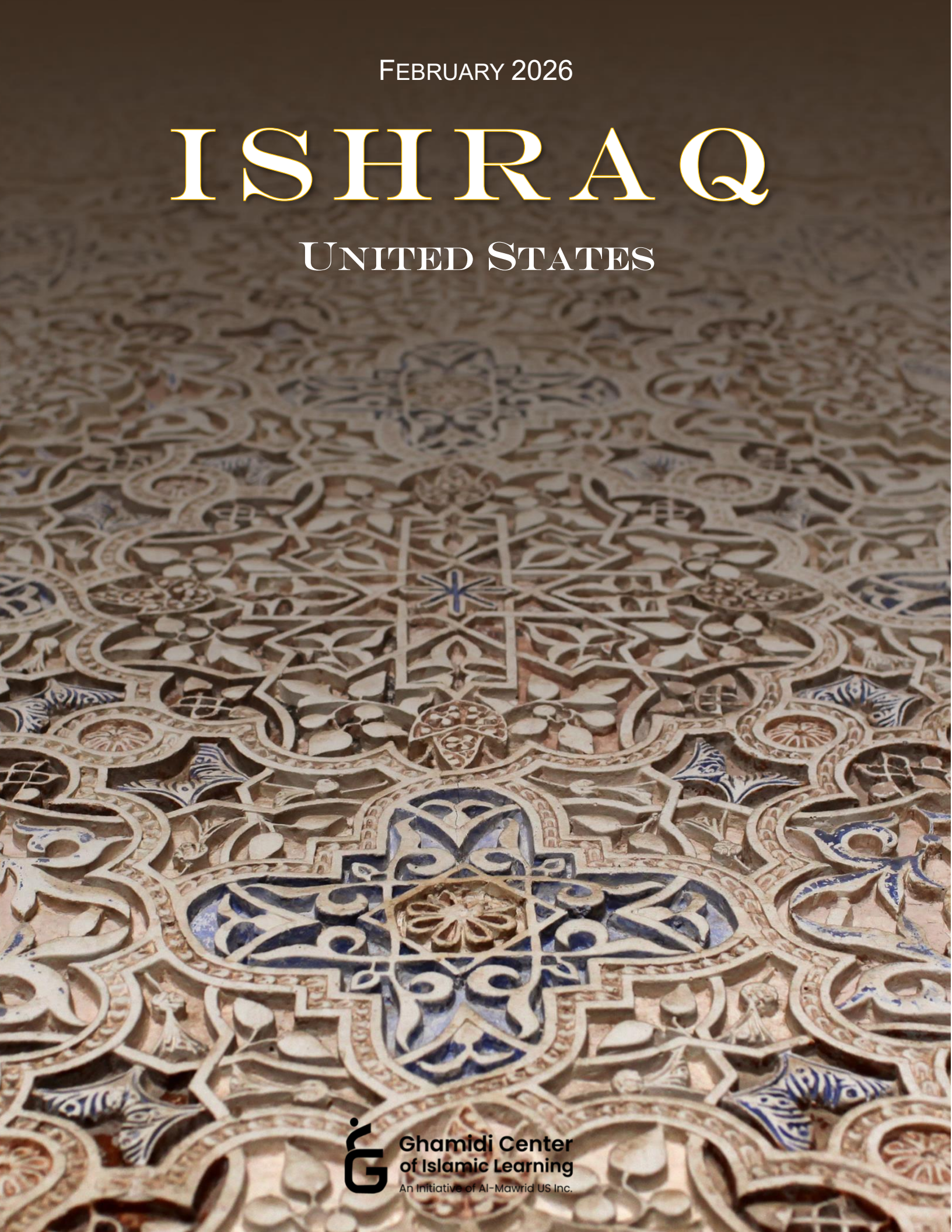


FEBRUARY 2026

# ISHRAQ

UNITED STATES



**Ghamidi Center  
of Islamic Learning**  
An Initiative of Al-Mawrid US Inc.

FEBRUARY 2026

# ISHRAQ

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## FASTING

Javed Ahmed Ghamidi

بِأَيِّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا، كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمُ الصِّيَامُ كَمَا كُتِبَ عَلَى الَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ. أَيَّامًا مَّعْدُودَاتٍ، فَمَن كَانَ مِنكُم مَّرِيضًا أَوْ عَلَى سَفَرٍ فَعِدَّةٌ مِّنْ أَيَّامٍ أُخَرَ، وَعَلَى الَّذِينَ يُطِيقُونَهُ فِدْيَةٌ طَعَامُ مِسْكِينٍ، فَمَن تَطَوَّعَ خَيْرًا فَهُوَ خَيْرٌ لَّهِ، وَأَن تَصُومُوا خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ، إِن كُنتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ. شَهْرُ رَمَضَانَ الَّذِي أُنزِلَ فِيهِ الْقُرْآنُ، هُدًى لِّلنَّاسِ، وَبَيِّنَاتٍ مِّنَ الْهُدَى وَالْفُرْقَانِ، فَمَن شَهِدَ مِنكُمُ الشَّهْرَ فَلْيَصُمْهُ، وَمَن كَانَ مَرِيضًا أَوْ عَلَى سَفَرٍ فَعِدَّةٌ مِّنْ أَيَّامٍ أُخَرَ. يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ بِكُمُ الْيُسْرَ وَلَا يُرِيدُ بِكُمُ الْعُسْرَ، وَلِتُكْمِلُوا الْعِدَّةَ، وَلِتُكَبِّرُوا اللَّهَ عَلَى مَا هَدَاكُمْ، وَلَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُونَ.

*[These are the limits set by God and only they cannot cross them who fear Him; therefore,] Believers! The fast has been made obligatory upon you as it was made obligatory upon those before you so that you become fearful of God. These are but a few days; yet if any one among you is ill or on a journey, let him complete this count in other days; and those who have the capacity to feed a needy, they must feed a needy in place of every fast. Then he who does a virtuous deed out of his own desire, it is better for him and if you fast, then this is even better for you if you have understanding. It is the month of Ramadan in which the Quran was revealed, as a book replete with guidance for mankind and in the form of extremely manifest arguments which [by their nature] are guidance and also a means of distinguishing right from wrong. Therefore, whoever among you is present in this month, he should observe its fasts. And he who is ill or is on a journey should complete this count in other days. [This concession has been given because] God desires ease for you and does not want to be harsh with you. And [the permission given to travelers and the sick to feed the needy has been withdrawn] so that you can complete the number of fasts [and thus not be deprived of the blessings of fasting] and [for this purpose the month of Ramadan has been fixed] so that [in the form of the Quran] the guidance God has bestowed to you, you glorify God and so that you are grateful to Him. (Surah Al-Baqarah 2:183–185)*

After prayer and zakat, fasting is the third most important act of worship. In the Arabic language, the word *sawm* is used for it, which means to refrain from something and to abstain from it. When horses were kept hungry and thirsty for the purpose of training, the Arabs would describe this as their *sawm*. In the terminology of the Shariah, this word is used, with specific limits and conditions, for refraining from eating, drinking, and marital relations. In the Urdu language, this is called *roza* (fast). Since human beings also possess a practical, physical existence in this world, when the impulse of worship toward Allah relates to this practical existence, it necessarily includes obedience along with devotion. Fasting is a symbolic expression of this obedience. In it, a servant, in compliance with the command of his Lord and in seeking His pleasure and approval, renders certain permissible things forbidden for himself, thereby becoming a living embodiment of obedience. In this way, he virtually proclaims by the language of his state that nothing is greater than Allah and His command. If, by virtue of the law of nature, something lawful is also declared forbidden for him by Allah, then it befits a servant that he submit to this command without question.

This state of awareness and acknowledgment of Allah's majesty and greatness, upon reflection, is also the true expression of gratitude to Him. Accordingly, the Quran has, on this very basis, described fasting as magnifying Allah and giving thanks to Him, and has stated that the month of Ramadan has been specified for this purpose: that for the guidance Allah has bestowed upon you in the form of the Quran during this month—containing clear and decisive proofs for the guidance of reason and for distinguishing between truth and falsehood—you should proclaim Allah's greatness and become grateful to Him: *وَلِتُكَبِّرُوا اللَّهَ عَلَى مَا هَدَاكُمْ وَلَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُونَ*. This is the very reality of fasting, in view of which it has been said that fasting is for Allah and He Himself will reward it.

That is, when a servant, without any ulterior motive and purely in obedience to Allah’s command, declares even lawful things forbidden for himself, Allah will then recompense him not by measure or calculation, but by His special grace and favor—bestowing such an unbounded reward that the servant will be overwhelmed with joy.

It is narrated from Abu Hurayrah (RA) that the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) said: “Every good deed that the son of Adam performs is rewarded tenfold up to seven hundredfold, but fasting is an exception.” Allah the Exalted says: *‘فانه لي وأنا أجزي به’*—“It is for Me, and I alone will reward it,” because the servant abandons his food, drink, and sexual desires solely for My sake.<sup>1</sup> Accordingly, it is said that for those who fast there are two moments of joy: one when they break their fast, and the other when they meet their Lord.<sup>2</sup> From this, one can appreciate how extraordinarily significant this act of worship is in the sight of Allah. The Prophet (PBUH) said:

لخولف فم الصائم أطيب عند الله من ریح المسك.

*“The odor from the mouth of a fasting person is more pleasing to Allah than the fragrance of musk.” (Sahih Bukhari, No. 1894)*

He also said:

إن في الجنة بابًا، يقال له الريان، يدخل منه الصائمون يوم القيامة، لا يدخل منه أحد غيرهم، يقال: أين الصائمون؟ فيقومون لا يدخل منه أحد غيرهم، فإذا دخلوا أغلق فلم يدخل منه أحد.

*“In Paradise there is a gate called al-Rayyan. On the Day of Resurrection, those who fasted will enter through it, and none other than them will enter through it. It will be announced: ‘Where are those who fasted?’ They will stand up, and none other than them will enter through it. When they have entered, it will be closed, and no one will enter through it thereafter.” (Sahih Bukhari, No. 1896)*

The ultimate perfection of this act of worship, as explained in the Shariah, is that a person, while in a state of fasting, imposes some additional restrictions upon himself and, withdrawing from others, sits in a mosque for several days to devote himself as much as possible to the worship of Allah. In technical terminology, this is called *i’tikaf*.<sup>3</sup> Although it has not been made obligatory like the fasts of Ramadan, it holds great importance from the perspective of self-purification. Through the combination of fasting, prayer, and the recitation of the Quran, the special quality that is produced—described metaphorically as *“amekhtan ba badah-yi safi gulab ra”*—and the state of detachment, seclusion, and exclusive turning to Allah that descends upon the soul, enable the true objective of fasting to be realized at the highest level. For this reason, during the last ten days of Ramadan, the Prophet (PBUH) would observe *i’tikaf*<sup>4</sup> every year in his mosque and devote his days and nights to supplication and intimate communion with Allah, to bowing and prostration, and to the recitation of the Quran. Sayyidah ‘A’ishah (may Allah be pleased with her) relates:

كان النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم إذا دخل العشر، شدّ منزره وأحيا ليله وأيقظ أهله.

*“When the last ten days (of Ramadan) would begin, the Prophet (PBUH) would tighten his waistcloth, spend the night in worship, and awaken his family (for worship).” (Sahih Bukhari, No. 2024)*

This act of worship of fasting has been made obligatory for Muslims in the month of Ramadan. There is no doubt

<sup>1</sup> Bukhari, No. 1894; Muslim, No. 2707

<sup>2</sup> Bukhari, No. 1904; Muslim, No. 2707

<sup>3</sup> This is also an ancient form of worship, and it has always been present in the religion of the Prophets

<sup>4</sup> Bukhari, Nos. 225-26; Muslim, No. 2782

that the inclinations of the lower self never completely disappear and that the temptations of this world always remain present. However, the Prophet (PBUH) has explained that in this month Allah Almighty bestows a special grace: He completely blocks all the avenues through which the devils mislead people. He said that when Ramadan arrives, the gates of Heaven are opened, the gates of Hell are closed, and the devils are put in chains.<sup>5</sup> Consequently, during this month every person has the opportunity—if he so wishes—to strive for goodness and success for himself without any external hindrance. Its reward, as stated in the narrations, is that a person's sins are forgiven. This is the general Quranic principle regarding repentance and self-reform. Nevertheless, with specific reference to Ramadan, the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) gave people glad tidings in these words:

من صام رمضان إيمانًا واحتسابًا، غفر له ما تقدم من ذنبه .

*“Whoever fasts in Ramadan with faith and seeking reward, his previous sins are forgiven.” (Sahih Bukhari, No. 2009)*

من قام رمضان إيمانًا واحتسابًا، غفر له ما تقدم من ذنبه .

*“Whoever stands (in prayer) during the nights of Ramadan with faith and seeking reward, his previous sins are forgiven.” (Sahih Bukhari, No. 37)*

The same has been said regarding standing in prayer on Laylat al-Qadr.<sup>6</sup> This is the night of the revelation of the Quran, and Allah Almighty has stated that the angels and the Trustworthy Spirit descend in it with permission concerning every matter. Therefore, because it is distinguished by the execution of momentous affairs, the mercies, blessings, and opportunities for nearness to Allah that are attained in this single night cannot be achieved even in thousands of nights. For this reason, it has been declared: *‘لَيْلَةُ الْقَدْرِ خَيْرٌ مِنْ أَلْفِ شَهْرٍ’* (The Night of Decree is better than a thousand months).<sup>7</sup> The Prophet (PBUH) said that it should be sought in the last ten days of Ramadan, particularly on its odd nights.<sup>8</sup>

What is the significance of fixing specific days and times for acts of worship? Imam Amin Ahsan Islahi has explained this in his commentary *Tadabbur-e-Quran* as follows:

*...Just as in this material world there is consideration for crops, seasons, and times, so too in the spiritual realm there is consideration for them. Just as there are specific seasons and months for sowing particular things—if you sow in them, they flourish and bear fruit, and if you ignore these seasons and months, even the longest possible duration of other months cannot substitute for them—in the same way, in the spiritual realm there are specific seasons and specific times and days fixed for particular works. If those works are carried out in those designated times and days, they produce the desired results; but if those days and times are neglected, then even the greatest possible amount of other days and times cannot properly take their place. Understand this through an example: there is a specific day for Friday, a specific month for fasting, specific months and specific days for Hajj, and a fixed day for standing at ‘Arafah. With all these days and times Allah Almighty has prescribed great acts of worship whose reward and recompense have no limit or end. However, all their blessings manifest in their true form only when they are performed with precise observance of those very days and times. If that is not done, then the blessing inherent in them is lost. (9/468)*

<sup>5</sup> Bukhari, No. 1899

<sup>6</sup> Bukhari, No. 1901; Muslim, No. 1781

<sup>7</sup> Surah al-Qadr 97:1-3

<sup>8</sup> Muslim, No. 2746 — meaning those sins which do not pertain to the rights of other people (*Huquq al-'Ibad*) or for which repentance, compensation, or expiation (*kaffarah*) is not required.

## THE HISTORY OF FASTING

Like prayer, the history of fasting is extremely ancient. In the verses of *Surah al-Baqarah* cited above, the Quran states that fasting has been prescribed for Muslims in the same manner as it was prescribed for earlier communities. Thus, it is a historical fact that, as an important act of spiritual discipline and self-training, the concept of fasting has existed in all religions.

The civilizations of Nineveh and Babylon are very ancient. At one time, the Assyrian people inhabited these regions, and it was to them that Prophet Jonah (Yunus), peace be upon him, was sent. Initially, these people rejected him, but later they embraced faith. On this occasion, their repentance and turning back to God is described in the Bible, in the *Book of Jonah*, as follows:

*Then the people of Nineveh believed in God, proclaimed a fast, and put on sackcloth, from the greatest of them to the least of them. When the news reached the king of Nineveh, he rose from his throne, removed his royal robe, covered himself with sackcloth, and sat in ashes. And he issued a proclamation in Nineveh by the decree of the king and his nobles, saying: Let neither man nor beast, herd nor flock, taste anything; let them not feed or drink water. But let man and beast be covered with sackcloth, and let them call out mightily to God. Yes, let everyone turn from his evil way and from the violence that is in his hands. (3:5–8)*

In pre-Islamic Arabia as well, fasting was not an unfamiliar practice. The very existence of the word *sawm* in their language is sufficient proof that they were fully acquainted with this act of worship. In *Al-Mufassal fi Tarikh al-Arab Qabl al-Islam*, Jawad Ali writes:

*The reports state that Quraysh used to fast on the Day of Ashura. On that day they would gather, celebrate a festival, and clothe the House of God (the Kabah). Historians explain this by saying that Quraysh, during the period of ignorance, committed a sin whose burden they felt very deeply. They therefore sought to atone for it and designated the fast of the Day of Ashura for themselves. They observed this fast in gratitude to God Almighty for having protected them from the evil consequences of that sin. Reports also state that the Messenger of God (PBUH) used to observe this fast even before prophethood... Another explanation given for this fast is that at one time Quraysh were afflicted by famine, and when God Almighty granted them deliverance from it, they began observing this fast as an expression of gratitude to Him. (6/339–340)*

In the religious law of the Jews and Christians as well, fasting is a common act of worship. The Bible mentions their fasts in many places, and in addition to the specific term for fasting, expressions such as “afflicting the soul” and “self-mortification” are also used in some passages.

In Exodus it is stated:

*And the Lord said to Moses, ‘Write these words, for according to these words I have made a covenant with you and with Israel.’ So he was there with the Lord forty days and forty nights; he neither ate bread nor drank water. And He wrote on the tablets the words of the covenant, the Ten Commandments. (34:27–28)*

In Leviticus it is stated:

*This shall be a statute forever for you: in the seventh month, on the tenth day of the month, you shall afflict your souls, and do no work at all, whether a native of your own country or a stranger who dwells among you. For on that day atonement shall be made for you, to cleanse you, that you may be clean from all your sins before the Lord. It is a sabbath of solemn rest for you, and you shall afflict your souls. (16:29–31)*

In Judges it is stated:

*Then all the children of Israel, that is, all the people, went up and came to Bethel and sat there before the Lord, and wept until evening. And they fasted that day until evening, and offered burnt offerings and peace offerings before the Lord. (20:26)*

In Second Samuel it is stated:

*And they mourned and wept and fasted until evening for Saul and for Jonathan his son, for the people of the Lord and for the house of Israel, because they had fallen by the sword. (1:12)*

And:

*David therefore pleaded with God for the child, and David fasted and went in and lay all night on the ground. (12:16)*

In Nehemiah it is stated:

*Now on the twenty-fourth day of this month the children of Israel were assembled with fasting, in sackcloth, and with dust on their heads. Then those of Israelite lineage separated themselves from all foreigners; and they stood and confessed their sins and the iniquities of their fathers. (9:1–2)*

In Psalms it is stated:

*But as for me, when they were sick, my clothing was sackcloth; I humbled my soul with fasting; and my prayer returned to my own bosom. (35:13)*

In Jeremiah it is stated:

*You go, therefore, and read from the scroll which you have written at my dictation the words of the Lord in the hearing of the people in the Lord's house on the day of fasting. (36:6)*

In Joel it is stated:

*The day of the Lord is great and very terrible; who can endure it? 'Now, therefore,' says the Lord, 'turn to Me with all your heart, with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning.' So rend your heart, and not your garments; return to the Lord your God, for He is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness; and He relents from doing harm. (2:11–12)*

In Zechariah it is stated:

*Then the word of the Lord of hosts came to me, saying, 'Thus says the Lord of hosts: The fast of the fourth month, the fast of the fifth, the fast of the seventh, and the fast of the tenth shall be joy and gladness and cheerful feasts for the house of Judah.' (8:18–19)*

In Matthew it is stated:

*Moreover, when you fast, do not be like the hypocrites, with a sad countenance. For they disfigure their faces that they may appear to men to be fasting. Assuredly, I say to you, they have their reward. But you, when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face, so that you do not appear to men to be fasting, but to your Father who is in the secret place; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly. (6:16–18)*

In Acts it is stated:

*As they ministered to the Lord and fasted, the Holy Spirit said, 'Now separate to Me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.' Then, having fasted and prayed, and laid hands on them, they sent them away. (13:2-3)*

This, then, is the history of fasting. From it, it is clear that, like prayer and zakat, fasting was not something unfamiliar to the immediate addressees of the Quran. They were fully aware of its religious status and of its limits and conditions. Therefore, when the Quran mentioned it, it did not reiterate any of these limits and conditions; rather, it directed them to observe it as an obligatory act of worship in the same manner in which they already knew it—as an ancient command of God and an ancient practice of the prophets, peace be upon them. The Prophet (PBUH) and his Companions observed the fasts of Ramadan in accordance with this understanding even before its formal prescription, and Muslims, generation after generation, have continued to follow the same practice. From this perspective, the primary source of fasting is essentially the consensus of the Muslims and their continuous practical transmission. The Quran did nothing more than declare it obligatory, explain the law of concession for the sick and travelers, and later clarify certain issues when related questions arose.

### PURPOSE OF FASTING

The Quran states the purpose of fasting in these verses of *Surah Al-Baqarah*: that people may become God-fearing. For this, the words used are **لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ**, that is, so that piety (*taqwa*) may develop within you. In Quranic terminology, *taqwa* means that a person lives his day and night within the limits set by Allah Almighty, and deep in his heart remains fearful of the fact that if he ever violates these limits, there will be no one except Allah who can save him from its consequences.

How does fasting produce this *taqwa*? To understand this, three things should be kept in view:

First, fasting powerfully awakens in a person's mind the feeling that he is a servant of Allah. As soon as a lock of prohibition is placed on a few basic demands of the self, this sense of servitude begins to emerge and then gradually keeps increasing, until by the time of breaking the fast it encompasses his entire being. From dawn to sunset, not a single morsel of food nor a single drop of water passes down the throat of the fasting person, and he refuses to fulfill every demand of the self purely in obedience to the command of his Lord. When this act of fasting is repeated again and again, this reality sinks into the inner depths of the fasting person's existence, rather it becomes embedded in his very nature: that he is the servant of one Lord, and that what truly befits him is that in the rest of life's affairs as well, with submission and acknowledgment, he surrenders himself before the authority of his Master, and in thought and action alike renounce claims of freedom and self-sovereignty. As a result, a person's faith in God obviously becomes a living faith in every respect, after which he does not merely believe in one God, but in a Being who is All-Hearing, All-Seeing, All-Knowing, All-Wise, and قائم بالقسط (established with justice), who is fully aware of everything open and hidden, and from whose obedience he cannot deviate under any circumstances. For producing *taqwa*, this is the foremost requirement.

Second, fasting also implants deep within the heart and the depths of the soul the awareness that one day a person must present himself before his Lord for accountability. In principle every Muslim believes this, but during fasting—when thirst constricts, hunger torments, and sexual urges demand satisfaction with full force—everyone knows that it is this very sense of accountability that restrains a person from fulfilling the demands of the belly and the private parts. Throughout the entire month of Ramadan, for hours every day, the self keeps guard over these basic demands solely because it has to face its Master one day. To the extent that in intense heat the throat cracks with thirst, cold water is right there, and he could easily drink it, yet he does not; hunger is draining life away, food is present, yet he does not eat; husband and wife are young, privacy is available, they could fulfill their desire, yet they do not. This discipline is no ordinary discipline. Through it, the awareness of accountability before

Allah Almighty becomes firmly rooted in the heart and mind. For producing *taqwa*, if one reflects, this is the second most effective factor.

Third, *taqwa* requires patience, and fasting trains a person in patience. In fact, for training patience, perhaps there is no better or more effective method than this. What is the reality of the test we face in this world, other than that on one side are the unruly desires of our animal existence, and on the other side is Allah Almighty's demand that we live within His limits? This requires patience at every step. Truthfulness, honesty, forbearance, tolerance, keeping promises, justice and fairness, forgiveness and overlooking faults, avoidance of evil deeds, abstaining from indecencies, and steadfastness upon the truth—without these qualities *taqwa* has no meaning, and without patience these qualities, obviously, cannot develop in a person at all.

The purpose of fasting is precisely this *taqwa*, and for it Allah has appointed the month of Ramadan. We have stated above that Allah Almighty has explained the reason for this by saying that in this month the Quran began to be revealed. What connection does this have with the purpose of fasting? Explaining this, Imam Amin Ahsan Islahi writes in his tafsir *Tadabbur-e-Qur'an*:

*Anyone who reflects will have no difficulty in understanding this reality that among all the blessings of God, the greatest blessing is intellect, and greater than intellect is the Quran, because even intellect receives true guidance only from the Quran. Were it not so, intellect, even after applying all the telescopes and microscopes of science, would continue to wander in darkness. For this reason, the month in which the world received this blessing deserved to be made a special month for proclaiming God's greatness and expressing gratitude to Him, so that acknowledgment of the value and greatness of this supreme blessing may always remain alive. For this gratitude and proclamation of greatness, Allah Almighty prescribed the worship of fasting, which is the special act of worship for training that taqwa upon which the establishment and survival of the entire religion and Shariah depend, and for whose possessors alone the Quran was truly revealed as guidance. ... Thus, the arrangement of this Quranic wisdom turned out to be that the true benefit of the Wise Quran is exclusive to those who possess the spirit of taqwa, and the special means for training this taqwa is the worship of fasting. For this reason, the Most Kind and Wise Lord specified this very month for fasting in which the Quran was revealed. In other words, it can also be said that the Quran is spring for this world, the month of Ramadan is the season of spring, and the crop that this spring season nurtures is the crop of taqwa. (Tadabbur-e-Qur'an, 1/451)*

This purpose is inevitably achieved through fasting, but for this it is necessary that those who fast avoid the flaws which, if they afflict a fast, wipe out all its blessings. Although these flaws are many, some of them are such that every fasting person should remain alert about them.

One of these flaws is that people turn Ramadan into a month of pleasures and delicacies. They think that whatever is spent in this month will not be taken into account by Allah. Consequently, for such people, even if they eat and drink, it becomes a month of indulgence and enjoyment. Instead of training the self, they make it a month of nurturing it, and they spend their mornings to evenings merely in preparations for iftar. As long as they are fasting, they keep thinking about what kinds of foods they will now use to fill the void created in their stomachs by a whole day of hunger and thirst. The result is that, in the first place, they gain nothing from fasting, and even if they gain something, they lose it right there.

The way to avoid this flaw is that a person should certainly eat and drink to maintain the strength needed for work, but should not make it the purpose of life. Whatever comes without special arrangement, he should eat it while thanking Allah. Whatever the household places on the table, even if it does not appeal to the heart, he should not become upset over it. If Allah has blessed him with wealth, then instead of nurturing his own self, he should

spend it on helping the poor and the needy and feeding them. This will certainly increase the blessings of his fast. This is also the Sunnah of the Prophet (PBUH) in the matter of spending. Sayyiduna ‘Abdullah ibn ‘Abbas relates that the Prophet was the most generous of people even in normal circumstances, but in Ramadan he would become, as it were, the embodiment of generosity and benevolence.<sup>9</sup>

The second flaw is that since hunger and thirst create a certain sharpness in temperament, some people, instead of making fasting a means of reform, turn it into an excuse for provocation. They pounce on their wives, children, and those who work under them over trivial matters, say whatever comes to their mouths, and if matters escalate, unleash a barrage of abuses; and in some situations they do not even refrain from beating their subordinates. After this, they console themselves by saying that this sort of thing happens in fasting.

The remedy for this, the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) has explained, is that instead of using fasting as an excuse for agitation on such occasions, a person should use it like a shield against it, and whenever a situation of provocation arises, he should immediately remember that he is fasting. He said: fasting is a shield; therefore, when one of you is fasting, he should neither speak indecently nor behave ignorantly. Then if someone abuses him or wants to fight, he should say: I am fasting; my brother, I am fasting.<sup>10</sup> Thus, the reality is that if a fasting person adopts this method of self-reminder at every occasion of anger and provocation, he will gradually see that he has gained such control over the satan of his self that it rarely succeeds in causing him to fall. This sense of victory over Satan will create a feeling of tranquility and superiority in his heart, and this very reminder of fasting will become a means of his reform. Then he will show anger only where it is appropriate; it will no longer be possible for anyone to provoke him at all times and without reason.

The third flaw is that many people, when they leave eating, drinking, and other such interests during fasting, seek compensation for this deprivation in those interests which, in their view, do not affect the fast, rather help pass the time. They will fast and play cards, read novels and short stories, listen to songs and ghazals, watch films, sit with friends and chat, and if they do not do all this, then they will get entangled in backbiting and satire of someone. When the stomach is empty in fasting, a person, in any case, finds great pleasure in eating the flesh of his brothers. The result is that sometimes they get engaged in these activities from the morning and then withdraw from them only with the call of the muezzin.

One remedy for this flaw is that a person should regard silence as an etiquette of fasting and try, as much as possible, to put a lock on his tongue at least in the matter of speaking nonsense and spreading falsehoods. The Prophet (PBUH) said that the one who does not give up lying and acting upon it, Allah has no need for him to give up his eating and drinking.<sup>11</sup>

The second remedy is that in whatever time is left free from necessary tasks, a person should study the Quran and Hadith and try to understand the religion. He should take advantage of this opportunity of fasting and memorize some portion of the Quran and the supplications taught by the Prophet (PBUH). In this way, he will be saved from those pastimes during fasting, and later this very store will serve him in keeping the remembrance of Allah alive in his heart.

The fourth flaw is that sometimes a person fasts not for Allah, but to avoid the reproach of his family and acquaintances, and at times he bears this hardship to maintain the appearance of piety among people. This, too, does not allow the fast to remain a true fast.

<sup>9</sup> Bukhari, No. 6; Muslim, No. 6009.

<sup>10</sup> Bukhari, No. 1894; Muslim, No. 2703.

<sup>11</sup> Bukhari, No. 1903

The remedy for this is that a person should always keep the importance of fasting clear before his own self and counsel it that when you are already giving up eating, drinking, and other pleasures, then why not give them up for Allah alone? Along with this, he should also keep voluntary fasts from time to time outside Ramadan and try to conceal them as much as possible. It is hoped that through this, these obligatory fasts too will someday become purely for Allah alone.

The voluntary fasts that the Prophet (PBUH) himself observed, or encouraged people to observe for this very purpose, are as follows:

### THE FAST OF THE DAY OF ASHURA

Its virtue has been mentioned in the narrations.<sup>12</sup> The Prophet (PBUH) generally observed it;<sup>13</sup> in fact, before the fasts of Ramadan were prescribed, he would observe this fast compulsorily and would also instruct people to do so, encourage them, and keep an eye on them in this regard.<sup>14</sup> One reason given for this is that Quraysh used to observe this fast,<sup>15</sup> and another is that the Jews used to fast on this day. When the Prophet asked them, they told him that this day held great significance for them: on this day Allah granted deliverance to Moses and his people and drowned Pharaoh and his people in the sea. Moses (PBUH) then observed a fast on this day in gratitude. The Prophet said: our relationship with Moses is closer than yours. Accordingly, he himself observed the fast and also directed people to observe it.<sup>16</sup>

### THE FAST OF THE DAY OF 'ARAFAH

The virtue of this day is known to every Muslim. The Messenger of Allah (PBUH) said that if a fast is observed on this day, it is expected that Allah will forgive the sins of one year before and one year after it.<sup>17</sup> However, on the occasion of Hajj he did not observe this fast.<sup>18</sup> The reason for this was probably that he did not like to combine it with the hardship of Hajj.

