price of 35 Kg of silver)
3. Request the killer's death.

Although the understanding of the above verses was made clear in the prophet's own words, but many Muslims are always bewildered by the wording of the first verse where Allah says: "*the free man for the free man, the slave for the slave, the female for the female*", they say: "*Why should an innocent free man, an innocent slave or an innocent woman be killed for the crimes of their families or tribes, justice says that only killers should be killed to protect the community from their crimes.*" Absolutely true, only killers should be killed, and actually this is what the verse is saying, if you return to the reasons of revelation, you will be able to resolve the dilemma here. This verse was revealed at a time when there was some revengeful feud between 2 tribes, one of them transgressed the limits and decided to kill for every slave a free man and for every woman a man. The verse at hand was revealed to tell those transgressors that a free man should not be killed unless he has already killed another free man, a slave should not be killed unless he has already killed another slave, and a woman should not be killed unless she has killed another woman. Some jurists debated about whether a free man should be killed for killing a slave and vice versa. The majority said 'Yes', the killer should be killed to protect the community from his or her dangers, whether the killer was a free man, a slave or a woman. They took the following verse as their evidence:

"We prescribed for them in [the Torah]: 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 a wound for a wound. But, if anyone forgoes it, this shall be an expiation for him. Those who do not judge by what Allah has sent down are wrongdoers!" [The Qur'an (5:45)].

The verse is a reminder of Allah's law in the Torah. The wording in this verse indicate that only a killer should be killed, and it added to this law a new clause, that's the pardoning option in return for Allah's reward. It ends with a warning against transgressing the limits by deviating towards a choice which Allah did not reveal, and this is exactly what Prophet Muhammad explained to his companions in the mentioned traditions.

If the family of the murdered person demands the death of the killer, the judge issues a death sentence. Jurists differed in determining the manner in which the killer should be killed. Some said that he or she should be killed exactly in the same manner which he utilized in killing his victim, but the majority said that this is against the prophet's teachings when he said, "*If you kill, make it a quick death,*" so they decided to determine the fastest manner with which a person could be put to death. Decapitation was the choice of the big majority, a few others chose hanging. Electrocuting, Gas chamber, lethal injection and firing squads were all rejected by Muslim scholars and considered excruciating.

Some people think that killers should not be killed, but should be imprisoned for life. They think that killing killers means that we are no better than them. Well, Islam gave the victim's family the option to forgive and forgo, but in some cases forgiveness couldn't be an option. Try to imagine that a criminal kidnaps your wife, rapes her and then puts a couple of bullets in her head, would you forgive him?! What if the victim was not your wife but your daughter?! Some crimes could not be forgiven and the victim's family members could never find any comfort before the person who has done such a crime receives the proper punishment which he deserves. No father can live normally knowing that the rapist and murderer of his daughter still lives, so who exactly are you punishing here?! If you say that he is in prison, this will be of no consolation whatsoever. We have seen men who committed crimes and entered the prison just to kill the murderer of their children, so what you are promoting is nothing but more crimes. Punishing criminals with what they deserve is not against humanity. We might all find it repulsive, but actually it saves more lives than it takes.

When any person sees another being punished, he forgets the deed that resulted in the punishment. For example, if you see a death penalty being applied on a convicted criminal, there is no doubt that when you see him or her being tied helpless and led to the place where the penalty shall be applied, you pity him and wish that the procedures would be stopped. But if you remember that this convict shot dead another soul for the purpose of stealing the victim's money and gambling with it, if you look at the victim's orphaned children and widowed wife, if you look at his grieving mother or father, etc., you won't but approve to the application of the death penalty, set aside the chance that you could be the victim's son, daughter, father, mother, wife, etc. All kinds of punishment are brutal, but to be fair and reasonable, we must think of the criminal's deed and its consequences like we think of the punishment applied. Punishments are essential for protecting those who are innocent and the whole community from larger damages. In other words they have a twofold purpose, the first is to deter all people from committing any crimes, and the second is to purify the community from criminals and the corruption they disseminate. The reader here should know perfectly well that no punishment is applied on those who were impelled like being in a state of self-defense, or defending others against an assault.



2. Theft

Allah says in the Qur'an: *"Cut off the hands of thieves, whether a male or a female, as a [deterrent] punishment from Allah for what they have done. Allah is exalted in Might and All-Wise. **But whoever repents after his transgression and reforms; indeed, Allah will turn to him forgiveness. Indeed, Allah is Most-Forgiving and Ever-Merciful.**"* [The Qur'an (5:38-39)].

About this Prophet Muhammad P.B.U.H. said, *"O people; verily, the previous nations were doomed to perish because of their injustice. Whenever a person among their nobles committed theft they let him go, but whenever a person from among the common people stole something, they cut off his hand. I swear by Allah that if my daughter Fatimah steals, I shall cut off her hand."* [Recorded by Muslim].

The conditions set for applying the theft punishment:

1. The person accused of theft must be an adult sane person who is a citizen of the state, and not a wayfarer who is unaware of the applied laws.
2. He or she intentionally forces-open, unlocks, unfolds or breaks into the property of others.
3. He or she stole from this property what's equivalent to or exceeding the price of 35 grams of silver. The prophet P.B.U.H. said: *"There is no cutting in less than 10 dirhams."*
4. He or she was caught immediately after committing the crime, or the investigators were successful in submitting enough evidence to prove without any doubt his conviction.
5. The country is not suffering from famine or any national catastrophe.

'Omar Ibn Al-Khattab stopped the application of the theft punishment during the famine period, this was to ward off any suspicion that the person was impelled to steal out of hunger. Moreover, while bidding farewell one of his deputies, he asked him, *"What shall you do if a thief was arrested at your province?"* The deputy answered, *"I shall cut-off his hand."* *'Omar* said: *"And so shall I cut-off yours if a hungry man or an unemployed person comes complaining from your province. Allah destined us to rule over His servants to satisfy their hunger, shelter their bodies, and make it easy for them to practice their crafts. Only if we succeeded in providing them with these things, we get our reward from Allah. Know that Allah created the hands to work, if they don't find a righteous job, they shall search for one in wrongdoing, so occupy the hands of your subjects with what's lawful before they occupy you with what's unlawful."*

In theft, the victim has the right to forgive the thief before the case reaches the judge. If the victim forgoes and drops the charges, the police officers may let the thief go, and the criminal must return what he has stolen unless the victim forgoes in return for Allah's reward. Prophet Muhammad said, ***"Forgive one another before you raise the case to me, for if it reaches me, and the accused was convicted of the crime, then I must apply Allah's prescribed punishment."*** [Recorded by Abu Dāwūd]. If the victim does not drop the charges, the case is raised to the judge. If the judge found that the evidence submitted was enough to convict the criminal with theft, he has no choice but to order the application of the prescribed punishment. Any person found guilty of the previous points is sentenced to have his right hand cut off at the carpus. After this, his hand must be treated immediately and bandaged to stop the bleeding.

In Islam no punishment is applied unless the convicted criminal was found uncompelled to make his crime. Prophet Muhammad said, *"Allah has forgiven from the sins of my nation whatever they commit out of error, forgetfulness and whatever they do under compulsion."* [Authenticated by Albany]. The surrounding conditions and circumstances must be thoroughly studied, evaluated and weighed by the judge before any criminal is convicted. If a man steals some food out of hunger, or steals money to buy a highly expensive medicine for his ill mother, and he was convicted with theft, his hand is not cut-off, but he is sentenced to payback his debt, which in this case will be paid from the Muslims' treasury, and it is the ruler's job to make sure that he is employed and can provide for himself and his family their livelihood.

Putting thieves in prison and allowing them to mingle, creates mobs and increases their experience. Most of them come out and steal again; but this time, they make sure that they won't get caught. Besides, what's so useful in putting them in prison while the tax payers spend on their sustenance and the running costs of the prison? From the previous, it should be clear now that if the punishment for theft under the previously mentioned conditions was cutting off the thief's hand, no one would dare steal or even think about it. Meanwhile, if someone insisted on stealing and his hand was cutoff, then the society will be purified from thieves, which is beneficial for all people.



3. Fornication

Allah says in the Qur'an, *"The woman and man who fornicate, flog each one of them a hundred stripes. Let no pity for them withhold you from obeying Allah, if you truly believe in Allah and the Last Day, and let their punishment be witnessed by a group of believers. The male fornicator only [likes to] marry a fornicating or a pagan woman, and the female fornicator only [likes to] marry a fornicating or a pagan man, the (preference of such spouses) has been forbidden on the believers. Those who defame chaste women, and cannot bring forth four witnesses, shall be given eighty stripes. Do not accept their testimony ever after; they are transgressors."* [The Qur'an (24:2-3)].

If a free, sane, adult person have illicit sexual intercourse with another who is not his or her lawful spouse, they both have committed fornication and deserve the prescribed punishment. The crime occurs if the male's penis glans totally disappears inside the female's vagina. Of course no punishment is applied on those who are forced or raped but only on the one who commits this crime with his or her own free will.

Fornication could only be proven through one of the following means:

1. The person who has committed such a crime confesses four times in front of the judge and mentions clearly the glans's total entrance into the female. The confession of the male or the female does not condemn the other party involved, it's only against him or herself. Naming the other party involved should not even be requested.
2. Four known, sane, just, free men, testify to have witnessed with their own eyes clearly without any doubt the total intromission of a male's penis into the female's vagina. Each one of them must give his testimony in front of the same judging council, on the same hearing, aside the others. Every witness must describe the incident with its details; e.g. the date of the incident, the exact time, the exact place where it occurred and its description, the full description of the two partners, the assumed position, etc. **If only three testified and the fourth didn't, or the details mentioned by anyone of them was different from the others, then their testimonies are refused altogether and they are accused of defamation and perjury. Each one of them is sentenced to receive 80 stripes and his testimony is never accepted in court again.**

This was the 4th crime in our list. It should be clarified here that spying on others is forbidden in Islam. Allah says in the Qur'an, "*O believers, avoid suspicion, some suspicions are sinful, and do not spy on one another or backbite. Would any of you like to eat the flesh of his dead brother? No, you would hate it. So be mindful of Allah. Verily, Allah is ever relenting, most merciful.*" [The Qur'an (49:12)].

About this Prophet Muhammad said, "*Beware of suspicion for it is the most false of all tales. Don't ever spy or hunt for other people's secrets, don't hate one another, and be like brothers.*" [Recorded by Bukhari and Muslim].

One wonders, *what are the odds of proving the crime under discussion without spying?* Actually, this was never recorded to have happened anytime in the Islamic history. It's almost impossible to occur unless the fornicators were making a porn movie, or practicing illicit sex in a public place. Muslim scholars commented on this saying that the tougher the punishment, the more complicated is the evidence required for proving the crime.

Hence, from the hard means placed for proving this crime, one should understand how painful it is for a person living in a pure chaste community to be scandalized with such a crime. But if the crime was proven against any person without any doubts, then the punishment must be applied without any delay to protect the community from the consequences of having this abominable deed spreading among its citizens. Fornication results in so many crimes, like marital betrayal, honor killings, distorted family lineages, false ancestry cases, incest and unlawful marriages, etc. By all means, this is the worst crime among all those mentioned before.

All Muslim scholars agree that if a person fornicates, and no one knew of his or her crime, this person should repent silently and keep the crime a secret. He should not confess of what he has done unless a bigger crime was about to result from this sin. For example: If a married man committed adultery with a married woman, thereafter she became pregnant from him and gave birth to a girl. If it happens in the future that this girl falls in love with that man's son and they were about to get married, the man and the woman must confess to their crime; or else, the boy will marry his sister.

When a companion named *Ma'ez* went to confess that he committed adultery, *Abu Bakr* and *'Omar* advised him to keep silent and repent secretly, may Allah forgive him. Another companion told him that he should go and confess to the prophet. When he went to Prophet Muhammad and confessed, the prophet said to his companion, "*If you kept it a secret and advised him to repent silently it would have been better for you.*" From this, Muslim scholars agreed that if Allah kept your crime hidden from people's eyes, you should repent secretly and ask Allah for His forgiveness.

Bukhari and Muslim recorded that a man once came to the prophet in the mosque and said, "*O messenger, I have committed a crime that deserves punishment.*" The prophet didn't ask him about his crime and got up to lead the prayers. When the prayer was over, the man approached the prophet and repeated what he said earlier. The prophet said, "*Didn't you just pray with us?*" The man said, "*Yes.*" So the prophet said, "*Then Allah has forgiven your sin.*" The prophet also said, "*He who repents from his sins is like one who never sinned before.*" [Recorded by Ibn Mājah].

And when he was told that *Ma'ez* tried to escape when they started stoning him, the prophet said: *"You should have let him go, may Allah accept his repentance."* [Recorded by Abu Dāwood and others].

Based on the previous, Muslim scholars deduced that the person who commits a crime, and Allah protects him against getting caught, then he must repent secretly and should not speak of that crime unless this was the only way to prevent a bigger crime from happening as explained earlier.

As recorded in the *Sunnah* books, the punishment of unmarried fornicators is 100 stripes of medium strength that are neither damaging nor painless; they must be distributed on all of the body except: the head, the face, the belly, the chest and the groin areas, these must be avoided. The man is flogged in a standing position, wearing only short trousers to hide his private parts and the woman is flogged while sitting and wearing all of her clothes and veil, but without the inside stuffing that may cause the punishment to be ineffective. The punishment is not applied on weak or ill convicts until they heal completely and regain their strength, nor on a pregnant woman until she delivers her baby and regains her strength. The tool used in flogging is either a whip of intermediate length and power, or a palm branch stripped of its leaves and thorns, it's like a cane. The person applying the punishment should also be of intermediate strength. He must not raise his flogging hand above his shoulder and must not to let his armpit be seen. *'Ali Ibn Abi-Taleb* said, *"Stripes of intermediate strength and a whip of intermediate effect."*



There is consensus among Muslim scholars on the previous punishment for fornicators if they were unmarried. But when it comes to married persons who commit adultery, scholars were split into 2 teams: the first stated that the punishment in such case is stoning to death, and the second denied stoning and said that flogging is the punishment for all cases. Let's indulge into their debate so that we may understand this controversial issue.

Please note that a married person is defined as, "An adult male or female who is free, sane, and has had complete sexual intercourse with a lawfully wedded partner of the same mentioned qualities. This marriage is proven either by confession, or by the testimony of 2 witnesses, or through evidence: like the existence of a known born child for the couple."

The first team said: Allah gradated the application of the punishment against fornication because in the pre-Islamic era, most Arabs were used to taking many wives and having illicit sexual intercourse with any dancer or slave girl they liked without deeming it something immoral. Islam placed rules restricting polygyny, and followed a gradated method in abolishing fornication. The first stage on the path of abolishing it was the verses that say, *"If any of your women commit fornication, call in four male witnesses from among yourselves against them, if they testify to their guilt, confine them to their houses until death comes to them, or until Allah prescribes a way out for them. And those two of you who commit it, punish them both. If they repent and mend their ways, leave them alone. Allah is the Most-Relenting, Most-Merciful."* [The Qur'an (4:15-16)].

In the above verses, Allah orders Muslims to confine the adulteress inside her house after punishing her and her partner. The verses also make it clear that the crime cannot be proven except through 4 witnesses who would testify in the manner described earlier. As for the punishment, it was called *Ta'zir*: it's a punishment left for the discretion of the judge according to the case at hand; it varies from verbal tough reprehension to flogging with maximum 39 stripes. So the judge may choose the proper punishment according to the ugliness of the crime (i.e. whether the fornicator was married or not, having children or not, having one wife or more, etc.)

Later on the verses of chapter 24 were revealed specifying a punishment of 100 stripes against anyone who commits fornication as explained earlier. Consequently, the confinement within the house was lifted from upon women. Later on, when piety and chastity were deeply rooted in the community, the final stage was promulgated by Prophet Muhammad when he said, *"Receive this injunction from me, receive from me, Allah has prescribed a way out for women: a 100 strips punishment for the unmarried man and woman, and an exile for one year, but as for those who are married, a 100 stripes and stoning."* [Recorded by Muslim].

It was recorded that Prophet Muhammad stoned a companion named *Ma'ez* when he confessed that he had committed adultery, and he also stoned the *Ghamedeyyah* woman when she gave the same confession. *'Omar Ibn Al-Khattab* was recorded to say, *"Allah has sent Muhammad with the truth and revealed to him the Qur'an. Among what was revealed is the verse of stoning those who commit adultery, we read it and understood it perfectly well. The prophet applied stoning and we applied it after him, I'm afraid that a time may come when people will say 'We can't find stoning mentioned anywhere in the Qur'an', so they will forsake it and go astray by forsaking a punishment prescribed by Allah. Stoning is the punishment for the adulterer and adulteress if the prescribed evidence was established, or if pregnancy occurred, or with confession."* [Recorded by Bukhari, Muslim and others].

Lady *'A'ishah*, *Obai Ibn Ka'b*, *Zayd Ibn Thabet* and *'Ali Ibn Abi-Taleb* were also recorded to state that stoning was prescribed by the prophet. Based on the previous, stoning was considered the rightful punishment for adultery by the majority of the scholars. They stated some logical reasons for prescribing stoning as a punishment for adultery and not flogging, they said:

1. A married person has a spouse with whom he or she can satisfy their sexual lusts, unlike the single person who can fall more easily into this sin.
2. The married person does not only commit the crime of fornication, but he or she also betrays his or her unaware trusting spouse.
3. Allah has granted a way out for men to quench their sexual lusts without ever needing to commit this abominable deed. Men can marry up to 4 wives.
4. Allah granted every woman a way out if she didn't love her husband, she can ask for divorce or *Khol'* and marry another person whom she loves.
5. Marriage is a solemn covenant, betraying it is like betraying Allah's solemn trust.
6. The possibility of having a distorted family lineage and false ancestry is much higher with adultery than with fornicating unmarried persons.
7. Adultery is a crime that rocks the community and spreads lack of trust among all spouses. This could bring down calm secured houses.

The method prescribed by jurists for stoning stipulate that: While applying the punishment, if the convict ran away out of fear, and he or she was receiving the punishment after confessing, then he or she should not be followed and is left to get away. But if this person runs away from stoning after being found guilty by the testimony of witnesses, then he or she is followed and stoned to death. If the adulteress was pregnant, she is released until she delivers her baby and suckles him or her for 2 years. If the baby had no one to look after him or her, the woman is left until the baby grows up, needs her no more and can manage to take care of him or herself, then the punishment is applied without further delay.

The second team said: It's true that Prophet Muhammad applied stoning 2 times following the laws of the Torah (Leviticus {20:10}), but this was before he received the verses of chapter 24 in the Qur'an, which abrogated the old laws. Prophet Muhammad always applied the laws of Moses until he received new laws abrogating them. There is no stoning in Islam. All of the traditions upon which the first team built its opinion were either weak or narrations of individuals that could not stand as evidence above the Qur'an, or a proof for such punishment. The following are a few logical points they mentioned:

1. The tradition recorded by *Muslim* relating Prophet Muhammad's words promulgating stoning has "*Hushaim Ibn Bashir*" in its CON, and *Hushaim* was accused of forging traditions; therefore, this is a weak deceitful tradition.
2. The wording of the tradition in *Muslim* implies that the prophet was speaking to a lot of companions, then how come the number of those who were recorded to confirm stoning from among the companions did not exceed 8 companions and all of the traditions ascribed to them were weak and unreliable?!
3. The wording of the tradition contradicts the prophet's application. Prophet Muhammad never flogged before stoning and he never banished any fornicator.
4. How could '**stoning**' be '**a way out**' for women when they commit adultery?! The wording doesn't make any sense, which degrades the classification of this tradition from 'Authentic' to 'Fabricated.'
5. As for the very long tradition attributed to '*Omar Ibn Al-Khattab*, and recorded by Bukhari, this tradition is a dilemma itself. If 'Omar was speaking to the companions who lived with the prophet and knew very well his teachings, then how come the wording implies that '*Omar* was speaking to a bunch of people who were unaware of stoning or were denying it?!
6. If there is a verse that prescribes stoning, then how come that it was not written down inside the Qur'an?! Those who say that it was abrogated in wording but its ruling remained applicable are worsening the situation; there is absolutely no meaning nor logic in cancelling a verse prescribing a divine law while its ruling is still applicable, it's as if Allah wants us to go astray.
7. Allah promised to keep His final testament intact, complete and safe, so how come that any verse from amidst its context is lost and there isn't even one recurrent tradition mentioning it?!
8. The tradition recorded by *Ibn Mājah*— in which Lady *Ā'ishah* states the wording of the claimed stoning verse—is classified as weak. Even if it was raised to the state of 'Good by others,' it will remain to be a speculative narration of individual.
9. The tradition recorded by *Ahmad* on the authority of '*Ali Ibn Abi-Taleb* is classified 'very weak,' which is worse than the previous tradition of *Ibn Mājah*.

10. The few narrations recorded on the authority of the companions regarding stoning were speculative weak traditions except 'Omar's tradition, which is a narration of individual. There aren't even 10 weak traditions recorded on the authority of the companions that confirm stoning.
11. The juristic rule says: "Punishments are cancelled by suspicion." Prophet Muhammad himself said, "*Forsake what fills you with doubt to what you are sure of.*" Lady 'Ā'ishah said, "*Ward off punishments from upon the people as much as you can. It is better for a judge to be mistaken in pardoning than to be mistaken in punishment.*" So how can we apply such a brutal punishment when all of the evidence supporting it is speculative and contradicts the Qur'an?!

Then the second team started submitting their rebuttal evidences, they said:

- Bukhari recorded a tradition reported by a follower named *Ibn Al-Shaibany* who said, "*I asked 'Abdullah Ibn Abi-Awfa: 'Did the prophet apply stoning?' He answered, 'Yes.' So I asked, 'Was it before or after Chapter An-Nur?' He answered, 'I don't know.'*" [Recorded by Bukhari].
 1. Chapter 24 was revealed after the "Slander incident" by one month, approximately in *Ramadan* of the 6th year A.H.
 2. 'Abdullah Ibn Abi-Awfa was one of the companions. His regular companionship to the prophet started in 6 A.H.
 3. He witnessed "*Al-Hudaibeyah* treaty" with the prophet in *Dhul-Qe'dah* of the 6th year A.H., this was 1 month after chapter 24 was revealed.
 4. 'Abdullah witnessed the last 5 years of the prophet's life, but still, he didn't have a clue whether stoning was applied before or after the verses of chapter 24.

