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TIPU SULTAN AND THE NIZAM OF HYDERABAD — TWO FIGURES, TWO DISPOSITIONS, TWO OUTCOMES

Muhammad Hassan Ilyas

At the onset of British ascendancy in the Subcontinent, Muslims were confronted, in practical terms, with only two viable courses: the path of resistance, and the path of patient accommodation—accepting changed circumstances in order to secure survival, undertake reconstruction, and reconstitute the future anew.

These two courses are not merely the subject of an abstract intellectual debate; rather, they appear embodied in two living historical figures: Tipu Sultan and the Nizam of Hyderabad. One unsheathed the sword, resolved upon direct confrontation, and ultimately met defeat. The other recognized a changing reality, accepted a new balance of power, and laid foundations for the future at the level of institutions. The historical consequences of these two dispositions have persistently raised a fundamental question: do nations attain dignity through emotive slogans, or through realist prudence and long-term strategy?

With the decline of the Mughal Empire and the emergence of a power vacuum, Muslims found themselves positioned between these very alternatives. In effect, these two personalities became a measure by which the ensuing centuries of history would be written.

Tipu Sultan stood as a symbol of courage, honor, and lofty ambition. He refused to surrender to the British until his final breath and died fighting on the battlefield of Seringapatam in 1799. The oft-cited saying attributed to him—“A lion’s life of one day is better than a jackal’s life of a hundred years”—still stirs emotion and incites a sense of pride. Yet the hard question posed by circumstance is: whom did that one day of valor protect? History’s unsentimental answer is that after Tipu Sultan’s martyrdom, British authority in South India was further consolidated; the balance of power shifted decisively; and Muslims found themselves in a position weaker than before. In this way, the defeat became a romance of personal greatness and martyrdom, but it did not become a pathway to collective survival.

The same resistant mindset later persisted in various forms among Muslims in North India as well. The desire to redirect the course of fate through direct confrontation found its final and most intense expression in 1857, and the result was an all-encompassing defeat. That defeat plunged Muslims into prolonged deprivation—political, military, economic, and civilizational—at every level. The “bravery of one day” inflicted wounds of retreat upon an entire generation, wounds whose repair was not possible for decades; nor did it add any enduring weight to the community’s collective future.

By contrast, the Nizam of Hyderabad assessed the balance of power not through the lens of sentiment, but through the lens of reality. He accepted that the British had become the superior force militarily and politically, and that direct confrontation might generate a temporary passion but could not yield lasting benefit. In his view, the primary unit of power was no longer the sword; it had become the institution, knowledge, and disciplined intellectual organization. This awareness, in turn, opened a different path of construction in the Deccan.

The Nizam preserved his state, stabilized internal administration, built a judicial framework, laid the foundations of a modern bureaucracy, supported industry, established medical and engineering institutions, and ultimately founded Osmania University in 1918—an institution that proved to be a major spring of learning and the arts.

Osmania University made Urdu a language of higher education, rendered modern disciplines within a native linguistic framework, and cultivated an intellectual environment in which Muslim students began to distinguish themselves in science, law, engineering, politics, and the social sciences. The efforts of the Dar al-Tarjumah (Translation Bureau) opened new horizons for minds, and Hyderabad's scholarly climate became a model for the entire Subcontinent.

This realist orientation, alongside knowledge and culture, generated political and social possibilities through which a collective Muslim selfhood remained sustained for a century. Even in the absence of full sovereignty, Muslims remained connected to the practical experience of governance and administration within a semi-autonomous polity. Participation in modern bureaucratic and legal institutions taught them the language of power and its conventions, while educational institutions produced leadership later capable of guiding the politics of the Subcontinent and emerging Muslim states. This entire process yielded the insight that power has no single route through the sword; rather, by accepting reality, using the available possibilities to secure a respite of peace, and focusing on survival through the construction of knowledge, a community can rebuild.

The same intellectual atmosphere and cultural capital later prepared the ground for exceptional thinkers who left deep imprints on the Subcontinent's intellectual history. Syed Sulaiman Nadwi, Shibli Nomani, and generations connected—intellectually or educationally—to Hyderabad benefitted from this milieu. In later periods, thinkers such as Syed Abul Ala Maududi and Hamid al-Din Farahi also drew upon this scholarly tradition, sustained in the background by the Deccan's intellectual world, a translation movement, a conscious synthesis of modern and classical learning, and deliberate efforts to establish Urdu as a language of scholarship. Thus, Hyderabad did not remain merely a political entity; it became a practical laboratory for the dialogue between Islam and modernity—one that helped set new directions for religion, thought, and culture.

It was this realist method that Sir Syed Ahmad Khan later recognized with full clarity. He did not interpret the defeat of 1857 as simply a military or political failure; rather, he saw it as the collapse of a mental structure, and he declared that a nation's survival lies not in the sword but in knowledge, intellectual reconstruction, and civilizational accommodation. Yet for a long time the majority of Muslims did not accept this call, because realism appeared to them as cowardice. They had learned how to live in power, but they were unfamiliar with the disciplines of living under subjugation. The craft of rising after defeat and reaching reconstruction was alien to them, while Sir Syed continued to summon them to precisely that craft.

On one side, emotive resistance carried the story to 1857 and closed a door of history; on the other, Hyderabad's prudent deliberation opened new pathways of scholarly and cultural possibility into the twentieth century.

The core question between these two dispositions is this: does a nation's survival lie in living one day as a lion and dying so, or in living a hundred years supported by knowledge, skill, and institutions? The issue is not how a lion died in a single day; the issue is how the nation lived through the subsequent century. If one day's bravery yields prolonged deprivation and scholarly backwardness, the slogan may warm the heart, but it does not build a nation's future. Conversely, if the path people once dismissed as cowardice becomes the guarantee of survival—securing a respite of peace, giving birth to institutions, establishing an intellectual tradition, and producing thinkers from within that very atmosphere—then the question inevitably arises: who, in truth, was the lion?

The reality is that an emotive slogan may grant an individual a day of honor, but it cannot grant a nation a hundred years of dignity. Realism, prudent planning, institution-building, and sustained scholarly labor, by contrast,

constitute a capital that bestows not merely a century but even longer horizons of dignity and leadership. Tipu sought honor through the force of the sword; that honor remained preserved for him personally in the romance of martyrdom, yet it could not add weight to the collective future of the nation.

In sum, the matter is not one of emotion but of outcomes. Honor can be displayed in a single day; history, however, asks nations what they accomplished across centuries. Tipu met death; the Nizam gave life. One closed the chapter of resistance; the other opened the chapter of knowledge and construction. The choice remains the same even today: one day of pride, or a century of dignity? When one reflects with evidence, consequences, and historical testimony in view, the answer presents itself.



WHAT IT MEANS TO MAKE OBEDIENCE TO GOD CONTINGENT UPON OBEDIENCE TO THE PROPHET

Syed Manzoor ul Hassan

Question: In Islam, obedience to the Holy Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) is regarded as synonymous with obedience to God. Muslim scholars also emphasize this point with full seriousness. For example, Shah Wali Allah, at the beginning of his book *Hujjat Allah al-Balighah*, writes: “And God has made His obedience contingent upon their obedience” (وَجَعَلَ طَاعَتَهُ مِنْوَطَةً بِطَاعَتِهِمْ). In your view, what is meant by making obedience to God contingent upon obedience to the prophets, and how do you explain this within your own thought?

Answer: The meaning of making obedience to God contingent upon obedience to the prophets is that the guidance which God has conveyed to human beings through His prophets—*the only means of attaining it is the prophets themselves; there is no other*. They are the ones who, on God’s behalf, inform us that a connection has been established with the heavens; that revelation has come to them; that realities have been disclosed to them; that they have been made aware of the truths of the *mala al-ala*; and that, in this manner, they then become—so to speak—witnesses with complete consciousness and confidence, as the Qur'an declares:

لِئَكُونُوا شُهَدَاءَ عَلَى النَّاسِ وَيَكُونَ الرَّسُولُ عَلَيْكُمْ شَهِيدًا

So that you may become witnesses over all people, and the Messenger may be a witness over you (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:143).

This means that we receive God’s detailed guidance not directly from God, but through His prophets. I have expressed this same reality in these words:

...On this earth, the sole source of religion is now the most exalted person of Muhammad (PBUH) alone. It is only through his being that the children of Adam can receive their Lord’s guidance until the Day of Judgment; and it is only his station such that whatever he, by his word and deed and by his endorsement or approval, declares to be religion—only that will, until the end of this world, be recognized as the true religion.” (Meezan, 13)

THE CONTEMPORARY (RE)COMPILED OF HADITH

Javed Ahmed Ghamidi

To understand any scholarly work relating to Hadith, it is essential first to grasp this fundamental point: the sole source of religion on this earth is the person of Muhammad, the Messenger of God (PBUH). The religion has reached us from him in two forms: the Qur'an and the Sunnah. Both are absolutely certain and do not stand in need of investigative validation for their establishment. Muslims have transmitted them from generation to generation through *ijma* (consensus) and *tawatur* (mass, continuous transmission). That is, in every generation Muslims received them from those before them without disagreement and conveyed them to those after them, and this chain has remained intact from the time of the Messenger to the present.

The entirety of religion is confined to these two, and all its rulings are derived from them. At times, however, difficulties arise in deduction; and even in matters left open to our *ijtihad* (independent reasoning), guidance is needed. For this reason, recourse is made to religious scholars. Since Muhammad (PBUH) was God's Prophet, he was the first and greatest scholar of religion—indeed, the imam of all scholars. What distinguishes his knowledge from that of other scholars is that it was free from error, because it enjoyed the confirmation and sanction of revelation. If such knowledge is available, every Muslim would naturally wish to seek guidance from it first in understanding the Qur'an and the Sunnah.

Our good fortune is that this knowledge exists, and a substantial portion of it has reached us. The Companions acquired it from the Messenger of God (PBUH); but because transmitting it onward was a matter of great responsibility, some exercised reserve while others, with resolve, conveyed it. It included matters they heard from his tongue or observed in his practice, as well as matters done in his presence that he did not forbid. This entire body of knowledge is what is called 'hadith'. It is the greatest source for knowing the Messenger of God (PBUH) in his biography and life-example. It does not add anything—whether belief or practice—to religion; rather, it explicates the same religion and, for the purpose of acting upon it, relates the Messenger's exemplary practice (*uswah al-hasana*) that he delivered to his followers in the form of the Qur'an and the Sunnah.

How did this reach us? History shows that the Companions first conveyed it to people in the form of Hadith reports. Those who heard these reports from them then conveyed them to others. Transmission occurred orally, and at times also in written form. For a generation or two this continued in the same way; then it became plainly evident that errors were occurring here and there in transmission, and that some people were also deliberately mixing falsehood into these reports. At this juncture, certain servants of God arose and began investigating these Hadith reports; they are called '*muhaddithin*'. They were extraordinary individuals: by scrutinizing each report and its transmitters, they identified—as far as possible—what was sound and what was unsound, separating falsehood from truth. Some among them then compiled books about which it can, to a considerable degree, be said with confidence that the Hadith reports recorded therein represent, for the most part, the Messenger's own knowledge, expressed in the narrators' wording. In scholarly terminology these are called *akhbar-e-ahad*: that is, they were transmitted by only a limited number of people and were not conveyed through *ijma* and *tawatur* in the manner of the Qur'an and the Sunnah. It is therefore generally accepted that the knowledge yielded by them does not reach the level of certainty; at most, it may be deemed *zann ghalib* (preponderant probability).

All the Hadith collections mentioned above have their importance; however, the works of Imam Malik, Imam al-Bukhari, and Imam Muslim occupy a foundational position and are regarded as highly reliable because they were compiled after rigorous investigation. This does not mean, however, that their compilers committed no errors; specialists in this field know that errors have occurred in their critical work as well. For this reason, scholars continually examine and re-examine Hadith collections. Thus, if they do not find a report's transmitters trustworthy in integrity and precision, or do not deem mutual meeting between them plausible, or find in the report's content something contrary to the Qur'an and Sunnah or to established rational and intellectual certainties, they state plainly that this cannot be the Messenger's statement and that it has been mistakenly attributed to him. The same applies to the understanding, commentary, and interpretation of these Hadith reports: scholars continue to present and evaluate interpretive judgments in this domain as well.

This work has continued in every age. In the previous century, Allama Nasir al-Din al-Albani rendered remarkable service in this regard by re-examining many Hadith collections and attempting once again to distinguish what is sound from what is weak. The undertaking assumed by scholars in the Republic of Türkiye is, broadly, of the same nature. Their results have not yet appeared, so no assessment can be offered regarding them; yet, based on what is known of the project's nature, nothing seems objectionable. If, keeping in view the status of Hadith explained above, it is examined according to the established principles of this discipline; or if it is newly arranged; or if an effort is made to grasp its import and to distinguish what is time-bound from what is permanent—what is there to object to in that? The door of knowledge and research cannot be closed in any era or under any circumstance. Even if errors occur in such work, there is no cause for alarm: other scholars will identify them through critique. There is no path for the advancement of knowledge except that people be allowed to work freely; it is through this that new paths open, and earlier mistakes—where they exist—are corrected. Turkish scholars' efforts should be viewed in this spirit, and encouragement should be given to those who, for the first time in Muslim history, are undertaking this service in an institutional form. If their work meets scholarly standards, it will be a great service; and if it proves substandard, it will lose all value and be consigned to the dustbin of history. The court of knowledge is relentless; sooner or later it delivers its judgment. In such matters, one ought to await that judgment.

[2013]



THE TREASURE OF PROPHETIC TEACHINGS

Muhammad Hassan Ilyas

-1-

From Abu Hurayrah (RA): The Messenger of Allah (PBUH) said: *“By Him in Whose grasp is Muhammad’s soul: no one from this community—nor any Jew or Christian—who hears of me, then does not believe in that with which I have been sent, and dies in that state, will be anything but among the inhabitants of Hell.”* (Sahifah Hammam bin Munabbih, no. 91)

-2-

Ahnaf bin Qays relates: I set out to support the Messenger’s cousin. On the way, I met Abu Bakrah (RA). He asked, “Where are you headed?” I replied, “I am going to support the Messenger’s cousin.” He said, “Return, for I heard the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) say: *When two Muslims confront one another with their swords, each intending to kill the other, they both reach the brink of Hell. Then, when one of them kills the other, both the killer and the slain fall into the Fire of Hell.*” I submitted, “O Messenger of Allah, as for the killer, that is understood; but why the slain?” He replied, “*Because he, too, was eager to kill his opponent.*” (Sahih Bukhari, no. 6583)

-3-

From Abu Hurayrah (RA): The Messenger of Allah (PBUH) said: *“On Mondays and Thursdays, the gates of Paradise are opened. Then every person who does not associate anything with Allah is forgiven—except one between whom and his brother there is enmity. Concerning them it is said: Give these two respite until they are reconciled.”* (Sahih Muslim, no. 4658)



THE NIGHT JOURNEY AND ASCENSION (ISRA AND MI'RAJ) - 6

Syed Manzoor ul Hassan

From the book Javed Ahmed Ghamidi's Stance On Prophet Muhammad's Night Journey and Ascension - Derived from a dialogue with Muhammad Hassan Ilyas. This book is part of '23 Objections Series'.

3. The Incident of *Sidrat al-Muntaha* (The sighting of Gabriel at *Sidrat al-Muntaha*)

وَلَقَدْ رَأَهُ تَرْلَةً أُخْرَى. عِنْدَ سِدْرَةِ الْمُنْتَهَى. عِنْدَهَا جَنَّةُ الْمَأْوَى. إِذْ يَعْشَى السِّدْرَةُ مَا يَعْشَى. مَا زَاغَ الْبَصَرُ وَمَا طَغَى. لَقَدْ رَأَى مِنْ أَبْيَتِ رَبِّهِ الْكَبِيرِيَّ

And he has seen him once again descending near the farthest lote-tree, close to which is the Paradise of Repose, when the lote-tree was being covered with that which was covering it. His sight did not falter nor lost its poise. He has seen his Lord's great signs. (53:13-18)

Background

This incident is also recounted in Surah Al-Najm and is mentioned within the same context as the previously described incident, serving as a counterargument to the allegations of sorcery hurled by the Quraish chieftains against the Messenger of Allah (PBUH).

Details

After seeing Gabriel on the high horizon and at the distance of two bows (*Qaba Qawsayn*), the Messenger of Allah (PBUH), saw him again. The style of the conversation indicates that this second incident of sighting of Gabriel happened on a different occasion from the first; no additional encounters occurred in between.

The purpose of recounting this second sighting is to dispel any notion that the Prophet's earlier vision of Gabriel was an illusion or misconception—God forbid—since such clarity of sight also transpired on a subsequent occasion. Hence, there is no ground for doubt or uncertainty¹. Javed Ahmed Ghamidi writes in his Al-Bayan:

This is a mention of the second meeting. It seems that after this, these meetings started to happen with great frequency and without any break. The implication is that this observation made by the Prophet (sws) did not take place just once so that people may regard it a flight of fancy or some misunderstanding. He also saw

¹ Here, the question may arise whether the Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him, saw Gabriel in his original form only twice? According to several hadith reports, the answer is affirmative. It is narrated in a Hadith from Sahih of Imam Muslim that Aysah (RA), said: The Prophet (PBUH) said: Gabriel, peace be upon him, is referred to in the mentioned verses of Surah At-Takwir and Surah Al-Najm. I saw him in his true form only on two occasions, the form in which Allah created him. I saw him descending from the sky, and his presence spanned from the sky to the earth. (Hadith No. 457)

Gabriel again and at this instance too Gabriel was in his real form. (5/65-66)

The Prophet (PBUH) observed Gabriel for the first time as he emerged from the higher horizon. When he saw him for the second time, he was close to *Sidrat al-Muntaha* (The Lote Tree at the Farthest Limit).

After the mention of *Jannat al-Ma'wa* (the Garden of Refuge), there is a reference to something overshadowing the *Sidrat al-Muntaha* (Lote Tree) without specifying any name or detail. This indicates that the Prophet (PBUH) witnessed a manifestation of divine light and glory in a form beyond the limits of language and expression, and beyond the comprehension of ordinary human understanding. The author of Al-Bayan writes:

This style shows that at that time such was the extent of divine disclosures and manifestations on the lote-tree that words are unable to portray them. (5/66)

The state in which the Prophet's vision neither dazed nor crossed the limits has been described in the words *Ma Zagha Al-Basaru Wa Ma Tagha* (His sight did not falter nor lost its poise). This affirms that the Prophet saw it in state of wakefulness.. He saw with his very own eyes, in full wakefulness, what the Lord intended to show him. The glowing illuminations, bright lights, and visions of brilliance that were bestowed upon his sight were met with intense focus and deep immersion. On this very occasion, in spite of the boundless splendor and the blinding brightness, his vision remained steady and unflinching, fully engaged with the scenes before him. Al-Bayan notes:

...In spite of the great extent of divine disclosures, the sight of the Prophet (sws) was neither dazed nor crossed the limits; in fact, he saw them with full concentration, attention and assurance. (5/66-67)

On this profound occasion, the Prophet (PBUH) witnessed the sublime signs of his Lord. The phrase *Laqad ra'a min ayati rabbibi al-kubra* (He has seen his Lord's great signs) signifies this event. Though no particular sign is individualized herein, the term *kubra* (great) intimates that the signs he beheld were of such a magnitude that they surpass human knowledge and grasp. Al-Bayan elucidates:

No details are provided of these signs; hence neither is it possible for words to describe them nor can they be understood by our intellect and imagination. However, it is evident from the words of this verse that these signs were beyond the ones which we observe in the world within us and that around us. (5/67)

The conclusions that can be drawn from the above descriptions regarding the event at *Sidrat al-Muntaha* are:

1. The Prophet (PBUH) was fully awake.
2. He saw Gabriel (AS) descending from *Sidrat al-Muntaha*.
3. This was the second instance where the Prophet (PBUH) saw Gabriel(AS) in his true form.
4. This station was located beyond *Sidrat al-Muntaha* and before *Jannat al-Ma'wa*, serving as a juncture between the world of humanity ('alam-e-nasoot) and the divine realm ('alam-e-lahoot).
5. Apart from seeing Gabriel (AS), the Prophet also witnessed some extraordinary signs of Allah that defy human description and comprehension.
6. All these observations were made by the Prophet (PBUH) with eyes fully open and while completely awake.
7. In spite of the great extent of divine disclosures, the sight of the Prophet (PBUH) was neither dazed nor crossed the limits; in fact, he saw them with full concentration, attention and assurance.

The details not specified in the narrative include:

1. The exact location where the Prophet (PBUH) was at the time of this experience is not mentioned.
2. It does not detail whether this event took place during the day or at night.
3. Besides the station of *Sidrat al-Muntaha* and the presence of Gabriel (AS), it is not specified which other places and personalities the Prophet observed.

Explanation

The essential elements for interpretation and understanding of the verses are as follows:

Firstly, what is the nature of *Sidrat al-Muntaha*? Evidence from the Qur'an and Hadith indicate it is a point that represents the ultimate frontier of the tangible universe or the domain of existence, traversing the seven heavens. Beyond that lie the *Jannat al-Ma'wa*, and it is from there that the unseen realm commences, where the sovereign throne of the Lord of both worlds is situated. These two spheres are also referred to in our tradition as 'the realm of humanity' ('alam-e-nasoot) and 'the realm of divinity' ('alam-e-lahoot). Imam Amin Ahsan Islahi writes:

The place of the farthest lote-tree is the one where this world of ours ends. It seems that this lote-tree divides our world from the divine realm which is beyond our observation. Neither are we aware of the boundaries of these two worlds nor of the reality of this sign called the lote-tree which bifurcates the two. These things belong to the category of the mutashabihat. Hence as per the directive of the Qur'an, it is essential to profess faith in them and one should not try to determine their real form and shape. Only God knows their real form. The knowledge of those who have sound knowledge increases through such things. People who make efforts to try to find out their real form and shape, falter and go astray. (Tadabbur-e-Qur'an 8/56)

Secondly, the allusion to *Jannat al-Ma'wa* serves to elucidate the eminent status of *Sidrat al-Muntaha* and to designate its surroundings. It is evident from Surah As-Sajdah of the Qur'an that it is not the Paradise which individuals are promised as a reward for their faith and deeds. It denotes the gardens which serve as a preliminary sanctuary for the righteous ones prior to their entrance into the actual Paradise. The text articulates:

آمَّا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ فَلَهُمْ جَنَّتُ الْمَأْوَى نَزُلٌلٌ بِمَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ.