### THE FASTS OF SHAWWAL

The virtue of these fasts has also been mentioned in the narrations. The Prophet (PBUH) said that whoever observes the fasts of Ramadan and then follows them immediately with six fasts of Shawwal, it is as though he fasted for a whole lifetime.<sup>19</sup>

### THREE FASTS EVERY MONTH

The Messenger of Allah (PBUH) encouraged these fasts and stated the same thing about them as has been mentioned above regarding the fasts of Shawwal.<sup>20</sup> According to a narration of Sayyidah Ayyashah, the Prophet himself also observed these fasts. However, no specific days were fixed for them. Whenever he wished, he would observe these fasts at any time during the month.<sup>21</sup> Some Companions, however, were instructed by him to

<sup>12</sup> Bukhari, No. 2004; Muslim, No. 2746

<sup>13</sup> Bukhari, No. 2006; Muslim, No. 2637.

<sup>14</sup> Bukhari, Nos. 2002, 4680; Muslim, No. 2652.

<sup>15</sup> Bukhari, No. 2002; Muslim, Nos. 2637, 2642.

<sup>16</sup> Bukhari, No. 2004; Muslim, No. 2658.

<sup>17</sup> Muslim, No. 2746 — meaning those sins which do not pertain to the rights of other people (*Huquq al-'Ibad*) or for which repentance, compensation, or expiation (*kaffarah*) is not required.

<sup>18</sup> Bukhari, Nos. 1658, 1988; Muslim, No. 2632.

<sup>19</sup> Muslim, No. 2758; Abu Dawood, No. 2433.

<sup>20</sup> Bukhari, Nos. 1976, 1979; Muslim, No. 2746.

<sup>21</sup> Muslim, No. 2744

observe these fasts on the thirteenth, fourteenth, and fifteenth days of the lunar month.<sup>22</sup>

### THE FASTS OF MONDAY AND THURSDAY

The Prophet also observed these fasts. When people asked the reason for this, he said: on Monday and Thursday, people's deeds are presented.<sup>23</sup> He also said that Monday is the day of my birth and the day on which the Quran was revealed to me.<sup>24</sup>

### THE FASTS OF SHA'BAN

Apart from Ramadan, this is the month in which the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) mostly remained in a state of fasting. Sayyidah Ayshah states that she did not see him observing fasts in any month more than in Sha'ban.<sup>25</sup>

Apart from these, people may observe voluntary fasts whenever they wish. Those who desire to fast frequently were instructed by him to follow the practice of David (PBUH), who would fast one day and leave one day.<sup>26</sup> However, he did not approve of<sup>27</sup> singling out Friday alone for fasting,<sup>28</sup> fasting throughout the entire year,<sup>29</sup> or fasting on the days of Eid.<sup>30</sup>

### THE LAW OF FASTING

The law of fasting that has always existed in the religion of the prophets (peace be upon them) is the same law according to which Allah Almighty has instructed the Muslims to fast. The Quran states that fasting has been made obligatory upon the believers in the same manner as it was made obligatory upon those before them. It says that these are a limited number of days that have been set aside for this act of worship. It is evident that this has been said by way of reassurance. In other words, the point is that if the blessings of fasting are kept in view, then thirty or twenty-nine days out of twelve months do not constitute a long period; rather, they are only a few days. Therefore, instead of feeling anxious or disheartened, a person should derive full benefit from them.

After this introduction, the ruling of concession is stated. It is said that those who are unable to complete the fasts of Ramadan due to illness or travel should either complete this number by fasting on other days, or compensate for each missed fast by feeding one needy person. This ruling concludes with the words: *"Then whoever volunteers good, it is better for him; and that you fast is better for you, if you only knew."* The meaning is that this expiation is the minimum requirement which those who have the ability must fulfill in all circumstances, but if a person feeds more than one needy person or performs some other good deed along with it, that is better for him. Moreover, in Allah's sight, it is even better that instead of the expiation, a person should complete the fasts on other days.

However, in the subsequent verse that begins with the words *"The month of Ramadan in which the Quran was revealed ..."*, the permission of expiation was withdrawn. Accordingly, the ruling was repeated verbatim, but the words from *"and upon those who can afford it ..."* to *"... if you only knew"* were omitted. Since fasting on ordinary days after Ramadan is difficult, Allah Almighty did not make it obligatory until people's dispositions became

<sup>22</sup> Nasai No. 2422

<sup>23</sup> Nasai, No. 2360; Ahmad, No. 21246.

<sup>24</sup> Muslim, No. 2747

<sup>25</sup> Bukhari, Nos. 1969, 1970; Muslim, Nos. 2721, 2722.

<sup>26</sup> Bukhari, No. 1979; Muslim, No. 2729

<sup>27</sup> Bukhari, Nos. 1984, 1985; Muslim, Nos. 2681, 2683, 2684.

<sup>28</sup> Bukhari, No. 1976; Muslim, No. 2747.

<sup>29</sup> Bukhari, No. 1990, 1991; Muslim, No. 2671, 2672.

<sup>30</sup> This is because the first would soon turn into an innovation, the second would disrupt the balance of life, and the third would be completely out of place, for which there can be no room whatsoever in this upright religion.

fully prepared for it. Thus, it was stated that this permission of expiation has been withdrawn so that you complete the number of fasts and do not remain deprived of the goodness and blessings hidden within them.

This is the original ruling of fasting. After this, it appears that some questions arose in people's minds. One of the important questions was whether it was permissible to approach one's wives during the nights of Ramadan or not. The likely reason for this was that among the Jews, the fast would resume immediately after breaking it, and they did not consider eating, drinking, or approaching their wives during the night of the fast to be permissible. The Muslims assumed that the same law would apply to them as well, but then some of them, while holding this assumption in their hearts, ended up violating it. This was not a good matter, because if a person, according to his own reasoning or assumption, considers something to be a requirement of religion and law, then regardless of whether it is actually a ruling of the Shariah or not, it is not permissible for him to violate it. Accordingly, the Quran described this as betrayal of one's own conscience and clarified the matter:

أَجَلٌ لَكُمْ لَيْلَةَ الصِّيَامِ الرَّفِثُ إِلَى نِسَائِكُمْ، هُنَّ لِبَاسٌ لَكُمْ وَأَنْتُمْ لِبَاسٌ لَهُنَّ، عَلِمَ اللَّهُ أَنَّكُمْ كُنْتُمْ تَخْتَانُونَ أَنْفُسَكُمْ فَتَابَ عَلَيْكُمْ وَعَفَا عَنْكُمْ. فَالَّذِينَ بَاشِرُوا هُنَّ وَابْتَغُوا مَا كَتَبَ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ وَكُلُوا وَاشْرَبُوا حَتَّى يَتَبَيَّنَ لَكُمُ الْخَيْطُ الْأَبْيَضُ مِنَ الْخَيْطِ الْأَسْوَدِ مِنَ الْفَجْرِ، ثُمَّ أَتَمُّوا الصِّيَامَ إِلَى اللَّيْلِ، وَلَا تُبَاشِرُوا هُنَّ وَأَنْتُمْ عَافُونَ فِي الْمَسْجِدِ. تِلْكَ حُدُودُ اللَّهِ فَلَا تَقْرُبُوهَا، كَذَلِكَ يُبَيِّنُ اللَّهُ لِيَوْمِ النَّاسِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَّقُونَ.

*“If you wish to ask, then know that) on the nights of fasting, approaching your wives has been made lawful for you. They are a garment for you, and you are a garment for them. Allah knew that you were betraying yourselves, so He turned to you in mercy and pardoned you. So now approach them without hesitation and seek what Allah has decreed for you, and eat and drink until the white thread of dawn becomes distinct to you from the black thread of night. Then complete the fast until nightfall. And do not approach them while you are in retreat in the mosques. These are the limits set by Allah, so do not go near them. Thus Allah makes His signs clear to people so that they may become God-fearing.” (Surah Al-Baqarah 2:187)*

After this Quranic clarification, the law of fasting and retreat (*i'tikaf*) that emerges is as follows:

Fasting, in the terminology of the Shariah, is abstaining from eating, drinking, and approaching one's wife with the intention of fasting and purely for the pleasure of Allah.

This abstention is from dawn until the beginning of night; therefore, eating, drinking, and approaching one's wife during the nights of fasting are entirely permissible.

The month of Ramadan has been specified for fasting; therefore, whoever is present during this month is obligated to fast the entire month.

If a person is unable to complete the fasts of Ramadan due to illness, travel, or some other unavoidable reason, it is obligatory for him to make up for them by fasting on other days and complete the required number.

Fasting is prohibited during the states of menstruation and post-natal bleeding. However, the fasts missed due to these reasons must also be made up later.

The highest level of fasting is *i'tikaf*. If Allah grants a person the ability for this, he should, for as many days as possible during the month of fasting, withdraw from worldly engagements and seclude himself in a mosque for the worship of Allah, and not leave the mosque except for unavoidable human needs.

If a person is in *i'tikaf*, there is no restriction on eating and drinking during the nights of fasting, but approaching one's wife is no longer permissible for him. Allah Almighty has prohibited this in the state of *i'tikaf*.

This law of fasting is established by the consensus of the Muslims and their continuous practical transmission,

and the Quran has also explained it in considerable detail. The explanations provided by the knowledge and practice of the Prophet (PBUH) are presented below in an appropriate order:

1. When the moon is sighted, the month should begin. The Prophet (PBUH) said: the month may be of twenty-nine days; therefore, fast when you see the moon and end the fast when you see it. If the sky is overcast, then complete thirty days of Sha‘ban.<sup>31</sup>
2. One should not fast one or two days before the beginning of Ramadan. The Prophet (PBUH) did not approve of this, except for a person who habitually fasts on that day.<sup>32</sup>
3. One should wake up for *suboor*. He said: take *suboor*, for there is blessing in eating *suboor*.<sup>33</sup>
4. In fasting, apart from sexual intercourse, all forms of affection with one’s wife are permissible. Sayyidah Ayshah (RA) states that the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) would kiss and embrace her while he was fasting.<sup>34</sup>
5. One may fast while in a state of major ritual impurity (*janabah*). According to the same narrator, the Prophet (PBUH) would sometimes keep a fast and perform the ritual bath after dawn.<sup>35</sup>
6. If a person eats or drinks forgetfully, his fast is not broken. He said: it is Allah who has fed him and given him drink.<sup>36</sup>
7. It is better to observe *i’tikaf* in the second or third ten days of Ramadan, and for the full ten days, unless the month is of twenty-nine days. The narrations show that this was generally the Prophet’s practice.<sup>37</sup>
8. Intentionally breaking the fast is a major sin. If such a thing occurs, it is better that a person offers expiation for it. The Prophet (PBUH) prescribed for one person the same expiation that the Quran has fixed for *zihar*. However, it is clear from the narration that when the person expressed inability, the Prophet did not insist upon it.<sup>38</sup>



<sup>31</sup> Muslim, Nos. 2503, 2514.

This means that the real objective is not the sighting of the moon itself; rather, it is attaining knowledge of the beginning or the end of the month. Whichever method this knowledge is acquired through, fasting should be observed or ended accordingly.

<sup>32</sup> Bukhari, No. 1914. Muslim, No. 2518.

<sup>33</sup> Bukhari, No. 1923. Muslim, No. 2549.

<sup>34</sup> Bukhari, No. 1927. Muslim, No. 2576.

<sup>35</sup> Bukhari, No. 1931. Muslim, No. 2589.

<sup>36</sup> Bukhari, No. 1933. Muslim, No. 2716.

<sup>37</sup> Bukhari, Nos. 2025–2027. Muslim, Nos. 2772, 2780.

<sup>38</sup> Bukhari, No. 1936; Muslim, No. 1995, The reason for this is that expiation becomes obligatory only when a situation like *كُفِّرَ بِكَ* arises.

## THE FIVE PROHIBITIONS OF MORALITY

Syed Manzoor ul Hassan

It is clear from verse 33 of Surah Al-Araf (7) that, within the domain of morality, the Shariah has declared only five things to be prohibited. It is stated:

فَلْ إِنَّمَا حَرَّمَ رَبِّيَ الْفَوَاحِشَ مَا ظَهَرَ مِنْهَا وَمَا بَطَّنَ وَإِذَا اتَّيْتُمْ مَوْلًى أَوْ ابْنَةً أَوْ ابْنَةَ أَخِيكُمْ فَاتَّخِذُوا لَهُمْ خِلْفَةً مِمَّا قَدْ تَرَكَ آبَاؤُهُمْ عَلَىٰ سَبِيلِ الْحَقِّ وَالْبَعَىٰ بَعْثٌ يَأْتِي الْغُيُوبَ ۚ وَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ ۚ  
 أَنْ تَقُولُوا عَلَى اللَّهِ مَا لَا تَعْلَمُونَ.

*Say, 'My Lord has only forbidden indecencies, whether they be open or hidden, and violation of rights and unjust aggression, and that you associate with Allah that for which He has sent down no authority, and that you attribute to Allah something you do not know.'*

These five things are: indecencies, violation of rights, unjust aggression, polytheism, and attributing falsehood to Allah. By indecencies (*fawahish*) are meant those acts which human nature itself regards as evil and whose reprehensibility the collective conscience of mankind unanimously recognizes. Adultery, homosexuality, bestiality, and similar acts of sexual deviation are prominent among them. By 'violation of rights' is meant an act as a result of which the rightful person is deprived of his right or the entitlement of one who deserves it is infringed. This is the meaning for which the word '*al-ithm*' has been used in the verse. 'Unjust aggression' means that a person interferes with the rights of others or adopts an attitude of deviation from fulfilling them. From this arise forms of oppression and injustice, rebellion and transgression, and obstinacy and stubbornness. 'Polytheism' is to regard someone as a partner with Allah in His essence, attributes, or governance of affairs. To attribute falsehood to Allah means to present something as religion without the authority of Allah and His Messenger. This is termed 'innovation' (*bid'ah*) in technical usage. The word of restriction '*innama*' (only) at the beginning of the command serves as decisive proof that neither can anything be added to these nor can anything be reduced from them. Therefore, all moral prohibitions mentioned in the Quran and Hadith will be subsumed under these five prohibitions. The respected teacher has written:

*... Apart from food and drink, Allah has declared only five things to be prohibited: first, indecencies; second, violation of rights; third, unjust aggression; fourth, polytheism; and fifth, innovation. These five things are prohibited in God's Shariah. Other than these, nothing is prohibited. This is God's declaration regarding the lawful and the unlawful; therefore, no one has the right to declare anything prohibited besides these. Hence, if something is to be prohibited, it will be so only when one of these is found in it. Reports, narrations, Hadiths, and statements of previous scriptures—all will be understood in the light of this very directive of the Quran. Anything outside of it or contrary to it will not be acceptable. (Al-Bayan, 2/150–151)*

With regard to understanding and applying these prohibitions, it is necessary to keep a few points in mind:

First, it is evident from the very terms—indecencies, violation of rights, unjust aggression, polytheism, and attributing falsehood to Allah—that these are not singular, specifically defined crimes. Rather, they are universal categories or fundamental types. Under each of them, numerous criminal acts can be counted. Each type has its own distinct aspect of reprehensibility. These aspects of reprehensibility are the very causes or realities that are intrinsically prohibited. Thus, when they are present in any act, they bring it within the sphere of prohibitions. It is necessary that each of these be identified individually and clarified as principles so that people can recognize them separately and, being aware of the reality of their reprehensibility, can apply them to different actions.

Second, there may be certain crimes that simultaneously fall under different types among these. This does not hinder classification. Such composite crimes will be regarded as more serious in view of their consequences and effects. The most prominent example of this is the gravest crime of polytheism. It is attributing falsehood to Allah and simultaneously falls under violation of rights and unjust aggression. Obviously, it will be subject to accountability from both these aspects. Moreover, there may be crimes that are a combination of indecencies, violation of rights, and unjust aggression. Examples of this are prostitution and rape. In such crimes, the individuality of the relevant types is fully intelligible and becomes a cause for increased gravity of the crime.

Third, deviation from the religious commands that are positively enjoined is also among the reprehensible acts and is punishable in the sight of Allah, but such deviation cannot be included among the prohibitions and forbiddances. Compliance with all positive commands of worship and morality is required by religion. These will be counted among commands; they will not be counted among prohibitions. Prohibited matters pertain to forbiddances; they should not be counted among commands and thereby create confusion.

Fourth, prohibitions related to positive commands are themselves part of those positive commands; they are not included separately among the prohibited matters. For example, the prohibitions against performing prayer in a state of intoxication or major impurity or menstruation and postnatal bleeding are not prohibitions; they are conditions of prayer. Similarly, the times of sunrise and sunset are called prohibited times for prayer, but they are not counted among forbiddances. Abstaining from eating, drinking, and approaching one's wives during fasting is also not considered within the domain of prohibition, because this abstention itself is, in reality, fasting. Furthermore, if a person turns away from performing the obligatory duties of religion—prayer, fasting, *zakah*—he will be called a denier or abandoner of them, not a perpetrator of the unlawful.

Fifth, the statements of Allah and His Messenger (PBUH) that are of an advisory nature and in which people are restrained from certain things by way of etiquette, discipline, or warning are also not included among prohibitions. For example, it is stated in verse 101 of Surah Al-Ma'idah (5): "*O believers, do not ask about things which, if they are disclosed to you, will distress you.*" In verse 154 of Surah Al-Baqarah (2) it is stated: "*And do not say of those who are slain in the way of Allah that they are dead.*" In verse 108 of Surah Al-An'am (6) it is said: "*And do not abuse those whom they invoke besides Allah.*" The Prophet (PBUH) forbidding spitting during prayer, stopping two people from whispering when there are three, and prohibiting severing relations for more than three days are of the same nature; therefore, the term '*haram*' will not be used for them.

Sixth, the styles used in the Quran and Hadith to express prohibition—such as *la*, *nahy*, *haram*, *la yahill*, *ijtanimboo*, and the like—do not necessarily require that a ruling of absolute prohibition be inferred from them. Some of them are used merely for warning, some for moral refinement, some as a preventive measure, and some for absolute prohibition. Their intent is determined on the basis of the nature of the matter and the established religious convention.<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>39</sup> Our jurists have coined terms such as *Haram li-dhatibi* (intrinsically forbidden), *Haram li-ghayrihi* (forbidden due to something else), *makruh taHrimi* (prohibitively disliked), and *makruh tanzih* (disliked but not strictly prohibited) to clarify this distinction.

## DISCIPLINING A WOMAN—WHO IS THE ADDRESSEE: THE HUSBAND OR SOCIETY?

Muhammad Hassan Ilyas

A fundamental principle of the Quran’s mode of address is that although it addresses the whole society through the Prophet’s tongue, practical directives always relate to those roles that are clearly under discussion in the context. A general address does not prove general liability; the determination of responsibility is always made by the nature of the directives and the roles that the context highlights.

This reality can be observed in many Quranic verses. Regarding orphans it is said: “If you fear that you will not deal justly with the orphans” (*Surah Al-Nisa* 4:3). Here the address is general, but the command applies only to those who are guardians of orphans. Similarly, in the rulings of suckling (*razah*), the address is collective, but responsibility is placed only upon the mother and the father. The entire society can neither breastfeed children nor bear their maintenance.

This is a basic reality of the Quranic style: even if the address is general, the command always remains specific in accordance with the role that the context has highlighted. An address of the same nature appears in *Surah An-Nisa* (4), verse 34. It is stated:

الرِّجَالُ قَوَّامُونَ عَلَى النِّسَاءِ بِمَا فَضَّلَ اللَّهُ بَعْضَهُمْ عَلَى بَعْضٍ وَبِمَا آتَقَفُوا مِنَ أَمْوَالِهِمْ فَالصَّالِحَاتُ قَانِتَاتٌ حَافِظَاتٌ لِّلْغَيْبِ بِمَا حَفِظَ اللَّهُ وَ الَّتِي تَخَافُونَ نُشُوزَهُنَّ فَعِظُوهُنَّ وَ اٰجُرُوهُنَّ فِي الْمَصَاحِجِ وَ اضْرِبُوهُنَّ ۚ فَاِنِ اطَعْنَكَ فَلَا تَبْغُوا عَلَيْهِنَّ سَبِيْلًا ۗ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ كَانَ عَلِيْمًا كَبِيْرًا .

*Men are caretakers over women because Allah has given some of them preference over others and because they spend of their wealth. So righteous women are obedient, guarding the unseen as Allah has guarded it. And those from whom you fear rebellion—admonish them, leave them alone in their beds, and discipline them. Then if they obey you, seek no way against them. Indeed, Allah is Most High, Most Great.*

Here too the address appears general, but the entire context is firmly established upon the mutual relationship of husband and wife, their responsibilities, and their internal order. The mention of guardianship (*qiwamah*), the determination of women’s responsibilities, their guarding in the unseen, and then the three stages of reform in case of negligence in those responsibilities—all of these constitute decisive evidence that the real addressees here are the husband and wife alone, not all segments of society.

Someone may say that since the address is in the plural form, society may also be an addressee along with the husband in the disciplinary stages. The words are: *wallati takhafuna nushuzabunna fa izubunna wahjurubunna fil mazaji wazribubunna*. In our view, this opinion is completely contrary to the context, because from the beginning to the end of the verse, the entire discourse rests upon the role and responsibility of the husband alone.

At this very point, the Quran itself directly addresses the party responsible for implementing this discipline and thereby decisively determines who the real addressee of these directives is. It is stated:

فَاِنِ اطَعْنَكَ فَلَا تَبْغُوا عَلَيْهِنَّ سَبِيْلًا .

*Then if they obey you, seek no way against them.*

Here, the pronoun ‘كُمْ’ cannot refer to anyone other than the husband, because obedience is always related to the

party with whom the marital contract exists. A wife's obedience pertains to the husband, not to society. Society is neither a guardian nor does the concept of obedience or disobedience apply to it. Hence, to regard both the husband and society as addressees at the same time is completely contrary to practical reality and the context. This pronoun decisively indicates that the addressees of this directive are exclusively the husbands.

At this point, it is also especially necessary to clarify that among these three reformative stages, the second stage—‘*وَابْجُرُونَنَّهُ فِي الْمَضَاجِعِ*’ (wa-ihjurūhunna fī al-maḍāji‘ — “and leave them in the beds”)—cannot, in any respect, be a directive related to society. This is because ‘*مَضَاجِعُ*’ (maḍāji‘ — “beds / places of lying down”) refers to places of lying down, that is, beds and sleeping chambers, and this is a sphere which, by nature, custom, and practice, relates exclusively to the mutual relationship of husband and wife. Society neither shares anyone's bed nor has the authority to intervene in the private residential arrangement of spouses. The instruction to withdraw from the bed can relate only to the party with whom the woman has a marital relationship, in whose house she resides, and with whom she lives her married life.

In reality, this expression is a metaphor for abstaining from sexual relations, which the Quran has expressed in its outward and tangible form. This is the well-known literary style of the Quran that it conveys extremely delicate and private matters not directly, but in a dignified and allusive manner.

Thus, the qualification ‘*فِي الْمَضَاجِعِ*’ (fī al-maḍāji‘ — “in the beds”) itself is decisive proof that the addressee here is not society, but only the husband, and transferring this directive into any collective or social framework is not only contrary to the context, but also bears no conformity with practical reality. However, the Quran has indeed included society at a specific point in marital matters, and that is when the issue moves out of the internal sphere of rebellion (*nushuz*) and turns into the social crisis of discord (*shiqaq*). It is stated:

وَ إِنْ خِفْتُمْ شِقَاقَ بَيْنِهِمَا

*And if you fear discord between the two... (Surah An-Nisa 4:35)*

Here, by the plural pronoun in ‘*خِفْتُمْ*’ are meant the elders of the family or those socially responsible people who may have to face the wider effects of this disorder, and by saying ‘*بَيْنِهِمَا*’ the husband and wife are distinctly separated as two parties. Thus, *shiqaq* is the stage where all avenues of internal reform within the household are exhausted, the matter turns into the danger of breakdown or injustice, and its effects begin to spread to the family and then to society at large. At this point, by directing the appointment of arbitrators, the Quran has involved society, because here the issue no longer remains internal but formally assumes a social character.

In this way, the Quran has clearly distinguished between the two stages of *nushuz* and *shiqaq*. *Nushuz* is purely a marital and internal matter; therefore, the addressee of verse 34 is only the husband. *Shiqaq* is a social issue; therefore, in verse 35, society is addressed.

In verse 34, ‘*فَإِنْ أَطَعْتُمْ*’, and in verse 35, ‘*وَ إِنْ خِفْتُمْ*’, both decisively determine the scope of authority and the real addressee of their respective stages.

This entire style can also be understood through a simple worldly example. Suppose a ruler addresses his nation generally and says that officers have been appointed over your departments because responsibilities and resources have been entrusted to them. Thus, those subordinates who adopt a correct attitude should adhere to their directives, and those about whom you fear that they are deviating from instructions—first admonish them, then, if necessary, reduce their powers, and if even then they do not reform, take disciplinary action against them. Then, if they obey you, seek no path of excess against them. Here the address is to the whole nation, but the practical directives are only for the officer, because all the mentioned measures fall within his jurisdiction.

But if the same ruler then goes on to say that if you fear that the disagreement between the officer and the

subordinate has grown to the extent that internal reform is no longer possible and its effects are reaching the entire department, then you people should appoint impartial arbitrators from both sides to examine the dispute. If they desire reform, We will bring about reconciliation between them. At this point, the direction of address changes, and the addressee is no longer the officer, but those collective authorities who are responsible for safeguarding the overall order of the department, because at this level the conflict becomes a threat to the institution.

In this example, two stages are clearly evident: the first stage pertains purely to the mutual order between the officer and the subordinate, and all measures are entrusted to that role. The second stage is when the disagreement escalates to such an extent that the order of the department begins to be affected, and thus the matter enters the domain of higher authority. This same order has been established by the Quran in the two stages of *nushuz* and *shiqaq*. *Nushuz* is an internal issue, whose addressee is only the husband, and *shiqaq* is a social issue, in which the responsible members of society are addressed.



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# THE TREASURE OF PROPHETIC TEACHINGS

Muhammad Hassan Ilyas

[1]

Narrated Abu Hurairah (RA) that the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) said: *“On Mondays and Thursdays, the gates of Paradise are opened. Then every person is forgiven except one who harbors enmity with his brother. It is said regarding them: Give them respite until they agree to reconcile with each other.”* (Sahih Muslim, 4658)

[2]

Narrated Hisham ibn ‘Amr (RA) that the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) said: *“It is not permissible for a Muslim to cut off relations with his Muslim brother for more than three days. For if they remain in this state for more than three days, they remain distant from the truth. Whoever initiates reconciliation first, it counts as expiation for him. And if one greets the other but the other does not reply, angels will greet the one who greeted, and Satan will greet the one who did not respond. And if both die while in this state of severed relations, neither of them will enter Paradise.”* (Musnad Ahmad, 15917)

[3]

Whoever keeps severed relations with his brother for more than three days will enter Hell, except that Allah, by His special grace, looks upon him with mercy. (Musannaf Ibn Abi Shaybah, 24786)



# TAFHEEM AL-ATHAR (UNDERSTANDING THE TRADITIONS)

Ammar Khan Nasir

## Dialogues between the leaders of Persia and the Companions

[16]

عَنْ سَيْفٍ، عَنْ مُحَمَّدٍ وَطَلْحَةَ وَعَمْرٍو وَزِيَادٍ بِإِسْنَادِهِمْ ... قَالُوا: وَأَرْسَلَ سَعْدٌ إِلَى الْمُغِيرَةَ بْنِ شُعْبَةَ وَبُسْرَ بْنَ أَبِي رُهْمٍ وَعَرْفَجَةَ بْنَ هَزْنَمَةَ وَخَدِيفَةَ بْنَ مِحْصَنٍ وَرَبِيعَ بْنَ عَامِرٍ وَقِرْفَةَ بْنَ زَاهِرِ الثَّمِيمِيِّ ثُمَّ الْوَالِيَّ وَمَدْعُورَ بْنَ عَدِيِّ الْعُجَلِيِّ وَالْمُضَارِبَ بْنَ زَيْدِ الْعُجَلِيِّ وَمَعْبُدَ بْنَ مِرَّةَ الْعُجَلِيِّ — وَكَانَ مِنْ دُهَاهِ الْعَرَبِ — فَقَالَ: إِنِّي مُرْسِلُكُمْ إِلَى هَؤُلَاءِ الْقَوْمِ فَمَا عِنْدَكُمْ؟ قَالُوا جَمِيعًا: نَتَّبِعُ مَا تَأْمُرُنَا بِهِ وَنَتَّبِعُ إِلَيْهِ، فَإِذَا جَاءَ أَمْرٌ لَمْ يَكُنْ مِنْكَ فِيهِ شَيْءٌ نَظَرْنَا أَمْتَلٌ مَا يَنْبَغِي وَأَنْفَعَهُ لِلنَّاسِ فَكَلَّمْنَاهُمْ بِهِ، فَقَالَ سَعْدٌ: هَذَا فِعْلُ الْحِرْمَةِ، اذْهَبُوا فَتَهَيَّبُوا، فَقَالَ رَبِيعُ بْنُ عَامِرٍ: إِنَّ الْأَعْجَمَ لَهُمْ آرَاءٌ وَأَدَابٌ، وَمَتَى نَأْتِيهِمْ جَمِيعًا يَرَوْنَ أَنَا قَدْ اخْتَفَلْنَا بِهِمْ! فَلَا تَرُدُّهُمْ عَلَى رَجُلٍ، فَمَالَتْهُ جَمِيعًا عَلَى ذَلِكَ، فَقَالَ: فَسَرَّخُونِي، فَسَرَّخَهُ.

فَخَرَجَ رَبِيعٌ لِيَدْخُلَ عَلَى رُسْتَمَ عَسْكَرَهُ، فَاخْتَبَسَهُ الَّذِينَ عَلَى الْفَنْطَرَةِ، وَأَرْسَلَ إِلَى رُسْتَمَ لِمَجِيبِهِ، فَاسْتَشَارَ عِظَمَاءَ أَهْلِ فَارَسَ، فَقَالَ: مَا تَرَوْنَ؟ أُنَبِّأُكُمْ! [فاجتمع ملوهم على المباهاة]، فأظهروا الزبرج، وبسطوا البسط والنمارق، ولم يتركوها شيئاً، ووضع لرستم سرير الذهب، وألبس زينته من الأنماط والوسائد المنسوجة بالذهب. وأقبل ربيعي يبسير على فارس له زبنة قصيرة، معه سيف له مشوف، وعمده لفاقة ثوب خلق، وزمحه معلوب بقدي، معه حنفة من جلود البقر، على وجهها أديم أحمر مثل الرغيب، ومعه قوسه ونبله.