Putting the previous together, you should be able to deduce that:

1. 'Abdullah never witnessed the prophet applying the punishment of stoning.
 2. The prophet didn't apply stoning during the last 5 years of his life.
 3. The probability that chapter 24 abrogated the stoning laws of the Torah are now sky high.
- The previous translation of the Qur'anic verses (4:15-16) is wrong. The correct translation is as follows: "*If any of your women is involved in an unlawful sexual relation, call in four male witnesses from among yourselves against them, if they testify to their guilt, confine them to their houses until death comes to them, or until Allah grants them a way out. And if two men from among you commit it, punish them both. If they repent and mend their ways, leave them alone. Allah is the Most-Relenting and Most-Merciful.*" [The Qur'an (4:15-16)].

These two verses are not speaking about fornication or adultery, they are speaking about sapphism and sodomy. This was the recorded opinion for *Mujahed Ibn Jabr* the student of *Ibn 'Abbās*, and the *Mu'tazily* scholar *Abu Muslim Al-Asfahany* (Died 322 A.H.). The verses were revealed prescribing the punishment for such unlawful relationships. A female who commits sapphism should be confined to her house until a man proposes to take her as a lawful wife; this is her way out. As for sodomites, they should be punished by flogging each one of them 100 stripes if intromission occurred. But if there was no intromission, then the judge may prescribe the punishment he deems appropriate on the condition that it doesn't exceed 39 stripes.

- Chapter 24 speaks about fornicators, whether married or unmarried. This is obvious in the verses that say, *“One who accuses his wife and has no witnesses except himself shall swear four times by Allah that his charge is true, and the fifth time, that Allah’s curse may be upon him if he is telling a lie. **The wife shall receive no punishment, if she bears witness four times in the name of Allah that her husband has lied, and a fifth time that Allah’s wrath will be upon her if he is telling the truth.**”* [The Qur’an (24:6-9)]

The punishment mentioned in these verses is the one prescribed 3 verses earlier. This is an ultimate proof that the flogging punishment includes both married and unmarried persons.

- Allah says in the Qur’an, *“If any of you cannot afford to marry a free believing woman let him marry one of his believing maids whom he possesses. Allah best knows your faith. You are one of another. So marry them with their owner’s permission, and give them their dowry according to what is fair, neither committing fornication nor taking secret paramours. And if, after they are married, they commit adultery they shall have half the punishment prescribed for a free woman.”* [The Qur’an (4:25)].

This verse prescribed the adultery punishment for a wife who was originally a female slave. She should receive half the punishment of the wife of free origins. If the punishment for adultery was stoning, how can this be split into two halves?! Of course the punishment meant here is flogging her with 50 stripes. This further proves that flogging is the lawful punishment for adultery and not stoning.

- If the method of applying the death penalty on “killers” was chosen to be the least painful and most quick, and so was the case with the enemies who fight against Muslims, then how come that the method chosen to punish a Muslim who commits adultery would be stoning?! Is a Muslim adulterer worse than the enemy who is killing and persecuting Muslims?! Didn’t Prophet Muhammad say, *“If you kill, then make it a quick death.”* How could stoning be a quick death?!



The previous was a simplified record of the debate that has been occurring since the 1st century A.H. Which of the two teams is more correct is something that you have to figure out on your own after a complete fair study. All I wanted to do by tackling this issue was to draw your attention towards the critical thinking of the early generations, which unfortunately, Muslims don’t have today. Today, Muslims follow blindly like Christians did during the dark ages.

Since that we have tackled sapphism and sodomy, then it’s worth mentioning here that Prophet Lot P.B.U.H. tried to treat the sexual disorientation of his people by preaching marriage. He called on all sodomites to take women as lawful wives, explaining that marriage was the cleanest and safest method to satisfy their sexual lusts. He even offered his daughters to be their lawfully wedded wives, but they declined and insisted on their deviant act. This makes it clear that the Qur’anic cure prescribed for homosexuals is marriage. Allah says in the Qur’an, *“When Our messengers came to Lot, he was troubled*

on this account and felt powerless to protect them. He said, 'This is a dreadful day.' His people, who were used to committing foul deeds, came running to him. He said, 'O people, here are my daughters. They are purer for you, [if you marry them] so have some fear of Allah and do not disgrace me before my guests. Is there not a single right-minded man among you?' They replied, 'You know it is not your daughters whom we want. You know very well what we seek.' " [The Qur'an (11:77-79)].

One should ask, *"Why did Allah prohibit homosexuality? Didn't He create gays and lesbians the way they are? Could the Creator be unknowledgeable of those whom He created, or is He unfair?!"* Well, this is an important question, but answering it is not within my grasp of knowledge, this is why I tried to compile an extract from different medical articles written about this issue. The reader should not suffice with the data included in this book, but should try to indulge deeper into the subject, maybe he or she will be successful in presenting it in a more accurate and helpful manner.



From the fact Sheet used in teaching medical Classes on AIDS, published as part of "The AIDS Epidemic in San Francisco: The Medical Response 1981-1984. Volume I, an oral history conducted 1992-1993," published by the University of California, Berkeley, 1995—this information was based upon a distillate of the knowledge accumulated by San Francisco general hospital "SFGH," the university of California-San Francisco "UCSF," University of California-Los Angeles "UCLA," Stanford, several hospitals in New York and the combined efforts of the AIDS Task Force at the Center for Disease Control in Atlanta, Georgia. There are no other authorities to turn to for better information.

What is A.I.D.S?

"Acquired Immuno Deficiency Syndrome," is a disease of previously healthy people who for some reason develop diseases seen only in the immuno-deficient. The deficiency appears to be permanent and is not explained by other known immune defect diseases. While there are several theories as to what it is, the one felt to be the most likely is that it is a new virus, not previously seen.

Who is at risk?

Homosexual and bisexual men (75% of cases)

Heterosexual men, women, and children (25% of cases)

Hemophiliacs, IV drug abusers, Haitians, 5% unknown risk factors.

(End of adaptation from the facts sheet)

Of course there is no need to say that since homosexuals comprise such a small percent of the population (about 1-3 %), they have a significantly higher rate of infection than heterosexuals. In order to make things clearer, we need to take a sample look at what some of those who work in the medical field had to say about this issue.

"Susan Brinkmann," a well experienced nurse, in her article "Health risks of the homosexual lifestyle" published back in 2004, threw some light on the harms of homosexuality based on facts and statistics reached by many physicians and medical centers through many years of observation. Among what she stated is the following:

A 1997 New York Times article reported that a young male homosexual has about 50% chance of getting HIV by middle age. (Sheryl Gay Stolberg, "Gay Culture Weighs Sense and Sexuality," New York Times (Late edition, east coast), November 23, 1997, section 4, p.1)

As of 1998, 54% of all AIDS cases in America were homosexual men and according to the Center for Disease Control (CDC) nearly 90% of these men acquired HIV through sexual activity with other men. (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 1998, June, HIV or AIDS Surveillance Report).

Even more alarming, the Center for Disease Control & Prevention reported in 1998 that an estimated half of all new HIV infections in the United States are among people under 25. Among 13 to 24 years old, 52% of all AIDS cases reported among males in 1997 were among young men who have sex with men. (CDC Fact Sheet: "Young People at Risk," Center for Disease Control & Prevention, National Center for HIV, STD and TB Prevention Division of HIV or AIDS Prevention, July 24, 1998.

Researchers at St. Paul's Hospital in Vancouver conducted a study to assess how HIV infection and AIDS is impacting the mortality rates for homosexual and bisexual men. Lead by "R.S. Hogg" and published in the International Journal of Epidemiology (vol. 27, no. 3, 1997, pp 657-661) they reached an alarming conclusion:

In a major Canadian center, life expectancy at age 20 years for gay and bisexual men is 8 to 20 years less than for all men. If the same pattern of mortality continues, we estimate that nearly half of gay and bisexual men currently aged 20 years will not reach their 65th birthday. Under the most liberal assumptions, gay and bisexual men in this urban center are now experiencing a life expectancy similar to that experienced by all men in Canada in the year 1871.

In addition to AIDS, there is a long list of maladies that attack homosexually active persons. Of particular concern is anal cancer. According to "J.R. Daling", "Correlates of Homosexual Behavior and the Incidence of Anal Cancer", Journal of the American Medical Association 247, no.14, 9 April 1982, pp. 1988-90: The risk of anal cancer soars by 4000 percent among those who engage in anal intercourse.

(End of adaptation)

Dr. "John Diggs, Jr", a Practicing Internist in "Wing Medical Center", a researcher in area of sexually transmitted diseases, member in the "National Advisory Council of the Family Research Council" and Co-chair member of the "Massachusetts Physicians Resource Council", in his article "The Health Risks of Gay Sex" explained further these harms in a more academic way. Among what he wrote:

Anal intercourse is the sine qua non of sex for many gay men. Yet human physiology makes it clear that the body was not designed to accommodate this activity. The rectum is significantly different from the vagina with regard to suitability for penetration by a penis. The vagina has natural lubricants and is supported by a network of muscles. It is composed of a mucus membrane with a multi-layer stratified squamous epithelium that allows it to endure friction without damage and to resist the immunological actions caused by semen and sperm. In comparison, the anus is a delicate mechanism of small

muscles that comprise an “exit-only” passage. With repeated trauma, friction and stretching, the sphincter loses its tone and its ability to maintain a tight seal. Consequently, anal intercourse leads to leakage of fecal material that can easily become chronic.

The potential for injury is exacerbated by the fact that the intestine has only a single layer of cells separating it from highly vascular tissue, that is, blood. Therefore, any organisms that are introduced into the rectum have a much easier time establishing a foothold for infection than they would in a vagina. The single layer tissue cannot withstand the friction associated with penile penetration, resulting in traumas that expose both participants to blood, organisms in feces, and a mixing of bodily fluids.

Furthermore, ejaculate has components that are immuno-suppressive. In the course of ordinary reproductive physiology, this allows the sperm to evade the immune defenses of the female. Rectal insemination of rabbits has shown that sperm impaired the immune defenses of the recipient. Semen may have a similar impact on humans.

The end result is that the fragility of the anus and rectum, along with the immuno-suppressive effect of ejaculate, make anal-genital intercourse a most efficient manner of transmitting HIV and other infections.

A 1988 survey from the “Center for Disease Control and Prevention” CDC identified 21 percent of all Hepatitis B cases as being homosexually transmitted while 18 percent were heterosexually transmitted. Again since homosexuals comprise such a small percent of the population (only 1-3 percent), they have a significantly higher rate of infection than heterosexuals.

*Anal intercourse puts men at significant risk for anal cancer. Anal cancer is the result of infection with some subtypes of human papilloma virus (HPV), which are known viral carcinogens. Data as of 1989 showed the rates of anal cancer in male homosexual practitioners to be 10 times that of heterosexual males, and growing. Thus, the prevalence of anal cancer among gay men is of great concern. For those with AIDS, the rates are doubled. **(End of adaptation)***

Regarding the “**Emotional and mental harms of homosexuality**”, “Susan Brinkmann” gave briefs of the following:

Two extensive studies published in the October 1999 issue of American Medical Association Archives of General Psychiatry confirmed the existence of a strong link between homosexuality and suicide, as well as other mental and emotional problems.

Youth who identify themselves as homosexual, lesbian and bisexual are four times more likely than their peers to suffer from major depression, three times more likely to suffer anxiety disorders, four times more likely to suffer conduct disorders, six times more likely to suffer from multiple disorders and more than six times more likely to have attempted suicide.

Many homosexual activists point their finger at homophobia as the cause of these disorders, but the most extensive studies have been done in the Netherlands and New Zealand where homosexuality is widely accepted.

In an interview with Zenit News, Dr. Richard Fitzgibbons, a child and adult psychiatrist in practice for more than 27 years, said, *“Compared to controls who had no homosexual experience in the 12 months prior to the interviews, males who had any homosexual contact within that time period were much more likely to experience major depression, bipolar disorder, panic disorder, agoraphobia and obsessive compulsive disorder. Females with any homosexual contact within the previous 12 months were more often diagnosed with major depression, social phobia or alcohol dependence.”*

He concluded by saying, *“Men and women with a history of homosexual contact had a higher prevalence of nearly all psychiatric disorders measured in the study. These findings are the result of a lifestyle marked by rampant promiscuity and an inability to make commitments, combined with unresolved sadness, profound insecurity, anger and mistrust from childhood and adolescence.”*

(End of adaptation)

Dr. “John Diggs” also included the following data in his article:

Multiple studies have identified high rates of psychiatric illness, including depression, drug abuse and suicide attempts, among self-professed gays and lesbians. Some proponents of GLB rights have used these findings to conclude that mental illness is induced by other people's unwillingness to accept same-sex attraction and behavior as normal. They point to homophobia, effectively defined as any opposition to or critique of gay sex, as the cause for the higher rates of psychiatric illness, especially among gay youth. Although homophobia must be considered as a potential cause for the increase in mental health problems, the medical literature suggests other conclusions.

An extensive study in the Netherlands undermines the assumption that homophobia is the cause of increased psychiatric illness among gays and lesbians. The Dutch have been considerably more accepting of same-sex relationships than other Western countries in fact, same-sex couples now have the legal right to marry in the Netherlands. So a high rate of psychiatric disease associated with homosexual behavior in the Netherlands means that the psychiatric disease cannot so easily be attributed to social rejection and homophobia.

The Dutch study, published in the Archives of General Psychiatry, did indeed find a high rate of psychiatric disease associated with same-sex sex. Compared to controls who had no homosexual experience in the 12 months prior to the interview, males who had any homosexual contact within that time period were much more likely to experience major depression, bipolar disorder, panic disorder, agoraphobia and obsessive compulsive disorder. Females with any homosexual contact within the previous 12 months were more often diagnosed with major depression, social phobia or alcohol dependence. In fact, those with a history of homosexual contact had higher rates of nearly all psychiatric pathologies measured in the study. The researchers found “that homosexuality is not only associated with mental health problems during adolescence and early adulthood, as has been suggested, but also in later life.” Researchers actually fear that methodological features of “the study might underestimate the differences between homosexual and heterosexual people.”

The Dutch researchers concluded: *“This study offers evidence that homosexuality is associated with a higher prevalence of psychiatric disorders. The outcomes are in line with findings from earlier studies in which less rigorous designs have been employed.”* The researchers offered no opinion as to whether homosexual behavior causes psychiatric disorders, or whether it is the result of psychiatric disorders.

(End of adaptation)

Dr. Diggs stated in his article that suicide rates among a San Francisco cohort were 3.4 times higher than the general U.S. male population in 1987 (Homosexuals today comprise 15.4% of San Francisco's population). More over there has been much more cases of “physical abuse” reported between homosexuals than between heterosexuals in relation to their population.

“Susan Brinkmann” stated that: *“A recent study published in the ‘American Journal of Public Health’ has shown that 39% of males with same-sex attraction have been abused by other homosexual men.”*

A study by “Susan Turrell” titled “A descriptive analysis of Same-Sex Relationship Violence for a Diverse Sample,” and published in the Journal of Family Violence (vol 13, pp 281-293), found that relationship violence was a significant problem for homosexuals. 44% of gay men reported having experienced violence in their relationship, 13% reported sexual violence and 83% reported emotional abuse. Levels of abuse ran even higher among lesbians with 55% reporting physical violence, 14% reporting sexual abuse and 84% reporting emotional abuse.

As outrageous as it might sound: *“Most medical groups have embraced the homosexual agenda and are advocating that lifestyle despite all the scientific studies and medical evidence that demonstrate medical and psychological risks”* said Joseph Nicolosi, President of the National Association for Research and Therapy of Homosexuality. *“Homosexual activism and political correctness are clearly trumping science.”*

(End of adaptation)

As for the question: “Didn't God create homosexuals this way?” Science has the answer in the following statement: *“Researches designed to prove that gays and lesbians are ‘born that way’ has come up empty handed. There is no scientific evidence that being gay or lesbian is genetically determined.”* Researcher “Dean Hamer”, who once hoped he had identified a gay gene, admitted later that, *“There is a lot more than just genes going on.”*

In the article titled “This is the Way God Made Me,” A Scientific Examination of Homosexuality and the ‘Gay Gene,’ by Brad Harrub, Ph.D., Bert Thompson, Ph.D. and Dave Miller, Ph.D., a very good summary of the studies aimed to determine whether a gay gene existed or not is presented. From what they have stated:

In June of 1998, University of Chicago psychiatrist “Alan Sanders” reported at the meeting of the American Psychiatric Association that he had been unable to verify Hamer’s results. In 1999, George Rice and his colleagues from Canada looked intently at the gene Xq28 that Hamer described. They included 182 families in their study,

they observed: *“These results do not support an X-linked gene underlying male homosexuality.”* They noted: *“It is unclear why our results are so discrepant from Hamer’s original study. Because our study was larger than that of Hamer, we certainly had adequate power to detect a genetic effect as large as was reported in that study. Nonetheless, our data do not support the presence of a gene of large effect influencing sexual orientation at position Xq28.”*

That is a tactful way of saying that any claims of having found a gay gene were overblown, if not outright false, and that Hamer’s results are dubious at best. Commenting on the study of Rice and his colleagues, Ingrid Wickelgren remarked: *“...the Ontario team found that gay brothers were no more likely to share the Xq28 markers than would be expected by chance... Ebers interprets all these results to mean that the X linkage is all but dead.”* [1999].

Consider the obvious problem of survival for individuals who allegedly possess a gay gene: individuals who have partners of the same sex are biologically unable to reproduce without resorting to artificial means, and taking in to consideration that this was not available except a few decades ago; therefore, if an alleged gay gene did once exist, the homosexual population would have disappeared altogether.

At 2003, Robert L. Spitzer who is a Professor of Psychiatry at Columbia University in New York City, United States and is on the research faculty of the Columbia University Center for Psychoanalytic Training and Research conducted a study on 200 self-selected individuals (143 males, 57 females) in an effort to see if participants could change their sexual orientation from homosexual to heterosexual. Spitzer observed: *“The majority of participants gave reports of change from a predominantly or exclusively homosexual orientation before therapy to a predominantly or exclusively heterosexual orientation in the past year.”* In summarizing his findings, Spitzer declared: *“Thus, there is evidence that change in sexual orientation following some form of reparative therapy does occur in some gay men and lesbians.”* He thus concluded: *“This study provides evidence that some gay men and lesbians are able to also change the core features of sexual orientation.”*

We now know that it is not scientifically accurate to refer to a ‘gay gene’ as the causative agent in homosexuality. The available evidence clearly establishes that no such gene has been identified. Additionally, evidence exists which documents that homosexuals can change their sexual orientation by therapy. Future decisions regarding policies about, and or treatment of, homosexuals should reflect this knowledge.

(End of adaptation)



Many other issues are still discussed by specialists and researchers regarding homosexual life, like the children’s need for both parents in their lives and upbringing, the causes of homosexuality that could be prevented, the psychiatric treatment that has proven to be effective with many cases in reforming their sexual behavior and rectifying their mental orientation. As reported by Dr. Richard Fitzgibbons, who has practiced child and adult psychiatry for 27 years, about half the cases subjected to therapy got better.

Hence, from the statistics we can realize how the communities that practice illicit sexual relationships like fornication, sapphism and sodomy, are more vulnerable to the epidemical and incurable diseases we have given brief of. At the end of 2008, it was estimated that 1,178,350 persons were living with HIV infection in the United States. CDC estimates 1.2 million people in the United States are living with HIV infection, one in five (i.e. 20%) of those people are unaware of their infection. Unfortunately, the western media propagates ideas like “Safe sex,” “Homosexual activism,” “Free sex,” etc., instead of propagating knowledge about the harms and risks of such relationships.

By all means, this is their choice. All we can do is to ring a warning bell, then it’s up to them whether to take heed or ignore us. As for us, we should abide by our Lord’s laws and teachings. In Islam, fornication, adultery, anal sex, gay sex, lesbian sex and animal sex are all prohibited. Any sexual relation outside lawful wedlock is prohibited and has a deterring prescribed punishment. By all means, marriage is the purist way of life, so why forsake it for what’s inferior and risky?!



5. Drinking Liquor

Allah says in the Qur’an, *“Indeed wine, gambling, idols and divination stones are abominations from satan, so stay away from them. Satan only wishes to produce animosity and hatred between you through intoxicants and gambling and to avert you from the remembrance of Allah and from your prayers, so will you not desist.”* [The Qur’an (5:90-91)].

There was a consensus among the companions that after the gradual prohibition of wine, Prophet Muhammad imposed a penalty of 40 stripes for whoever drinks **after being cured from his addiction**. This was a deterrent punishment for all Muslims, so that they would stay away from wine. It’s up to the judge to increase this number to 80 stripes if the previous punishment wasn’t deterring enough and the convict returned to drinking again after being punished the first time. Please return to chapter 3, subtitle 3.5 for more insight information about the gradual prohibition of wine.

Drinking liquor numbs the senses and befogs the mind. This state leads many people to commit horrible sins. In many cases a man fornicates with another man’s wife while drunk and wakes up the next morning to discover the catastrophe. Many people are run over annually by drunk drivers. Many murder crimes occur under the effect of liquor. Those who fall into the well of addiction lose their social lives. Family ties get broken and innocent people pay the price. These reasons, among many others, made drinking liquor, narcotic abuse or consuming any intoxicants unlawful in Islam. Scholars also agreed that if consuming a big amount of any substance befogs the mind, then consuming a few amount of it is also unlawful. The above verses say, *“Stay away from them;”* this is a complete boycott order. The objective is to protect people against the procrastination and weakness that always push them towards overstepping the reasonable limits.

6. Spreading Disorder

Allah says in the Qur'an, *“Those who wage wars against Allah and His Messenger, and spread disorder in the land shall either be put to death or crucified or have their hands and feet cut off on alternate sides, or be banished from the land. They shall be disgraced in this world, and then severely punished in the Hereafter, except for those who repent before you gain power over them: for you must know that Allah is forgiving and merciful.”* [The Qur'an (5:33-34)].