Those who accepted faith and have done righteous deeds, for them are orchards of bliss as an initial hospitality in reward of their deeds². (19:32)

Thirdly, concerning the site of *Jannat al-Ma'wa*, it apparently is located at the outset of the realm of divinity. Imam Amin Ahsan Islahi remarks:

*It seems that just as the *Sidrat al-Muntaha* stands at the terminal edge of the domain of humanity, *Jannat al-Ma'wa* likewise situates at the threshold of the domain of divinity. This recognition clarifies that the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) encountered Gabriel (AS) the second time at the intersection where both domains converge. (Tadabbur-e-Qur'an 8/57)*

Fourthly, the incident at *Sidrat al-Muntaha*, namely the vision of Gabriel (AS) by the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) with unshielded eyes and utter serenity at the locus of *Sidrat al-Muntaha*, is limited to as described in these verses. The verses *Wa laqad raabu nazlatan ukhra* (and he saw him

² A footnote on this verse given in al-Bayan reads:

*This is a mention of the orchards where the dwellers of Paradise will be kept before they enter it. It will be their foremost station of hospitality. The plural *Jannatu* is used for these orchards. This shows that each person will have his own orchard. (al-Bayan 4/102)*

another time by the *Sidrat al-Muntaha*) distinctly differentiate this occurrence from the event of *Qaba Qawsayn*. Additionally, the Qur'an does not furnish any further or supplemental details regarding this event. Consequently, it is essential to recognize it as a discrete, independent, and complete occurrence without amalgamating it with any other Qur'anic or Hadith depiction.

[To be continued....]



TAFHEEM AL-ATHAR (UNDERSTANDING THE TRADITIONS)

Dr. Ammar Khan Nasir

Dialogues between the Persian Commanders and the Companions (15)

(5)

عن ابن الرَّفِيلِ، عن أَبِيهِ، قَالَ: رَأَى رُسُتُمَ الْبَالِدِيُّ أَنَّ مَلَكًا جَاءَ حَتَّى دَخَلَ عَسْكَرَ فَارِسَ، فَخَتَمَ السِّلَاحَ أَجْمَعَ.
عن سيف، عن مُحَمَّدٍ وَأَصْحَابِهِ، وَشَارَكُهُمُ الْأَصْنَارُ بِإِسْنَادِهِ، قَالُوا ... : فَلَمَّا نَزَلَ رُسُتُمُ التَّاجِفُ عَادَتْ عَلَيْهِ الرُّؤْيَا، فَرَأَى ذَلِكَ الْمَلَكَ وَمَعَهُ
النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ وَأَعْمَرُ، فَلَمَّا دَخَلَ الْمَلَكُ سِلَاحَ أَهْلِ فَارِسٍ فَخَتَمَهُ، ثُمَّ دَفَعَهُ إِلَى النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ، دَفَعَهُ النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ إِلَى عُمَرَ، فَأَصْبَحَ رُسُتُمُ فَارِزُدَادُ حُزْنًا، فَلَمَّا رَأَى الرُّفَيْلُ ذَلِكَ رَغْبَةً فِي الإِسْلَامِ، فَكَانَتْ دَاعِيَتُهُ إِلَى الإِسْلَامِ.
(تاریخ الطبری 3/510-509)

Rufayl relates from his father that Rustam saw in a dream at Dayr that an angel came, entered the Persian army camp, gathered all their weapons, and sealed them. Sayf narrates from Muhammad and his companions—while Naḍr also participates in the same isnad—... that when Rustam reached Najaf, he saw the same dream again. This time he saw that the angel was accompanied by the Prophet and by Umar. The angel took the Persians' weapons, sealed them, and then handed them over to the Prophet; the Prophet then handed them over to Umar. When morning came, Rustam's grief increased further. When Rufayl heard of Rustam's dream and observed this condition, an inclination toward Islam arose in his heart; and this (later) became the motive for his embracing Islam.

Explanation and Clarification

That the weapons of an army are gathered and sealed is, as it were, a symbolic depiction of the extinguishing of its military power; and that the weapons are collected and handed over to someone indicates that the ownership of the Persian realm has now been transferred to another. The identification of the two persons seen with the angel in the dream—namely, that they were the Prophet and Umar—is the narrator Rufayl's inference. Clearly, Rustam himself would not have recognized these two personalities. Most likely, he described their appearance, and then, after accepting Islam, Rufayl obtained information from the Muslims and thereby determined that these were the Prophet and 'Umar. It is also possible that, on the basis of the dream's implied meaning, he inferred that if the angel entrusted the Persians' weapons to one person and that person then passed them to another, this could only be an indication—respectively—of the Prophet and 'Umar.

Referencing and Variance in Narration Chains

This report—though with some variation in wording—has also been transmitted by al-Kala'i on the authority of Rufayl (al-Iktifa'... 2/442).

(6)

عَنْ سَيْفٍ، عَنْ مُحَمَّدٍ وَطَلْحَةَ وَزَيَادٍ وَعَمْرِو بِإِسْنَادِهِمْ، قَالُوا: لَمَّا أَبَى الْمَلَكُ إِلَّا السَّيْرَ كَتَبَ رُسْتَمُ إِلَى أَخِيهِ وَإِلَى رُؤُوسِ أَهْلِ بَلَادِهِمْ: مِنْ رُسْتَمَ إِلَى الْبِنْدُوْانِ... فَأَتَى الْمَلَكُ...
عَنْ سَيْفٍ، عَنْ الصَّلَّتِ بْنِ بَهْرَامَ، عَنْ رَجُلٍ... فَأَنَا سَائِرٌ إِلَيْهِمْ.

(تاریخ الطبری 506/3)

Sayf reports—through their isnads—from Muhammad, Talhah, Ziyad, and 'Amr that when the king (Yazdegerd) insisted that an advance be made (toward the Muslims), Rustam wrote to his brother and to the chiefs of his realm: “From Rustam to al-Binduwan—the frontier-guardian of al-Bab and the ‘arrow’ (that is, the weapon) of the Persians—who used to prepare for every great crisis, by whom God has dispersed every great and mighty army and by whom He has opened every fortified stronghold; and (I write) to those Persian grandees, frontier guardians, and cavalrymen who are with Binduwan: repair and secure your fortresses; prepare and make ready, and be prepared yourselves. For it is as though these Arabs—a desppicable nation, whom you used to regard as of the lowest rank and straitened in livelihood—have entered your lands and are contending with you for your territory and your sons. My opinion was to repel them and to delay matters until the auspicious time for them turns into misfortune, but the king has refused to accept this...”

Sayf also relates from Salt bin Bahram and from a man that when Yazdegerd ordered Rustam to depart from Sabat, Rustam wrote another letter to his brother in the manner of the first, adding: “Indeed, the Fish has muddied the water; the Na'a'im are well-placed; Venus is also well-positioned; the Balance is in equilibrium; and Bahram (Mars) has passed ahead. (This is not a favorable time for war.) It seems to me that these people will overcome us and seize what lies within our reach. The hardest thing for me is that the king has said: either you advance against them, or I myself will go forth against them; therefore, I am setting out toward them.”

Lexical Analysis:

- Marzuban: In the Sasanian administrative order, the guardian of a frontier region; its plural is marazibah.
- al-Asawirah: plural of iswar/uswar; used for mounted warriors in the Persian army.
- al-Samakah: literally “fish”; here it refers to the zodiacal sign Pisces, whose stars appear in the form of a fish.
- al-Na'a'im: plural of na'amah (“ostrich”); here it refers to stars seen in the twentieth lunar mansion, resembling an ostrich’s long legs.
- al-Zuhrah: the second planet of the solar system (Venus).
- al-Mizan: the zodiacal sign Libra, whose stars appear like a balance-scale.

- Bahram: the fourth planet of the solar system—Mars.
- Rummu: from *ramm*, “to mend/repair what is broken”; thus, “*rummu busunakum*” means: repair your fortresses’ damage and make them secure.
- Qaraukum: from *qar* (“to strike forcefully”); *muqara’ah* means to test strength against one another, to engage in combat. Thus, “*qara’ukum ‘an ardikum wa-abna’ikum*” means: they wish to fight you to seize your land and deprive you of your people’s sons.

Explanation and Clarification

According to Persian reports, Rustam had a strong interest in astrology. In that context, he mentions in his letter the positions of Pisces and Libra and other celestial bodies, which in his view indicated that the moment was not militarily favorable for the Persians. Prior to this, several ominous incidents had already occurred in Yazdegerd’s court, and certain dreams had also conveyed similar signs to Rustam. In light of all this, Rustam’s personal inclination was to avoid war with the Arabs and instead to try to delay them; but Yazdegerd’s insistence compelled him to march with his army to confront the Muslims.

Referencing and Variance in Narration Chains

Al-Kala'i also transmits this report from Sayf bin 'Umar (al-Iktifa'... 2/439). In al-Kala'i's version, some sentences differ in wording and some are additional; the bracketed sentences in the Arabic text above are taken from his version.

(7)

عَنْ سَيْفٍ، عَنْ مُحَمَّدٍ وَطَلْحَةَ وَزَيَادٍ وَعَمْرٍ وَبِإِسْتَادِهِمْ، قَالُوا: لَمَّا فَصَلَ رُسْتَمُ مِنْ سَابَاطَ لَقِيَهُ جَابَانُ عَلَى الْقَنْطَرَةِ، فَشَكَا إِلَيْهِ وَقَالَ: أَلَا تَرَى مَا أَرَى؟ فَقَالَ لَهُ رُسْتَمُ: أَمَا أَنَا فَأَقْادُ بِخِشَاشٍ وَزَمَاءٍ، وَلَا أَجِدُ بُدُّا مِنَ الْأَنْقِيَادِ. وَأَمَرَ الْجَالِلُوسَ حَتَّى قَدِمَ الْجِيرَةَ، فَمَضَى وَأَضْطَرَ بَقْسَطَانَ بَلِ الْنَّجْفَ، وَخَرَجَ رُسْتَمُ حَتَّى يَنْزَلَ بِكُوئِيَّ، وَكَتَبَ إِلَى الْجَالِلُوسَ وَالْأَزَادِمْرُدْ: أَصِيبَا لِي رَجُلًا مِنَ الْعَرَبِ مِنْ جُنْدِ سَعْدٍ. فَرَكِبَا بِأَنْفُسِهِمَا طَلِيَعَةً، فَأَصَابَا رَجُلًا فَبَعَثَا بِهِ إِلَيْهِ وَهُوَ بِكُوئِيَّ، فَاسْتَحْبَرَهُ ثُمَّ قَتَلَهُ. (تاریخ الطبری 507/3)

Sayf bin 'Umar relates from Muhammad, Talhah, Ziyad, and 'Amr that when Rustam departed from Sabat, he met (the Persian commander) Jaban on the bridge. Jaban complained to him and said: “Do you not see what I see?” Rustam replied: “As for me, I am being driven with a nose-ring and a rein; I have no choice except to submit and be led.”

Then Rustam ordered Jalinus to proceed to al-Hirah. Accordingly, Jalinus went and pitched his camp at Najaf, while Rustam went toward Kutha and encamped there. Rustam wrote to Jalinus and Azadmard: “Capture for me a man from among the Arabs in Sa'd's army, and send him to me.” The two went out themselves with a detachment, seized a man, and sent him to Rustam in Kutha. Rustam interrogated him, and then killed him.

Lexical Analysis:

- **Khishash:** the nose-ring inserted into a camel’s nostril.

Referencing and Variance in Narration Chains

Al-Kala'i also transmits this report from Sayf bin 'Umar (al-Iktifa'... 2/440–441).

(8)

عَنْ أَبْنَى الرُّؤْفِيِّ عَنْ أَبِيهِ، قَالَ: لَمَّا فَصَلَ رُسْتَمُ وَأَمْرَ الْجَالُوْسَ بِالنَّقْدِ إِلَى الْجِيَرَةِ أَمْرَهُ أَنْ يُصِيبَ لَهُ رَجُلًا مِنَ الْعَرَبِ، فَخَرَجَ هُوَ وَالْأَرَادُمْرُ سَرِيَّةً فِي مَائِةٍ حَتَّى اتَّهَمَهَا إِلَى الْقَادِسِيَّةِ، فَأَصَابَاهَا رَجُلًا دُونَ قُطْرَةِ الْقَادِسِيَّةِ فَلَخَّطَهَا، فَفَرَّ النَّاسُ فَأَعْجَرُوهُمْ إِلَّا مَا أَصَابَ الْمُسْلِمُونَ فِي أَخْرَيَاتِهِمْ. فَلَمَّا اتَّهَمَهَا إِلَى النَّجَفِ سَرَّحَا بِهِ إِلَى رُسْتَمَ وَهُوَ يُكُوَّنِي.

فَقَالَ لَهُ رُسْتَمُ: مَا جَاءَ بِكُمْ؟ وَمَاذَا تَطْلُبُونَ؟ قَالَ: جَنَّتَا تَطْلُبُ مَوْعِدَ اللَّهِ، قَالَ: وَمَا هُوَ؟ قَالَ: أَرْضُكُمْ وَأَبْناؤُكُمْ وَيَمَاؤُكُمْ إِنْ أَبْيَثُمْ أَنْ سُلْمُوا. قَالَ رُسْتَمُ: فَإِنْ قُتِلْتُمْ قَبْلَ ذَلِكَ؟ قَالَ: فِي مَوْعِدِ اللَّهِ أَنْ مَنْ قُتِلَ ذَلِكَ أَدْخَلَهُ الْجَنَّةَ، وَأَنْجَرَ لَمَنْ بَقَى مِنَّا مَا قُلِّتَ لَكَ، فَخَنَّ عَلَى يَقِينِي. فَقَالَ رُسْتَمُ: قَدْ وَضَعْنَا إِذَا فِي أَبْيَكُمْ. قَالَ: وَيُحَكِّكَ يَا رُسْتَمَ! إِنَّ أَغْمَالَكُمْ وَضَعْنَكُمْ فَأَسْلَمُكُمُ اللَّهُ بِهَا، فَلَا يَمْرُّنَكَ مَا تَرَى حَوْلَكَ، فَإِنَّكَ لَسْتَ تُحَاوِلُ الْإِنْسَنَ، إِنَّمَا تُحَاوِلُ الْقَضَاءَ وَالْقَرَرَ! فَأَسْتَشَاطَ عَصْبَانَا، فَأَمَرَ بِهِ فَضَرَبَتْ عَنْقَهُ.

وَخَرَجَ رُسْتَمُ مِنْ كُوَّنِي حَتَّى يَنْزَلَ بَيْرُنِ، فَعَصَبَ أَصْحَابَهُ النَّاسَ أُمُوَالَهُمْ وَوَقَعُوا عَلَى النِّسَاءِ وَشَرَبُوا الْحُمُورَ، فَضَيَّجَ الْعُلُوجُ إِلَى رُسْتَمَ وَشَكَوُا إِلَيْهِ مَا يَلْقَوْنَ فِي أُمُوَالِهِمْ وَأَبْنَائِهِمْ، فَقَامَ فِيهِمْ فَقَالَ: يَا مَعْشَرَ أَهْلِ فَارَسِ، وَاللَّهِ لَقَدْ صَدَقَ الْعَرَبِيُّ، وَاللَّهِ مَا أَسْلَمَنَا إِلَّا أَعْمَلَنَا، وَاللَّهِ لِلْعَرَبِ فِي هُوَلَاءِ وَهُمْ لَهُمْ وَلَنَا حَرْبٌ—أَحْسَنُ سِيرَةً مِنْكُمْ، إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ يَنْصُرُكُمْ عَلَى الْعُدُوِّ وَيُمْكِنُ لَكُمْ فِي الْبَلَادِ بِخُسْنِ السَّيِّرَةِ وَكَفَى الظُّلُمُ وَالْوَقَاءُ بِالْعَهُودِ وَالْإِحْسَانِ، فَإِنَّمَا أَذْتَهُوَلَمْ عَنْ ذَلِكَ إِلَى هَذِهِ الْأَعْمَالِ فَلَا أَرَى اللَّهَ إِلَّا مُغَيَّرًا مَا يَكُمْ، وَمَا أَنَا بِإِمْنٍ أَنْ يَنْزَعَ اللَّهُ سُلْطَانَهُ مِنْكُمْ. وَبَعْثَ الرِّجَالَ فَلَقَطُوا لَهُ بَعْضَ مِنْ يُنْشَكِي، فَلَيَّ بِنَقْرَ فَضَرَبَ أَغْنَاهُمْ. (تَارِيخُ الطَّبْرَى 507-508/3)

Ibn Rufayl relates from his father that when Rustam set out (from Sabat) and instructed Jalinus to advance toward al-Hirah, he also told him to seize an Arab and send him to Rustam. Thus, Jalinus and Azadmard set out with a detachment of one hundred men until they reached al-Qadisiyyah. There they captured a man near the bridge of al-Qadisiyyah and carried him off. The Muslims pursued them, but they escaped; apart from inflicting some harm on the rear of the detachment, the Muslims could not catch them. When Jalinus and Azadmard reached Najaf, they sent the man to Rustam, who was then in Kutha.

Rustam asked him: "Why have you come here, and what do you seek?" He replied: "We have come to obtain what God has promised." Rustam said: "And what is it?" He replied: "Your land, your sons, and your lives—if you refuse to accept Islam." Rustam said: "And if you are killed before that?" He replied: "God's promise is that whoever among us is killed before the victory, He will admit him into Paradise; and for those of us who remain, He will fulfill what I have told you. We are, therefore, completely certain." Rustam said: "Then it is as though He has placed us into your hands!" He replied: "Woe to you, Rustam! Your deeds have brought you to this state, and God has handed you over to us because of them. So do not be deceived by what you see around you, for you are not contending with human beings; rather, you are contending with (God's) decree and destiny." Upon hearing this, Rustam became enraged and ordered that his head be struck off; thus, he was beheaded.

Then Rustam departed from Kutha to camp at Bars. There, Rustam's companions seized people's property, assaulted women, and drank wine. The populace cried out, went to Rustam with complaints, and told him what was being done to their wealth and their children. Rustam stood before his companions and said: "O Persians! By God, that Arab spoke the truth. By God, it is our deeds alone that have destroyed us. By God, the Arabs have treated these people better than you have—though they are enemies both to them and to us. God continued to grant you victory over the enemy and dominion in the land so long as your conduct was upright: you restrained oppression, fulfilled covenants, and practiced beneficence. But when you abandoned those good deeds and began

these evil acts, I am convinced that God will transform your dominance into defeat, and I fear that God will strip sovereignty from you.” Then he sent men to seize some of those complained against; a few men were brought, and Rustam had their heads struck off.

Lexical Analysis:

- **al’Ulij:** plural of *ilj*—a stout, powerfully built person; commonly used for non-Arab unbelievers.

Explanation and Clarification:

1. Rustam’s ordering the captured Arab to be killed in anger makes clear his inner turmoil and his divided personality. On one side, on the basis of astrology he believes that the Arabs are destined to win this war; and the contrast between the Arabs’ moral comportment and the Persians’ corruption further strengthens his conviction. Yet when he hears the same point stated bluntly by the Arab himself, he cannot restrain himself; his national pride is wounded, and, in anger, he has him killed.
2. In the same frame, Rustam identifies the Persians’ moral condition as the cause of their anticipated defeat. This motif also appears among other responsible Persian figures, as will be seen in certain reports. It reflects Persian religious and moral conceptions about rule and sovereignty: in their religious literature and royal edicts, governance is frequently presented as conditioned upon justice and fairness, and as losing its legitimacy in their absence. Certain Sasanian kings—such as Anushirwan and Ardashir—are often cited as historical exemplars in this regard.

Referencing and Variance in Narration Chains

Al-Kala‘i also transmits this report (al-Iktifa’... 2/440–441).

(9)

عَنْ سَيْفِ، عَنْ النَّضْرِ بْنِ السَّرَّيِ، عَنْ ابْنِ الرُّفَيْلِ، عَنْ ابْنِ الرُّفَيْلِ، قَالَ: ... وَكَتَبَ جَابَانُ إِلَى جُشْنَسْمَاهَ: إِنَّ أَهْلَ فَارَسَ قَدْ زَالَ أَمْرُهُمْ، وَأَدِيلُهُمْ عَنْهُمْ عَلَيْهِمْ، وَدَهَبَ مَلْكُ الْمَحْوَسِيَّةِ، وَأَقْبَلَ مَلْكُ الْعَرَبِ وَأَدِيلُ دِيَّلُهُمْ، فَاعْتَقَدَ مِنْهُمُ الْمَمَّةُ، وَلَا تَخْبِئَكَ الْأَمْرُورُ، وَالْعَجَلُ الْعَجَلُ قَلَّ أَنْ تُؤْخَدَ! قَلَّمَا وَقَعَ الْكِتَابُ إِلَيْهِ خَرَجَ جُشْنَسْمَاهُ إِلَيْهِمْ حَتَّى أَتَى الْمُغَعَّبَ، وَهُوَ فِي خَيْلٍ بِالْعَنْيَقِ، وَأَرْسَلَهُ إِلَى سَعْدٍ، فَاعْتَقَدَ مِنْهُ عَلَى نَفْسِهِ وَأَهْلِ بَيْتِهِ وَمِنْ اسْتَجَابَ لَهُ وَرَدَّهُ، وَكَانَ صَاحِبَ أَخْبَارِهِمْ. (تَارِيخُ الطَّبْرِيِّ 3/507)

Sayf—via Naqr bin al-Sari and Ibn Rufayl—relates from Rufayl (the father) that (Yazdegerd’s royal astrologer) Jaban wrote to Gushnasp Mah: “The dominion of the Persians is on the verge of collapse; their enemy will be granted ascendancy over them; and the sovereignty of Magianism will come to an end. Now is the time of Arab dominion, and their religion will prevail. Therefore, conclude a covenant of *dhimmah* with the Arabs, and let the outward appearance of affairs not deceive you. Hurry—hurry—before you are seized!” When the letter reached Gushnasp Mah, he set out toward the Arabs and met (their commander) Mu‘anna, who was present at al-‘Atiq with his cavalry. Mu‘anna sent him to Sa‘d bin Abi Waqqas, and Sa‘d granted him a covenant of *dhimmah* for his own life, his household, and those who would respond to him, and then sent him back. After that, Gushnasp Mah began conveying to them intelligence about the Persians.