فَلَمَّا غَشِيَ الْمَلِكَ وَانْتَهَى إِلَيْهِ وَإِلَى أَدْنَى الْبُسْطِ قِيلَ لَهُ: انزِلْ، فَحَمَلَهَا عَلَى الْبَسَاطِ، فَلَمَّا اسْتَوَتْ عَلَيْهِ نَزَلَ عَنْهَا وَرَبَطَهَا بِوَسَادَتَيْنِ، فَسَقَطَتْهُمَا ثُمَّ ادْخَلَ الْحَبْلَ فِيهِمَا، فَلَمْ يَسْتَطِيعُوا أَنْ يَنْهَوْهُ، وَإِنَّمَا أَرَوْهُ التَّهَاقُوتَ وَعَرَفَ مَا أَرَادُوا، فَأَرَادَ اسْتِحْرَاجَهُمْ. وَعَلَيْهِ دِرْعٌ لَهُ كَانَتْهَا أَصْنَاءٌ وَيَلْمُهُ عِبَادَةٌ بَعِيرُهُ فَذَجَابَهَا وَتَدَرَّعَهَا، وَشَدَّهَا عَلَى وَسْطِهِ بِسَلْبٍ، وَقَدْ شَدَّ رَأْسَهُ بِمِعْجَرَتِهِ، وَكَانَ أَكْثَرَ الْعَرَبِ شَعْرَةً، وَمِعْجَرَتُهُ نِسْعَةٌ بَعِيرُهُ، وَلِرَأْسِهِ أَرْبَعُ صَفَائِرٍ قَدْ فُتِنَ قِيَامًا كَأَنَّهُنَّ فُرُونَ الْوَعْلَةِ، فَقَالُوا: ضَعِ سِلَاحَكَ، فَقَالَ: إِنِّي لَمْ أَتِكُمْ قَاصِعَ سِلَاحِي بِأَمْرِكُمْ، أَنْتُمْ دَعَوْتُمُونِي، فَأَنْ أَيْبُكُمْ أَنْ أَيْبُكُمْ كَمَا أَرِيدُ رَجَعْتُ. فَأَخْبَرُوا رُسْتَمَ فَقَالَ: ائْتُوا لَهُ، هَلْ هُوَ إِلَّا رَجُلٌ وَاحِدٌ!

فَأَقْبَلَ يَتَرَكُّ عَلَى رُحْمِهِ، وَرَجُّهُ نَصْلٌ، يُقَارِبُ الْخَطْوَ وَيَرْجُ النَّمَارِقَ وَالْبُسْطَ، فَمَا تَرَكَ لَهُمْ نَمْرَقَةً وَلَا بَسَاطًا إِلَّا أَفْسَدَهُ وَتَرَكَهُ مُنْهَتِكًا مُحْرَقًا، فَلَمَّا دَنَا مِنْ رُسْتَمَ تَعَلَّقَ بِهِ الْحَرَسُ، وَجَلَسَ عَلَى الْأَرْضِ، وَرَكَزَ رُحْمَهُ بِالْبُسْطِ، فَقَالُوا: مَا حَمَلَكَ عَلَى هَذَا؟ قَالَ: إِنَّا لَا نَسْتَجِبُ الْقُعُودَ عَلَى زِينَتِكُمْ هَذِهِ. فَكَلَّمَهُ فَقَالَ: مَا جَاءَ بِكُمْ؟ قَالَ: اللَّهُ ابْتَعَثَنَا، وَاللَّهُ جَاءَ بِنَا لِنُخْرِجَ مَنْ شَاءَ مِنْ عِبَادَةِ الْعِبَادِ إِلَى عِبَادَةِ اللَّهِ، وَمَنْ ضَيَّقَ الدُّنْيَا إِلَى سَعَتِهَا، وَمَنْ جَوَّرَ الْأَدْبَانَ إِلَى عَدْلِ الْإِسْلَامِ، فَأَرْسَلْنَا بِيَدِهِ إِلَى خَلْقِهِ لِنُدْعُوهُمْ إِلَيْهِ، فَمَنْ قَبِلَ مِنَّا ذَلِكَ قَبِلْنَا ذَلِكَ مِنْهُ وَرَجَعْنَا عَنْهُ، وَتَرَكَنَاهُ وَأَرْضَنَاهُ يَلْبِيهَا دُونَنَا، وَمَنْ أَبِي قَاتَلَنَاهُ أَبَدًا حَتَّى نُفْضِي إِلَى مَوْعِدِ اللَّهِ. قَالَ: وَمَا مَوْعِدُ اللَّهِ؟ قَالَ: الْجَنَّةُ لِمَنْ مَاتَ عَلَى قِتَالِ مَنْ أَبِي، وَالطُّفْرُ لِمَنْ بَقِيَ.

فَقَالَ رُسْتَمُ: قَدْ سَمِعْتُ مَقَالَتِكُمْ، فَهَلْ لَكُمْ أَنْ تُؤَخَّرُوا هَذَا الْأَمْرَ حَتَّى نَنْظُرَ فِيهِ وَنَنْظُرُوا! قَالَ: نَعَمْ، كَمْ أَحَبُّ إِلَيْكُمْ؟ أَيُّوْمًا أَوْ يَوْمَيْنِ؟ قَالَ: لَا بَلْ حَتَّى نُكَاتِبَ أَهْلَ رَأِينَا وَرُؤَسَاءَ قَوْمِنَا، وَأَرَادَ مَقَارَبَتَهُ وَمَدَافَعَتَهُ، فَقَالَ: إِنَّ مِمَّا سَأَلْنَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ وَعَمِلَ بِهِ أَيُّمُنَا أَلَّا نُمَكِّنَ الْأَعْدَاءَ مِنْ آدَانِنَا، وَلَا نُؤَجِّلُهُمْ عِنْدَ الْإِلْقَاءِ أَكْثَرَ مِنْ ثَلَاثٍ، فَتَحْنُ مَتَرِدُونَ عَنْكُمْ ثَلَاثًا، فَانظُرْ فِي أَمْرِكَ وَأَمْرِهِمْ، وَاخْتَرْ وَاحِدَةً مِنْ ثَلَاثٍ بَعْدَ الْأَجْلِ: اخْتَرِ الْإِسْلَامَ وَنَدْعُكَ وَأَرْضَكَ، أَوِ الْجَزَاءَ فَتَقْبَلُ وَتَكْفُ عَنكَ، وَإِنْ كُنْتَ عَنْ نَصْرِنَا غَيِّبًا تَرَكَنَاكَ مِنْهُ، وَإِنْ كُنْتَ إِلَيْهِ مُحْتَاجًا مَعْنَاكَ، أَوِ الْمُنَابَذَةَ فِي الْيَوْمِ الرَّابِعِ، وَلَسْنَا نَبْدُوكَ فِيهَا بَيْنَنَا وَبَيْنَ الْيَوْمِ الرَّابِعِ إِلَّا أَنْ تَبْدَأَنَا، أَنَا كَفَيْتُ لَكَ بِذَلِكَ عَلَى أَصْحَابِي وَعَلَى جَمِيعِ مَنْ تَرَى. قَالَ: أَسَيِّدُهُمْ أَنْتَ؟ قَالَ: لَا، وَلَكِنَّ الْمُسْلِمِينَ كَالْجَسَدِ بَعْضُهُمْ مِنْ بَعْضٍ، يُجِيرُ أَدْنَاهُمْ عَلَى أَعْلَاهُمْ.

فَخَلَصَ رُسْتَمُ بَرُوسَاءَ أَهْلِ فَارِسَ، فَقَالَ: مَا تَرَوْنَ؟ هَلْ رَأَيْتُمْ كَلَامًا قَطُّ أَوْضَحَ وَلَا أَعَزَّ مِنْ كَلَامِ هَذَا الرَّجُلِ؟ قَالُوا: مَعَاذَ اللَّهِ لَكَ أَنْ تَمِيلَ إِلَى شَيْءٍ مِنْ هَذَا وَتَدْعَ دِينَكَ لِهَذَا الْكَلْبِ! أَمَا تَرَى إِلَى ثِيَابِهِ! فَقَالَ: وَيْحَكُمْ لَا تَنْظُرُوا إِلَى الثِّيَابِ، وَلَكِنْ انظُرُوا إِلَى الرَّأْيِ وَالْكَلَامِ وَالسِّيَرَةِ، إِنَّ الْعَرَبَ تَسْتَخْفُ بِاللِّبَاسِ وَالْمَأْكَلِ وَيَصُونُونَ الْأَحْسَابَ، لَيْسُوا مِثْلَكُمْ فِي اللَّبَاسِ، وَلَا يَرَوْنَ فِيهِ مَا تَرَوْنَ. وَأَقْبَلُوا إِلَيْهِ يَتَنَاوَلُونَ سِلَاحَهُ، وَيُرْهِدُونَهُ فِيهِ، فَقَالَ لَهُمْ: هَلْ لَكُمْ إِلَى أَنْ تَرُونِي فَأَرِيكُمْ؟ فَأَخْرَجَ سَيْفَهُ مِنْ خِرْقِهِ كَأَنَّهُ شُعْلَةٌ نَارٍ فَقَالَ الْقَوْمُ: اغْمِذْهُ، فَعَمِدْهُ، ثُمَّ رَمَى ثُرْسًا وَرَمَوْا حَجْفَتَهُ، فَحُرِقَ ثُرْسُهُمْ وَسَلِمَتْ حَجْفَتُهُ، فَقَالَ: يَا أَهْلَ فَارِسَ، إِنَّكُمْ عَظُمْتُمْ الطَّعَامَ وَاللِّبَاسَ وَالشَّرَابَ وَإِنَّا صَعَرْنَا هُنَّ، ثُمَّ رَجَعَ إِلَى أَنْ يَنْظُرُوا إِلَى الْأَجْلِ.

فَلَمَّا كَانَ مِنَ الْعَدِّ بَعَثُوا أَنْ ابْعَثْ إِلَيْنَا ذَلِكَ الرَّجُلَ، فَبِعَثَ إِلَيْهِمْ سَعْدُ حُدَيْبَةَ بْنِ مِحْصَنٍ، فَأَقْبَلَ فِي نَحْوِ مِنْ ذَلِكَ الرَّيِّ، حَتَّى إِذَا كَانَ عَلَى أَدْنَى الْبِسَاطِ، قِيلَ لَهُ: انزل، قَالَ: ذَلِكَ لَوْ جِئْتُكُمْ فِي حَاجَتِي، فَقُولُوا لِمَلِكِكُمْ: أَلَهُ الْحَاجَةُ أَمْ لِي؟ فَإِنْ قَالَ: لِي فَقَدْ كَذَبَ، وَرَجَعْتُ وَتَرَكْتُكُمْ، فَإِنْ قَالَ: لَهُ لَمْ آتِكُمْ إِلَّا عَلَى مَا أَحْبَبْتُ فَقَالَ: دَعُوهُ، فَجَاءَ حَتَّى وَقَفَ عَلَيْهِ وَرُسْتَمُ عَلَى سَرِيرِهِ، فَقَالَ: انزل، قَالَ: لَا أَفْعَلُ، فَلَمَّا أَبِي سَأَلَهُ: مَا بَالُكَ جِئْتَ وَلَمْ يَجِيءْ صَاحِبُنَا بِالْأَمْسِ؟ قَالَ: إِنَّ أَمِيرَنَا يُحِبُّ أَنْ يَعْدِلَ بَيْنَنَا فِي الشِّدَّةِ وَالرَّخَاءِ، فَهَذِهِ نَوْبِي.

قَالَ: مَا جَاءَ بِكُمْ؟ قَالَ: إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ مِنْ عَلَيْنَا بِدِينِهِ وَأَرَانَا آيَاتِهِ، حَتَّى عَرَفْنَاهُ وَكُنَّا لَهُ مُنْكَرِينَ، ثُمَّ أَمَرَنَا بِدُعَاءِ النَّاسِ إِلَى وَاحِدَةٍ مِنْ ثَلَاثٍ، فَأَيُّهَا أَجَابُوا إِلَيْهَا قَبْلُنَا هَا: الْإِسْلَامُ وَتَنْصَرَفَ عَنْكُمْ، أَوْ الْجَزَاءُ وَنَمْنَعُكُمْ إِنْ اخْتَجْتُمْ إِلَيْ ذَلِكَ، أَوْ الْمُنَابَذَةَ، فَقَالَ: أَوْ الْمُنَابَذَةَ، أَوْ الْمُوَادَعَةَ إِلَى يَوْمٍ مَا؟ فَقَالَ: نَعَمْ، ثَلَاثًا مِنْ أَمْسٍ، فَلَمَّا لَمْ يَجِدْ عِنْدَهُ إِلَّا ذَلِكَ رَدَّهُ وَأَقْبَلَ عَلَى أَصْحَابِهِ، فَقَالَ: وَيْحَكُمْ! أَلَا تَرَوْنَ إِلَى مَا أَرَى! جَاءَنَا الْأَوَّلُ بِالْأَمْسِ فَغَلَبْنَا عَلَى أَرْضِنَا، وَحَقَّرَ مَا نَعْظُمُ، وَأَقَامَ فَرَسَهُ عَلَى زِبْرَجِنَا وَرَبَطَهُ بِهِ، فَهُوَ فِي يَمَنِ الطَّائِرِ، ذَهَبَ بَارِضِنَا وَمَا فِيهَا إِلَيْهِمْ مَعَ فَضْلِ عَقْلِهِ، وَجَاءَنَا هَذَا الْيَوْمَ فَوَقَفَ عَلَيْنَا، فَهُوَ فِي يَمَنِ الطَّائِرِ، يَفُومُ عَلَى أَرْضِنَا دُونَنا، حَتَّى أَعْضَبُونَهُ وَأَعْضَبُونَهُ.

فَلَمَّا كَانَ مِنَ الْعَدِّ أُرْسِلَ: ابْعَثُوا إِلَيْنَا رَجُلًا، فَبِعَثُوا إِلَيْهِمُ الْمُغِيرَةَ بْنَ شُعْبَةَ.

(تاريخ الطبري 521/3)

*“Saif ibn Umar has narrated from Muhammad, Talhah, Amr, and Ziyad. They say that Saad ibn Abi Waqqas (RA) summoned Mughirah ibn Shubah, Busr ibn Abi Rahm, Urfajah ibn Harthamah, Hudhayfah ibn Muhsin, Ribi ibn Amir, Qarfab ibn Zahir al-Taymi (later al-Wathili), Madhur ibn Adi al-Ajli, Mudarib ibn Yazid al-Ajli, and Mabad ibn Murrab al-Ajli—who were counted among the most wise and intelligent men of the Arabs. Saad (RA) said to them: I want to send you to those people (that is, the Persians), so what will you say to them? All of them replied: We will say exactly what you command us and will remain bound by it. However, if some matter arises concerning which there is no specific instruction from you, then we will think about what is more appropriate and more beneficial for the people, and we will say that to the Persians. Saad (RA) said: This is indeed the way of wisdom. Go and prepare yourselves.*

*At this, Ribi ibn Amir said: The people of Ajam (Persia) have their own customs and manners. If all of us go to them together, they will think that we are giving them great importance. Therefore, you should send only one man to them. Everyone agreed with this opinion. Ribi ibn Amir said: Send me alone. So Saad (RA) sent him.*

*Ribi ibn Amir set out to meet Rustam in his army. When he reached the bridge, the guards stopped him and sent word of his arrival to Rustam. Rustam consulted the great Persian chiefs and asked them: What is your opinion? Should we display our grandeur and splendor before this Arab envoy, or should we treat him with indifference? They all agreed that he should be overawed by displays of splendor. So they displayed a great show of gold, spread precious carpets and silk cushions, and left nothing undone in showing their pomp and magnificence. For Rustam, a golden throne was set up, adorned with valuable carpets and brocade cushions.*

*Ribi ibn Amir advanced riding on a small, thick-haired mare. He had with him a shining sword wrapped in an old and worn cloth. His spear was hanging by a strap, and he carried a shield made of cowhide. On the shield was a piece of red leather, round like a loaf of bread. He also had a bow and a quiver of arrows.*

*When he reached the royal court and came near the first spread carpet, he was told: Get down from your mare! But Ribi rode his mare onto the carpet, and when it stepped onto it, he dismounted. He then tore two cushions, passed a rope through them, and tied his mare to them. The Persians could not stop him, because they wanted to show indifference toward him, and Ribi understood what they intended, so he decided to trouble them in return. Ribi wore a coat of mail that shone like the water of a pond. Over his body was a cloak made of camel hide, which he had cut and worn like armor, fastening it around his waist with a strap. He had tied his head with an iqal. Ribi had more hair on his head than anyone else in all Arabia. The 'iqal on his head was actually a rope used for tying a camel's saddle. His hair was arranged into four thick braids, stretched out like the horns of a mountain goat.*

*The guards said to him: Take off your weapons. Ribi replied: I have not come to you of my own accord so that I should remove my weapons at your command. You yourselves have summoned me. If you do not wish me to come in the state that I choose, then I will go back. The guards informed Rustam, and he said: Let him come; after all, he is only one man.*

*Ribi advanced, leaning on his spear. The spearhead was bare. He took small steps forward, tearing the carpets and cushions with his spear as he went. He left no carpet or cushion there without slashing and ruining it. When he came near Rustam, the guards seized him and stopped him. He sat down on the ground and drove his spear into the cushions. People asked him why he had done that. Ribi replied: We do not like to sit on these adornments of yours.*

*Rustam addressed him and asked: Why have you people come here? Ribi replied: Allah has raised us with this religion, and He Himself has brought us here so that He may, through us, take whom He wills out of the servitude of humans into the servitude of God, and from the narrowness of this world into the vastness of the worship of Allah, and from the injustice of religions into the justice of Islam. He has given us His religion and sent us to His creation so that we may call them to it. Whoever accepts our call, we will accept his faith and return, leaving him and his land in his own hands. But whoever refuses, we will fight him until we attain the promise of Allah.*

*Rustam asked: What is the promise of Allah? Ribi replied: For those who are killed while fighting the rejecters, Paradise; and for those who live, victory over the enemy.*

*Rustam said: I have heard what you said. Would you like to postpone this matter for some time, so that we may also think and you may also reflect? Ribi said: Yes. How much time do you want—one day or two days? Rustam said: No, we need enough time to consult our people of opinion and the chiefs of our nation. In reality, he wanted to incline Ribi toward reconciliation and away from war. Ribi said: The Sunnah established by our Prophet (PBUH), and which our leaders have continued to follow, is that we do not give the enemy control over our ears (that is, we do not keep listening to them excessively), and once we have come to the battlefield, we do not grant them more than three days' respite. So we will wait for you for three days. Consider your matter and the matter of your people, and choose one of three paths: either accept Islam, in which case we will leave you and your land and go away; or agree to pay jizyah, and we will accept it and will not attack you. If you do not need our help, we will not interfere; but if you do need our help, then in return for the jizyah we will protect you. And the third path is that on the fourth day we will fight you. However, during this period we*

*will not initiate fighting unless you begin it. I guarantee this on behalf of my companions and the entire army that you see.*

*Rustam asked: Are you their leader? Ribi replied: No, but the Muslims are like one body; even their lowest-ranking individual can grant protection on behalf of the highest-ranking among them.*

*Then Rustam spoke privately with the Persian chiefs and said: What do you think? Have you ever heard words clearer and more confident than this man's speech? They replied: God forbid that you be influenced by this man's words and abandon your religion for this dog! Do you not see his clothing? Rustam said: Woe to you! Do not look at his clothing; rather, look at his opinion, his speech, and his conduct. The Arabs consider clothing and food insignificant, but they hold lineage and honor dear. They are not like you in their dress, nor do they give it the importance that you do.*

*Then they came to Ribi and began touching his weapons, trying to show him how insignificant they were. Ribi said: Do you want me to show you? Then he drew his sword from its sheath, and it shone like a flame of fire. The people said: Put it back in its sheath, so he did. Then Ribi threw down his shield, and they also threw down their shield. Their shield shattered, while Ribi's remained intact. Ribi said: O people of Persia, you have given great importance to food and clothing, but we consider all these things insignificant. Then Ribi returned so that they might reflect until the respite was completed.*

*When the next day came, the Persians sent a message: Send that man to us again. So Saad (RA) sent Hudhayfab ibn Muhsin. He went in the same manner, and when he reached the first carpet, he was told: Get down from your mount. Hudhayfab said: If I had come for my own need, I would have dismounted. Ask your king whether he needs me or I need him. If he says that I need him, he is lying, and I will leave you and go back; but if he says that he needs me, then I will come in the state that I prefer. Rustam said: Let him come. So Hudhayfab came and stood before Rustam, who was sitting on his throne. Rustam said: Come down. Hudhayfab said: I will not come down. When he did not agree, Rustam asked: Why is it that today you have come, and not the man who came yesterday? Hudhayfab said: Our commander wants equality among us in hardship and ease, so today it is my turn.*

*Rustam asked: Why have you people come? Hudhayfab said: Allah has favored us with His religion and shown us His signs, until we recognized Him, whereas before that we were unaware of Him. Then He commanded us to invite people to accept one of three things, and whichever of them they choose, we accept it: either you accept Islam and we will leave your land, or you pay jizyah and in return we will protect you if you need it, or else there will be war.*

*Rustam said: Can there be a truce for a specific period? Hudhayfab replied: Yes—from yesterday until three days (we have an agreement not to fight). When Rustam received no answer other than this, he sent Hudhayfab back and turned to his people and said: May you be ruined! Do you not see what I see? The man who came yesterday took possession of our land and belittled the things that we consider great, and he rode his mare onto our gold-adorned cushions and tied it to them. His omens were favorable. He was superior in intellect and understanding, and he took our land and its things with him. And today this man has come and stood before us. His omens are also favorable. He is standing on our land while we are not standing. By saying these things, Rustam angered the Persians, and in response the Persians angered Rustam.*

*When the next day came, they sent a message: Send us some man. So the Muslims sent Mughirah ibn Shubah to them.”*

## LEXICAL EXPLANATION

**dubat** ‘: This is the plural of *dabiyah*. It refers to a person of exceptional intelligence and sound judgment. *Dubatul arab* means the astute and sagacious people of the Arabs.

**Ihtafalna bihim**: The literal meaning of *ihhtifal* is to give someone an enthusiastic reception. Here it means to give importance to someone and to regard them with esteem.

**Nubahi**: Derived from *biha*, which means splendor and magnificence. *nubahi* means to display our grandeur and splendor.

**natabawanu**: Derived from *hawn*, which means humiliation and contempt. *natabawanu* means to make him feel that he is not being given importance or value.

**zabba**: The feminine form of *azaba*, meaning a mare with long and thick hair.

**mashuf**: Shining, glossy.

**maghlub**: Wrapped, folded.

**adatun**: A small pond. The water of a pond shines in sunlight; here the coat of mail is likened to a pond from this aspect.

**mijaratun**: A cloth wrapped around the head.

**Al-yalmaqu**: A cloak (outer garment).

**Al-munabadhatu**: The literal meaning of *nabdh* is to throw something away. The word is also used for terminating a treaty or security. From this, *munabadhab* comes to mean a declaration of war or an invitation to combat.

## EXPLANATION AND CLARIFICATION

Before the Battle of Qadisiyyah, the discussions between the Muslims and the Iranian commander Rustam continued over several days in different stages, and different individuals were sent in turn for this purpose. The narration under discussion mentions the first stage, when Ribī ibn Amir, Hudhayfah ibn Muhsin, and Mughirah ibn Shu'bah were sent on separate days to speak with Rustam. In the next stage, a delegation consisting of the remaining people of sound judgment was sent collectively for discussion; its details will be mentioned in later narrations.

In his conversation with Rustam, Ribī ibn Amir highlighted a central objective of the Muslims' initiative: to call people from the servitude of humans to the servitude of God, and from the oppression of religions to the justice of Islam. In this regard, Ribī ibn Amir and Hudhayfah ibn Muhsin particularly emphasized that Muslims do not believe in a division between elite and common classes, and that the responsibility of representation and advocacy among Muslims can be entrusted to any one of them. Ribī made it clear that if, as a representative of the Muslims, he was guaranteeing a three-day non-aggression period, then the entire army would abide by it, because according to Muslim law, if even the lowest-ranking Muslim grants security to the enemy, its observance becomes binding on all Muslims. Likewise, on the second day, Hudhayfah ibn Muhsin explained to Rustam the reason he had been sent instead of Ribī: that the Muslim commander ensures equality among all in both hardship and ease, meaning that no discrimination is practiced by selecting only particular individuals for specific responsibilities while denying others the opportunity.

## SOURCE REFERENCE AND VARIATIONS IN TRANSMISSION

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This incident of the dialogues of Ribī ibn Amir and Hudhayfah ibn Muhsin with Rustam has also been reported by al-Kalā‘i through the chain of Saif ibn ‘Umar (in *al-Iktifa’*, vol. 2, pp. 457–461). Some sentences placed in brackets in the text have been taken from *al-Iktifa’* because they are more appropriate in meaning.

[To be continued.....]



## THE NIGHT JOURNEY AND ASCENSION - 7

Syed Manzoor ul Hassan

Based on Javed Ahmed Ghamidi's Conversation with Hassan Ilyas

### 4. THE EVENT OF SHAQ AL-SADR (SPLITTING OF CHEST) AND MI'RAJ

عن شريك بن عبد الله أنه قال سمعت أنس بن مالك قول: ليلة اسري برسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم من مسجد الكعبة انه جاءه ثلاثة نفر قبل ان يوحى إليه وهو نائم في المسجد الحرام، فقال اولهم: ايهم هو؟ فقال اوسطهم: هو خيرهم، فقال آخرهم: خذوا خيرهم، فكانت تلك الليلة.

فلم يرههم حتى اتوه ليلة أخرى فيما يرى قلبه، وتنام عينه، — ولا ينام قلبه، وكذلك الانبياء تنام اعينهم ولا تنام قلوبهم، — فلم يكلموه حتى احتملوه فوضعه عند بئر زمزم، فتولاه منهم جبريل، فشق جبريل ما بين نحره إلى لبتة حتى فرغ من صدره وجوفه، فغسله من ماء زمزم بيده حتى انقى جوفه، ثم اتي بطست من ذهب فيه تور من ذهب محشواً إيماناً وحكمةً، فحشا به صدره ولغاديدته يعني عروق حلقه ثم اطبقه.

ثم عرج به إلى السماء الدنيا، فضرب باباً من ابوابها، فناده اهل السماء من هذا؟ فقال جبريل: قالوا: ومن معك؟ قال: معي محمد، قال: وقد بعث؟ قال: نعم، قالوا: فمرحباً به واهلاً، فيستبشر به اهل السماء لا يعلم اهل السماء بما يريد الله به في الارض حتى يعلمهم.

فوجد في السماء الدنيا آدم، فقال له جبريل: هذا ابوك آدم فسلم عليه، فسلم عليه ورد عليه آدم، وقال: مرحباً واهلاً بابني، نعم الابن انت فإذا هو في السماء الدنيا بنهرين يطردان، فقال: ما هذان النهران يا جبريل؟ قال: هذا النيل والفرات عنصرهما، ثم مضى به في السماء، فإذا هو بنهر آخر عليه قصر من لؤلؤ وزبرجد، فضرب يده، فإذا هو مسك اذفر، قال: ما هذا يا جبريل؟ قال: هذا الكوثر الذي خبا لك ربك.

ثم عرج به إلى السماء الثانية، فقالت الملائكة له مثل ما قالت له الاولى من هذا قال جبريل: قالوا ومن معك؟ قال محمد صلى الله عليه وسلم، قالوا: وقد بعث إليه؟ قال: نعم، قالوا: مرحباً به واهلاً .

ثم عرج به إلى السماء الثالثة، وقالوا له مثل ما قالت الاولى والثانية، ثم عرج به إلى الرابعة، فقالوا له مثل ذلك، ثم عرج به إلى السماء الخامسة، فقالوا مثل ذلك، ثم عرج به إلى السماء السادسة، فقالوا له مثل ذلك، ثم عرج به إلى السماء السابعة، فقالوا له مثل ذلك.

كل سماء فيها انبياء قد سماهم، فواعيت منهم إدريس في الثانية، وهارون في الرابعة، وآخر في الخامسة، لم احفظ اسمه، وإبراهيم في السادسة، وموسى في السابعة — بتفضيل كلام الله — فقال موسى: رب لم اظن ان يرفع علي احد ! ثم علا به فوق ذلك بما لا يعلمه إلا الله، حتى جاء سدرة المنتهى، ودنا للجبار رب العزة، فتدلى، حتى كان منه قاب قوسين او ادنى، فوحي الله فيما اوحى إليه خمسين صلاةً على امتك كل يوم وليلة.

ثم هبط حتى بلغ موسى، فاحتبسه موسى، فقال: يا محمد، ماذا عهد إليك ربك؟ قال: عهد إلي خمسين صلاةً كل يوم وليلة، قال: إن امتك لا تستطيع ذلك فارجع، فليخفف عنك ربك وعنهم، فالتفت النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم إلى جبريل كأنه يستشير في ذلك، فإشار إليه جبريل: ان نعم إن شئت فعلاً به إلى الجبار، فقال وهو مكانه: يا رب، خفف عنا فإن امتي

لا تستطيع هذا، فوضع عنه عشر صلوات.

ثم رجع إلى موسى، فاحتبسه فلم يزل يردده موسى إلى ربه حتى صارت إلى خمس صلوات، ثم احتبسه موسى عند الخمس، فقال: يا محمد، والله لقد راودت بني إسرائيل قومي على ادنى من هذا، فضعفوا فتركوه، فامتك اضعف اجسادًا وقلوبًا وابدانًا وابصارًا واسماعًا، فارجع، فليخفف عنك ربك كل ذلك يلتفت النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم إلى جبريل ليشير عليه ولا يكره ذلك جبريل، فرفعه عند الخامسة.

فقال: يا رب، إن امتي ضعفاء اجسادهم وقلوبهم واسماعهم وابصارهم وابدانهم، فخفف عنا، فقال الجبار: يا محمد، قال: لبيك وسعديك، قال: إنه لا يبذل القول لدي كما فرضته عليك في ام الكتاب، قال: فكل حسنة بعشر امثالها فهي خمسون في ام الكتاب وهي خمس عليك.

فرجع إلى موسى، فقال: كيف فعلت؟، فقال: خفف عنا اعطانا بكل حسنة عشر امثالها، قال موسى: قد والله راودت بني إسرائيل على ادنى من ذلك، فتركوه ارجع إلى ربك فليخفف عنك ايضًا.

قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: يا موسى، قد والله استحييت من ربي مما اختلفت إليه، قال: فاهبط باسم الله. قال: واستيقظ وهو في مسجد الحرام.