If an adult sane person, or a group of persons who decided to act together, committed an **armed organized crime** like breaking and entering, banditry, armed robbery, kidnapping, rape, assassination, terrorism, high treason, etc., they have committed a crime against Allah and Prophet Muhammad's teachings. Their punishment is issued by the judge based on the size of their crime and its consequences. They receive one of the following 4 sentences:

1. Banished or imprisoned.
2. Cutting off their right hands and left legs or vice versa.
3. Death.
4. Death and Crucifixion

If the criminal frightened the people and practiced bullying against them, he is imprisoned. If the criminal used force in stealing the possessions of others, he is sentenced to have his right hand and left leg cut off or vice versa. If the criminal killed his victim in the process, he receives a death sentence. If the criminal kidnapped a female and raped her, he receives a death sentence. If he breaks into her house and rapes her, he receives a death sentence. If he kills her after raping her and his crime was so terrible and disturbing for the community, the judge should order the criminal's corpse to be crucified after his death as a warning for other criminals.

Likewise, all crimes that waste lives and disturb the communities like high treason, organized crime, assassination and terrorism, they all receive that same sentence. Some crimes like arms trafficking and drug dealing are considered highly destructive for the communities. Their punishment, as decided by jurists in many Islamic countries is death.

Finally, I would like to say that killing killers, rapists, drug dealers, traitors, arms traffickers, and assassins, means life for those who are innocent. Those who claim that the death sentence should be cancelled, are actually pulling the trigger with their own hands and killing those who want to live in peace. Before following into their footsteps, think carefully and decide: which camp is it that you want to join.



That was a simplified quick overview on the penal code in Islam. In my opinion deterring laws ward off crimes. They form a protective shield for the community against corruption and save lives. And since that protecting this earth and its inhabitants against corruption is the sole objective of vicegerency; therefore, applying these laws is highly important.

Other crimes were made highly corruptive in Islam, the most important of which are the following 5 civil crimes:

1. **Bribery:** Allah says in the Qur'an, *"Do not consume one another's property by unjust means, nor offer it as a bribe to the authorities, so that you may deliberately and wrongfully devour a part of other people's wealth."* [The Qur'an (2:188)].
2. **Usury:** Allah says in the Qur'an, *"Believers, be pious to Allah, and give up what is still due to you from usury, if you are true believers. For, if you do not do so, then know that you are at war with Allah and His Messenger. But if you repent, you may retain your capital. Do not wrong [others] and you will not be wronged. If the debtor is in straitened circumstances, then grant him respite till a time of ease. If you were to write it off as an act of charity, which would be better for you, if only you knew."* [The Qur'an (2:278-280)].
3. **Gambling:** Allah says in the Qur'an, *"Indeed wine, gambling, idols and divination stones are abominations from satan, so stay away from them. Satan only wishes to produce animosity and hatred between you through intoxicants and gambling and to avert you from the remembrance of Allah and from your prayers, so will you not desist."* [The Qur'an (5:90-91)].
4. **Monopoly:** Prophet Muhammad P.B.U.H. said, *"No one monopolizes except that he has sinned."* [Recorded by Muslim and Abu Dāwood].
5. **Cheating:** Prophet Muhammad P.B.U.H. said, *"Whoever cheats is not one of us (i.e. is not a Muslim)."* [Recorded by Muslim]. Cheating is highly forbidden in all civil and personal interactions.

Under each one of these titles comes many injunctions and prophetic traditions that need a separate book to tackle them all. The punishments for such crimes were left for the discretion of the judge and the law makers of the state. Exposition, imprisonment, financial fines and public flogging are the most common punishments applied for such crimes. They may differ from one Islamic country to another, there is no fault or wrongdoing in that.



I hope that the reader has found in the second section a fair amount of information about the laws that were revealed in the Qur'an and taught by Prophet Muhammad 1400 years ago. Hundreds of laws could be found within the folds of the Qur'an and Prophet Muhammad's *Sunnah*. I believe that if Muslims convert these laws into a modern book of law, and apply it in a professional manner, they will be able to solve many of their current problems and move forward. Life is built upon choices, if I were given the chance to choose the law by which my country will abide, I would choose the Islamic law every time, but where are the rulers who are sincere and truthful enough to do the hard task and grant us this chance?

May Allah save us all from the evils and sorrows of this world, Amen.

10. Apostasy or High Treason?

One of the most famous misconceptions raised against Islam is that of apostates. Some non-Muslims say, *“Islam orders the killing of apostates; is this a religion or is it the Mafia? Where is the freedom of choice in that?! Where is ‘Let there be no compulsion in religion’ which you always drawl with?! You people are hypocrites and liars.”*

Well, this is an important issue which needs to be addressed. How does Islam order its adherents to deal with apostates? What exactly does the word apostate mean? What are the proofs from the Qur’an and the Sunnah on the punishment ascribed to apostasy? Did Prophet Muhammad apply himself any punishment on those who apostatized during his life? Did the Caliphs apply any punishment on those who apostatized during their reigns? If yes, then what were the circumstances under which such incidents occurred?

To tell the truth, the questions raised by non-Muslims are all correct and need answers. Many sheikhs and scholars propagate the idea that Islam orders the killing of apostates. Let’s get to understand their argument so that we can either accept or refuse it. Those scholars built their opinion on two traditions, **the first one is:**

Prophet Muhammad P.B.U.H. said, *“It is unlawful to sentence any Muslim to death except in one of three cases, that he commits murder, that he commits adultery¹, or that **he forsakes his religion and leaves our community.**”* [Recorded by Bukhari].

Jurists deduced from the last clause that apostates should be sentenced to death. The problem with this clause is that it doesn’t describe a person who will only forsake Islam, but will also leave the Muslim community. This creates a dilemma, for if he departs from the Muslim community and goes to live somewhere else, then Muslims have no authority over him. Moreover, why should he be considered dangerous in any way if he is not living among Muslims? I can imagine that if he apostates and preaches renouncing Islam while living among Muslims, maybe those who are not well grounded in religion will be affected by him and apostate as well, so some may say that he constitutes a sort of danger on the stability of the community. But this person left, he departed the Muslims’ community and went to live on his own at peace, so why should he receive a death sentence?! In other words, what does “leave the community” really mean?

The answer to these questions is found in another version of this tradition. It was recorded by Abu Dāwood on the authority of Lady ‘Ā’ishah that Prophet Muhammad P.B.U.H. said, *“It is unlawful to sentence a Muslim to death except in one of three cases, him who commits adultery¹, he is stoned, **him who departs the community and wage wars against Allah and His messenger, he is either killed, crucified or banished from the land, and him who commits murder, he is killed.**”* [Recorded by Abu Dāwood].

1: The reader should not think that this tradition is solid evidence on stoning those who commit adultery. Those who deny stoning will say it could have been said before the verses of chapter 24 were revealed, and it is also an indecisive narration of an individual, so it cannot stand as evidence above the decisive verses of the Qur’an.

The tradition of Lady ‘Ā’ishah clarifies that the person intended is not a peaceful apostate, but this is someone who forsakes Islam, departs the community and wages wars against Muslims. In other words, he joins the enemy’s lines, organizes hostile operations against the community and tries to kill Muslims. **This is treason, not apostasy.** In this case, I don’t find applying the death sentence something weird.

The second tradition upon which jurists based their opinion is the one in which Prophet Muhammad P.B.U.H. said, *“Whoever changes his religion, kill him.”* [Recorded by Bukhari].

From this tradition jurists deduced that changing one’s religion is a crime, which entails applying the death sentence on any Muslim who forsakes Islam. This needs some investigation because the word **“Badala”** translated as **“changes”** does not imply clearly the intended meaning of the tradition. Since that all Muslims from all sects agree that the Qur’an is the main reference for the Arabic language, let’s search for this word inside it so that we can understand its correct meaning and interpretation.

This word is mentioned in the Qur’an in several verses among them is the following relevant verse, *“When Our clear revelations are recited to them, those who do not expect to return to Us say, ‘Bring us a different Qur’an, or make some changes in it.’ Say [O Muhammad], ‘It is not for me to change it of my own accord.”* [The Qur’an (10:15)].

I guess now things are starting to clear up. The word “Badala” means **“tamper with,” “distort” or “make changes in”**. So the correct translation of the tradition at hand is: *“Whoever makes changes in his religion, kill him.”* This is a protective order and punishment against anyone who would try to distort the teachings of Islam and deny any of its decisive teachings while he claims to be a Muslim. This was the case with the Arab tribes who refused to pay *Zakah* after the prophet’s death, they said that he was the only one entitled to collect and distribute it, and after his death, no *Zakah* is required any more. On learning what they stated, Abu Bakr said, *“I shall fight against those who have separated Zakah (as an obligation) from Prayers and want to make changes in our religion and its legal rulings.”* [Recorded by Bukhari].

From this we can deduce that if a Muslim tries to distort the decisive Islamic teachings, he is sentenced to death as a traitor, not as an apostate. But as for those who may forsake Islam and embrace a different religion, or forsake all religions and follow a different path of their own choice without fighting against Muslims or committing any treason, they constitute no danger, nor have they committed a crime in choosing the path which they deemed more correct. Allah says: *“Let there be no compulsion in religion”, “Whosoever wills, let him believe and whosoever wills, let him deny”, “We did not send you as a warder over them, your duty is but to convey the message”, etc.* These, among many other verses stipulate the freedom of choice for every person.

Now some scholars will say, *“NO, you are wrong; these verses mean that we should not force anyone to embrace Islam, but after he acquires sufficient understanding of its teachings and have all of the misunderstood points explained to him, he is not allowed to apostate. Didn’t you see that many of those whom Abu Bakr fought against apostatized in the sense that they totally forsook Islam and followed false prophets?”*

Exactly, they followed false prophets who claimed that they were receiving new messages from Allah like Prophet Muhammad did, which is tampering with the decisive teachings of Islam. Allah says in the Qur'an, "**Muhammad is not the father of any of your men, but is Allah's Messenger and the seal of all Prophets.**" [The Qur'an (33:40)].

Prophet Muhammad also said: "*Lying false prophets shall come forth from my nation. Know that I'm the seal of all prophets, there shall be no prophets after me.*" [Recorded by Abu Dāwood].

"I'm Muhammad, the unlettered prophet, there shall be no other prophets after me." [Recorded by Ahmad].

Based on the Qur'an and *Sunnah*, *Abu Bakr* fought against those traitors who fancied prophethood as a privilege, and went mad after the prophet's death, each one of them seeking to subjugate people to his whim by claiming to be a new prophet. **This is not apostasy, but distortion to the Islamic teachings and spreading disorder in the community.** Moreover, those people prepared armies to attack Madinah, so what exactly is it that you wanted *Abu Bakr* to do, stand watching and clap his hands?! If you revise the incidents mentioned by scholars to prove that the punishment of apostasy is death, you will find that the crime committed was not apostasy but treason. Let's check the origins of apostasy as mentioned in the Qur'an for better understanding.



When Muslims started building their capital in Madinah, the Islamic teachings about Jesus and Mother Mary, and the corruptions in the previous Holy books started spreading among all people. The Jews dwelling there tried to respond to these teachings by seducing Muslims from their faith. They planned that some of them would embrace Islam, and then after a short while apostatize claiming that Islam is a fake unworthy religion. This was an attempt to drive people away from Islam and spread disorder among Muslims. They were wishing to disseminate confusion among Muslims and facilitate for the pagans a way to destroy them once and for all. Allah informed Muslims of their plan in the verses that say:

"Abraham was neither a Jew nor a Christian. But he was an upright Muslim, and was not one of those who associate partners with Allah. The closest of all people to Abraham are those who followed him, and this prophet, and those who believe, and Allah is the Guardian of all believers. A group from the people of the Book loves to mislead you, while they mislead none but themselves, and they do not realize so. O people of the Book, why do you disbelieve in the verses of Allah while you are yourselves witnesses [to their truthfulness]? O People of the Book, why do you confound the truth with falsehood, and conceal the truth when you know [the reality]? And a group from the people of the Book said [to their people]: 'Believe in what has been revealed to Muslims in the early part of the day, and [declare your] disbelief at the end of it, so that they may turn back, but do not believe [for real] except in those who follow your faith.' Say [O Muslims], 'Guidance is only from Allah.' (But all that you do is due to your envy) that someone is given what is similar to that which you have been given, or that they argue against you before your Lord. Say, 'All bounties are in the hand of Allah. He gives it to whom He wills.' Allah is All- Embracing, All-Knowing." [The Qur'an (3:67-73)].

The people mentioned in the previous verses were planning for treason not apostasy. They didn't believe in Islam in the first place so that we may call them apostates. Their main concerns were spreading disorder and dispersing the Muslims' unity. The previous 2 traditions under discussion should be understood under the spotlight of these Qur'anic verses. **Those who toy with religion and seek to spread corruption in the land should be sentenced to death for treason, not apostasy.**

Those who embrace Islam and claim to be sincere Muslims while they lurk to destroy the Muslim community were again mentioned in the following verses. Allah informed the prophet about them and about their plans. He ordered the prophet to warn those traitors of a terrible fate in this life and the next if they do not desist.

*“O Prophet, strive against **those who deny the truth and the hypocrites**, and be firm against them. Their abode shall be Hell: an evil destination. **They swear by Allah that they did not, yet they uttered the words of disbelief after they had accepted Islam. They meditated a plot which they were unable to carry out, and being spiteful was their only response to Allah, who had enriched them out of His bounty, and to His Messenger. If they repent, it will indeed be better for them. If they turn away, Allah will punish them with grievous suffering in this world and the Hereafter, and there will be no one on earth to protect or help them.**” [The Qur'an (9:73-74)].*



What's truly amazing about this debate is that apostasy is mentioned clearly in the Qur'an several times, but it has no punishment mentioned in this life whatsoever, neither implicitly nor explicitly. Let's go through these verses to further understand that the crime intended by the previous traditions was treason and not apostasy. Allah says in the Qur'an,

*“They will not stop fighting you until they make you **renounce your faith**, if they can. **Whoever of you turns back from his faith** and dies a denier of the truth will have his deeds come to nothing in this world and the Hereafter, and he will be an inhabitant of the Fire, to abide therein forever.” [The Qur'an (2:217)].*

*“**Those who deny the truth after accepting it** and then grow in their refusal to acknowledge the truth, their repentance will not be accepted. They are the ones who have gone far astray.” [The Qur'an (3:90)].*

*“On the Day when some faces shall be bright and some faces shall be dark, it will be said to those with darkened faces, **'Did you reject faith after accepting it? Taste then this punishment for having denied the truth.'**” [The Qur'an (3:106)].*

*“Muhammad is only a messenger. Messengers have passed away before him. If he should die, or be killed, **will you turn back on your heels? Those who turn on their heels** do not harm the Lord in the least. Allah will reward the grateful.” [The Qur'an (3:144)].*

*“**Those who have taken denying the truth as the price of their faith** shall in no way harm Allah, painful punishment awaits them. Let not those who deny the truth think that granting them respite is good for them: We grant them respite only to permit them to indulge in their disobedience—shameful punishment awaits them.” [The Qur'an (3:177-178)].*

“As for those who believe, and then deny the truth, Then again they believe, and again they deny the truth, thereafter they grow stubborn in their denial to the truth—Allah shall never forgive them, nor will He guide them. Warn the hypocrites that for them there is a painful punishment.” [The Qur’an (4:137-138)].

“Believers, if any among you renounce his faith, Allah will replace them by others who love Him and are loved by Him, who will be kind and considerate towards believers and firm and unyielding towards those who deny the truth. They will strive hard for the cause of Allah and will in no way take to heart the reproaches of the fault finder. Such is Allah’s bounty, which He gives to anyone He wishes. God is bountiful and all-knowing.” [The Qur’an (5:54)].

All of the above verses speak about apostasy, not treason, and all of them state that the punishment of apostates is not in this worldly life, but shall be in the hereafter. Verses (4:137-138) speak of a Muslim who would believe then deny, then again believe and then again deny, if killing apostates was Allah’s prescribed punishment for apostates, then how come that Allah speaks of a person who is swinging between apostasy and belief while not ordering once that he should be killed?!



From the previous simplified analysis, it should be clear now that there are two kinds of apostasy, **the first kind** usually occurs due to misunderstanding the Islamic teachings or the verses of the Qur’an. The following cases are a few examples from what we face so frequently:

- A woman who may apostate when reading verse (4:34) that is always misunderstood to imply that beating women is allowed in Islam.
- Students who find in the big bang and evolution theories what proves that there is no God needed for the universe to exist.
- The youths who may not find the teachings of Islam coherent with the modern world.
- A person who may invoke Allah for certain things to happen, and when he does not receive his wish, he loses faith.

The previous among many other examples are a kind of intellectual apostasy. It should be dealt with by reasoning things out and explaining them calmly. We have seen many examples of Muslims who have apostatized in this manner, but after sometime, they returned to Islam benefiting us with their experiences. Two famous examples are:

- Dr. Mustafa Mahmoud (1921-2009 A.D.): The famous Egyptian writer, philosopher and Islamic thinker. He is among the most famous contemporary examples for intellectual apostasy. He apostatized for three years during which he read about all religions and followed their ways in his trial to reach the truth, and then finally, he returned to Islam choosing it as the true path to the Creator. His famous books, “An interview with my atheist friend,” “My journey from doubt to belief,” “The Mystery of Life,” “The Mystery of death,” “The Torah,” and many other books are considered a fortune for any truth seeker.

- Imam Abu Hamed Al-Ghazzaly (1058-1111 A.D.): By all means, he is one of the most famous Muslim scholars through all times. He apostatized for two months, which he spent in solitude doubting everything. After this, he returned to Islam but much stronger in faith. He wrote his famous books in critical thinking and philosophy, which formed a corner stone for the European Philosophy centuries later.

The apostasy of the previous categories does not present a public threat for the community, nor does it contradict the human nature so that any scholar may hold it a crime that deserves punishment. If the 2 knowledgeable scholars we have mentioned apostatized, and they both needed time to think things over and reach the truth, then by all means, having doubts by laymen is something totally normal. Threatening to kill apostates could never produce a righteous community, it can only produce a community of hypocrites who are hiding their disbelief.

Some scholars will say, *“We don’t harm apostates in any way except after granting them a chance to clarify their reasons for apostasy and discussing things with them for 3 days. If they are not convinced, then we have no choice but to issue a death sentence against them to protect others who are naïve from their seduction.”*

No one should think that there is a fixed period in which an apostate can reach the truth. Some scholars like restricting this period to 3 days as if all apostates are alike; this is wrong. One apostate may need a few hours of thinking to return to Islam, another may need a couple of days, and some cases take years of research. The intellectual problems which we face in the modern world are much more complicated than things used to be 1400 years ago. Justice says that every case should be dealt with separately. Besides, who is more dangerous, a person who states clearly that he doesn’t believe in Islam, or a person who hides his disbelief out of fear and gets filled with hatred against Muslims for subjugating him? By all means this is against Islam.

The Islamic teachings are about providing a fair chance for all people to choose their faith. Unlike other religions, in Islam, no religious knowledge is monopolized by any group or authority whomsoever. There is no priesthood in Islam. The Qur’an and the prophetic teachings are clear and available for any person to read and study carefully. Choosing to embrace Islam or disregarding it, is up to the person him or herself. No Muslim ever hides knowledge from others. Prophet Muhammad P.B.U.H. said, *“Whoever hides knowledge shall be bridled with a bridle of fire on the judgment day.”* [Recorded by Abu Dāwood and others]. Actually the Qur’an orders its reader to study it carefully, ask about all vague issues and think first before taking any decision regarding its truthfulness. If you are not convinced, then you have all the right to disregard it. Freedom of thought and of belief are granted in the Qur’anic verses; nonetheless, we must differentiate between those who are seeking after the truth and those who are toying with religion and seeking to spread disorder among the Muslim communities.

Among the very famous supplications that were taught by the early generations is the one in which we say, ***“O Allah, we ask you for truthful faith, beneficial knowledge, a pious heart, and a tongue that is disposed to mention you continuously.”*** No one should think that he or she has reached the apex of faith; only hypocrites do that.

We all have our shortcomings, so who are you to judge that another Muslim deserves to be killed because he or she has an intellectual problem and needs time to think?! If Prophet Muhammad himself was forbidden to assign himself as a warder over people, then who are you to do that?! All we can do is present the evidence, then it's up to the people whether to believe or deny. Their choice is not our responsibility in any way.

As for the second kind of apostasy, it is the organized apostasy attempted by some people seeking to:

- Tamper with the decisive teachings of Islam.
- Spread disorder among Muslims.
- Double cross those who are naïve and entice them to renounce their faith.
- Propagate false information to defame Islam.
- Spy on Muslims for a while and plot for their destruction.

If any attempt of that sort was proven to be the intention of an apostate through enough solid evidence, then he or she should be sentenced to death for treason, not apostasy. Such persons were never actually Muslims to say that they apostatized. Allah knows best.

May Allah guide us all to the truth, Amen.



This is the end of a 5 years journey through the main points utilized by westerners to attack Islam. I have learned a lot and trained myself to indulge into religious matters without any fear. Reading and acquiring knowledge are truly the hoarded treasure I came up with. I hope the reader has found some light within the folds of this book.

May Allah's mercy, forgiveness and guidance shower us all, Amen.

The Methodology of Spiritual Purification

Islamic knowledge is built upon three main pillars: Monotheism, Jurisprudence, and Self-Purification, or what's commonly known as "Sufism." We have already tackled the first two among these three pillars. Now it's time to tackle the third and last one. Because of its great importance, I decided to place it at the end. That's mainly because this is its proper place within the folds of this book. If a person pursues a spiritual purification path, he must acquire good unshakable understanding of religion first; otherwise, he shall go astray.

Allah says in the Qur'an, *"By the human-spirit and how [Allah] formed it, then inspired it to understand what is wrong and what is right. Him who purifies it will indeed be successful, and him who demoralizes it is sure to fail."* [The Qur'an (91:7-10)].

Honest religious individuals recognize good traits and greatly respect them. Spiritual-purification is a path through which they walk their lives. What they hope to acquire in their life-times, what they wish to meet their maker with is a sound heart. Of course, the previous only applies to those who are true. Recognizing them is not possible for they esteem the privacy of their endeavor greatly. Every one of them consider this a very special relation between himself and his creator. He allows no one to intrude. Nonetheless, some of them were so bright like the full moon amidst the night. Keeping their identities a secret was impossible. It's from those individuals that we learned so much.