Lexical Analysis:

- **Udila:** derived from *dawlah*, literally “the turning of the game-piece”; “*udila ‘aduwwuhum ‘alayhim*” means: their enemy has been granted success against them.
- **La takhlubannaka:** from *khalb* (“to deceive”).

Explanation and Clarification:

1. Jaban was the royal astrologer at Yazdegerd's court. Through his knowledge, it too became clear to him that the time had come for the Persian dominion to end. Accordingly, out of personal concern and a private relationship with Gushnasp Mah—a Persian notable—he secretly informed him and advised him to secure protection from the Muslims.
2. The Arabs referred to Zoroastrianism—the official religion of the Sasanian state—as “Magianism” (*Majusiyah*). The “Magians” were, in fact, a distinct class that performed religious rites in Zoroastrian temples; hence the designation became common among the Arabs for the religion itself. The Qur'an, too, mentions the adherents of this religion under the name *al-Majus* (al-Hajj 22:17).

Referencing and Variance in Narration Chains

Al-Kala'i also transmits this report (al-Iktifa'... 2/440–441).

(10)

عَنْ أَبْنَ الرَّفِيلِ، عَنْ أَبِيهِ، قَالَ: لَمَّا نَزَلَ رُسُنُمْ عَلَى الْعَنْيَقِ وَبَاتَ بِهِ أَصْبَحَ غَلَبِيَا عَلَى التَّصْفُحِ وَالْخَرْزِ، فَسَائِرُ الْعَنْيَقِ تَحْوِلُ خُفَانَ، حَتَّى أَتَى عَلَى مُنْقَطِعِ عَسْكَرِ الْمُسْلِمِينِ، ثُمَّ صَعَدَ حَتَّى اتَّهَى إِلَى الْقُطْرَةِ، فَقَامَلَ الْقَوْمَ حَتَّى أَتَى عَلَى شَيْءٍ يُشَرِّفُ مِنْهُ عَلَيْهِمْ، فَلَمَّا وَقَفَ عَلَى الْقُطْرَةِ رَأَسَلَ رُهْرَةً، فَرَأَجَ إِلَيْهِ حَتَّى وَاقَعَ، فَأَرَادَهُ أَنْ يُصَالِحُهُمْ، وَجَعَلَ لَهُ جُغْلًا عَلَى أَنْ يَنْصُرُهُمْ عَنْهُ، وَجَعَلَ بَقِيَّهُ فِيمَا يَقُولُ: أَنَّمَا چِرَانِنَا، وَقَدْ كَانَتْ طَائِفَةً مِنْكُمْ فِي سُلْطَانِنَا، فَكَانَتْ أَنْجِسْنُ چَوَارَهُمْ، وَنَذَفَتْ الْأَدَى عَنْهُمْ، وَتَوَلَّهُمُ الْمَرَاقِقُ الْكَثِيرَةُ، نَحْظَفُهُمْ فِي أَهْلِ بَادِيَّتِهِمْ، فَقَرُّ عِيَّهُمْ مَرَاعِيَّنَا، وَتَمَيِّرُهُمْ مِنْ بَلَادِنَا، وَلَا نَمْنَعُهُمْ مِنَ الْتِجَارَةِ فِي شَيْءٍ مِنْ أَرْضِنَا، وَقَدْ كَانَ لَهُمْ فِي ذَلِكَ مَعَاشٌ – بُعْرَضُهُمْ بِالصُّلْحِ، وَإِنَّمَا يُخْبِرُهُ بِصَنْعِهِمْ، وَالصُّلْحُ يُرِيدُ وَلَا يُصَرِّخُ

فَقَالَ لَهُ رُهْرَةُ: صَدَقْتَ، فَذَكَرَ كَانَ مَا تَذَكَّرُ، وَلَيْسَ أَمْرُنَا أَمْرًا أُولَئِكَ وَلَا طَبِّنَتَا، إِنَّا لَمْ تَأْتِكُمْ لِطَلْبِ الْأُنْيَا، إِنَّمَا طَلَبْنَا وَهَمَّنَا الْأُخْرَةُ، كُلَّا كَمَا ذَكَرْتُ يَدِينُ لَكُمْ مِنْ وَرَدِ عَلَيْكُمْ مِنْهَا، وَبِضْرَغِ إِلَيْكُمْ يَطْلُبُ مَا فِي أَيْدِيْكُمْ، ثُمَّ بَعَثَ اللَّهُ تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى إِلَيْنَا رَسُولًا، فَذَعَانَا إِلَى رَبِّهِ فَلَجَبَاهُ، فَقَالَ لَنَبِيِّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: إِلَيْيَ قَدْ سَلَطْتَ هَذِهِ الطَّائِفَةَ عَلَى مَنْ لَمْ يَدْنُ بِدِينِي، فَأَنَا مُنْتَقِمٌ بِهِمْ مِنْهُمْ، وَأَجْعَلُ لَهُمُ الْغَلَبَةَ مَا دَامُوا مُقْرِبِيَّ بِهِ، وَهُوَ دِينُ الْحَقِّ، لَا يَرْغَبُ عَنْهُ أَحَدٌ إِلَّا ذَلَّ، وَلَا يَعْتَصِمُ بِهِ أَحَدٌ إِلَّا عَرَّ.

فَقَالَ لَهُ رُسُنُمْ: وَمَا هُوَ؟

قَالَ: أَمَّا عَمُودُهُ الَّذِي لَا يَصْلُحُ مِنْهُ شَيْءٌ إِلَّا بِهِ فَشَهَادَةُ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَأَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا رَسُولُ اللَّهِ، وَالْإِقْرَارُ بِمَا جَاءَ مِنْ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ تَعَالَى.

قَالَ: مَا أَحْسَنَ هَذَا! وَأَيُّ شَيْءٍ أَيْضًا؟

قَالَ: وَإِخْرَاجُ الْعِبَادِ مِنْ عِبَادَةِ الْعِبَادِ إِلَى عِبَادَةِ اللَّهِ تَعَالَى.

قَالَ: حَسْنٌ، وَأَيُّ شَيْءٍ أَيْضًا؟

قَالَ: وَالثَّالِسُ بَئُو آدَمَ وَحَوَاءَ، إِحْوَةً لِأَبٍ وَأُمٍّ. قَالَ: مَا أَحْسَنَ هَذَا!

ثُمَّ قَالَ لَهُ رُسْتَمٌ: أَرَأَيْتَ لَوْ أَنِّي رَضِيَتُ بِهَذَا الْأَمْرِ وَأَجْبَرْتُكُمْ إِلَيْهِ وَمَعِي قَوْمِي كَيْفَ يَكُونُ أَمْرُكُمْ؟ أَتَرْجِعُونَ؟

قَالَ: إِنِّي وَاللَّهِ، ثُمَّ لَا نَقْرُبُ بِلَادَكُمْ أَبْدًا إِلَّا فِي تِجَارَةٍ أَوْ حَاجَةٍ.

قَالَ: صَدَقْتَنِي وَاللَّهُ، أَمَا إِنَّ أَهْلَ فَارَسَ مُؤْمِنٌ وَلَيْ أَرْتَشِيرُ لَمْ يَدْعُوا أَحَدًا يَخْرُجُ مِنْ عَمَلِهِ مِنَ السَّيِّلَةِ، كَانُوا يَقُولُونَ إِذَا خَرَجُوا مِنْ أَعْمَالِهِمْ: تَعَوَّلُوا طَوْرَهُمْ وَعَادُوا أَشْرَافَهُمْ.

فَقَالَ لَهُ رُهْرَةُ: تَحْنُ حَيْرَ النَّاسِ لِلنَّاسِ، فَلَا تُسْتَطِعُ أَنْ تَكُونَ كَمَا تَقُولُونَ، تُطِيعُ اللَّهَ فِي السَّفَلَةِ، وَلَا يَصُرُّنَا مِنْ عَصَى اللَّهِ فِينَا.

فَأَنْصَرَفَ عَنْهُ، وَدَعَا رَجَالَ فَارَسَ فَذَاكِرُهُمْ هَذَا، فَحَمُّوا مِنْ ذَلِكَ وَأَنْفُوا، فَقَالَ: أَبْعَدْتُمُ اللَّهَ وَأَسْخَقْتُمْ أَخْرَى اللَّهِ أَخْرَ عَنَا وَأَجْبَرْتُمَا!

فَلَمَّا أَنْصَرَفَ رُسْتَمُ مُلْتُ إِلَى رُهْرَةَ، فَكَانَ إِسْلَامِي، وَكَثُثَ لَهُ عَدِيدًا، وَفَرَضَ لِي فَرَائِضُ أَهْلِ الْقَادِسِيَّةِ. (تَارِيخُ الطَّبْرَى/ 3- 517/ 518)

Ibn Rufayl relates from his father Rufayl: when Rustam halted at al-‘Atiq and spent the night there, he set out the next morning to inspect (the army) and assess the situation. He moved from al-‘Atiq toward Khuffan until he reached the edge of the Muslims’ camp. Then he advanced upward to the bridge. He continued surveying the Muslims’ camp until he reached a point from which he could look down upon them. When he stood on the bridge, he sent a message to (the Muslim commander) Zuhrah. Zuhrah came out and stood before Rustam. Rustam intended to offer the Muslims a peace settlement and to induce them to withdraw by paying them a specified sum. In the course of his conversation, Rustam said to Zuhrah: “You are our neighbors, and a group among you has also lived under our authority. We treated them well: we protected them from harm, provided them with many conveniences, looked after their desert-dwellers, and allowed them to pasture their animals in our grazing lands. We supplied them grain from our country and never barred them from trading anywhere in our territory; indeed, this was their livelihood.”

By these remarks, Rustam was gesturing toward a peace settlement: he was recounting Persian beneficence toward them, intending thereby to propose peace, though without stating it explicitly.

Zuhrah replied: “You have spoken truthfully; things were indeed as you describe. But our affair is not like the affair of those people, nor is our aim their aim. We have not come seeking the world; rather, our aim and aspiration is the Hereafter. As you have said, those who previously came to you were obedient to you and sought what you had. Then God sent to us a messenger, who called us to our Lord, and we accepted his call. God said to His Prophet: ‘I have resolved to set this group of My followers over those who do not believe in My religion, so that through them I may exact retribution from them; and so long as they remain steadfast upon this religion, I shall grant them supremacy.’ This is the religion of truth: whoever turns away from it will be humiliated, and whoever holds fast to it will be honored.”

Rustam asked: “What is that religion?”

Zuhrah said: “Its pillar—without which nothing of it is sound—is to bear witness that there is no deity except God and that Muhammad is God’s Messenger, and to affirm what has come from God.”

Rustam said: “How excellent this is! And what else?”

Zuhrah said: “To bring God’s servants out from the servitude of other servants into servitude to God.”

Rustam said: “Good—and what else?”

Zuhrah said: “All people are the children of Adam and Hawwa’—brothers from one father and one mother.”

Rustam said: “How excellent this is!”

Then Rustam said: “What do you think: if I and my people were to accept this religion and respond to you, what would become of your demand—would you return?”

Zuhrah replied: “Yes—by God. Then we would never draw near to your lands again, except for trade or some need.”

Rustam said: “By God, you have spoken truly. But since the time Ardashir assumed rule, it has been the Persians’ established practice that they do not allow anyone from the lower classes to step beyond his prescribed sphere of work. If they attempt to do so, they say: ‘They have overstepped their station and adopted hostility toward their nobles.’”

Zuhrah replied: “We are the best of people for people; we cannot adopt the method you describe. We obey God even with respect to those of lower rank, and we are not harmed by anyone among us who wishes to disobey God.”

After this, Rustam returned to his people and conveyed these words to them. They became enraged and stirred by pride (and began taunting Rustam with cowardice). Rustam said: “May God destroy and annihilate you! May God disgrace whichever of us is cowardly and weak!”

(Rufayl says:) When Rustam departed, I left the Persians and came over to Zuhrah—this became the cause of my accepting Islam. I was counted among the army at al-Qadisiyyah, and I was allotted a share (of the spoils) equal to theirs.

Lexical Analysis

- **Namir**: from *mirah* (“grain/provisions”); “*mara iyalabu*” means: he provided food for his household. (Reference cited in the text: Yusuf 12:65.)
- **al-Safilah**: the base/low strata of society; despicable people.
- **Hamu**: from *hamiyyah*—to feel intense tribal pride/indignation.
- **Anifu**: to feel strong aversion; to become furious.
- **Akhra**: weak; lacking resolve.
- **‘Adid**: one who is counted among a group even if he is not originally of them.

Explanation and Clarification

1. After the earlier conversation in Yazdegerd’s court, this is the first recorded dialogue in the historical sources between the Persian commander Rustam and the Muslims. Muslim representation here is by Zuhrah bin Juyyah (or Huyyah), from Banu Sa‘d, who commanded the vanguard of the Arab army. In line with Yazdegerd’s approach, Rustam first tried to persuade Zuhrah to return with some worldly provisions. When he failed, he asked once again about Islam’s foundational teaching. In his reply, Zuhrah especially highlighted that Islam seeks to bring people out of servitude to other people and into servitude to God—meaning that, if the Persians accepted Islam, they would have to abolish within their polity the entrenched distinction between ruling and subject classes.

2. While mentioning the class system prevalent among the Persians, Rustam refers to Ardashir, who in the third century CE ended the Parthian empire and founded the Sasanian dynasty. In the Sasanian order, Iranian society was divided into classes, and each class was considered bound to its particular duties. For example, one who learned a specific craft was expected to confine himself to it and not take interest in other professions. The lowest class consisted of common people, for whom opportunities to rise beyond their social rank into higher classes were very limited (as cited in the text). Rustam had already observed—and knew from other information—that the new religion under which the Arabs had united did not permit this sort of hierarchy and class division. Thus, despite finding Islam's teaching appealing in principle, he expressed reservations about this particular aspect and indicated that the Persian elites would never accept a change to the established class-based system.

Referencing and Variance in Narration Chains

Al-Kala'i also transmits Rufayl's report, though without including the concluding sentence about Rufayl's acceptance of Islam (al-Iktifa'... 2/457).

[To Be Continued...]



CONCEPT OF GOD: *KALAM* AND NATURAL REASONING

Muhammad Hassan Ilyas

The 'Point of View' column is reserved for writings by various thinkers. The institution is not necessarily in agreement with the views expressed in the articles published therein.

Within the Muslim intellectual tradition, two prominent modes of thought emerge with respect to establishing God's existence and explicating His attributes: one grounded in the Quran's plain, natural, and intuitive argumentation, and the other associated with the intricate, abstract, and philosophical constructions of *ilm al-kalam* (scholastic theology).

In their present scholarly forms, these appear as two independent vantage points; historically, however, their provenance is not the same. The Quranic method is, in its very origin, the earliest and foundational style of revelation, whereas the *kalam* method is the product of centuries of intellectual struggle and engagement with external philosophical disputations. The tension that arose was not merely a divergence of terminology; it was a divergence of perspective and of argumentative posture—one that, over time, penetrated the inner life of human consciousness and began to reshape the very taste and mode of understanding of faith.

The first perspective rests upon natural reasoning—taking human consciousness, intuition, experience, and observation as its ground—while the second seeks to establish truths by translating them into complex logical propositions through philosophical syllogisms, rational subtleties, and technical *kalam* vocabulary. Thus, the issue becomes not only what is being proven, but also how it is being proven. This is precisely the intellectual posture by which advocates of *kalam* regard it not simply as the primary rational foundation for demonstrating religious premises, but as the very basis upon which the entire edifice of the Islamic sciences stands.

In their view, just as jurisprudence organizes legal rulings concerning human acts and *usul al-fiqh* provides a theoretical framework for deriving those rulings, so too does *ilm al-kalam* assume a decisive role in structuring the premises of faith, defining doctrines, and forming the conceptions of divinity and prophethood. According to this view, disciplines such as Qur'anic exegesis, hadith, and jurisprudence draw their answers to fundamental questions—concerning the nature of revelation, the reality of prophethood, moral responsibility for human action, and the wisdom in God's acts—from *kalam*. Hence, in questions of the relationship between reason and transmitted authority, the tension between compulsion and choice, and the conceptual delimitation of good and evil, the methodology of *kalam* is treated as the decisive criterion.

This defense of *kalam* is also tied to the historical context in which Muslim civilizational thought first confronted systematic philosophical challenges. When Muslims faced Greek philosophy, formal logic, and atheistic objections, a need was felt to organize the relationship between reason and revelation; from this arose the various schools of *kalam*. In that context, one party held that reason assists the path of faith, but revelation remains the ultimate measure: reason is a means to recognizing revelation, not its sovereign judge. In contrast, another party treated reason as the primary source, granting it autonomy in defining foundational notions such as moral value (*husn* and *qubh*), justice and injustice, and even the delineation of monotheism, while viewing revelation as a means of confirmation and completion. In this way, two broad tendencies within *kalam* took shape, and, gradually, the direction of this method moved away from the Qur'an's simple idiom of nature, consciousness, and direct testimony toward an increasingly philosophical and logical style.

However systematic such a philosophical construction may appear, it carries the premise of faith away from its natural and intuitive horizon into an altogether different direction. Here, the essential difference between the two approaches becomes self-evident: on the one hand, faith is understood in relation to living human experience, observation, and inward consciousness; on the other, it is arranged as a series of philosophical concepts, abstract premises, and metaphysical propositions. Accordingly, although *kalam* argumentation may seem, in outward form, rigorously organized—almost “scientific” or “mathematical”—in truth it is fundamentally distinct from the intuitive, natural, and humanly accessible mode of summons that the Qur'an itself established, and that the Noble Messenger (PBUH) and his Companions adopted.

This distinction becomes fully clear when we examine the premise of faith through the closest experience in the cosmos: the creation of the human being. Lifeless nutritional elements becoming a drop of fluid, and that drop—through conjunction with the ovum—passing through an unseen phase and, within nine months, taking the form of a being endowed with consciousness and will: this entire journey is not merely the manifestation of the chemical properties of matter; it is a definitive testimony to an intentional, knowing, and wise agent. Here, the language of formal proof becomes unnecessary; the event itself speaks. This continuous and ordered act of creation stands before us as a living witness to knowledge, will, and power.

If the same reality is viewed from another angle, the first thing that becomes apparent is that the human being, in and of himself, is created. The premise of religion, in fact, begins from precisely this simple ontological truth. We know how lifeless elements of food are transmitted into a seminal fluid, how that fluid bears the full capacity to become a human being, and how, after the union with the ovum, an unseen reality transforms into a being possessing consciousness, will, and personality; all stages are before our eyes. Yet we also know with certainty that the human being was not hidden in food, nor in earth, nor in their chemical structure was there any power capable—of itself—of converting matter into life and life into consciousness. All of this is creation; and it is precisely this act of creation that declares the human being to be created.

Once the human being recognizes himself as created, his own consciousness inclines him inwardly to seek his Creator. This search is not driven by the maxim that “everything must have a creator,” but by the more basic necessity that every created thing must have a creator. The inescapable demand—an effect for an efficient cause, an act for an agent—is woven into human nature; it does not allow the soul to rest until, at some level, the linkage from creation to Creator becomes intelligible. And it is here that the true structure of faith becomes manifest: a structure formed from the intuitions of nature, the depth of consciousness, and the simplicity of human experience, not from complicated philosophical premises and scholastic propositions.

Yet, in the third and fourth centuries Hijri, a stage arrived in Muslim intellectual history in which this simplicity, this direct experience, and this natural intimacy began, gradually, to be suppressed into the background. As external philosophical pressure increased, attention shifted away from natural reasoning toward a defensive, logical, and philosophical style of argument. The aim was to answer objections; but the real need was to respond on the opponent's terrain while also returning the addressee to that reasoning whose foundation rests on self-evident truths and natural testimonies already present within the human being. This was the juncture at which the natural language of faith—kept by the Quran closest to human consciousness—quietly receded, and in its place philosophical idioms and logical forms took over.

This intellectual background then became the basis upon which, in later periods, the organized rational edifice of *ilm al-kalam* was constructed. The framework of the scholastics did not arise in a vacuum; it emerged as an intellectual formation in response to Greek logic, Neoplatonism, and atheistic or pantheistic objections. Over time, defense overwhelmed the original summons; the means became the end. Thus the defensive method came to dominate the primary message, and natural reasoning was pushed to the margins. This difference was not merely methodological; it became a difference that directly affected the meaning of faith and its inward taste.

Accordingly, in *kalam* discussions, issues assumed centrality that had no direct connection with the original call of religion, its spirit, or its ethical aims. Questions such as *imkan-i kidhb-i bari* (the “possibility” of falsehood ascribed to God), *taaddud-i qadim bil-dhat* (multiplicity of “self-eternal” entities), and *hawadith la awwala laha* (origination-events without a first beginning) were, in reality, products of those philosophical premises concerned with rational analyses of existence, creation, and the divine attributes. For proving God's existence, the central *kalam* proof—*dalil-i huduth-i 'alam* (the “argument from the world's temporality/origination”)—appears, on the surface, to be a strong rational inference; yet its first premise is itself contestable: that the world is originated. When the foundational premise is not certain, the proof that is taken as decisive itself becomes unstable. Thus the premise from which one argues to the Creator's existence becomes something that itself requires proof, and the entire scholastic structure becomes entangled in a doubled uncertainty.

Because philosophy begins with the gradations of being and their definitions, concepts such as *wajib al-wujud* (Necessary Existent), *mumkin al-wujud* (contingent existent), *qadim bi'l-dhat* (self-eternal), and *hadith bi'l-dhat* (originated in itself) were formulated—concepts grounded in abstract reason and imagination. From these premises arose questions such as: if God is *qadim bi'l-dhat*, are His attributes also eternal or originated? If divine speech is originated, does it thereby count as created? *Kalam* accepted these questions defensively and, alongside interpretive readings of religious texts, erected a vast logical-philosophical edifice whose foundations lay not in the Quran's natural consciousness of faith, but in the questions posed by Greek philosophy.