*It is narrated from Shareek bin Abdullah. He says that he heard Anas bin Malik (RA) describe the night when the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) was taken from the Masjid al-Ka'bah. He narrates: Before the revelation began, the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) was sleeping in the Sacred Mosque when three individuals (angels) came to him. One of them asked: 'Who among these (people) is he?' The one in the middle answered: 'He is the best among these (people).' The last one said: 'Take the best among them.' (Then the three returned). That was all that happened that night.*

*After that, the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) did not see them until they came again on another night. At that time, his condition was such that his heart was seeing, but his eyes were sleeping, And his heart never slept. This is the case with all prophets; their eyes may sleep, but their hearts never sleep. They did not speak to him, but lifted him and laid him beside the well of Zamzam. Then, among them, Gabriel (AS) took him into his custody. Gabriel (AS) split open the part of his body from his throat to the lower part of his chest and took out whatever was inside his chest and abdomen. Then they washed him with Zamzam water using their hands until he was completely purified. Afterwards, a golden tray containing a golden bowl filled with faith and wisdom was brought. Gabriel (AS) filled his chest and the veins of his neck with it and then sealed the chest back as it was.*

*Then Gabriel (AS) took him on a flight towards the lowest heaven. Upon reaching, they knocked on one of its doors. From heaven, a voice asked: 'Who is it?' He replied: 'Gabriel.' The question came: 'Who is with you?' The answer was: 'Muhammad' Asked: 'Has he been invited?' Gabriel (AS) said: 'Yes.' They said: 'Welcome, he is very welcome. The inhabitants of the heavens are pleased with his arrival.' (However,) the inhabitants of the heavens do not know what Allah intends from them concerning the earth until they are informed about it.*

*Then, on this lowest heaven, he (Prophet Muhammad) saw Prophet Adam (PBUH). Gabriel (AS) said to the Prophet (PBUH): He is your father, greet him. Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) greeted Prophet Adam (PBUH), and he responded to the greeting. Then Adam (PBUH) said: 'Welcome, a good son and a good prophet.' Meanwhile, he saw two rivers flowing in the lowest heaven. He asked: 'Gabriel, what are these rivers?' Gabriel (AS) explained: 'These are the real forms of the Nile and the Euphrates.' Then Gabriel escorted him forward, and the Prophet (PBUH) saw another river at the banks of which there was a palace made of pearls and emeralds. When he put his hand into the river, he found its soil as fragrant as musk. He asked: 'Gabriel,*

*what is this?’ He said: ‘This is Al-Kawthar, which your Lord has reserved especially for you.’*

*After that, Gabriel (AS) took him to the second heaven. There, the angels said the same thing as the angels of the first heaven had said. Hence, they asked who was with him. The answer was: ‘Muhammad (PBUH) is with me.’ They asked: ‘Has he been invited?’ Gabriel (PBUH) said: ‘Yes.’ They said: ‘Welcome, he is very welcome.’*

*Then Gabriel (AS) took him to the third heaven, where the angels said the same thing as those before them had said. Then Gabriel (AS) took him to the fourth heaven, where the angels said the same thing as those before them had said. Then Gabriel (AS) took him to the fifth heaven, where the angels said the same thing as those before them had said. Then Gabriel (AS) took him to the sixth heaven, where the angels said the same thing as those before them had said. Then Gabriel (AS) took him to the seventh heaven, where the angels said the same thing as those before them had said.*

*On each heaven, prophets were present (with whom the Prophet Muhammad met). The names of these prophets were also mentioned. (The narrator mentions that) he remembered these names: Idris (PBUH) on the second heaven, Harun (PBUH) on the fourth heaven, another prophet on the fifth heaven - whose name he could not recall - Abraham (PBUH) on the sixth heaven, and Moses (PBUH) on the seventh heaven - because he had the honor of speaking directly with Allah. - Moses (PBUH), seeing the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) accompanied by Gabriel (AS) and learning that he was being taken above the seventh heaven, exclaimed in astonishment: ‘My Lord, I did not imagine that anyone would be raised above me!’*

*Then Gabriel (AS) took him above this (seventh heaven) to those heights known only to Allah until he reached Sidrat al-Muntaha. Then Allah descended and came close to him until there was only the distance of two bow lengths or even lesser between the two. Then Allah imparted His revelation to him and commanded him to pray fifty times in a day, which became obligatory for his Ummah.*

*Afterwards, he descended and reached Moses (PBUH). Moses (PBUH) stopped him. He asked: ‘O Muhammad, what responsibility has Allah placed upon you?’ He said: ‘I have been commanded to pray fifty times in day and night.’ Moses (PBUH) said: ‘Your Ummah does not have the strength for this, (so my advice is) go back and ask for a reduction on behalf of yourself and your Ummah.’ The Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) turned towards Gabriel (AS), as if seeking his advice. Gabriel (AS) indicated it was okay if he wished to return. Consequently, he returned to the same place in the presence of Allah (where he had met God earlier). Prophet Muhammad requested: ‘O Lord, grant us concession in this matter, for my Ummah does not have the strength (to pray fifty times).’ (Accepting the request) Allah reduced it by ten prayers (to make it forty prayers a day).*

*Upon return, when Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) reached Moses (PBUH), he stopped him again. (And gave the same advice, upon which Muhammad (PBUH) returned to the presence of Allah). The process of being sent back by Moses (PBUH) for a reduction continued (and Allah kept reducing it) until the number of obligatory prayers was reduced to five. Moses (PBUH) then stopped him again and (as usual) said: ‘O Muhammad, by Allah, I tried to convince my people, Israelites, to accept even less than this, but they showed weakness and abandoned (the obligation). Your Ummah is even weaker in heart, body, and vision. So, go back once more so that Allah may further reduce it.’ The Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) looked towards Gabriel (AS) to seek his opinion. Gabriel (AS) did not dislike this. Hence, he took him to the almighty Allah for the fifth time.*

*Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) requested: ‘O Lord, the people of my Ummah are weak in heart, body,*

*hearing, and vision, so I request further reduction.’ Allah said, “O Muhammad!” The Messenger of Allah said, “Labbaik wa Sa’daik (I am at Your service, O Allah, I am at Your service).” Allah said, “My decree does not change. (Thus, the command will remain) as I have decreed upon you in the Mother of the Book (i.e., the Lauh Mahfuz -Preserved Tablet). (However, the form of reduction for your nation will be that) one virtuous deed will be equal to ten virtuous deeds. Hence, in the Mother of the Book, these prayers remain fifty, but for you, their number will be five. (As if the reward of one prayer will be equal to ten prayers).”*

*(With this command) Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) returned to Moses (PBUH). He asked what happened. Prophet Muhammad replied that Allah had reduced the prayers in such a way that the reward for one (prayer) has been made equal to ten (prayers). In response, Prophet Moses (PBUH) repeated (the same advice) and said, “By Allah, I had demanded even less from my people, the Israelites, but they showed weakness and abandoned (the obligation). Go back once more so that Allah may reduce it further.”*

*The Messenger of Allah (PBUH) said, “Moses, by Allah, I now feel ashamed to go back to my Lord for the same purpose.” Moses (PBUH) then said, “Well, then, descend in the name of Allah.”*

*Anas ibn Malik (RA) narrates that after this, when (Prophet Muhammad) woke up, he was in the Masjid al-Haram. (Sahih Bukhari, Kitab al-Tawhid, No. 7517)*

## Background

This incident is the fourth and the last of the series. It is narrated by Anas bin Malik (RA) and documented by Imam Bukhari in his Sahih. The incident comprises two parts. The first part details the opening of the chest (Shaql al-Sadr), in which Gabriel (AS) split the noble chest of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), cleansed it with Zamzam water, and filled it with faith and wisdom before closing it. The second part relates to the ascension (Mi'raj), whereby the Messenger of Allah (PBUH), escorted by Gabriel (AS) the trustworthy, ascended toward the heavens, traveled through the seven heavens and the Sidrat al-Muntaha, got ushered into the Divine Presence of Allah, and returned with the gift of prayers.

This event is far from a common human experience. It is associated with prophethood. When Allah Almighty selects a person for this position, He endows him with the honor of His direct conversation and communication. This communication can manifest in diverse manners, as ordained by the divine wisdom and will of Allah. This process has been explained in Meezan in the following words:

*Prophethood denotes the choosing of an individual for divine communication. It implies that when Allah Almighty selects a person for this office, He engages in direct communication with him. The Quran has apprised us that humans have traditionally received this privilege in two forms:*

*One is through a direct conversation which transpires behind a veil. The individual hears a voice yet the originator remains unseen. This is what Moses (PBUH) experienced. He abruptly heard a voice emanating from a tree at the base of Mount Sinai, but the speaker remained concealed from his sight.*

*The second method is the revelation. Through revelation, Allah instills something into a person’s heart. It can happen in two ways: First, Allah places His words directly into the heart of a prophet. Second, He sends an angel to impart His message into the prophet’s heart on His behalf. This can occur in both states of consciousness—while asleep and while awake. The message received sometimes takes a symbolic form in dreams. The circumstances under which the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) received revelation are reported in hadith reports, indicating that the revelation could start with a sound similar to a bell ringing. It would*

*be so intense that even in cold weather, the Prophet (PBUH) would perspire profusely. What is the essence of this reality? The Quran indicates that it is something beyond human comprehension. Hence, it is stated:*

وَيَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ الرُّوحِ قُلِ الرُّوحُ مِنْ أَمْرِ رَبِّي وَمَا أُوتِيتُمْ مِنَ الْعِلْمِ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا

*They ask you about the ruh [that is being revealed to you]. Tell them: This ruh is a directive of my Lord and you have been given very little knowledge of such facts. (Quran 17:85) (Mizan 130-131)*

Some of the most significant methods Allah used to communicate with the prophets, as detailed above, are as follows:

1. Direct communication while remaining unseen.
2. Imparting God's words into the prophet's heart
3. Sending His message through an angel to the prophet during his wakefulness
4. Presenting realities in symbolic form to the prophet when he is awake
5. Sending His message through an angel in the prophet's dreams
6. Presenting realities in symbolic form in dreams

The narrative about the event of Mi'raj (Ascension) confirms that the last two methods were used.

[To be continued....]



# THE PROHIBITION OF EATING AND CONJUGAL RELATIONS DURING THE NIGHTS OF RAMADAN

In the Context of Surah Al-Baqarah 2:187

Dr. Irfan Shehzad

In light of Surah Al-Baqarah (2), verse 187, it has been understood that earlier in the Shariah there was a ruling that during Ramadan, after breaking the fast—or after sleeping or offering the ‘Isha prayer—eating, drinking, and conjugal relations with wives were prohibited. When some Companions were unable to maintain the restriction of abstaining from conjugal relations at night, this restriction was abrogated through Surah Al-Baqarah (2):187. The verse is:

أَجَلٌ لَكُمْ لَيْلَةَ الصِّيَامِ الرَّفْتُ إِلَى نِسَائِكُمْ بِنَ لِبَاسٍ لَكُمْ وَأَنْتُمْ لِبَاسٌ لِهِنَّ عِلْمَ اللَّهِ أَنْكُمْ كُنْتُمْ تَخْتَانُونَ أَنْفُسَكُمْ فَتَابَ عَلَيْكُمْ وَعَفَا عَنْكُمْ فَالْتَن بَاشِرُونَ وَابْتَغُوا مَا كَتَبَ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ.

*(If you wish to ask, then listen:) Going to your wives during the nights of fasting has been made lawful for you. They are a garment for you, and you are a garment for them. Allah knew that you were betraying yourselves, so He turned to you in mercy and pardoned you. So now, go to them (without hesitation) and seek what Allah has decreed for you.*

The wording of the verse indicates that this issue existed at a collective level during the nights of Ramadan. The narrations also support this.

Bara ibn Azib (RA) narrates:

لَمَّا نَزَلَ صَوْمُ رَمَضَانَ كَانُوا لَا يَقْرَبُونَ النِّسَاءَ، رَمَضَانَ كُلَّهُ، وَكَانَ رِجَالٌ يَخُونُونَ أَنْفُسَهُمْ، فَأَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ: «عِلْمَ اللَّهِ أَنْكُمْ كُنْتُمْ تَخْتَانُونَ أَنْفُسَكُمْ فَتَابَ عَلَيْكُمْ وَعَفَا عَنْكُمْ».

*“When the fasting of Ramadan was prescribed, Muslims did not approach their wives throughout the entire month of Ramadan. Men began to betray themselves. Upon this, Allah revealed: ‘Allah knew that you were betraying yourselves, so He turned to you in mercy and pardoned you.’” (Bukhari, No. 4508)*

Ibn Kathir writes:

هَذِهِ رُخْصَةٌ مِنَ اللَّهِ تَعَالَى لِلْمُسْلِمِينَ، وَرَفَعَ لِمَا كَانَ عَلَيْهِ الْأَمْرُ فِي ابْتِدَاءِ الْإِسْلَامِ، فَإِنَّهُ كَانَ إِذَا أَفْطَرَ أَحَدُهُمْ إِنَّمَا يَجِلُّ لَهُ الْأَكْلُ وَالشُّرْبُ وَالْجَمَاعُ إِلَى صَلَاةِ الْعِشَاءِ أَوْ يَنَامُ قَبْلَ ذَلِكَ، فَمَتَى نَامَ أَوْ صَلَّى الْعِشَاءَ حَرَّمَ عَلَيْهِ الطَّعَامَ وَالشَّرَابَ وَالْجَمَاعَ إِلَى اللَّيْلَةِ الْقَابِلَةِ. فَوَجَدُوا مِنْ ذَلِكَ مَشَقَّةَ كَبِيرَةً.

*This was a concession granted by Allah Almighty to the Muslims, and a lifting of the restriction that existed at the beginning of Islam. The situation was that when one of them broke his fast, eating, drinking, and intercourse were permitted only until the ‘Isha prayer or until he slept. Once he slept or prayed ‘Isha, eating, drinking, and intercourse became forbidden for him until the next night. They experienced great hardship because of this. (Tafsir Ibn Kathir 1/510)*

In contrast to this, Imam Razi reports the view of Abu Muslim Isfahani that these prohibitions were not established in the Muhammadan Shariah. Rather, they existed in the Christian law. Muslims misunderstood from

the Quranic statement that fasting was prescribed in the same way as it had been prescribed for previous nations, assuming that it must have been imposed with all its associated restrictions. Thus, they adopted for themselves the nighttime prohibitions that were prevalent among Christians. He writes:

وَقَالَ أَبُو مُسْلِمٍ الْأَصْفَهَانِيُّ هَذِهِ الْحُرْمَةُ مَا كَانَتْ ثَابِتَةً فِي شَرْعِنَا النَّبِيِّ، بَلْ كَانَتْ ثَابِتَةً فِي شَرْعِ النَّصَارَى، وَاللَّهُ تَعَالَى نَسَخَ بِهَذِهِ آيَةِ مَا كَانَ ثَابِتًا فِي شَرْعِهِمْ.

*Abu Muslim Isfahani says that these prohibitions were not established at all in our Shari'ah; rather, they existed in the law of the Christians. Allah Almighty abrogated, through this verse, those rulings that were established in their law. (Al-Tafsir al-Kabir 5/267)*

Allamah Rashid Rida, while critiquing the above narrations in Tafsir al-Manar, writes:

فَأَنْتَ تَرَى فِي هَذِهِ الرَّوَايَاتِ اضْطِرَابًا، فَفِي بَعْضِهَا أَنَّهُمْ كَانُوا يَرَوْنَ مُقَارَبَةَ النَّسَاءِ مُحْرَمَةً فِي لَيْلِي رَمَضَانَ كَأَنَّهُمْ عَلَى الْإِطْلَاقِ، وَفِي الْأُخْرَى أَنَّهُمْ كَانُوا يَعُدُّونَهَا كَالْأَكْلِ وَالشَّرْبِ لَا تَحْرُمُ إِلَّا بَعْدَ النَّوْمِ فِي اللَّيْلِ، وَأَقْرَبُ مَا يُمَكِّنُ أَنْ يَخْرُجَ عَلَيْهِ الْجَمْعُ بَيْنَ الرَّوَايَتَيْنِ اخْتِلَافُ اجْتِهَادِ الصَّحَابَةِ فِي ذَلِكَ بِحَمْلِ كُلِّ رَوَايَةٍ عَلَى طَائِفَةٍ، وَإِلَّا تَعَارَضْنَا وَسَقَطَ الْاِحْتِجَاجُ بِهِمَا. وَهَذَا الْجَمْعُ يُوَافِقُ مَا قَالَهُ الْأَسْنَادُ الْأَمَامُ، فَتَعَيَّنَ أَنَّ اجْتِهَادَهُمْ لَمْ يَكُنْ حُكْمًا فَرَأَيْنَا فَيُقَالُ إِنَّهُ نَسَخَ بِالْآيَةِ، وَإِنَّمَا هُوَ اجْتِهَادٌ أَوْفَعُهُمْ فِيهِ الْإِجْمَالُ فَجَاءَتْ هَذِهِ الْآيَةُ بِالْبَيَانِ (قَالَ): وَقَوْلُهُ: (أَجَلٌ لَكُمْ) لَا يَقْتَضِي أَنَّهُ كَانَ مُحْرَمًا، بَلْ يَكْفِي فِيهِ أَنْ يَنْوَهُمْ أَنْ مِنْ كَمَالِ الصِّيَامِ أَوْ مِنْ شُرُوطِهِ عَدَمُ الْأَكْلِ بَعْدَ النَّوْمِ وَعَدَمُ مُقَارَبَةِ النَّسَاءِ بَعْدَهُ أَوْ مُطْلَقًا. وَهُوَ كَقَوْلِهِ تَعَالَى: (أَجَلٌ لَكُمْ صَيْدُ الْبَحْرِ) (5: 96) وَلَمْ يَكُنْ قَدْ سَبَقَ نَصٌّ فِي تَحْرِيمِهِ.

*You will notice inconsistency in these narrations. Some of them state that the Companions considered conjugal relations during the nights of Ramadan absolutely forbidden, just like during the daytime, while others state that they considered it forbidden only after sleeping at night, similar to eating and drinking. The only way to reconcile these narrations is to understand them as reflecting differences in the Companions' ijtihad, with each narration relating to a different group. Otherwise, they contradict one another and cannot be used as proof. This reconciliation accords with what Ustadh Imam Muhammad 'Abdub stated. He concluded that the Companions' view was not a Quranic ruling that could be said to have been abrogated by this verse; rather, it was an ijtihad caused by ambiguity, which this verse clarified. He further states that the words 'أَجَلٌ لَكُمْ' do not necessarily imply that it was previously forbidden; rather, it suffices that people imagined that refraining from eating after sleeping or refraining from conjugal relations—after sleep or absolutely—was part of the perfection or conditions of fasting. This is similar to Allah's statement: 'أَجَلٌ لَكُمْ صَيْدُ الْبَحْرِ' (Surah Al-Maidah 5:96), even though no prior text existed declaring it forbidden. (Tafsir al-Manar 2/141)*

Maulana Maududi comments:

*In this matter too, people were initially under a misunderstanding. Some thought that after offering the 'Isha prayer, eating and drinking became forbidden, while others thought that one could eat and drink as long as one remained awake, but once one slept, one could not eat again. These were notions people had formed in their own minds. (Tafhim al-Quran 1/145)*

Maulana Amin Ahsan Islahi expresses the same view:

*Many Muslims, out of caution and piety, thought that just as sexual relations are not permitted during the daytime while fasting, similarly they would not be permitted at night either. This notion may also have been reinforced by the fact that among the Jews, fasting resumes immediately after breaking the fast, which requires them to observe the same restrictions at night as during the day. Since the practical example before the Muslims was that of the People of the Book, and the Quran also referred to them, Muslims imposed this*

*restriction upon themselves, abstaining from marital relations at night just as they did during the day.*  
(Tadabbur-e-Quran 1/456)

If this had been an explicit prohibition, continuous collective violations of it would not have occurred among the Companions. It was an uncertain or doubtful restriction, and for this reason the Companions were not highly sensitive about strictly adhering to it.

However, objections arise to this view on the basis that the words 'أُجِلَّ لَكُمْ' appear to indicate that something previously forbidden was made lawful. The word 'فَالآنَ' also seems to support the idea that what was previously unlawful has now become lawful. The phrase 'تَخْتَانُونَ' further suggests that what the Muslims were doing was wrong.

The response is that in the Quran, 'أُجِلَّ' is not used solely for transforming prohibition into permissibility, but also for removing a mistaken notion of prohibition regarding something that is actually lawful. For example:

يَسْأَلُونَكَ مَاذَا أُجِلَّ لَهُمْ قُلْ أَجِلَّ لَكُمْ الطَّيِّبَاتُ.

*They ask you what has been made lawful for them. Say: All pure things have been made lawful for you.*  
(Surah Al-Ma'idah 5:4)

Pure things were always lawful, but when rulings regarding prohibited foods began to be revealed, some items were declared unlawful that people might have assumed to be lawful. As a result, people asked what was lawful for them, and it was clarified that pure things are lawful.

Another verse is:

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّبِيُّ إِنَّا أَحَلَّلْنَا لَكَ أَزْوَاجَكَ الَّتِي آتَيْتَ أُجُورَهُنَّ وَمَا مَلَكَتْ يَمِينُكَ.

*“O Prophet, We have made lawful for you your wives whose dowries you have paid, and those whom your right hand possesses from among those whom Allah has granted you as spoils.”* (Surah Al-Ahzab 33:50)

The wives of the Prophet (PBUH) and his bondwomen were already lawful for him before this verse. The reiteration of permissibility became necessary due to the propaganda of the hypocrites, who objected to his marriages beyond the general legal limit.

In the verse under discussion from Surah Al-Baqarah, the meaning of 'أُجِلَّ' is that the mistaken belief that conjugal relations with wives during the nights of Ramadan were forbidden has been clarified, and that this is not prohibited. 'فَالآنَ' means that now that the matter has been clarified, people may approach their wives without any sense of guilt.

The sense of guilt existed because, despite their assumption that conjugal relations were not allowed during the nights of Ramadan, the Companions were still engaging in them and thus, according to their own belief, were betraying themselves. In the sight of Allah, integrity is important. An individual is obliged to act according to his ijtihad, even if that ijtihad is mistaken. Because they acted against their own assumed standard, they were reproached.

Maulana Islahi writes:

*In this matter, since there had been no clear guidance until then, its nature was that of a doubtful issue. Because of this doubt, some people, due to the incitement of their desires, would occasionally commit an act that was doubtful even in their own conscience. In doubtful matters, the Shariah's guidance—as stated in the hadith—is: 'دع ما يريبك الى ما لا يريبك' (Leave that which causes doubt for that which does not cause doubt).*

*If one instead chooses the doubtful option, it is a kind of betrayal of one's own self. For this reason, the Quran described it as betraying oneself. However, since this caution was contrary to the intent of the Shariah and was self-imposed by cautious Muslims, Allah forgave this betrayal and explicitly permitted marital relations with wives at night. (Tadabbur-e-Quran 1/456)*

In summary, during the time of the Messenger, the Companions practiced maintaining fasting restrictions even after breaking the fast during the nights of Ramadan. However, this practice was not based on any explicit revealed ruling, as the exegetical narrations might suggest. Rather, it most likely entered from Christian practice, since previous nations were referenced in the command to fast. When this self-imposed and doubtful restriction regarding conjugal relations at night could not be maintained, questions began to arise within the Muslim community. Consequently, Allah Almighty clarified in Surah Al-Baqarah (2):187 that such a restriction was not imposed upon them.



# UNVEILING OVERLOOKED SYMBOLS: HOW ESCHATOLOGICAL SIGNS IN HADITH ALIGN WITH HISTORICAL EVENTS IN THE LIGHT OF THE BIBLE AND THE QURAN (CH 2 PART II)

Dr. Muhammad Saad Saleem

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This article under the section “Points of View” is reserved for the writings of various thinkers. The institution does not necessarily agree with the views expressed therein.

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## The Dajjāl Circumambulating Behind Prophet Jesus (PBUH) – the Pursuit of Global Supremacy During the Cold War (1946–1991)

In a dream, the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) saw Prophet Jesus (PBUH) performing the Ṭawāf of the Ka‘bah while the Dajjāl followed behind him.<sup>40</sup>

In this dream, the Ka‘bah represents the centre of global power, just as in Islamic tradition it is known as the House of God. Just as Muslims perform Ṭawāf of the Ka‘bah to seek God’s favour, in this dream, circling this symbolic centre of power signifies the pursuit of global dominance.

The symbolic interpretation of this Hadith refers to the global power struggle between the United States and the Soviet Union during the Cold War. Prophet Jesus (PBUH) represents the United States, which held global leadership, while the Dajjāl symbolises the Soviet Union, which always tried to surpass the United States but failed. The Ṭawāf of the Ka‘bah symbolises the global influence of the United States and the Soviet Union, where the United States maintained its supremacy.

Prophet Jesus (PBUH) performing Ṭawāf with the support of two men on his shoulders symbolises the alignment and decisive political backing of the United States’ key allies during the Cold War, namely Britain and West Germany, under strategic aims.

## Jesus (PBUH), Gog and Magog, and Subsequent Events in the Hadith

As noted earlier in this article, the Hadith presents the downfall of the Soviet Union before that of Nazi Germany, since the rise of the Soviet Union historically preceded the emergence of the Nazis. This ordering reflects a narrative style often found in parallel accounts, where events are arranged thematically rather than strictly chronologically. For further clarification and interpretive notes, see the section “Questions about the Interpretation” in the chapter on Gog and Magog.

The details concerning Gog and Magog are explored extensively in a dedicated chapter; here, the focus is on their

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<sup>40</sup> Muhammad al-Bukhārī, *Sahih al-Bukhārī* 5902, accessed May 17, 2025, <https://sunnah.com/bukhari:5902>.

sequence within the broader context of the Hadith. What follows is a chronological outline of these events as they unfold in history.

### God Sending Gog and Magog – Sudden Expansion by Nazi Germany (1939–1942)

A detailed discussion of Gog and Magog and their broader role has already been presented in the previous chapter. Here, only the specific aspect of their sudden unleashing — symbolised by Nazi Germany’s rapid conquests between 1939 and 1942 — is highlighted.

### The Encirclement of Mount Ṭūr by Gog and Magog – Resistance Through Allied Cooperation During the Second World War (1942–1945)

The Hadith states that Prophet Jesus (PBUH) and his companions will find themselves besieged by Gog and Magog at Mount Ṭūr, and no one will have the strength to confront them. The situation will become so severe that the price of a bull’s head will exceed one hundred dinars. In this moment of great hardship, Prophet Jesus (PBUH) and his companions will supplicate to Allah for deliverance.<sup>41</sup>

**The siege:** The siege imposed by Gog and Magog symbolically reflects Nazi Germany’s unprecedented territorial expansion during the Second World War, particularly by 1942, when the Axis dominated most of continental Europe—from Scandinavia to the Mediterranean and from the Atlantic coast deep into Eastern Europe—occupying or controlling France, the Low Countries, much of the Balkans, Greece, and large parts of the Soviet Union, while simultaneously threatening North Africa through the Mediterranean theatre. Although Germany never achieved total global encirclement, this vast dominance created the perception of an overwhelming and inescapable siege, forcing the Allied powers into defensive positions and compelling close cooperation for survival, much like the seemingly unstoppable advance of Gog and Magog described in the Hadith.

**Mount Ṭūr:** Historically, Mount Ṭūr symbolises the place of covenant, as Prophet Moses (PBUH) took a covenant from the Israelites at Mount Ṭūr.<sup>42</sup> It represents global treaties and strategies under which the Allied forces struggled against tyrannical powers during the Second World War. Numerous agreements and strategies were reached, such as:

- the Casablanca Conference (January 1943)
- the Quebec Agreement (August 1943)
- the Tehran Conference (November-December 1943)
- the Bretton Woods Conference (July 1944)
- the Yalta Conference (February 1945)

<sup>41</sup> Muslim ibn al-Hajjaj, *Sahih Muslim* 2937a, accessed May 17, 2025, <https://sunnah.com/muslim:2937a>.

<sup>42</sup> Quran 7:171, *Quran.com*, accessed May 17, 2025, <https://quran.com/7/171>.



Figure 1: Allied leaders of the United States and the United Kingdom, with representatives of Free France, at the Casablanca Conference, January 1943 (source: Imperial War Museums UK).

**Price of a bull's head:** The Hadith's statement that "the price of a bull's head will exceed one hundred dinars"<sup>43</sup> primarily signifies the collapse of the currency's purchasing power and the onset of extreme hyperinflation, in which the currency loses its value and prices become detached from intrinsic value. In the time of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), a bull's head was considered a low-value byproduct, making its exorbitant price a deliberate symbol of severe economic distortion. A similar depiction appears in the Book of Revelation, where commodity prices rise to the point that it becomes difficult for an ordinary person to obtain basic food.<sup>44</sup> This imagery is explicitly linked to Greece through the earlier metaphor of Gog and Magog drinking the waters of Lake Tiberias, which was presented as a symbolic representation of Greece being drained of its resources under Nazi occupation. After this, Greece experienced precisely the condition described in the Hadith: by 1942, its currency had become nearly worthless, hyperinflation had spiralled out of control, and even basic goods had become unattainable, thereby vividly illustrating the monetary collapse and inflationary chaos conveyed by the prophetic symbol.



Figure 2: A 2,000 million drachmai banknote issued during the Axis occupation of Greece in 1944, reflecting the severe hyperinflation during World War II. (source: Wikipedia)

**Supplication to Allah:** Supplication to Allah refers to the United States leadership's supplication to God for success. For example, on the eve of D-Day (June 1944), President Roosevelt addressed the nation on the radio

<sup>43</sup> Muslim ibn al-Hajjaj, *Sabih Muslim* 2937a, accessed May 17, 2025, <https://sunnah.com/muslim:2937a>.

<sup>44</sup> Revelation 6:5–6 (New International Version), *Bible.com*, accessed May 17, 2025, <https://www.bible.com/bible/111/REV.6.5-6.111>.

and earnestly prayed for the success and safety of the Allied forces. Some excerpts from this prayer are as follows:<sup>45</sup>

*“Almighty God: Our sons, pride of our Nation, this day have set upon a mighty endeavour, a struggle to preserve our Republic, our religion, and our civilisation, and to set free a suffering humanity. Lead them straight and true; give strength to their arms, stoutness to their hearts, steadfastness in their faith... They will be sore tried, by night and by day, without rest-until the victory is won. The darkness will be rent by noise and flame. Men’s souls will be shaken with the violences of war... With Thy blessing, we shall prevail over the unholy forces of our enemy. Help us to conquer the apostles of greed and racial arrogancies... Thy will be done, Almighty God. Amen.”*

## The Death of Gog and Magog – Unconditional Surrender of Germany (May 1945)

The broader details of Gog and Magog’s destruction are discussed in the dedicated chapter of this article. Here, the focus is on their symbolic “death” in history, reflected in Germany’s unconditional surrender in May 1945, which brought Nazi expansion and aggression to a definitive end.

## Cleansing of the Earth after Gog and Magog – A New Global Landscape after the War (1945–1949)

It is stated in the Hadith that the Messenger of Allah, Jesus (PBUH), and his companions will descend upon the earth, and they will not find even a handspan of land that is not filled with the filth and stench of the corpses of Gog and Magog. Then Jesus (PBUH) and his companions will pray to Allah, and Allah will send birds whose necks are like the necks of two-humped camels, and they will carry away these corpses and dispose of them as Allah wills. Then Allah will send a rain that neither mud houses nor camel-hair tents can withstand, and it will wash the earth until it becomes as clean as a mirror.<sup>46</sup>

**The stench:** Here, the fact that Jesus (PBUH) and his companions, upon descending to earth, do not find even a handspan of land free from corpses, symbolises the widespread destruction and devastation in Europe as a result of the Second World War. Entire cities were reduced to rubble, millions perished, and the whole continent was filled with destruction, corpses, and afflicted populations.