The main source from which sufists quench their thirst for wisdom and real knowledge is the Qur'an. They read it but not like the majority do. They ponder deeply over its verses and find treasures hidden therein. They feel like it's living, speaking to them continuously even during their sleep. They build an intimate relationship with the book and its conversations. They find therein guidance and light far beyond all else. Our Sheikhs used to say, *"Whoever wants to speak to Allah, let him read the Qur'an, and whoever wants Allah to speak to him, let him read the Qur'an."* In my personal endeavor to follow into their footsteps, I decided to include a brief compilation of the relevant verses that have always touched deep into my heart and urged me to ponder. I won't comment on them. My sole purpose is to outline a spiritual-purification example from the Qur'an, the shield that any Muslim can always raise against life's tribulations. Sufism is not mysticism like some people think, Sufism is the path of those who are truthful and faithful to one single thought, that is: ***"making what's right prevail above all else no matter what the price."*** May Allah raise from Muslims knowledgeable sound-hearted steadfast generations. I hope young Muslims would ponder over this brief compilation with their hearts and minds. I hope they would try to weigh worldly matters on their scale. If we compare the Qur'an to a human being, then the next few pages could be considered its **aorta**.

Allah says in the Qur'an, *"Have the people not travelled through the land to **make their hearts understand** and let their ears hear, verily it is not the eyes that go blind but the hearts inside chests."* [The Qur'an (22:46)].

*"[Here is] a Book which We have sent down unto you, full of blessings, that they may **ponder over its verses**, and that people of understanding may **receive admonition**."* [The Qur'an (38:29)].

This chapter is the first step in a new journey. May it be a blessed fruitful one.

Allah tells us that the faithful invoke upon Him; they say,

“In the name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful. Praise be to [You] Allah the Lord of the Universe, the merciful the compassionate, Lord of the judgment day, it is you whom we worship and from you alone do we seek strength; **guide us to the righteous path**, the path of those upon whom you have bestowed your grace, neither those who earned your wrath, nor those who have gone astray.” [The Qur’an (1:1-7)].

Allah responds to their supplication; He says,

“**This book** (i.e. the Qur’an), without any doubt, **holds guidance for the pious**, those who believe in the unseen (i.e. Allah, the Creator), **pray** sincerely, and **spend in charity** from what We have provided to them. Those who **believe** in what We have sent down to you [O Muhammad], and in what We have sent down before you (i.e. the scriptures), and they have **certitude** in the hereafter. Those are the ones following their Lord’s guidance, and those are the successful.” [The Qur’an (2:2-5)].

“**Virtue** is not to set your face towards the east or the west [in prayers], virtue is to believe in **Allah**, the **judgment day**, the **angels**, the **scriptures**, the **prophets**, and to **spend in charity**—despite your love for wealth—**on relatives, orphans, the poor, waifs, beggars**, and to **set slaves free**; and to **pray sincerely, give alms, and fulfill all taken pledges**; and to **show patience** in face of hardship, adversity, and in times of distress. Those are the **truthful**, and those are indeed the **pious**.” [The Qur’an (2:177)].

“If my servants ask you [O Muhammad] about me, indeed I am near, I respond to the supplication of him who invokes upon me. Hence, let them **respond to me** and believe in me, may they be rightly guided.” [The Qur’an (2:186)].

“Those who spend from their wealth in the cause of Allah (i.e. the welfare of all people) and **do not follow** their **spending with condescension or malice**, their reward is well present with their Lord, fear shall not befall them, nor shall they grieve.” [The Qur’an (2:262)].

“For the poor who were engrossed in the cause of Allah (i.e. learning and studying), they cannot travel about in the lands seeking livelihood, they are considered affluent by those unaware [of their strife] because of their dignified abstinence. You shall identify them by their modest appearances, they are never persistent when they ask people for help. Whatever wealth you spend [on them], Allah is well aware of it. Those who **spend** their wealth **night and day, in secret and openly**, they shall receive their reward from their Lord, fear shall not befall them, nor shall they grieve.” [The Qur’an (2:273-274)].

The faithful invoke upon Allah again,

“O our Lord, pardon us if we forget or err. O our Lord, lay not upon us a burden like that which You laid upon our predecessors. O our Lord, burden us not with what we have no strength to bear. Pardon [our weakness], Forgive [our sins] and [treat us] mercifully; You are our protector, make us triumphant over the deniers.” [The Qur’an (2:286)].

“O our Lord, let not our hearts swerve after you have guided us, and bestow upon us from your mercy; verily, You are the munificent giver.” [The Qur’an (3:8)].

Allah responds to their supplications, He says,

“Never will you attain virtue until you spend [in charity] from that which you cherish; verily, whatever you spend is well known to Allah.” [The Qur’an (3:92)].

“Whoever seeks refuge in Allah (i.e. His scripture); surely, he has been guided to a righteous path.” [The Qur’an (3:101)].

“Make haste towards [great] forgiveness from your Lord and a [magnificent] garden whose width equates that of the heavens and the earth prepared for the pious. Those who **spend** [in charity] at times of prosperity and adversity, those who **restrain** their **anger** and **pardon** their **fellow men**; verily, **Allah loves the benevolent**. Those who having committed any abominable deed and wronged their souls, they **remember Allah** and ask Him to forgive their sins—and who forgives all sins save Allah—and they **do not** knowingly **persist** to continue misbehaving.” [The Qur’an (3:133-135)].

“Do not feel abased or grieve; you shall be triumphant if you are **faithful**. If you are suffering, then know that your enemies have suffered similarly. Those are the days [the good and the bad], We give them to men by turns that We may test the faithful and take **martyrs** from among you. Verily, Allah loves not the evildoers.” [The Qur’an (3:139-140)].

“Think not of those who were martyred as dead. Nay, they are **alive** rejoicing with their lord’s blessings. They rejoice with what Allah has bestowed upon them from His grace, and they **await** happily those who haven’t yet joined them, but remained behind heralding that those shall have no fear nor grieve. They rejoice with Allah’s bounty and grace, and [the fact] that Allah waists not the reward of **the faithful**.” [The Qur’an (3:169-171)].

“Those [**outnumbered** few] unto whom some say, ‘The enemy has gathered a great army against you, so fear them,’ but this only increased their faith, and they responded, ‘**Allah is sufficient** for us, He is the disposer of all affairs.’ So they returned [to their homes] unharmed with bounty from their Lord and grace, and they followed **Allah’s favored path**; verily, Allah is the munificent giver. Satan could only frighten the evil-doers, so fear his followers not, and fear Me (i.e. My wrath upon evil-doers) if you are faithful.” [The Qur’an (3:173-175)].

“O you who have believe, **have patience, show perseverance, remain steadfast, and fear Allah** so that you may succeed.” [The Qur’an (3:200)].

“Worship Allah and do not associate partners with Him. **Be good to your parents, your relatives, orphans, the needy, the neighbor who is a kinsman, and the neighbor who is not a relative, your companions, wayfarers, and those whom you rightfully hold**. Allah does not like arrogant boastful people, who are miserly and enjoin others to be the same, they conceal what Allah has granted them of His bounty. We have prepared a humiliating punishment for those who deny the truth.” [The Qur’an (4:36-37)].

“Allah commands you to **hand back your trusts** to their rightful owners, and when you judge between people, **judge justly**. Allah instructs you with what’s best; indeed, Allah is All-Hearing, All-Knowing.” [The Qur’an (4:58)].

“O believers, **stand out firmly for justice**, as witnesses to Allah, even if against yourselves, or your parents, or your kin, and whether it be [against] rich or poor: for Allah can best protect both. **Do not follow the lusts** (of your hearts), lest you swerve, and if you distort (justice) or decline to do justice, verily Allah is well acquainted with all that you do. O believers, believe in Allah and His messenger, and the scripture which He has sent to His messenger and the scripture which He sent to those before him. Any who denies Allah, His angels, His Books, His messengers, or the Judgment Day, has gone far, far astray.” [The Qur’an (4:135-136)].

“O Believers, **be steadfast** in the cause of Allah (i.e. achieving justice) and **bear witness with justice**. Do not let your enmity for others turn you away from being just. **Deal justly**; that is closer to piety. **Fear Allah**; verily, Allah is well aware of what you do.” [The Qur’an (5:8)].

Prophet Ibrahim said,

“Verily, I have set my face towards Him who has created the heavens and the earth, staunch, and I am not among those who associate others with Allah.” [The Qur’an (6:79)].

Allah says about that,

“Those who have believed [in the creator] and never do they cloth their faith with polytheism, such are the secure and they are rightly guided.” [The Qur’an (6:82)].

Then Allah speaks to the prophet and to all people interchangeably saying,

“**This is a blessed Book** which We have revealed, confirming what was sent before it, so that you [O Muhammad] may warn the Mother of all villages [Makkah] and the cities surrounding it. Those who **believe in the hereafter** do believe in it, and they are ever-**sincere** in their prayers.” [The Qur’an (6:92)].

“He designed the break of day, and has made the night for rest, and He made the sun and the moon a reckoning of time. Such is the measure determined by the Almighty, the All Knowing. It is He who has set up for you the stars so that you might be guided by them in the darkness of land and sea. **We detail the signs for people of knowledge.**” [The Qur’an (6:96-97)].

“Say [O Muhammad], ‘Come! I will tell you what your Lord has decreed unlawful for you! **Do not associate partners with Him; be good to your parents; and do not kill your children for fear of poverty**—We shall provide sustenance for you as well as for them; **refrain from committing indecent deeds, whether openly or in secret; and do not take a life which Allah has made sacred save by right**. That is what He has enjoined upon you that you may understand. **Stay well away from an orphan’s property, except with the best intentions**, until he comes of age. **Give full measure and weight according to justice**—We never charge a soul with more than it can bear—**when you speak, observe justice**, even though it concerns a close relative; and **fulfil the covenant of Allah**. That is what He has enjoined upon you so that you may take heed. [He has enjoined], ‘**This is My straight path, so follow it**, and do not follow other paths that will lead you astray.’ That is what He enjoins upon you, so that you may guard yourselves.” [The Qur’an (6:151-153)].

“Indeed, those who have split up their religion into sects, you have nothing to do with them. Their case rests with Allah; He will inform them of what they used to do.” [The Qur’an (6:159)].

“**This Book** has been sent down to you [O Muhammad]—let there be no heaviness in your heart about it—so that you may **warn by means of it** and it is a reminder to the believers. [O People] Follow what has been sent down to you by your Lord and do not follow any protector other than Him. How seldom you take heed.” [The Qur’an (7:2-3)].

“O children of Adam, We have bestowed upon you clothes to cover your nakedness and as adornment; but **the raiment of righteousness: that is best**. That is from the signs of Allah that perhaps they will take heed.” [The Qur’an (7:26)].

“Say [O Muhammad], ‘My Lord has forbidden obscenity—both overt and covert—sin and wrongful maltreatment, and that you associate partners with Him against what He has revealed, and that you say about Allah what you know not.’” [The Qur’an (7:33)].

“O children of Adam! If messengers come to you from among yourselves, reciting My revelations, then those who take heed and mend their ways will have nothing to fear nor shall they grieve. But those who deny and scorn Our revelations shall be the inmates of Hellfire, where they shall dwell forever.” [The Qur’an (7:35-36)].

“**Indeed, We have brought them a Book which We have expounded with knowledge, a guide and mercy for those who believe.**” [The Qur’an (7:52)].

When the sons of Israel invoked upon Allah to forgive their sins, He said,
“As for My punishment, I smite with it whom I will, but **My mercy encompasses all matters**; thus, I shall prescribe it for **those who are pious, who give alms and believe in Our signs**. Those who **follow the Messenger—the unlettered prophet** they find **described** for them **in the Torah and in the Gospel**—who commands them of what is good, and forbids them from what is evil, who makes good things lawful to them and bad things unlawful, who will relieve them of their burdens and of the shackles that weigh down upon them. Those that **believe in him and honor him**, those that **give him aid and follow the light sent down with him**, such are the successful.” [The Qur’an (7:156-157)].

Then Allah tells of what happened to them when they persisted on sinning,
“We split them up into sections scattered around the earth. Some of them are righteous and some are otherwise. We tested them with blessings and misfortunes, so that they might **return to the righteous path**. They were succeeded by generations who inherited the book (i.e. the Torah) and took to the fleeting gains of this world, saying, ‘We shall be forgiven.’ Yet, if similar fleeting gains loomed to them, they would partake of it. Were they not made to vow on the book that they would not **say but the truth about Allah?** Did they not study what is in it? Surely, the abode of the Hereafter is better for those who are pious; will you not reflect? Those who **hold fast to the book and pray sincerely**, We shall not deny the righteous their reward.” [The Qur’an (7:168-170)].

Now, Allah directs His speech to all people saying,

“Of those We have created there are some who **give true guidance and act justly** therewith. As for those who deny Our signs, We shall stealthily seize them from whence they do not know.” [The Qur’an (7:181-182)].

Thence, Allah directs His speech to the prophet and all Muslims interchangeably,

“Say [O Muhammad], ‘I have no power to bring upon myself benefit or harm, save as Allah pleases. Had I been able to foresee the unknown, I would have availed myself of an abundance of good, and no harm would have touched me. I am but a warner and a bearer of glad tidings for those who will believe...’ ” [The Qur’an (7:188)].

“ ‘...Verily, my protector is Allah who sent down the book (i.e. The Qur’an) and takes care of the righteous.’ ” [The Qur’an (7:196)].

“And **keep remembrance of your Lord** [O Muhammad] within yourself **in humility and awe**, without raising your voice, morning and evening, and do not be one of the heedless.” [The Qur’an (7:205)].

“They ask you about the spoils of war [O Muhammad]; say, ‘The spoils’ management belongs to Allah and His Messenger. So **stay devout to Allah, make amends amongst yourselves, and obey Allah and His Messenger** if you are [true] believers. Indeed, [true] **believers** are those whose hearts tremble in awe at the mention of Allah, whose faith grows stronger as they listen to His revelations, and they are those who **put their trust in their Lord**. Those who **pray regularly and give alms** out of what We have provided for them. Such are the true believers; they have a high ranking with their Lord, [along with] His forgiveness and an honorable provision...’ ” [The Qur’an (8:1-4)].

“Remember [O Muhammad] when you prayed asking your Lord for help [when fighting back became incumbent], and He answered your prayers saying, ‘I am sending to your aid a thousand angels in succession.’ Allah only did this to give you glad tidings, and to reassure your hearts. Verily, victory is granted solely by Allah. Indeed, Allah is Most-Magnificent, All-Wise.” [The Qur’an (8:9-10)].

“O believers, when you meet **in battle** those who deny the truth, **never turn your backs** on them. Whoever turns his back on such an occasion, unless it be as a stratagem of war, or in an endeavor to join another group [of outnumbered believers] will indeed draw down upon himself the wrath of Allah; hell shall be his abode, and what a wretched fate. You did not kill them; it was Allah who killed them; and when you [O prophet] thrust [sand] at them it was not you, but it was Allah who thrust it so that the believers would do well by His favor. Surely, Allah is All-Hearing, All-Knowing.” [The Qur’an (8:15-17)].

“O believers, obey Allah and His Messenger, and do not turn away from him while you can hear [his preaching]. Do not be like those who said, ‘We hear,’ but they do not listen. Indeed, for Allah, the worst creatures are the deaf and dumb who possess no reasoning. If Allah had found any good in them, He would have certainly made them listen; but [being as described], even if He makes them hear, they would turn away in aversion. O believers, obey Allah and the Messenger when he calls you to that which revives your life. Know that Allah gets between a man and his heart (i.e. reads his thoughts and knows

his feelings), and to Him, you shall all be assembled. Beware of an affliction that will not smite exclusively the evildoers amongst you. Know that Allah is severe in exacting retribution. Remember when you were few, accounted weak in the land, ever fearing the onslaught of your enemies, but He provided you with shelter, granted you His victory, and provided you with good spoils, may you be grateful. O believers, **Do not betray Allah and His Messenger, and do not knowingly violate your trusts.** Know that your wealth and children are a trial and that there is an immense reward with Allah. O believers, if you **stay devout** to Allah, He will grant you the ability to discriminate between right and wrong, and will forgive you your sins; Allah is limitless in His bounty. Remember [O Muhammad] how those bent on denying the truth plotted against you to imprison you, kill you, or expel you; they schemed but Allah also schemed, and indeed, Allah is the best of schemers.” [The Qur’an (8:20-30)].

“Those who are bent on denying the truth are spending their wealth in debarring others from Allah’s path. They will spend it, but in the end, this will become a source of intense regret for them, and then they will be defeated; and all who deny the truth shall be gathered in Hell. So that Allah may separate the wicked from the good, He will pile up the wicked, one upon another in heaps, and then cast them all into the Hellfire. Such are surely the losers. Tell those who are bent on denying the truth that if they desist, their past sins shall be forgiven, but if they return to denying, they have an example in the fate of those who went before. **Fight them until there is no more [religious] persecution,** and religion belongs wholly to Allah: if they desist, then surely Allah is watchful of what they do, but if they turn away, know that Allah is your Protector, the Best of Protectors and the Best of Helpers!” [The Qur’an (8:36-40)].

“O believers, when you encounter one of the enemy’s factions, **stand fast and keep constant remembrance of Allah,** may you succeed. Obey Allah and His Messenger, and **avoid dissension** lest you falter and blow the wind out of your sails. **Show perseverance;** verily, Allah is with those who are persevering.” [The Qur’an (8:45-46)].

“If you apprehend treachery on the part of any people [O Muhammad], inform them that you renounce their pact equally; verily, Allah does not like the treacherous. Let not the deniers think that they will ever get away. They cannot frustrate [Allah’s scheme]. They have not the power to do so. **Prepare** against them **whatever strength and cavalry you can muster** with which you can overawe Allah’s enemy and yours, and others besides them whom you do not know, but whom Allah knows. Anything you spend for the cause of Allah will be repaid to you in full and you shall not be wronged. Then if they **incline towards peace making,** make peace with them and put your trust in Allah. Surely, it is He who is All Hearing and All Knowing. Should they seek to deceive you; surely, Allah is enough a supporter for you. It was He who strengthened you with His aid, rallied the faithful around you, and bound their hearts together. Even if you had spent all that is on the earth, you could not have bound their hearts together, but Allah has bound them together. Surely, He is Most-Magnificent, All-Wise.” [The Qur’an (8:58-62)].

“O prophet, tell those you have taken captive, ‘If Allah sees any good in your hearts, He will give you what is better than what has been taken from you, and He will forgive you, Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.’ If they intend to betray you, they have betrayed Allah before, and He gave [you] power over them. Allah is All-Knowing, All-Wise.” [The Qur’an (8:70-71)].

“If any of the polytheists seeks your refuge, **grant him asylum** so that he may listen to the word of Allah then **accompany** him to his place of **safety**, for they are people who have no knowledge. How can the polytheists hold a pact with Allah and His Messenger, except for those with whom you drew a pact at the Sacred Mosque, as long as they respect it, you should respect it too. Verily, **Allah loves the righteous.**” [The Qur’an (9:6-7)].

“Say [O Muhammad], ‘If your parents and your sons and your brothers and your spouses and your tribe, and the wealth that you have gained, and the commerce which you fear might decline, and the homes you love, are dearer to you than Allah and His Messenger and striving for His cause, then wait until Allah fulfills His decree. Allah does not guide those who are disobedient.’ ” [The Qur’an (9:24)].

“On the Day Allah created the heavens and the earth, He decreed that the number of months should be twelve in number. Out of these, four are sacred—that is the true religion—so do not wrong yourselves during them. **Fight the polytheists altogether** as they fight you altogether, and know that **Allah is with the righteous.**” [The Qur’an (9:36)].

“**Rally lightly or heavily equipped, and strive with your possessions and yourselves** for the cause of Allah (i.e. achieving freedom and justice for all people). That is better for you if you knew.” [The Qur’an (9:41)].

“It is not right that all believers should go out [in time of war] all together. There should stay behind a party from every group in order to **acquire deeper religious knowledge and warn** their **people** if they return, so as to guard themselves against evil?” [The Qur’an (9:122)].

“Indeed, those who **believe and do good deeds** will be guided by their Lord because of their faith. Rivers shall flow at their feet in the Gardens of Bliss. There, they will call out, ‘Glory be to You, O Lord,’ while their greeting in it shall be, ‘Peace,’ and the closure of their call will be, ‘All praise is due to Allah, the Lord of the Universe.’ ” [The Qur’an (10:9-10)].

“For every nation there is a messenger. Once their messenger has come, judgment will be passed upon them in all fairness and they will not be wronged.” [The Qur’an (10:47)].

“O mankind, there has come to you an admonition from your Lord, a cure for what is in the hearts, a guide and a blessing for true believers.” [The Qur’an (10:57)].

“Those who are full-heartedly loyal to Allah shall certainly have no fear, nor shall they grieve. For those who believe and are devout, there is good news in this life and in the hereafter. The decree of Allah never changes; that is the supreme triumph. Do not let their words grieve you. Surely, all glory belongs to Allah alone; He is All-Hearing, All-Knowing.” [The Qur’an (10:62-65)].

“Say [O Muhammad], ‘O people, if you are in doubt concerning my religion, then [know that] I do not worship those whom you worship instead of Allah, but rather I worship Allah who causes you to die (i.e. to whom life belongs), and I am commanded to be among

the believers.’ And **set your face towards the [true] faith in all uprightness**, and do not be among the polytheists. Do not invoke besides Allah what can neither benefit nor harm you. If you do, then you will be among the evildoers. If Allah inflicts harm upon you, no one can uplift it but He, and if He intends good for you, no one can withhold His bounty. He grants His bounty to whom He wills among His servants. He is the Oft-Forgiving, Most-Merciful. Say, ‘O people, the truth has come to you from your Lord, anyone who accepts guidance is guided only for his own sake, and he who goes astray does so at his own peril. I am not appointed a warder over you.’ **Follow what is revealed** to you, [O Prophet], and **show perseverance** until Allah issues His judgment. He is the Best of Judges.” [The Qur’an (10:104-109)].

“Therefore, **stand firm** [on the righteous path] as you were commanded [O Muhammad], along with those who have repented joining you, and do not exceed the bounds, for He sees everything you do. Do not incline towards those who do evil, lest the Fire touch you, and then you would have none to protect you save Allah; later on, you will not be helped. **Observe the prayers** by the break and end of day, and during parts of the night; surely, good deeds erase evil ones. This is a reminder for people who pay heed. **Be steadfast**; surely, Allah never wastes the reward of the **righteous**. Why then were there not among the generations before you upright men who would speak-out against the corruption on earth—except for a few whom We saved? But the evildoers pursued their worldly pleasures and thus became guilty. Your Lord would never unjustly destroy communities while their people were trying to reform. If your Lord had wished, He would have made mankind into one community but they will not cease to differ, except for those to whom your Lord has shown mercy; and it is to this end that He created them (i.e. having free wills, able to make their own choices).” [The Qur’an (11:112-119)].