The result was that belief in God—an experiential, intuitive, and natural reality in the Quran—came to remain as an abstract logical proposition. Faith, which had been a living moment of assent, was transformed into a theoretical debate. Rational verification displaced certainty, and skepticism began to replace surrender. Faith's original quality—relation, presence, and humility—was dissolved into conceptual formulations.

By contrast, the Quranic method is profoundly simple, intuitive, and direct. It does not make God's existence dependent upon a philosophical definition, nor upon metaphysical premises. It addresses human consciousness and nature directly. It declares in Surah Ibrahim:

أَفِي اللَّهِ شَكٌ فَاطِرُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ

Is there any doubt about God—He who brought the heavens and the earth into being?

This is not the formal structure of a syllogism; rather, it is an intuitive call that awakens the natural awareness already present within the human being.

Likewise:

أَفَرَغَيْتُمْ مَا تُمْتَنِعُونَ. إِنَّمَا تَحْلُفُونَ إِمَّا تَحْنَنُ الْخَلْقَوْنَ. (الواقعة 56: 58)

Have you ever reflected upon the drop you emit: do you create what is made from it, or are We the Creator?

أَقْلَى يَنْظَرُونَ إِلَى الْأَيْلَى كَيْفَ خَلَقْتَهُنَّ. (الغاشية 88: 17)

Do they not look at the camels—how they were created?

Here there is neither the terminology of *wajib al-wujud* nor the machinery of logical inference; there is only observation, experience, and nature—and through them, recognition of God.

Accordingly, the Qur'an presents God as *Rabb*: the Being who creates, nurtures, sustains, guides, and is present in every moment of human life. This conception of God is not merely an otherworldly existence; it appears as a personal, living, and ever-present relationship that produces gratitude, love, fear, and hope within the human being.

By describing the constitutive stages of human creation, the Qur'an makes clear that this manifestation of the cosmos is the working of a knowing and wise will:

وَبَدَا خَلْقُ الْإِنْسَانِ مِنْ طِينٍ. ثُمَّ جَعَلَ نَسْلَهُ مِنْ سُلْطَنٍ مِّنْ مَاءٍ مَّهِينٍ. (السجدة 32: 8)

He began the creation of the human being from clay; then He caused his progeny to proceed from an extract of a lowly fluid.

In the journey from biological compounds to consciousness, a continuous oversight of *rububiyyah* (lordly nurturing) is displayed; this observation itself leads the human being toward that knowing and wise Creator.

Natural reasoning, in truth, is the name for that light a human being finds within himself without external imposition. Recognition of good and evil, justice and injustice, and beauty and ugliness does not come to him from logic or philosophy; rather, it is placed within his consciousness as self-evident truths. This inward testimony forms his basic premises, and through those premises he reaches the reality that this order of the cosmos, this moral awareness, and this conscious life cannot be the play of blind matter. Here, proof is not imposed upon the human being from without; his own interior supplies the proof. Natural reasoning does not convert evidence into complicated premises; it makes it a simple path to those truths that are already testifying within him. For this reason, in this mode, proof does not become a burden; it becomes nature's confirmation.

It is precisely the power of this natural, intuitive, and experiential style that has, in every age, preserved the foundations of faith—and it is this foundation that has always needed to be understood independently of later philosophical complications. In our contemporary scholarly context, the honored teacher Javed Ahmad Ghamidi, in critiquing the utility of *kalam*, draws attention back to this natural reasoning and re-establishes the premise of faith within the domain of nature and intuitive consciousness.

According to him, the basis of natural reasoning is that the human being finds within himself an immediate awareness of good and evil, justice and injustice, and moral/aesthetic value (*husn* and *qubb*). This awareness is inescapable, and these very values direct him toward the Being who is their source. From this consciousness, faith begins—because recognition of these existential realities no longer remains dependent upon an external proof. Like the saying “Aftab amad dalil-i aftab” (“the sun itself is the proof of the sun”), a human being reaches, directly from this self-evident testimony within, the necessity of God.

Thereafter, reason does its work as far as it can reach; yet, for the completion of guidance, revelation becomes indispensable. In Ghāmīdī's view, natural reasoning brings us to the necessity of God's existence, but who God is, what His attributes are, what His will and good-pleasure entail, and what the nature of His relationship with the human being is—these are realities that lie beyond the limits of reason. Hence the Qur'an says: '*la tanfudhuna illa bi sultan*'—that is, access to knowledge beyond the self and matter is possible only through that "authority" whose name is revelation. Natural consciousness provides the foundation, and revelation carries that foundation to its final end, safeguarding the human being from debates that pertain to a world beyond the reach of reason.

Thus, nature, experience, reason, and revelation together give rise to a harmonious structure of faith—one that is neither dependent upon philosophical abstraction nor upon polemical disputation. At its center, this faith is simple, natural, and human: a faith that admits the human being into a living relationship with the Creator and makes that relationship the basis of knowledge, ethics, and civilization.

It is this very Qur'anic idiom that distinguishes it from all schools of thought. It does not demand that a human being become a philosopher; rather, it invites him to return to the foundational consciousness of being human—where nature itself becomes guide and proof. It keeps reason in its proper place, directing it by the light of nature; it does not allow proof to become the burden of imagined complexities, but makes it a means of reaching the simple and direct reality whose testimony already shines within the human being. Therefore its address reaches every person—farmer and shepherd, merchant and teacher, scholar and thinker, even philosopher—with equal depth and power, without leaning on technical terms, logical hair-splitting, or theoretical abstraction; it speaks directly to human consciousness.

And this is its miracle: it is not merely an intellectual text, but '*dhikrul lilalamin*' and a luminous Book—a light that, in every age, every society, and for every human being alike, opens the path of guidance, and whose truth, simplicity, and expressive power cannot be matched in any human speech.



THE PRESERVATION OF THE QURAN

Dr. Irfan Shehzad

The 'Point of View' column is reserved for writings by various thinkers. The institution is not necessarily in agreement with the views expressed in the articles published therein.

On 20 July 1969, humans set foot on the moon for the first time. This event was reported worldwide. Experts agreed on its occurrence. Such agreement is termed *ijma* (consensus) in scholarly terminology. This consensus involved so many people that it would have been impossible for all of them to collude to fabricate a falsehood. The transmission of this agreement by a large group is termed *tawatur* (continuous transmission). Subsequently, this event was passed down from generation to generation with both consensus and *tawatur* until it reached us. Even today, there is consensus regarding its occurrence. This would not have been possible without past consensus and *tawatur*. For an individual today, certainty about this event arises from the current consensus. Thus, before investigation, it is accepted as true, and then documented evidence may be examined for further verification. Even if such evidence is unavailable, doubt about its occurrence does not arise. Every historically consensus and continuously transmitted event is reported in this way and produces certainty.

Now consider the opposite scenario. History also reports some conflicting accounts regarding this event, claiming it was a fabrication. Some analyses are offered as proof, though they are not accepted as scholarly, yet some people consider the event doubtful based on these analyses.

Now consider the Qur'an. There is consensus among Muslims worldwide on a single text and recitation. This consensus would not have been possible without past consensus and *tawatur*. Therefore, confidence in the preservation of a single text and recitation of the Qur'an arises from the present consensus and *tawatur* of Muslims. Documentary evidence or chains of narration are not required to prove this; however, historical evidence of past consensus and *tawatur* is referred to for further research.

Consensus and *tawatur* regarding an event depend on circumstances. If they do not occur at the time of the event, they can never occur later. Therefore, if a non-consensual event became widespread in some period, scholars and researchers would know it was neither consensus-based nor continuously transmitted. Likewise, the agreement of Muslims on a single text and recitation could not have occurred later if it had not existed in the first Muslim community. Events on which the companions of the Prophet did not reach consensus remain disputed even today.

Some individual reports exist that claim the first compilation of the Qur'an was incomplete, that some verses were left out, that some memorizers were martyred in battles, and that some parts they knew were not included in the Qur'an. All these exist in history as individual reports. However, they contradict the consensus of the companions, who preserved the Arḍah-yi Akhirah (final recension) of the Qur'an completely and transmitted it to the next generation. Since then, it has been continuously transmitted to us.

Had the first Muslim community experienced the doubts described in these reports, later generations would have received a Qur'an without consensus. However, the reality is that the companions agreed on the *Ardah-yi Akhirah* recitation. Later, the third Caliph, Uthman, ordered its official publication and the destruction of private copies. Uthman did not collect people onto a new recitation; rather, he published the recitation on which they had already agreed. This recitation is known as *qiraat al-ammah* (public recitation).

Some companions possessed earlier recitations before the *Ardah-yi Akhirah*, which were later abrogated. These were transmitted in the form of individual reports. Some of their interpretive statements were mistakenly considered part of the Qur'anic text. These were transmitted as exegetical reports but never became part of the Qur'an. They remained of interest to scholars and reciters within their circles.

Later, in some regions, recitations different from *qiraat al-ammah* became common, such as in some African countries. Scholars know these were not public recitations. For example, at the end of the third century AH, the judge of Kairouan, Abdullah ibn Talib, ordered the recitation of Nafi' instead of the public recitation.³ From then on, the people of that region recited it. The reason was likely that they followed the Maliki school of jurisprudence, and Imam Malik preferred Nafi's recitation. However, there is no trace regarding who propagated the public recitation among Muslims, as it was always practiced among the masses and scholars since the time of the Prophet (PBUH).

Regarding the preservation of the Qur'an, the most skeptical are the Shiah. Yet, even among them, the Qur'an has been memorized, recited, and studied academically with a single text and recitation.

If the Muslim community had read different texts or recitations at different times and consensus on one text occurred later, historical evidence would need to show where multiple texts were used, how regional interactions handled differing recitations, how scholars cited verses according to different texts, and when and how the majority of Muslims agreed on a single text and recitation. Such widespread change would need documentation.

Any claim about dissemination and publication of the Qur'an must be connected to the entire history of the Muslim community, because the Qur'an was not a book for a few individuals but for the whole Ummah. Even a single letter change would affect the entire community. Claims of alternating recitations or lack of consensus for a period would be reflected in continuous transmission, but no such event exists in Muslim history.

The correct scholarly approach is to reject individual reports that contradict historical facts rather than doubt the facts themselves.

The memorization, recitation, and scholarly engagement with the Qur'an occur daily millions of times. In this sense, the consensus and *tawatur* of the Ummah on a single text and recitation are continuously reaffirmed. This is why there can be no error or discrepancy in its text and recitation. Any copying or printing errors are treated as mistakes and do not become widespread.

Because of the Qur'an's preservation, old copies were not deliberately preserved. Such effort is reserved for rare books.

Even if the earliest copies or manuscripts were available today, their antiquity would only attest to the historical consensus and *tawatur*, which already exists in the agreement on a single text and recitation. This history of consensus and *tawatur* is separately preserved in narrations of memorization, commentaries, translations, and jurisprudential references.

³ *Tartib al-Madarik*, Qadi 'Iyad ibn Musa, vol. 1, p. 483.

It should be noted that recitation in a language does not depend on its script. Some words are not read exactly as written. Native speakers do not require diacritics or phonetics. The same applies to Arabic and Qur'anic recitation. Arabic was not dependent on script, nor was Qur'anic recitation. Most Arabs learned and memorized the Qur'an orally, though written Qur'ans were always present. The Arabic script evolved over time, but this did not affect recitation. The recitation remains the same regardless of the alphabet used. Early orthographic issues were preserved in transmission to respect tradition, and the Ummah never doubted the correct pronunciation. For example:

- “*bi ayyikumul maftun*” (Al-Qalam 68:6): The extra *y* in بِيَعِيشُكُمْ does not affect recitation.
- “*wala in muttum aw qutiltum la ilallah tuhsharun*” (Al ‘Imran 3:158): An extra *alif* after *l* does not change the intended recitation.
- “*la azbahannahu*” (An-Naml 27:21): An extra *alif* after *l*; reading strictly according to script would invert the meaning.

This demonstrates the preservation of Qur'anic recitation.

The qiraat al-ammah was later called qiraat Hafs, because Imam Hafs, who taught the public recitation, became famous, and the name spread after his teaching or death. His contemporaries continued calling it qiraat al-ammah. Some scholars include: Khalid ibn Ahmad (100–170 AH), Sibawayh (148–180 AH), their student Akhush (d. 210 AH), Al-Farra' (144–207 AH). Even after Hafs, Imam Bukhari (d. 256 AH) called it qiraat al-ammah.⁴

Before or during the early years of Hafs (d. 180 AH), the Tabieen in India and other Far Eastern regions had the same Qur'an as we have today.

Hafs' recitation chain shows he taught the public recitation. His teacher, Asim ibn Abi al-Najud, learned it from Abu Abd al-Rahman al-Salmi (d. 73 AH), who began teaching the Qur'an at Kufa's Grand Mosque during Uthman's era and taught it continuously for forty years.⁵ He recited to Ali and then taught the entire Qur'an to Hasan and Husayn. He also studied with Zayd ibn Thabit and found no discrepancy between Zayd and Ali's recitation.⁶

Abu Abd al-Rahman al-Salmi stated:

كانت قراءة أبي بكر وعمر وعثمان وزيد بن ثابت والمهاجرين والأنصار واحدة، كانوا يقرؤون القراءة العامة، وهي القراءة التي قرأها رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم على جبريل مرتين في العام الذي قبض فيه، وكان زيد قد شهد العرضة الأخيرة، وكان يقرئ الناس بها حتى مات.

The recitation of Abu Bakr, Umar, Uthman, Zayd ibn Thabit, and the Muhajirin and Ansar was one; they recited according to the public recitation, which the Prophet (PBUH) recited to Jibril twice in the year of his passing. Zayd ibn Thabit witnessed the final recension and taught people according to it until his death. (Al-Burhan, al-Zarkashi, 1/331)

⁴ History of the Qur'an, Dr. Shehzad Saleem, pp. 1155–1156.

⁵ Al-Mustaghfiri, Faḍa'il al-Qur'an, vol. 1, p. 347.

Ibn Mujahid, al-Sab'ah fi al-Qira'at, p. 68.

⁶ Sharh Mushkil al-Athar, vol. 1, p. 263.

Asim ibn Abi al-Najud learned this recitation from Abd al-Rahman al-Salmi. Asim was known as “*Aqra al-Nas li-Qiraat Zayd*”, meaning the most proficient reciter of Zayd’s recitation.⁷ Hafs was a student of this same ‘Asim. Accordingly, Ibn Sawwar al-Baghdadi transmitted a statement of Imam Hafs regarding this matter:

قرأت هذه القراءة على عاصم حرفاً ولم أخالف عاصماً في حرف من كتاب الله تعالى. وأخبرني عاصم أنه قرأ على أبي عبد الرحمن السلمي وهي قراءة أبي عبد الرحمن التي أخذها عن أصحاب رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: عثمان وعلي وزيد بن ثابت وعامتها عن علي بن أبي طالب رضوان الله عليهم. قال حفص: فصحت القراءة على عاصم حتى لم أشك في حرف منها.

I learned this recitation letter by letter from Asim and did not differ from him in a single letter of the Book of Allah. Asim told me that he learned it from Abu Abd al-Rahman al-Salmi, which he had learned from the Companions of the Prophet (PBUH): Uthman, Ali, and Zayd ibn Thabit, mostly from Ali ibn Abi Talib. I corrected my recitation on Asim so that I had no doubt about a single letter. (Al-Mustanir fi al-Qiraat al-Ashr, 236-237)

Based on this, many scholars considered Asim’s recitation the most authentic regarding chain of transmission. Imam Tahawi cited Yahya ibn Aktham:

إن كانت القراءة توخذ بصحة المخرج فما نعلم لقراءة من صحة المخرج ما صح لقراءة عاصم.

*If the recitation is judged by the authenticity of its chain, we know of no recitation whose chain is as sound as Asim’s.*⁸ (Sharb Mushkil al-Athar 1/263)



⁷ Al-Mustaghfiri, *Faḍa'il al-Qur'an*, vol. 1, p. 347.

⁸ Taken from: *Mizan: Tawzīhi Mutala 'ab: Usul wa Mabadi'* (4), *Ishraq*, November 2025.

SALAT AL-TASBIH: IN THE LIGHT OF FIQH AND HADITH - 4

Dr. Muhammad Amir Gazdar

4. The Hadith of Umm Salamah

A hadith regarding *Salat al-Tasbih* is narrated from Sayyidah Umm Salamah. It is transmitted only in the following two sources of hadith and reports: (1) Abu Bakr al-Khatib al-Baghdadi (d. 463 AH), in *امالى الانكار فى فضل صلاة التسبيح* no. 26; and (2) al-Hafiz Ibn Hajar al-Asqalani (d. 852 AH), in *ذكر صلاة التسبيح*, no. 19. Apart from these two, the remaining sources of hadith and reports are entirely devoid of any narration from Sayyidah Umm Salamah in this chapter.

Textual Examination

This narration attributed to Sayyidah Umm Salamah is cited in al-Khatib al-Baghdadi's "ذکر صلاة التسبيح", no. 26, in the following wording:

عن أم سلمة، قالت: كان رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم في يومي وليلتي، حتى إذا كان في الهاجرة جاءه إنسان فدق الباب. فقال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: "من هذا؟" ف قالوا: العباس بن عبد المطلب. قال: "الله أكبير! لأمِّي ما جاء، فادخلوه". فلما دخل، قال: يا عباس، يا عم النبي، ما جاء بك في الهاجرة؟" ف قال: يا رسول الله، بأبي أنت وأمي! ذكرت ما كان مني في الجاهلية، فعرفت أنه لن يغنى عنِي بعد الله غيرك. ف قال: "الحمد لله الذي ألقى ذلك في قلبك! يا عباس! يا عم النبي! أما إبنه لا أقول لك بعد الفجر حتى تطلع الشمس، ولا بعد العصر حتى تغرب الشمس، صل أربع ركعات، اقرأ فيهن بأربع سور من طوال المفصل، فإذا قرأت الحمد وسورة، فقل: سبحان الله، والحمد لله، ولا إله إلا الله، والله أكبير، هذه واحدة، فقلها خمس عشرة مرة. فإذا ركعت، فقلها عشرًا، فإذا رفعت رأسك من الركوع، فقلها عشرًا، فإذا سجدت، فقلها عشرًا، فإذا رفعت رأسك من السجود، فقلها عشرًا، فإذا سجست الثانية، فقلها عشرًا، فإذا رفعت رأسك قبل أن تقوم، فقلها عشرًا. والذي نفس محمد بيده، لو كانت ذنوبك عدد نجوم السماء، وعدد قطر المطر، وعدد أيام الدنيا، وعدد الحصى، وعدد الشجر والمدر والثرى، لغفرها الله لك". قال: يا رسول الله، بأمي أنت وأمي! ومن يطيق ذلك؟ قال: "قلها في كل يوم مرة". قال: "ومن يطيق ذلك؟" قال: فقلها في كل جمعة مرة". قال: ومن يطيق ذلك؟ قال: "فقلها في كل شهر مرة". قال: ومن يطيق ذلك؟ قال: "فقلها في كل سنة مرة". قال: ومن يطيق ذلك؟ قال: "فقلها في كله مرة".

Sayyidah Umm Salamah reports: One day it was the Messenger of Allah's turn to be in my home. He was seated in the midday heat when someone came and knocked at the door. He asked, 'Who is it?' People said, 'Abbas bin 'Abd al-Muttalib.' He said, 'Allahu akbar—he must have come for some matter—let him enter.' When he entered, he said, 'O 'Abbas, O paternal uncle of the Prophet, what has brought you at this hour of midday?' He replied, 'O Messenger of Allah, may my father and mother be sacrificed for you: I recalled some deeds of mine from the Age of Ignorance, and I realized that after Allah none can benefit me except you.' Hearing this, he said, 'Praise be to Allah, Who has cast this into your heart. O 'Abbas, O paternal uncle of the Prophet, listen: at any time, except the times before sunrise and before sunset, pray four rakabs in which you recite four long surahs from the *tiwal al-mufassal*. When you have recited *Surat al-Fatihah* and another surah, say fifteen times these words: سُبْحَانَ اللهُ، وَالْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ، وَلَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللهُ، وَاللهُ أَكْبَرُ'. Then, when you bow, repeat the same words ten times; then when you raise your head from bowing, say them ten times; then when you

prostrate, recite them ten times; then when you rise from prostration and sit, at that moment also repeat them ten times; then prostrate again and recite them ten times; then when you rise from prostration, before standing up, repeat them ten times while sitting. By Him in Whose grasp is Muhammad's life: after this, even if your sins were as many as the stars of the sky, as many as the drops of rain, as many as the days of the world, as many as the pebbles of the earth, and as many as the trees, clods of earth, and particles of wet soil—Allah will surely forgive them for you.' Thereupon Abbas said: 'O Messenger of Allah, may my father and mother be sacrificed for you, who has the strength to perform such a prayer?' He said, 'Perform it once daily.' He said, 'But who has that much ability?' He said, 'Then perform it once every Friday.' He said, 'Who can do even that?' He said, 'Then perform it once every month.' He again said, 'But who is capable of even that?' He said, 'Then perform it once a year.' He said, 'Who has the strength for that as well?' He said, 'Fine—then perform it once in your lifetime.'

Isnad Investigation and Ruling on the Report

A major defect in both of the aforementioned chains of the hadith of Umm Salamah is that they contain a transmitter named 'Amr bin Jumay' al-Kufi. Imam al-Bukhari deemed him *munkar al-hadith*; Imam al-Daraqutni and a group of *rijal* critics described him as *matruk al-hadith*. Imam Yahya bin Ma'in declared him a *kadhdhab* (outright liar). Imam Ibn 'Adi stated that he was accused of fabricating hadiths. Imam Ibn Hibban said that he was among those who would cite reliable narrators' names to transmit forged reports and would relate "denounced" (*munkar*) narrations in the name of well-known hadith scholars; therefore, writing his hadiths and even mentioning him is impermissible—except that scholars may consult such reports during investigation in order to be alerted. It is also explicitly stated by Imam Abu Sa'id al-Naqqash and Imam al-Hakim that his narrations were fabricated.⁹

Accordingly, this chain-analysis establishes that—by the standards of transmission—this narration attributed to Sayyidah Umm Salamah in the chapter of *Salat al-Tasbih* is *mawdu'* (fabricated), and it is categorically impermissible to derive proof from it.