**Supplication to Allah:** Supplication to Allah after the Second World War is a plea for Allah’s help for peace, brotherhood, and the reconstruction of the world—for example, the President of the United States, after winning the war, said:<sup>47</sup>

*“... Now, therefore, I, --- designate August 19, 1945, as a Day of Prayer. I appeal to people of all faiths in the United States to unite in giving thanks to God for the victory we have achieved, and to pray that He may guide and support us on the paths of peace...”*

**Birds with camel necks:** Two-humped camels were renowned among the Arabs for their majestic appearance and extraordinary endurance, distinguished by their strong necks and thick hair. The birds mentioned in the Hadith, whose necks were like those of two-humped camels and who carried away the corpses, symbolise the collective and large-scale, organised efforts to clear the wreckage of war. efforts made after the war. They indicate that historical phase when the debris of war was cleared, humanitarian efforts were undertaken, and through the

<sup>45</sup> “Franklin D. Roosevelt’s D-Day Prayer: June 6, 1944,” *The National WWII Museum*, accessed May 17, 2025, <https://www.nationalww2museum.org/war/articles/franklin-d-roosevelts-d-day-prayer-june-6-1944>.

<sup>46</sup> Muslim ibn al-Hajjaj, *Sabih Muslim* 2937a, accessed May 17, 2025, <https://sunnah.com/muslim:2937a>.

<sup>47</sup> “Victory Day Prayer,” *Harry S. Truman Presidential Library and Museum*, accessed May 17, 2025, <https://www.trumanlibrary.gov/library/proclamations/2660/victory-day-prayer>.

trials of war crimes, an example was set under international law against oppression and brutality. The eradication of Nazi ideology and bringing war criminals to justice were also part of this large-scale "cleansing."

**Cleansing rain:** The subsequent rain symbolises the global transformations that washed away the devastation and ideologies of the Second World War and laid the foundation for a new world order—where Nazism, fascism, and colonial domination were systematically eliminated. Through the United States' Marshall Plan, devastated Europe received economic and industrial aid, while institutions such as the United Nations, the IMF, and the World Bank were established to find peaceful solutions to political and economic problems and to ensure global stability. The reference to camel-hair tents—renowned among the Arabs for their durability in the desert, particularly in withstanding rain—and mud houses, common in their permanent settlements, being washed away, underscores the extraordinary extent of the transformations brought about after World War II, which reshaped the world and are symbolised by the earth cleansed as if polished like a mirror.

### Abundance of Wealth and Resources – The Post-War Era (1945–1973)

The Hadith mentions that the earth will become so blessed that fruits, livestock, and other resources will be sufficient for large groups, tribes, and families.<sup>4849</sup>

This scenario resembles the post-Second World War era, known as the Golden Age of Capitalism (1945–1973). During this period, there was unprecedented economic growth worldwide, including industrial development, technological innovation, increased global trade, and improvements in living standards. The Western world and many countries in Asia greatly benefited from this era of prosperity.<sup>50</sup>

In contrast, regions that followed communist policies experienced delays in prosperity and were only able to develop after adopting free-market economic strategies. This era of material abundance is presented as a sign of a blessed time, characterised by wealth and abundant opportunities.

### One Prostration Better than the World and All it Contains – The Challenges of Post-War Liberalism (Particularly During the 1960s)

It is stated in the Hadith that a single prostration will be more valuable than all the wealth and riches of the world.<sup>51</sup>

This points to the reality that the worth of worship increases all the more in times when worldly wealth and comforts tempt human beings to forget their Lord.

This condition was vividly reflected in the post-World War II era of liberalism, particularly during the 1960s, when Western societies experienced unprecedented material prosperity. Yet alongside this wealth came rapid cultural and moral shifts: the rise of individualism, the sexual revolution, challenges to traditional family structures, and the decline of religious authority.

Thus, while the world appeared to be overflowing with abundance and luxury, beneath the surface it was beset by moral and spiritual crisis. In this context, the Hadith's message becomes clear: turning to God in worship is of greater value than all the riches and prosperity of the world.

<sup>48</sup> Muslim ibn al-Hajjaj, *Sahib Muslim* 2937a, accessed May 17, 2025, <https://sunnah.com/muslim:2937a>.

<sup>49</sup> Muhammad al-Bukhārī, *Sahib al-Bukhārī* 2476, accessed May 17, 2025, <https://sunnah.com/bukhari:2476>.

<sup>50</sup> "Post-World War II Economic Expansion," *Wikipedia*, last modified May 17, 2025, [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Post%E2%80%93World\\_War\\_II\\_economic\\_expansion](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Post%E2%80%93World_War_II_economic_expansion).

<sup>51</sup> Muhammad al-Bukhārī, *Sahib al-Bukhārī* 3448, accessed May 17, 2025, <https://sunnah.com/bukhari:3448>.

## Other Events Concerning Jesus (PBUH) in the Hadith

The following provides details of all the remaining events that are to occur after the descent of Jesus (PBUH).

### Killing the Swine – the End of Japanese Imperialism by the United States (1942–1945)

It is mentioned in the Hadith that Prophet Jesus (PBUH) will kill the swine.<sup>52</sup>

As described in the context of the sign of the beast of the land, animals in future prophecies represent empires, and in this context, the swine symbolises the imperialist attitude and strategy of Japan. The symbol of "killing the swine" is equivalent to the defeat of the Japanese imperial empire, in which the United States played a decisive role. There are three main reasons to portray Japanese imperialism in the form of a swine:

- **Japan's Duplicity:** Japan claimed to liberate Asia under the slogan "Asia for Asians," but its own imperial policies were extremely exploitative. This contradiction reflects the nature of the pig, which outwardly appears to be of the sheep and goat family, but also eats meat.
- **Greed and Hunger for Resources:** Behind Japan's imperial expansion was its intense need for resources to meet its industrial and military requirements. The exploitation of raw materials and human resources from conquered territories was part of its strategy, symbolising the severe hunger of the swine.
- **Naval and Territorial Expansion:** Japan seized numerous islands and regions in the Pacific and Indian Oceans. This represents wars in marshy, hot, and humid areas, which resemble the natural habitat of the swine.



Figure 3: (Left) A 1935 Japanese propaganda poster proclaiming, "With the cooperation of Japan, China, and Manchukuo, the world can be at peace." (Right) Chinese civilians being buried alive during the Second Sino-Japanese War, illustrating the contrast between Japanese imperial propaganda and the realities of violence and repression associated with Japan's expansionist policies and the ideology later framed as the "Greater East Asia Co-Prosperty Sphere." (Source: Wikipedia)

"Killing the swine" symbolises the act when the United States ended Japan's imperial ambitions, halted its

<sup>52</sup> Muhammad al-Bukhārī, *Sahih al-Bukhārī* 2476, accessed May 17, 2025, <https://sunnah.com/bukhari:2476>.

conquests, and transformed it into a modern, non-expansionist nation.

### The Descent as a Ruler — Emerging as a Global Power after the War (1945 Onward)

The Hadith states that Prophet Jesus (PBUH) will descend as a just ruler.<sup>53</sup>

This Hadith is often explained with emphasis on the attribute of “justice,” yet the essential and decisive point is that authority will rest directly in the hands of Jesus (PBUH), not with Muslims or any other group. The reason is that the concept of “justice” shifts with differing interests and perspectives.

The symbolic illustration of this rulership can be seen in America’s role in shaping the world order after the war:

- Bretton Woods Conference (July 1944) – creation of the IMF and World Bank.
- Founding of the United Nations (October 1945).
- Marshall Plan (1948) for European reconstruction.
- NATO (1949) – institutionalising U.S.-led security.

These measures were concrete manifestations of governance and authority over the world — reflecting the very condition described in the Hadith regarding the rulership of Jesus (PBUH).

### Breaking the Cross – the Decline of Church Authority Through Secularism (1945 Onward)

The Hadith states that Prophet Jesus (PBUH) will break the cross.<sup>54</sup>

The “breaking of the cross” symbolises the secular transformations that unfolded after the Second World War, particularly under U.S. influence in Christian-majority countries.

By the 1950s–1970s, church authority over politics had declined sharply across Western Europe, giving way to secular governance. Britain legalised abortion and divorce, despite church opposition; Italy upheld divorce in a 1974 referendum against Vatican pressure; and Spain, after Franco’s death, enshrined religious freedom in its 1978 constitution. France reinforced secular education, while West Germany pursued progressive reforms independent of church influence.

The United States played a key role in accelerating these changes. Through the Marshall Plan (1948) and its wider leadership of the post-war order, the U.S. strengthened secular democratic governments over religious institutions. Its cultural influence — from universities to media — spread liberal values and individualism that weakened traditional church authority. Moreover, America’s own model of church–state separation served as a reference for allies. In this way, U.S. political, economic, and cultural power reinforced the shift toward secular governance across the Christian world. Together, these transformations marked a decisive break from religious control of public life and fundamentally altered the systems of governance in these nations.

Today, Christian-majority countries — especially in the Western world — operate under secular governments where the church plays no significant political role, reflecting the symbolic “breaking of the cross.”

### Ending Jizya – The Principle of Equality in Nation-States (1945 Onward)

The Hadith states that Prophet Jesus (PBUH) will abolish the jizya.<sup>55</sup>

<sup>53</sup> Muhammad al-Bukhārī, *Sahih al-Bukhārī* 2476, accessed May 17, 2025, <https://sunnah.com/bukhari:2476>.

<sup>54</sup> Muhammad al-Bukhārī, *Sahih al-Bukhārī* 2476, accessed May 17, 2025, <https://sunnah.com/bukhari:2476>.

<sup>55</sup> Muhammad al-Bukhārī, *Sahih al-Bukhārī* 2476, accessed May 17, 2025, <https://sunnah.com/bukhari:2476>.

Abolishing jizya symbolises establishing a system where all citizens enjoy equal rights. After the Second World War (1945), the United States established a new global order based on the principles of equality and self-determination, reflected in the formation of nation-states. This philosophy was formally adopted through frameworks such as the United Nations Charter (June 1945), which emphasised equality and sovereignty. In Muslim-majority countries as well, this philosophy indirectly contributed to the abolition of jizya, as Muslim governments also became inclined to promote equality beyond religious distinctions.

## Events after Dajjāl in the Hadith

Unlike the detailed descriptions of the Dajjāl, the age of Prophet Jesus (PBUH) is not specified in *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* or *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*. However, several Hadith describe the period following the death of the Dajjāl—which, in this article, corresponds to December 1991, marking the end of the Soviet Union.

### Seven Years Without Rancour — The Unchallenged Supremacy of the United States (1991–1998)

The Hadith<sup>56</sup> speaks of seven years without rancour following the death of the Dajjāl—a fitting parallel to 1991–1998, the years after the Soviet Union’s collapse, when the United States stood unchallenged at the height of its unipolar dominance, unmatched in military power and ideological influence.

Yet by 1998, cracks had begun to appear. The Russian financial crisis brought Yevgeny Primakov to power, championing a multipolar order. Under Zhu Rongji, China launched major economic reforms after the Asian Financial Crisis, setting the stage for its rise. Meanwhile, al-Qaeda’s 1998 declaration of jihad signalled the dawn of a new, asymmetric challenge to Western supremacy.

The calm ended as new poles of power and resistance emerged, marking the close of America’s uncontested era and the beginning of a more turbulent world.

### The Breezes of Syria and Yemen Seizing the Souls of Believers — The Shift from Ideological Statecraft to Strategic Survivalism after Western Globalisation and China’s Rise (1998–Present)

According to the Hadith, seven years after the slaying of Dajjāl, Allah will send a cold breeze from Syria.<sup>57</sup> Another Hadith foretells of a breeze from Yemen, soft as silk.<sup>58</sup> These winds will draw out the souls of all who possess even a grain of faith or goodness, seizing their souls and leaving only the wicked upon the earth.<sup>59</sup>

The death of Dajjāl—that is, the dissolution of the Soviet Union—occurred in December 1991, and the subsequent seven-year period connects to the end of the 1990s. This Hadith is interpreted as follows:

- **The Cool Breeze of Syria – Western-led Globalisation.** It symbolises the influence of the Western Christian world, just as, during the time of the Messenger of Allah (PBUH), Syria was under the control of the Byzantine Christian Empire. Just as cool breezes were considered a sign of comfort and relief in the scorching deserts of Arabia, in the modern era, consumerism and material progress of the Western world—through globalisation and the internet—have extended their influence to every region of the world.

<sup>56</sup> Muslim ibn al-Hajjaj, *Sabih Muslim* 2940a, accessed May 17, 2025, <https://sunnah.com/muslim:2940a>.

<sup>57</sup> Muslim ibn al-Hajjaj, *Sabih Muslim* 2940a, accessed May 17, 2025, <https://sunnah.com/muslim:2940a>.

<sup>58</sup> Muslim ibn al-Hajjaj, *Sabih Muslim* 117, accessed May 17, 2025, <https://sunnah.com/muslim:117>.

<sup>59</sup> Muslim ibn al-Hajjaj, *Sabih Muslim* 2937a, accessed May 17, 2025, <https://sunnah.com/muslim:2937a>.

- **The Wind from Yemen, Softer than Silk – Cheap Goods from China.** Yemen was historically a major commercial hub and a gateway for goods from across the world. China today plays a similar role on a global scale, becoming the primary source of affordable manufactured goods and an anchor of global supply chains. Its economic rise has reshaped material consumption patterns worldwide, echoing the Hadith’s description of a soft, abundant breeze.

Within this interpretive model, the “breezes” signal a civilisational shift: the end of an era shaped by ideological confrontation and the rise of one defined by strategic survivalism and competing spheres of influence. After 1998, Western-led globalisation and China’s commercial expansion—symbolised by the breezes of Syria and Yemen—produced an ideological vacuum. States remained intact, but the ideological spirit that once animated world powers faded. For example, the British Empire’s civilising claims, America’s language of freedom and democracy, and the Soviet promise of socialist equality no longer guide global conduct. Modern states increasingly act from narrow self-interest rather than ideology. This emerged in two key ways:

- **China’s rise, coupled with Western economic weakening.** Outsourcing drained the West’s productive capacity, shifting manufacturing and industrial strength to China. Meanwhile, China’s cheap goods kept Western inflation low, masking the depth of this internal erosion. The result is a world in which the West is weakened but not collapsing, and China is ascendant yet still unable to project ideological or civilisational leadership. In this equilibrium, globalisation has bound all major powers into the same interdependent system—one that moves, but no longer generates transformative energy.
- **Effects of the internet.** The attention economy fragmented national narratives and allowed ideologies such as climate activism, identity politics, and other transnational movements to spread rapidly across borders. These ideologies now circulate globally but lack a central home or state sponsor, creating widespread ideological energy without concentrated political authority.

These trends have pushed the world into a stage that can be described as a “global ideological death.” Unlike the twentieth century, no new ideology—such as liberalism, communism, or fascism—is emerging that could pull states out of this confinement.

Thus, the Hadith’s warning concerns not the collapse of nations but the collapse of the ideals that once animated them. The world continues to move, yet without direction or transformative purpose. Ideologies persist among populations, but states themselves now operate according to shifting interests rather than enduring moral missions.

Light as Birds with Desires of Beasts and Worshipping Idols — Fickle Policies, Imperial Ambition, and Nationalism

A Hadith describes that after the cold wind from Syria seizes the souls of believers, only the wicked will remain—“as light as birds and with the desires of wild beasts.” They will neither recognise good nor reject evil. Then Satan will appear, commanding them to worship idols; in this state of moral blindness, they will enjoy material comfort and prosperity—until the Trumpet is blown.<sup>60</sup>

The symbols in the Hadith can be explained as follows.

- **Light as Birds – Fickle Policies.** Just as birds drift with the wind, nations have become unanchored and fickle, changing course with every shift in advantage. This “lightness” is evident in the rapid reversal of policies and alliances, in which long-term commitments vanish at the first sign of cost—for example,

<sup>60</sup> Muslim ibn al-Hajjaj, *Sahih Muslim* 2940a, accessed May 17, 2025, <https://sunnah.com/muslim:2940a>.

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the erratic shifts in U.S. foreign policy under the Trump administration.

- **Dreams of Beasts – Imperial Ambitions.** In the Hadith, “beasts” symbolise those powers that establish dominance over others and devour their resources. Modern powers “dream like beasts” when they seek control over the lands and resources of others. The Trump administration’s proposals—such as purchasing Greenland, reclaiming the Panama Canal, or even suggesting Canada as the 51<sup>st</sup> U.S. state—reflect this imperial instinct: the desire to expand, possess, and dominate.
- **Neither Recognise Good nor Reject Evil – Moral Confusion and Ethical Relativism.** In earlier eras, U.S. foreign policy—however imperfect—claimed a moral foundation in defending democracy and human rights. In the modern era, especially under the Trump administration, this moral compass has eroded; policies now shift according to political gain rather than principle. Allies are praised or punished not for their values but for their usefulness. This erosion of moral clarity reflects the Hadith’s warning — an age when nations no longer distinguish between right and wrong, even at the most superficial level.
- **Appearance of Satan – Symbolism of a Narcissistic Leader.** Satan, by nature, is narcissistic, refusing to bow to Prophet Adam (PBUH) out of pride and self-adoration. This Hadith thus alludes to the rise of a leader who embodies the same arrogance, one who will brazenly glorify himself.
- **Command to Worship Idols — Promotion of Nationalism.** Since the discussion here concerns nations and empires, “idol worship” does not refer to the adoration of a stone image, but rather to the worship of a self-fashioned ideal — the image of a perfect, powerful, and pure nation. When a nation begins to regard itself as sacred, its own interests become the highest virtue. Moral or universal principles become secondary before them. The Book of Revelation<sup>61</sup> speaks of people who are asked to worship “the image of the beast that rises from the sea.” That image symbolised the Roman Empire — a nation that worshipped its own power and glory. The same spirit appears in modern times when leaders call people to put their nation above everything else. For example, in his 2017 speech to the United Nations, Donald Trump spoke of nationalism as if it were the key to every nation’s salvation.<sup>62</sup>

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<sup>61</sup> Revelation 13:14-15 (New International Version), *Bible.com*, accessed May 17, 2025, <https://www.bible.com/bible/111/REV.13.14-15.NIV>.

<sup>62</sup> Donald Trump, “*Trump pitches nationalism in UN speech*,” YouTube video, 3:29, posted by McClatchy Washington Bureau, September 24, 2019, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CB1Chsxkeak>.



Figure 4: The United States President addressed the 72nd Session of the UN General Assembly, where nationalism was evangelised as a universal political virtue applicable to all nations. Source: UN Media.

The Hadith concludes that after these events, the Day of Judgement will come.

#### Committing Adultery Like Donkeys — States Driven by Short-Term Interests in the Modern World

Another Hadith describes a wind that seizes believers from beneath their armpits, taking their souls until only the wicked remain—those who “commit adultery like donkeys.” Upon them, the Hour will be established.<sup>63</sup>

Just as some Hadith mention a pleasant breeze as soft as silk, this Hadith likewise describes the souls being lifted from under the armpits—much like how adults gently lift small children by holding them under the arms. Once the souls with belief are lifted away, those who remain are the ones who have fallen to an animalistic level, represented by the imagery of donkeys engaging in sexual activity without restraint.

Unlike the ferocious beasts of the Book of Daniel<sup>64</sup> that symbolised predatory ancient empires, the donkey is a domesticated, grass-eating animal whose shortcomings lie in stubbornness, loud braying, and ill temper rather than devouring other creatures. For the Arabs, it was a beast of burden — a creature that lived within a system and pulled the loads assigned to it, unlike humans or predators that roamed freely, such as lions or leopards. Its strength is real, but its dignity is low. A donkey acts out of necessity rather than principle; it may kick, bray, or misbehave, but always within narrow limits. Likewise, the mating of donkeys was regarded as impulsive and devoid of loyalty or foresight — a scene driven purely by appetite. The Arabs also recognised that animal mating is often opportunistic, dominated by instinct, and marked by unequal or one-sided advantage rather than any moral or reciprocal bond.

In the twenty-first century, states resemble burden-bearing animals far more than the ancient predatory empires

<sup>63</sup> Muslim ibn al-Hajjaj, *Sabih Muslim* 2937a, accessed May 17, 2025, <https://sunnah.com/muslim:2937a>.

<sup>64</sup> Daniel 7:1–28 (New International Version), *Bible.com*, accessed May 17, 2025, <https://www.bible.com/bible/111/DAN.7.NIV>.

once symbolised by leopards and other beasts of prey—and they bear even less resemblance to the ideological powers of the twentieth century, represented symbolically in the figures of the Dajjāl and Prophet Jesus (PBUH) as the Soviet Union and the United States. Today’s nations operate within dense global systems—supply chains, financial markets, trade agreements, technological dependencies, and security structures. Their power is real, yet devoid of civilisational vision; their centre of gravity is not ideology but mere survival, protection, and the pursuit of short-term advantage.

Within this global system, these states impose sanctions, abruptly shift alliances, stage diplomatic theatrics, run propaganda campaigns, or launch attacks only to retreat again—yet despite all this, they do not possess the strength to break free from the very system that sustains their existence. Their mutual relationships resemble the mating habits of donkeys: driven by opportunism, momentary gain, and constantly shifting interests. Each state seeks to extract benefit from another, even if that benefit is taken forcefully and lasts only a short while. They display neither lasting loyalty nor any commitment rooted in moral principle.

Thus, in the world of the twenty-first century, neither roaring predators remain nor any bearers of great ideological banners. In their place stand stubborn, burden-bearing states, all trapped within the same net. Their mutual relations are disjointed, temporary, and purely interest-based, and they live in captivity to the very global structures that sustain their survival. The Hadith warns that it is upon such people that the Final Hour will be established.

## Questions about the Interpretation

### Soviet Union Roles in the Second World War and the Cold War

During the Second World War, the Soviet Union was aligned with the Allied forces and opposed Nazi Germany (symbolised as Gog and Magog in Hadith). However, in the post-war era, particularly during the Cold War, the Soviet Union, as a communist power, continued its antagonistic stance toward religious belief and moral values, promoting atheistic communism and rivalling the United States in global influence, performing the role of the Dajjāl, which may appear contradictory to its earlier anti-fascist position.

The events described in the Hadith illustrate how a single entity can play different symbolic roles depending on the historical context. A similar duality is found in scriptural history. The Babylonian Empire, for example, is depicted in the Book of Daniel as a tyrannical and idolatrous power that desecrated the Temple of Solomon.<sup>65</sup> Yet in the Qur’an (Sūrah Bani Isra’īl), the same Babylonians are described as “My servants” when sent by God as an instrument of punishment against the Israelites.<sup>66</sup> This Qur’anic statement does not endorse the beliefs of Babylonians but shows that even oppressive powers can serve a divine purpose in specific contexts—just as the Soviet Union, embodying Dajjāl-like attributes, was part of the Allied forces during the Second World War.

These examples suggest that symbolic figures and empires must be understood within their historical and theological contexts and not reduced to fixed or static roles.

### Moral Issues During the Second World War and the Cold War

The general roles of various states have been identified in the events of future prophecies mentioned in Hadith, but the moral approval of every action of the characters described therein is not guaranteed.

<sup>65</sup> Daniel 7:1–28 (New International Version), *Bible.com*, accessed May 17, 2025, <https://www.bible.com/bible/111/DAN.7.1-28.NIV>.

<sup>66</sup> Quran 17:5, *Quran.com*, accessed May 17, 2025, <https://quran.com/17/5>.

For example, despite the United States' anti-fascist and anti-communist efforts, the dropping of the atomic bomb on Japan, indiscriminate bombing in Korea, and war crimes in Vietnam are historical facts, in which ordinary citizens were also targeted. From a religious perspective, these actions cannot be justified morally. The Hadith does not indicate their moral correctness or approval.

### The United States' Own Interests

Did the United States do all this merely for its interests, or did it consciously play the role of a messiah? This article suggests that historical events are not only the result of human intentions; they become part of divine destiny and align with the signs of the Day of Judgment. Although the United States' intervention in the Second World War and the Cold War served its geographical and economic interests, its actions unintentionally became a means of fulfilling a larger, prophesied global narrative.

### Jewish and Christian Concepts of the Coming of the Messiah

The Hadiths recorded in Sahih al-Bukhārī and Sahih Muslim concerning the descent of Jesus (PBUH) are completely distinct from the concepts held by Jews and Christians, and they point to an entirely different reality. To understand this difference, a few key points related to Jewish and Christian prophecies are presented below:

- **Jewish Prophecies:** The Israelite prophets foretold that after the destruction of the First Temple, the Jews would return to Jerusalem, the Temple would be rebuilt, northern nations would desecrate this Temple, and eventually, God would grant the Jews victory over these nations. In continuation of these prophecies, glad tidings were given of the appearance of a "Messiah" — meaning an anointed and chosen prophet sent by God.
- **Historical Fulfilment:** These prophecies were fulfilled in history: the Second Temple was rebuilt in 516 BCE, and during the Hellenistic period, especially under the Seleucid Greeks, there was interference in Jerusalem and the desecration of the Temple in 167 BCE. The Jews then achieved an extraordinary victory over these forces, remembered in history as the Maccabean Revolt. Not long after this period, Jesus (PBUH) was sent as a prophet and designated the Messiah. Unlike earlier messianic figures in Jewish history, who were anointed or recognised within established Jewish religious institutions, Prophet Jesus (PBUH) was anointed by God through the Angel Gabriel (PBUH), rather than through institutional or ritual endorsement.<sup>67</sup>
- **Corruption in the Concept of the Messiah:** Over time, most Jews moved away from understanding these prophecies in their historical context. Instead, they combined different prophecies and began to portray the Messiah not as a chosen messenger of God, but as a global conqueror and king. This altered concept was based on their own assumptions and religious interpretations rather than on a correct understanding derived from divine revelation.

It is also noteworthy that after the ascension of Jesus (PBUH), the Jews were deposed from leadership of the world. Jesus (PBUH) himself declared this clearly during his mission,<sup>68</sup> and the Qur'an also confirms this reality.<sup>69</sup>

On the other hand, Christians believe that Jesus (PBUH) will return and that his followers will rule the world for a thousand years. This concept, like that of the Jews, is the result of combining various prophecies. To clarify this,

<sup>67</sup> Matthew 3:16 (New International Version), *Bible.com*, accessed May 17, 2025, <https://www.bible.com/bible/111/MAT.3.16>.

<sup>68</sup> Matthew 21:43 (New International Version), *Bible.com*, accessed May 17, 2025, <https://www.bible.com/bible/111/MAT.21.43>.

<sup>69</sup> Qur'an 3:55, *Quran.com*, accessed May 17, 2025, <https://quran.com/3/55>.

some key points about Christian prophecies are presented below:

- **The Return of the Messiah:** The mention of the return of Jesus (PBUH) in the Gospels is actually a symbolic statement of the divine punishment that befell the Jews between 66 and 70 CE for their rejection of the Messiah. This culminated in the destruction of Jerusalem and the desecration of the Temple by the Romans in 70 CE. Jesus (PBUH) explained this punishment by saying that these events would occur before the current generation of his rejecters had passed. His prophecy that not one stone of the Temple would be left upon another fully aligns with historical facts.<sup>70</sup>
- **The Thousand-Year Reign:** In the Book of Revelation, revealed to Jesus (PBUH), the authority to rule the world with an iron sceptre is given to a figure described as "Faithful" and "True."<sup>71</sup> These titles clearly point to the Messenger of Allah, Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). It was through his followers (peace be upon them) that the divine mission advanced, leading to the downfall of powers symbolised in the Book of Revelation: the Beast of the Sea (interpreted as the Roman Empire), the Beast of the Earth (associated with the Church), and the Scarlet Beast (identified with the Persian Empire). These victories established the foundation for a global Muslim rule. The Muslim caliphate — spanning from the era of the Rightly Guided Caliphs to the Ottoman Empire — exercised global influence for nearly a thousand years, in precise fulfilment of the prophecy recorded in the Book of Revelation.<sup>72</sup> In the seventeenth century, the "Age of Discovery" of European nations came to an end, and European colonial powers — referred to in Revelation as Gog and Magog —<sup>73</sup> began their campaigns to dominate the Muslim world and other regions. This colonial onslaught led to the decline of Muslim rule.
- **The Return of Jesus (PBUH) and the "Man of Lawlessness":** The most explicit reference to the return of Jesus (PBUH) in the New Testament appears in connection with the emergence of the "man of lawlessness" — a figure that closely resembles the Islamic concept of the Dajjal. This striking parallel resembles the Hadith narrative, in which Jesus (PBUH) returns to confront and defeat the Dajjal.<sup>74</sup> This concept is symbolically interpreted in this article as representing the Soviet Union and highlighting the key role of the United States during the Cold War.
- **The Return of Jesus (PBUH) and the Resurrection of the Dead:** Several passages in the New Testament link the return of Jesus (PBUH) with the resurrection of the dead, during which he is presented as a witness.<sup>75</sup> This concept is fully aligned with the account given in the Qur'an, specifically in Sūrah al-Mā'idah, where Jesus (PBUH) is described as bearing witness before his followers on the Day of Judgement.<sup>76</sup>

In summary, the Jewish and Christian concepts of the coming of the Messiah stand in clear contrast to the

<sup>70</sup> Matthew 24 (New International Version), *Bible.com*, accessed May 17, 2025, <https://www.bible.com/bible/111/MAT.24>.

<sup>71</sup> Revelation 19:15 (New International Version), *Bible.com*, accessed May 17, 2025, <https://www.bible.com/bible/111/REV.19.15.NIV>.

<sup>72</sup> Revelation 20:4–6 (New International Version), *Bible.com*, accessed May 17, 2025, <https://www.bible.com/bible/111/REV.20.4-6.NIV>.

<sup>73</sup> Revelation 20:7–9 (New International Version), *Bible.com*, accessed May 17, 2025, <https://www.bible.com/bible/111/REV.20.7-9.NIV>.

<sup>74</sup> 2 Thessalonians 2:3-8 (New International Version), *Bible.com*, accessed May 17, 2025, <https://www.bible.com/bible/111/2TH.2.3-8.NIV>.

<sup>75</sup> John 5:28-29 (New International Version), *Bible.com*, accessed May 17, 2025, <https://www.bible.com/bible/111/JHN.5.28-29.NIV>.

<sup>76</sup> Quran 5:116–117, *Quran.com*, accessed May 17, 2025, <https://quran.com/5/116-117>.

teachings of the Qur'an, the Hadith, and even the true spirit of their own scriptures. These views are largely the result of combining multiple prophecies, interpreting them through theological speculation, and removing them from their original historical context. In reality, the prophecies upon which these concepts are built have already found their fulfilment in the course of history.

This teaches us that, rather than engaging in speculative assumptions about future prophecies, we should seek to understand past events with an open mind and thoughtful reflection. And when the signs of a prophecy's fulfilment begin to appear, we should thank Allah Almighty — not only for granting us the opportunity to witness these signs, but also for blessing us with the insight to recognise them in the light of the Hadith of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH).