“Say to those who do not believe, you do things in your way and we are doing things in our way, and wait, we too are waiting.’ The knowledge of the secrets of the heavens and the earth belongs to Allah alone, and to Him shall all affairs be referred. So worship Him and put your trust in Him alone. Your Lord is never unaware of what you do.” [The Qur’an (11:121-123)].

“These are verses from a clear Book. We have sent down the Qur’an in Arabic may you reflect. We recount to you the best of narratives while revealing this Qur’an to you, even though, prior to that, you were unaware.” [The Qur’an (12:1-3)].

“**Do not despair** of Allah’s support; none but those who deny the truth despair of Allah’s support.” [The Qur’an (12:87)].

“Those who **stay devout and remain steadfast**, surely, Allah wastes not the reward of the benevolent.” [The Qur’an (12:90)].

“Yet, most men will not believe, no matter how keen you may be [on guiding them].” [The Qur’an (12:103)].

“Say [O Muhammad], ‘**This is my path, I call to Allah on the basis of solid knowledge**, I and those who follow me. Praised be Allah, I am not one of the polytheists.’ We never sent before you [O Muhammad] except men to whom We gave our revelations, chosen

from among the people of their towns. Did they (i.e. those in doubt) not travel through the lands and observe the fate of those who came before them? Verily, the life to come is a better abode for the pious. **Will you not then reflect?** It was not until the [previous] messengers lost all hope and thought that they had been denied, that Our help came to them; thence, whoever We pleased was saved, and Our punishment shall not be averted from the guilty.” [The Qur’an (12:108-110)].

“Those who deny the truth ask, ‘If only a sign has been sent down upon him from His Lord;’ verily, you are only a warner, and for every folk there is a guide.” [The Qur’an (13:7)].

“Indeed, Allah changes not the condition of any people unless they **change what is within themselves.**” [The Qur’an (13:11)].

“Those who believe and their hearts find comfort in the remembrance of Allah; indeed, **in the remembrance of Allah hearts find comfort.** Those who believe and **do righteous deeds,** blessings be upon them, and blissful is their final abode.” [The Qur’an (13:28-29)].

“Thus, We have revealed it [The Qur’an] as an Arabic Commandment. If you **follow** their desires (i.e. the people of the book) after all the **knowledge** which has come to you [O Muhammad], you would have no protector or shield against Allah.” [The Qur’an (13:37)].

“We have revealed to you **this Book** that you may lead the people from darkness to **light;** by their Lord’s will, to **the path** of the Most Magnificent, the Most Praiseworthy, Allah to whom belongs whatever is in the heavens and the earth. Woe to those who deny **the truth,** for they shall be sternly punished, those who prefer this life over the hereafter, who turn others away from the path of Allah and seek to make it crooked, they have gone far astray. We have never sent a prophet except if he spoke in the language of his own people, so that he might make [My message] clear to them; thereafter, Allah lets go astray whom He wills and guides whom He pleases (i.e. based upon what He sees in their hearts). He is the Most Magnificent, Most Wise.” [The Qur’an (14:1-4)].

“Remember when your Lord proclaimed [to the sons of Israel], ‘If you are **grateful,** I will surely bestow more favors upon you; but if you are ungrateful, then know that My punishment is indeed severe.’ ” [The Qur’an (14:7)].

“Did you not see those who countered Allah’s favor with ingratitude, and caused their people to descend into the Abode of Ruin? In the Hellfire shall they burn; such a wretched abode. They have set up rivals to Allah to lead people away from His path. Say [O Muhammad], ‘Enjoy your lives for a while; verily, your fate shall be the Hellfire.’ ” [The Qur’an (14:28-30)].

“Do not think that Allah is unaware of what the evildoers are doing. He only gives them respite until a Day on which all eyes shall stare fixedly in horror.” [The Qur’an (14:42)].

“This is a message for mankind, may they be warned therewith and know that there is but one God, may the mindful **take heed.**” [The Qur’an (14:52)].

“These are the verses of a **clear Book**. Perhaps [a time will come when] those who are bent on denying the truth will wish they had been Muslims. Let them enjoy themselves; let their vain hope beguile them. Soon they shall realize [the truth].” [The Qur’an (15:1-3)].

“Verily, it is We who have sent down the **dhikr** (i.e. content of The Qur’an) and We will, most surely, safeguard it.” [The Qur’an (15:9)].

“Proclaim openly what you are commanded [O Muhammad], and avoid the polytheists. Indeed, We are sufficient for you against the mockers. Those who set up another god with Allah, they shall soon learn. We do indeed know how your heart is distressed by what they say; **glorify your Lord** with His praise and be among those who **prostrate**, and **worship your Lord** until death comes to you.” [The Qur’an (15:94-99)].

“Allah ordains upon you **justice, kindness** and showing **liberality** towards kith and kin, and He forbids all shameful deeds, injustice and transgression. He admonishes you so that you may take heed.” [The Qur’an (16:90)].

“What you have shall come to an end, but what’s with Allah is everlasting. We will certainly give those who are patient their reward according to the best of their actions. To whoever does good deeds, man or woman, and is a believer, We shall assuredly give a good life; We shall bestow upon them their reward according to the best of their works. When you read the Qur’an, seek Allah’s protection from Satan the rejected one. Surely, he has no power over those who believe and put their trust in their Lord; his sole authority is over those who are willing to follow him and associate others with Allah.” [The Qur’an (16:96-100)].

“**Call to the path of your Lord** [O Muhammad] **with wisdom and fair preaching**, and **reason with them in a way that is best**. Your Lord knows best those who have strayed away from His path, and He knows best those who are rightly guided. If you want to retaliate, retaliate to the same degree as the injury done to you; but if you **show patience**, that is indeed the best act for the patient. **Endure with patience**; truly, your patience is possible only with the help of Allah. **Do not grieve** for them, **or feel distressed** by their plots; indeed, **Allah is with** those who are **pious** and those **who do good**.” [The Qur’an (16:125-128)].

“Whoever chooses to **follow the right path**, follows it for his own good; and whoever goes astray, goes astray at his own peril. No bearer of burdens shall bear the burdens of another. Nor do We punish before We send a messenger [to forewarn them].” [The Qur’an (17:15)].

“Verily, nothing prevents Us from sending [supernatural] signs, except the fact that the early nations denied them...” [The Qur’an (17:59)].

“...**Sufficient is your Lord** as a guardian.” [The Qur’an (17:65)].

“...**He is most merciful** towards you.” [The Qur’an (17:66)].

“So **be patient** [O Muhammad] with anything they say and **glorify your Lord** with His praise before the rising of the sun and before its setting; and glorify Him during the night

and at the beginning and end of the day, may you find satisfaction. **Do not give regard to the pleasures** We have given parties of them, **the splendor of the worldly life**, with it We seek to test them. The provision of your Lord is better and more enduring. Enjoin the prayers upon your people, and be constant therein. We ask you for no provision, We provide for you, and the hereafter is for righteousness.” [The Qur’an (20:130-132)].

“Time of reckoning has drawn near for mankind, yet they are heedless and turn away. Never comes to them a renewed message from their Lord [to warn and enlighten them], except that they listen to it in a playful manner.” [The Qur’an (21:1)].

“To Him belongs whoever is in the heavens and on earth; those that are with Him are never too proud to worship Him, nor do they grow weary; they glorify Him night and day without tiring. Have they taken deities from earth who can bring the dead to life? If there had been in the heavens or on earth other deities besides Allah, both would be ruined. Exalted is Allah, Lord of the throne, far above that which they describe. He should not be questioned about His works, but they shall be questioned. Have they taken other deities besides Him? Say to them [O Muhammad], ‘Bring forth your proofs. **This is a reminder** for those who are with me and a reminder of those who came before me.’ But most of them do not know the **truth**, and so they turn away from it. We sent not a messenger before you except that We revealed to him that, ‘There is no deity save Me, so worship Me alone.’ They say, ‘The All Merciful has taken a son!’ Glory be to Him! They (i.e. all messengers) are only honored servants; they dare not preach before [receiving] His revelations, and they act at His command. He knows what faces them and what happens after them, and they cannot intercede except on behalf of one whom He approves. Indeed they themselves stand apprehensive in awe of Him. Whoever of them should say, ‘I am a deity besides Him,’ that one shall be requited with Hell. Thus do We recompense the wrongdoers. Haven’t the deniers seen that the heavens and the earth were joined together and then We split them asunder, and We have made every living thing out of water? Will they still not believe? We set firm mountains upon the earth lest it should sway under them, and We placed therein passages for paths so that they might find their **way**. We have made the heaven a well-secured canopy [around the earth]; yet still they turn away from Our **signs**. It is He who created the night and the day, and the sun and the moon, each gliding in an orbit. We have not granted everlasting life to any human being before you; then if you [O Muhammad] should die, will they live forever? Every soul shall taste death; We test you with both good and evil [circumstances] as a **trial**, and then to Us you shall return.” [The Qur’an (21:19-35)].

“Say [O Muhammad], ‘I warn you only through the **Revelation**.’ But the deaf can hear nothing when they are warned.” [The Qur’an (21:45)].

“We gave Moses and Aaron the criterion [for judgment], **a light and a message for the righteous**, those who fear their Lord though unseen, and stand apprehensive in awe of the Judgment hour. And this [Qur’an] is a **blessed message** that We have revealed, will you then reject it?” [The Qur’an (21:48-50)].

“Before this We gave Abraham his sound judgment; of him (i.e. what’s in his heart), We were well-knowing.” [The Qur’an (21:51)].

“And We saved him and Lot [and brought them] to a land in which We have set blessings for all people.” [The Qur’an (21:71)].

“To Lot We gave **wisdom and knowledge** and delivered him from the city which practiced abomination. Indeed, they were wicked people. We admitted him to Our mercy; he was a righteous man. Before him Noah cried out to Us, and We answered his supplication. We saved him and his household from a great distress. We helped him against his people who rejected Our revelations. Surely, they were wicked people, so We drowned them all. Remember David and Solomon who both passed judgment on the field into which some people’s sheep had strayed [and grazed] at night. We bore witness to their judgment. We gave Solomon the **right understanding** of the matter, and We bestowed wisdom and knowledge on both of them. We caused the mountains and the birds to celebrate Our praises along with David. It is We who did this. We taught him the art of making coats of mail for you, to protect you in battle. Will you then be grateful? We subjected to Solomon the stormy wind, which blew at his behest towards the land which We had blessed (i.e. Palestine). It is We who have knowledge of all things. We also subjected to him some of the jinn who dived for him in the sea and performed other tasks. It is We who kept watch over them. Remember Job when he called on his Lord saying, ‘I have been afflicted with great distress, but You are the most merciful of the merciful.’ We heard his prayer and relieved his suffering, We restored to him his family, doubling their number as an act of Our grace, and as a reminder for the worshippers. Remember Ishmael and Idris and Dhul Kifl: they were all of the patient. We admitted them to Our mercy; they were all of the righteous. Remember the man of the whale [Jonah] when he set off in anger thinking We had no power over him; he cried out in the darkness, ‘There is no deity but You. Glory be to You! Indeed I was of the wrongdoers.’ We answered his supplication and delivered him from sorrow. Thus shall We deliver the true believers. Remember Zachariah, when he called out to his Lord, ‘Do not leave me heirless, O Lord. You are the best of heirs.’ We answered his supplication and bestowed John upon him and made his wife fit to bear him a child. Verily, they used to **hasten towards good deeds** and they called upon Us in hope and fear, and they were always **humble** towards Us. Remember the woman [Maryam] who guarded her chastity. We breathed into her from our spirit [Gabriel], and made her and her son a sign for all people. Surely, this is your nation [O faithful believers], one nation, and I am your Lord, so worship Me.” [The Qur’an (21:74-92)].

“The true promise of the Last Hour is close at hand. Soon, the deniers shall stare in horror fixedly, exclaiming, ‘Woe unto us! Indeed we were heedless of this. Ah! We truly have been wrongdoers.’” [The Qur’an (21:97)].

“On that Day We shall roll up the heavens like a scroll of parchment. As We originated the first creation, so shall We repeat it. This is a promise binding on Us. Indeed, We shall fulfill it. We have already written in the Psalms following the Torah that, ‘**My righteous servants shall inherit the earth.**’ Surely, herein is a message for true worshippers. We have sent you forth as a mercy to all mankind. Say, ‘It has been revealed to me that your God is but One God. Will you then submit to Him?’ ” [The Qur’an (21:104-108)].

“O People! Fear your Lord. The convulsion of the Last Hour shall be terrible indeed.” [The Qur’an (22:1)].

“That is because **Allah is the truth**. It is He who gives life to the dead and He has the power to will anything. The Last Hour is bound to come. There is no doubt about it. Allah will raise up those in the graves.” [The Qur’an (22:6-7)].

“...Verily, Allah never wrongs His servants.” [The Qur’an (22:10)].

“...Give glad tidings to **the humble**, those whose hearts shiver at the mentioning of Allah; they **endure adversity with fortitude, observe the prayers, and spend out** of what We have given them.” [The Qur’an (22:34-35)].

“Verily, Allah shall defend the believers. Allah does not love the perfidious and the ungrateful.” [The Qur’an (22:38)].

“[The **believers**] whom if We give them authority in the land, would **observe their prayers, give alms, enjoin good and forbid evil**. The final outcome of all affairs rests with Allah.” [The Qur’an (22:41)].

“Have the people not travelled through the land to make **their hearts understand** and let their ears hear; verily, it is not the eyes that go blind but the hearts inside chests.” [The Qur’an (22:46)].

“Verily, they did not recognize Allah in His true esteem. Indeed, Allah is Powerful, Mighty.” [The Qur’an (22:74)].

“O believers, **bow and prostrate** yourselves, **worship** your Lord and **do good works** so that you may succeed. **Strive truthfully** in the cause of Allah as is owed to Him. He has chosen you and laid no burden on you in religious matters, that is the faith of your forefather Abraham. In this—as in former scriptures—He (i.e. Allah) has given you the name ‘**Muslims**,’ (i.e. those who submit to Allah’s will) so that the Messenger may be a witness over you, and so that you may be witnesses over mankind. Therefore, **observe your prayers, give alms and hold fast to Allah**. He is your master; the best master and best helper!” [The Qur’an (22:77-78)].

“Successful indeed are **the faithful**, those who **are mindful in their prayers**, who **turn away from all that is frivolous**, who **give alms**, who **safeguard their chastity** except with their wives and what their right hands possess, for then they are free from blame; as for those who seek to go beyond that, they are transgressors. [The faithful are] those who **honestly observe their trusts and their promises**; and those who **attend to their prayers**; those are the heirs who shall inherit Al-Ferdaws (i.e. the loftiest dwellings in Paradise) wherein they shall abide forever.” [The Qur’an (23:1-11)].

“Those who tremble with fear of their Lord, believe in His messages and do not ascribe partners to Him; those who give to others what has been bestowed upon them with their hearts trembling at the thought that they must return to their Lord [and be judged]; it is they who **vie** with one another **in doing good works** and shall be the foremost in doing so.” [The Qur’an (23:57-61)].

“Exalted be Allah, the True King, there is no deity except Him, the Lord of the Glorious Throne. Whoever invokes another deity along with Allah—a deity of whose divinity he has no proof—will be brought to account by his Lord. Certainly, those who deny the truth shall never prosper [in the hereafter]. Say, ‘O Lord, forgive us and have mercy. You are the best of those who show mercy.’ ” [The Qur’an (23:116-118)].

“Allah is the Light of the heavens and the earth. The example of His Light is like a niche wherein there is a lamp; the lamp is within glass; the glass [shines] as if it were a pearl-like radiant star, lit from the oil of a blessed olive tree that is neither of the east nor of the west. The oil would almost give light of itself even if untouched by fire. Light upon light! Allah guides to His Light whom He wills. Allah strikes parables for people. Allah has full knowledge of all things. In houses decreed by Allah to be raised for the continuous mentioning of His name morning and evening, there are men who are never distracted by trade or commerce from the remembrance of Allah, the observance of prayers and alms; they fear a day when hearts and eyes will be convulsed; may Allah reward them according to the best of their deeds and give them more out of His bounty. Allah provides for whoever He wills without measures.” [The Qur’an (24:35-38)].

“[O Muhammad] do you not see that Allah is praised by all those who are in the heavens and on earth, as do the birds with wings outstretched? Each knows his own mode of prayer and glorification. Allah has full knowledge of all that they do. To Allah belongs the kingdom of the heavens and earth, and to Allah shall all things return.” [The Qur’an (24:41-42)].

“Allah promises those among you who **believe and do good deeds** that He will surely grant them power in the lands as He granted it to those who passed before; and that He shall establish for them their religion which He has approved of. He shall cause their state of fear to be replaced by a sense of security. Let them worship Me and associate none else with Me. Whoever chooses to deny the truth is truly rebellious.” [The Qur’an (24:55)].

“True servants of the Gracious One are those who **walk** upon the earth **with humility** and when they are addressed by those who are ignorant, their response is, ‘**Peace,**’ those who **spend the night prostrating** themselves, and standing before their Lord, they say, ‘Our Lord, ward off from upon us the punishment of Hell, for its punishment is a dreadful torment to suffer. Indeed, it is an evil abode and evil dwelling-place.’ They are those who are **neither extravagant nor niggardly** but keep a balance between the two, those who **never invoke any other deity besides Allah, nor take a life** which Allah has made sacred, **except with the right to do so, nor commit adultery**. Anyone who does that shall face punishment: he shall have his suffering doubled on the Day of Resurrection and he will abide forever in disgrace, except for those who **repent, and believe, and do good deeds**. Allah will change the evil deeds of such people into good ones: He is most forgiving and most merciful. He who repents and does good deeds has truly turned to Allah. And those who **do not bear false witness**, and when they pass by frivolity, they **pass by with dignity**, who **do not turn a blind eye and a deaf ear to the signs of their Lord** when they are reminded of them, who say, ‘Lord, grant us joy in our wives and children and make us a model for the righteous. These are the ones who will be rewarded with lofty mansions in Paradise, for their steadfastness. They will be received therein with greetings of welcome and salutations of peace. There they shall abide forever: a blessed dwelling and a blessed resting place.’ [The Qur’an (25:63-76)].

“Say [O Muhammad], “My Lord would not care for you were it not for your supplications.” [The Qur’an (25:77)].

“Tell them [O Muhammad] the story of Abraham, when he asked his father and his people, ‘What is that which you worship?’ They said, ‘We worship idols and will continue to cling to them.’ He asked, ‘Do they hear you when you call onto them? Do they help or harm you?’ They replied, ‘[Nay,] But we found our fathers doing this.’ Abraham said, ‘Have you really thought about what you have been worshipping, you and your forefathers—they are all my enemies save the Lord of the Universe who created me. It is He who guides me, He who feeds me and quenches my thirst, He who cures me when I am ill, He who will cause me to die and bring me back to life, and He who I hope would forgive my misdeeds on the judgement Day. O Lord, bestow wisdom upon me; unite me with the righteous; grant me a virtuous renown among posterity; make me one of the inheritors of the Garden of Bliss; forgive my father for he is one of those misguided; do not disgrace me on the Day when all people are resurrected, the Day when wealth and children will be of no avail, when he alone will be saved who **comes to [you] Allah with a sound heart.**’” [The Qur’an (26:69-89)].

“Who then responds to the distressed when they call upon Him, and relieves their suffering, and who makes you vicegerents on earth? Then, is there a god besides Allah? How little you pay heed!” [The Qur’an (27:62)].

“As for the abode of the hereafter, We shall assign it to those who seek neither self-aggrandizement on earth nor corruption. Only the righteous shall have a blessed end.” [The Qur’an (29:83)].

“We shall surely admit those who **believe and do good deeds** into the company of the **righteous.**” [The Qur’an (29:9)].

“[O Muhammad] recite [and convey] what has been revealed to you of the book, and pray regularly. Surely, praying restrains one from indecency and evil deeds; and verily, the remembrance of Allah is a greater [means of worship]. Allah knows what you do.” [The Qur’an (29:45)].

“We will surely guide to Our ways those who **strive hard** in Our cause. Allah is surely with the righteous.” [The Qur’an (29:69)].

“These are the verses of the **Book of wisdom**, a **guide** and a **mercy** for those who do good, for those who observe their prayers, give alms and have firm faith in the hereafter: these are rightly following their Lord’s guidance, and these are the ones who shall prosper.” [The Qur’an (31:2-5)].

“[Luqman said,] ‘O son! Though [a deed] be but the weight of a grain of mustard seed and though it be hidden in a rock, or in the heavens or on the earth, Allah shall bring it forth. Truly, Allah is the knower of all subtleties and He is aware. O son! **Observe your prayers, enjoin good, forbid evil, and endure patiently whatever befalls you;** surely, this is something which requires firm resolve. **Do not avert your face scornfully from people and do not walk haughtily on earth;** verily, Allah loves not arrogant boastful people. **Walk modestly and lower your voice,** for the ugliest of all voices is the braying of asses.”” [The Qur’an (31:16-19)].

“Whoever submits himself completely to Allah, and is a doer of good, he has surely grasped the strongest handhold, for the final outcome of all events rests with Allah.” [The Qur’an (31:22)].

“The ones who truly believe in Our messages are those who **fall to the ground prostrating** when they are recited to them, they **glorify** their **Lord** with praise and are not arrogant. They **forsake** their **beds calling upon** their **Lord in fear and in hope**, and **spend out** of what We have provided them with. No soul knows what joy is kept hidden in store for them as a reward for their good deeds.” [The Qur’an (32:15-17)].

“Verily, there is an excellent model in Allah’s messenger for those who aspire to return to Allah and long for the hereafter.” [The Qur’an (32:21)].

“Among the believers are men who were **truthful to their covenant** with Allah; some passed away [fulfilling their vows] and some are still waiting; never did any of them retreat, not in the least way.” [The Qur’an (32:23)].

“O believers, **remember Allah abundantly; exalt Him morning and evening**. He is the one who bestows His blessings upon you—and His angels invoke Him to bring you out from darkness to light; He is oft-merciful towards the faithful.” [The Qur’an (33:41-43)].