5. The Hadith of 'Abbas bin 'Abd al-Muttalib

A report regarding *Salat al-Tasbih* is also narrated directly from 'Abbas bin 'Abd al-Muttalib, appearing in the following five sources of hadith and reports: first, it is recorded in the fifth century AH by Abu al-Hasan 'Abd al-Rahman bin Yasir al-Jawbari (d. 425 AH) in "احاديث ابى الحسن الجوبى", no. 1, and earlier sources are devoid of it; second, al-Khatib al-Baghdadi (d. 463 AH) recorded two routes in "تاریخ دمشق", nos. 4 and 5; third, Ibn 'Asakir (d. 571 AH) included it in "التدوین فی اخبار قزوین", no. 6184; fourth, Abu al-Qasim al-Raf'i al-Qazwini (d. 623 AH) cited a route in "اماوى الادخار فی فضل صلاة التسبيح", no. 15 (3/249); and fifth, Ibn Hajar (d. 852 AH) recorded a route in "المسند", no. 631.

Introduction to the Text and Its Inconsistencies

The purport of these reports is that the Prophet encouraged 'Abbas to perform this distinctive prayer, and they describe its method and merit—largely as in the earlier narrations attributed to other Companions, with minor

⁹al-Majruhin, Ibn Hibban, vol. 1, pp. 499–500, no. 631.

Mizan al-I'tidal fi Naqd al-Rijal, al-Dhahabi, vol. 3, p. 259, no. 6006.

Lisan al-Mizan, Ibn Hajar al-'Asqalani, vol. 6, p. 196, no. 5788.

verbal differences. However, the texts of these reports from 'Abbas also exhibit disagreement and instability in certain respects, as follows:

- Contrary to the common narrations of this chapter, al-Khatib's "ذکر صلاة التسبيح", no. 4, transmits certain unique words, stating that the Prophet said on that occasion:
 فَإِنْ أَسْتَطَعْتُ أَنْ تَفْعَلْ ذَلِكَ فِي كُلِّ يَوْمٍ، وَإِلَّا فَفِي كُلِّ جُمْعَةٍ، وَإِلَّا فِي كُلِّ شَهْرٍ، وَإِلَّا فِي كُلِّ شَهْرَيْنِ، وَإِلَّا فِي كُلِّ سَنَةٍ، وَإِلَّا فِي كُلِّ سَنَةٍ
 (Translation of the Urdu rendering:) "If you can do so, then maintain this prayer daily. If that is not possible, then every Friday (that is, once a week). If even that is difficult, then once each month. If once a month is not possible either, then once in two months; and if you cannot manage that, then perform it once in six months; otherwise, let it suffice that you maintain it once a year."
- In "ذکر صلاة التسبيح", no. 5, with a slight difference, the following words are transmitted:
 أَرْبَعَ رَكْعَاتٍ فِي كُلِّ يَوْمٍ، أَوْ فِي كُلِّ جُمْعَةٍ، أَوْ فِي كُلِّ شَهْرٍ، أَوْ فِي نَصْفِ شَهْرٍ، أَوْ فِي نَصْفِ سَنَةٍ، أَوْ فِي كُلِّ سَنَةٍ
 (Translation of the Urdu rendering:) "Pray these four rak'ahs daily; or on Friday (that is, once a week); or at mid-month; or once in a month; or once every six months; or once every year."
- Whereas Ibn Hajar's "امالى الاذكار فى فضل صلاة التسبيح", no. 15, has the following wording:
 فَإِنْ أَسْتَطَعْتَ فِي كُلِّ يَوْمٍ، وَإِلَّا فِي أَيَّامٍ، وَإِلَّا فِي جُمُعَتَيْنِ، وَإِلَّا فِي شَهْرٍ، وَإِلَّا فِي سَيْنَةٍ، وَإِلَّا فِي سَنَةٍ
 (Translation of the Urdu rendering:) "If you can, then maintain this prayer daily; otherwise, once in a few days. If that is not possible, then every Friday (that is, once a week). If even that is difficult, then once every two weeks. If that also cannot be done, then once every month. If monthly is not possible, then once in six months; otherwise, let it suffice that you maintain it once a year."

In sum, regarding how frequently the Prophet emphasized performing this prayer, the statements found in the texts attributed to 'Abbas not only differ from other narrations in this chapter, but also display manifest internal contradictions and inconsistencies.

Isnad Investigation

A critical study of the chains of the aforementioned routes of the hadith of 'Abbas is as follows:

(1) In the chain of "احاديث ابى الحسن الجوبى", no. 1, the following defects are found:

1. It contains a criticized transmitter, Musa bin 'Ubaydah al-Rabadhi, whom the hadith authorities deem *munkar al-hadith* and extremely weak.¹⁰
2. A second transmitter is Sa'id bin Abi Sa'id al-Ansari, who is *majhul* (unknown) in the estimation of the *rijal* critics.¹¹

¹⁰ Tahdhib al-Kamal fi Asma' al-Rijal, al-Mizzi, vol. 29, pp. 104–113, no. 6989.

¹¹ Taqrib al-Tahdhib, Ibn Hajar, p. 236, no. 2320.

3. A third transmitter is ‘Atiq bin ‘Abd al-Rahman al-Asadi, whose status is likewise unknown and unrecorded among the *rijal* critics, that is, he too is *majhul*.
Hence it is clear that this route’s chain is broken and exceedingly weak.

(2) In the chain of “تاریخ دمشق”，Ibn ‘Asakir, no. 6184, in addition to the three defects just noted, there are two further unknown transmitters: al-Husayn bin ‘Ali al-Misri and Muhammad bin Hatim al-Bukhari. Their status is likewise unknown and unrecorded among the hadith scholars. Therefore, this route too is entirely negligible.

(3) In the chain of “ذکر صلاة التسبیح”，al-Khatib al-Baghdadi, no. 4, the following two defects exist:

1. It contains Abu Raja Mihraz bin Abdullah al-Jazari who, despite being trustworthy, is considered *mudallis*¹², and he transmitted this report with the preposition “عن”. It is a known hadith-critical principle that a *mudallis* narrator’s *mu‘an‘an* report is unacceptable and weak unless he explicitly states having heard it from his shaykh.
2. This Abu Raja transmits the report from Sadaqah bin Abdullah al-Samin al-Dimashqi, who is deemed weak, *munkar al-hadith*, and wholly unreliable. Imam al-Daraqutni declared him *matruk*.¹³
Thus it is established that, from the standpoint of the chain, this route too is entirely unreliable.

(4) In the chain of “ذکر صلاة التسبیح”，al-Khatib al-Baghdadi, no. 5, a transmitter named Hammad bin ‘Amr al-Nasibi appears, who is regarded by the hadith authorities as a liar who fabricated hadiths and is *matruk al-hadith*¹⁴. Hence this report too is extremely weak and negligible.

(5) In the route of al-Rafti’s (3/249), multiple defects appear:

1. The author ‘Abd al-Karim al-Rafti was born in 557 AH¹⁵, yet he narrates directly from Sulayman bin Yazid al-Fami, who died in 339 AH¹⁶—218 years before al-Rafti’s birth—so the brokenness of this chain is self-evident.
2. The chain also contains Abdullah bin Muhammad bin Abi Hudah, who is *majhul* among the *rijal* critics; and an unknown transmitter’s report is, by hadith principles, unacceptable.
3. The chain also contains Abu Raja’ Mihraz bin Abdullah al-Jazari, and he again narrates with “عن”;
thus, his *mu‘an‘an* narration remains weak and unacceptable unless hearing is explicitly affirmed.

¹² In hadith terminology, a *mudallis* refers to a narrator who conceals a defect in the chain of transmission of a narration, presenting it outwardly as correct and sound. See: تيسير مصطلح الحديث (*Facilitating the Terminology of Hadith*), Abu Hafs Mahmud ibn Ahmad Tahhan al-Nu‘aymi, p. 96.

¹³ Tahdhib al-Kamal fi Asma’ al-Rijal, al-Mizzi, vol. 13, pp. 133–137, no. 2863.

Tahdhib al-Tahdhib, Ibn Hajar al-‘Asqalani, vol. 4, pp. 415–416, no. 727.

¹⁴ Mizan al-I‘tidal fi Naqd al-Rijal, al-Dhahabi, vol. 1, p. 598, no. 2262.

Lisan al-Mizan, Ibn Hajar al-‘Asqalani, vol. 3, p. 274, no. 2741.

¹⁵ Al-‘A‘lam, al-Zirikli, vol. 4, p. 55.

¹⁶ Siyar A‘lam al-Nubala’, al-Dhahabi, no. 227.

4. The chain also contains Sadaqah bin Abdullah al-Samin al-Dimashqi, who is weak, *munkar al-hadith*, and wholly unreliable; Imam al-Daraqutni declared him *matruk*.¹⁷ On the basis of these four defects, al-Raifi's route is entirely negligible.

(6) In Ibn Hajar's “امالى الاذكار فى فضل صلاة التسبيح”, no. 15, in addition to the last two defects present in al-Raifi's route, there are two transmitters who are unknown among the *rijal* critics: Ja'far bin Muhammad al-'Attar al-Baghdadi, and 'Umar bin Khalid al-Raqqi. Therefore, by hadith standards, this route too is to be rejected.

Ruling on the Report

This investigation makes it clear that the attribution to the Prophet of the verbal hadith narrated from 'Abbas bin 'Abd al-Muttalib is not established through any single route. Those texts of this report which recommend performing this prayer “once in a few days,” “at mid-month,” “once every two weeks,” “once every two months,” or “once every six months” are *munkar* due to their divergence from other narrations of this chapter. Likewise, the instability and mutual disagreement found in certain texts points to its weakness and unreliability: that is, on the question of how frequently the Prophet urged 'Abbas to perform this prayer, the narrators' statements conflict both with one another and with the information found in reports attributed to other Companions.

As for the various chains, this inquiry also establishes that most routes are extremely weak and negligible, while the route in “ذكر صلاة التسبيح”, al-Khatib al-Baghdadi, no. 5, is *mawdu'* (fabricated). Therefore, it is categorically impermissible—on scholarly grounds—to cite the hadith of 'Abbas as evidence for the establishment of *Salat al-Tasbih* from the Prophet. This report is *munkar* and *muqtarib* in its text, and in terms of its chains it is *da'if jiddan* (very weak) and *mawdu'*.

6. The Hadith of Faḍl bin 'Abbas

A report in the chapter of *Salat al-Tasbih* is also narrated from Faḍl bin 'Abbas, transmitted only in two sources: (1) al-Khatib al-Baghdadi (d. 463 AH) first recorded it in the fifth century AH in “ذكر صلاة التسبيح”, nos. 6 and 7; and (2) nearly four hundred years later, Ibn Hajar (d. 852 AH) cited a route—attributing it to Abu Nu'aym's “كتاب الفربان” in his “امالى الاذكار فى فضل صلاة التسبيح”, p. 29. Apart from these, the remaining sources of hadith and reports are entirely devoid of any mention of the hadith of Faḍl bin 'Abbas in this chapter.

Introduction to the Text

The text of this report states that the Prophet encouraged Faḍl bin 'Abbas to perform this distinctive prayer, and it describes its method and merit with slight verbal variations—essentially the same as what has already appeared in most earlier reports attributed to other Companions.

¹⁷ Tahdhib al-Kamal fi Asma' al-Rijal, al-Mizzi, vol. 13, pp. 133–137, no. 2863. Tahdhib al-Tahdhib, Ibn Hajar al-'Asqalani, vol. 4, pp. 416–415, no. 727.

Isnad Investigation

(1) In the chain of “ذكر صلاة التسبيح”，al-Khatib al-Baghdadi, no. 6, the following defects are found:

1. It contains ‘Abd al-Rahman bin ‘Abd al-Hamid al-Ta‘i, whose identity and status are unknown to the *rijal* critics and hadith researchers; the standard biographical references are silent about him—thus he is *majbul*.
2. In the chain, this same ‘Abd al-Rahman transmits from his father, yet the father’s status is likewise unknown. Ibn Hajar says regarding both: “وَالظَّانُيُّ الْمَذْكُورُ لَا أَعْرِفُهُ وَلَا أَبَاهُ” “I do not know this Ta‘i, nor do I know his father.”¹⁸
3. Furthermore, in this chain ‘Abd al-Rahman’s father transmits from a narrator named Abu Rafi‘. Who this Abu Rafi‘ is, the *rijal* references do not clarify. Moreover, Ibn Hajar explains that he is not the Companion Abu Rafi‘ al-Qibti; rather, in his view this narrator is Isma‘il bin Rafi‘, one of the weak transmitters.¹⁹

It should be noted that the transmitter identified by Ibn Hajar is in fact Abu Rafi‘ Isma‘il bin Rafi‘ al-Ansari, from the generation of the *taba‘ al-tabi‘in*; it has already been mentioned earlier in the article that the narration attributed to Ja‘far bin Abi Talib is also transmitted through him. Many *rijal* critics considered him weak, and many hadith authorities labelled him *munkar al-hadith* or *matruk al-hadith*²⁰.

This also clarifies that, if Ibn Hajar’s identification is accepted, then—besides containing multiple unknown narrators—this chain is also broken: for how can a denounced (*munkar*) and abandoned (*matruk al-hadith*) transmitter from the *taba‘ al-tabi‘in* narrate directly from Faḍl bin ‘Abbas, when Faḍl’s death occurred in the eighteenth year after the Hijrah, or even earlier?²¹ It is therefore self-evident that this chain is *munqati‘*, indeed *mu‘dal*²²: between Abu Rafi‘ and Faḍl bin ‘Abbas the chain requires the explicit mention of two or more transmitters, who are not stated here. Isma‘il bin Rafi‘ narrating directly from Faḍl bin ‘Abbas cannot be acceptable in any way.

(2) In the chain of “ذكر صلاة التسبيح”，al-Khatib al-Baghdadi, no. 7, the following two defects exist:

1. It contains Faḍl bin Abdullah al-Harawi, who is unknown; no reliable accreditation is established for him, and the *rijal* references are entirely devoid of his identification.

¹⁸ Amali al-Adhkar fi Faḍl Salat al-Tasbih, Ibn Hajar, p. 29.

¹⁹ Amali al-Adhkar fi Faḍl Salat al-Tasbih, Ibn Hajar, p. 29.

²⁰ Tahdhib al-Kamal fi Asma‘ al-Rijal, al-Mizzi, vol. 3, pp. 85–90, no. 442.

Tahdhib al-Tahdhib, Ibn Hajar al-‘Asqalani, vol. 1, pp. 294–296, no. 547.

²¹ Tahdhib al-Kamal fi Asma‘ al-Rijal, al-Mizzi, vol. 23, pp. 231–233, no. 4738.

²² In the terminology of the science of hadith, a *mu‘dal* refers to a narration in whose chain of transmission two or more narrators are missing consecutively. Because of this break in the chain, it is regarded as the most defective type among narrations rendered weak due to discontinuity in the isnad. See: تيسير مصطلح الحديث (Facilitating the Terminology of Hadith), Abu Hafs Mahmud ibn Ahmad Tahhan al-Nu‘aymi, pp. 92–93.

2. It contains 'Abd al-Malik bin Harun bin 'Antarah, whom al-Bukhari called *munkar al-hadith*; Yahya bin Sa'id al-Qattan called *kadhdhab*; and al-Sa'di called “*a dajjal kadhdhab*.” Ibn Hibban said that he used to fabricate hadiths himself, and al-Daraqutni said that he lied in hadith, therefore he is *matruk*.²³

(3) As for Ibn Hajar’s final route cited in “*امالى الاذكار في فضل صلاة التسبيح*”, p. 29, via Abu Nu‘aym’s *كتاب الاربان*: it should be kept in mind that Ibn Hajar himself explicitly states (as mentioned above) that the Ta'i and his father are unknown, and that Abu Rafi' is also an unreliable transmitter; and by his own clarification the report’s being *mu'dal* has already been established.

Ruling on the Report

From the foregoing investigation it is clear that the attribution to the Prophet of the verbal hadith narrated from Faḍl bin 'Abbas is not established at all. The first and third routes are wholly baseless, extremely weak, and negligible due to unknown transmitters and a break in the chain; the second route is *mawdu'* (fabricated) due to a lying and fabricating transmitter. Therefore, in light of the science of transmission, it is not permissible to cite the hadith of Faḍl bin 'Abbas as evidence for establishing *Salat al-Tasbih*.

Moreover, the results of this investigation also bring to light an additional inconsistency in the report transmitted through an unreliable narrator such as Isma'il bin Rafi' al-Ansari: in some narrations he relates this incident from the Prophet via the Prophet’s cousin Ja'far bin Abi Talib, whereas in other narrations he reports it via the Prophet’s cousin Faḍl bin 'Abbas. This instability and discrepancy also indicates the report’s unreliability.

[To Be Continued]



²³ Al-Kamil fi Du'afa' al-Rijal, Ibn 'Adi, vol. 8, p. 366, no. 1452.

al-Tarikh al-Kabir, al-Bukhari, vol. 5, p. 436, no. 1423.

Mizan al-I'tidal fi Naqd al-Rijal, al-Dhahabi, vol. 2, pp. 666–667, no. 5259.

Mawsu'at Aqwal Abi al-Hasan al-Daraqutni fi Rijal al-Hadith wa-'Ilalih, compiled by a group of authors, vol. 2, p. 426, no. 2242.

A STUDY OF THE MUSNAD AHMAD - 4

Dr. Ammar Nasir; Dr. Muti Syed

Muti Syed: Abu Bakr Siddiq (RA) stated that the Prophet (PBUH) informed us that the Dajjal would emerge from an eastern region called Khorasan, and his followers would be of such peoples whose faces would resemble shields flattened with hammers (No. 12). Which peoples will these be?

Ammar Nasir: The description of peoples with flat and small noses is generally interpreted in the narrations as referring to the Turkic peoples. However, when other narrations are also considered, it becomes clear that the followers of the Dajjal will not belong to a single specific group; rather, groups from different races and religions will follow him. For example, in the narration of Umm al-Mu'min Ayshah (RA), it is mentioned that the appearance of the Dajjal will be among the Jews of Isfahan.²⁴ Similarly, other narrations specify that the emergence of the Dajjal from the East will occur among people from the Prophet's (PBUH) own Ummah, who will recite the Qur'an, yet it will not pass beyond their throats. The Prophet (PBUH) said that whenever these people attempt to rise, they will be suppressed, until the emergence of the Dajjal occurs among the remaining people.²⁵

Muti Syed: After discussion at Saqifah Bani Saidah, Saad bin 'Ubada said to Abu Bakr (RA), "You will be the Amir and we will be the ministers" (No. 18). Despite saying this, they did not pledge allegiance to Abu Bakr. What was the reason?

Ammar Nasir: No, this was the proposal of the Muhajirun, that the Quraysh would be rulers and the Ansar ministers. However, Saad did not accept this. The narrator here either summarized the matter very briefly or was confused in narration. Detailed narrations clarify that this proposal was generally accepted by the Ansar, but Saad personally did not agree with it.

Muti Syed: It is sometimes said that the matter of selecting the Prophet's (PBUH) successor was so critical that the Companions prioritized it even over the burial of the Prophet (PBUH). Yet, the events suggest that this decision was made in an emergency.

Ammar Nasir: That is correct. The situation was not such that the Companions intentionally prioritized the caliphate. The objection sometimes raised by the Shia that the Prophet's (PBUH) body was lying while the Companions were concerned with the caliphate is also incorrect. Abu Bakr and Umar did not even intend to take the pledge of caliphate at that moment; they went only to prevent the Ansar from rushing into the matter. It was a carefully considered decision to be made with consensus. However, when Umar observed the situation, he became seriously concerned that if the matter was left unresolved, there could be further disorder. Therefore, in an emergency, he applied his personal authority to ensure that Abu Bakr received the pledge so that the matter would not remain incomplete.

Muti Syed: Later, in the Musnad of Umar, there will be a narration stating that Umar Farooq cited the Prophet's (PBUH) appointing Abu Bakr to lead prayer as a proof for his caliphate, though Abu Bakr did not present this argument in his speech (No. 233).

²⁴ Musnad Ahmad, No. 24467

²⁵ Musnad Ahmad, No. 19808

Ammar Nasir: No, Abu Bakr did not claim caliphate for himself nor did he desire to be made caliph. Umar did not intend at that moment to have the caliphate election conducted, yet he was completely certain in his mind that Abu Bakr would be the caliph. His predetermined opinion was that no one else could assume leadership while Abu Bakr was present.

Muti Syed: Abu Bakr said regarding the Quraysh that the Arabs would not accept the authority of anyone else. This means it was purely a political matter. From a political standpoint, the Ansar also had weight; Islam's current authority was due to their support, so they had a greater right. Since the matter was political, not religious, the Ansar had the right to claim their political status.

Ammar Nasir: Certainly, the Ansar's position had political weight, and Abu Bakr and Umar did not deny their services or right to participate. The matter was indeed political, but a political matter does not mean their position could be ignored. The entire future process depended on this political decision. The question of who would hold power could not be dismissed merely because it was political. The establishment of a stable Islamic state, the preservation of religion, and the responsibilities the Companions had to fulfill all depended on it. In other words, it was not directly a matter of religion, but the religious responsibilities of the Companions depended on the leadership of a stable Arab government.

Muti Syed: On one occasion, Uthman expressed great concern before Abu Bakr that the Prophet (PBUH) had passed away and he had not asked him, "What will be our salvation?" i.e., on what basis will we be saved? Abu Bakr told him that he had asked the Prophet (PBUH) about this, and he said that salvation would come through the Kalimah, saying *La ilaha illallah*, which the Prophet had presented before his uncle Abu Talib, but he did not accept it (No. 20). Uthman's concern is not clear. Did he really not know on what basis salvation would occur? The Prophet (PBUH) had spent his entire life explaining this.

Ammar Nasir: No, his concern was not about the basis of salvation; the Qur'an and the Prophet (PBUH) clearly clarified this. The issue is that when narrators report events literally, the form sometimes changes. Other chains of the same event reported by Imam Ahmad clarify this further. Uthman was actually concerned about the whispers of Satan, wondering how they could be avoided so that the sin would not fall upon them. Abu Bakr told him that at such moments reciting the Kalimah of Tawheed was sufficient. This would either dispel the whispers or, at least, the person would have expressed their faith and be free of liability.²⁶

Muti Syed: Abu Bakr sent Yazid bin Abi Sufyan to govern Syria and advised him: "Yazid, you have certain relatives; it is possible that, being commander of the army, you might favor your relatives. This is my greatest concern regarding you" (No. 21). Did he fear nepotism? It seems that even during Umar's time, he remained a commander in Syria. Is there evidence that nepotism actually occurred, or was this a general perception?