# SALAT AL-TASBIH: IN THE LIGHT OF FIQH AND HADITH [A RESEARCH STUDY] (5)

Dr. Amir Gazdar

## 7. THE HADITH OF ‘ALI IBN ABI TALIB (RA)

In the chapter on Salat al-Tasbih, a narration is also reported from ‘Ali ibn Abi Talib (RA). This hadith has been transmitted only in the following three sources of hadith and reports:

1. For the first time, in the fifth century Hijri, Abu Bakr al-Khatib al-Baghdadi (d. 463 AH) transmitted this hadith through two different chains in his book *Dhikr Salat al-Tasbih*, nos. 1 and 2.
2. Nearly four hundred years after Khatib Baghdadi, in the ninth century Hijri, Ibn Nasir al-Din (d. 842 AH) also transmitted two different chains of the hadith of ‘Ali on pages 51 and 52 of his book *Al-Tarjih li-Hadith Salat al-Tasbih*. One of these chains he quoted with reference to Imam al-Daraqutni’s book on Salat al-Tasbih, and the other with reference to al-Wahidi’s book *Al-Da‘awat*.
3. Apart from Ibn Nasir al-Din, in the same ninth century Hijri, Hafiz Ibn Hajar al-‘Asqalani (d. 852 AH) also transmitted, on pages 33 and 34 of his book *Amali al-Adbkar fi Fadl Salat al-Tasbih*, the same first two chains of the hadith of ‘Ali that Ibn Nasir al-Din had mentioned, and then on page 36 he mentioned a third chain as well.

Apart from these three sources, all the remaining primary sources of hadith and reports are completely devoid of any mention of the hadith of ‘Ali ibn Abi Talib in the chapter on Salat al-Tasbih.

## THE TEXTS OF THE NARRATIONS AND THEIR INCONSISTENCIES

Below, we first examine the texts of the hadith of ‘Ali, through which their contents, the inconsistencies found within them, and their mutual contradictions also become clear:

1. In *Dhikr Salat al-Tasbih* of Khatib Baghdadi, no. 1, this narration is reported from Sayyiduna ‘Ali (RA) that the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) said: “Whoever performs four rak‘ahs on Friday in such a way that he recites Surah al-Fatihah ten times in each rak‘ah ...”. After stating this much, Khatib Baghdadi writes that then ‘Ali (RA) narrated from the Prophet (PBUH) the complete hadith of Salat al-Tasbih. Thereafter, Khatib Baghdadi states that the mention of performing Salat al-Tasbih specifically on Friday is not found in the narration of any Companion other than this narration of Sayyiduna ‘Ali. That is, in this text there is singularity (tafarrud) and objectionability (nakarah). It is also noteworthy here that the wording about reciting Surah al-Fatihah ten times in each rak‘ah occurs exclusively in this chain alone. From this perspective as well, this text is entirely singular and objectionable.
2. In *Dhikr Salat al-Tasbih* of Khatib Baghdadi, no. 2, it is narrated from ‘Ali (RA) that the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) met him and kissed him between his two eyes. Then the Prophet (PBUH) and ‘Ali (RA) sat down, and he said to him: “O ‘Ali, shall I not give you a gift and a present?” ‘Ali (RA) said: “Why not, O Messenger of Allah?” Thereafter, in this narration, with a slight difference in wording, Salat al-Tasbih is mentioned in the same manner as, according to the narration of Abu Rafi‘ (RA), this prayer was taught

by the Prophet (PBUH) to Sayyiduna al-‘Abbas (RA). Then, according to the text under discussion, ‘Ali (RA) was also instructed to perform this prayer daily, or weekly, or monthly, or yearly, or once in a lifetime, in the same manner as, according to the narration of Sayyidah Umm Salamah (رضى الله عنها), the Prophet (PBUH) instructed Sayyiduna al-‘Abbas to do so. At the end of the hadith of ‘Ali, the same words regarding the virtue of this prayer are also reported as in the hadith of al-‘Abbas: ‘غفر، فإذا فعلت ذلك، غفر’ — ‘الله ذنوبك: كبيره وصغيره، خطاه و عمدته، قديمه وحديثه

3. According to one chain on page 52 of Ibn Nasir al-Din’s *Al-Tarjih li-Hadith Salat al-Tasbih* and the narration on page 33 of Ibn Hajar’s *Amali al-Adhkar fi Fadl Salat al-Tasbih*, while teaching the method of this prayer to ‘Ali (RA), the Prophet (PBUH) instructed him to recite the tasbihat fifteen times in the standing position before the recitation, not after the recitation. Whereas, according to another chain on the same page 52 of Ibn Nasir al-Din’s book, the entire incident mentioned above was not narrated by Sayyiduna ‘Ali with reference to himself, but rather with reference to his brother Ja‘far ibn Abi Talib (RA): that when the Prophet (PBUH) met Ja‘far ibn Abi Talib, he kissed him in this manner and gave him this prayer as a gift and mentioned this extraordinary virtue of it to him. Thus, from this it also becomes clear that there is explicit inconsistency in the different texts of the hadith of ‘Ali regarding whether the incident of the Prophet (PBUH) teaching Salat al-Tasbih occurred with Sayyiduna ‘Ali himself or with Ja‘far (RA).
4. Hafiz Ibn Hajar, on page 36 of *Amali al-Adhkar fi Fadl Salat al-Tasbih*, while mentioning another chain narrated from ‘Ali (RA) with reference to Abu Nu‘aym’s book *Qurban al-Muttaqin*, states that its text clearly contradicts all the other narrations in the chapter on Salat al-Tasbih. This is because it contains an instruction to perform this prayer on Friday at the time of Duha, even if it is performed only once in a lifetime. Moreover, it emphasizes reciting Surah al-Fatihah followed by Surah al-Kafirun, Surah al-Ikhlās, Surah al-Falaq, Surah al-Nas, and Ayat al-Kursi ten times each in the standing position of every rak‘ah, and it instructs the recitation of ‘سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ، وَالْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ، وَاللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ، وَلَا حَوْلَ وَلَا قُوَّةَ إِلَّا بِاللَّهِ’ forty times in the tashahhud, as a result of which protection from the evils of the earth and the heavens is guaranteed. Hafiz Ibn Hajar says that after narrating this report, Abu Nu‘aym stated that false words are found in its text and that the signs of its being fabricated are completely evident. In short, this text describes a method of Salat al-Tasbih that is entirely different from all the other narrations in this chapter; therefore, this text is objectionable (munkar), and Abu Nu‘aym himself, after narrating it, clarified that the evidence of its fabrication is entirely apparent.

### RESEARCH ON THE CHAINS OF TRANSMISSION (ISNAD ANALYSIS)

A critical study of the chains of transmission of all the above-mentioned routes of the hadith of ‘Ali is as follows:

**A.** In the chain of narration of *Dhikr Salat al-Tasbih* by Khatib Baghdadi, no. 1, the following four defects are found:

1. In this chain there is a narrator named Abu Hanifah, Muhammad ibn Hanifah al-Wasiti, whose reliability is not established from the Imams of al-Rijal. Rather, Imam al-Daraqutni has explicitly stated about him: *‘laysa bil-qawi’* — “This narrator is not strong.”
2. In the same chain there is a narrator, al-Hasan ibn Jablah al-Shirazi, about whom the Imams of al-Rijal and the hadith scholars are completely unaware as to who he was. The biographical sources of al-Rijal are entirely silent regarding his identification; therefore, he is an entirely unknown (majhul) narrator. Al-

Haythami (d. 807 AH) has also stated that he does not know who this narrator is.

3. In it, there is also a narrator Ayyub ibn Sulayman al-Raqqi, who is likewise unknown. The references of the science of al-Rijal provide no guidance in this regard either. He too is an unidentified narrator.
4. In this chain there is a narrator named ‘Abd al-A‘la ibn Amir al-Tha‘labi al-Kufi, whom Imam Ahmad, Abu Zur‘ah, Ibn Saad, and al-Fasawi have declared *da‘if* (weak), whereas according to Imam al-Qattan and Ibn Mahdi, he is a *matruk* (abandoned) narrator.

**B.** In *Dhikr Salat al-Tasbih* by Khatib Baghdadi, no. 2, and the route mentioned on page 52 of *Al-Tarjih li-Hadith Salat al-Tasbih* by Ibn Nasir al-Din, which is cited with reference to al-Wahidi’s book *Al-Da‘awat*: a common defect in the chains of both these routes is that they contain a narrator named Muhammad ibn Muhammad ibn al-Ash‘ath, who was a *wadda‘* (fabricator). He not only fabricated hadiths, but Imam Ibn ‘Adi has also stated about him that due to his extreme inclination toward Shi‘ism, he fabricated an entire collection of hadiths comprising nearly one thousand narrations, which he used to narrate to people. The baseless and objectionable narrations of that book had chains that went through ‘Ali (RA) back to the Prophet (PBUH). When Imam al-Daraqutni was asked about this person, he said: *‘Ayah min ayat Allah, wada‘a dhaka al-kitab — ya‘ni al-‘Alawiyyat’* — “He was one of the signs of Allah; he himself fabricated that book, meaning the narrations attributed to ‘Ali.” This is a route with a *mawdu‘* (fabricated) chain, which Hafiz Ibn Hajar has also mentioned on page 34 of *Amali al-Adhkar fi Fadl Salat al-Tasbih*.

**C.** The route narrated from ‘Ali (RA) that Ibn Nasir al-Din has cited on page 52 of *Al-Tarjih li-Hadith Salat al-Tasbih* contains the following defects in its chain:

1. In it there is a narrator named Ishaq ibn Ibrahim ibn Nastas, about whom Imam al-Bukhari said: *‘fibi nazar’*. The scholars know that in Imam al-Bukhari’s terminology, these words are considered a severe form of criticism against any narrator. Likewise, it has also been transmitted that Imam al-Bukhari declared this narrator *‘munkar al-hadith’*. Imam al-‘Uqayli and Ibn al-Jarud also called him *‘munkar al-hadith’*. Imam Ibn ‘Adi, Imam al-Nasa‘i, and Imam al-Daraqutni declared him *da‘if*.
2. In this chain there is a narrator Umar ibn Abdullah al-Madani, whom Imam Yahya ibn Ma‘in, Imam al-Nasa‘i, and Hafiz Ibn Hajar have declared *da‘if*. Ibn Hajar has also stated that he narrates excessively in a *mursal* manner, and in fact, in this route as well, his narration from ‘Ali (RA) is *mursal* and *munqati‘* (disconnected). Imam Ibn Ma‘in said that he did not hear any narration from any Companion. Ibn Hibban said that this narrator is not reliable as proof. Imam Malik declared him *matruk*.

**D.** This same *mursal* narration, directly attributed to ‘Ali (RA) by this weak narrator, is the one that Hafiz Ibn Hajar has also mentioned on page 33 of *Amali al-Adhkar fi Fadl Salat al-Tasbih*, and alongside it Ibn Hajar himself has explicitly stated that its chain contains *da‘if* (weakness) and *inqita‘* (disconnection). It is self-evident that this weakness in the chain is due to the narrator ‘Umar ibn Abdullah being considered *da‘if* by the scholars of hadith, and the disconnection is due to his directly narrating from ‘Ali, despite the fact that he did not hear any narration face to face from any Companion, as Imam Yahya ibn Ma‘in has explicitly stated.

## THE STATUS OF THE NARRATION AND ITS RULING

From the above research and study, it is established that the attribution of a verbal hadith to ‘Ali ibn Abi Talib (RA) in the chapter on Salat al-Tasbih is not proven from the Prophet (PBUH) at all. According to the principles of transmission, the chains of some of its routes are extremely weak and baseless due to multiple defects, while some have been proven to be fabricated. Apart from the chain, the hadith of ‘Ali is also unreliable due to the mutual contradictions and inconsistencies found in its texts. Some of its routes are also *munkar* from the

perspective of the text, because they clearly contradict the other narrations in the chapter on Salat al-Tasbih.

The details of the mutual differences and contradictions found in the texts of the hadith of ‘Ali are as follows: from some texts it appears that ‘Ali (RA) heard a statement of the Prophet (PBUH) regarding Salat al-Tasbih, and then some people transmitted that verbal hadith from him. In some narrations, however, it is reported from ‘Ali himself that this prayer was specifically taught to him by the Prophet (PBUH) as a gift and favor, while in some texts ‘Ali (RA) himself states that this prayer was actually given as a gift and favor by the Prophet (PBUH) to his brother Ja‘far (RA). Moreover, in one text of the hadith of ‘Ali it is mentioned that the recitation of tasbih and takbir in the standing position is to be done after reciting the surah, whereas in another narration it is stated that this recitation is to be done even before the recitation of Surah al-Fatihah.

Thus it becomes clear that the hadith of ‘Ali cannot be considered reliable for establishing Salat al-Tasbih, neither in terms of its text nor in terms of its chain, nor can it be used as evidence. In the light of the principles of transmission and critical analysis, it holds no authoritative status.

### 8. HADITH OF ABD ALLAH IBN AMR IBN AL-AS (RA)

A hadith related to **Salat al-Tasbih** is also reported from Abdullah ibn Amr ibn al-As (RA). A few of its routes have been transmitted only in the following four sources of hadith and reports:

1. *Nuskhat Abi Mus-hir*, Abu Mus-hir ‘Abd al-A‘la ibn Mus-hir al-Ghassani al-Dimashqi (d. 218 AH), no. 36.
2. *Shu‘ab al-Iman*, Abu Bakr Ahmad ibn al-Husayn al-Khurasani al-Bayhaqi (d. 458 AH), no. 604.
3. *Dhikr Salat al-Tasbih*, Abu Bakr Ahmad ibn ‘Ali al-Khatib al-Baghdadi (d. 463 AH), nos. 19, 20, 21, 23.
4. *Amali al-Adhkar fi Fadl Salat al-Tasbih*, Ibn Hajar al-‘Asqalani (d. 852 AH), no. 11.

Apart from these four sources from the 3rd, 5th, and 9th centuries AH, all other primary sources of hadith and reports are completely silent regarding the hadith of Abdullah ibn ‘Amr in the chapter on Salat al-Tasbih.

### TEXTS OF THE NARRATIONS AND THEIR INCONSISTENCIES

Below, we first examine the texts of the narrations of Abdullah ibn ‘Amr, through which their contents, the inconsistencies found in them, and their mutual contradictions also become clear.

**A.** In *Nuskhat Abi Mus-hir*, no. 36, it is narrated from Abdullah ibn ‘Amr ibn al-‘As (RA) that the Prophet (PBUH) said: “Shall I not give you a gift and a present?” At the beginning, this text does not clarify which Companion the Prophet (PBUH) was addressing. He then said that it is a prayer of four rakahs; whoever observes it, all of his sins—new and old, minor and major, committed by mistake or deliberately—will be forgiven. In this route, it is mentioned that during the standing position of this prayer, before the recitation of Surah al-Fatihah, fifteen times, and after the recitation of the surah, ten times, tasbih, tahmid, tahlil, and takbir are to be recited. This, evidently, differs from and conflicts with the method transmitted in all other narrations in the chapter on Salat al-Tasbih. Then in this text, at all the remaining positions of the prayer, the same supplications are to be repeated ten times each, but there is no mention of observing this supplication in the sitting position (qa‘dah), whereas it is known that in all other narrations, emphasis is also placed on reciting this remembrance ten times in the sitting positions of this prayer. Thus, it becomes clear that this text is also deficient in this latter respect.

After that, an interesting point is that at the end of this narration, after the Prophet (PBUH) explained the method

of this prayer, Abdullah ibn ‘Amr says that al-‘Abbas (RA) said: “Who can perform such a (lengthy) prayer?” From this question, it appears that in this incident, the Prophet (PBUH) was actually addressing his uncle, al-‘Abbas, and it was to him that he was giving this prayer as a gift. Abdullah ibn ‘Amr (RA) heard this conversation of the Prophet (PBUH) and narrated it; otherwise, he himself was not the direct addressee of the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) in the matter of being taught this prayer. In response to the above question of al-‘Abbas, the Prophet (PBUH) said that this prayer may be performed once a week, or once a month, or once a year, and if the worshipper wishes, he may also recite *Surah al-Ikhlās* in it.

**B.** According to *Dhikr Salat al-Tasbeeh* by Khatib Baghdadi, no. 21, and *Shu‘ab al-Iman* by al-Bayhaqi, no. 604, the Prophet (PBUH) actually addressed Abdullah ibn ‘Amr (RA) himself and gave him this four-rak‘ah prayer as a gift. In both of these narrations, the method of this prayer and its virtue are stated in the same words as mentioned above in *Nuskhat Abi Mus-hir*, no. 36. In these narrations as well, there is no mention of the recitation of remembrance and tasbeeh in the sitting position. According to these texts, since al-‘Abbas (RA) was also present at the time when the Prophet (PBUH) gave this prayer as a gift to Abdullah ibn ‘Amr (RA), he heard the Prophet’s statement and commented that who could have the resolve to perform such a (lengthy) prayer. It is said that upon hearing this, the Prophet (PBUH) said that this prayer may be performed once a week, or once a month, or once a year, and if one wishes, one may also recite *Surah al-Ikhlās* in it. In short, from the wording of the previous narration, the Prophet’s primary addressee appeared to be al-Abbas, whereas according to this narration, he was conversing with Abdullah ibn Amr (RA).

**C.** In the narration from Abdullah ibn ‘Amr recorded in *Dhikr Salat al-Tasbeeh* by Khatib Baghdadi, no. 19, there is a general mention of the Prophet (PBUH) exhorting and encouraging the performance of a four-rakah prayer. In this text, there is no mention of the Prophet (PBUH) addressing any specific Companion, nor are there any words indicating that this prayer was given to someone as a gift or present. Moreover, contrary to the text of the previous narration, in this one there is only an instruction to recite tasbeeh fifteen times after the recitation during the standing position. In this route, there is no instruction mentioned for any remembrance or tasbeeh before the recitation. Furthermore, as before, this text also contains the deficiency that there is no mention of the *tasbeeh* being recited in the sitting position. In this narration, the words describing the virtue of this prayer are also somewhat different, and they are: *‘yughfar labu ma qaddama wa ma akhkhara, wa ma asarra wa ma a‘lana’* — “The one who performs it will be forgiven for his earlier and later sins, and those committed secretly and openly.”

**D.** In the text of *Dhikr Salat al-Tasbeeh* by Khatib Baghdadi, no. 20, it is stated that the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) taught this prayer as a gift directly to Abdullah ibn ‘Amr ibn al-‘As. In this narration, there is no mention of the presence of al-‘Abbas or of any dialogue between him and the Prophet (PBUH). The complete method of the prayer in this narration is mentioned in the same way as has already been described in most of the earlier narrations. At the end, forgiveness of all sins—new and old, minor and major—is foretold as the reward of this prayer.

**E.** In *Dhikr Salat al-Tasbeeh* by Khatib Baghdadi, no. 23, and *Amali al-Adhkar fi Fadl Salat al-Tasbeeh* by Ibn Hajar, no. 11, it is narrated from Abdullah ibn ‘Amr (RA) that the Prophet (PBUH) actually addressed Ja‘far (RA) and taught him this prayer as a gift, and he said to him that you may perform this prayer during the day or the night, or perform it every Friday, or once a month, or once a year. After that, this narration describes the same method of this prayer that has been mentioned earlier in most of the narrations. According to *Dhikr Salat al-Tasbeeh* by Khatib Baghdadi, no. 23, at the end the Prophet (PBUH) said to Ja‘far (RA): *‘yaghfir Allah laka dhunubaka ma asrarta wa ma a‘lan-ta’* — “As a result of this prayer, Allah will forgive your sins, those committed secretly and those committed openly.”

### Investigation of the Chains of Transmission (Isnad Analysis)

**A.** In the chains of Nuskhah Abi Mus-hir (No. 36), Dhikr Salat al-Tasbih by al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdadi (No. 21), and Shu‘ab al-Iman by al-Bayhaqi (No. 604), the following two major defects are found:

In these chains there is a narrator named Abu Junab Yahya ibn Abi Hayyah al-Kalbi al-Kufi, whom most scholars of narrator criticism (rijal) have declared “weak” (da‘if) and “a mudallis”. Some hadith scholars have called him “munkar al-hadith”, and others “matruk al-hadith.”

In all three chains, Abu Junab Yahya narrates this report using the particle “an”, without explicitly stating that he heard it from his shaykh Abu al-Jawza’. From this perspective as well, the narration is unreliable, because it is a known principle among hadith scholars that when a mudallis narrator does not explicitly state hearing from his shaykh, his mu‘an‘an narration is unacceptable.

In all three routes there is also a narrator named Muhammad ibn Humayd al-Tamimi al-Razi, whom some scholars of rijal have declared “weak,” some “very weak,” some “munkar al-hadith,” some “matruk al-hadith,” and many hadith scholars have labeled him a “liar (kadhdhab).”

**B.** In the chain of Amali al-Adhkar fi Fadl Salat al-Tasbih by Ibn Hajar al-‘Asqalani (No. 11), several defects are found:

In this chain, Hafiz Ibn Hajar narrates this report from a narrator named Muhammad ibn Ahmad al-Shahrazuri, who is regarded by the scholars of hadith and rijal as “unknown (majhul).” The biographical references are completely silent about him. According to the principles of hadith science, the narration of an unknown narrator is considered disconnected (munqaṭi‘) and weak.

In the same chain, there is a narrator named Ibn al-Muqayyar Ali ibn Abi Abdullah al-Azji, who belongs to the twenty-sixth generation of hadith narrators and was born in 545 AH. In this chain, he narrates from Ibn al-Ghariq Muhammad ibn Ali al-Qurashi, who belongs to the nineteenth generation of narrators and died in 465 AH. This clearly shows that the chain here is also disconnected, because Ibn al-Muqayyar’s narration from Ibn al-Ghariq is impossible, as Ibn al-Ghariq died eighty years before Ibn al-Muqayyar was born.

In addition, in this chain the narrator Mahmud ibn Khalid al-Sulami does not name the person from whom he narrates this report; rather, he leaves it ambiguous and says “an al-thiqah” (“from a trustworthy narrator”). He does not clarify who that trustworthy narrator was. According to the principles of hadith, mentioning an ambiguous narrator with one’s own declaration of reliability is unacceptable, even if it comes from a great hafiz or muhaddith. Therefore, due to this ambiguous narrator, the disconnection in the chain at this point is also very clear.

In the same chain there is a narrator ‘Abd al-Rahman ibn Thabit ibn Thawban al-‘Ansi, whom many leading scholars of hadith, including Imam Yahya ibn Ma‘in and Imam al-Nasa’i, have declared “weak,” while Imam Ahmad explicitly stated that his hadiths are “munkar.”

**C.** In the chain of Dhikr Salat al-Tasbih by al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdadi (No. 19), there is a narrator named Ghiyath ibn al-Musayyab al-Rasibi, who is unknown. Therefore, this chain is also disconnected and rejected.

**D.** In the chain of Dhikr Salat al-Tasbih by al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdadi (No. 20), the following two major flaws are present:

It contains a narrator named ‘Abd al-‘Aziz ibn Aban al-Qurashi, whom many hadith scholars have declared a “liar” and “fabricator (wadda‘).” For this reason, they consider him completely abandoned (matruk).

In this chain there is also Aban ibn Abi ‘Ayyash al-Basri, who is regarded by the scholars of rijal as “matruk al-hadith,” and his narrations carry no weight.

E. In the chain of Dhikr Salat al-Tasbih by al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdadi (No. 23), the following defects are found:

It contains Abu Bakr Abdullah ibn Sulayman ibn al-Ash‘ath, the son of Imam Abu Dawud. Imam Abu Dawud himself said about him that “my son is a liar.” The same view was expressed by Hafiz Ibrahim al-Asbahani. The shaykh of Imam Ibn Adi, Yahya ibn Muhammad ibn Sa‘id, said that the statement of his father Abu Dawud is sufficient for us: “my son is a liar,” therefore no hadith should be taken from him.

This chain also contains Abd al-Rahman ibn Thabit ibn Thawban al-Ansi, whom many leading scholars, including Imam Yahya ibn Main and Imam al-Nasa‘i, declared weak, while Imam Ahmad described his hadiths as munkar.

In addition, in this chain the latter-mentioned narrator does not name the person from whom he narrates this report; rather, he leaves it ambiguous and says “haddathani al-thiqah” (“a trustworthy narrator narrated to me”). According to the rules of the science of narration, leaving a narrator ambiguous while declaring him trustworthy on one’s own authority is absolutely unacceptable, even if done by a great imam of hadith. Due to this ambiguous narrator, the disconnection of the chain at this point is also very clear.

### THE STATUS OF THE NARRATION AND ITS RULING

From the above investigation and study, it is established that the verbal hadith attributed to Abdullah ibn Amr ibn al-As (RA) regarding Salat al-Tasbih is not proven from the Prophet (PBUH) at all. In light of the principles of narration, the chains of some routes of this hadith are extremely weak and baseless due to multiple defects, while some are outright fabrications. In addition to the chain-related issues, the hadith of Ibn Amr is also completely unreliable due to the differences and inconsistencies found in its texts. Some of its routes are munkar even textually, because they clearly contradict other narrations in the chapter of Salat al-Tasbih.

Likewise, clear contradictions and inconsistencies have been observed among the texts of this hadith. Some texts indicate that Abdullah ibn Amr (RA) heard a general statement of the Prophet (PBUH) regarding Salat al-Tasbih and then narrated it. Some narrations state that the Prophet (PBUH) specifically taught this prayer to Ibn Amr as a gift. Some texts suggest that the Prophet’s addressee in this incident was al-Abbas (RA), while according to one route, Ibn Amr himself explicitly stated that the Prophet (PBUH) taught this prayer to Jafar (RA)—meaning that the actual addressee in this incident was Jafar (RA).

Some routes of this hadith also contain the anomaly that they prescribe reciting tasbih and takbir 15 times before the recitation of al-Fatihah in the standing position and 10 times after the recitation of the surah. This clearly contradicts the method reported in all other narrations of Salat al-Tasbih. Meanwhile, some routes mention only 15 repetitions of tasbih after the recitation in the standing position, with no mention of any remembrance before the recitation.

Thus, it becomes clear that the hadith of Abd Allah ibn Amr cannot be given any consideration for establishing Salat al-Tasbih—neither from the perspective of its chain nor from that of its text. In the light of the principles of narration and understanding (*riwayah* and *dirayah*), this hadith holds no authoritative value.

[To be continued]

## A STUDY OF MUSNAD AHMAD (5)

**Ammar Khan Nasir**

### MUSNAD OF UMAR IBN AL-KHATTAB (RA)

**Muti Sayyid:** With regard to Umar (RA), it is generally said that he did not favor frequent narration, yet the number of his narrations is greater than that of Abu Bakr. Is the reason for this that he lived for a longer period after the Prophet?

**Ammar Nasir:** Yes, that is correct. He lived for fourteen to fifteen years, and during his period of caliphate many such matters came before him in which he had to search for and verify the hadiths of the Prophet (PBUH), or he had to relate many hadiths that were already known to him. Therefore, quite naturally, the number of his narrations is greater.

**Muti Sayyid:** There are some hadiths of which Umar was unaware, even though they were well known among the Companions. For example, he heard from Abu Musa al-Ashari (RA) the hadith that when one goes to someone's house, permission should be sought three times, and if no response is received, one should return. Upon this, Umar said to him: "Bring a witness for this, otherwise I will punish you" (Tirmidhi, No. 2690). This was a hadith related to everyday manners of life—how could Umar have been unaware of it? He was with the Prophet (PBUH) all the time.

**Ammar Nasir:** Such a thing is not improbable. Sometimes even people with very close relationships remain unaware of an important matter. In any case, during the lifetime of the Prophet (PBUH), Umar did make arrangements to ensure that important statements made by the Prophet in his absence would reach him. He had divided turns with one of his companions: one day Umar would attend to trade and other matters, while his companion would stay with the Prophet in the Prophet's Mosque. The next day, the companion would attend to trade, and Umar would stay with the Prophet. Then both of them would inform each other of important matters (Bukhari, No. 89). Even despite this, if some important matters did not reach his knowledge, that is not beyond possibility.

**Muti Sayyid:** Some people came from Syria and said to Umar that they had horses and slaves and that they wanted to pay zakah on them. Umar said that the Prophet (PBUH) and Abu Bakr had not done this, so he would consult the Companions regarding it. Then Ali advised that if this were not made a permanent obligation upon them—one that would continue to be taken from them even after him—then zakah could be taken from them (No. 82). From this it appears that the Companions temporarily collected zakah from them but were not in favor of imposing zakah on them permanently. What was the reason for this? Did they consider the ruling of zakah to be restricted to certain specific types of wealth?

**Ammar Nasir:** This is a good question, and it helps in understanding how the process of ijtiḥad and qiyas developed in the ummah. If you look at the words of the Quran, they are general: **خُذْ مِنْ أَمْوَالِهِمْ صَدَقَةً** —"Take charity from their wealth" (*Surah At-Tawbah* 9:103). No specific type of wealth is identified here. From the perspective of analogy as well, zakah should be due on every type of wealth. However, our juristic tradition did not reach this conclusion all at once; rather, it adopted this position after passing through several stages of ijtiḥad.

The reality is that during the time of the Prophet (PBUH), the zakah that he collected was from those forms of

wealth that the Arabs generally possessed at that time. He collected zakah on gold and silver, agricultural produce, and livestock—camels, cows, and goats. However, regarding horses and slaves, he said that he had exempted them from zakah. Even in agricultural produce, he did not take zakah on vegetables and greens; rather, he took zakah only on dates, wheat, barley, and the like.

Against this background, the general tendency among the Companions and the Successors was that zakah was originally imposed only on these specific categories of wealth. The same tendency is reflected in this dialogue between Umar and Ali. The reports state that they did accept the zakah of horses and slaves from the people of Syria upon their insistence, but in return they also allocated stipends from the public treasury for their slaves (*Al-Amwal* by Abu ‘Ubayd, Nos. 1365, 1366). Later, when new types of agricultural produce appeared, the Companions and Successors differed over whether zakah should be taken from them or not. Some jurists held the view that zakah should be taken only from those categories from which the Prophet (PBUH) took zakah, while other jurists considered it permissible to take zakah from other crops as well, such as maize, olives, rice, lentils, and the like. In the early period, this difference of opinion generally remained among the jurists. A large group held this view, and if you look at Imam Abu ‘Ubayd, the author of *Kitab al-Amwal* in the third century, you will see that his inclination was also that zakah is only on those specific forms of wealth from which the Prophet (PBUH) took zakah, and that there is no zakah on other forms of wealth.

**Muti Sayyid:** According to analogy, it does seem that zakah should be due on every type of wealth. Those jurists who were of the view that zakah is only on specific forms of wealth—did they not consider qiyas valid? If they accepted qiyas, then on what basis did they hold this opinion?

**Ammar Nasir:** No, the reason for their view was not a rejection of qiyas. They did accept qiyas, but their disagreement in this particular issue was over the point of what the fundamental effective cause (‘illah) for the obligation of zakah is in the view of the Shari‘ah. If it is merely the existence of wealth, then zakah should be due on every type of wealth. However, they believed that when the Prophet (PBUH) took zakah from certain specific types of wealth and not from others, and even explicitly stated that he exempted some from zakah, this indicates that the Shari‘ah intends to restrict zakah to those specific forms of wealth.