“Verily, Allah and His angels **praise the prophet**; O believers, praise him and [invoke Allah to deliver to him] your continuous peace greetings.” [The Qur’an (33:56)].

“O People, **remember Allah’s favor to you**. Is there any creator other than Allah who provides for you from the heavens and the earth? There is no God save Him. How then are you turned away from the truth?” [The Qur’an (35:3)].

“If one seeks glory, let him know that glory belongs to Allah alone. To Him ascends good words, and righteous deeds are exalted by Him.” [The Qur’an (35:10)].

“O people, it is you who stand in need of Allah; verily, Allah is self-sufficient and praiseworthy.” [The Qur’an (35:15)].

“Only those who possess **knowledge** fear Allah. Verily, Allah is all-glorious and most forgiving. Those who read **Allah’s book, observe** their **prayers**, and **spend in charity secretly and publicly** out of what We have provided them with, they seek a trade that will never perish. He shall give them their full rewards and give them more out of His bounty. He is most-forgiving and most-appreciative.” [The Qur’an (35:28-30)].

“The chosen servants of Allah; those have known provision—fruits of various kinds; and they shall be honored, in the Gardens of Bliss, seated on couches, facing one another. A drink will be passed round among them from a flowing spring: white and delicious to those who drink it, causing no headiness or intoxication. With them will be spouses—modest of gaze and beautiful of eye—like closely guarded pearls.” [The Qur’an (37:40-49)].

“This is a **blessed Book** which We sent down to you [O Muhammad], for people to **ponder over its messages, and** for those with understanding to **take heed**.” [The Qur’an (38:29)].

“He who **brings the truth**, and he who **confirms it**—those are surely **pious people**. They will have everything they wish for from their Lord. Such is the reward of those devoted to doing good.” [The Qur’an (39:33-34)].

“**Follow the best** of what is revealed to you from your Lord.” [The Qur’an (39:55)].

“No just estimate have they (i.e. most people) fathomed of Allah as He well deserves. On the Resurrection Day, the whole earth will lie within His power, and heavens shall be folded up under His dominion—Glory be to Him! Exalted is He above all that they associate with Him. The Trumpet shall be blown and whoever is in the heavens or on earth shall fall down in a swoon, except those who shall be spared by Allah. Then the trumpet shall be blown again and all shall rise gazing around [in awe]. The earth shall shine with its Lord’s light, and the Book will be laid open. The prophets and all witnesses shall be brought forth, and judgement shall pass on them with fairness; none shall be wronged. Every soul will be repaid in full for what it has done. He is fully aware of all that they do.” [The Qur’an (39:67-70)].

“Those who fear their Lord will be led in groups towards Paradise. When they reach it, its gates shall be opened, and its keepers shall say to them, ‘Peace be upon you. You have done well, enter Paradise and dwell in it forever,’ and they will respond, ‘All praises be to Allah who has fulfilled His promise to us and made us the inheritors of these lands, letting us settle inside Paradise wherever we please.’ How excellent is the reward of good doers! You shall see the angels circling about the throne glorifying their Lord with His praise. And judgement will have been passed in justice on all and it will be said, ‘All praises be to Allah, the Lord of the universe!’ ” [The Qur’an (39:73-75)].

“The [angels] who bear the Throne, and those around it, glorify their Lord with His praise and believe in Him. They ask forgiveness for those who believe, saying, ‘O Lord, You embrace all things in mercy and knowledge, forgive those who turn to You and follow Your path. Save them from the punishment of Hell and admit them, O Lord, to the Eternal Gardens of Eden which You have promised them, together with their righteous ancestors, spouses, and offspring. You alone are the Almighty, All-Wise. Protect them from all evil deeds; whoever You protect from [the punishment for] evil deeds will receive Your mercy—that is the supreme success.’ ” [The Qur’an (40:7-9)].

“Verily, We make victorious Our messengers and those who **believe** in the worldly life and on the day when all shall be resurrected and bear witness.” [The Qur’an (40:51)].

“Be patient [O Muhammad]; verily, Allah’s promise shall come to pass. Ask forgiveness for your sins and **praise your Lord** morning and evening.” [The Qur’an (40:55)].

“Indeed, those who affirm, ‘Our Lord is Allah,’ and **remain devout**, the angels descend upon them, saying, ‘Have no fear and do not grieve. Rejoice in glad tidings with Paradise that you have been promised. We are your allies in this life and in the Hereafter. Therein you shall have all that your souls desire, and therein you shall have all that you ask for, a rich provision from the ever forgiving, the most merciful.’ Who’s words are better than one who calls to Allah, does good deeds, and says, ‘I am surely of those who submit [to Allah]’? Good and evil deeds are not equal. Repel evil with what is better, then you will

see that one who was once your enemy has become your dearest friend, but no one will be granted such goodness except those who **exercise patience and self-restraint**; no one is granted it save those who are truly fortunate. If a prompting from Satan should stir you, **seek refuge with Allah**, He is the All Hearing, All Knowing.” [The Qur’an (40:30-36)].

“Allah chooses for Himself whoever He pleases and guides towards Himself those who turn to Him.” [The Qur’an (42:13)].

“Surely, those who profess, ‘Our Lord is Allah,’ and **remain steadfast [on that path]**, they shall feel no fear, nor shall they grieve.” [The Qur’an (42:13)].

“**Have patience** [O Muhammad] as did the steadfast Messengers, and be in no haste about them (i.e. those who deny your message).” [The Qur’an (46:35)].

“O believers, if you **make victorious Allah’s cause**, He will make you victorious and establish your endeavors.” [The Qur’an (47:7)].

“That’s for Allah is the guardian of believers, but the deniers have no guardian.” [The Qur’an (47:11)].

“Indeed, Allah is self-sufficient, but you stand in need [of Him].” [The Qur’an (47:38)].

“It was He (i.e. We Allah) who cast tranquility into the hearts of believers, that they may acquire more faith along with their own.” [The Qur’an (48:4)].

“We have sent you forth [O Muhammad] as a witness, a bearer of glad tidings, and a warner, so that you [mankind] may believe in Allah and His Messenger, help and honor him, and so that you may glorify Allah morning and evening.” [The Qur’an (48:8-9)].

“Verily, the believers are but those who have believed in Allah and His Messenger and then they doubt not, but **strive with their wealth and themselves for the cause of Allah**. Such are the truthful ones.” [The Qur’an (49:15)].

“Paradise will be brought near to the righteous and will no longer be far away. This is what you were promised—this is for everyone who often turned to Allah and kept Him in mind, who fears the Compassionate One, though He is unseen, and comes to Him **with a sound heart**; ‘Enter it in peace. This is the Day of immortality.’ Therein they shall have all that they desire, and there is even more with Us.” [The Qur’an (50:31-35)].

“**Bear with patience** what they (i.e. the deniers) say [O Muhammad], and glorify your Lord with His praise before the rising of the sun and before its setting; proclaim His praise during the night and at the end of every prayer.” [The Qur’an (50:39-40)].

“Surely, the pious shall dwell amidst gardens and springs. They shall well-accept what their Lord shall bestow upon them; indeed, they have done good works in the past, sleeping little during night-time, asking for forgiveness in the hour before dawn, and sharing their possessions with beggars and the deprived.” [The Qur’an (51:15-19)].

“The pious shall find themselves in gardens and rivers, in the assembly of the truthful with an all-powerful sovereign.” [The Qur’an (54:54-55)].

“One Day, you [O Muhammad] shall see the faithful men and women, their light streaming out before them and on their right hands, [you shall hear a voice saying to them:] ‘Rejoice with glad tidings, today you shall enter gardens with rivers flowing through them wherein you shall forever dwell. That is the supreme triumph.’ ” [The Qur’an (57:12)].

“Blessed is He in whose hand is all creation: He has power over all things. He created death and life so that He might test you, which of you is **best in conduct**. He is the Almighty, the Most Forgiving.” [The Qur’an (67:1-2)].

“Indeed, man is born impatient, when misfortune touches him he starts lamenting, and whenever good fortune comes to him, he grows niggardly. Not so the worshippers who **pray regularly**; those who **give a due share of their wealth to the beggars and the destitute**; and those who **believe in the Judgement day** and are careworn by the punishment of their Lord—none should ever feel secure from the punishment of their Lord [in this life]— those who **preserve their chastity except from their spouses** and their right hand possessions, for which they incur no blame—but those who go beyond that limit are transgressors; those who are **faithful to their trusts and to their pledges**; those who **stand by their testimony** and those who **observe their prayers**. They will be honored in the Gardens of Bliss.” [The Qur’an (70:19-35)].

“Verily, this is a reminder, so let him who wills follow a path to his Lord.” [The Qur’an (76:29)].



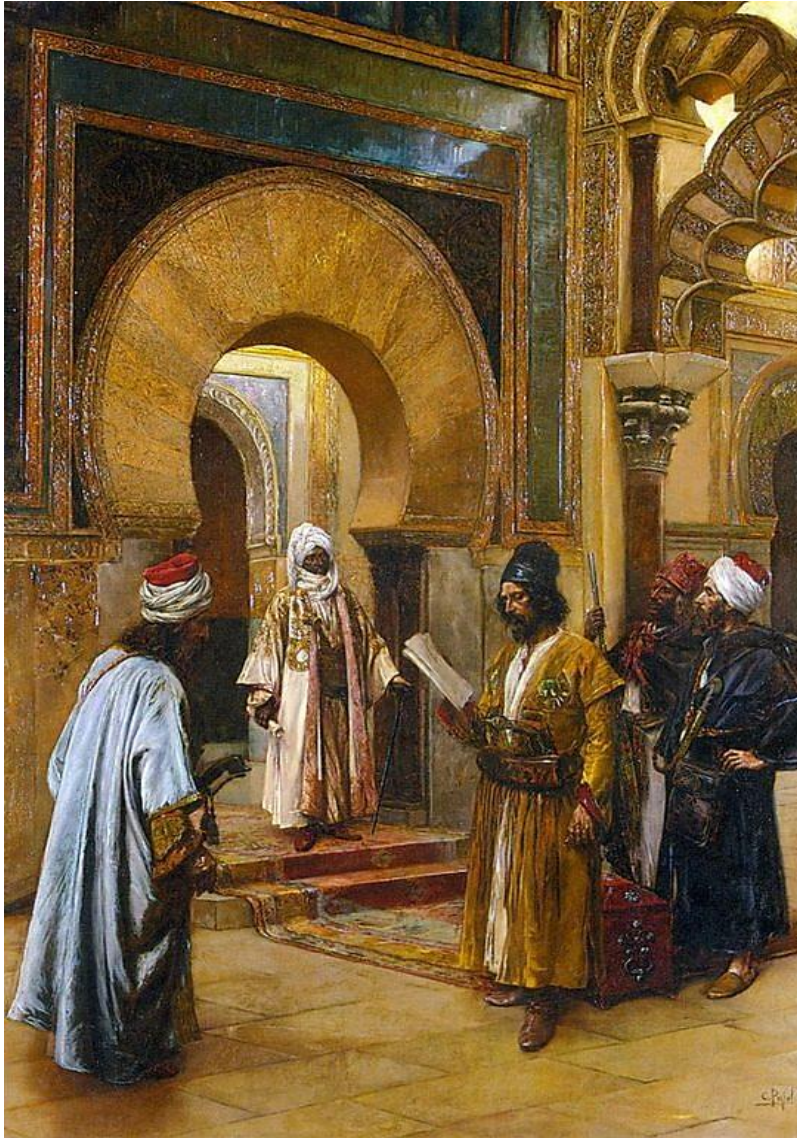
The previous verses are a small portion of what I could've added in this chapter.

I hope that those few pages would help the reader see one of the many paths to spiritual-purification amidst the Qur'an. May Allah bestow His grace upon us all.

O Allah, I seek your refuge from all evils, those that I know, and those that I know not, in this life and the next. O Allah, if you treat me with your justice, I'm doomed; I seek refuge in your mercy and kindness; forgive my sins and guide me to make amends. If you forsake me to my whim, I shall go astray; lead me to your righteous path, and help me in every step along the way. Let me live among the pious and return to you with a sound heart. Amen.



Section III: People of the Book



This section is a brief record for the main stops in the history of the people of the book. Kindly note that some of the dates, incidents, numbers and data included in this section could not be confirmed, nor do they present a 100% accurate account of history. This is a summarized chronology for the history of the Jewish and Christian nations. I believe it's important for students to understand the sequence of the events in order to have a better understanding of the ideologies governing the two famous religions.

*

The Jewish Chronicles

According to the Jewish transmitted chronicles: After a series of tragic dealings with mankind, starting from Adam's sin and expulsion from paradise, up to Noah's flood, God decided to choose one man and his descendants to be the trustees on his messages, and from among them, all messengers to mankind would be chosen. Their duty was to abide by god's messages, and in return, god would grant them his protection and victory. This was a covenant between god and **Abraham**, the chosen pious man. After Abraham died, this covenant was renewed with his son **Isaac**, then with Isaac's son Jacob (AKA **Israel**), then with the **12 sons** of Jacob. These 15 figures are known in the Jewish traditions as "**The Patriarchs.**" **Levi** was one of the 12 sons of Israel, from his offspring came **Moses**, the true founder of **Judaism**. He is the first bearer of a message from god to the sons of Israel. This message included the commandments around which Judaism revolved. The message was named the **Torah**. It consists of **5 books** usually referred to by the name "**Pentateuch**".

God's covenant to Abraham included a promise to grant him a great nation that would dwell in **Canaan**. Through the course of history, the sons of Israel had to **immigrate to Egypt** escaping a famine that hit Palestine, and in Egypt they were enslaved by Egyptians for almost 430 years. During this period their numbers multiplied vastly from a few tens of persons to hundreds of thousands. This made the Egyptian king, Pharaoh, issue a decree that stipulates the killing of new born babies for the Israelites. Moses was among the children born in this period. God saved him in a miraculous manner; he was raised and protected by Pharaoh himself. When he was 40, an incident happened that changed the history of mankind till the moment of writing this. Moses saw 2 men fighting, one of them was a Hebrew and the other was Egyptian. Trying to defend the Hebrew, he punched the Egyptian accidentally killing him. The Bible tells the story as follows: "*And it came to pass in those days, when Moses was grown, that he went out unto his brethren, and looked on their burdens: and he spied an Egyptian smiting an Hebrew, one of his brethren. And he looked this way and that way, and when he saw that [there was] no man, he slew the Egyptian, and hid him in the sand.*" This incident forced Moses to escape from Egypt towards **Midian** where he lived in exile for 40 years working as a shepherd for **Jethro**. One day, while traveling between the mountains with his herd searching for pasture, it happened that he received god's orders telling him to lead his people **out of Egypt**.

After many dramatic events, Moses succeeded in leading the Israelites **into the wilderness of Shur**, and then into the **wilderness of Sin** where god inspired Moses to ascend **Mount Sinai**, and there he received the tablets which included god's message to the Israelites. Moses received laws governing every aspect of life of that day. Based on these laws, the Mishnah and the Talmud were later on compiled. A while before Moses received the laws, the Israelites were gathered under Mount Sinai and God related to them **10 commandments**. They are the foundation of Judaism:

1. I am your Lord who has delivered you from Egypt. You shall have no other gods but me.
2. You shall not make any graven images.
3. You shall not take your Lord's name in vain.
4. You shall remember the Sabbath and keep it holy.
5. You shall honor your parents.

6. You shall not kill.
7. You shall not commit adultery.
8. You shall not steal.
9. You shall not bear false witness.
10. You shall not covet your neighbor's property.

During the years of wandering, Israelites were given 2 religious institutions, those are:

1) The ark of the covenant: it's a coffin containing the sacred relics of the Exodus.
2) The tent of meeting: in which the Israelites worshipped **YHWH** and offered sacrifice in his name. Later on, **Solomon** established a huge **temple** for YHWH in **Jerusalem**. His father David wanted to do this, but he was forbidden because he shed a lot of blood. The Ark of the Covenant was placed inside the temple, and a group of priests assumed the responsibility of serving YHWH's temple.

961-922 B.C.: Solomon's reign – Establishment of YHWH's temple – Priests of the temple compiled what was later known as the "**Yahvist text**".

922 B.C.: Solomon's death and the split of the Israelites into 2 nations. The northern one was called **Israel**. It included 10 tribes of the 12, consequently, they were larger in number and more productive. The southern nation consisted of the remaining 2 tribes **Judah** and Benjamin. These 2 nations **fought** against each other seeking to seize full control. The war between them extended for years, the book of Chronicles (13:17) mentions **500,000 men** from Israel being slain by Judah. This was mainly because the northern nation was also attacked by the neighboring countries during its war with Judah.

800-700 B.C.: The 8th century witnessed a huge prophetic movement during these troubled times. **Hosea, Isaiah, Micah** and **Amos** were 4 famous prophets who lived in this century. They gave prophecies about Judah, Jerusalem, future prophets, etc. Their role was mainly reformatory, they criticized the sins of the Jewish community and the social injustices of their time in a poetic style. Some of them lived during the Assyrian invasion in 721. During this century, the "**Elohists text**" was compiled.

721 B.C.: Year of the Assyrian invasion to the Northern nation "Israel." The invasion resulted in **complete destruction of the 10 tribes**. Some fusion was witnessed between the Yahvist and Elohist texts.

620 B.C.: **War** erupted **between** the Chaldeans (**Babylonians**) and the **Assyrians**. After many years, the Chaldeans eventually won the war. Prophet **Habakkuk** lived during the years of this war.

586 B.C.: The Babylonians invaded Judah after gaining triumph over the Assyrians. The temple was destroyed, and the Ark of the Covenant was destroyed. The Jews fell in **captivity**. Afterwards, they were deported to work as slaves **in Babylon**. It was **Ezekiel** who led the Jews while in captivity. His role was important in preserving the identity and customs of the Jews. His students were the ones who compiled the "**Sacerdotal text**." The **Diaspora** began with the destruction of both nations. Synagogues also began as an assembly of at least 10 men (**Quorum**) and a copy of the Torah with them. **Rabbis** or masters, was the title given to those who studied the scripture and taught it to people.

- 538 B.C.: **Cyrus the great** of Persia invaded Babylon, destroyed its idols and freed the Jews as was predicted by Isaiah. Among the Jews who were freed later on was **Prophet Ezra**. The Jews who returned to Jerusalem reestablished the temple in 520 B.C.
- 300-200 B.C.: The 3rd century B.C. witnessed the production of the “**Hebrew Masoretic text**” called “**Tanakh**” + The **Greek Septuagint** written by the Jews living in Alexandria of Egypt + The **Hebrew Samaritan Pentateuch** written with Samaritan alphabets in Babylon.
- 100 B.C.-70 A.D.: The “**Dead Sea scrolls**” were written in this period.
- 70 A.D.: Destruction of the second temple by the Romans. Jewish revolutionaries were slaughtered, thousands were enslaved, and the Diaspora was renewed. Jews of the Diaspora separated themselves from the gentiles by refusing to work on the Sabbath, refusing to eat prohibited kinds of food, practicing circumcision, etc. The rabbis sought by laymen, faced a huge problem in applying the laws of the scripture in countries ruled by non-Jews, but the people gathered around their knowledgeable ones. “**Yohannah Ben Zakkai**” was one of those rabbis, he was living in Jerusalem during the siege, and he managed to escape to **Titus**’s tent one night to ask his permission to gather the rest of the rabbis and discuss the future of Judaism. Titus agreed and those rabbis assembled; their discussions continued for years. Among the results of their councils was the formation of the canon which we know today as the **Old Testament**. After the destruction of Jerusalem, Jews moved to Galilee.
- 135-217 A.D.: “**Judah Ha Nasi**,” was one of the most important rabbis in the Jewish history. He compiled the commentary of the Jewish scholars on the laws of Moses since the time of Ezra. He called it “**Mishnah**.” It was **published in 200 A.D. as the oral Torah**. It included the debates between the 2 most famous schools of thought in Judaism: **Hillel** and **Shammai** schools, what they agreed on and what they differed about, and it also included the opinions of famous rabbis like **rabbi Akiva** (died 137 A.D.). The oral Torah or the secondary law was a means of preserving the primary laws of the Torah and making their understanding and application easier for Jewish people.
- 306 A.D.: **Constantine** became Emperor of Rome. He was favorably inclined towards Christianity. **In 325** he ordered the assembly of the **council of Nicaea**. This helped in establishing Trinitarian Christianity as the official religion of the Roman Empire. Consequently, persecution against the Jews ensued. Most **Jews** were forced to escape towards the more tolerant communities. Many moved to **Babylon** where some Jews were still living there since 586 B.C. There, discussions over the laws and additional sermonic material were compiled under the title “**Gemara**.” “**Mishnah + Gemara**” formed the **Talmud**. Two Talmuds were produced, one in Jerusalem called “**The Palestinian Talmud**.” It was published in **425 A.D.** The other was “**The Babylonian Talmud**.” It was published in **500 A.D.** The **legal matters**’ section is called “**Halakah**,” while the **narratives**’ section is called “**Haggadah**.” **30% of the Babylonian Talmud is Haggadah.**

- 600-1000 A.D.: Rabbis who had compiled the Talmuds were succeeded by scholars who established schools and ran academies teaching the Talmud. Dean of the academy was called “**Gaon.**” This period is called the “**Gaonic period.**” Another group named the “**Karaites**” rose against “**Gaons**” and denied their authority and that of the Talmud. They only accepted the Hebrew Bible (Old Testament). This period also witnessed the compilation of “**Sepher Yetzirah**”—or the “**Book of Creation**”—by the Babylonian scholars. It contributed in the evolution of “**Kabbalah.**”
- 610-660 A.D.: The advent of Islam and the expulsion of most Jewish tribes from Arabia.
- 711 A.D.: Muslims enter southern Spain and establish Andalusia.
- 750 A.D.: The ‘*Abbāsid* Caliphate rose in Iraq. They showed tolerance towards the Jews of Babylon who mingled with Arabs and Muslims. This continued for almost 200 years and the Jewish academies flourished in Baghdad.
- 882-942 A.D.: “**Saadi Ben Joseph,**” the last great Gaonim who led spokesmen against the Karaites, translated the Hebrew Bible to Arabic. Later on, the struggle among the Jewish sects became more intense; gradually, the academies declined and closed their doors. The leaders of the Jews passed through the Islamic states safely and freely till they reached Spain where they were allowed to enter the fields of government, science, medicine, philosophy, etc. The most famous Jewish philosophers and Talmudists were living in Islamic states. With the decline of Babylon community, Spanish Jews became the leaders of the Jewish world. Among them were:
Samuel Ibn Naghrillah (993-1056): The Grand Vizier of Granada.
Judah Ha Levi (1075-1141): A physician and poet.
Moses Ibn Nachman (1195-1270): **Nachmanides** was a Talmudist, Kabbalist, and philosopher.
Moses Ibn Maimoun (1135-1204): **Maimonides** was a physician, Talmudist and philosopher. He escaped from **Al-Mohad**’s persecution to Egypt where he became **Saladin’s personal physician.** His most famous books were: “**Mishnah-Torah,**” a summary of the Talmudic laws, and “**Guide to the perplexed,**” which was an attempt to harmonize Judaic creed with **Aristotle’s philosophical views.** This book was criticized greatly by the rabbis and Talmudists of the time.
- 1096 A.D.: Beginning of the **Crusades** by orders of the **Pope.** 80,000 citizens of Palestine were massacred by the Franks in the first crusade. Around 40,000 of whom were Muslims, the rest were Christians and Jews.
- 1280 A.D.: Vast persecution campaigns were launched against the Jews forcing many of them to escape to Poland and Turkey. Approximately 160,000 Jews lived in Poland. “**Ashkenazim**” was the name given to them. They spoke “**Yiddish,**” which is a combination of German and Hebrew. About 500,000 Jews lived in Turkey. “**Sephardim**” was the name given to them. They spoke Spanish with some Hebrew. Meanwhile, a Spanish scholar named **Moses De Leon** compiled “**The book of Splendor,**” known as “**Zohar.**” He attributed part of it to **Simeon Ibn Yohai,** the student of **rabbi Aquiva** who lived in the 2nd century. This book replaced the Talmud and became the most widely read book in Judaism. The Kabbalistic literature addressed the oppressed who have little hope. This is why it was sought by most Jews, especially after their expulsion

from Spain in 1492. In the period 1534-1572 A.D., **Isaac Luria** led a **Kabbalistic group** in upper **Galilee**.