Ammar Nasir: This was a general advisory given to anyone assuming office. Umar gave similar advice to six nominees for caliphate, warning each individually according to likelihood of appointment. Usman was told not to impose Banu Umayyah on the people; Saad was told not to impose his tribe; Ali was told not to impose Banu Hashim.²⁷

Muti Syed: Abu Bakr narrated that whoever commits a wrongful act will receive its recompense in this world (No. 23). This seems contrary to the full scheme of divine trial. If every bad act is recompensed in this world, then what of the Hereafter?

²⁶ Musnad Ahmand, No. 37

²⁷ Al-Tabaqat al-Kubra, Vol. 3 p. 319

Ammar Nasir: No, this narration was summarized briefly, causing misunderstanding. The full narration, also transmitted by Imam Ahmad, explains that when the Qur'anic verse was revealed: “*Not by your desires nor the desires of the People of the Book; whoever does evil will be recompensed for it*” (Al-Nisa’ 4:123), Abu Bakr was deeply concerned. Humans are prone to error; if every deed were recompensed in the Hereafter, it would be severe. When he raised this concern before the Prophet (PBUH), he explained that it does not mean every sin will be punished in Hell. Divine forgiveness can operate through worldly trials, distress, or suffering, which may serve as a means of purification.²⁸ The brief narration makes it appear as though all recompense occurs in this world, but the full context clarifies this.

Muti Syed: Did the Prophet (PBUH) explain this interpretation of the verse in the light of some other verses? Because, on the face of it, this clarification does not appear to be present in the verse itself.

Ammar Nasir: This is a good question. The method of atonement for sins that you mentioned was clearly explained in accordance with the principles set forth by Allah, which are mentioned in several places in the Qur'an. For example, in one verse, it is stated that even minor sins are forgiven through good deeds: “*Indeed, good deeds remove evil deeds*” (Hud 11:114). In another verse, it is mentioned that if the believers refrain from major sins, Allah will, out of His grace, forgive their minor sins: “*If you avoid the major sins which you are forbidden, We will remove from you your lesser sins*” (An-Nisa 4:31). Similarly, the Qur'an also refers to the fact that many of the calamities and hardships that befall humans occur as a consequence of their actions: “*Corruption has appeared on land and sea because of what the hands of people have earned, so that He may let them taste some of what they have done, in order that they may return [to righteousness]*” (Ar-Rum 30:41).

However, it should be noted that here the Prophet ﷺ is not actually providing a direct exegesis of the verse. The context in which the verse was revealed is not intended to indicate that every evil deed will necessarily be punished in this world. The primary purpose of the verse is to refute the notion that any religious group—whether the People of the Book or Muslims—enjoys immunity from accountability before Allah for their sins. When viewed alongside other similar verses in the Qur'an, this directive is essentially addressed to the Jews, who believed themselves to be the chosen and beloved people of God and thought that apart from a brief punishment, their sins would not be held against them.²⁹ By referencing this, Allah also warns the believers against holding the same misconception.

However, the wording of the verse led Abu Bakr and the Companions to understand that since Allah's law of accountability is so rigorous, every sin must indeed be punished. The Prophet ﷺ, in reality, was addressing their anxiety and providing reassurance, explaining that while Allah does indeed punish, human trials and worldly hardships also serve as a form of atonement. Therefore, this is not a literal exegesis of the verse itself.

Muti Syed: Abu Bakr delivered a sermon stating that the Prophet (PBUH) said well-being ('afiyat) is very significant after faith (No. 34). This sermon appears several times in his Musnad, in somewhat disorderly form, suggesting Imam Ahmad may not have revised the arrangement.

Ammar Nasir: Correct. The order was not maintained or there may not have been an opportunity to do so; both are possible reasons.

Muti Syed: A narration from Abdullah bin Abbas (RA) mentions that when the Companions began digging the Prophet's (PBUH) grave, Abbas (RA) sent one person toward Abu Ubaidah bin Jarrah and another toward Abu Talha. Abu Ubaidah followed the Makkah style of a straight grave, while Abu Talha followed the Madinah style

²⁸ Musnad Ahmad, No. 76

²⁹ Al-Baqarah 2:80

of preparing a burial pit (No. 39). The narrators are neither Abu Bakr nor a statement of his, so why was it included in Abu Bakr's Musnad?

Ammar Nasir: The full narration of Ibn Abbas includes that the Companions disagreed about the burial place. Abu Bakr narrated that he heard from the Prophet (PBUH) that the deceased should be buried where they pass away.³⁰ Imam Ahmad transmitted a portion of this narration. It is likely the full narration was intended or present in draft form but was not included; since Abu Bakr is mentioned in the full context, its inclusion is justified.

Muti Syed: 'Uqbah bin Harith reported that a few days after the Prophet's (PBUH) passing, he went out of the mosque after Asr prayer with Abu Bakr, with Ali (RA) also present. They saw Hasan bin Ali playing with children. Abu Bakr lifted him onto his shoulders and said that Hasan resembles the Prophet (PBUH) more than Ali does, causing Ali (RA) to laugh (No. 40). This suggests that personal relations between Abu Bakr and Ali (RA) were pleasant after the Prophet's (PBUH) death and Abu Bakr's caliphate. However, Sahih Bukhari reports that Ali (RA) did not pledge allegiance to Abu Bakr until after the death of Fatimah (RA). Once the attitude of the people toward Ali changed after her death, he sent a message to Abu Bakr to visit him at his house and expressed grievances before ultimately pledging allegiance at the mosque.³¹ This indicates a tense relationship between the two.

Ammar Nasir: Indeed, the incident with Hasan and other events do not support the idea of a prolonged personal tension between Abu Bakr and Ali (RA). There is also no evidence that Ali (RA) remained isolated from Muslim affairs or decision-making. Ibn Kathir cites the Hasan incident, noting that Ali performed prayers behind Abu Bakr.³² Other evidence indicates that he participated in consultation with Abu Bakr and the Companions. For instance, Ayshah narrated that Abu Bakr had decided to lead the army against the apostates himself and left Medina with the army for several miles, but Ali advised him not to go personally, fearing the disruption to the Muslim state if he were martyred.³³ This incident is also mentioned in other historical reports.³⁴ This occurred about two and a half months after the Prophet's (PBUH) passing, so it is clear that if Ali had not pledged allegiance by that time, such advice would still have been possible.

Historically, it is reported that Ali and Zubair (RA) were initially displeased at not being consulted regarding Abu Bakr's pledge but ultimately did pledge. Most historical narrations indicate this matter did not last long; some report it occurred immediately, others after one or two days. Ibn Saad, Tabari, Baladhuri, and others transmitted these narrations in detail. Only Ayshah's narration in Sahih Bukhari suggests that Ali (RA) refrained for about six months until Fatimah's death before pledging, giving it special significance. Some scholars like Imam Bayhaqi and Ibn Kathir have questioned this and, in light of other narrations, suggest that Ali's pledge was probably reaffirmed after Fatimah's passing.³⁵ However, Ayshah's narration does not seem to accommodate this explanation, though in light of all other narrations, her narration can be considered exceptional.

Muti Syed: In Ayshah's narration, it is also mentioned that Fatimah remained displeased with Abu Bakr regarding the Fadak issue until her death, and after her passing, Ali (RA) arranged her burial at night without informing Abu Bakr.

³⁰ Sunnan Ibn Majah, No. 597

³¹ Sahih Bukhari, No. 4241

³² Al-Bidayah wa'l-Nihayah, vol. 8, p. 189.

³³ Tarikh Dimashq, Ibn 'Asakir, vol. 30, p. 316.

³⁴ Al-Bidayah wa'l-Nihayah, vol. 6, p. 346; vol. 8, p. 189.

³⁵ Al-Bidayah wa'l-Nihayah, vol. 9, p. 417.

Ammar Nasir: Yes, this is also stated there, but this point is likewise not corroborated by other reports. The most significant difficulty that arises in this regard is that during the illness of Sayyidah Fatimah, her nursing and care were being undertaken by Abu Bakr's wife, Asma bint Umays, and it was she herself who bathed her after her death and made arrangements for her shrouding and burial.³⁶ It would therefore be quite strange that Abu Bakr's wife should be so closely involved and participate in the preparations for burial, yet Abu Bakr should have absolutely no knowledge of the matter.

That Sayyidah Fatimah was buried at night and that many people—especially men—were not included on that occasion is understandable, because she was extremely sensitive regarding matters of modesty (satr). The reports mention that she used to say that after death, when a woman's body is placed on a bier, the outlines of her body become visible to men as well, which she found very displeasing. Accordingly, at her own request, Asma bint Umays (RA) proposed a method she had seen among the people of Abyssinia: that the bier should not be flat, but rather that a cloth be stretched over it at some height, so that the contours of the body are not visible. Sayyidah Fatimah approved of this method and instructed Asma that after her death she should do exactly this and not allow anyone to see her body.³⁷

In light of this sensitivity on the part of Sayyidah Fatimah, arranging for her burial at night and not informing non-mahram men on that occasion is quite comprehensible. However, the claim that Abu Bakr was completely unaware of this, or that he was deliberately kept uninformed, appears highly implausible. Rather, in the same report it is stated that in accordance with Sayyidah Fatimah's instruction, Asma' bint 'Umays placed a cloth over her body, and when Sayyidah 'A'ishah came, she too was not allowed to see Sayyidah Fatimah's body. At this, Sayyidah 'A'ishah complained to Abu Bakr that his wife was not allowing her to see the body of the daughter of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. Abu Bakr went to Asma' and asked her the reason for this, whereupon she explained that it was Fatimah's instruction. Upon learning this, Abu Bakr told her to act exactly in accordance with Fatimah's instruction.³⁸ This report thus completely negates the notion that Sayyidah Fatimah was buried without Abu Bakr's knowledge.

Muti Syed: Maulana Muhammad Nafi', in his book *Rahma' Bainahum*, mentions narrations indicating that Abu Bakr also led Fatimah's funeral prayer.

Ammar Nasir: With regard to the funeral prayer as well, there are quite a few differing reports. Ibn Sa'd has mentioned them. In some, the name of Haḍrat al-'Abbas is mentioned; in some it is stated that Haḍrat 'Ali himself led the prayer; and in others there is mention of Haḍrat Abu Bakr leading the funeral prayer. On the face of it, all three of these figures are such that if any one of them had led the funeral prayer, it could be regarded as plausible. Haḍrat 'Ali was Sayyidah's husband, Haḍrat al-'Abbas was a senior elder of Banu Hashim, and Haḍrat Abu Bakr was the Caliph of the Muslims. However, determining with certainty who actually led the prayer is difficult. In my view, if arrangements were made for her burial at night due to Sayyidah's sensitivity regarding modesty (satr), then it is more plausible that Haḍrat 'Ali himself also led the funeral prayer.

[Continued]



³⁶ Al-Sunan al-Kubra, al-Bayhaqi, no. 7011.

³⁷ Al-Sunan al-Kubra, al-Bayhaqi, no. 7011.

³⁸ Al-Sunan al-Kubra, al-Bayhaqi, no. 7011.

HAYAT-E-AMIN - 28

Naeem Ahmad Baloch

After returning from Hajj, all of Mawlana Islahi's engagements revolved around teaching in the *Halaqah-e-Tadabbur-e-Qur'an*, preparing drafts of the Qur'anic commentary *Tadabbur-e-Qur'an*, and the monthly journal *Mithaq*. He was deeply satisfied with these activities. He was particularly pleased with the intellectual capacity of the students in the *Halaqah-e-Tadabbur-e-Qur'an* and the effort being invested in them. He discussed this in considerable detail in *Mithaq*.

From that article it becomes clear that he taught Arabic to the students using Imam Farahi's concise treatise *Asbaq al-Nahw*. Thereafter, he taught them a book prepared by Mawlana Hamid al-Din Farahi as an elementary reader. Along with language instruction, this reader trained them in the practical application of grammatical issues. From the very first day, the teaching of the Qur'an continued regularly, in which linguistic issues, the coherence of discourse (*nazm al-kalam*), and the interpretation of verses were discussed. After this reader, in order to advance further in literature, they were taught *Kalilah wa Dimnah*, and after that *Muqaddimah Ibn Khaldun* was begun. When the students started to understand the *Muqaddimah* well and read it fluently, he discontinued it and had them read *Hamasah of Abu Tamam* in its entirety. For further reading as well as for Hadith, he taught them *Sahih Muslim* by Imam Muslim. For jurisprudence, he taught *Bidayat al-Mujtahid* by Ibn Rushd. In this way, instead of being confined to a single school of law, the students became acquainted with all the well-known and lesser-known juristic opinions, along with their arguments. After this, he taught *Hujjat Allah al-Balighah* by Shah Wali Allah.

After teaching this curriculum, what his expectations and objectives were, he himself writes:

After this, in my estimation, there will no longer be any need to teach them anything lesson by lesson; rather, they will be able to study everything on their own, and they will themselves open up the paths of deduction and inference. This, indeed, is my objective. (Maqalat-e-Islahi, 1/324)

Since these students were modern, educated individuals, he wrote about them:

Along with possessing an Islamic mind and outlook, these students are, by the grace of God, Muslims in practice and outwardly as well. I have produced a new kind of 'mullah' who, God willing, will feel no embarrassment at being called a mullah; rather, they will take pride in it. Each one of them is also equipped with all the weaponry of modern education. If God so wills, they will prove to be a double-edged sword in the defense of Islam and in the struggle against atheism and irreligion. (Maqalat-e-Islahi, 1/321-323)

Mawlana's goal was that on this very principle, within a period of three years, he would prepare modern educated people to learn and teach religion, and that these individuals would establish similar circles in different cities, thereby generating a movement for learning and teaching religion.

This series continued until 1965. Then, in that very year, Mawlana was confronted with the greatest tragedy of his life. This incident shook the routine of his life to its foundations.

The Martyrdom of Abu Salih Islahi

It has already been mentioned in these pages that among Mawlana's three sons, the eldest was Abu Salih Islahi. Mawlana had a special affection for him. He had attached many hopes to this son of his. He chose the field of

journalism and had come to be counted among the leading journalists of the country. He was the editor of the most famous newspaper of his time, the daily *Mashriq*. On 20 May 1965, he departed for 'Umrah on a PIA flight. The aircraft crashed and was destroyed in the Egyptian city of Cairo. One hundred and twenty-four people lost their lives in it. There were also twenty-two journalists on board the plane, one of whom was Abu Salih. On his tragic demise, the condolence article written by his close friend and renowned journalist of that era, Agha Shorish Kashmiri, is perhaps unsurpassed in writing about Abu Salih. Through it, readers will learn all the details about him. This article is included in Shorish Kashmiri's book *Nau Ratan*. We present that article here:

“Abdul Majid Qureshi said: Shorish, meet him—this is Abu Salih Islahi. You wrote the editorial note on his article stating that God Almighty has opened for him the paths of thought and vision. The article under consideration is the result of his vast observation, deep study, and prolonged analysis.”

Abu Salih Islahi—?

I greeted him warmly with a handshake, even embraced him by forming an arc with my right arm around his neck, yet I could not believe that this was Abu Salih Islahi. Firstly, given his name, the image that formed was of an elderly man; secondly, considering what had emerged from his pen—from the maturity of handwriting to the blending of ideas—it was hard to accept that this youthful lad was Abu Salih Islahi. At that time, he was perhaps around twenty or twenty-one years old, but in appearance he looked sixteen or seventeen. He had a slender body; his eyes were both lively and bright; his complexion was clear; his face round and full; his tongue sharp; and in his gait and demeanor there was a trace of graceful charm—and thus began our friendship.

As time passed, the friendship deepened. Abu Salih began journalism with the daily *Tasnim*; he wrote for *Chattan* for four or five years. 'Qalam Qatl' was his special column—an invention of his own mind. He engaged in light satire, rarely targeted individuals, performed post-mortems on news items, or subjected those theories he found laughable to the edge of humor. He never struck below the belt; whatever he wrote, he wrote cleanly. He had a complete grasp of the temperament of satire. He understood well where the pen inflicts wounds and where it makes flowers bloom. 'Qalam Qatl' not only enhanced the beauty of his pen, but also became a distinct style.

When *Kohistan* was launched, he went to Rawalpindi as its editor. In place of 'Qalam Qatl', he began writing 'Aaj Ki Baatain'. When he came to *Mashriq*, he brought the title along with him. In short, his talent continued to mature in daily newspapers, until he became a complete editor. Whoever he targeted felt that something from the realm of literary elegance had occurred. Humor is neither abuse nor buffoonery. The virtue of humor lies in the fact that even the person being teased derives pleasure from it. Bitterness or sharpness should be only to the extent of the mild intoxication of a light fever. Abu Salih Islahi was fully acquainted with these subtleties and graces. His upbringing itself had been such that he was not accustomed to harshness in writing. He wrote in a conversational style, wrote extempore, and whatever he wrote, he wrote with measure. His writings were spared from extravagance of words and wastefulness of thought.

My association with him dates back to the end of 1948. We went through thick and thin together. When he moved to Rawalpindi during the *Kohistan* period, the daily closeness changed; otherwise, before that, his routine was to have breakfast at home, come to the *Chattan* office in the morning, and stay together until seven or eight in the evening. In those days, we ate and drank together. At noon, we would spend an hour or an hour and a half at the coffee house with Nizami Sahib (Hamid Nizami). In the evening, at Loring Metro or Keso's. In Hamid Nizami's circle of friends, there were three talkative individuals: Sheikh Khurshid Ahmad (former Law Minister, Government of Pakistan), Shorish Kashmiri, and Abu Salih Islahi. Sheikh Sahib excelled in verbal sparring; Abu Salih generally debated politics, sometimes with light humor.

When he began to reside permanently in Rawalpindi, the daily connection with Lahore naturally diminished, but whenever he came to Lahore every second or third month, gatherings would be held. Neither could he leave without meeting us, nor could we return from Rawalpindi without meeting him. He had relationships with others as well, but we were his true companions. In our view, he had only one flaw: he chewed betel. There was no blemish on his character. He was pure gold—clean youth, radiant prime. Averse to the rebelliousness of the self, his heart was a mirror; whatever he saw or read, he reflected upon it. We had roamed every alley of life and had acquired a certain sharpness of passion. Abu Salih was devoted solely to books. For him, matters of beauty and love were merely themes of ghazal poetry; perhaps he did not consider them things to be practiced by human beings. Beauty was present in his writings, but in demeanor he was entirely uninitiated. He had no sense of physical beauty at all, nor did he possess any poetic fervor. The saying ‘youth, therefore, falls’ did not apply to him at all.

At one time, Shaheed Suhrawardy (Prime Minister of United Pakistan) used to spend a large part of the day at the *Chattan* office. Since he had a taste for revelry and color, he did not hesitate to go to ‘that market’. After the day’s mental engagements, he would certainly seek recreation. But Abu Salih, despite mingling with us, never accompanied us to that alley. In other words, he had no interest in revelry, color, music, or song. During the period of compiling *Is Bazaar Mein* (Shorish’s celebrated book on the red-light district), he went along two or three times, but no more than that—since even on friendly journeys he had to pass through that one turn. He was unfamiliar with matters of union and separation.

Upon returning from America, he stayed for a few days in Germany. We were already there to attend the annual meeting of the International Press Institute. In those countries, it does not take long for a person to become exposed, but he had no inclination in that direction. He commented on everything—from the palanquin of the Paan to the bullet of Kennedy—but even among close friends, he would not touch upon immodest topics.

When *Mashriq* was launched from Lahore, he became its editor, but those informal gatherings no longer remained. Nizami had passed away; I was absorbed in my own engagements; and he was constrained by editorial responsibilities. *Mashriq* gave newspapers a new color and polish, which was impossible without constant labor from morning till evening. Nevertheless, we met daily—sometimes he would come to the *Chattan* office, sometimes I would go to the *Mashriq* office. What topic was there on which we did not try our hand? Like Nizami, he too sensed the suffocation of the surroundings and would say much in good humor, but he believed that an Islamic government would be of this very kind. He was always content, but after his marriage he became very content. Every kind of circumstance came upon him, but some of his habits were so refined that he had learned the art of living with contentment.

He was the capable son of a renowned father. From his father, Mawlana Amin Ahsan Islahi, he inherited two things: dignity without a trace of arrogance, and contentment that even great men lack. He had acquired this wealth at a very young age. When he graduated from Madrasah al-Islah, Sarai Mir, India was being partitioned. He came to Pakistan. His father was Vice-President of Jamaat-e-Islami; he himself also joined the Jamaat, but left it much earlier than his father. His mind always remained Islamic—owing to his early education and training, as well as his father’s influence and the home environment. He had immense respect for his father. The flippancy commonly found among journalists was entirely absent in him—it did not even touch him.

He studied Arabic, Persian, and Urdu at the madrasah; he learned English on his own, to the extent that he mastered even the most complex books. He learned writing from his father and became proficient within a year or two. Difficult words had no passage in his writings. He expressed his thoughts in simple, straightforward words, and whatever he conveyed, he did so with such excellence that it left an imprint on the listener’s or reader’s heart. He was perhaps the last young editor of his cohort who possessed foundational knowledge of Urdu,

Persian, and Arabic. He was thoroughly familiar with the classical literature of these languages. Easternness permeated his veins. Not for a moment did he surrender himself to Western civilization; rather, he made Western civilization submit to him.

He had no desire to go to 'Cairo'. He wanted to perform 'Umrah, and it was with this desire that he prepared himself. The State Bank officials kept him waiting until the last moment for foreign exchange. One day before he was to depart on the journey of death, he came to the *Chattan* office and chatted for a long time. I said, 'I will be present at the airport in the morning.'

He replied, 'Agha, what need is there for such formality? I will be back on the third day.'

It is my habit that I rarely go to airports or railway stations to see people off or receive them; perhaps it has happened only once or twice in my life. But that day, my heart repeatedly urged me to go. So, despite the intense heat, I reached the airport on time. He was ready to depart. Upon seeing me, he embraced me.

'Agha, you really took the trouble.'

'No brother, what trouble! I felt like coming.'