Imam Abu ‘Ubayd has transmitted from some scholars an explanation to the effect that the purpose of the Shari‘ah is actually to fulfill the dietary needs of the poor and needy. Therefore, it prescribed zakah only on wheat, barley, and dates among food crops, and only on camels, cows, and goats among animals, so that the poor may eat these food items and drink the milk of the animals to satisfy their hunger. Thus, these scholars were not deniers of qiyas; rather, they differed in their understanding of what the underlying cause of this ruling is.

In any case, as civilization continued to change and other forms of wealth became more useful and important, this tendency became more widespread among jurists as well—that zakah is obligatory on every type of wealth. Among contemporary scholars, there is almost consensus on the obligation of zakah on all forms of wealth. You can see this discussion in Yusuf al-Qaradawi’s *Fiqh al-Zakah*.

**Muti Sayyid:** A Christian from Banu Taghlib accepted Islam and entered into a combined ihram for hajj and Umrah. Someone called him foolish for doing so. Disturbed by this, he went to Umar. Umar said: “There is nothing to worry about; you have acted exactly according to the Sunnah of the Prophet (PBUH)” (No. 83). But on the other hand, it is also reported about him that he used to prohibit hajj tamattu‘. On the one hand he is recognizing this as Sunnah, and on the other hand he is prohibiting it—how is that?

**Ammar Nasir:** No, this was not tamattu‘; it was qiran. In qiran, Umrah and hajj are performed with a single ihram, and the ihram is not removed after Umrah. In tamattu‘, during the same journey one first performs Umrah, then removes the ihram, and later enters into a separate ihram for hajj. Umar used to prohibit hajj tamattu‘ so that

people would not remove the ihram in between.

**Muti Sayyid:** During hajj, Umar departed from Muzdalifah towards Mina before sunrise and explained that the polytheists used to depart after sunrise, whereas the Prophet (PBUH) opposed them and departed from Muzdalifah before sunrise (No. 84). If the Prophet did this temporarily to oppose the polytheists, then why was Umar later observing this practice so carefully?

**Ammar Nasir:** No, in this matter the opposition to the polytheists was not merely to establish distinction from them. The decision to depart from Muzdalifah before sunrise was actually made to correct a self-imposed restriction from the pre-Islamic period. The polytheists had imposed upon themselves the rule that they would remain in Muzdalifah until sunrise. The Prophet (PBUH) corrected this by clarifying that it was not necessary to wait; one could depart even before sunrise. That is why Umar, following the Prophet, also chose the same time.

**Muti Sayyid:** In some matters, one sees in Umar a tendency to follow the Prophet (PBUH) exactly as he did, even if the original reason no longer remained. For example, regarding performing ramal (brisk walking) in the first three circuits of ṭawaf, he said that although Allah has granted strength to Islam, we will continue this practice because we have been doing it since the time of the Prophet (PBUH) (No. 317). But on many other occasions, Umar's stance appears different. For example, regarding the *mu'allafah al-qulub*, he said that there was no longer a need to give them zakah because Islam had now become strong. On what basis, then, do we see that in many matters he insists on continuing the same practice, while in several others he adopts a different approach?

**Ammar Nasir:** In my view, Umar's inclination was that in matters where there was no compelling reason to abandon the Prophet's practice, it should be maintained as it was, even if the Prophet had done it due to some temporary consideration. For example, although brisk walking in the first three circuits of ṭawaf was done in a specific context, there was no particular reason to abandon it. Even if that specific reason no longer remained, the Prophet had performed the act and Muslims had continued doing it, so there was no reason to discontinue it. In contrast, where a religious interest or necessity required abandoning a particular practice, he would give preference to ijihad. For example, suspending the allocation for the *mu'allafah al-qulub* due to the absence of need was a religious consideration. Similarly, in the matter of compiling the Quran into a single mushaf, you see that Abu Bakr was hesitant, saying that since the Prophet (PBUH) had not done this, how could they do it? But Umar insisted that it was a necessary task and should be carried out.

**Muti Sayyid:** On a journey, Abdullah ibn Umar (RA) saw Saad ibn Abi Waqqas (RA) wiping over his leather socks and expressed surprise. After returning to Madinah, he sought confirmation from Umar. Umar said: "When Saad narrates a hadith to you, do not ask anyone else about it" (No. 88). One question here is that we hear that the hadiths regarding wiping over leather socks are *mutawatir*. But from this report it appears that even a Companion like Abdullah ibn Umar was unaware of this concession. How is that?

**Ammar Nasir:** The statement that hadiths are *mutawatir* was made later by the hadith scholars, and their concept of *tawatir* is different. For example, when we say that the Quran is *mutawatir*, or that fundamental religious obligations like prayer and hajj are *mutawatir*, *tawatir* here means that the entire ummah is transmitting and is aware of these matters. But when hadith scholars say that a matter is *mutawatir*, they mean that it has been reported in many narrations, and when all these narrations are gathered and examined, certainty is achieved that the matter is correct and that no mistake occurred in its transmission. In this sense, hadith scholars call the narration of wiping over leather socks—and similar reports—*mutawatir*. You can understand it another way: among jurists, *tawatir* applies to that which the entire community of Muslims has been aware of since the time of the Prophet (PBUH). If a matter was not known and widespread in this way during the time of the Prophet or the Companions, then it is not *mutawatir*, even if it later becomes very well known. For such reports, the Hanafi

jurists coined a separate term, *khbar mashhur*—that is, a report which was not mutawatir from the time of the Prophet, but became well known through investigation and verification during the time of the Companions or the Successors. The terminology of the hadith scholars is different. Even if, in the third or fourth century, collecting many chains of a report leads to confidence that the event is authentic, hadith scholars may still call it mutawatir from the perspective of transmission.

**Muti Sayyid:** The second question is whether the Prophet (PBUH) practiced this only occasionally, which is why some Companions knew of it while others did not.

**Ammar Nasir:** Most reports state that the Prophet (PBUH) wiped over leather socks while traveling. Reports of wiping while resident are very few. Then even during travel, obviously not all Companions were close to the Prophet at all times. Therefore, those Companions who happened to be near him during travel and had the opportunity to observe this practice were aware of it, while others were not. That is why, when ‘A’ishah was asked about the duration of wiping over leather socks, she said: “Ask Ali, because he used to be with the Prophet during travel” (Muslim, No. 276). A position is also reported from Imam Malik that he did not hold wiping over leather socks to be valid while resident. The likely reason for this, too, was that the reports establishing it are far fewer compared to those related to travel.

**Muti Sayyid:** It is generally reported about Imam Abu Hanifah that he described one sign of *Abl al-Sunnah* as wiping over leather socks. How, then, could he declare as a sign of *Abl al-Sunnah* something that even all the Companions were not aware of?

**Ammar Nasir:** The background of this is different. In fact, when sectarian divisions emerged among Muslims, certain specific issues became markers of religious identity for different groups. For example, the Rafidis dissociated themselves from Abu Bakr and Umar. The Kharijites dissociated themselves from both Uthman and Ali, and they also denied many rulings that came through hadith in addition to the Quran, such as stoning (rajm), wiping over leather socks, and the prohibition of combining two sisters in marriage. In this context, Imam Abu Hanifah said that considering Abu Bakr and Umar superior to the rest of the Companions, loving both Uthman and Ali, and wiping over leather socks—this is the position of *Abl al-Sunnah*.

**Muti Sayyid:** A report states that a man killed his son with a sword blow, and Umar said: “Had the Prophet of Allah (PBUH) not said that retaliation (qisas) is not taken from a father, I would have had you executed” (No. 98). In the study of the *Sihab Sittah*, you mentioned the distinction that if a father is beating his child and, during that, the child receives such a severe injury that he dies, then qisas is not taken; but if the father intentionally kills his son, then qisas is taken. Here, however, the wording is quite clear that the father killed the son with a sword strike, and yet Umar is applying the same rule that qisas is not taken from a father.

**Ammar Nasir:** As you may recall, we clarified there that this distinction is the position of the Malikis. They say that the scope of this hadith is where the son is killed by the father without intent to kill, in which case qisas is not taken; but if the father kills intentionally and deliberately, then this ruling does not apply, rather qisas is taken. The rest of the jurists do not hold this view; they maintain that qisas is not taken in both cases. Now, when the Prophet (PBUH) stated this ruling, what exactly was the occasion—this has not been mentioned in the report, so both interpretations are possible. In the incident of Umar as well, the full details are not mentioned as to the nature of the killing. From the apparent wording, it seems as though the father threw the sword from some distance towards the son and he died as a result of a fatal blow. It is not necessary that there was an intention to kill; this could also be accidental killing. If that is the case, then perhaps Umar said this by way of threat and admonition for his negligence, meaning that if this hadith did not exist, he would have had him executed. But if the situation was one of deliberate killing, then it can be said that Umar’s understanding was also in line with the

majority of jurists. The Malikis, however, can say that instead of agreeing with a Companion's understanding and explanation, they prefer to determine the scope of the hadith through analogy (qiyas). In matters of ijtiḥad, there is considerable room for disagreement.

**Muti Sayyid:** Umar says: "I heard the Prophet (PBUH) say: 'I have given a slave to my maternal aunt. I hope that Allah will make him a source of blessing for her, and I have forbidden her from making him a cupper, a butcher, or a goldsmith'" (No. 102). The reason for forbidding this is not clear to me; there does not seem to be anything wrong with these professions.

**Ammar Nasir:** Regarding cupping (*bijamah*), there appears to be an apparent contradiction in the hadiths, which is discussed by the hadith scholars. The Prophet (PBUH) expressed dislike for the profession of cupping and forbade becoming a cupper, yet he himself had cupping done and also paid the cupper his wages. Generally, hadith scholars reconcile this by saying that, from a legal perspective, there is no prohibition or unlawfulness in this profession. However, since the work involved drawing blood from the body by sucking with the mouth, the Prophet (PBUH) felt a natural aversion to it. A refined person feels repulsion in this regard, so from this angle he expressed dislike. Otherwise, he did not declare the profession unlawful, which is why he himself underwent cupping and paid its wages.

**Muti Sayyid:** And why did he forbid the other two professions?

**Ammar Nasir:** It is the same in their case as well. The Prophet (PBUH) was not issuing a general ruling that the profession of a butcher is unlawful. He was saying specifically about this slave that he should not be made a butcher. A butcher's work involves cutting meat all the time, so perhaps there was an expression of natural dislike on the Prophet's part. It is also possible that, in that environment, certain undesirable aspects were associated with the profession of butchery. Similarly, one can reason about the profession of a goldsmith. Commentators say that while making jewelry, a goldsmith may have to mix alloys, and there are many opportunities for shortchanging or deception. From this angle, the Prophet (PBUH) forbade it as a precaution, not to declare these professions unlawful in and of themselves.

**Muti Sayyid:** When Umar received news of the plague in Syria, he said: "If my time comes and Abu Ubaydah ibn al-Jarrah is alive, I will appoint him as my successor." People did not like this and said: "What will happen to the major clans of Quraysh, that is, Banu Fihr?" (No. 108). Who were Banu Fihr, and what was their status within Quraysh?

**Ammar Nasir:** Fihr was actually the name of Quraysh itself, and Banu Fihr refers to the entire tribe of Quraysh. Within Quraysh there were various clans, and among them some clans—such as Banu Hashim and Banu Umayyah—were more prominent and distinguished in terms of numbers and political standing. Other clans—such as Banu Adi, Banu Jumah, and Banu Taym—were smaller clans. The first two caliphs belonged to these smaller clans: Abu Bakr belonged to Banu Taym, and Umar belonged to Banu Adi. Abu Ubaydah ibn al-Jarrah belonged to Banu Jumah. Since he was among the leading Emigrants and among the earliest to accept Islam, Umar expressed his intention that if he were to nominate someone as caliph, it would be Abu Ubaydah. His name had also been proposed by Abu Bakr at Saqifah Bani Sa'adah, when he said: "Choose either Abu Ubaydah or Umar as caliph." Now, when Umar, for the third caliph as well, mentioned the name of a Companion belonging to a smaller clan of Quraysh, it was natural that people—especially within Quraysh—raised the question as to why the larger clans, namely Banu Hashim and Banu Umayyah, were being kept away from the caliphate.

**Muti Syed:** In the same report it is stated that Umar also said about Muadh ibn Jabal that he would like to appoint him as caliph (No. 108). Similarly, a statement of his is also reported regarding Salim, the freed slave of Abu Hudhayfah—who had been freed by Hudhayfah—that if he had been alive, he would have appointed him

as caliph after himself (*Fada'il al-Sahabah*, Ibn Hanbal 2/742). But Mu'adh was from the Ansar, not from Quraysh. In response to the position of the Ansar at Saqifah Bani Saidah, the very argument presented was that the Arabs would not accept the leadership of anyone other than Quraysh. Then how is it that Umar was mentioning the name of an Ansari Companion or a freed slave to be appointed as caliph? Would Quraysh or the Arabs have accepted their leadership?

**Ammar Nasir:** This is actually a way of expressing a person's eligibility—that if the opportunity arose and there were no impediments, I would nominate these people as caliphs, because they are qualified to carry out the responsibility of the caliphate. When individuals are praised, there are different contexts for it. It is not necessary that Umar was speaking about the practical possibility or feasibility of formally appointing them as caliphs. Generally, commentators have explained these statements of Umar in this very sense. However, it seems to me that Umar did not view the relationship between the caliphate and Quraysh as something inseparable or as something that must always remain that way. At Saqifah Bani Saidah too, the point of the caliph being from Quraysh was stated from the angle of political expediency, as far as I recall, by Abu Bakr and some Ansari Companions. Umar himself did not present this argument there. His argument was actually in reference to the personality of Abu Bakr—that while he was present, the caliphate of anyone else would not be acceptable in the sight of Allah and His Messenger. But after that phase had passed and stability and consolidation had been achieved in governance, when Umar reflected on future possibilities, it seems to me that his inclination became that the office of the caliphate should be connected to individual competence rather than political tribalism. That is, if capable and qualified individuals exist among the Ansar or other tribes besides Quraysh, then they should be given this responsibility. You may call this, in a sense, his “loud thinking.” It is not necessary that he wanted or was able to act upon this intention in practical circumstances, but he was certainly thinking along these lines.

**Muti Syed:** Umar delivered a sermon to the people and said that Allah Almighty granted His Messenger the concession that He was to grant. But the Prophet of Allah has now departed from this world, so you should complete both Hajj and Umrah as Allah has commanded, and also safeguard the private parts of your women (No. 104). What is Umar saying here, and which concession is he referring to?

**Ammar Nasir:** Here he is referring to Hajj Tamattu and temporary marriage with women, i.e., mut'ah. What he wants to say is that Allah Almighty, during the lifetime of the Prophet (PBUH), granted this concession under a particular expediency—that people could marry women for a limited period and could combine Umrah with Hajj in the same journey—but this is not the original or permanent ruling of the Shariah. The original ruling is that there should be a separate journey for Umrah and a separate journey for Hajj; they should not be combined in one journey. Similarly, when marriage is contracted with women, it should be with the intention of a permanent relationship, not a temporary or provisional marriage. There is another very well-known report in which he says that there were two mutahs during the time of the Messenger of Allah (PBUH), but I prohibit them: one is Hajj Tamattu and the other is Mut'at al-Nisa' (*Mustakhraj Abi 'Awanah*, No. 3349).

**Muti Sayyid:** From this it appears that Umar regarded Hajj Tamattu, like Mutat al-Nisa', as a temporary ruling. But in another report it is stated that he said that Hajj Tamattu is also the Sunnah of the Messenger of Allah (PBUH), but I do not like that people have intercourse with their wives under the pilu trees and then get up in the morning and make the intention for Hajj (No. 342). That is, personally he did not like it and did not want people to take advantage of it. This may be his personal inclination, but on what basis was he preventing people on that account? This position is somewhat difficult to understand.

**Ammar Nasir:** In fact, different kinds of reasoning are reported from Umar in the narrations. In some of them it is stated that he did not like pilgrims establishing marital relations within the Haram during the journey of Hajj, and he thought that when people reach the Haram for Hajj, they should refrain from intercourse and the like

before completing the Hajj. At the time of Hajjat al-Wada, when the Prophet (PBUH) instructed the Companions who had entered ihram for Hajj to perform Umrah and then remove their ihram, the Companions were also hesitant for this very reason and said that if we remove the ihram, then when the days of Hajj arrive, shall we go towards Mina in a state that we have just had intercourse with our wives? (Muslim, No. 1216). Some other narrations report that Umar said that he wanted people to come frequently to visit the House of Allah (*Al-Sunan al-Kubra*, al-Bayhaqi, No. 8877). Perhaps he feared that if people started performing Umrah together with Hajj, then they would not come to the House of Allah except for Hajj, and the flow of people during the rest of the year would decrease. And some narrations state that he regarded it as a temporary concession granted during the time of the Prophet (PBUH), as mentioned in the report you cited.

Now it is possible that his actual position was indeed that Hajj Tamattu' was a temporary concession, whereas the Shariah fundamentally intends that Hajj and Umrah be performed through separate journeys. But a major question arises here: this concession has been explicitly stated by Allah Almighty in the Quran, even though along with it the command of sacrificing an animal or fasting has also been given (*Surah Al-Baqarah 2:196*). That is, calling this concession temporary or provisional is very difficult. It seems to me that his real concern was that within the boundaries of the Haram, after removing the ihram of Umrah, people would be having intercourse with their wives under trees or wherever they found space, and this was not a good sight. At that time, obviously, not all pilgrims had enclosed accommodations, and most had to stay in open areas, so in such conditions it was not possible to maintain the necessary privacy required for intercourse. To avoid this situation, Umar wanted to prevent people, and then perhaps as supporting evidence or incidentally he argued that this was a temporary concession granted during the time of the Prophet (PBUH), whereas Allah Almighty's original requirement is that people perform Umrah and Hajj through separate journeys. He was interpreting 'وَأَتِمُّوا الْحَجَّ وَالْعُمْرَةَ لِلَّهِ' in this sense.

**Muti Sayyid:** But Ali and other Companions used to criticize Umar for this position, didn't they?

**Ammar Nasir:** Yes. Very strong criticism was directed at Umar, to the effect that who was he to prohibit something when Allah and His Messenger (PBUH) had permitted it.

**Muti Sayyid:** Regarding Mutat al-Nisa', the Shia say that the Prophet (PBUH) did not prohibit it; rather, Umar prohibited it. Do the Ahl al-Sunnah also accept that it was Umar who prohibited it, or do they hold that the Prophet (PBUH) himself prohibited it?

**Ammar Nasir:** If you look at it from the Shia perspective, they say that Umar was a bold person who enforced his own opinion even in the face of the commands of the Prophet (PBUH). They cite all these examples. Husayn Musawi is a major Shia scholar from Iraq. In his book *Al-Nass wa al-Ijtihad*, he has compiled all such examples regarding the caliphs, where on one side there was an explicit text—the command of Allah and His Messenger (PBUH)—while on the other side the caliphs formed their own opinions. However, with regard to Mut'at al-Nisa', the Shia objection does not actually stand, because Ali's position on this issue was also that the Prophet (PBUH) permitted it on certain specific occasions, but then later prohibited it (Bukhari, No. 6560). As for Hajj Tamattu', Ali did not agree with Umar and criticized him for placing restrictions on the permission granted by the Prophet (PBUH). The general view of Ahl al-Sunnah is also that its prohibition was enacted by the Prophet (PBUH) himself. That is the original source. However, if some Companions continued to regard it as permissible, or did so due to lack of knowledge about its abrogation, then when it came to Umar's knowledge, he strictly prevented it.

**Muti Sayyid:** But from the narrations it does not seem that Umar was saying that the Prophet (PBUH) had prohibited it.

**Ammar Nasir:** Yes, that is correct. His reasoning was not textual; his reasoning was based on the objectives of the Shariah.

**Muti Sayyid:** After Umar, did anyone else consider it permissible?

**Ammar Nasir:** Even after Umar's decision, the disagreement did not end. It remained for two to two-and-a-half centuries, and among Ahl al-Sunnah there were groups holding both opinions. Imam al-Shafi'i also mentioned it as a disputed issue. Since Abdullah ibn 'Abbas held the view of permissibility, this position remained prevalent among the people of Makkah for a long time. Then gradually, by the time of the formation of the juristic schools, a general consensus emerged among Ahl al-Sunnah on its prohibition, while the permissive position was adopted by the Imami school.

**Muti Sayyid:** What were the reasons for this consensus forming among Ahl al-Sunnah?

**Ammar Nasir:** In my view, the major reason was the same reasoning based on the objectives of the Shariah that Umar articulated. It is clear that the Prophet (PBUH) granted this concession only in an emergency situation; he did not grant a general permission. But in such matters, concessions do not take long to turn into general permissions—that is, the chances of misuse are very high. That is why when Abdullah ibn 'Abbas, who used to issue formal legal opinions permitting it, came to know how people were actually using this concession, he did not retract his opinion, but he stopped issuing legal verdicts to people. He said that he was not telling people to make general use of it; rather, he understood it in the same way as eating carrion becomes permissible in a state of necessity. So it seems to me that Sunni scholars also basically saw that if this concession were left in place, its misuse would be very widespread. Umar also fundamentally took this into consideration; that is why he did not present any textual proof claiming that it had been abrogated. He was seeing that if this practice became common, it would be very difficult to prevent its harms.

**Muti Sayyid:** In the Shia tradition, its permissibility is present, and in their society it is also practically practiced. What harms have arisen from it in their social life?

**Ammar Nasir:** The Shia also regard it as theoretically permissible, but along with that they impose specific conditions and, depending on circumstances, practically restrict its use as well. When their jurists see that it is not being practiced properly, they do not grant permission. It is reported that in Iran it was legally permissible before Imam Khomeini, but when Imam Khomeini came, he put a stop to it. So they also consider its practical aspects, but when they discuss it at a principled and theoretical level, their position remains that it has not been abrogated.

[To be continued...]



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# RAMADAN AND THE RELATIONSHIP WITH ALLAH

Muhammad Hassan Ilyas  
Shahid Raza

Ramadan is the blessed month that comes into our lives every year like a spiritual spring. The vibrancy of this month, the arrangement of worship, the liveliness of mosques, and the special feeling that arises in hearts all testify to the fact that Ramadan is not merely a collection of days; rather, it is a great opportunity—an opportunity to understand anew, strengthen, and bring positive change into our lives by renewing our relationship with our Lord.

As human beings, when we open the eye of awareness, the first thing we reflect upon is our own existence and the universe around us. Any person who reflects on this existential reality in the light of a sound nature (*fitrat-e-salima*), without external bias, clearly realizes that I am a creation, and my existence and the universe around me testify to that. The natural result of this reflection is that we ourselves are created beings, and this entire universe is also the creation of some Creator. This reality becomes clear in the light of both reason and knowledge: we have been created; we did not come into existence on our own. From here, an unavoidable question arises: if we are created, then who is our Creator?

In this journey of searching for the Creator, a person becomes perplexed. When he looks around, he finds different answers: some people declare the universe itself to be the creator of this creation; some, after wandering in this quest, regard the satisfaction of their spiritual journey and inner experience as the answer; and some become bearers of a tradition that comes into existence as a result of a divine call and introduces us to the existence of God. That is, some accept the universe itself as the creator, some consider their inner experiences and spiritual states as the answer, and some encounter a tradition that presents a clear, coherent, and rational introduction to God. This third source is, in fact, the source of the Prophets, peace be upon them. These are the chosen people who claim that God has selected us; we have come with guidance for humanity from the Creator of the universe; we want to convey His message to you; and the questions of your nature, the plausible results of existential realities, we convey to you directly from the Creator.

It is this very message of the Prophets, peace be upon them, that introduces us to the true understanding of God. When we accept this message with faith and certainty, it necessarily gives rise to certain essential relationships, bonds, and demands between the Creator and the creation. If one reflects, the relationships and demands that arise between a conscious servant and the Creator, by virtue of being a creation, are of only three types:

1. Worship
2. Obedience
3. Vow (sacrifice)

The first relationship is that of worship. When we accept someone as our Creator, its necessary demand is that we worship Him alone, bow before Him alone, and express our servitude solely for Him. This is to affirm that on the face of the earth we do not establish this kind of relationship with any being other than Him. From here

emerges the entire concept of acts of worship. Prayer is a symbol of this worship. A believing servant, a slave, expresses his relationship with his Lord, his Master. Standing, bowing, and prostration are symbolic expressions of the fact that there is no being on earth worthy of worship except Allah. He has no equal, no partner, no associate in creation or in the management of affairs. He is alone, unique, incomparable, singular. Thus, this is the first relationship that arises between a believing servant and his Creator, between a servant and his Lord: the worship of the Creator.

The second relationship is that of obedience. If He is the Creator, then obviously He is the Living and Self-Subsisting Creator. He has intentions, wishes, commands, guidance, limits, and restrictions according to which He wants His servants to live. The Creator of the universe says: I have sent you into the world for a test; the result of this test and reward and punishment will also be determined. For success in this reward and punishment, there are certain demands of His Shariah upon me; those demands are His commands and prohibitions. Now, if I am a servant, then a necessary demand of faith in my Lord is that I obey Him—meaning that I submit to His commands and accept His authority and decisive position in my life. The light present in my nature, the spark of vice and piety, if He has shaped its details into Shariah through the Messenger and the Quran and Sunnah, then obedience to it is obligatory upon me. The commands, guidance, and limits given by Him are the criteria for us. Thus, for a believing servant, a necessary demand of faith is that he submit before the commands of Allah.

The third relationship is that of vow and sacrifice. When something from one's existence is offered as a vow or sacrifice, it can only be for that One Being alone, not for anyone else. When something is vowed purely for God, sacrifice comes into existence; from the spirit of obedience comes fasting; and similarly, from the spirit of worship comes prayer. Thus, when a person offers something purely for Allah, it is an expression that he is ready to sacrifice even his life, wealth, and desires for the pleasure of Allah. Sacrifice is a symbol of this spirit, fasting is a manifestation of this obedience, and prayer is a practical expression of this worship.

Thus, as a believing servant, these are the dimensions through which we relate to the Creator. Allah tells us that the real purpose of all these acts of worship is purification (*tazkiyah*), that is, the purification of the human being. This purification has three dimensions:

1. Purification of knowledge and action
2. Purification of food and drink
3. Purification of the body

Acts of worship motivate us to remain steadfast upon this purification and to increase it. The Quran makes it clear that prayer restrains a person from indecencies and evils;<sup>77</sup> fasting has been prescribed to become conscious of limits;<sup>78</sup> and regarding sacrifice it is said that neither the flesh nor the blood reaches Allah, but rather the piety and the inner feeling reach Him—that if the occasion arose to sacrifice life by Allah's command, we would not withhold even that.<sup>79</sup> Symbolically, we offer the life of an animal in God's name. Thus, the entire system of

<sup>77</sup> Surah Al-'Ankabut 29:45

إِنَّ الصَّلَاةَ تَنْهَىٰ عَنِ الْفَحْشَاءِ وَالْمُنْكَرِ

(There is no doubt that prayer restrains from indecency and evil.)

<sup>78</sup> Surah Al-Baqarah 2:183

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمُ الصِّيَامُ كَمَا كُتِبَ عَلَى الَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ

(O believers, fasting has been prescribed for you just as it was prescribed for those before you, so that you may become God-fearing.)

<sup>79</sup> Surah Al-Hajj 22:37

لَنْ يَنَالَ السُّدَّ نُحُومًا وَلَا دِمَاقًا وَ لَكِنَّ يَنَالُهُ النُّفُوسُ مِمَّا كُنْتُمْ تُسَازِلُونَ سَخَّرْنَا لَكُمُ الْكَلِمَةَ لِيَتَذَكَّرُوا السُّدَّ عَلَىٰ مَا بَدَأْتُمْ

worship aims at the purification and refinement of our knowledge and actions, morals, attitudes, dealings, food and drink, and body.

Religion seeks this purification from us because Allah, after testing His servants, has devised a plan of reward and punishment in which He wants to make the purified people the eternal citizens of His Paradise. Allah has prepared a great reward for His servants: eternal Paradise, everlasting life, and an existence free from fear and grief. Allah wants to include the believing servant, as a reward, in His kingdom. Now, since God is free from all defects and possesses perfect attributes, how can He include in it those whose hearts do not even have a trace of purity? Thus, religion and acts of worship seek that we become pure. If we practice all of this and the desired result is not achieved, it means that worship has become mere rituals and formalities—and such worship has no benefit in the court of Allah. If the effect of these acts of worship does not appear in our lives, they become weightless before Allah.

The past history of religious and divine tradition shows that when the religious mindset changes the original orientation of religion—*the Hereafter*—and turns it toward tangible worldly objectives, such as establishing a system, striving for the dominance of Islam, or reviving an Islamic caliphate, then the entire system of worship becomes detached from its essence and lifeless. The result is that devotion disappears from worship. In the modern era, the founder of a movement that emerged in this context expressed his theory poetically as follows:

میری زندگی کا مقصد تیرے دین کی سرفرازی

میں اسی لیے مسلمان میں اسی لیے نمازی

*“The purpose of my life is the supremacy of Your religion;  
That is why I am a Muslim; that is why I am a worshipper.”*

That is, I was supposed to be a worshipper to establish a relationship with Allah and attain purification, but the orientation of that worship completely changed: I am a worshipper for the supremacy of religion; the worship itself has no inherent purpose. Thus, the objective of worship was lost. When the objective of worship is lost, then despite millions performing Hajj, offering sacrifices, praying, and performing Tarawih in Ramadan—when in Ramadan the entire Muslim world, in a sense, becomes a manifestation of servitude to God—no change is seen in society. Knowledge and morals continue to decline. The reason is that the objective and reality of worship, and the destination to which worship was meant to take us, have been changed. The result is that acts of worship are performed in abundance, but society continues to suffer moral decay.

If we practice these acts of worship with awareness of their true objective, then their effects will begin to manifest in the intervals between acts of worship. We pray so that it reminds us of God. The Quran says, *aqim al-salata li dbikri* — “Establish prayer for My remembrance.”<sup>80</sup> This reminder means that when I leave after praying and my car is wrongly parked, I should feel ashamed; or if I have placed my shoes in the wrong place, I should feel ashamed that I forgot the reminder of meeting Allah; or if I used the mosque’s washroom and did not clean it, I should feel reminded that I am not achieving the purpose of meeting Allah. Then I go to my shop, and if I do not speak the truth, give short measure; if I backbite or find faults; if my heart harbors jealousy, malice, and hatred toward Muslims; if I speak harshly and bitterly to my wife, use sharp words, and when criticized, try to expose others’ faults—then it means that the objective of worship has not been achieved.