1290 A.D.: Expulsion from England.

1306 A.D.: Expulsion from France.

14th century: Expulsion from Germany.

1391 A.D.: Thousands of Jews massacred by European Christians.

15th century: Expulsion from Spain, followed by Portugal.

1492 A.D.: **Ferdinand and Isabella** expelled Muslims and Jews from Spain.

Main Reasons of Persecution

1. Jews were accused of killing Jesus.
2. They were accused of the ritual murder of some Christians and using their blood to bake unleavened bread for Passover.
3. They were accused of making lepers poison the Christian water wells during the period of plagues.
4. They dealt with usury, which was forbidden by the church. This made them the available money lenders in most cities.
5. They always isolated themselves from their communities and formed secret societies.

1520 A.D.: **Martin Luther** started preaching Protestantism. First, he denounced the Catholic Church and its persecution campaigns against Jews, but when Jews refused his version of Christianity, he turned against them. In response to his views, the Catholic Church made some reformations that were accompanied with the inquisitions and the formation of the **Ghettos** (These were confinements in which Jews were forced to live).

1648-1656 A.D.: Cossack peasants led a revolution against the nobles in Poland. They directed their anger towards the landlords and tax collectors who were mostly Jews. Many were slaughtered, women were raped, etc. Around 100,000 Jews were killed in this revolution. The survivors fled to Western Europe.

1665 A.D.: A Jew called **Sabbati Zevi** claimed to be the Messiah. He entered Constantinople where he was captured and converted to Islam.

1743 A.D.: **Moses Ibn Mendel** entered Germany to study in its schools. He was a talented poet and was generously accepted by Germany's poets. This made him encourage the Jews to leave the Ghettos, mingle with the gentiles and speak their language.

1750 A.D.: **Israel Ibn Eliazer**, nicknamed "**Baal Shem Tov**," preached that God was not to be found in the Torah or Talmud, but was rather heartfelt. His followers were known by the name "**Hasidim**." They were excommunicated by orthodox rabbis.

1789 A.D.: The French revolution, followed by the declaration of human rights and the tearing down of Ghettos.

1843 A.D.: 100 years after **Moses Ibn Mendel** entered Germany, his call was fruitful. German Jewish leaders issued the following declaration:

1. There is continuous development in Judaism.
2. The Talmud has no authority over modern Jews.
3. Jews seek no Messiah and know no homeland but that of birth.

- 1881 A.D.: The assassination of Alexander II, Emperor of Russia, Poland and other eastern countries. This resulted in new pogroms against the Jews. Thousands fled to U.S.A.
- 1894-1899 A.D.: The Dreyfus case: **Captain Alfred Dreyfus** was accused of committing treason against the French army. He was convicted falsely and received a life sentence in prison. 7 years later, his trial was declared erroneous. This case was covered by an Austrian Jewish journalist called **Theodore Herzl**, who concluded that, “Regardless of the liberal façade of Europe, Jews would never be treated fairly until they have a land of their own.” Herzl started a movement that pleaded the cause of a Jewish state. It was called “**Zionism**,” and it chose Palestine as a place for this dream.
- 1900 A.D.: Jews started buying lands in Palestine.
- 1909 A.D.: The foundation of **Tel Aviv**.
- 1917 A.D.: **Belford declaration to Chaim Weizmann**.
- 1920 A.D.: 50,000 Jews settled in Palestine.
- 1928 A.D.: 100,000 Jews settled in Palestine.
- 1931 A.D.: 175,000 Jews settled in Palestine.
- 1933 A.D.: 220,000 Jews settled in Palestine.
- 1935 A.D.: **Hitler** issued new laws reducing Jews to second class citizens. They could not vote, hold office or work in most professions.
- 1941 A.D.: The **Holocaust** started. 6 million are claimed to have been annihilated. The Main reason behind it was the troubles that faced Germany after WW-I, they blamed the Jews for their defeat. The “**Protocols of the elders of Zion**” was believed to play a big role in this.
- 1947 A.D.: The United Nations voted for a partition plan for Palestine though Jews only owned 2% of Palestinian lands. Palestinians refused this decision which led to an unresolved situation till the moment of writing this. Most importantly, it led to the transformation of Judaism from a religion to Zionism as an ideology.

Jewish sects today

1. Orthodox Judaism: They are Talmudists. They observe the Kosher food law and the Sabbath. Men are always separated from women inside the synagogues, and women wear a veil.
2. Reform Judaism: They developed modernized practices of Judaism. They worship on Fridays. Men and women sit together, and they utilize music and choirs in their recitations.
3. Conservative Judaism: They are closer to the Orthodox, but they incline towards science and make scientific studies for the Jewish Bible.
4. Reconstructionists: They mingled religion with culture, history, law and art.

Famous Jewish feasts and holidays

1. Passover: Deliverance of the Israelites from slavery.
2. Shavuot: Receiving the 10 commandments at Mount Sinai.
3. Yom Kippur: The holiest of all holidays.
4. Hanukkah: The rededication of the temple in 165 B.C.

The Christian Chronicles

According to the Christian transmitted chronicles: Jesus was born in Bethlehem prior to the death of Herod the Great 4 B.C. He was the miraculous born son of a pious virgin called Mary. When he turned thirty, he was baptized by John the son of Zachariah in Jordan River. Thereafter, he secluded himself in the wilderness and fasted for 40 days. When this period ended, he entered Galilee and began preaching, teaching and healing the sick. His ministry reverberated between Galilee, Jerusalem and Judea. He had a group of disciples who followed him, the Gospels name 12 disciples.

Jesus's teachings were mainly concerned with values, morals and ethics. His use of parables was an easy and extremely nice method of teaching. The gospel of Luke has many parables recorded in it. Jesus also defended the Judaic laws and held them as a means of reformation if properly applied. During his ministry, he fought bravely against the improper application of the laws by hypocritical rabbis. His teachings attracted those who had pure hearts and his miracles in healing stood as evidence on his relation to the Omnipotent Creator. He is recorded to heal the sick, the blind and the lame. He also raised the dead, fed the hungry, walked upon water, cast out demons and stilled storms.

The gospels tell us that he was recognized by John the Baptist as Elijah, some people thought of him as a prophet, and his disciples recognized him as the Messiah. Near his death, Jesus went to Jerusalem with his disciples. He taught in the temple and engaged in debates with the **Pharisees**. During this period he stayed in a village called Bethany, a few miles away from Jerusalem. This continued for a few days until he was betrayed by a disciple called "Judas," who gave his location to the Romans lurking to arrest and kill him. He was captured, tortured, crucified and buried near Jerusalem. The exact reasons behind his arrest are unknown. Some say that the Pharisees informed the **Romans** that he was enticing a revolution against them, others say that he was related to the "**Zealots**"—a group of revolutionists trying to overthrow the Roman government, and some say that the "**Sadducees**" who controlled the temple hated him for threatening their authority.

Two days after his burial, his tomb was found empty. The gospels tell us that he appeared for some of his disciples in Jerusalem and Galilee at various times for 40 days. He gathered his followers at the Mount of Olives outside Jerusalem and ascended to heaven. These final events formed the foundation base of the Christian faith. After these events, Jesus's followers started preaching the new faith and Christianity evolved. **Simon Peter** led the Christians who were still a Jewish sect at that time. He traveled through the Roman Empire until he reached Rome where he built the Roman Church. When Peter started his journey to preach Christianity for other communities, he was succeeded by **James**, the half-brother of Jesus. 7 men were chosen to serve Christians in Jerusalem. One famous figure was **Stephen**, whose preaching enraged the Romans, so they had him stoned. He was the first martyr in Christianity.

A couple of year after Jesus's departure, a man named **Saul from Tarsus**—later on, changed to **Paul**—who was a Pharisee, converted from Judaism to Christianity. He was one of those who persecuted Christians. On a persecution mission to Damascus he was struck down by light and he heard a voice telling him that the Lord's son orders him to stop persecuting Christians and that he should go and preach Christianity to all people.

Paul traveled all over the Roman Empire preaching in Jewish synagogues and to the gentiles. He preached that gentiles should join Christians in their quest to spread Christianity. His opinion was that the old Judaic practices are no longer important for the new converts; he denounced circumcision and kosher food, he permitted the eating of pork among other things which created a wide gap between the teachings of Judaism and Christianity. After spending several years traveling and preaching Christianity, Paul was arrested by the Romans. He was imprisoned for several years and then executed approximately in 67 A.D. Paul was the author of 14 books of the New Testament. He is the real founder of Christianity.

Early Christians followed the Judaic rituals and prayed inside the temple at Jerusalem. They continued to practice the animal sacrifice, followed the Jewish prayers, recited the same hymns, etc. They added baptism as a doorway for new converts, they began some new rituals like the “**Eucharist**,” or the communion meal in which they share a meal and recall the last supper and death of Jesus. From this ritual came the practice that the bread and wine become the flesh and blood of Jesus.

- 30-150 A.D.: Christianity was still under formation; there were many sects and beliefs during this period.
- 64 A.D.: **Nero** ordered the burning of Rome and initiated a persecution campaign against Christians after blaming them for Rome’s destruction.
- 70 A.D.: The Romans destroyed the second temple in Jerusalem and the Church. This event was deemed the cause behind the evolution of most gospels during that time. Among these gospels were the 4 famous ones.

Main Characteristics of the 4 Gospels

<u>Matthew</u>	<u>Mark</u>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A prolongation of the O.T. 2. Emphasizing that Jesus was the one in whom God has fulfilled the history of Israel. He is the Messiah. 3. Tracing the genealogy of Jesus till Abraham. 4. Jesus describes himself to be sent to the lost sheep of Israel. 5. The passage that says: <i>“Then certain of the scribes and of the Pharisees answered, saying, Master, we wish to see a sign from you. But he answered them: ‘An evil and adulterous generation seeks a sign, no sign shall be given to it but the sign of prophet Jonas: For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale’s belly, so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.’ ”</i> 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The oldest and shortest gospel. 2. Written by a clumsy writer, the weakest among all evangelists. 3. He Contradicts Matthew regarding Jonas’ sign. 4. Its closing verses 16{9-20} were recognized to be an early addition that was not found in all codices. 5. The text doesn’t name any author. 6. Some scholars saw in the story of the young man who had nothing but a linen cloth an anonymous signature proving that the author was mark the disciple. 14{46-52}. 7. The author was of Jewish origins but the presence of Latin expressions suggests that the gospel was written in Rome. The author is also keen on explaining the Aramaic expressions he uses.

<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 6. It is the work of a Judeo-Christian community. It harmonizes with the O.T. 7. Matthew was recognized by Origen and Jerome as one of Jesus's companions. He was known by the name Levi, he was a customs officer at <i>Cafir-Na'um</i> when Jesus invited him to be one of his disciples. This opinion is no longer held today. 8. This gospel was written in Greek. Its author knows the Jewish customs well and he knows Aramaic. 9. Most commentators date this gospel to 80-90 A.D. 10. Matthew was most probably a teacher or an educated Jew turned Christian. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 8. Mark was most probably Peter's companion. 9. Evidence preponderate that this gospel was written in Rome between 65-70 A.D.
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<u>Luke</u>	<u>John</u>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The writing style indicates that Luke was a true novelist. 2. He narrates on account of eye witnesses. 3. He touches on Jesus's childhood. 4. He provides a different genealogy of Jesus from that of Matthew. 5. He describes the Eucharist in a different way from Matthew and Mark. His description matches that of Paul in Corinthians. 6. He contradicts himself regarding the ascension of Jesus, for in the gospel he puts it on Easter's day, while in acts he places it 40 days later. 7. Luke was a well-educated man, most probably a physician as referred to by Paul and confirmed by his precision in describing the sick. 8. It seems that he witnessed the siege and destruction of Jerusalem by Titus in 70 A.D. His gospel was written in Greek after this period. Most critics situate it in 80-90 A.D. 9. He highlights the cruelty of the Jews and the good relations with the Samaritans. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. This is a totally different work from the previous three. It has a different arrangement, speech, geography, style chronology and theological outlook. 2. It doesn't mention the institution of the Eucharist, but the author limited himself to describing the last supper, Jesus washing the feet of his disciples and predicting Judas's betrayal. 3. The author places a description of Jesus raised from death to his disciples beside the sea of Tiberius. This is different from Luke who describes a miraculous fish catching incident during Jesus's life. 4. John described Jesus's mission to have taken place over 2 years. 5. The author was most probably an eye witness. Many commentators attribute this gospel to John son of Zebedee. 6. This gospel was written near the end of the first century. This indicates that it was written by a young disciple who lived till he was almost 100 years old. 7. Many additions produced confusion regarding the author's true identity. Some say that the author's disciples must have made those additions.

All accounts prove that early Christianity was not an organized religion with a well-established creed. Within the course of time, the church established some creedal statements and some form of Orthodox theology. Heresy within the church of the first centuries was centered on Gnosticism. Gnostics believed that God was a pure spirit and couldn't have created this materialistic world. They believed that this world was created by some secondary deity. Based on this idea, Gnostics assumed that Jesus was pure spirit but appeared to be human. This is why the church has historically placed much emphasis on the divinity of Jesus and neglected his humanity.

117-138 A.D.: **Persecution** campaigns against Christians ordered by Emperor **Hadrian**.

140 A.D.: A man named **Marcion**—son of the bishop of Pontus—entered Rome seeking an office in church. He taught that God of the OT was different from God of the NT; hence, Christians should not waste time reading the OT.

161-180 A.D.: Persecution campaigns renewed by orders of Emperor **Marcus Aurelius**.

182-254 A.D.: The life of **Origen** who was born and spent half of his career in Alexandria. His writings extended to theology, exegesis, philosophy, preaching, and spirituality.

306 A.D.: **Constantine** became Emperor in Rome. He was favorably inclined towards Christianity. In **325** he ordered the assembly of the **council of Nicaea**. This helped in establishing Trinitarian Christianity as the official religion of the Roman Empire.

337 A.D.: Constantine embraced Christianity in its Arian form and was baptized on his death bed.

379-396 A.D.: The reign of **Theodosius** during which Christianity became the official religion of the Roman Empire.

342-420 A.D.: The life of **Saint Jerome** who translated the Hebrew and Greek Biblical material to Latin. The **Vulgate** remained the standard Bible of the Roman church for over 1500 years.

354-430 A.D.: The life of **Augustine** who was the second most influential figure in Christianity after Paul. He formulated the doctrine of the original sin, the fall of man and predestination. He took Paul's letter to the Romans as his evidence. He said that the original man and woman had willfully sinned against God; consequently, they passed their sinful nature to the next generations. For this reason, all mankind were incurably sinful and needed a redeemer. This is why God sent his son to die for the sins of men. **Monk Pelagius** refused this view and said that all mankind were free to act as they want, their salvation was something which they initiated and carried forth by their own will. Pelagius's views were denounced by the Orthodox Church.

431 A.D.: **Council of Ephesus**: It was convened to discuss the **Nestorian creed** which states that Virgin Mary was the birth giver of Christ but not God. It ended by condemning the Nestorian teachings and confirming the Nicene Creed.

532 A.D.: **Council of Chalcedon**: It was convened to discuss the truth about the nature of Jesus, whether he was God or man or both. It ended up with issuing a canon stating the following: *"We, then, following the holy Fathers, all with one consent, teach people to confess one and the same Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, the same perfect in Godhead and also perfect*

in manhood, truly God and truly man, of a reasonable soul and body, consubstantial with the Father according to the Godhead, and consubstantial with us according to the Manhood, in all things like unto us, without sin, begotten before all ages of the Father according to the Godhead, and in these latter days, for us and for our salvation, born of the Virgin Mary, the Mother of God, according to the Manhood, one and the same Christ, Son, Lord, only begotten, to be acknowledged in two natures, inconfusedly, unchangeably, indivisibly, inseparably.”

1225-1274 A.D.: The life of **Thomas Aquinas** who was the greatest thinker in the history of Christianity. He benefited from the writings of Plato, Aristotle and other philosophers. He is best known for “Summa Contra Gentiles,” which was a series of arguments defending the Christian faith against pagans. The second was “Summa Theologiae,” which was a massive systematization of the Christian faith. He believed that both reason and revelation were necessary for Christian belief.

1320-1384 A.D.: The life of **John Wycliffe** who translated the Bible from Latin to English. His reformative ideas triggered the protestant movement almost 2 centuries later. The church condemned his opinions in 1415. In 1428 his remnants were dug out and burned.

1373-1415 A.D.: The life of **John Hus** who was influenced by Wycliffe’s writings. He fought boldly against the church’s practice of selling indulgences. He was condemned and burned at the stake.

1483-1546 A.D.: The life of **Martin Luther** who started preaching Protestantism in 1520. He denounced the Catholic Church and declared that every Christian is a priest who could interpret the scriptures. He refused the concept of Transubstantiation, which holds the bread and wine used in the sacrament of the Eucharist as the body and blood of Christ in their actual form.

1509-1564 A.D.: The life of **John Calvin** who was the most influential writer and thinker behind reformation. His work “The institutes of the Christian religion” was the rock upon which the protestant theology was built. He founded the University of Geneva and died there.

1545 A.D.: The **council of Trent**: it was convened to respond to the protestant movement. It ended up declaring that the Catholic traditions were coequal with the scriptures as a source of truth for Christians, and that only the Catholic Church had the right to interpret the scriptures.

1491-1556 A.D.: The life of Ignatius **Loyola** who was a noble Spanish officer. He was wounded in a battle in 1521. During the period of his recovery, he read a book about the life of Christ and various saints. He developed spiritual exercises tailored to train special believers. He founded the secret society of the Jesuits. They took vows of poverty, chastity and total obedience to the Pope and the church. This society had a military nature that performed secret missions ordered by the pope himself.

17th-19th century: The European Renaissance.

1869 A.D.: The **Vatican council**: it declared that the pope was infallible.

1962-1965 A.D.: The **2nd Vatican council**. The most revolutionary council since that of Trent. Among the decisions that this council took was that non-Catholics were recognized as Christians, and Jews were no longer held responsible for the death of Jesus.

Biblical Teachings Utilized in Attacking Islam

Whenever I read in the Bible, I couldn't help not noticing that there isn't a single accusation, idea, or concept, utilized by some "thinkers" in attacking Islam except that it is originated from the Bible. I think that the fear of those people is not from Islam, it's from losing their undeserved status in front of the justice of Islam. The next few pages hold a few Biblical verses which emphasize this idea. This is only the tip of the ice berg.

Regarding encouraging violence, bloodshed, slavery and taking sex slaves:

From Leviticus, read (25:39-46):

"If any of your fellow Israelites become poor and sell themselves to you, do not make them work as slaves. They are to be treated as hired workers or temporary residents among you, they are to work for you until the Year of Jubilee. Then they and their children are to be released, and they will go back to their own clans and to the property of their ancestors. Because the Israelites are my servants, whom I brought out of Egypt, they must not be sold as slaves. Do not rule over them ruthlessly, but fear your God. 'Your male and female slaves are to come from the nations around you, from them you may buy slaves. You may also buy some of the temporary residents living among you and members of their clans born in your country, and they will become your property. You can bequeath them to your children as inherited property and can make them slaves for life, but you must not rule over your fellow Israelites ruthlessly.'"

From numbers, read (21:34-35):

"But the LORD said to Moses, 'Do not fear him, for I have given him into your hand, and all his people and his land, and you shall do to him as you did to Sihon, king of the Amorites, who lived at Heshbon.' So they killed him and his sons and all his people, until there was no remnant left him, and they possessed his land."

From numbers, read (31:1-11):

"The Lord said to Moses, 'Take vengeance on the Midianites for the Israelites. After that, you will be gathered to your people.' So Moses said to the people, 'Arm some of your men to go to war against the Midianites so that they may carry out the Lord's vengeance on them. Send into battle a thousand men from each of the tribes of Israel.' So twelve thousand men armed for battle, a thousand from each tribe, were supplied from the clans of Israel. Moses sent them into battle, a thousand from each tribe, along with Phinehas son of Eleazar, the priest, who took with him articles from the sanctuary and the trumpets for signaling. They fought against Midian, as the Lord commanded Moses, and killed every man. Among their victims were Evi, Rekem, Zur, Hur and Reba—the five kings of Midian. They also killed Balaam son of Beor with the sword. The Israelites captured the Midianite women and children and took all the Midianite herds, flocks and goods as plunder. They burned all the towns where the Midianites had settled, as well as all their camps. They took all the plunder and spoils, including the people and animals."