'I will be back the day after tomorrow.'

'My friend! What trust is there in this flying contraption?'

We embraced, and he went into the passenger room to board the aircraft.

The words slipped from my mouth, but at that time it never even crossed my mind that this plane was flying with the wings of the Angel of Death; that there was no return written in its destiny, nor in that of its passengers. The next morning, around eleven o'clock, Majid Nizami called to say that the PIA aircraft that had taken journalists to Cairo had crashed near Cairo—everyone had perished.

His images began to swirl before my eyes. The last embrace with Abu Salih Islahi came back into view. One image stood before me—his final image. Yes, handsome, wheat-colored complexion, large eyes, a dagger-like nose, a broad forehead; he used to wear an achkan, now he had begun wearing a suit. His height was slightly below average, though his build had grown fuller. Alas, these were not the days of his death, yet in the blink of an eye, they became so.

When Hamid Nizami passed away, he came from Rawalpindi to Lahore. The funeral procession was underway; he wept bitterly all along the way. It took a long time for his heart to steady. His health remained weak for several days. Since he was the youngest among all friends, we would often tease him. We would say, 'My friend! When we depart to God, be sure to write an article on our virtues and merits, do print our photographs—and if I am there, do take out a special number!' He would laugh and say, 'You are outrageous, brother! Where are you people dying yet—we have only just begun the journey of life.'

But he did not know that the journey he was embarking upon was the final one. He was not going to Cairo; he was going to the city of non-existence, and the mourning of his untimely death was destined for us.

'Alas, O death! If only death itself had come to you.' (165–173)

[To be continued]

THE RETURN OF JESUS: AN ACADEMIC REFLECTION

Aamir Iqbal Yazdani

Qur'an (4:157-158):

...and because of their claim: "We have killed the Messiah, Jesus son of Mary, the Messenger of God." – even though neither did they kill him nor did they crucify him; in fact, the matter was muddled up for them. Those who are disagreeing in this are afflicted with doubts about it; they have no knowledge about it; they are only following conjectures. They certainly did not slay him; in fact, God had lifted him up to Him. And God is Mighty, very Wise."

The Qur'an in Surah Maryam (Chapter 19) first details the miraculous birth of Prophet Yahya (John, peace be upon him) and concludes the passage in verse 15 with the divine proclamation: *"And peace be upon him the day he was born, and the day he dies, and the day he is raised alive."*

The same chapter narrates the birth and speech of Prophet Isa (Jesus, peace be upon him), culminating in verse 33, where Jesus himself echoes the same divine pattern: *"And peace is upon me the day I was born, the day I die, and the day I shall be raised alive."*

The identical linguistic structure used for both prophets indicates that both are being described in terms of their complete, divinely ordained life spans — from birth to death to resurrection. If one were to assert a return for Jesus (Isa), one would also need to propose a similar return for Yahya (John), who, according to Islamic tradition, has no prophesied second advent. The verse, therefore, suggests a completeness and finality in the life cycle of Jesus, as affirmed by the Qur'an.

Further, in Surah al-Maida (5:116-117), the Qur'an recounts a conversation between God and Jesus in the Hereafter, where God asks: *"Did you say to the people, 'Take me and my mother as gods besides Allah?'"*

To which Jesus responds:

"Never did I say to them anything except what You commanded me to — worship Allah, my Lord and your Lord. And I was a witness over them while I dwelt among them; but when You took me up, You were the Watcher over them, and You are Witness to all things."

This passage clearly shows that Jesus denies knowledge of events that occurred after he was "taken up" indicating that he did not return to earth following his ascension. If he were to return before the end time, he would logically be aware of the people's misattribution of divinity to him, which contradicts his statement.

God mentions in the Qur'an (3:55) that He shall protect Jesus from any harm and will lift him to Him after giving him death: *"At that time when God said: 'Jesus, I have decided to give you death and lift you up to Myself and I shall purify you from these who have disbelieved in you and shall grant your followers supremacy over these disbelievers until the Day of Judgement. Then to Me finally you shall all have to return. So, at that time, I shall give verdict on what you have been differing in.'*

Regarding the anticipated figure of al-Dajjal, Islamic tradition describes him as the "False Messiah" or "The Great Deceiver." The word Dajjal means a "Deceiver", "Impostor", or "One who covers the truth with falsehood." The Root Word comes from the Arabic root word: د-ج-ل (D-J-L). The verb *dajala* means: "To smear," "to cover," or "to coat with gold or varnish," especially to cover something false with an appearance of truth.

In classical Arabic, *dajl* was used to describe someone who falsifies, tricks, or covers reality with lies. For example, a camel might be called *mudajjal* if its skin is covered with tar to conceal defects.

So, "al-Masih al-Dajjal" literally means: "The False Messiah who deceives or obscures the truth." This linguistic root ties perfectly into the Islamic portrayal of Dajjal as someone who pretends to be divine, performs false miracles, and misleads people into believing he is the true messiah.

Narrated Abu Hurayrah: The Prophet (may peace be upon him) said: "The Last Hour will not come until ten signs appear: a landslide in the East, a landslide in the West, and a landslide in the Arabian Peninsula; the Smoke; the Dajjal; the Beast of the Earth; Gog and Magog; the rising of the sun from the west; and a fire that will emerge from the depths of Aden, driving people to their place of assembly." (Sahih Muslim, Hadith no. 7286)

This is an adjective meaning "a great deceiver". It has also been referred to as 'al-masih al-dajjal'. The implication is that before the Day of Judgement, a person will falsely claim to be Jesus (sws) and, while making use of the notion of the return of Jesus (sws) found in Muslims, Jews and Christians, will deceive people through some of his magical powers. It is mentioned in some narratives that he would be blind in one eye and his deception would be so evident to the believers that it would be as if they would see disbelief written on his forehead. I am quoting this Hadith both from Sahih Al Bukhari and Sahih Al Muslim:

Narrated Anas: The Prophet (may peace be upon him) said: "No prophet was sent but that he warned his followers against the one-eyed liar (Ad-Dajjal). Beware! He is blind in one eye, and your Lord is not so, and there will be written between his (Ad-Dajjal's) eyes (the word) Kafir (i.e., disbeliever)." (Sahih al-Bukhari, Hadith 7131)

Narrated Hudhaifa ibn al-Yaman: The Messenger of Allah (may peace be upon him) said: "The Dajjal will be blind in one eye, and between his eyes will be written 'Kafir' (disbeliever), which every believer will be able to read, whether literate or illiterate." (Sahih Muslim, Hadith 7375)

The Qur'an, however, does not mention Dajjal directly. These narratives arise from Hadith literature. As students of the Qur'an, it is crucial to approach such texts critically and always in light of the Qur'an, which is described by Allah as the Furqan (the criterion between right and wrong), the Meezan (the scale of justice), and the Muhammin (the guardian and protector of all other revelations).

The Qur'an talks about the personality of Jesus (peace be upon him) from many angles. It mentions his mission of preaching and gives details about his life in several places. The Qur'an also often speaks about the major events of the Day of Judgment. The return of such an important prophet from the heavens would be a huge event. Yet, despite many chances to mention it, the Qur'an does not refer to this event even once. This silence raises an important question: can human understanding be truly satisfied with such an omission? It's difficult to accept.

Thus, any external source — Hadith or otherwise — must be subordinate to the Qur'an and measured against its clear directives. The Qur'an remains the supreme authority in all religious matters.

Lastly, there is a pressing need for introspection among the Muslim ummah. Our current decline — morally, socially, and politically — cannot be rectified by speculative eschatological hopes alone. The romanticization of

an apocalyptic triumph through the emergence of al-Mahdi, the return of Jesus, or a decisive war is not only theologically ungrounded but also reflects a form of escapism. Islam calls for moral action, conscious faith, and personal accountability, here and now.

The Qur'an repeatedly reminds us that salvation lies in our conscious relationship with God, not in identity, sect, or ancestral legacy.



CRISIS MANAGEMENT

Dr. Shehzad Saleem

Life is seldom smooth. Every now and then all of us face crises of some sort or the other. These include death of dear ones, debilitating ailments, financial hardships, famines, wars, social anarchy, child and substance abuse. For once, we are jolted and life seems dark and desolate. There seems to be no way out. Such is the suffering we face that while some end up complaining to God, others forsake the concept of a merciful being.

It is on such occasions that each one of us must be equipped to handle crises. If we lack this ability, life will become even more difficult and desperation and despair will become our permanent companions.

Here are some suggestions that may help us cope with crisis situations.

Firstly, we must accept that everything happens from God because of a reason. In His grand scheme of things, we have been sent in this world for trial and test. Crisis situations test our mettle as to whether we are still thankful to God. It is easy to be thankful in smooth situations, but so very difficult when the going gets tough. Moreover, at the time of a crisis, we may not realize the reason concealed in it. However, many a time, we do realize that a certain crisis actually was a blessing in disguise for us. It is here that we must fully trust God and resign to His will. This attitude may earn His help in the form of a new resolve to combat the situation.

Secondly, crisis is a time to lend support as well as to seek support from our fraternity. It is a time that strengthens the human bond and makes us realize that we are part of a greater family. In other words, we must fall back on others to cope with this situation and as a result we will find ourselves stronger than before and more caring for one another. Crisis times thus bring us together and make us forget our differences. These are times that we must relish for this reason.

Thirdly, crisis times stimulate creativity and research. The faculties of people which operate in normal circumstances mostly produce normal results. A crisis calls upon them to use their extra reserves and delve deeper into their minds. This results in producing literature, art and scientific advancement at an enhanced rate. These phenomena in turn help us in coping with crises and bringing us out of this imbroglio.

Fourthly, it is a time to come closer to God and strengthen our connection with Him. The deeper the crisis the more prone we become in invoking His help and showing trust in Him. It nurtures and develops courage and resilience in us and makes us stronger and better than before. The stronger our God-connection the stronger we become in coping with crises.



SOCIAL CONDITIONS OF THE ARAB SOCIETY - 4

Dr. Khursheed Rizvi

Arab society, from the most ancient times, has consistently been divided into two distinct groups: the *Ahl al-Badw*, that is, the nomadic Bedouins, and the *Ahl al-Hadar*, that is, the settled population. In brief, they are also referred to simply as *Badw* (Bedouins) and *Hadar* (townsfolk). Additionally, the terms *Ahl al-Wabar* ("people of wool") and *Ahl al-Madar* ("people of clay") are likewise used for them respectively, since the Bedouins dwell in tents made of wool, while the settled people construct houses of mud and clay. References to these two groups are found not only in very ancient Babylonian, Egyptian, and Assyrian sources, but also in Greek and Roman historical records.

It scarcely needs clarification that this division between Bedouin and settled populations is not fundamentally racial, but rather economic and geographical. Wherever agriculture was possible through wells, springs, or rain-fed water, or where groves of date palms guaranteed economic subsistence, permanently settled communities came into being. However, since three-quarters of the Arabian landmass is uncultivable due to acute scarcity of water—and correspondingly supports little animal life, making pure hunting an impossible means of livelihood—the only remaining option was nomadism. That is, rearing animals and continuously moving from one place to another in search of pasture.

Most researchers are of the view that primacy belongs to Bedouin life, and that it was from among the Bedouins themselves that certain tribes chose to settle in fertile areas and thus assumed the form of *Ahl al-Hadar*. Consequently, the settled population is still identified in terms of tribes, which provides a trace of their Bedouin past. Evidence of this transition from nomadism to settlement is also found within the various intermediate stages of nomadic tribes themselves. Thus, between the Bedouin and the settled population, there also exists an intermediate stratum—for example, those Bedouins who, alongside animal husbandry, also engage in agriculture, and those who rear only sheep and goats and therefore remain closer to urban populations. In contrast, camel-herders are more independent, self-willed, and powerful, and are able to penetrate deep into the interior of the desert. These people represent a more intense form of nomadism. This journey from nomadism to settlement continues even today, and in the modern era its pace has accelerated. As a result, the class of camel-herders is steadily diminishing, and the majority of Bedouins are increasingly concentrating on the outer fringes of the desert and joining the ranks of sheep and goat herders.

Although this division between Bedouin and settled groups is, in principle, based on economic and geographical foundations, the difference in their ways of life is so fundamental that their cultures evolve along entirely separate lines. Their temperaments, ideas, modes of thought—in short, all the frameworks of life—are completely different from one another.

In the eyes of the Bedouins, who are steadily decreasing in number, settled life is a humiliating burden from which they recoil, and they are enamored of a free existence in the vast expanses of the desert. On the other hand, for the *Ahl al-Hadar*, the very idea of nomadic life is excruciating. They regard the Bedouins as ignorant and uncouth. Bedouins are inherently freedom-loving; no law other than their own tribal code can be imposed upon them. The settled population can be brought under obedience more easily, and among them the prospects for the formation of a state are stronger. In the life of the desert-dwellers, the primary point of reference is blood; land holds a secondary position. The concept of individual ownership of land does not exist among them; rather, specific

pastures or springs are considered the collective property of particular tribes, for which the entire tribe is willing to fight to the death. Among the settled population, although tribal affiliations persist as vestiges of the past, the reference to land becomes more prominent, and the concept of individual land ownership also emerges. The wealth of a Bedouin is measured in terms of camels and sheep or goats, whereas among the settled population, wealth is assessed through date orchards and cultivable lands.

There is little need to write at length about the life of the *Ahl al-Hadar*, since they represent agrarian societies with which we are well acquainted. However, it is appropriate to examine the salient features of Bedouin life, because the background of most of ancient Arabic literature is rooted precisely in the lives of these Bedouins.

It is a fact that the Bedouin possesses a deep emotional attachment to desert life and an aversion to urban civilization; nevertheless, it would be incorrect to assume that he merely seeks aimless wandering. In reality, his way of life is an entirely logical response to the demands of the desert. In the words of Professor Hitti:

“Nomadism is as much a scientific mode of living in the Nufud as Industrialism is in Detroit or Manchester.”

With regard to clothing, weapons, and certain other crafts, nomadism must inevitably maintain a connection with settled life. However, the Bedouin has always looked upon agriculture and craftsmanship with contempt, considering them unworthy of manliness. To obtain necessities from the settled population, he either engages in barter or resorts to raiding. Consequently, a combination of the trader and the pirate is found in his character. Raiding (*ghazw*) is both a necessity and a favored pastime for him. For this reason, inter-tribal conflict remains rife.

The Bedouin is at once extremely free and exceedingly bound. Individually, he is hot-tempered, honor-conscious, fiercely independent, blunt-spoken, and quick to anger. Desert life has never allowed him to become subjugated; hence, there exists among him a tendency to live boldly and without inhibition. Even a common tribesman’s meeting with the tribal chief (*shaykh/sayyid*) is not governed by formal etiquette. Yet, on the other hand, tribal unity is so vital that, like a beehive, the individual’s personal inclinations are rendered meaningless within it. Life in the desert is impossible apart from the tribe; therefore, under all circumstances, one must submit to every tribal decision, no matter how serious one’s personal disagreement with it may be. If the tribe disowns an individual, or if he kills a member of the tribe and flees, the earth and sky become constricted for him. Such a person is termed *tarid* (outcast). He is compelled to attach himself to another tribe, where he becomes a *dakhil* (outsider). If a slave is freed, he often affiliates himself, after emancipation, with the very tribe that freed him and is called their *mawla*; this relationship is termed *wala*. Besides a freed slave, any other person who does not belong by lineage to a tribe but becomes affiliated with it for any reason is also called a *mawla*. At times, an entire tribe may affiliate itself with a stronger tribe and be known as its *halif* (ally).

Among the Bedouins, the reference to blood is the most crucial, and like other Semitic groups, they attach immense importance to genealogy. The mention of “son of so-and-so” (*ibn fulan*) with every person’s name is deemed essential, and the collective lineage of the tribe is traced generation after generation. The tribe generally operates under a patriarchal system and is known by the name “Banu so-and-so.” However, according to Professor Hitti, the attribution of some tribes to female names also indicates traces of an ancient matriarchal system.

Due to life under harsh conditions, the Bedouin temperament exhibits roughness and abrasiveness; yet, at the same time, fidelity to covenants, hospitality, and delicate sentiments of love and affection are also integral to his nature.

The geographical aspect of Arabia’s isolation has already been mentioned in previous pages, as a result of which the pace of all kinds of change remained negligible here. The characteristics of Bedouin life outlined above appear in exactly the same form in the background of pre-Islamic literature, and even until half a century ago, there had been scarcely any difference in them. Bedouin society remained essentially the same as it had been centuries earlier. However, the influence of the modern age, owing to its scientific means and resources, is unprecedented in the whole of history. Although the representation of ancient Bedouin and settled characteristics still survives to some

extent in the vast deserts and small settlements, over the past forty to fifty years the pace of change has suddenly become so rapid that what could not change over centuries is now transforming before one's eyes. Since the discovery of petroleum, wealth has become widespread, and cities are replete with paved roads, luxury automobiles, air-conditioned houses, modern hotels, and contemporary facilities such as airplanes, telephones, and television. Dependence on dates has ended, and canned fruits, vegetables, milk, and meat are now readily available.

Even the desert-dwelling Bedouins—who were attached to nomadism and hostile to settled life—are becoming helpless before the mechanical age. The traditions of nomadism are rapidly disintegrating. Bedouins have begun sending their children to schools, and they themselves are demonstrating considerable proficiency in operating trucks, machinery, and modern equipment of oil companies. As a result, they are gradually contracting toward the desert fringes near cities and are beginning to benefit from modern medical care and, in some cases, amenities such as refrigerators and television. In short, those resilient desert traditions that remained intact for centuries, and through which it was possible even in the modern age to understand ancient Arabic literature with ease, now appear to be guests of only a few remaining days.

For details, see:

1. *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 1/872–892; “Badw.”
2. Hitti, pp. 23–29
3. *Geographical Factors*, pp. 38–54, 123
4. “The Nomadic Life Dries Up in Arabia” by Richard Covington, *International Herald Tribune*, 22 March 1997, still available on the internet, edited and distributed by HURINET (The Human Rights Information Network).

[To Be Continued]



PREPARING FOR THE INEVITABLE!

Dr. Shehzad Saleem

This life is but a fleeting story
Hands of death end our glory

One day we must go away
Short it be or long a stay

As sudden as a door chime
Death may come any time

Prepare then we must to depart
But before our heavens fall apart

Let's not leave our kin confused
Unsure, puzzled and bemused

About assets and money we may owe
And transactions only we may know

Files, bills and documents of lease
Records, passwords, codes and keys

So a memo we must write
In words black and white

A will also we should jot down
Of the wealth we leave around

So that they know what to expect
And carry on from where we left!



ZAKAH ON JEWELRY: WHAT IS THE RULING OF THE RELIGION?

Muhammad Hasan Ilyas

Zakah is an act of worship that requires the purification of wealth, the establishment of social balance, and spending in the way of Allah for His pleasure. After prayer, it is the most important financial obligation in Islam. Along with spiritual purification, it also serves as a means of ensuring the circulation of wealth. Zakah is a structured and regulated system of such spending, whose objective is not limited merely to helping the needy; rather, its primary purpose is to protect human beings from the trial of wealth and the potentially harmful effects of its love. Moreover, zakah also plays an important role in the stability of the social order. For this reason, Allah Almighty Himself has prescribed its law, so that there is no unnecessary interference in an individual's property and the state's financial system remains balanced.

The rate of zakah has been clearly fixed in the Shariah, leaving no scope for ijтиhad in this matter. However, the determination of the *nisab* and the concessions granted therein fall within the domain of ijтиhad. The issue of whether zakah is obligatory on women's jewelry is also one of these ijтиhadi matters, regarding which there is disagreement among the jurists.

Some jurists hold zakah to be obligatory on all kinds of jewelry, as is the opinion of the Hanafis. In contrast, according to the Maliki, Shafi'i, and Hanbali jurists, only such jewelry falls within the scope of zakah that is not in use and is kept solely for hoarding or investment.

This disagreement is, in reality, an example of differing ijтиhadi applications in determining the *nisab*, which has arisen in light of changing circumstances and the demands of different times. Contemporary economic and social changes have further enhanced the importance of this discussion. On the one hand, the affluent use jewelry to display and demonstrate their wealth; on the other, jewelry is no longer merely a means of accumulating wealth but has also come to be regarded as a symbol of cultural and social status. These very factors highlight the need for renewed reflection on this issue, so that the law and principles of zakah can be understood more effectively in a contemporary context.

It should be borne in mind that the fundamental condition for the obligation of zakah—upon which there is consensus among jurists—is that the item in question be *mal nami* (productive or growth-oriented wealth), that is, wealth capable of increase and investment. Accordingly, those jurists who maintain that zakah is absolutely obligatory on jewelry actually classify it under the category of “capital assets.” In this regard, the basis of their argument is primarily the hadith literature.

The reports attributed to the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) from which the obligation of zakah on jewelry is inferred are as follows:

1. The report of Ayshah (RA)

The Prophet (PBUH) asked whether she paid zakah on her silver rings. When she replied in the

negative, he said:

“These are sufficient for you for the Fire of Hell.” (Sunan Abi Dawud: 1558)

2. The report of Umm Salamah (RA)

“I asked the Prophet (PBUH) whether, if a woman possesses gold jewelry, it would be counted as *kanz* (hoarded wealth). He replied: ‘If she pays its zakah, then it is not *kanz*.’” (Sunan Abi Dawud: 1564)

3. The report concerning thick gold bangles

“The Prophet (PBUH) saw a woman wearing thick gold bangles and said: ‘Do you pay zakah on these?’

When she replied in the negative, he said: ‘Would you like Allah to make you wear bangles of fire in their place?’” (Sunan Abi Dawud: 1563)

Those jurists who do not consider zakah obligatory on jewelry used in daily life present various scholarly explanations in interpreting these hadiths, among which the following are noteworthy:

1. These hadiths are weak or not explicit

According to some hadith scholars, these reports are either weak in terms of their chains of transmission or do not contain an explicit statement establishing the obligation of zakah.

2. Specific applied instruction

According to the Shaf'i and Maliki jurists, these hadiths pertain to jewelry that is kept as stored wealth, whereas jewelry in regular use is excluded from this ruling.

3. No change in the fundamental principle

Some hadith scholars maintain that these reports were narrated to encourage the payment of zakah, not as definitive proof establishing its obligation.