*(Neither their meat reaches Allah nor their blood; rather, it is your piety that reaches Him. Thus He has subjected them to you so that you may glorify Allah for the guidance He has given you.)*

<sup>80</sup> Surah Taha 14:20

Thus, in Ramadan, Muslims have a special zeal; God's help also accompanies us; Satan is chained.<sup>81</sup> This is the opportunity for all of us to reflect: is the objective of worship being achieved? If it is not, then what we are doing is merely ritual actions. Their reality does not reach God. Thus, the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) said in a narration:

عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ، عَنِ النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ: «مَنْ لَمْ يَدَعْ قَوْلَ الزُّورِ وَالْعَمَلَ بِهِ وَالْجَهْلَ، فَلَيْسَ لِلَّهِ حَاجَةٌ أَنْ يَدَعَ طَعَامَهُ وَشَرَابَهُ.»

*Abu Hurairah (RA) narrated that the Prophet (PBUH) said: Whoever does not abandon false speech and acting upon it, and ignorant behavior, then Allah has no need for him to abandon his food and drink. (Bukhari, No. 6057)*

That is, if even while fasting you engage in vain talk, then Allah gains nothing from your hunger and thirst. What we need to deeply reflect upon is that the orientation of religion is the Hereafter. Our religion wants to take us toward a purpose; when worship is performed while striving toward that purpose, it becomes conscious worship. The heart finds delight in it, and its objective is achieved.

Ramadan reminds us that the true orientation of religion is the Hereafter and the real objective of worship is the purification of the soul (*tazkiyat al-nafs*). If we worship with this awareness, not only will worship become pleasurable, but our lives, our morals, and our society will also begin to change.



<sup>81</sup> Bukhari, No. 3277.

قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ:

إِذَا دَخَلَ رَمَضَانُ فَتُحْتَفَلُ أَبْوَابُ الْجَنَّةِ وَغُلِقَتْ أَبْوَابُ جَهَنَّمَ وَسُلْسِلَتِ الشَّيَاطِينُ

(The Messenger of Allah (PBUH) said: When the month of Ramadan arrives, the gates of Paradise are opened, the gates of Hell are closed, and the devils are chained.)

## HAYAT-E-AMIN (29)

Naeem Ahmad Baloch

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Biography of Maulana Amin Ahsan Islahi, written in accordance with the will of the author of *Tadabbur-e-Quran*.

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As has already been stated, the tragedy of the death of Abu Saleh Islahi was the greatest calamity of Maulana Islahi's life. However, the most significant aspect of this grief is the manner and patience with which Maulana bore it; this stands as an unparalleled example of his character. Through this, the deep relationship of the author of *Tazkiyah-e-Nafs* with his Lord becomes manifest, and the trust and reliance of the exegete of *Tadabbur-e-Quran* upon his Creator become evident—qualities that distinguish him among the scholars of truth, just as his commentary does. The self-accountability he undertook in light of this incident is a magnificent example of faith in the Hereafter. This unparalleled critic who regarded Sufism as a “parallel religion” demonstrated, in this context, a remarkable mode of intimate supplication with Allah.

It is a strange coincidence that despite years of association and hundreds of meetings with him, this incident never came up in discussion. Thus, over many years of close relationship, I remained unaware of this event that so profoundly affected his life. When I eventually learned about it, it had become quite difficult to speak to Maulana directly due to his weakness, illness, and hearing impairment. Consequently, when I once mentioned it specifically to his “special disciple,” the late Khalid Masood, he told me that Maulana had very high expectations from this son of his. After the accident, we—the students associated with the circle of *Tadabbur-e-Quran*—were anxious about how Maulana would endure such a great calamity. However, he said that we found Maulana at that time like a mountain of patience and steadfastness. He composed himself very quickly, became extremely quiet, and thereafter would also fall silent whenever Abu Saleh was mentioned. Very few people saw him with tearful eyes. Mr. Khalid Masood said that we realized he now avoided mentioning Abu Saleh in order to forget the tragedy. Hence, we too understood it as a silent message and refrained from mentioning the incident in his presence lest his wounds be reopened.

Here we quote some excerpts from two articles which reveal how Maulana endured the grief of his son, what Abu Saleh meant to him, and which aspects of his character and conduct were sources of gratitude and reassurance for him. These articles also bring to light many important events and circumstances of his life. Both articles were published consecutively in the June and July 1965 issues of *Mithaq*:

*“On 20 May 1965, the tragic accident that befell a PIA aircraft near Cairo was, in general, a national tragedy for all of Pakistan. The entire nation was grieved by it, and I share equally in that grief with the nation. But for me, this incident became a double sorrow, because my young son Abu Saleh Islahi was also martyred in this accident. I am a weak human being made of flesh and blood. I am deeply affected even by ordinary incidents whose news appears daily in newspapers, so how could I protect my heart from the effects of an incident that burned my entire home to ashes? I confess that these days passed very heavily upon me; never before in my life had I experienced such hard days. Although upon hearing the news of the accident I immediately entrusted myself to my Lord, saying: ‘O Lord, if this is not the result of Your wrath, then I am content with Your decision. Grant me the ability of patience and acceptance,’ yet despite this, during this*

*period a constant battle raged between my intellect and my heart, and many times in the solitude of the night I felt that my emotions were overpowering my reason. But now I do not wish to stir those emotions and increase my own grief and that of my sympathizers. Rather, by way of recounting blessings, I wish to mention some matters that manifested from the Lord Most Generous, through which I received great help in lightening the burden of this sorrow.”*

*“The first thing is that on this journey, the late Abu Saleh had intended to perform ‘Umrah, and therefore he had made all the necessary preparations before leaving home. This intention was known to my brother-in-law, Chaudhry Fazlur Rahman Mahmood (may Allah preserve him), for several months, but before the journey he conveyed this good news to his mother, and through her, as it were, to me as well. In early May, I had gone to my land for matters related to agricultural management. There, one task after another arose, and it took more days than expected. Alarmed by my unusual delay, my wife and my younger daughter also came there. One day before the accident, my wife mentioned that Abu Saleh was going on a journey to the Middle East. I said, ‘What is new about that? He regularly travels to China, America, and England.’ She said, ‘No, the matter is that now he has made the intention of ‘Umrah.’ When he used to come to me, he would say: ‘Mother, you think I am indifferent to religion, but I have made the intention of ‘Umrah. I will return after performing ‘Umrah on this journey. During the day I do office work; at night I memorize the supplications of Hajj. I have read several travelogues of Hajj. If you have read any travelogue that describes the spirituality of Hajj, please tell me about it. Ask father as well.’ I said, ‘Yes, this indeed is new news.’ In this way, I was truly very pleased.”*

It should be remembered that the mother with whom Abu Saleh is expressing such closeness was not his biological mother. His real mother had passed away during his childhood.

*“Abu Saleh had achieved remarkable fame in journalism at such a young age, and his continuous successes in the struggle of life were, on the one hand, admirable, but on the other hand, from a particular angle, a cause of concern for me. My heart feared that perhaps the intoxication of these successes might make him heedless of the Hereafter. Therefore, I would constantly pray for him: ‘O Lord, You have given him worldly success; guide him also to the path of religion.’ Whenever he would come to visit us, his mother would invariably raise the issue of regularity in prayer. I too once or twice said to him: ‘Abu Saleh, you are a son to be proud of; if you become devout, I would also offer thanks to my Lord for having a son like you.”*

It should be noted that Abu Saleh was by no means negligent in fulfilling obligatory duties, but the level of consistency and readiness that Maulana expected from his son is the context of this admonition and reminder.

*“There was indeed some heedlessness, but his temperament was very receptive to advice. He also possessed great zeal for religion. Now when I think of his death in exile (that is, away from his homeland), imagine the flames of fire in which his body and my heart were scorched, recall the martyrdom mentioned in the hadith for a believer who perishes in fire or by drowning, and then consider his intention of ‘Umrah, my chest fills with good hope that perhaps the Most Generous and Merciful Lord chose this short path to take that youthful soul into His Paradise. This hope reduces my grief so much that at times I feel as if no incident had occurred at all.”*

The hadith to which Maulana refers in these lines is:

عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ ، أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ: ... الشُّهَدَاءُ خَمْسَةٌ: الْمَطْعُونُ، وَالْمَبْطُونُ، وَالْغَرِيقُ، وَصَاحِبُ  
الْهَذْمِ، وَالشَّهِيدُ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ.

*Abu Hurairah (RA) reported that the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) said: ‘...The martyrs are five: one who dies of plague, one who dies of an abdominal disease, one who dies by drowning, one who dies under debris, and one who is martyred in the path of Allah.’ (Muslim, No. 1914)*

*“How many people have performed the funeral prayer in absentia, and how many letters I have received. From their meetings, I have felt that their hearts are even more wounded by this incident than mine. Many have informed me that they and their families rise at night, weeping and praying for the deceased. Among them are common people as well as such scholars and righteous individuals whose knowledge and piety I greatly respect. When I observe this widespread impact, I find myself worthy of it neither, nor the late Abu Saleh. This appears to me to be entirely God-made. When the Most Generous and All-Managing Lord wishes to bestow His mercy upon one of His servants, He fashions his death in such a way that countless hands are raised in supplication for him, with tearful eyes and anguished hearts. How then can I imagine that the hands He Himself has raised for prayer will be returned empty? This thought fills my soul with joy and dispels all grief and sorrow.*

*“The third thing is that some of my elders and sympathizers, instead of writing condolences, wrote congratulations to me upon this incident. Those who offered congratulations held distinguished positions in both knowledge and piety. I maintain a good opinion that they did not congratulate me merely to console me, but that in their view Abu Saleh’s death truly held the status of martyrdom. Martyrdom is a great rank. If Abu Saleh attained this rank, he attained something immense. Thousands of lives are sacrificed for a martyr’s death. I had never imagined that anyone from my humble family would be deemed worthy of such a rank. When I reflect upon this rank, which the Most Generous Lord granted purely out of His grace, my soul feels deeply ashamed before my Lord that why did I mourn Abu Saleh’s death? Why did I not perform a prostration of gratitude instead? May Allah reward all those friends and elders who drew my attention to this reality.*

*“Another matter that most helped in relieving my grief was the dream of a long-standing friend of mine. Although I do not give much importance to dreams, this was the dream of a person whose dreams I have personally experienced to come true. I once spent nearly ten months with him in Borstal Jail and Lahore Central Jail. During that period, he saw astonishing dreams related to forthcoming events, and all of them proved true. He saw a dream between the nights of 30 and 31 May, around four in the morning, which I narrate in his own words:*

*“The late Abu Saleh Islahi appeared cheerful and lively, dressed in nightwear—a greyish bush-shirt and pajama. He said, “I experienced pain for only half an hour. Now I am completely fine.” He repeated this two or three times. I said, “Your father, Maulana Islahi Sahib, is deeply grieved by this incident.” He replied, “Yes, that is correct; he is deeply grieved. Why would he not be? Now all responsibilities have fallen upon his shoulders.” He also said, “Please convey my message, which I have just stated, to my family.” I said... and the feeling was that perhaps they would or would not accept what I convey as a dream. What message would I deliver? But he insisted two or three times, saying, “What concern is that of yours? Convey the message; whether they accept it or not is their choice.”*

The dream was quite long, and the full sequence of events is not entirely remembered, but those parts of the conversation that are written above remain engraved in my mind. In addition, it was also seen that three or four of his friends were moving around near him, dressed in white shirts and trousers, without beards or moustaches. One of them asked Abu Saleh: “Brother, it is time for prayer.” At that time, it was indeed the time for the Fajr prayer. “Now we need to perform ablution; tell us where.” Abu Saleh pointed to one side and said: “There is a

washroom adjacent to the room with my dining table. You may perform ablution there.”

The interpretation of this dream is for the interpreters of dreams to explain, but a few things are absolutely clear to me, and they are the source of my reassurance and comfort.

First, the dreamer is a person with whom, although I have not been in contact for a long time, I have personal experience that his dreams come true. Therefore, any message from the late Abu Saleh conveyed through him has an aspect of reassurance for me.

Second, within two or three days after the accident, I had analyzed all the causes of grief and overcome most of them, but one question persistently troubled my soul: what was the Lord Most Generous’s dealing with Abu Saleh at the time of the accident and thereafter? At night, when this question would dominate my mind, sleep would elude me. I repeatedly wished that something should appear before me that might slightly ease this burden from my heart. Even if in a dream—but I myself rarely see dreams, and those I do see I do not remember. Now that this dream has come to my knowledge, the thought persists that it is an answer to that very question. And if it truly is the answer to my question, then it is indeed a most beautiful and blessed dream.

بریں مژدہ گر جاں فشانم رواست

This is a hemistich of Saadi Shirazi. The complete verse and its meaning are:

بریں مژدہ گر جاں فشانم رواست  
کہ عاشق چنین شادمان کم رواست

*“This glad tiding is so great that even if I were to sacrifice my life upon it, it would be little, for such joy is rarely granted to a lover.”*

“In the dream, the color of Abu Saleh’s nightwear that stood out was later confirmed at home to be exactly the same as his actual sleeping suit. During that time, the room containing his dining table was indeed adjacent to his washroom. The dreamer had no prior knowledge or conception of these details.”

The person who saw this dream was the late Amir of Jamaat-e-Islami, Mian Tufail Muhammad Sahib.

[To be continued...]



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# CONTACTS OF ANCIENT ARABIA WITH OTHER NATIONS AND THE INFLUENCE OF FOREIGN CULTURES

**Dr. Khursheed Rizvi**

It is true that on three sides the sea, and on one side the Nafud Desert, had from ancient times kept the Arabian Peninsula cut off; however, as we have already written, in a broader perspective this peninsula also presents a paradox. It played an important intermediary role in transmitting the influences of Asia, Africa, and Europe to one another, and obviously, while doing so, this land itself could not remain entirely untouched by the effects of diverse cultures. Many reflections of this basic paradox become apparent when reading the history of ancient Arabia. One of these is that although a large majority of Arabs were living far from civilization, leading nomadic and desert lives, at the same time Arab society, as a whole, was connected to and influenced in many ways by the greatest civilizations of that era. In short, it would not be correct to imagine that a land whose borders touched those of two great powers of the time—Iran and Rome—and adjacent to which, in earlier periods, the famous civilizations of the Assyrians, Babylonians, and Chaldeans had flourished and the Code of Hammurabi had been formulated, would have had an intellectual life completely detached from these external influences. The reality is that Arabic literature and Arab life were not free from foreign influences.

It is almost impossible to prepare a complete list of all the means through which one nation absorbs influences from others, because their details are extremely subtle; however, some of these means are very prominent. The Arabs' contact with other nations and their receptivity to foreign cultures was mainly through three channels:

## **(1) THE STATES OF HIRA AND GHASSAN**

These were, respectively, sources of the penetration of Iranian and Roman cultures, and they affected Arab society in several ways. A detailed discussion of them follows in later pages.

## **(2) TRADE**

The land of Arabia has been an important commercial thoroughfare since the most ancient times. Initially, when the people of Yemen were at their height, they controlled the reins of trade. Later, when they declined, trade passed into the hands of the people of Hijaz. The central region of the peninsula is largely desert, so the trade routes were spread along its edges. One route came from Hadramawt toward the Red Sea, passed through Hijaz, and went on to Syria. Another ran from Hadramawt in the opposite direction, through Oman and Bahrain, reaching as far as Tyre. Frankincense and similar goods were exported from Dhofar beyond Arabia, while various imports reached Yemen from outside. In addition, goods from India—such as rare animals like langurs and peacocks—used to travel overland through Arabia to the Pharaohs of Egypt.

As mentioned above, after Yemen, control of trade came into the hands of the people of Hijaz. Makkah lay roughly at the midpoint of the trade route from Yemen to Syria and was also an important stopping place because of the well of Zamzam. Moreover, the Haram of the Ka'bah possessed religious sanctity; therefore, the Quraysh, who were the leading people there, gained special advantages in commerce—an indication of which is also found in the Quran. The merchants of Quraysh would also take the trade goods of Abyssinia to the markets of Syria.

Their caravans were very grand, and naturally included, for purposes of interpretation, individuals who were familiar with foreign languages. Moreover, the chosen minds of Arabia—such as Abu Sufyan, Makhrema ibn Nawfal, and ‘Amr ibn al-‘As—were included in these caravans, people who possessed the ability to observe foreign cultures with discernment. On this very trade route, the Prophet Muhammad [pbuh] also traveled to Syria, first at the age of twelve with his uncle Abu Talib, and later at the age of twenty-five in connection with the wealth of Khadijah (RA).

The desert-dwelling tribes were not entirely detached from these commercial activities either. To remain safe from plunder and to find the way, trading caravans would hire these tribes as guides or guards. Despite being illiterate and accustomed to raiding, these people were trustworthy in the sense that they were firm to their word and did not violate their agreements. There are even examples where, if due to the attack of a more powerful tribe they found themselves unable to protect the caravan, they would return the wages they had taken. In short, because of these commercial activities, the constant interaction of Arabs with other nations—and with one another—left the imprint of foreign cultures on their intellectual life. The Persian, Roman, Egyptian, and Abyssinian loanwords found in Arabic also entered the language partly due to these commercial contacts.

### (3) JUDAISM AND CHRISTIANITY

The third important channel through which foreign cultures entered Arabia was Judaism and Christianity. Several centuries before the advent of Islam, some Jews came and settled here from Alexandria and Rome, and later, under their influence, some Arab tribes also adopted Judaism. Thus, Tayma, Fadak, Khaybar, Wadi al-Qura, and above all Yathrib became centers of the Jews. Banu Nadir, Banu Qaynuqa‘, and Banu Qurayzah were well-known Jewish tribes. The Jews brought with them the seeds of the philosophical cultures of Alexandria and Rome, and since both Rome and Alexandria were heirs to Greek culture, a reflection of Hellenism was also indirectly present in their social life. Besides agriculture, these people were skilled in certain industries such as weapon-making, blacksmithing, and goldsmithing. Through the mediation of the Jews, lengthy traditions and interpretations concerning beliefs related to the creation of the world, life after death, reckoning, and the balance gained currency in ancient Arab society—traditions that later also found their way into Islamic literature. Religious terms such as Hell, Iblis, and Satan also first became known to the Arabs through the mediation of the Jews.

Similarly, Christianity represented Abyssinian, Roman, and Greek influences among the Arabs. Among the various Christian sects, the Jacobite and Nestorian sects were prominent in Arabia; accordingly, Nestorian beliefs were found in Hira, and Jacobite beliefs in Ghassan. The greatest center of Christianity was Najran. These people lived a highly organized life. “Sayyid,” “Aqib,” and “Usquf” were, respectively, the titles of the leaders responsible for their external, internal, and religious affairs. They were skilled in making silk garments and weapons. The Yemeni cloaks and garments frequently mentioned in Arabic literature are attributed to them. It is reported that the famous orator Quss ibn Sa‘idah was the bishop of Najran.

Under the influence of Christianity, a tendency arose among the Arabs to reflect on the phenomena of the universe and to live an ascetic life. Thus, it is narrated about Hanzalah al-Ta‘i that he left his tribe, established a monastery, and died there in seclusion. Similar reports are found about Quss ibn Sa‘idah—that he lived in desolate places, ate very little, and was familiar with wild animals. Some similar accounts are also transmitted about ‘Adi ibn Zayd and Nu‘man, the king of Hira. In the poetry of Umayyah ibn Abi al-Salt, ‘Adi ibn Zayd, and Quss ibn Sa‘idah as well, the element of asceticism and monasticism is prominent.

The addition of certain words and expressions to the Arabic language also occurred through Christian tendencies. According to some reports, the phrase “amma ba‘d” was first used by Quss ibn Sa‘idah, and “bismik Allahumma”

by Umayyah ibn Abi al-Salt. In Umayyah's poetry, some unfamiliar words are also found that he took from ancient books; for example, he used the words "sulṭiṭ" and "taghrur" for God.

[To be continued]



# NEWSLETTER AL-MAWRID US

## (FEBRUARY 2026)

### WEEKLY LESSONS ON THE QURAN AND HADITH

In January 2026, the live weekly sessions on the Quran and Hadith conducted under the auspices of the Ghamidi Center continued. In the Quran sessions, Javed Ahmed Ghamidi delivered lessons on *Surah Al-Muminun* (verses 44–118) and on the first two verses of *Surah An-Nur*. In the Hadith sessions, discussion centered on narrations related to the rulings of ritual purity (*tabarah*).

Some of the key issues addressed in these Hadith sessions included: “Performing ritual purification before touching the Quran,” “An objection related to water affected by major ritual impurity (janabah),” “Is it obligatory to perform ghusl immediately after janabah?” and “Does a person become intrinsically impure in the state of janabah?” Recordings of these Quran and Hadith lessons are available on the Ghamidi Center’s YouTube channel.

### WORLD RELIGION PODCAST

Last month, Muhammad Hassan Ilyas recorded a program titled *World Religion Podcast*. Its primary objective is to foster intellectual harmony through dialogue among major world religions, particularly between Islam and Hinduism. Rather than viewing religion solely through a traditional lens, the program seeks to understand it on rational and logical grounds.

Some of the key questions discussed include: “What is Islam and when did it begin?,” “What is the definition and reality of Islam?,” “Is Islam fundamentally different from other religions?,” and “The challenge of atheism in the modern age.” The recording of this program is available on the Ghamidi Center’s YouTube channel.

### AFKAR-E-GHAMIDI (THOUGHTS OF GHAMIDI)

Syed Manzoor-ul-Hassan’s weekly YouTube program *Afkar-e-Ghamidi* serves as an important medium for presenting Javed Ahmed Ghamidi’s ideas in an accessible and comprehensible manner. The program explains his intellectual positions in clear and simple language.

In the January 2026 episodes, notable topics included: “What is the language of knowledge?,” “Ghamidi’s advice: Become sincere students,” “Can the state intervene in personal matters?,” and “Is it correct to label a scholar’s call as the call of religion itself?” Recordings of these programs can be viewed on the Ghamidi Center’s YouTube channel.

### ISTIF SAR: WITH DR. AMMAR KHAN NASIR

In January 2026, several sessions of the popular Q&A series *Istif sar: With Dr. Ammar Khan Nasir*, broadcast from the Ghamidi Center platform, were held. Some of the significant questions discussed included: “What are the limits of tradition and renewal?,” “Why do exegetes differ in their interpretations?,” “Who are meant by Ahl al-Bayt in the Hadith of Ghadir Khumm?,” and “What is meant by avoiding sectarianism?” Recordings of these sessions are available on the Ghamidi Center’s YouTube channel.

## ASK GHAMIDI

To provide direct guidance on religious and ethical issues, the Ghamidi Center organizes a monthly online session titled *Ask Ghamidi*. The purpose of this session is to allow participants to ask questions arising in their minds directly to Javed Ahmed Ghamidi.

In the January 2026 session, prominent questions included: “Does performing only ‘Umrah fulfill the obligation of Hajj?”, “What are the etiquettes of visiting a graveyard?”, “Is spiritual tranquility possible without Sufism?”, and “Why is the denial of prophethood not considered blasphemy?” Recordings of these sessions are available on the Ghamidi Center’s YouTube channel.

## TIPU SULTAN AND THE NIZAM OF HYDERABAD: TWO FIGURES, TWO APPROACHES, TWO OUTCOMES

In this article, Muhammad Hassan Ilyas compares two distinct historical Muslim approaches—emotional resistance and pragmatic strategy—through the characters of Tipu Sultan and the Nizam of Hyderabad. He writes that while Tipu Sultan’s bravery created an enduring romantic ideal of martyrdom, the Nizam of Hyderabad, by recognizing changing realities, sought the survival of his people through institution-building and the promotion of knowledge.

The central thesis of the article is that lasting honor and stability for nations are not achieved through emotional slogans alone, but through long-term strategy, education, and the establishment of strong institutions. This article can be read in the January 2026 issue of *Isbraq* (US).

## THE MEANING OF CONDITIONING OBEDIENCE TO GOD UPON OBEDIENCE TO THE PROPHET

This article by Mr. Manzoor-ul-Hassan is derived from a discourse by Javed Ahmed Ghamidi, in which the concept of linking obedience to God with obedience to the Messenger (PBUH) is explained. The article clarifies that the sole authentic means for humanity to receive divine guidance is through the person of the prophets, as access to revelation and unseen realities is granted only to them.

On earth, the final and exclusive source of religion is the person of Muhammad, the Messenger of God (PBUH), and guidance until the Day of Judgment can be obtained only through his words and actions. This article appeared in last month’s issue of *Isbraq* (US).

## QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS WITH HASSAN ILYAS

In January 2026, several important questions were discussed in *Ask Hassan Ilyas*, a program hosted by Mr. Muhammad Hassan Ilyas on the popular YouTube channel *Muslim Today*. These included: “Is suicide a crime or an act deserving compassion?”, “What is the correct method of divorce?”, “Can an individual declare the implementation of Shariah?”, and “Is our belief in God without evidence?” The recording of this program is available on the Ghamidi Center’s YouTube channel.

## QUARTERLY JOURNAL SALIHAT

The latest January–March issue of the quarterly women’s journal *Salihat*, published under the platform of GCIL, has been released. This journal features engaging articles in simple Urdu on intellectual, literary, and social topics specifically for women.

Notable contributions in the current issue include Mr. Hassan Ilyas's article "Disciplining Women: Is the Husband or Society the Addressee?", Ms. Nasreen Khan's travelogue *Dil Darwazay*, Ms. Thauba Noreen's article "Quarrels and Disputes", and Ms. Fabia Ehsan's article "Prohibitions Related to Divorce," along with other writings. The editor of this issue is Mr. Naeem Ahmed Baloch, with Ms. Wajiha Hassan Wahidi serving as Deputy Editor.

### TAFHEEM AL-ATHAR SERIES

The scholarly program *Tafheem al-Atthar*, conducted by the Ghamidi Center, continues its series on explaining reports attributed to the Companions and Successors, along with related Q&A sessions. The program is hosted by Dr. Syed Muti-ur-Rahman, with Dr. Ammar Khan Nasir participating as a guest.

In the January 2026 sessions, key topics included: "Ali and the transmission of Hadith," "Sayyidah Aisha and Hadith narration," "Sayyiduna Abu Hurairah and Hadith narration," and "Will every verse of the Quran be acted upon at some point?" Recordings are available on the Ghamidi Center's YouTube channel.

### SALAT AL-TASBIH IN THE LIGHT OF FIQH AND HADITH

In this research-based article, Dr. Aamir Gazdar critically examines the narrations related to *Salat al-Tasbih* attributed to Umm Salamah, Sayyiduna Abbas, and Fadl ibn Abbas (may God be pleased with them). Through a detailed analysis of the chains of transmission, he demonstrates that due to the presence of fabricators, abandoned narrators, and unknown individuals in all these chains, the narrations do not reach the level of proof and are academically classified as either fabricated or weak.

Consequently, from the perspective of the science of Hadith, it is entirely impermissible to use these narrations as evidence for establishing *Salat al-Tasbih*. This article can be found in the January 2026 issue of *Isbraq* (US).

### MAULANA ISLAHI'S EDUCATIONAL MISSION AND ABU SALIH ISLAHI: REMINISCENCES

In the January installment of *Hayat-e-Amin*, Mr. Naeem Ahmad Baloch discusses Maulana Islahi's scholarly engagements and recounts significant events from the life of his son, Abu Salih Islahi, including his tragic death in a plane crash. The article explains how Maulana Islahi prepared the modern educated class for the intellectual front through a comprehensive curriculum encompassing the Quran, Hadith, and classical Arabic literature, enabling them to confront atheism with intellectual rigor.

The article also mentions the passing of the renowned journalist Abu Salih Islahi in a plane crash in 1965 and refers to Agha Shorish Kashmiri's moving condolence essay, which reflects Abu Salih's professional excellence and moral integrity.

### FAITH AND BELIEFS

To introduce English-speaking audiences to the discussions of Mr. Javed Ahmed Ghamidi's book *Meezan*, Mr. Shahzad Saleem's *Meezan Lecture Series* continues. In January 2026, two lectures on the topic of "Faith and Beliefs" were recorded and are available on the Ghamidi Center's YouTube channel.

### GHAMIDI CENTER'S ONLINE KHANQAH

Mr. Moiz Amjad conducts a weekly training session titled *Online Khanqah* under the Ghamidi Center platform,

aimed at the moral and spiritual reform of the human self. Along with self-reform, participants' questions are addressed in a satisfactory manner.

In last month's sessions, several important topics were discussed, including: "What does manifestation mean?", "The human faculty of imagination," "The impact of environment on human potential," and "The lack of self-awareness." Recordings of these sessions are available on the Ghamidi Center's YouTube channel.

### ISLAM STUDY CIRCLE

Dr. Shahzad Saleem organizes a monthly session titled Islam Study Circle, in which he discusses various religious, ethical, and social issues in the light of the Quran and Hadith. The session consists of three parts: in the first, a topic is selected from Quranic verses and explained; in the second, selected Prophetic Hadith are discussed; and in the third, a passage from the Bible is examined. The session concludes with answers to questions related to the topic. Recordings are available on the Ghamidi Center's YouTube channel.

### ILM O HIKMAT: GHAMIDI KAY SAATH

In January 2026, four episodes of Javed Ahmed Ghamidi's weekly program "Ilm o Hikmat: Ghamidi Kay Saath" (*Knowledge and Wisdom: With Javed Ahmed Javed Ahmed Ghamidi*) were broadcast on *Dunya News*: three on the topic "Principles of Reflection on Religion," and one on "Islam and the State."

Some of the important questions discussed included: "To what extent can Hadith assist in reflecting on religion?", "Is adopting the Gregorian calendar an act of shirk?", "Is the state a natural reality or a modern invention?", and "Does the present form of the state reflect human nature?" Recordings of these programs are available on the institution's YouTube channel.

### SHAHZAD SALEEM'S ONLINE PRIVATE COUNSELING SESSIONS

A series of online counseling sessions by Mr. Shahzad Saleem for resolving social and family issues continues. In more than 30 sessions held last month, discussions focused on addressing parental challenges and the psychological and developmental difficulties faced by the younger generation. These sessions have become an important resource for individuals seeking sincere guidance in their personal matters while remaining within religious and ethical boundaries.

### ISSUANCE OF FATWAS BASED ON RELIGIOUS OPINIONS

The Ghamidi Center of Islamic Learning, Al-Mawrid US, has become an important center for guiding Muslims worldwide on the legal applications of Shariah-related issues. Last month, numerous fatwas were issued concerning marriage and divorce, inheritance, and various economic and social matters. These fatwas, prepared by Mr. Muhammad Hassan Ilyas in the light of Javed Ahmed Ghamidi's thought, should be understood as religious opinions rather than legal decrees or judicial verdicts.

### TEACHING OF "AL-BAYAN" IN ENGLISH

Continuing the series of teaching Javed Ahmed Ghamidi's Quranic exegesis *Al-Bayan* in English, Dr. Shahzad Saleem delivered lessons in January 2026 on *Surah Al-Araf* (verses 31–46). This initiative aims to enable English-speaking scholars and students to benefit from an understanding of *Al-Bayan*. Video recordings of these sessions are available on the Ghamidi Center's YouTube channel.

### ASK DR. SHAHZAD SALEEM

Dr. Shahzad Saleem holds a monthly live Q&A session in which he responds to questions on various religious, ethical, and social issues. Participants may ask questions in both Urdu and English. Recordings of these sessions are available on the Ghamidi Center's YouTube channel.