From Deuteronomy, read (20:10-17):

“When you march up to attack a city, make its people an offer of peace. If they accept and open their gates, all the people in it shall be subject to forced labor and shall work for you. If they refuse to make peace and they engage you in battle, lay siege to that city. When the Lord your God delivers it into your hand, put to the sword all the men in it. As for the women, the children, the livestock and everything else in the city, you may take these as plunder for yourselves. And you may use the plunder the Lord your God gives you from your enemies. This is how you are to treat all the cities that are at a distance from you and do not belong to the nations nearby. However, in the cities of the nations the Lord your God is giving you as an inheritance, do not leave alive anything that breathes. Completely destroy them—the Hittites, Amorites, Canaanites, Perizzites, Hivites and Jebusites—as the Lord your God has commanded you.”

From Deuteronomy, read (21:10-14):

“When you go to war against your enemies and the Lord your God delivers them into your hands and you take captives, if you notice among the captives a beautiful woman and are attracted to her, you may take her as your wife. Bring her into your home and have her shave her head, trim her nails and put aside the clothes she was wearing when captured. After she has lived in your house and mourned her father and mother for a full month, then you may go to her and be her husband and she shall be your wife. If you are not pleased with her, let her go wherever she wishes. You must not sell her or treat her as a slave, since you have dishonored her.”

From Joshua, read (8:18-29):

“Then the Lord said to Joshua, ‘Hold out toward Ai the javelin that is in your hand, for into your hand I will deliver the city.’ So Joshua held out toward the city the javelin that was in his hand. As soon as he did this, the men in the ambush rose quickly from their position and rushed forward. They entered the city and captured it and quickly set it on fire. The men of Ai looked back and saw the smoke of the city rising up into the sky, but they had no chance to escape in any direction, the Israelites who had been fleeing toward the wilderness had turned back against their pursuers. For when Joshua and all Israel saw that the ambush had taken the city and that smoke was going up from it, they turned around and attacked the men of Ai. Those in the ambush also came out of the city against them, so that they were caught in the middle, with Israelites on both sides. Israel cut them down, leaving them neither survivors nor fugitives. But they took the king of Ai alive and brought him to Joshua. When Israel had finished killing all the men of Ai in the fields and in the wilderness where they had chased them, and when every one of them had been put to the sword, all the Israelites returned to Ai and killed those who were in it. Twelve thousand men and women fell that day—all the people of Ai. For Joshua did not draw back the hand that held out his javelin until he had destroyed all who lived in Ai. But Israel did carry off for themselves the livestock and plunder of this city, as the Lord had instructed Joshua. So Joshua burned Ai and made it a permanent heap of ruins, a desolate place to this day. He impaled the body of the king of Ai on a pole and left it there until evening. At sunset, Joshua ordered them to take the body from the pole and throw it down at the entrance of the city gate. And they raised a large pile of rocks over it, which remains to this day.”

From Joshua, read (10:24-26):

“When they had brought these kings to Joshua, he summoned all the men of Israel and said to the army commanders who had come with him, ‘Come here and put your feet on the necks of these kings.’ So they came forward and placed their feet on their necks. Joshua said to them, ‘Do not be afraid, do not be discouraged. Be strong and courageous. This is what the Lord will do to all the enemies you are going to fight.’ Then Joshua put the kings to death and exposed their bodies on five poles, and they were left hanging on the poles until evening.”

From Joshua, read (11:15-18):

“As the Lord commanded his servant Moses, so Moses commanded Joshua, and Joshua did it, he left nothing undone of all that the Lord commanded Moses. So Joshua took this entire land: the hill country, all the Negev, the whole region of Goshen, the western foothills, the Arabah and the mountains of Israel with their foothills, from Mount Halak, which rises toward Seir, to Baal Gad in the Valley of Lebanon below Mount Hermon. He captured all their kings and put them to death. Joshua waged war against all these kings for a long time.”

From Judges, read (1:1-8):

“After the death of Joshua, the Israelites asked the Lord, ‘Who of us is to go up first to fight against the Canaanites?’ The Lord answered, ‘Judah shall go up, I have given the land into their hands.’ The men of Judah then said to the Simeonites their fellow Israelites, ‘Come up with us into the territory allotted to us, to fight against the Canaanites. We in turn will go with you into yours.’ So the Simeonites went with them. When Judah attacked, the Lord gave the Canaanites and Perizzites into their hands, and they struck down ten thousand men at Bezek. It was there that they found Adoni-Bezek and fought against him, putting to rout the Canaanites and Perizzites. Adoni-Bezek fled, but they chased him and caught him, and cut off his thumbs and big toes. Then Adoni-Bezek said, ‘Seventy kings with their thumbs and big toes cut off have picked up scraps under my table. Now God has paid me back for what I did to them.’ They brought him to Jerusalem, and he died there. The men of Judah attacked Jerusalem also and took it. They put the city to the sword and set it on fire.”

From Judges, read (3:28-31):

“Ehud got away. He passed by the stone images and escaped to Seirah. When he arrived there, he blew a trumpet in the hill country of Ephraim, and the Israelites went down with him from the hills, with him leading them. ‘Follow me,’ he ordered, ‘for the Lord has given Moab, your enemy, into your hands.’ So they followed him down and took possession of the fords of the Jordan that led to Moab, they allowed no one to cross over. At that time they struck down about ten thousand Moabites, all vigorous and strong, not one escaped. That day Moab was made subject to Israel, and the land had peace for eighty years. After Ehud came Shamgar son of Anath, who struck down six hundred Philistines with an oxgoad. He too saved Israel.”

From 2 Samuel, read (8:1-2):

“In the course of time, David defeated the Philistines and subdued them, and he took Metheg Ammah from the control of the Philistines. David also defeated the Moabites. He made them lie down on the ground and measured them off with a length of cord. Every two lengths of them were put to death, and the third length was allowed to live. So the Moabites became subject to David and brought him tribute.”

Regarding oppressing women and denying their rights:

From Numbers, read (27:8-11):

“Say to the Israelites, ‘If a man dies and leaves no son, give his inheritance to his daughter. If he has no daughter, give his inheritance to his brothers. If he has no brothers, give his inheritance to his father’s brothers. If his father had no brothers, give his inheritance to the nearest relative in his clan, that he may possess it. This is to have the force of law for the Israelites, as the Lord commanded Moses.’ ”

From Deuteronomy, read (22:13-21):

“If a man takes a wife and, after sleeping with her, dislikes her and slanders her and gives her a bad name, saying, ‘I married this woman, but when I approached her, I did not find proof of her virginity,’ then the young woman’s father and mother shall bring to the town elders at the gate proof that she was a virgin. Her father will say to the elders, ‘I gave my daughter in marriage to this man, but he dislikes her. Now he has slandered her and said, “I did not find your daughter to be a virgin.” But here is the proof of my daughter’s virginity.’ Then her parents shall display the cloth before the elders of the town, and the elders shall take the man and punish him. They shall fine him a hundred shekels of silver and give them to the young woman’s father, because this man has given an Israelite virgin a bad name. She shall continue to be his wife, he must not divorce her as long as he lives. If, however, the charge is true and no proof of the young woman’s virginity can be found, she shall be brought to the door of her father’s house and there the men of her town shall stone her to death. She has done an outrageous thing in Israel by being promiscuous while still in her father’s house. You must purge the evil from among you.”

From Deuteronomy, read (22:28-29):

“If a man happens to meet a virgin who is not pledged to be married and rapes her and they are discovered, he shall pay her father fifty shekels of silver. He must marry the young woman, for he has violated her. He can never divorce her as long as he lives.”

From Deuteronomy, read (24:1-4):

“If a man marries a woman who becomes displeasing to him because he finds something indecent about her, and he writes her a certificate of divorce, gives it to her and sends her from his house, and if after she leaves his house she becomes the wife of another man, and her second husband dislikes her and writes her a certificate of divorce, gives it to her and sends her from his house, or if he dies, then her first husband, who divorced her, is not allowed to marry her again after she has been defiled. That would be detestable in the eyes of the Lord. Do not bring sin upon the land the Lord your God is giving you as an inheritance.”

From 1 Corinthians, read (11:5-10):

“But every woman who prays or prophesies with her head uncovered dishonors her head—it is the same as having her head shaved. For if a woman does not cover her head, she might as well have her hair cut off, but if it is a disgrace for a woman to have her hair cut off or her head shaved, then she should cover her head. A man ought not to cover his head, since he is the image and glory of God, but woman is the glory of man. For man did not come from woman, but woman from man, neither was man created for woman, but woman for man. It is for this reason that a woman ought to have authority over her own head, because of the angels.”

From 1 Corinthians, read (14:34-35):

“Women should remain silent in the churches. They are not allowed to speak, but must be in submission, as the law says. If they want to inquire about something, they should ask their own husbands at home, for it is disgraceful for a woman to speak in the church.”



Regarding polygyny and taking concubines:

From Genesis, read:

(14:19) “And Lamech took unto him two wives: the name of one [was] Adah, and the name of the other Zillah.”

(25:5-6) “Abraham left everything he owned to Isaac. But while he was still living, he gave gifts to the sons of his concubines and sent them away from his son Isaac to the land of the east.”

(28:9) “Then went Esau unto Ishmael, and took unto the wives which he had Mahalath the daughter of Ishmael.”

(35:22-23) “While Israel was living in that region, Reuben went in and slept with his father's concubine Bilhah, and Israel heard of it. Jacob had twelve sons: The sons of Leah: Reuben the firstborn of Jacob, Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar and Zebulun....”

(36:12) “Esau's son Eliphaz also had a concubine named Timna, who bore him AMālek.”

From Judges, read (8:30-31):

“And Gideon had threescore and ten sons of his body begotten: for he had many wives. And his concubine that was in Shechem, she also bare him a son, whose name he called Abimelech.”

From 2 Samuel, read (3:7):

“And Saul had a concubine, whose name was Rizpah, the daughter of Aiah...”

From 2 Samuel, read (5:13):

“After he left Hebron, David took more concubines and wives in Jerusalem, and more sons and daughters were born to him.”

From 1 Kings, read (11:3):

“He (Solomon) had seven hundred wives of royal birth and three hundred concubines.”



Regarding severe punishments:

From Leviticus, read (20:1-16):

“The Lord said to Moses, “Say to the Israelites: ‘Any Israelite or any foreigner residing in Israel who sacrifices any of his children to Molek is to be put to death. The members of the community are to stone him. I myself will set my face against him and will cut him off from his people, for by sacrificing his children to Molek, he has defiled my sanctuary and profaned my holy name. If the members of the community close their eyes when that man sacrifices one of his children to Molek and if they fail to put him to death, I myself will set my face against him and his family and will cut them off from their people together with all who follow him in prostituting themselves to Molek. I will set my face against anyone who turns to mediums and spiritists to prostitute themselves by following them, and I will cut them off from their people. Consecrate yourselves and be holy, because I am the Lord your God. Keep my decrees and follow them. I am the Lord, who makes you holy. Anyone who curses their father or mother is to be put to death. Because they have cursed their father or mother, their blood will be on their own head. If a man commits adultery with another man’s wife—with the wife of his neighbor—both the adulterer and the adulteress are to be put to death. If a man has sexual relations with his father’s wife, he has dishonored his father. Both the man and the woman are to be put to death, their blood will be on their own heads. If a man has sexual relations with his daughter-in-law, both of them are to be put to death. What they have done is a perversion, their blood will be on their own heads. If a man has sexual relations with a man as one does with a woman, both of them have done what is detestable. They are to be put to death, their blood will be on their own heads. If a man marries both a woman and her mother, it is wicked. Both he and they must be burned in the fire, so that no wickedness will be among you. If a man has sexual relations with an animal, he is to be put to death, and you must kill the animal. If a woman approaches an animal to have sexual relations with it, kill both the woman and the animal. They are to be put to death, their blood will be on their own heads.’ ”

From Numbers, read (15:32-36):

“While the Israelites were in the wilderness, a man was found gathering wood on the Sabbath day. Those who found him gathering wood brought him to Moses and Aaron and the whole assembly, and they kept him in custody, because it was not clear what should be done to him. Then the Lord said to Moses, “The man must die. The whole assembly must stone him outside the camp.” So the assembly took him outside the camp and stoned him to death, as the Lord commanded Moses.”

From Deuteronomy, we read:

“If a man happens to meet in a town a virgin pledged to be married and he sleeps with her, you shall take both of them to the gate of that town and stone them to death—the young woman because she was in a town and did not scream for help, and the man because he violated another man’s wife. You must purge the evil from among you.”



Regarding killing apostates:

From Deuteronomy, read (13:6-11):

“If your very own brother, or your son or daughter, or the wife you love, or your closest friend secretly entices you, saying, ‘Let us go and worship other gods’ (gods that neither you nor your ancestors have known, gods of the peoples around you, whether near or far, from one end of the land to the other), do not yield to them or listen to them. Show them no pity. Do not spare them or shield them. You must certainly put them to death. Your hand must be the first in putting them to death, and then the hands of all the people. Stone them to death, because they tried to turn you away from the Lord your God, who brought you out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery. Then all Israel will hear and be afraid, and no one among you will do such an evil thing again.”

From Deuteronomy, read (17:2-7):

“If a man or woman living among you in one of the towns the Lord gives you is found doing evil in the eyes of the Lord your God in violation of his covenant, and contrary to my command has worshiped other gods, bowing down to them or to the sun or the moon or the stars in the sky, and this has been brought to your attention, then you must investigate it thoroughly. If it is true and it has been proved that this detestable thing has been done in Israel, take the man or woman who has done this evil deed to your city gate and stone that person to death. On the testimony of two or three witnesses a person is to be put to death, but no one is to be put to death on the testimony of only one witness. The hands of the witnesses must be the first in putting that person to death, and then the hands of all the people. You must purge the evil from among you.”



Regarding Abrogation:

From Genesis, read (29:16-30):

“Now Laban had two daughters, the name of the older was Leah, and the name of the younger was Rachel. Leah had weak eyes, but Rachel had a lovely figure and was beautiful. Jacob was in love with Rachel and said, ‘I’ll work for you seven years in return for your younger daughter Rachel.’ Laban said, ‘It’s better that I give her to you than to some other man. Stay here with me.’ So Jacob served seven years to get Rachel, but they seemed like only a few days to him because of his love for her. Then Jacob said to Laban, ‘Give me my wife. My time is completed, and I want to make love to her.’ So Laban brought together all the people of the place and gave a feast. But when evening came, he took his daughter Leah and brought her to Jacob, and Jacob made love to her. And Laban gave his servant Zilpah to his daughter as her attendant. When morning came, there was Leah! So Jacob said to Laban, ‘What is this you have done to me? I served you for Rachel, didn’t I? Why have you deceived me?’ Laban replied, ‘It is not our custom here to give the younger daughter in marriage before the older one. Finish this daughter’s bridal week, then we will give you the younger one also, in return for another seven years of work.’ And Jacob did so. He finished the week with Leah, and then Laban gave him his daughter Rachel to be his wife. Laban gave his servant Bilhah to his daughter Rachel as her attendant. Jacob made love to Rachel also, and his love for Rachel was greater than his love for Leah. And he worked for Laban another seven years.”

From Exodus, read (6:20):

“Amram married his father’s sister Jochebed, who bore him Aaron and Moses. Amram lived 137 years.”

The above verses of Genesis describe Prophet Jacob’s marriage to two sisters, which was still allowed by God back then. The verse of Exodus states that Amram married his Aunt, his “Father’s sister” which was also still allowed by God. The previous permissible marriages were later on made highly forbidden.

Read Leviticus (18:12-18):

“Do not have sexual relations with your father’s sister, she is your father’s close relative. Do not have sexual relations with your mother’s sister, because she is your mother’s close relative. Do not dishonor your father’s brother by approaching his wife to have sexual relations, she is your aunt. Do not have sexual relations with your daughter-in-law. She is your son’s wife, do not have relations with her. Do not have sexual relations with your brother’s wife, that would dishonor your brother. Do not have sexual relations with both a woman and her daughter. Do not have sexual relations with either her son’s daughter or her daughter’s daughter, they are her close relatives. That is wickedness. Do not take your wife’s sister as a rival wife and have sexual relations with her while your wife is living. Do not approach a woman to have sexual relations during the uncleanness of her monthly period.”

Also read Ezekiel, where God abrogates his order when Ezekiel calls for his mercy:

“Eat the food as you would a loaf of barley bread, bake it in the sight of the people, using human excrement for fuel.” The Lord said, “In this way the people of Israel will eat defiled food among the nations where I will drive them.” Then I said, “Not so, Sovereign Lord! I have never defiled myself. From my youth until now I have never eaten anything found dead or torn by wild animals. No impure meat has ever entered my mouth.” “Very well,” he said, “I will let you bake your bread over cow dung instead of human excrement.” He then said to me: “Son of man, I am about to cut off the food supply in Jerusalem. The people will eat rationed food in anxiety and drink rationed water in despair...”

From Matthew, read (5:38-41), where Jesus abrogates the previous laws of the Torah:

“You have heard that it was said, ‘Eye for eye, and tooth for tooth.’ But I tell you, do not resist an evil person. If anyone slaps you on the right cheek, turn to them the other cheek also. And if anyone wants to sue you and take your shirt, hand over your coat as well. If anyone forces you to go one mile, go with them two miles.”

From Genesis, read (17:10-13):

“Then God said to Abraham, ‘As for you, you must keep my covenant, you and your descendants after you for the generations to come. This is my covenant with you and your descendants after you, the covenant you are to keep: Every male among you shall be circumcised. You are to undergo circumcision, and it will be the sign of the covenant between me and you. For the generations to come every male among you who is eight days old must be circumcised, including those born in your household or bought with money from a foreigner—those who are not your offspring. Whether born in your household or bought with your money, they must be circumcised. My covenant in your flesh is to be an everlasting covenant. Any uncircumcised male, who has not been circumcised in the flesh, will be cut off from his people, he has broken my covenant.’ ”

Then Paul abrogated circumcision in his letter to the Galatians (5:2-6):

“Mark my words! I, Paul, tell you that if you let yourselves be circumcised, Christ will be of no value to you at all. Again I declare to every man who lets himself be circumcised that he is obligated to obey the whole law. You who are trying to be justified by the law have been alienated from Christ, you have fallen away from grace. For through the Spirit we eagerly await by faith the righteousness for which we hope. For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision has any value. The only thing that counts is faith expressing itself through love.”

From Matthew, read (10:5-6):

“These twelve Jesus sent out with the following instructions: “Do not go among the Gentiles or enter any town of the Samaritans. Go rather to the lost sheep of Israel.”

Now read Mark (16:15), where this was abrogated by Jesus himself:

He said to them, “Go into the entire world and preach the gospel to all creation.”

From Leviticus, read (11:7-8):

“And the pig, though it has a divided hoof, does not chew the cud, it is unclean for you. You must not eat their meat or touch their carcasses, they are unclean for you.”

And Deuteronomy (14:8):

“The pig is also unclean, although it has a divided hoof, it does not chew the cud. You are not to eat their meat or touch their carcasses.”

And also Isaiah (65:2-4):

“All day long I have held out my hands to an obstinate people, who walk in ways not good, pursuing their own imaginations— a people who continually provoke me to my very face, offering sacrifices in gardens and burning incense on altars of brick, who sit among the graves and spend their nights keeping secret vigil, who eat the flesh of pigs, and whose pots hold broth of impure meat...”

The prohibition of eating swine was later on abrogated by Paul’s letter to Titus (1:15), where he said: “Unto the pure all things [are] pure...”

From Matthew, read (5:17-20) where Jesus is recorded to say:

“Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets, I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them. For truly I tell you, until heaven and earth disappear, not the smallest letter, not the least stroke of a pen, will by any means disappear from the Law until everything is accomplished. Therefore anyone who sets aside one of the least of these commands and teaches others accordingly will be called least in the kingdom of heaven, but **whoever practices and teaches these commands will be called great in the kingdom of heaven. For I tell you that unless your righteousness surpasses that of the Pharisees and the teachers of the law, you will certainly not enter the kingdom of heaven.**”

From Matthew, read (19:16-19):

“Just then a man came up to Jesus and asked, ‘Teacher, what good thing must I do to get eternal life?’ ‘Why do you ask me about what is good?’ Jesus replied. ‘There is only One who is good, [that is] God. If you want to enter life, keep the commandments.’ He inquired, ‘Which ones?’ **Jesus replied, ‘You shall not murder, you shall not commit adultery, you shall not steal, you shall not give false testimony, honor your father and mother, and love your neighbor as yourself.’**”

Now read Romans (3:21-28) where Jesus’s teachings are abrogated by Paul:

“But now apart from the law the righteousness of God has been made known, to which the Law and the Prophets testify. This **righteousness is given through faith in Jesus Christ** to all who believe. There is no difference between Jew and Gentile, for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and all are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus. **God presented Christ as a sacrifice of atonement, through the shedding of his blood—to be received by faith.** He did this to demonstrate his righteousness, because in his forbearance he had left the sins committed beforehand unpunished—he did it to demonstrate his righteousness at the present time, so as to be just and the one who justifies those who have faith in Jesus. Where, then, is boasting? It is excluded. **Because of what law? The law that requires works? No, because of the law that requires faith. For we maintain that a person is justified by faith apart from the works of the law.**”



Finale

The previous was just a simplified illustration to the fact that most of the accusations thrown at Islam are actually teachings from the previous scriptures. The Qur'an states that the previous scriptures have been tampered with and distorted, this is why Allah sent us one last message to rectify these corrupt teachings and elevate some of the burdens that were laid upon the previous nations. Allah took it upon Himself to keep this final message intact and safe from any distortion. He also chose a man, a final prophet to deliver this message to all people. As Allah took it upon Himself to protect His last message, He also took it upon Himself to protect that last messenger from all enemies until he completes his mission. In the farewell pilgrimage, Allah revealed to all people the following verse:

"Today, I have fulfilled your religion for you, and have completed My blessing upon you, and I am satisfied with Islam as your religion." [The Qur'an, (5:3)].

I hope I was successful in presenting the Islamic teachings regarding the most famous misconceptions in a simplified way. Whatever success I may have accomplished in this is by Allah's will and from His grace, and whatever deficiency or shortage, it is from me.

O Allah I seek your mercy and ask for your forgiveness, you are the Most-Forgiving, and you are the Best Disposer of all affairs.

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El-Manial Island, Cairo, Egypt
February, 2015.*



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