The scholars who hold this inclination also find support for their *ijtihad* in those reports and narrations where the Companions and Successors themselves adopted this position. Some such evidences are as follows:

1. Jabir ibn Abdullah (RA): **لَيْسَ فِي الْخِلِيلِ زَكَاةً** “There is no zakah on jewelry.” (Daraqutni: 170; al-Bayhaqi: 7959)
2. Anas ibn Malik (RA): Zakah was not paid on his sister’s jewelry. (Daraqutni: 171)
3. Abdullah ibn Umar (RA): He did not pay zakah on the jewelry of his daughters. (Musannaf Ibn Abi Shaybah: 10399)
4. Ayshah and Asma’ (RA): The payment of zakah on their jewelry is not established. (Musannaf Ibn Abi Shaybah: 10398)
5. Imam Malik (RA): He considers jewelry among items of use and does not regard zakah as obligatory on it. (al-Muwatta’ 1/251)

A balanced and practical perspective

In our student-level opinion, zakah should not be obligatory on jewelry used for daily wear, because it falls within the category of personal necessities and has the status of non-productive wealth. However, if jewelry is kept purely as a store of wealth or for the display of social status, then its nature effectively transforms into *mal nami*.

Similarly, if jewelry is purchased as a secure asset (investment asset), with the primary purpose of selling it when needed, then it practically falls under the category of investment, and the application of zakah becomes possible.

If the quantity of jewelry is extraordinarily large according to prevailing social norms and its actual use becomes merely nominal—such as when hundreds of tolas of jewelry are given to daughters at the time of marriage solely to display status—then, as a precautionary measure, it would be more appropriate to pay zakah on it, so that a sense of religious responsibility and accountability with regard to wealth is maintained.

Furthermore, individuals who are financially stable and affluent and possess large quantities of jewelry would do well to ensure the payment of zakah if, under the state's financial system, they fall within the "high-income bracket." In contrast, in middle-class households, jewelry collected for the marriage of daughters is neither used on a daily basis nor fully at the owner's disposal; rather, it is preserved merely as a trust. For this reason, such jewelry should be considered exempt from zakah.

Along with this juristic application, the Quranic warning must always be kept in view, which cautions human beings about the consequences of becoming engrossed in the love of wealth and failing to spend it in the way of Allah. Allah says:

"Then give them tidings of a painful punishment—those who hoard gold and silver and do not spend it in the way of Allah. On the Day when it will be heated in the Fire of Hell and their foreheads, their sides, and their backs will be branded with it [and it will be said], 'This is what you hoarded for yourselves, so taste what you used to hoard.'" (Surah al-Tawbah 9:34)

Explaining this, the respected teacher Javed Ahmed Ghamidi writes:

After paying zakah, it is not forbidden to save money for present and future personal and business needs. However, if a demand for spending arises—whether from the creation or from the Creator—and a person refuses to spend, then the punishment is the same as that which the Quran has described thereafter. Imam Islahi writes:

"...It is this very spending that grants the treasure of wisdom and through which light increases in the heart. If, while accumulating wealth, a person remains indifferent to the orphans, the helpless, and the destitute in his surroundings, or becomes detached from the call to religion, the establishment of religion, religious education, and other works of jihad in the way of Allah, then he cannot be absolved of accountability and responsibility before Allah, even if he has fulfilled the legal requirement of his wealth." (Tadabbur-e-Quran 3/566)

JAVED AHMED GHAMIDI AND THE ETHICS OF UNSHAKABLE CALM

Abid Mehmood Hashmi

In the public life of religious scholars, temperament often speaks louder than arguments. Ideas may be complex and interpretations contested, but it is a scholar's emotional posture, especially under pressure, that reveals the depth of his intellectual and moral discipline. In this regard, Javed Ahmed Ghamidi stands apart in contemporary Islamic discourse for a quality that is both rare and consequential: his consistent refusal to become angry, even in the face of sustained provocation.

A Public Sphere Designed to Provoke

Javed Ahmed Ghamidi's intellectual journey has unfolded in an environment where disagreement is rarely courteous. His views have been challenged not only academically but emotionally—through accusations, misrepresentation, character attacks, and, at times, direct threats. For most public religious figures, such treatment produces a predictable response: defensiveness, counter-attacks, and a gradual hardening of tone.

Javed Ahmed Ghamidi's response has been strikingly different.

Whether in televised debates, public lectures, interviews, or hostile question-and-answer sessions, he maintains an unusual composure. His voice remains measured, his language controlled, and his facial expressions calm. Even when provoked deliberately, interrupted, mocked, or accused of grave deviations, he neither raises his voice nor resorts to sarcasm or denunciation. This is not accidental calm. It is disciplined restraint.

Anger as a Choice, Not an Instinct

What makes Javed Ahmed Ghamidi's calmness noteworthy is that it appears to be a conscious ethical choice rather than mere personality. He does not suppress anger awkwardly; he simply does not allow it to take control. His responses suggest an internal principle: that anger clouds judgment and corrupts dialogue, and therefore has no place in the pursuit of religious truth.

Unlike many clerics who equate emotional intensity with sincerity, Javed Ahmed Ghamidi demonstrates that conviction does not require agitation. He speaks with firmness when necessary, but firmness without fury. Disagreement, for him, is not a moral insult but an intellectual condition.

Knowledge Without Aggression

In religious discourse, knowledge often becomes performative, used to dominate rather than to clarify. Anger amplifies this tendency, turning scholarship into confrontation. Javed Ahmed Ghamidi's style resists this transformation. He explains rather than overwhelms, repeats rather than ridicules, and disengages rather than escalates.

Even when faced with bad-faith criticism, he does not attempt to “win” through emotional pressure. Instead, he allows silence, pauses, and careful wording to do the work that anger usually claims to accomplish. This approach unsettles critics precisely because it denies them the emotional conflict they seek.

The Cost of Calmness

It is important to recognize that such restraint is not without cost. In a culture that rewards outrage, calmness is often mistaken for weakness. Javed Ahmed Ghamidi has paid this price—misunderstood by some as evasive or detached. Yet this misreading ignores the moral strength required to remain composed when one’s integrity is questioned publicly and repeatedly.

Choosing not to be angry in such moments is not passivity. It is self-mastery.

A Quiet Challenge to Clerical Culture

Javed Ahmed Ghamidi’s temperament implicitly challenges a dominant clerical culture in which anger is normalized and even celebrated. Loud condemnation, aggressive rebuttals, and emotional absolutism have become familiar features of religious authority. Against this backdrop, Javed Ahmed Ghamidi’s calmness appears almost subversive.

Without explicitly criticizing others, his conduct raises an uncomfortable question: if one’s position is grounded in evidence and reason, why is anger necessary at all?

Beyond Agreement

One may agree or disagree with Ghamidi’s interpretations; that is an intellectual matter. But his emotional discipline belongs to a different category. It reflects a commitment to adab (ethical conduct) in disagreement, a principle deeply rooted in the Islamic scholarly tradition but increasingly absent from public religious life.

In this sense, Javed Ahmed Ghamidi teaches even when one rejects his conclusions. He demonstrates that religious discourse can be rigorous without being hostile, confident without being aggressive, and principled without being angry.

Conclusion: The Authority of Self-Control

In an age where anger has become a currency of influence, Javed Ahmed Ghamidi’s refusal to participate in emotional escalation is not merely a personal trait, it is a moral stance. It asserts that truth does not require rage, and that scholarship loses its dignity the moment it loses its calm.

His example reminds us that the strongest authority a religious scholar can possess is not the power to silence opponents, but the ability to remain unshaken by them.

If Islamic discourse is to regain intellectual seriousness and moral credibility, it may need fewer angry voices, and more unshakable calm.



NEWSLETTER - AL-MAWRID US

ANNUAL GENERAL BODY MEETING OF AL-MAWRID US

Last month in Dallas, the ninth annual meeting of the General Body of Al Mawrid US was held over two days. Along with a large number of General Body members, attendees from across the United States also participated. The Secretary of Al Mawrid US America, Muhammad Idris Mohsin, invited the Chair of the Board, Mukaram Aziz, to deliver the inaugural address at the opening session. On behalf of the Board, he welcomed the participants and expressed, on his own behalf and that of the Board, a firm commitment to work energetically for the institution's growth and development. Mukarram Aziz and Javed Roshan also presented a detailed report on the organization's financial affairs for the year 2025. After presenting the annual performance report of the institution, the Executive Director of Al-Mawrid US, Farhan Saiyed, outlined work undertaken in relation to online educational courses, AI dubbing, English-language content, and the publication and sale of books. Thereafter, Education Committee member Atif Sajid presented the annual educational performance report regarding the Sunday School. Umair Ajmal provided details concerning IT-related matters.

Muhammad Hasan Ilyas, Director of Research and Communication at the Ghamidi Center of Islamic Learning, after outlining the institution's aims, objectives, and strategy, also reported on activities carried out over the past year in relation to journals; the preparation of books in Urdu, English, and Arabic; the recording of scholars' programs; digital content; social media; websites; audiobooks; and documentaries. He stated that, beyond Urdu and English, the Ghamidi Center has now initiated these knowledge-dissemination activities in Arabic and Bengali as well. Javed Ahmed Ghamidi commended the work of those affiliated with Al Mawrid US, offered prayers for them, and provided the institution with scholarly and intellectual guidance.

COMPLETION OF “IN RESPONSE TO 23 OBJECTIONS TO JAVED AHMED GHAMIDI’S THOUGHT”

A major scholarly and intellectual project organized under the Ghamidi Center of Islamic Learning (al-Mawrid America) over the past six years—“In Response to 23 Objections to Javed Ahmed Ghamidi’s Thought”—has now been completed. In this extended series, all of the traditional objections commonly raised against Javed Ahmed Ghamidi’s ideas and his religious interpretations have been subjected to systematic scholarly examination. Muhammad Hasan Ilyas presented each objection before Javed Ahmed Ghamidi with care and attention to detail, and Javed Ahmed Ghamidi responded with extensive, evidence-based scholarly arguments. This body of material comprises 215 episodes and encompasses a total of 23 objections. For the convenience of viewers with intellectual and research interests, all episodes have been made available on the Ghamidi Center’s YouTube channel.

ISLAM HUB

The Ghamidi Center has launched a comprehensive scholarly project titled “Islam Hub,” expected to be completed over the next two to three years. Under this larger initiative, two major outputs have emerged thus far: (1) an English translation of Javed Ahmed Ghamidi’s book “al-Islam,” produced with the assistance of modern technology and available on the institution’s website; and (2) a chart titled “Islam Atlas” that presents the entire structure of religion in the form of a tree. This chart can be purchased from the Ghamidi Center’s website for display in homes, and it is intended to be developed in the future into a digital application. In that form, by clicking on any topic, a user would not only reach Javed Ahmed Ghamidi’s books and the relevant Quranic verses and Hadith reports, but would also gain direct access to the complete body of scholarly material

available on the selected topic. The overall system will also include components such as “Meezan Hub” and “Quran Hub,” which, through integration, are meant to facilitate understanding of religion more effectively.

INTERFAITH DIALOGUE

In December 2025, Dr. Charles Ramsey, a distinguished American scholar and advocate of interfaith dialogue, visited the Ghamidi Center in Dallas. On this occasion, in a session titled “Interfaith Dialogue” with Muhammad Hasan Ilyas, he spoke at length about his family background, academic journey, tasawwuf, and the Christian world’s perceptions of Islam. Dr. Ramsey also shared reflections on Pakistani hospitality and issues such as extremism in Islam. At the conclusion of the program, he described Javed Ahmed Ghamidi as an excellent teacher, noting that Javed Ahmed Ghamidi’s reasoned responses consistently impress him. The recording of this session can be viewed on the Ghamidi Center’s YouTube channel.

IJTIHADI APPLICATIONS

Last month, within the ongoing video series on the “23 Objections” organized by the Ghamidi Center, the topic “Ijtihadi Applications” was discussed. These sessions examined Javed Ahmed Ghamidi’s ijtihadi applications to date, as well as scholarly critiques directed at them. In sessions held under this theme, he presented arguments supporting his positions on issues including making up missed fasts, a grandson’s inheritance, politics and the state, the right to bequeath, and determining the waiting period (*iddah*). These sessions can be viewed on the Ghamidi Center’s YouTube channel.

THE GHAMIDI CENTER’S FIRST ANNUAL MUSHAIRAH

Under the auspices of Al Mawrid US, the first annual Mushairah was held at the Ghamidi Center in Dallas, where approximately eighteen distinguished poets from the city presented their work. The presiding poet was the well-known Dallas poet Tariq Hashmi. The program began with dinner, followed by the poetic gathering. During the Mushairah, Muhammad Hasan Ilyas recited Javed Ahmed Ghamidi’s poetry, while Farhan Saiyed, Executive Director of Al Mawrid US, recited, among other pieces, his well-known poem “Jawabi Bayaniyah” (“The Counter-Narrative”). At the conclusion, the presiding poet Tariq Hashmi delivered his presidential address and recited his own poetry, receiving appreciation from the audience. A large audience attended, and participants described it as a memorable Mushairah in Dallas’s literary history, warmly commending Al Mawrid US’s scholarly and literary sensibility. The recording is available on the Ghamidi Center’s YouTube channel.

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE GUIDANCE OF NATURE AND THE GUIDANCE OF THE PROPHETS

This article by Manzoor ul Hasan is drawn from Javed Ahmed Ghamidi’s discourse. It presents his view regarding the relationship between natural guidance and prophetic guidance: that religion is not an external imposition, but rather the manifestation of human nature itself, within which God has embedded foundational guidance concerning good and evil from the very beginning. The purpose of the prophets’ mission is to provide detailed articulation of that concise natural guidance and to adjudicate intellectual disagreements that arise among human beings. Those to whom the prophetic call did not reach will also be held accountable on the Day of Judgment on the basis of their innate guidance. This article can be read in last month’s issue of “Ishraq” America.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS WITH HASSAN ILYAS

On the well-known YouTube channel “Muslim Today,” Muhammad Hasan Ilyas’s program “Ask Hassan Ilyas” continues. This is a question-and-answer format in which he responds to scholarly, intellectual, and

religious questions posed by attendees. In December 2025, some prominent questions included: “How do you view the debate between atheism and religion?”, “How can we know that the universe is created?”, “How can we know that the Quran is truly God’s word?”, and “What evidence do we have that God is the Creator?” The recording is available on the Ghamidi Center’s YouTube channel.

ISTIFSAR: WITH DR. AMMAR KHAN NASIR

A new question-and-answer series titled “Istifsar: With Dr. Ammar Khan Nasir” has been launched on the Ghamidi Center platform. In this program, the Center’s scholar Dr. Ammar Khan Nasir responds to intellectual and scholarly questions. Among the key questions asked in December 2025 were: “What is the status of Hadith?”, “What is meant by Ahl al-Bayt?”, and “Is the witr prayer obligatory?” Recordings can be viewed on the Ghamidi Center’s YouTube channel.

ASK GHAMIDI

This is an online question-and-answer session intended to enable people to obtain direct responses from Javed Ahmed Ghamidi to questions that arise in their minds concerning religious and ethical topics. Each month a large number of people participate. In December 2025, some notable questions included: “What is the punishment for a false claimant to prophethood?”, “What is the reality of finality of prophethood?”, “How should verse 2 of Surah al-Talaq be explained?”, and “How can the Quran be understood with attention to context?” Recordings are available on the Ghamidi Center’s YouTube channel.

WEEKLY LESSONS ON THE QURAN AND HADITH

In December 2025, during the ongoing live Quran and Hadith lessons organized by the Ghamidi Center, Javed Ahmed Ghamidi taught Quran 22:71–78 (Surah al-Hajj) and Quran 23:1–43 (Surah al-Muminun). In the Hadith lessons, discussion focused on reports concerning the Prophet’s dreams. Key points included the virtues of ablution; the importance of purity, charity, prayer, and the Quran; prophecies concerning the descent of the Messiah and the Dajjal; and an account of a Companion seeing himself in Paradise. These sessions can be viewed on the Ghamidi Center’s YouTube channel.

AFKAR-E-GHAMIDI

“Afkar-e-Ghamidi” is a weekly program broadcast on YouTube by Manzoor ul Hassan in which Javed Ahmed Ghamidi’s ideas are explained in an accessible manner. In December 2025, topics discussed included “Ten injunctions regarding bodily cleanliness,” “Why were acts of worship made obligatory?”, and “Five principles of Muslim politics.” Recordings are available on the Ghamidi Center’s YouTube channel.

TAFHIM AL-ATHAR SERIES

Under the auspices of the Ghamidi Center, a program titled “Tafhim al-Athar” is being recorded, featuring explanation of reports from the Companions and the Successors, along with question-and-answer sessions based on selected narrations. The program is hosted by Dr. Syed Mutee-ur-Rahman, with Dr. Ammar Khan Nasir participating as a guest. In December 2025, sessions addressed topics such as “Abu Bakr and the transmission of Hadith,” “Umar and the transmission of Hadith,” “Uthman and the transmission of Hadith,” and “The ruling on esoteric interpretation among the Sufis.” Recordings can be viewed on the Ghamidi Center’s YouTube channel.

SALAH AL-TASBIH: IN THE LIGHT OF FIQH AND HADITH

In the monthly journal “Ishraq America,” a research article by the Ghamidi Center’s scholar Dr. Aamir Gazdar is being published in parts, offering a technical evaluation of the narrations concerning Salah al-Tasbih and

examining its legal status. The author clarifies scholarly and juristic disagreements regarding the prayer's legitimacy and presents his position in light of Hadith studies. The installment published in December 2025 states that Hadith compilations contain only verbal reports regarding Salah al-Tasbih, whereas no action-based report attributed to the Prophet exists demonstrating that he ever performed this prayer. In addition, the verbal reports on this topic are subjected to a critical investigative study in light of Hadith methodology.

AN ENGLISH SUMMARY OF “ITMAM AL-HUJJAH”

In the “23 Objections” video series, Dr. Shehzad Saleem has been presenting English summaries of all topics discussed thus far. In December 2025, he summarized the topic “Itmam al-Hujjah” as it was addressed within the series. Recordings are available on the Ghamidi Center’s YouTube channel.

MAULANA AMIN AHSAN ISLAHI’S INTELLECTUAL AND EDUCATIONAL SERVICES AND HIS PROGRAM OF ACTION

In the episode of “Hayat-e-Amin” published last month, Maulana Islahi’s intellectual and educational contributions and his program of action are discussed. Naeem Ahmad Baloch writes that through the journal “Mithaq,” Maulana Islahi emphasized the need for political stability in the country and underscored the harms of electoral politics for religious parties, identifying the revival of constructive religious consciousness as the primary goal. Under a comprehensive initiative for the “Protection of Religion,” he proposed establishing educational institutions and research centers where the integration of modern and classical sciences could enable the intellectual formation of youth so that they might contribute to the moral reform of society. In order to keep his full focus on scholarly and exegetical work, he declined new organizational formation, and through “Halaqah Tadabbur-e-Quran,” he initiated a successful experiment of directly teaching the Quran and Hadith to the modern educated class.

FAITH AND DOCTRINES

Under the “Meezan Lectures Series,” Dr. Shehzad Saleem is teaching Javed Ahmed Ghamidi’s book “Meezan” in English so that English-speaking audiences may benefit from it. In December 2025, he recorded two lectures on “Faith and Doctrines.” These lectures are available on the Ghamidi Center’s YouTube channel.

THE GHAMIDI CENTER’S ONLINE KHANQAH

Within the ongoing online khanqah organized by the Ghamidi Center, Moiz Amjad conducts a weekly session focused on self-reform, addressing various themes related to moral and spiritual training and responding to participants’ questions. In last month’s sessions, prominent themes included maintaining expectations while treating others well, human consciousness and self-awareness, the meaning of *tawakkul* and *tafwid*, and strengthening one’s faith while confronting life’s challenges. Recordings are available on the Ghamidi Center’s YouTube channel.

ISLAM STUDY CIRCLE

Dr. Shehzad Saleem holds a monthly session titled “Islam Study Circle,” in which he discusses diverse religious, ethical, and social topics in the light of the Quran and Hadith. The session consists of three parts: first, clarification of a topic selected from Quranic verses; second, discussion of selected Prophetic Hadith reports; and third, engagement with an excerpt from the Bible. At the end, questions related to the topic are addressed. The recording is available on the institution’s YouTube channel.

ILM O HIKMAT: WITH GHAMIDI

“Ilm o Hikmat: With Ghamidi” is a well-known program on Dunya News (Pakistan) that has been broadcast

for many years. It is recorded in Dallas and aired weekly. Hosting duties are performed by Hassan Ilyas, Director of Research and Communication at the Ghamidi Center. In December 2025, four programs were recorded and broadcast on Dunya News under the title “Principles for Reflection on Religion.” Recordings are available on the institution’s YouTube channel.

DR. SHEHZAD SALEEM’S ONLINE PRIVATE CONSULTATION SESSIONS

Dr. Shehzad Saleem arranges monthly online private consultation sessions in which participants seek guidance on personal and family matters. Last month, more than thirty sessions were held, in which participants consulted him regarding challenges faced by parents and the resolution of adolescent issues.

ISSUANCE OF FATWAS BASED ON RELIGIOUS OPINIONS

With regard to applied legal questions of the Shariah, people frequently contact the “Ghamidi Center of Islamic Learning, al-Mawrid America.” They seek applied guidance on matters such as marriage and divorce, inheritance, and other economic and social dimensions. Last month, multiple fatwas of this nature were issued in response to these needs, issued by Muhammad Hassan Ilyas in light of Javed Ahmed Ghamidi’s thought.

TEACHING AL-BAYAN IN ENGLISH

Continuing the series of English instruction on Javed Ahmed Ghamidi’s Quranic exegesis “al-Bayan,” Dr. Shehzad Saleem presented, in December 2025, a lesson on Quran 7:1–30 (Surah al-Araf). This initiative is being undertaken so that scholars and students proficient in English may also benefit from “al-Bayan.” Video recordings are available on the Ghamidi Center’s YouTube channel.

ASK DR. SHEHZAD SALEEM

Dr. Shehzad Saleem holds a monthly live question-and-answer session in which he responds to a wide range of religious, ethical, and social questions. Participants may ask questions in both Urdu and English. Recordings of these sessions can be viewed on the Ghamidi Center’s YouTube channel.

